

GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THREE BRITISH PLAYS:
CLOUD NINE BY CARYL CHURCHILL
MY BEAUTIFUL LAUNDRETTE BY HANIF KUREISHI
THE INVENTION OF LOVE BY TOM STOPPARD

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

GÖKHAN ALBAYRAK

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

JUNE 2009

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name : Gökhan Albayrak

Signature :

ABSTRACT

GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THREE BRITISH PLAYS:
CLOUD NINE BY CARYL CHURCHILL
MY BEAUTIFUL LAUNDRETTE BY HANIF KUREISHI
THE INVENTION OF LOVE BY TOM STOPPARD

Albayrak, Gökhan

M.A., Program in English Literature

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ünal Norman

June 2009, 182 pages

This thesis analyzes how gender and sexual identities are discursively constructed through Churchill's *Cloud Nine*, Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette* and Stoppard's *The Invention of Love*; it traces how the dominant discourse reduces the *riddle* of human sexuality to the binary frame; it also discusses that the bi-polar organization of sexuality does not suppress, but reproduces sexual dissidence. A male-female pair is envisaged by the prevailing discourse; Butler's ideas of performativity and drag performance will be employed to indicate that gender and sexuality are not inborn, but culturally and historically determined, and to explore how deviant sexualities undermine the double columns of the masculine and the feminine, the homosexual and the heterosexual. An investigation into the homosexual/heterosexual split will demonstrate how power shifts between the points of the binary frame rather than being monopolized by the dominant discourse. The regulating discourse polarizes homosexuality and heterosexuality; it deploys the binary frame to overvalue the heterosexual and to disparage the homosexual; the established order seeks to fortify its authority through the binary thought. Yet, the binary logic is internally unstable; binary oppositions constantly threaten to collapse and fuse into one another; therefore, due to the inherent

indeterminacy of the binary logic, homosexuality is not annihilated, but rejuvenated by heterosexuality; thus, power flows among the dominant and counter discourses. Queer theory, drawing on post-structuralism, subverts the binary frame, and glorifies the proliferation of sexual identities and practices beyond the dualistic understanding.

Keywords: Gender, Performativity, Performance, Sexuality, Power

ÖZ

ÜÇ İNGİLİZ OYUNUNDA TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET VE CİNSELLİK:
CLOUD NINE, CARYL CHURCHILL
MY BEAUTIFUL LAUNDRETTE, HANIF KUREISHI
THE INVENTION OF LOVE, TOM STOPPARD

Albayrak, Gökhan

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Edebiyatı Programı

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Ünal Norman

Haziran 2009, 182 sayfa

Bu çalışma, üç İngiliz oyunu üzerinden, toplumsal cinsiyetin ve cinsel kimliklerin söylemler tarafından nasıl inşa edildiğini incelemektedir; baskın söylemin, cinsiyet *karmaşasını* nasıl ikili bir yapıya indirgediğini araştırmaktadır; aynı zamanda, cinselliğin iki kutuplu bir şekilde düzenlenişinin, cinsel kutuplaşmayı ortadan kaldırmadığını, fakat yeniden meydana getirdiğini tartışmaktadır. Baskın söylem, erkek-kadın çift anlayışını öngörmektedir; Butler'ın edimsellik (performativite) ve drag performans hakkındaki fikirleri, toplumsal cinsiyet ve cinsel pratiğin doğuştan olmadığını, fakat kültürel ve tarihsel olarak belirlendiğini göstermek ve *normal* ölçülerin dışına çıkmış, *sapkın* cinsel pratiklerin ve kimliklerin, dişil ve eril, eşcinsel ve karşıt cinsel gibi ikili zıtlıkları nasıl altüst ettiğini incelemek için ele alınacaktır. Eşcinsel/karşıt cinsel ayrımının üç İngiliz oyununda irdelenişi, gücün, baskın söylem tarafından tekeline alınmasındansa, ikili sistemin iki ucu arasında nasıl yer değiştirdiğini açıklayacaktır. Baskın söylem, eşcinselliği ve karşıt cinselliği kutuplaştırmaktadır; ikili yapıyı, karşıt cinselliğin değerini artırmak ve eşcinselliği küçültmek için kullanmaktadır. Yerleşik düzen, ikili düşünce şekli aracılığıyla, otoritesini sağlamlaştırmaya çalışır. Fakat iki kutuptan oluşan bu yapı,

kendi içinde tutarsızdır; birbirine zıt bir şekilde konumlandırılmış değerler, birbirleriyle karışmak ve birbirlerine kaynaşmak tehdidi altındadır; bu yüzden, ikili yapının doğasında var olan belirsizlikten dolayı, eşcinsellik, karşıt cinselliği savunan söylem tarafından yok edilmez, aksine, yeniden canlandırılır; böylece, güç, baskın ve karşıt söylemler arasında gidip gelir. Post-yapısalcılardan beslenen *terso/lubunya* (queer) kuramı, bir kavramı, ona karşıt başka bir kavram üzerinden tanımlamayı öngören ikili düşünce şeklini yerle bir edip, cinsel kimliklerin ve deneyimlerin bu ikili yapının ötesinde çoğalmasını yüceltir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Edimsellik (Performativite), Performans, Cinsellik, Güç

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ünal Norman for all her support, helpful suggestions, her encouraging and tender attitude during my study. It has been a pleasure to write this thesis under her guidance.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Assist. Prof. Dr. Nurten Birlik and Dr. Mine Özyurt Kılıç for their invaluable help and experience for their contributions to my academic career.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ix
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. GENDER: PERFORMATIVITY AND PERFORMANCE.....	23
2.1 Performativity: <i>CloudNine</i>	25
2.2 Performativity: <i>My Beautiful Laundrette</i>	34
2.3 Performativity: <i>The Invention of Love</i>	37
2.4. Performance.....	41
2.5. Performance: <i>Cloud Nine</i>	42
2.6. Performance: <i>My Beautiful Laundrette</i>	57
2.7. Performance: <i>The Invention of Love</i>	55
3. POWER AND SEXUALITY.....	61
3.1 <i>Cloud Nine</i>	62
3.2 <i>My Beautiful Laundrette</i>	101
3.3 <i>The Invention of Love</i>	132
4. CONCLUSION.....	170
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	178

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The configurations of gender and sexuality have preoccupied human beings throughout the centuries; they have strived to pin down this endlessly suggestive territory by means of dominant ideologies and discourses, cultural imperatives, religious indoctrinations and legal authorities; they have also been enticed by the deviant sexualities and puzzled by the constituent characteristics of their definitional indeterminacy and elasticity. Beckett asks a pregnant question that is left unanswered in *Endgame*: “Why did you engender me?” (Abrams, 2489); a question which springs from an insatiable desire to figure out the origin of man’s creation and procreation. Attempting to queer this inquisition of absurdist drama, one may tend to problematize the issues of gender and sexuality through doubling and twisting Beckett’s question, and asking the following question: “Why did you gender me ?”; the intersectionality between engendering and gendering is evident whilst the priority is open to discussion. One may be faced with the succession of the following questions: whether gendering follows from engendering or vice versa; whether the individual is engendered as long as s/he is gendered, or s/he is already gendered as her/his sex is biologically determined.

This controversial reciprocity between gendering and engendering opens up the dichotomy between the essentialist view and the constructionist view. The essentialist view argues that sexuality is natural and innate; “women and men are deemed to have innate and distinct characteristics which remain fundamentally unchanged and unchangeable throughout history and across cultures” (Tripp, 2); the constructionist view points to the artificiality of sexual and gender identities; “the constructed character of sexuality has been invoked to counter the claim that sexuality has a natural and normative shape and movement, that is, one which approximates the normative phantasms of a compulsory heterosexuality” (Butler, *Bodies*, 93). Queer theory defers any final assessment of sex, gender and

sexuality; it refuses to solidify “a zone of possibilities” (Jagose, 7). Queer theory shares with deconstruction an interest in discovering the underpinnings of binaries like homosexuality/heterosexuality and male/female; it proposes to “delineate the regulatory regimes that sort sexualities and subjectivities into valued and devalued categories” (Adam, *Liberation*, 19). The attempt to domesticate and fix the mobile field of gender and sexuality is countered by the mismatches between sex, gender and desire. Queer theory’s main project is exploring the contestations of the categorization of gender and sexuality. Theorists claim that identities are not fixed; they can not be categorized and labelled because identities consist of many varied components. Queer theory includes a wide array of previously considered non-normative sexualities and sexual practices in its list of identities; queerness points to “a non-normative sexuality which transcends the binary distinction homosexual/heterosexual to include all who feel disenfranchised by dominant sexual norms”(Walters, 8); queer theory celebrates the proliferation of sexual identities and practices beyond the bi-polar organization of sexuality. Rejecting the administrative labels for the management of sexual complexity, queer theory defends sexual diversity and stresses “the fractious, the disruptive, the irritable, the impatient, the unapologetic, the bitchy, the camp” (Adam, *Movement*, 146).

Any attempt to map the complexities of sexuality and gender in the light of queer theory should begin with a historical research into the many facets of the social construction of the same-sex desire. Same-sex desire has been understood and experienced quite differently in different cultural contexts; it has been conceived of as a sin against nature; it has been condemned by religion; it has been medicalized as a disease and an abnormality; it has been criminalised; yet, it has also been deemed with great esteem as in the case of classical world of ancient Greece. Unburdened by the reductive ideologies of the White Western man, different conceptions of sex, sexuality and gender have proliferated in a variety of cultures as David Halperin points out:

Does the ‘pederast’, the classical Greek adult, married male who periodically enjoys sexually penetrating a male adolescent, share *the same sexuality* with the Native American (Indian) adult male who from childhood has taken on many aspects of a woman and is regularly penetrated by the adult male to whom he has been married in a public and socially sanctioned ceremony? Does the latter share

the same sexuality with the New Guinea tribesman who from the ages of eight to fifteen has been orally inseminated on a daily basis by older youths and who, after years of orally inseminating his juniors, will be married to an adult woman and have children of his own? Do any of these three persons share *the same sexuality* with the modern homosexual (in Sullivan, 2).

Disassociated from the descriptiveness and prescriptiveness of the dominant discourses, the understanding and handling of sexuality and gender invites one to view how these terms resist fixity and claim ambiguity; Halperin's account of the conceptions of gender and sexuality in different cultural contexts is indicative of the notion that gender and sexuality are discursively constructed, and classifications of sexuality "do not simply describe being but rather constitute it in historically and culturally specific ways" (Sullivan,1). Similarly, the native inhabitants of America "believe that there are four sexes: men who love women, men who love men, women who love women and women who love men; and since men who love men and women who love women are fewer in number, they must be blessed by the gods" (in Garber, 56); these multiple conceptions of sexuality demonstrate that sexuality can not be restricted to the heterosexual configuration of desire; in fact, the native American's understanding of sexuality is entrapped in the homosexual/heterosexual split; nonetheless, it does not devalue the homosexual desire so as to idealize the heterosexual norm; the consecration of the same-sex desire by the native Americans is in stark contrast to the damnation of homosexuality by the dominant discourse in the Western societies, which indicates the precariousness of sexuality as a cultural and historical construct.

The anthropologist Margaret Mead's investigations in non-Western societies indicate that sexual and gender identities vary across cultures:

She studied men and women in three societies and concluded that, in the Arapesh, gender norms consisted of gentle and non-dominant men and women; in the Mundugunor, the norm was violent and aggressive men and women; and, in the Tchambuli, the norm involved dominant women and dependent men (in *Theorizing Gender*, 26).

The traditional attributes that are regarded as feminine can also be viewed as masculine in other cultures, which exposes the artificiality of gender norms. Each

society around the world constructs its own sex/gender system: “a set of arrangements by which the biological raw material of human sex and procreation is shaped by human, social intervention” (Rubin in Bristow, *Sexuality*, 200). Gender assignment differs from one culture to another: “In the early nineteenth century, Kodiak Islanders would occasionally assign a female gender to a child with a penis; this resulted in a woman who would bring great good luck to her husband and a larger dowry to her parents” (Bornstein, 22). All these culturally and historically specific accounts point to the fluidity of gender.

How ancient Greeks perceived sexual relationships between men also evinces that the configurations of sexuality and gender differ from one culture to another. The love, which the Greeks most often glorified, was that between adult and adolescent males; the relationship is partly educational: “In ancient Greece, adolescence was a time when young men left their biological families to become the lovers of adult men. Sexuality was but one element of an affectional and educational relationship in which youths learned the ways of manhood” (Adam, *Movement*, 2). Hammend explains that the older man is called *erastes* or “lover” and the younger man is called *eromenos* or “beloved”. The younger man benefits from the older man’s knowledge and experience whilst the younger male body is desired by the older one as it is on the verge of manhood. The older man leads the youth into intellectual and moral maturity; Greek love “helps tide an adolescent boy over an essentially difficult period in his life, when his relationship with the world hangs in the balance” (Eglinton in Edwards, 64). It was also significant that the youth should play the subordinate part during the sexual intercourse. The Greeks were not concerned about the gender of a man’s sexual partner; they marked out no divisions between men who were sexually attracted to women or men who slept with men; yet their perception rested on divisions based upon the power relationships in a sexual encounter (Hammend, 6). Oscar Wilde’s famous defence of same-sex desire also invokes the Greek ideals:

It is such a great affection of an elder for a younger man as there was between David and Jonathan, such as Plato made the very basis of his philosophy, and such as you find in the sonnets of Michelangelo and Shakespeare. It is that deep, spiritual affection that is as pure as it is perfect...It is in this century misunderstood, so much misunderstood that it may be described as the “Love that

dare not speak its name”, and on account of it I am placed where I am now. It is beautiful, it is fine, it is the noblest form of affection. There is nothing unnatural about it (in Adam, *Movement*, 38).

Plato’s *Symposium* has become the point of origin for a homosexual canon. Plato’s discussion of love between men indicates that adult men naturally desire beautiful youths, the pleasures and pains of such love lead them into philosophical discussion. The pursuit of wisdom does not entail any rejection of the desires of the flesh; rather, the body is considered to be the starting point for other kinds of knowledge; love of male beauty leads to love of beauty and truth in their abstract forms, ultimately to wisdom.

In the Middle Ages, sodomy, a sexual term that includes same-sex desire, was disparaged as “a sin, an abomination, a crime against nature and worthy of damnation” (Edwards, 17); it was strictly forbidden; yet, it managed to survive. Those who indulged in same-sex practices were tyrannized by “the severe penalties for all erotic contact between members of the same sex”; the Church fuelled a persecution of homosexuality through the biblical “story of divine wrath against Sodom and Gomorrah”, two cities in the Bible which were destroyed by God because of their sexual deviance; sodomites “were punished with castration, incarceration, and by the thirteenth century (if not earlier) public execution” (Hall, 101). Same-sex desire was controlled and castigated by the religious authority during the medieval era; however, homosexuality could not be eradicated because it returned in the very mode of repression.

In Britain, sodomy was considered to be a sin against nature until the 1800s. Sexual practices such as anal sex, oral sex, and sex which involved the use of contraception were conceived of as sodomitical. The term sodomy covered a variety of non-procreative sexual practices (Sullivan, 3).

It would be anachronistic to speak of same-sex desire as a sexual identity before the nineteenth century; same-sex desire was understood to cover sexual acts which all human beings might tend to practice. Yet, in the nineteenth century, Foucault points out that the homosexual became “a species”; as a result of the medical discourse the sexual deviant was disrobed of the descriptive term of the sodomite “which had been a temporary aberration”, and reconfigured as an innate

identity. The understanding of sodomy shifted to the notion of homosexuality as the basis of an individual's nature (in Sullivan, 4).

Following the paradigmatic shift from sexual acts to sexual identities, many theoreticians attempted to theorise same-sex desire. In the second half of the nineteenth century Ulrichs claimed that homosexuality is congenital. According to Ulrichs' model of homosexuality, some males are born with a strong feminine element and some females are born with a strong masculine drive; to Ulrichs, "being attracted to men indicated a female psyche" (Birke, 59); this argument promotes the view that homosexual men have a male body, but the mind of a woman. In accordance with the understanding of homosexuality as an inner androgynous being, Ulrichs states that the sexes are the same "until a certain stage of inter-uterine development" (in Sullivan, 4); he speaks of the female essence in pre-adolescent males before they grow into an "artificial masculinity" (Sullivan, 5). Ulrichs' theory of homosexuality is demonstrative of his essentialist position as he regards homosexual identity as innate. Although Ulrichs challenges normative opinions about same-sex desire, he is unable to disregard the gender polarity; his understanding is firmly based upon dichotomies such as male/female and active/passive; he conceives men who are sexually drawn to men as having a female soul.

Ulrichs claims that a man-loving man "is not a man, but rather a kind of feminine being it concerns not only his entire organism, but also his sexual feelings of love, his entire natural temperament, and his talents" (in Bristow, *Sexuality*, 21); Ulrichs focuses on effeminacy as the primary sign of the man-loving man; the implication of this theory is "the conjunction of male homosexuality with effeminacy, conflating sexuality and gendered identity" (Edwards, 19). In his view, sex is split into two antithetical forms; he assumes that the desire of a person is predicated upon an attraction to an opposite pole; he renders man-manly love intelligible because it reveals how a feminine soul seeks a masculine object; his ideas revolve around the binary frame of the established norm that he appears to have internalized.

Krafft-Ebbing, whose *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) is an acknowledged source of sexual studies, regards homosexuality as a disease. He thinks that

homosexuality is congenital, yet, unlike Ulrichs, he associates this innate condition with heredity and degeneration. Krafft-Ebbing studies homosexuality from the point of view of heterosexuality; he upholds heterosexuality as the ideal state, which homosexuals, being “unfinished specimens of stunted evolutionary growth”, are unable to attain (in Sullivan, 8). He also claims that “aberrant episodes of homosexual intercourse occur when cultural factors prevail against the seemingly normal path of desire towards the opposite sex” (Bristow, *Sexuality*, 31-2); he regards heterosexuality as the authentic, ideal path of sexuality, and homosexuality as a form of sexuality that strays from the ideal heterosexuality.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century Havelock Ellis argues that “both nature and nurture” have an impact on the construction of homosexuality, thus he combines the views of homosexuality as innate and as learned or acquired. Furthermore, Ellis puts forward that homosexuality is an abnormality, but not a disease; he appears to have taken heterosexuality for granted, regarded it as the *normal* configuration of desire, and analysed homosexuality in its deviance from its prioritized opposite: “When the sexual instinct is directed towards persons of the same sex we are in the presence of an aberration variously seen as ‘sexual inversion’...as opposed to normal heterosexuality” (in Ahmed, 70); Ellis views homosexuality as a form of sexual aberration and renders heterosexuality as the *true* form of sexuality. Ellis speaks of a kind of sexual ambiguity that is evident at the time of puberty, which is likely to become less foregrounded or recognised, and to fade out after adolescence. Accordingly, he thinks that “many people go through the world with a congenital predisposition to inversion which always remains latent and unaroused”; he refers to those who are inclined to same-sex desire by birth, which never resurfaces or which is repressed (Sullivan, 8).

In the first half of the twentieth century Hirschfeld regards homosexuality as a “deep, inner-constructed natural instinct” (Adam, *Movement*, 20). He bases his theory on the idea of a third sex “to term the situation of a male-female, masculine-feminine combination in one body” (Edwards, 21), yet he later gives up this idea and develops a notion that might be regarded as “sexual pluralism”. He believes in “a notion of sexual variability” that he compares “to the distinctiveness of fingerprints”. Hirschfeld seems to have abandoned the binary logic of homosexuality and

heterosexuality as he advocates a sort of sexual plenitude and celebrates sexual diversity. He points out that it is meaningless to seek to cure homosexuality; moreover, he posits “a form of adjustment therapy” through which homosexuals would come to accept, embrace and glorify their sexuality. Hence, he aims to urge the homosexuals to reassume and to be proud of their sexuality (Sullivan, 12).

Edward Carpenter, an English poet and gay activist (1844-1929), regards homosexuals as superior to heterosexuals:

The instinctive artistic nature of the male of this class, his sensitive spirit, his wavelike emotional temperament, combined with hardihood of intellect and body [...] may be said to give them, through their double nature, command of life in all its phases, and a certain freemasonry of the secrets of the two sexes which may well favour their function as reconcilers and interpreters (in Sullivan, 12-3).

In Foucauldian terms Carpenter views homosexuality as “a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphroditism of the soul” since his approach is suggestive of a fusion of the male and the female; he appears to advocate that the homosexual partakes of both sexes, thus is superior to the heterosexual whose being is made to be based on the difference of the sexes. Although Carpenter celebrates the homosexual’s favourable twofold position, he might be analysing homosexuality in the binary logic of heterosexuality and homosexuality; he appears to associate “the hardihood of intellect and body” with the male, and the instinctive, sensitive and emotionally temperamental side of the homosexual with the female. Under the yoke of the binary frame, Carpenter disavows the corporeal side of the homosexual desire; he is opposed to male carnality; his ideas about man-loving man revolve around the ideas of male-bonding and comradeship; he views the comradeship of men as a spiritual sentiment; he defends “the Greek ideal of the ‘continent’, ‘temperate’, ‘even chaste’ sublimation in ‘finer emotions’, cautioning against “a too great latitude on the physical side” (in Adam, *Movement*, 39). Therefore, Carpenter is entrapped in the ideological metaphors of the heterosexual discourse, which is evident in his attribution of human characteristics to the sexes; Carpenter’s sexual politics is based upon “distinctions between the sexes in strikingly orthodox terms” (Bristow, *Sexuality*, 25).

Sigmund Freud refuses to regard “inversion as a sign of degeneracy”. Freud conceives of sexuality as a drive. According to Freudian theory the sex drive is “shaped in and through the social development of human being”. Thus, Freud’s approach to sexuality contains both the biological aspect of sex and the constructed nature of sex. Freud points out that there are “a whole range of possible sexual aims, object choices, and states of psycho-sexual being”; he advocates sexual plurality and liberates sex from the reductive logic of heterosexual norm. Freud also regards heterosexuality not as the ideal form of sexuality, but as a culturally and historically specific institution. Keeping in mind the constructed side of sex, Freud refutes the notion that heterosexuality is naturally preordained (Sullivan, 14).

The Freudian approach to the notions of repression, perversion and sublimation is of vital importance in terms of gender and sexuality. Freud identifies perversion as being, or remaining at the very centre of civilisation; one grows to be an adult and thereby becomes positioned within sexual difference, yet the perverse desire does not die out, but it is metamorphosed into other kinds of energy through repression and sublimation; furthermore, civilisation draws upon this energy. Freud associates civilisation with perversion although the former stands for order and the latter stands for chaos; thus, Freud challenges the hierarchised position between the binary terms such as order and disorder, by extension, homosexuality and heterosexuality since homosexuality is traditionally associated with chaos as it disrupts the heterosexual machinery of genital intercourse and reproduction (Dollimore, 105).

Freud puts forward that sexual perversion is essential to human nature; infancy is marked by “polymorphous perversity and innate sexuality”; sexual normality (read heterosexuality) is “precariously achieved and precariously maintained”. So, Freud views homosexuality as innate and heterosexuality as constructed; he subverts the notion that heterosexuality is naturally preordained, and he essentialises homosexuality (Dollimore, 176).

Freud points to the fact that the repressed returns via the mode of repression; there is something counter-effective in the very mechanism of repression. Instead of transforming perverse desire into civilised achievement, repression counter-productively coerces the subject into a perverse existence. In Freudian context,

repression turns out to be un-repression. Suppression intensifies rather than reduces desire; it incites rather than eradicates desire. Repression counter-effectively produces un-repression (Dollimore, 177-8).

In the wake of these studies regarding sexuality, some homophile organisations began to emerge; they had an assimilationist tendency although they tried to increase tolerance of homosexuality and give an end to religious condemnation and legal prosecution of homosexual behaviour. As for their assimilationist side, the homophile groups aimed “to be accepted into and to become one with mainstream culture” (Sullivan, 23) ; they sought to be dismantled of their marginalised position and to be admitted into the centre; they fought against their being decentred, yet their ideal was marked by the desire to occupy the heterosexual centre and to disclaim the homosexual margin; therefore, their struggle was characterised by the notion of the heterosexual path from which the homosexuals are found to stray; so, the assimilationist tendency is indicative of how the homosexual liberation is still contained by the heterosexual hegemony.

The homophile organizations employed a sort of gay propaganda which is called “the Shylock argument”; according to the Shylock argument, it is asserted that “a homosexual is not a [...] dissolute libertine well beyond the pace of respectable society, but ‘a creature who bleeds when he is cut, and who must breathe oxygen in order to live’” (Sullivan, 23). By means of quoting from Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*, Sullivan associates the marginalized homosexual with Shylock, a Jewish person, who is driven to the periphery of the community by the dominant discourse, thus he means to argue that the homophile organizations propose that homosexuals and heterosexuals are no longer different from one another once they are stripped of social disguise or posture.

The Mattachine Society (1951), one of the most prominent homophile organizations, regards homosexuals as a population unaware of its status as “a social minority imprisoned within a dominant culture” (Jagose, 25). The Mattachine Society “originated with a comprehensive vision of social and political change for gay people and a willingness to challenge antihomosexual attacks” (Adam, *Movement*, 67). The Mattachine Society aims to create “a collective identity” among homosexuals who might be enabled to fight against their oppression once they are

made to realize “the institutional and hegemonic investment in their continued marginalization” (Jagose, 25). The Mattachine Society intended to promote and to protect the interests of homosexuals by means of making them recognize their potential, and energising them to stand against the dominant discourse which has pushed them to the margins of the society.

Jagose points out that some opponents within the Mattachine Society had a conservative tendency like the assimilationist groups, insisting that “it was more productive for homosexuals to co-operate with experts in the fields of medicine, law and education in order to effect change” (26). This assimilationist attempt is demonstrative of the mainstreaming of a homophile movement. The homophile organizations degrade themselves by demanding recognition and pleading for tolerance as they unwittingly agree to the fact that the heterosexual is the powerful one who could grant favours to the homosexual. Moreover, some assimilationist groups represent homosexuals as “victims of an unfortunate congenital accident” (Sullivan, 23); consequently, they ask not to abuse and not to persecute homosexuals, but to take pity on them, which evinces that these assimilationist homosexuals have internalized the oppression, persecution and marginalization inflicted on them by the heterosexual discourse.

The Stonewall Riots (1969) is glorified as the inauguration of the Gay Liberation Movement; it is regarded as “a myth that has taken on legendary dimensions” (Sullivan, 26). What characterizes the Stonewall Riots is “the reaction of the drag queens, dykes, street people, and bar boys who confronted the police first with jeers and high camp and then with a hail of coins, paving stones, and parking meters” (Adam, *Movement*, 81); their anger and militant behaviour characterise their uprising. The Stonewall Riots marks a cultural shift away from assimilationist policies. With the Stonewall, homosexuals were no longer quiet; more radical groups emerged and they began to question the values of heterosexual dominance. Similarly, Hall points out that “Stonewall was an important manifestation of a newly broadened concern with oppression and a new willingness to take to the streets to demand an end to discrimination” (112). Gay Liberationists challenged conventional knowledge about sexuality and gender instead of representing themselves as being just like heterosexuals; they were “militant in their expression of political disquiet” (Jagose,

31). Liberationists were not pleading for sympathy and pity; they “scandalized society with their difference” rather than searching for sameness with the heterosexuals (Jagose, 31). Gay Liberation was concerned with the assertion and creation of a new sense of identity, one based on pride in being gay (Jagose, 32). Liberationists re-defined themselves; they did not seek for social recognition; on the contrary, they struggled to overthrow the social institutions which marginalized homosexuality. They had an aggressive manner and they believed in subversion of the heterosexist categories. Carl Wittman speaks of the Gay Liberation in *A Gay Manifesto*:

Liberation for gay people is to define for ourselves how and with whom we live, instead of measuring our relationships by straight values...To be a free territory, we must govern ourselves, set up our own institutions, defend ourselves, and use our own energies to improve our lives (in Sullivan, 29).

Dennis Altman speaks of the four key concerns: pride, choice, coming out, and liberation. In a radical manner he argues that one’s identity “needs no excuses, that, in fact, it is something to celebrate” (in Sullivan, 30). Gay Liberation was marked by a self-determined articulateness; they did not hesitate to glorify their gayness and to be proud of their gay identity. They believed “in the transformative power of ‘coming out’, of publicly declaring one’s identity” (Sullivan, 31). They promoted an unambiguous expression of one’s gayness. Altman defines liberation as “freedom from surplus repression that prevents us from recognizing our essential androgynous and erotic natures” (in Sullivan, 31). Gay Liberationists embraced a vision of liberated bodies and unrepressed psychic drives within an essentialist understanding of sexuality.

The word ‘homosexuality’ has inevitably associated with the pathologizing discourses of medicine. In the 1960s ‘gay’ was deployed as a specifically political counter to the binarized and hierarchised sexual categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality. The word ‘gay’ has meant ‘blithe’, ‘light-hearted’, ‘exuberantly cheerful’ (Jagose, 73). The gay liberationist understanding of identity has been challenged by post-structuralism; the post-structuralist problematization of identity

has led to the emergence of the term ‘queer’; its non-fixity points to the “inclusive tendency to cover all sexual variations” (Jagose, 76).

Queer theory employs an anti-essentialist and deconstructive approach:

Queer studies ‘queries’ orthodoxies and promotes or provokes... uncertainties...disrupt[ing] fixed or settled categorisation... [Q]ueer theory seeks...to question all...essentialising tendencies and binary thinking (Widdowson and Brooker in Tripp, 15).

Queer theory offers an understanding of sexuality not as something god-given, natural or innate, but instead as a series of culturally and historically specific classifications, definitions and contestations. For example, queer theory exposes the constructedness and historical specificity of the notions of the homosexual and the heterosexual. For queer theory, categories of sexuality can not be defined by such simple oppositions as homosexual/heterosexual: “Building on deconstruction’s insights into human subjectivity (selfhood) as a fluid, fragmented, dynamic collectivity of possible ‘selves’, queer theory defines individual sexuality as a fluid, fragmented, dynamic collectivity of possible sexualities” (Tyson, 337). Queer theory defends a continuum of sexual possibilities; it “rejects the idea of a unified homosexual identity, and sees the construction of sexual identities around the hierarchically structured binary opposition of heterosexual/homosexual as inherently unstable” (Roseneil, 29).

The word ‘queer’ unpacks the limits of identity. The priority of sexual preference or gender over other aspects of identity is problematized. The queer studies have put an emphasis on the “intersectionality of racial, sexual, gender and class identities” (Sullivan, 38). The ‘queer’ vision emerges as the understandings of sexuality, gender and identity encounter with the postmodernist rejection of the reasonable, unified and coherent sense of identity. Donald Morton regards “the return of the queer” as the refutation of the views of the Enlightenment concerning the role of the conceptual, rational, systematic and structural thinking (in Jagose, 77). The views of the Enlightenment reduce human beings to reasonable, authentic, orderly, unified subjects and eradicate their unreasonable, fragmentary, disunified and chaotic aspects; yet, the Queer vision, with its non-specificity, foregrounds the amorphous

nature of human beings; it does not seek to orchestrate all kinds of dissonance and incongruities into unity and coherence.

Regarding the post-structuralism's contribution to the queer theory, it is of vital importance to have a brief outlook on the main tenets of post-structuralism in relation to the queer studies. Primarily post-structuralism is critical of "universalizing explanations of the subject and the world" (Sullivan, 39); it rejects grand narratives which "lead to totalizing discourses and practices that leave no room for difference, for complexities or for ambiguity" (Sullivan, 40); it "often tends toward a fetish of inconsistency, contradictions, and the ever-present 'difference'" (Walters, 9); thus, sexual discordance finds a breathing space within post-structuralism which rejects the monolithic understanding of identity, and highlights "the plurality and diversity of identities" (Edwards, 142). It challenges the humanist notion of the subject as "a unique, unified, rational, autonomous individual" (Sullivan, 41). For post-structuralism, no true self exists prior to its immersion into culture. Rather, the self is constructed in and through its relations with others, and with systems of power and knowledge.

Post-structuralism is a challenge to the Cartesian dualism, which is founded on a distinction between the mind and the body; it rejects the notion that the mind is the site which harbours identity and the body is "simply a material receptacle that houses the mind or spirit" (Sullivan, 41). Post-structuralism mobilizes a deconstructive approach to the hierarchized binary oppositions such as the mind and the body, the male and the female, and the homosexual and the heterosexual. This deconstructive approach does not consist of reversing the terms; a deconstructive analysis would highlight "the inherent instability of the terms" (Sullivan, 51). A poststructuralist approach to heterosexuality as something that has been represented as natural, essential and original shows that heterosexuality is "dependent on its so-called opposite", that is, homosexuality; the former includes the latter, which it seems to exclude (Sullivan, 51).

Post-structuralism regards identity as a cultural myth. Accordingly, Roland Barthes states that "our understanding of ourselves as coherent, unified and self-determining subjects is an effect of the representational codes commonly used to describe the self" (Jagose, 78). Barthes points out that identity is a naturalized

cultural category, and we are made to believe that one's self marks a point of undeniable realness although it is fabricated. Similarly, Louis Althusser argues that we do not pre-exist as free subjects; on the contrary, we are "constituted as such by ideology" (Jagose, 78). Likewise, Freud's theorization of the unconscious problematizes the view that subjectivity is stable and coherent. Subjectivity is not "an essential property of the self, but something which originates outside it" (Jagose, 79). Identity is always ongoing and incomplete; it is a process rather than a property.

According to Foucault, sexuality is not an essentially personal attribute, but a cultural category; in other words, sexuality is a discursive production rather than a natural condition. Foucault rejects the notion that "sex, as an instinctual drive, has been repressed by oppressive institutions, and thus in need of liberation; sexuality, in its many forms, has been discursively produced in historically and culturally specific ways" (Sullivan, 40). The ways in which sexuality expresses and manifests itself are subject rather than, as previously assumed, impervious to the specificity of their historical and cultural context. Angela Carter, as a non-conformist novelist, expresses her ideas about sexuality from a Foucauldian perspective in *The Sadeian Woman*:

[O]ur flesh arrives to us out of history, like everything else does. We may believe we fuck stripped of social artifice; in bed, we even feel we touch the bedrock of human nature itself. But we are deceived. Flesh is not an irreducible human universal. Although the erotic relationship may seem to exist freely, on its own terms, among the distorted social relationships of bourgeois society, it is, in fact, the most self-conscious of all human relationships, a direct confrontation of two beings whose actions in the bed are wholly determined by their acts when they are out of it (9).

This constructionist view indicates that sexualities operate as dependent variables within a vast complexity of cultural and historical relations.

Foucault puts forward the idea that power is not merely repressive, but also enabling; power is "productive rather than simply oppressive, and should be understood as a network of relations rather than something one group owns and wields in order to control another" (Sullivan, 42). Following the poststructuralist vein of thinking, Foucault evinces the fact that the powerful is dependent on the powerless to figure out his territory, thus he denounces the dichotomous logic, and highlights the inherent instability of the terms. Regarding the Foucauldian notion of power,

Jagose elaborates that power “does not simply weigh like a force which says no, but runs through, and it produces things, it includes pleasure, it forms knowledge; it produces discourse” (81). Hence, it can be argued that marginalized sexual identities, deviant sexualities are not simply victims of the operations of power; on the contrary, they are produced by those same operations. Accordingly, Jagose states that “the dominant discourse on sex and the appearance of the homosexual made possible the formation of a ‘reverse’ discourse” (82).

Queer theory, as a deconstructive strategy, aims to denaturalise heteronormative understandings of sex, gender, sexuality and the relations between them. Judith Butler agrees to the approach which posits sexuality and gender as not natural attributes, but social constructs. Accordingly, she argues that gender is performatively constructed; “gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” (in Jagose, 84). Gender is not the expression of a seamless internal identity; acts and gestures which we learn and repeat over time create the illusion of a stable gender core.

Butler also challenges the heteronormative model of identity in which “gender follows from sex, and desire follows from gender” (Sullivan, 86). Butler’s account of performativity denaturalizes the dichotomous logic of gender; the polarized understanding of gender leaves no room for gender discontinuities. Butler focuses on drag, cross-dressing, as a parodic repetition of gender norms. For Butler, drag is subversive since “in imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself - as well as its contingency” (in Sullivan, 86). Drag is parodic in the sense that gender does not follow from sex as it suggests a discontinuity between the sex of the performer and the gender being performed. Butler focuses on the difference between performativity as a mode of discursive production, and drag performance as a kind of theatrical production; “performativity is neither free play nor theatrical self-representation” (in Sullivan, 89). What she means by performativity is a process through which the subject is consolidated; yet, drag performance points to the theatricality of gender. Lynne Segal emphasizes the difference of performativity from wilful theatrical self-presentation:

[W]e are not free to choose our performances or masquerades at will – like a type of ‘improvisational theatre’. ...Mostly we can only enact those behaviours which have become familiar and meaningful to us in expressing ourselves. This remains so however much we realise that our self-fashioning was formed through the policing norms and personal relations of a sexist heterosexual culture” (in Whittle, 123).

Segal points to the fact that how the subject is discursively endorsed to impersonate certain preconceived and deeply ingrained notions of gender and sexuality which have become naturalised in the course of time.

The term ‘queer’ is marked by its definitional indeterminacy; it resists to be defined, thus domesticated and fixed; it “refuses to solidify as merely another acceptable category” (Jagose, 7). It has no interest in stabilizing itself; “by refusing to crystallize in any specific form, queer maintains a relation of resistance to whatever constitutes the normal” (Jagose, 100). Refraining from pinning down the term queer, David Halperin associates queer with “whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant”; queer can be employed for anyone who is marginalized due to their sexual practices; it might cover, Halperin argues that “some married couples without children ...or even (who knows ?) some married couples with children - with perhaps, very naughty children “ (in Sullivan, 44). Queer refers to twisted sexuality; queer desire points to “a form of ‘derailment’, of making the wrong turn” in the heterosexual imagination; as a sexual aberration, it is associated with “the wandering away from the straight line” of heterosexuality (Ahmed, 76-7). Referring to queer’s ambiguity and elasticity, Sedgwick points out that “the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses, excesses of anyone’s sexuality aren’t made (or can’t be made) to signify monolithically” (in Jagose, 100). Therefore, queer theory glorifies the polymorphous nature of sexuality: it is inclusive of “lots of ‘heterosexual’ men who have plenty of anonymous sex with other men [...] celibate faggots and dykes [...] lesbians who’ve been married for thirty years and have six children [...] heterosexual women who frequently have sex with other women at swing parties” (Califia, 25); the binary organization of sexuality in the form of straight and gay is contested by queer theory.

Queer unpacks the monolithic identities and extends its scope to cover the fields of other identity-constructing discourses such as race and ethnicity as they

intersect with the aspects of gender and sexuality. Therefore, Sedgwick points to the “dimensions that can’t be subsumed under gender and sexuality at all, the ways that race, ethnicity, postcolonial nationality criss-cross with these and other identity-constituting, identity-fracturing discourses” (in Jagose, 99). Regarding the intersectionality of racial and sexual aspects of an identity, queer theory dwells on the notion that race is sexualized and sex is racialized. The White Western construction of the Oriental and the Black is of vital importance since it sheds light on the fictionality of the sexual traits traditionally attributed to the Oriental and the Black people; thus, it lays bare how sexuality, gender, race and ethnicity criss-cross with one another. For instance, Orientalism constructs the figure of the *oriental* man as feminine and weak, which indicates how race is gendered. Hence, Sullivan points out that “race and sexuality are not two separate axes of identity that cross and overlay in particular subject positions, but rather, ways to circumscribe systems of meaning and understanding that formatively and inherently define each other” (73).

Queer theory is fascinated with transsexual and transgendered bodies as they dismantle binary oppositions such as male/female, heterosexual/homosexual. Transsexualism is sometimes reduced to be a medical condition that can be cured; Benjamin claims that transsexuals “feel that their sex organs, the primary as well as the secondary, are disgusting deformities that must be changed by the surgeon’s knife” (in Sullivan, 102). Similarly, the transsexual is regarded as a man in a woman’s body, or a woman in a man’s body; in order to ‘correct’ this gender asymmetry, and not to mix genders, the transsexuals are said to seek for sex reassignment surgery. They try to be *completely* feminine women or *completely* masculine men. Accordingly, Shapiro regards transsexuals as “simply conforming to their culture’s criteria for gender assignment”, and claims that “transsexuals, rather than challenging gender norms, reinforce them” (in Sullivan, 105). In terms of sexual plurality, queer theory likes to deal with male-to-female transsexuals who are sexually attracted to women and identify themselves as lesbians, or female-to-male transsexuals who are sexually drawn to men and identify themselves as gays. Queer theory is tempted by such border-zone dwellers as they destabilize and disturb the coherent images of sexuality and gender through their ambiguous, incongruent aspects of identity.

Queer theory aims to denaturalize heterosexuality, so it seeks to queer 'straight' sex, to make it strange, to figure out its eerie aspects. Heterosexuality has attained the status of the natural; it is so embedded in our culture that it has become "the-taken-for-granted" (Sullivan, 119). Adrienne Rich points out that heterosexuality has become obligatory and institutional rather than a natural inclination; moreover, she argues that heterosexuality "plays a central role in the implementation and perpetuation of male domination" (in Sullivan, 120). Heterosexuality constructs female sexuality as "a lust for self-annihilation" (MacKinnon in Sullivan, 123). Heterosexuality is based upon binary oppositions such as "essentialising notions of masculinity/femininity, activity/passivity, power/powerlessness, penetrator/penetrated" (123). Sheila Jeffreys argues that heterosexuality eroticises and naturalizes "dominance and submission" (in Sullivan, 117); on the other hand, she regards homosexual desire as "desire based upon sameness instead of difference of power, desire which is about mutuality" (in Sullivan, 127).

In straight sex bodies are marked as masculine or feminine, thus straight sex reaffirms the hegemonic bodily images and consolidates gender inequality. Straight sex might be queered by privileging various zones of the body so as to subvert heterosexuality enacted in the form of penis-vagina sex as "a militarised invasion and occupation of a passive female body" (Sullivan, 130). On the other hand, straight sex might be resignified since it can be argued that the vagina enfolds the penis (Irigaray in Sullivan, 130). Both views might be unwittingly reaffirming the heterosexual intercourse since they are based on a power-practice. Sex is inevitably intersubjective; sexual pleasure involves the transgression of the supposed boundaries between self and other, subject and object, inside and outside, active and passive, power and powerlessness; in sex pleasure is erasure; pleasure springs from the fact that self is obliterated. Similarly, Segal points out that "in consensual sex alien bodies meet, the epiphany of that meeting - its threat and excitement - is surely that all the great dichotomies slide away" (in Sullivan, 130). Thus, consensual sex, particularly heterosexual, becomes organ transplantation; furthermore, it can be argued that heterosexuals are mental transsexuals, which definitely queers straight sex, makes it strange.

Gender and sexual identities are discursively constructed. The aim of this study is to demonstrate how these identities are produced through an analysis of performativity, drag performance, and power relationships. The plays to be studied are Caryl Churchill's *Cloud Nine* (1979), Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985), and Tom Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* (1997). When in brackets the plays will be referred as *Cloud*, *Laundrette* and *Invention*.

Cloud Nine is a two-act play; Act I is set in British colonial Africa in Victorian times, and Act II is set in a London park in 1979. However, between the acts only twenty-five years pass for the characters. In Act I, Clive, a British colonial administrator, lives with his family, a governess and a servant during turbulent times in Africa. The natives are rioting and Mrs Saunders, a widow, comes to them to seek safety. Her arrival is soon followed by Harry Bagley, an explorer. Clive makes passionate advances to Mrs Saunders, and his wife Betty fancies Harry, who has sex with the servant Joshua and Clive's son Edward. The governess Ellen, who reveals herself to be a lesbian, is forced into marriage with Harry. Act I ends with the wedding celebrations; the final scene is Clive giving a speech while Joshua is pointing a gun at him. In Act II, Betty has left Clive; her daughter Victoria is now married to Martin; Edward has an openly gay relationship with Gerry. Victoria leaves Martin and starts a lesbian relationship with Lin. When Gerry leaves Edward, Edward moves in with his sister and Lin. The three of them have a drunken ceremony in which they call up the Goddess. The characters from Act I begin appearing in Act II. Act II has a looser structure than Act I.

Churchill challenges the established notions of gender and sexuality; she deliberately subverts gender stereotypes through casting her characters; thus, she unsettles the expectations of her audience. Churchill draws an analogy between colonial and sexual oppression. She amplifies social constructs, using an unnatural time gap. She explores how the patriarchal discourse fashions gender and sexual identities.

My Beautiful Laundrette is a screenplay written by Kureishi. It dramatizes the story of Omar, who is the son of a Pakistani father and an English mother. Omar's uncle, Nasser, who is a successful entrepreneur, gives Omar a job in one of his garages; after working for a brief time as a car-washer, Omar is assigned the task of

running a run-down laundrette and turning it into a profitable business. Omar comes across an old friend of his, Johnny; Johnny agrees to help Omar, and they resume a love affair which had been interrupted after school. At Nasser's, Omar meets a few other members of the Pakistani community: Tania, Nasser's daughter, and Salim, who traffics drugs and delivers Omar to deliver them. Running out of money, Omar and Johnny sell one of Salim's deliveries to make cash for the laundrette redecoration. The laundrette becomes a success. At the opening day, Nasser visits the store with his mistress, Rachel. They dance together in the laundrette while Omar and Johnny are kissing in the back room. Omar and Johnny are almost caught by Nasser, but Omar claims they were sleeping. Omar decides to take over two laundrettes owned by a friend of Nasser, with the help of Salim. A group of English punks attack Salim around the laundrette; Johnny decides to save Salim from the group of punks to which he also belonged. Johnny's friends decide to attack him for supporting the Asian community, and beat him savagely until he is saved by Omar. Omar proceeds to clean up his wounds. The play ends with them splashing each other with water while topless.

Kureishi investigates how gender identities are culturally preordained and acquired. He undermines the essentialist idea that gender and sexual identities are inbuilt and fixed. He also explores how race intersects with gender and sexual identities; he puts forward that sexuality is a point of transfer for power.

The Invention of Love portrays the life of poet A. E. Housman, focusing specifically on his love for a college mate, Jackson. The play is written from the viewpoint of Housman dealing with his memories after dying and contains many classical allusions. The play begins with A.E. Housman, dead at age 77, standing on the bank of the river Styx. Upon boarding his boat for the afterlife which is captained by Charon, Housman begins to remember moments from his life. The play unfolds as a collection of short scenes that trace, primarily, Housman's relationship with Jackson, for whom Housman harboured a lifelong, unrequited love. The scenes also explore the late-Victorian artistic ideals as well as Housman's intellectual growth into a preminent Latin textual scholar. Throughout the play, the older Housman comments on and occasionally talks to the characters, including his younger self and Oscar Wilde.

Stoppard places the life and work of A.E. Housman at the centre of his play; he discusses on the nature of classical scholarship and explores the ways that ancient manuscripts are distorted throughout the centuries. Stoppard goes beyond Housman the scholar and delves into Housman the poet; he dwells upon the interconnections of the scholar with the straight Housman and the poet with Housman the homosexual. Stoppard explores how gender and sexual identities are enforced upon the individual; both the repressed homosexual Housman and the notoriously practicing homosexual Wilde are dramatized by Stoppard as historically specific constructions of sexuality.

Chapter II analyzes how gender norms are put on by the subjects, how they are perceived within the binary frame, and how they manage to configure the subject that they purport to configure through discursive means. The organizing principles that inform these gender constructions and the discursive strategies which immobilize the heterosexual norms will be studied in Chapter III in order to highlight the interconnections between power, knowledge, sex and gender.

CHAPTER II

GENDER: PERFORMATIVITY AND PERFORMANCE

Judith Butler disregards the traditional view that gender and sex are natural attributes; she claims that they are fabricated and acquired. She argues that the masculine gender and the feminine gender are not biologically fixed at birth, but they are culturally presupposed. She views sex and gender as social constructs rather than inner truths. Likewise, Anna Tripp calls into question the preconceived notions of sexuality and gender: "are our notions of 'femininity' or 'masculinity' in fact context-specific and variable, constructed by and circulated within particular cultural formations and signifying practices?" (1). She questions models of sexuality and identity which cohere around the assumed stability of heterosexuality. Tony Purvis states that Butler's investigations "show how the assumed causes and origins of sexuality are in fact the effects of discourses and institutions whose points of origin are multiple" (442); Butler's approach displays indebtedness to the work of Foucault who is celebrated for showing how fixed ideas of sexuality are deployed to serve the tactical perpetuation of social systems. Butler's constructionist approach to gender is obvious in the following quotation: "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (Butler, *Gender*, xv). Thus, she defies the essentialist understanding of gender as an internal, inbuilt reality; she exposes that the internal coherence of gender is illusory.

Butler puts forward the idea that gender is performed, thus constructed; the body is viewed as the ground, surface, or site of cultural inscription; the body "often appears to be a passive medium that is signified by an inscription from a cultural source figured as 'external' to that body" (*Gender*, 175). Similarly, Foucault regards the body as "a blank page" (in Butler, *Gender*, 177). Human beings are made to act out a variety of gender features that are attributed either to the male or to the female. Butler states that "the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence" (*Gender*, 34). The

performance of sex, gender and sexuality is not a voluntary choice for Butler; she locates the construction of the gendered and sexed subject within regulating discourses which allow possibilities of sex, gender and sexuality to appear coherent and natural. Thus, she offers her notion of performativity; she explains that “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, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration” (*Gender*, xv). She communicates the idea that gender is established through certain signifying gestures; she speaks of gender as impersonation. By coercing the subjects to perform specific stylized actions, the regulative discourse seeks to maintain the appearance of the core of sex, gender and sexuality in the subjects. Butler emphasizes the repetitive and ritualistic sides of performativity as they restrict the possibilities of gender to received notions of masculine and feminine; the indeterminate field of sexuality and gender is immobilized through these repetitions and the reified set of acts and gestures. She elaborates on her view of performativity so as to denaturalize the fixed field of gender, and to uncover the tenuousness of gender and the irreducible complexity of sexuality: “what we take to be an internal essence of gender is manufactured through a sustained set of acts, posited through the gendered stylization of the body” (*Gender*, xv). The body is under siege, and imprinted by culturally and historically specific inscriptions.

Queer theory, assuming a deconstructive strategy, attempts to denaturalize heteronormative understanding of sex, gender, sexuality and the relations between them. Butler aligns her approach with that of the queer theory by stating that “Queer theory aims to open up the field of possibility for gender without dictating which kinds of possibilities ought to be realized” (*Gender*, viii); she refers to the fascination of queer theory with the inexhaustible complexity of sex, gender and sexuality, and its deferral of any final assessment of sex, gender and sexuality. She criticizes the normative foundations of heterosexism since a zone of possibilities has been coercively foreclosed by the various reifications of gender. By means of viewing gender as a learned set of attributes and actions, Butler opposes the system that finds certain expressions of gender to be false and derivative; she undermines a way of thinking which wields a discourse of truth to delegitimize sexual dissidents. She

assaults sexual hierarchy which enforces gender discrimination and promotes gender normativity. Hence, she aims to uproot the pervasive assumptions about presumptive heterosexuality, and certain idealized expressions of gender which pertain to the norms.

2.1. Performativity: *Cloud Nine*

Butler's notion of performativity which refers to the repetition of gender norms as a mode of discursive production will be employed to analyze the main characters in Churchill's *Cloud Nine*. The idea of performativity will be handled so as to demonstrate that acts and gestures are not expressions of an innate gender identity, but they are learned and repeated over time, and they create the illusion of a stable gender core. These acts and gestures are performative in the sense that the internal essence that they purport to express is a set of fabrications generated and perpetuated through discursive means. Butler points out that gender operates "as an expectation that ends up producing the very phenomenon that it anticipates" (*Gender*, xv); the subject is an effect rather than the agent of action; there is not an agent behind the deed; on the contrary, the deed constructs the doer.

Churchill, preoccupied with the sexual politics, regards the body as a site of gender representation. She suggests that the contours of the body are established through markings that establish specific codes of cultural coherence. She aims to destabilize fixed sexual and gender identities determined by dominant heterosexual ideology. Her dramatization of sexual politics in *Cloud Nine* is inclusive in the sense that her play not only speaks of lesbian and gay identities that are marginalized by heterosexuality and women oppressed by the patriarchy, but also speaks of the heterosexual men persecuted within the very terms of heterosexuality. Churchill's play manages to cover a wide spectrum of sexualities:

One of the things I wanted to do [...] was to write a play about sexual politics that would not just be a woman's thing. I felt there were quite a few women's groups doing plays from that point of view. And gay groups... There was nothing that also involved straight men (in Aston, 37).

Churchill's multiplicity of points of view accords with the queer theory that purports to include all non-normative practices of sexuality as it is seen as "an umbrella term for a coalition of culturally marginal sexual self-identifications" (Jagose, 1).

Edward is a significant figure in terms of Butler's account of performativity; his state of dangling between the notions of masculinity and femininity, and his attempt to assume the former and to disown the latter is indicative of how gender is performed; thus, Edward's gender identity is culturally shaped. Edward's constant oscillation and his enacting a gender trespass in spite of his father's indoctrinations indicate that gender is "an assignment which is never quite carried out according to expectation, whose addressee never quite inhabits the ideal s/he is compelled to approximate" (Butler, *Bodies*, 231). Simone de Beauvoir suggests that "one is not born a woman, but rather, becomes one" (in Butler, *Gender*, 11); for Beauvoir, gender is constructed; the one who becomes a woman is not necessarily female. Edward becomes a *woman* in terms of cultural configuration, yet he is not female with regards to his biological sex; Edward is a passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed. The relation between the signifier 'female' and the signified 'woman' is arbitrary; "woman might refer to more than a biological female, man to more than a biological male" (Elam, 170); Edward's assumption of the feminine gender does not match with his biological sex according to the normative ideals of gender. Edward does not deliberately and playfully assume gender; he is made to perform gender. Performativity is "neither free play nor theatrical self-presentation" (Jagose, 87); it is a process through which the subject is constituted.

Edward is always lectured about manliness by his father, Clive, who stands for the dominant discourse of heterosexuality. Clive constantly imposes his view of male behaviour on his young son; he strives "to teach him to grow up to be a man" (252); thus, gender becomes a set of learned acts rather than a natural attribute. Edward is forced to acquire the conventional codes of manliness. Similarly, he is condemned by the household for playing with his sister's doll (257); Edward's "masculinity is precariously achieved by the rejection of femininity and of homosexuality" (Weeks, *Discontents*, 190). According to the settled gender binary oppositions of masculine and feminine, a boy's playing with a doll is unacceptable since dolls are associated with femininity; Edward's interest in a doll eradicates the

distinction between the polarized genders established by the heterosexual discourse; the boundaries are not to be blurred. Edward, seeking to justify his desire for the doll in his father's eyes, finds an excuse; he explains he minds his sister, Victoria's doll for her. Clive, as a resourceful patriarch, tries to fit his son's tendency of minding the doll into the norm; he tells his son that it is "manly to take care of your [his] little sister" (257) rather than her doll; thus, Clive purports to inscribe his son into the reified codes of masculinity; he aims to shape his son's gender performatively. The breakdown of gender binaries is problematic; gender discontinuities call into question the stability of gender; policing gender is a way of securing heterosexuality.

In order to immobilize gender diversity in Edward, Clive intentionally wrenches him from the traditional feminine attributes; during the family picnic Clive lets Edward, a child, drink champagne (264) so as to shape his son into heterosexual male and to empower his son's sense of masculinity; Clive opens the champagne:

Edward: Can I have some?
Maud: Oh no Edward, not for you.
Clive: Give him half a glass.
Maud: If your father says so (264).

Following the dominating regime of the binary frame, Clive associates softness with femininity and hardness with masculinity. To enjoy themselves during the picnic, Harry, Clive and Edward play ball; Clive insults Edward calling him "butterfingers" when Edward misses the ball:

Clive: Butterfingers.
Edward: I'm not.
Harry: Throw straight now
Edward: I did, I did.
Clive: Keep your eye on the ball.
Edward: You can't throw.
Clive: Don't be a baby.
Edward: I'm not, throw a hard one, throw a hard one-
Clive: Butterfingers. What will Uncle Harry think of you? (265).

Hence, Churchill means that gender is performative; it is an artificial construction. Once Edward learns to be hard, to be manly, he will be enabled to perform his

gender *appropriately*; thus, his identity will be constituted discursively. Feinberg points out how gender is mandated by the regulative discourse, and how gender-variant people are trampled by the bigoted system which forces them to perform the gender-coded behaviours: “being a man has nothing to do with rippling muscles, innate courage, or knowing how to handle a chain-saw. These are really caricatures. Yet these images have been drilled into us” (39).

Clive identifies reason with masculinity and emotion with femininity; he is the concrete manifestation of the dualistic understanding of gender as he follows the tradition of associating the mind with the male, and the body with the female. According to the restricted perspective of the heterosexual discourse embodied in the person of Clive, being ruled by the heart is a sign of femininity that is to be disowned by the male to safeguard the precariously achieved manliness, and being governed by the mind promotes masculinity. So, Clive commands his son to cover his emotions; Betty says to Clive that he has hurt Edward’s feelings since he has humiliated Edward by calling him butterfingers; in reply Clive remarks that a “boy has no business having feelings” (266). The heterosexual law, thus, prescribes Edward how to perform the *appropriate* gender that is believed to accord with his biologically-determined sex; the received notions of gender are reified through the cultural shaping Edward receives.

Edward’s playing at the master is indicative of the illusion of an inner and organizing gender core that is discursively maintained within the rigid regulatory frame. Edward appears to have internalized his father’s remarks about *natural* disposition to save women from danger; he acts out this gesture of manliness when he plays the master in order to protect his mother from their servant, Joshua’s, demeaning attitude:

Betty: Joshua, fetch me some blue thread from my sewing box. It is on the piano.

Joshua: You’ve got legs under that skirt.

Betty: Joshua.

Joshua: And more than legs.

Betty: Edward, are you going to stand there and let a servant insult your mother?

Edward: Joshua, get my mother’s thread.

Joshua: Oh little Eddy, playing at master. It’s only a joke.

Edward: Don’t speak to my mother like that again.

Joshua: Ladies have no sense of humour. You like a joke with Joshua.

Edward: You fetch her sewing at once, do you hear me? You move when I speak to you, boy.

Joshua: Yes sir, master Edward sir (278).

Edward's enactment of the role of the master is suggestive of a performative appropriation of masculinity. Edward seeks to "become intelligible through becoming gendered in conformity with recognizable standards of gender intelligibility" (Butler, *Gender*, 22); gender intelligibility provides Edward with social visibility; recognition forms the subject. His gender identity is inaugurated and mobilized; being entitled to be the master animates him. Edward reprimands Joshua for not attending to his mother's orders; he accomplishes to pose as the masculine gender. Edward becomes a gendered self; these kinds of acts, gestures and remarks are codified; thus, they produce the appearance of an innate gender core. Gender is "a construction that regularly conceals its genesis" as Butler points out (*Gender*, 190). That Edward's tenuous masculinity is an effect of these performative acts and gestures is obscured by the illusion that there is an essential, natural gender core. The deed pre-exists the doer, and the former constructs the latter: "there is no 'I' who stands behind discourse and executes its volition or will through discourse. On the contrary, the 'I' only comes into being through being called, named, interpellated, to use the Althusserian term, and this discursive constitution takes place prior to the 'I' (Butler, *Bodies*, 225). Thus, Edward's gendered body is constructed through corporeal significations. Butler notes that "such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications *manufactured* and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means" (*Gender*, 185). Therefore, Edward *embodies* the notion of masculinity; his manliness is corporeally signified. Gender identity emanates from "the morphology of the body", that is, from the body that is subjected to gender construction: "it is not biology that is the real destiny in our culture but morphology" (Weeks, *Discontents*, 256).

The performative effect of reiterative acts is evinced in the scene where Betty repeats her mother, Maud's remarks:

Betty: The night air is deceptive. Victoria was looking pale yesterday.

Clive: My love.
[Maud comes from inside the house]
Maud: Are you warm enough Betty?
Betty: Perfectly.
Maud: The night air is deceptive (256).

Betty's performative repetition of her mother's views indicates how the expression of gender is fixed within the demarcated boundaries of the mandatory heterosexuality. What appears to be an internal essence of gender is constituted through a sustained set of acts, performed through the gendered stylization of language. The repetitive mechanism occasions the view that performativity is not a singular act; Betty complains that she suffers from boredom as she has nothing to do in Africa, and she is tired of waiting for her husband who is frequently away from home due to his job; Maud admonishes her daughter, telling her that "you have to learn to be patient. I am patient. My mama was very patient"(258), which explains the repetitive structure of gender performance.

Maud is the embodiment of the Victorian sense of conformity and propriety; she is the spokesperson for the idealized gender configurations. Maud announces that it does not rest upon women to make a judgement about men's business; Clive is flogging some servants who have been disloyal to him; Mrs. Saunders wonders who does the flogging; in response, Maud utters that "[t]he men will do it in the proper way, whatever it is. We have our own part to play"(273). Maud, under the yoke of the patriarchal regime, confines her sex within the safe walls of home whereas men are engaged in the brutal act of flogging outside. Being tender-hearted, women are to be disconnected from the male territory of punishment; thus, she unwittingly speaks of the constructedness of the roles assigned to the sexes. Maud feels at ease since Clive, the head of the household, takes on his masculine responsibility to save women in his charge. Maud warns Betty not to interfere with Clive's business; Maud thinks that it is enough that "Clive knows what is happening. Clive will know what to do. Your father always knew what to do" (274); her remark suggests the repetitive structure of gender norms once more. Furthermore, she utters that she is squeamish at the scene of flogging, but Clive is not, so she presumes that she can not put up with it; thus, Maud reactivates the hegemonic figuration of the feminine gender: women are easily upset, or made to feel sick by unpleasant sights or situations, especially

when the sight of blood is involved. Moreover, she declares that Victoria will *learn* to play with her doll when Edward tries to justify himself and his interest in Victoria's doll by stating that Victoria does not like her doll and she does not play with it (275). Maud unwittingly demonstrates that gender is performed and acquired; gender is "a behaviour, a learned or conditioned response to a society's view of how men and women should act" (Gamble, 38).

Cloud Nine consists of two acts. The first act is set in Africa in the nineteenth century; it is marked by sexual, racial and colonial oppression. It is firmly structured, which refers to the Victorian sense of orthodoxy that leaves no room for deviance and dissonance. The second act is set in London in the second half of the twentieth century; it is characterised by the so-called sexual liberation. It is loosely structured, which is representative of the permissiveness of the period. In the first act, Butler's notion of performativity is applied to the characters so as to shed light on how they are becoming the genders that they are expected to be. In the second act there is an alteration for the better in the characters in terms of their partial recognition of their need to free themselves from the traditional codes of gender and sexuality; however, they are partially emancipated. Butler's idea of performativity indicates that the traditional understanding of gender does not proliferate beyond the binary frame in spite of the liberation; Churchill's characters also gender sexual dissonances and perform their gendered non-normative sexualities in accordance with the heterosexist mind.

The sexual dissidents, Edward, now a grown-up, and Victoria's friend, Liz seem to have internalized the binary logic which is the cornerstone of the heteronormativity. Although they are peripheral to the heterosexist centre, they perform their gender identities, assuming the perspective of the dominant discourse.

Lin, a lesbian, re-enacts the polarized expressions of gender even though she seems to have recognized the constructedness of gender identities. On the one hand, Lin thinks that gender is not a seamless internal identity, but it is acquired; on the other hand, she urges her young daughter, Cathy, to appropriate the aggressiveness and violence as she understands them to be the manifestations of masculinity in traditional terms. Lin advises Cathy, who is bored, to do some painting; she tells her daughter to "Paint a car crash and blood everywhere" (289); the way Lin brings her

daughter up indicates how she dissents from the established gender norms; in her eyes to pass as the masculine gender allows one to paint a car crash and blood. Lin attempts to reverse the binary terms by means of hierarchizing the female over the male; yet, prioritizing one over the other is a tactical exercise employed by the dominant discourse. Rather than reactivating the binary frame in a reverse form, a deconstructive approach would figure out the inherent instability of the terms. Yet, Lin makes her daughter play with a gun (292) in retaliation for Edward's being condemned to play with the doll in the first act. Lin is watching Cathy and the other children playing in the park; she encourages her daughter to make use of her gun and shoot her friends: "Don't hit him, Cathy, kill him. Point the gun, kiou, kiou, kiou. That's the way" (291); Lin's attitude conveys the idea that the masculine gender can be acquired by a girl performatively. Nevertheless, Lin's subversive attitude is contained by the dominant discourse as she practices the heterosexual strategy of sexual difference. The heterosexist imaginary associates the gun with the masculine gender as it does the doll with the feminine one. Lin also makes Cathy wear jeans, yet Cathy wants to wear frocks since she is called a boy when she wears jeans (299). The heterosexist frame of polarized genders operates not to blur the boundaries, but to reduce confusion and complexity to the sexual difference. The dominant discourse leads the subjects into performing genders; wearing frocks is performative as it promotes the feminine gender; likewise, wearing jeans is also performative; to be a boy is to perform and to wear jeans. Thus, gender is established as a performative effect of these acts and gestures. In fact there is no gender core beneath this expression of gender; Butler explains that "There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender, that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (*Gender*, 34); one's gender does not determine if one should wear a frock or not; on the contrary, wearing a frock determines one's gender.

Edward's gayness is re-contextualized by the heterosexist mind as he performs his gendered homosexuality within the very terms of conventional femininity. Edward's attachment to his lover, Gerry, turns out to be a replication of a heterosexual couple as Edward enacts the feminine gender and positions Gerry as the masculine gender; camp, effeminate style in the person of Edward and macho, virile

style in the person of Gerry reinforce and buy into "masculine/feminine stereotypes, thus validating the traditional gender order" (*Theorizing Gender*, 148) :

Edward: I've got some fish for dinner. I thought I'd make a cheese sauce.
Gerry: I won't be in.
Edward: Where are you going?
Gerry: For a start I'm going to sauna. Then I'll see.
Edward: All right. What time will you be back? We'll eat then
Gerry: You've getting like a wife.
Edward: I don't mind that (306).

Traditionally male homosexuality is associated with femininity; Edward utters that everyone has attempted to prevent him from being feminine:

Gerry: Just be yourself.
Edward: I don't know what you mean. Everyone's always tried to stop me being feminine and now you are too.
Gerry: You're putting it on.
Edward: I like doing the cooking. I like being fucked. You do like me like this really.
Gerry: I'm bored. Eddy (306).

Edward likes cooking and knitting; he waits up for Gerry; he acts like Gerry's wife. In terms of pluralism glorified by the queer theory, Edward's performance of such acts is not disregarded; yet, Edward's gayness is constituted as a performative effect of these acts and gestures, and that he has interiorized the heterosexual frame of sexual difference since he associates such acts with the feminine in his psyche. Having been bothered by Edward's assumption of femininity and bored with his possessiveness, Gerry reminds Edward that they are not a heterosexual couple:

Gerry: Well I'm divorcing you.
Edward: I wouldn't want to keep a man who wants his freedom.
Gerry: Eddy, do stop playing the injured wife, it's not funny.
Edward: I'm not playing. It's true.
Gerry: I'm not the husband so you can't be the wife (307).

Gerry indicates that Edward performs his homosexuality repetitively within the framework of the traditional understanding of femininity, thus his gay identity

becomes not the expression of internal essence, but it is stylized as an effect of his deeds which he acts out under the regime of the heterosexual norm.

2.2. Performativity: *My Beautiful Laundrette*

In Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Butler's idea of performativity can also be employed. Omar is a young man who has a Pakistani father and an English mother; he tries to find his way out of his hybrid identity. Omar performs gender as he affirms gender norms through his division of masculine and feminine selves. He associates the state of submissiveness with the feminine principle and the state of having power with the masculine principle, which posits sexuality and gender as not natural attributes, but social constructs. Omar assumes and replicates the gender norms, which demonstrates the imitative structure of gender. Butler also challenges the heteronormative model of identity, in which gender follows from sex, and desire follows from gender. Omar, who has internalized the heteronormative logic, follows this dichotomous model; therefore, he strives to establish himself and the object of his love as the opposite genders. Yet, this polarized understanding of gender leaves no room for gender discontinuities as it disapproves of Omar's relationship with Johnny, Omar's lover, a white non-working outsider, which evinces that gender does not follow from sex and desire does not follow from gender.

Omar's state of in-betweenness accords with the heterosexual difference between the masculine and the feminine. At the very beginning of the play Omar appears to have assumed the feminine principle as it is fabricated by the dominant discourse, then he is made to put on a masculine image which is culturally constructed. Butler's account of performativity denaturalizes the dichotomous logic of gender; accordingly, Butler's idea of performativity will highlight how Omar performs both genders since he is implicated in the normalizing discourse.

Omar lives with his father; his mother is already dead; he is positioned to impersonate the feminine principle in his father's domain. Omar practices roles traditionally attributed to the female; he is "pushing an old-fashioned and ineffective carpet sweeper across the floor" (6); he "is in the kitchen of the flat, stirring a big saucepan of dall" (6). Omar's father talks to his brother about his son in similar

terms: “He brushes the dust from one place to another. He squeezes shirts and heats soup”(7). However, he is reprimanded by his father for being *soft*; he mocks Omar: “To amuse himself, Papa squashes Omar’s nose and pulls his cheeks, shaking the boy’s unamused face from side to side”(76). Omar’s feminine disposition renders him a plaything in his father’s eyes, yet beneath Papa’s mocking attitude lies his dissatisfaction with his son’s failure to enact the masculine gender; therefore, Papa decides to ask his brother to provide Omar with a job so that Omar could be disconnected from the feminine territory of the house chores and implemented to a male circle through a job in his uncle’s garage where his masculine identity could be empowered. Papa tells Omar: “I’m fixing you with a job. With your uncle. Work now, till you go back to college. If your face gets any longer here, you’ll overbalance”(6).

Papa talks to his brother about Omar: “What’s he doing? Just roaming and moaning”(7). According to the codes of the heterosexual law, he is to engage with the masculine *toughness* which is expected to be performed by the male, and which is prioritized over the feminine *softness*. Omar is castigated by his father because his being does not become a cultural sign of masculinity and it does not materialize itself in obedience to a historically delimited possibility; Omar performs the masculine gender under duress. Butler points out why those who fail to perform the *appropriate* gender are punished: “Because there is neither an ‘essence’ that gender expresses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires, and because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender create the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all”(Gender, 190). Omar’s failure, therefore, is found to be threatening the credibility of the constructed naturalness of gender. The main point is that Omar’s performance of the feminine gender indicates how gender is open to imitation, which evinces the constructedness of gender identities. Omar’s association with the feminine is not a voluntary choice; he is thus labelled because he is the effect of the housewifely acts that he performs. Omar’s feminine image does not point to an origin of femininity in his being; on the contrary, the feminine principle that he has internalized is the performed femininity in his doing.

Kureishi juxtaposes the culturally manufactured feminine image with the culturally fabricated masculine image in the person of Omar in order to unmask the

illusion of these images' being natural. Having been castigated and belittled for the femininity he has exhibited, Omar attempts to masculinize himself through a set of gestures and acts that has been discursively reified. Butler's notion of performativity enables one to realize that Omar puts on a sense of masculinity that has been shaped within the rigid regulatory frame of the heterosexual discourse.

Omar starts to work in his uncle's garage; he recognizes his so-called softness as he becomes more familiar with the masculine toughness he witnesses by means of his new job; therefore, he announces that he should "harden" himself, stiffen his image of manliness (22); he purports to be disrobed of the femininity, and acquire manliness through performing certain stylized expressions of gender. Accordingly, he severs himself from the so-called feminine attributes, and indulges in a process which will constitute his masculine image, thus the enactment of certain deeds secures his manhood. Correspondingly, Butler declares that "gender is always a doing, though not doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed" (*Gender* 34); Omar's hardening his image is a doing that safeguards his manliness, yet he does not pre-exist his deed; he does not determine his doing, but his deed determines his gender.

This process is initiated by Omar's father who wants his brother to make Omar meet a girl since he presupposes that his son is unaware of his sexual potential: "Try to fix him with a nice girl – I'm not sure if his penis is in full working order" (7). Omar's uncle, Nasser, who has accomplished to become a wealthy Pakistani man in England, provides Omar with a job, washing the cars, and tries to make a man out of Omar (10). Thus, Omar is dismantled from the feminized terrain of housework, and transplanted into the masculine world of cars. Kureishi offers a metaphor for Omar's conversion into the masculine; Omar appears in a convertible car, speeding along a country lane (17). This metaphor reflects Omar's *conversion*: Omar's assumed masculine image is represented by the phallic car thrusting through a slit-like lane which is suggestive of the female genitalia in the heterosexual imaginary. Sexual difference is embodied through this metaphor; the thrusting tendency is associated with the masculine and the female anatomy is reduced to a receptive hollowness. Thus, the binary frame is reinvigorated through Omar, both the agent and the effect of the social systems.

2.3. Performativity: *The Invention of Love*

In Tom Stoppard's *Invention of Love*, Butler's idea of performativity can be studied through the character of Housman, a nineteenth-century English poet and scholar. Housman, like Omar, genders his split identity and performs gender, conforming to the norms of the dominant discourse. Housman, as a repressed homosexual, interiorizes the dichotomous logic of feminine and masculine, thus is unable to go beyond the binary frame of the heterosexual matrix. Housman's divided selves parallel the mode of sexual difference which is at the heart of heterosexuality. He associates his scholarly side with the masculine principle and his poetic persona with the feminine principle. Butler elaborates on the idea about the relationship between the poetic diction and the maternal body: "Poetic language thus suggests a dissolution of the coherent, signifying subject into the primary continuity which is the maternal body" (*Gender*, 113). Kristeva points out that the poetic language reactivates the repressed, instinctual maternal element; poetic language indicates a return to the maternal terrain (in Butler, *Gender*, 113). He attempts to repress his feminine side and assume a masculine image. He seeks to renounce his homosexuality by means of being immersed in his scholar identity; he purports to acquire a masculine image through disidentifying himself with his Romantic poet self. His assumption of manliness indicates how gender is performative, and how the subject is an effect of cultural construction.

In her psychoanalytic approach to gender, Butler speaks of "a series of highly regulated libidinal displacements that take place through language" (*Gender*, 58); the division between the classical scholar and the Romantic poet coincides with the dichotomy between the heterosexual norm and the homosexual desire. In Housman's eyes, poetic diction is reminiscent of the sexual plenitude prior to the imposition of the heterosexual law; poetic language invokes the unregulated field of sexuality with its breakdown of grammatical rules; abandoning poetry for prosaic scholarship might be representative of Housman's infantile entrance into culture, a passage from the maternal realm into the paternal one where he is required to perform and enact manliness through a body of significations. Therefore, the classical scholar is a substitution for his poetic persona from which he is barred; prosaic language

becomes the residue of dissatisfied desire and the cultural production of a sublimation that never really satisfies. Housman the scholar is founded through the prohibition of Housman the poet; the scholar is performatively established.

Housman performs his own sense of masculinity which is stylized as a result of his feverish repudiation of femininity. He associates being a Romantic poet with the heart, emotions; the Dionysian spirit is equated with his homosexuality; Dionysus, "the lord of misrule, the celebrant of sensual gratification" is disregarded by him (Rusinko, 87). His heart is intentionally repressed whereas the head is glorified, which manifests Housman's dualistic understanding, which is an effect of heterosexual binarism; for Housman the heart stands for femininity and the head represents masculinity. Therefore, this dichotomous logic does not proliferate beyond the binary frame. His idea of the masculine principle is marked by his scholarly side, and it is governed by the Apollonian impulse, which strives towards rationality. Housman's appropriation of the so-called masculine Apollonian impulse is not expressive, but performative.

Housman idealizes the classical temperament which has a particular respect for order, and renounces the romantic temperament which is evocative of spontaneity and disorder. He points out that "poetical feelings are a peril to scholarship" (36); his notion of scholarship does not involve poetical feelings. Housman even attempts to masculinise his attachment to Jackson by means of transforming it to comradeship: "my greatest friend and comrade Moses Jackson" (5). The idea that same-sex desire is a sign of "beastliness"(7) is so much embedded in his consciousness that Housman seeks to *purify* his commitment to Jackson from corporeal love; he is made to affirm cool detachment and cut off himself from hot experience. He labours not to be labelled as "sissylike" or "effeminate" so that the masculine image he puts on will not be harmed. He strives to be "the straightest man"(64) in order to indicate that he has not strayed from the ideal path of heterosexuality.

Housman performs the Apollonian impulse, striving towards rationality, which is gendered as the masculine in the heterosexist mind; therefore, he represses the Dionysian spirit, pursuit of unbridled passion, which passes for the feminine principle. He aligns himself with those scholars who believe that "a sonnet on the honeyed mouth and lissome thighs of Ganymede would be capable of a construction

fatal to the ideals of higher learning” (21); the male beauty and homosexual desire for it is suppressed as it is considered to be detrimental to the sublime and sophisticated state of learning. Accordingly, Housman idealizes “science for our material improvement” (30), thus empowers his masculine image. He regards literature as “frailty” and “aberration” (38) since literature, in his eyes, promotes liberation of profound emotions and instincts, which is pernicious to the state of manliness he impersonates. He struggles not to fall into “the abyss of perverse eroticism”; he aims to redeem himself from the zone of sexual possibilities that is not domesticated by the heteronormative restrictions. He even genders order as masculine and disorder as feminine; he views the multiplicitous state of erotic possibilities as chaotic, which is manifested in the metaphor of “a garden gone to wilderness” that is “begging to be put back in order” (69).

The Apollonian impulse is contrasted with the Dionysian spirit; Ruskin, a pre-eminent art critic of the time, elaborates on how the Apollonian impulse is queered by the Dionysian spirit which is associated with the Aesthetic movement: “Conscience, faith, disciplined restraint, fidelity to nature [...] have been tricked out in iridescent rags to catch the attention of the movement”(18). Such values as discipline and restraint can be equated with the Apollonian state of being; these values, which are believed to secure the orderliness of the society and the individual, are twisted by the Aesthetic spirit; the word *iridescence* points to a state of showing many bright colours that seem to change in different lights; thus, it is associated with the idea of spectrum; this shifting and uncertain quality is suggestive of the Dionysian instinct which stands for the release of all human impulses iridescently regardless of the restraining norms of the society.

In response to the state of orderliness venerated by Ruskin, Pater, a renowned scholar, introduces “the ecstasy of living each moment for the moment’s sake”, which is related to the Dionysian impulse:

Success in life is to maintain this ecstasy, to burn always with this hard gem-like flame. Failure is to form habits. To burn with a gem-like flame is to capture the awareness of each moment; and for that moment only. To form habits is to be absent from those moments. How may we always be present for them? – to garner not the fruits of experience but experience itself? – (19).

Thus, Pater defies the conventional morality which requires one to sacrifice the sheer fullness of being attained through being attentive to every passing moment of life. Forming habits, achieving a state of orderliness, is an impediment to revel in merriment as a result of hot experience rather than cool detachment.

AEH, speaking to Housman of classical scholarship and textual criticism, highlights the Apollonian values of reason and commonsense:

Reason and commonsense, a congenial intimacy with the author, a comprehensive familiarity with the language, a knowledge of ancient script for those fallible fingers, concentration, integrity, mother wit and repression of self-will – these are a good start for the textual critic (389).

Yet, he is haunted by the Dionysian spirit glorified in ancient poetry; he regrets that he has been in pursuit of the Apollonian impulse rather than the Dionysian instinct:

If I had my time again, I would pay more regard to those poems of Horace which tell you you will not have your time again. Life is brief and death kicks at the door impartially [...] Now is the time, when you are young, to deck your hair with myrtle, drink the best of the wine, pluck the fruit (39).

AEH grieves that his life has not been immersed in the Dionysian pursuit of momentary impulses. His scholarship is associated with the Apollonian state whereas his poetic side is equated with the Dionysian impulse. He genders these two states of being; the Apollonian instinct passes for the straight image he has put on while the Dionysian one re-emerges in his supposedly repressed homosexuality.

The idea that gender roles are performable accords with the notion that the players play their roles; therefore, drama as a genre is vitally suggestive of the theatricality of the acts and gestures the subjects put on. Maud remarks that everybody has a part to play, which is demonstrative of the relationship between drama as a genre and gender as representation. Yet the account of performativity should be differentiated from the staginess of the theatre plays since the subjects do not perform gender playfully as a result of their choice or will, but they are made to enact a set of acts and gestures by the dominant discourse.

2.4. Performance

In addition to the idea of performativity, Butler introduces an account of performance which assaults the dichotomous logic of gender that overlooks gender dissonances. Butler's notion of drag performance, a man in a woman's clothes or a woman in a man's clothes, points to the mismatches between sex and gender as the drag refers to the fact that the sex of the performer is not the same with the gender being performed. Butler declares that the knowledge derived from the clothes that a person wears, or how the clothes are worn is adopted knowledge; it is "based on a series of cultural inferences, some of which are highly erroneous" (*Gender*, xxiii); for instance, high heels and make-up are traditionally matched with women; it is considered to be unnatural when they are worn by a man. This artifice is so much established that the clothes "cover and articulate the body"(xxiv). Genet explains how clothes shape one's gender identity: "A single pocket, on the left side. A whole social system is upset by this simple detail of dress. Their trousers have only one pocket [...] there is no doubt but that they are humiliated by this, as if someone had amputated a male sexual attribute - which is really what is involved" (214); manliness is secured by having at least two pockets according to Genet's biting humour. Butler argues that drag "plays upon the difference between the anatomical body of the performer and the gender that is being performed" (*Gender*,187). Purvis explains that drag should not be "understood as a secondary imitation or enactment of a prior, original gender"(442) because there is no origin for stylized repetitions of acts. Butler's account of drag performance suggests that gender is open to imitation; alternatively phrased, by means of a theatrical dislocation of gender norms, Butler's idea of drag performance denaturalizes the supposed symmetry between sex and gender: "drag is the site of a certain ambivalence, one which reflects the more general situation of being implicated in the regimes of power by which one is constituted and, hence, of being implicated in the very regime of power that one opposes" (*Bodies*, 125).

Butler states that "drag fully subverts the distinction between inner and outer psychic space and effectively mocks both the expressive model of gender and the notion of a true identity" (*Gender*, 186). She elaborates on the idea of an original

gender identity being parodied within the practices of drag and cross-dressing. Drag reveals that the assumed *original* that is copied by the performer is an imitation without an origin. Thus, drag queers the essentialized notion of gender. Sullivan points out that parody of gender subversively exposes “the plasticity and groundlessness of identity”(186).

Butler makes a clear distinction between her ideas of performativity and performance; she suggests that the former is a mode of discursive production and the latter is a kind of theatrical production. Butler explains that “performativity is neither free play nor theatrical self-presentation; nor can it be simply equated with performance” (*Bodies*, 95). Performativity is a discursive vehicle through which the subject is formed. Yet, the notion of drag performance as a parodic form of mimicry illuminates the unnaturalness of identity generally; drag performance suggests the theatricality of gender. The performer performs as an agent and effect of discursive production; s/he does not assume gender deliberately or playfully; on the contrary, the performer in the notion of drag performance performs in a theatrical fashion; by means of staginess s/he offers an effective model for deconstructing those commonly held assumptions that privilege certain expressions of gender by attributing *naturalness* to them.

Kate Bornstein offers a list of traditional rules about gender; there are only two genders, female and male; one's gender is invariant, it is inflexible; genitals are the essential signs of gender; a female person is a person with a vagina; a male person is a person with a penis; there are no transfers from one gender to another (46-49). Butler's idea of drag performance challenges all these age-old perceptions of gender; by *mismatching* the culturally established gender and the so-called anatomic sex, drag exposes that the definition of gender is fickle; gender-bending shows that the male/female dichotomy is fictitious; prescribed gender codes can be transgressed.

2.5. Performance: *Cloud Nine*

In *Cloud Nine*, Churchill makes an extensive use of cross-acting in order to exhibit the mobile field of gender, and to defer any final assessment of it. Butler's idea of drag performance is employed to analyze Churchill's theatrical convention of

cross-acting; Churchill's idea of having Edward played by a woman, Betty played by man, Cathy played by a man, and Joshua, a black man played by a white actor, is explored as she strives to denaturalize monolithic understanding of gender, sex and sexuality, and to celebrate sexual fluidity and ambiguity. To justify Churchill's purpose, Butler can be quoted: "The notion of an original or primary gender identity is often parodied within the cultural practices of drag, cross-dressing, and the sexual stylization of butch/femme identities" (*Gender*, 187).

Churchill utilizes theatrical transvestism through the characters of Betty, Edward, Cathy and Joshua. Betty, Clive's wife, is played by a man because Betty aspires to embody what man wants her to embody:

I live for Clive. The whole aim of my life
Is to be what he looks for in a wife.
I am a man's creation as you see,
And what men want is what I want to be (251)

Clive wants her to be submissive and docile. Assuming a monotheistic authority over the household, Clive commands that Betty be shaped by his will. Clive, who seems to be responsible for the way his wife is constructed, presides over his wife, superimposing his will on her: "My wife is all I dreamt a wife should be, / And everything she is she owes to me" (251). Edward is played by a woman since Churchill aims to play "with the stage convention of having boys played by women (Peter Pan, radio plays, etc.)", to highlight "the way Clive tries to impose traditional male behaviour on him" (245). Edward, who is coerced to be a manly son to his father, wants to be what his father wants him to be, yet he finds it rather hard (252).

Joshua, the black servant, is subversively played by a white man because he has a strong desire to be what white men want him to be:

My skin is black but oh my soul is white
I hate my tribe. My master is my light.
I only live for him. As you can see,
What white man want is what I want to be (251-2)

Clive, as a white man, wants Joshua to be self-effacing and servile; Joshua's black skin is reviled; his soul is whitened by his master's light in the form of his pale complexion. Joshua does not value himself as a black. That Joshua is played by a white man accords with Churchill's idea of theatrical transvestism since Joshua represents "the colonial or feminine mentality of interiorised repression" (Churchill, 245). The black and colonized aspects of his identity are associated with femininity, by extension, with homosexuality in the heterosexual imaginary. Churchill challenges the traditional way of viewing male homosexuality as entwined with femininity; she portrays Joshua engaged in a homosexual encounter with Harry. Harry is a guest in the household who wants to make sexual use of Joshua: "Shall we go in a barn and fuck?"(262); Joshua is subjected to Harry's will and sexual advance after the rest of the household recede into the house, leaving Harry and Joshua alone. Hence, the convention of cross-acting in terms of colour skin also goes hand-in-hand with the disjunction between the sex of the performer and the gender being performed since Churchill draws an analogy between "colonial and sexual oppression"(245).

In the second act Cathy, Lin's daughter, is played by a man; Churchill seeks to achieve "a simple reversal of Edward being played by a woman" in the first act; she also considers that "the size and presence of a man on stage seemed appropriate to the emotional force of young children"; a man's physical appearance, his vigorous being is used to express the emotional turmoil of a young girl who is expected to veil her anger and aggression through a weepy and moaning posture. Also, Churchill wants to highlight "the issues involved in learning what is considered correct behaviour for a girl"(246).

Due to this deployment of the convention of cross-acting, the play becomes "funny" and "farcical" (Churchill, 245-6). The incongruities between the sex of the performer and the gender being performed provide the play, particularly the first act, with the moments of laughter. Yet, Churchill does more than this by means of cross-casting the players; she unsettles the established views concerning sex, gender and sexuality in a mocking tone; cross-casting "challenges assumptions that gender and social definitions are natural concomitants of physical differences" (Kritzer, 120).

Her employment of this theatrical convention proliferates beyond a simple reversal; its ramifications bring out many profound issues when the actors are in drag.

Churchill challenges the image of the married, legitimate couple when Betty in drag appears to be quite intimate with her husband, Clive. At first sight, the *imperial* couple consists of a man and a woman as it is expected, yet the technique of cross-acting makes this idealized image into a parodic form of the heterosexual couple. Clive, played by man, and Betty, played by a man, use terms of endearment for one another; thus, the heterosexual romance is queered as two men on stage call each other with such terms as “my little dove”(253). Moreover, Churchill might intend to shed light on Clive’s latent same-sex desire which is hinted at in his attachment to Harry through making him hug and kiss Betty played by a man. Thus, Churchill manages to twist the heteronormative ideals by means of the disparity between the anatomy of the performer and the gender being performed.

The seemingly heterosexual romance between Betty and Harry is also bent into a homosexual love through the medium of cross-acting. Thus, theatrical transvestism opens up new erotic possibilities; the passionate heterosexual love story is embodied in the persons of the male actors, played out between men. Clive, the head of the household, welcomes Harry, his guest, and leaves the scene; Betty and Harry are alone; they feel free to express their passion for each other:

Betty: Please like me.

Harry: I worship you.

Betty: Please want me.

Harry: I don’t want to want you. Of course I want you (261).

Churchill provocatively unsettles the normative understandings of sex and sexuality. This theatrical medium provides Churchill with an opportunity to permit the representation of homosexual desires, and to expose the homoerotic undercurrents which may be veiled in ostensibly heterosexual relationships. Furthermore, Churchill parodies the romance between Betty and Harry in an ironic way. Harry, a homosexual, is sexually drawn to men; yet he plays the straight and woos Betty so as to safeguard his heterosexual image. Ironically Betty, played by a man, represents Harry’s object of desire, but Harry merely feigns attraction. Thus, Churchill attempts

to unmask Harry's repudiation of his homosexuality and his internalization of homophobia.

Churchill also utilizes the technique of theatrical transvestism in order to dwell upon the lesbian desire through Ellen, Edward's governess, who is in love with Betty. Ellen's emotional commitment to Betty is problematized since it is played out between Ellen, played by a woman, and Betty, played by a man. The lesbian desire is figured out within the boundaries of the heterosexual law. Churchill seeks to evince how same-sex desire in the person of Ellen is perceived as a femme-butcht relationship in the case of a woman loving another woman. Ellen finds an opportunity to disclose her love for Betty when the rest of the household are playing hide-and-seek; Betty and Ellen are out of their earshot:

Betty: He [Harry] held my hand like this. Oh I want him to do it again. I want him to stroke my hair.

Ellen: Your lovely hair. Like this, Betty?

Betty: I want him to put his arm around my waist.

Ellen: Like this. Betty?

[Ellen kisses Betty.] (271)

Ellen appropriates Harry's role in Betty's eyes, which might be an indication of Ellen's assumption of the so-called masculine position; also her lesbian desire is given no room to expose itself, so Ellen reveals her love for Betty through adopting Harry's role. Ellen's desire for Betty is enacted in a heterosexual frame because Betty is played by a man, and the heterosexual law is reactivated as Ellen, under the reign of the binary logic, assumes the traditionally labelled masculine, butcht role and positions Betty, femme, as the feminine. Betty is there to be admired; her hair is to be stroked; her body is to be surrounded by a man's hands and arms. Ellen plays the active agent while Betty is reduced to a passive receptacle cherished for her beauty and charm. Betty is expected to be *femme*, yet there is a male actor who is adored by a woman. Therefore, Churchill's deployment of theatrical transvestism functions in at least two ways in the case of Ellen and Betty; it queers the same-sex desire which is already queer in the heterosexual imaginary; it demonstrates how the homosexual desire is configured by the heterosexual law; furthermore, it unsettles the

heterosexual consolidation of the same-sex desire through a double reversal of a butch-femme relationship and the notions of activity and passivity.

Edward is another significant character for Churchill in order to assault the sharp demarcations of sexual and gender categories, and to challenge the heterosexual discourse that aims to discipline the discordant desires. Certain kinds of gender identities do not conform to the norms of cultural intelligibility; Edward's gender dissonance is beyond the norms of the cultural intelligibility; the persistence and proliferation of such non-normative gender identities "provide critical opportunities to expose the limits and regulatory aims of that domain of intelligibility and, hence, to open up within the very terms of that matrix of intelligibility rival and subversive matrices of gender disorder" (Butler, *Gender*, 24). Edward's gender discontinuity is a loophole that the normative understanding of gender is unable to plug; this loophole displays the inadequacy of the cultural configuration of gender and it makes the norm of gender intelligibility undermine itself. Churchill makes Edward played by a woman, thus she indicates how Clive assumes the power of the heterosexual discourse to decide on the limits of love and sexual patterns by means of imposing traditional male behaviour on Edward, yet Clive's attempt is mocked because he lectures Edward, played by a woman, to be manly, thus Clive himself blurs the distinction between the masculine and the feminine that has been neatly made by the heterosexual logic of sexual difference. Churchill also questions the sex-gender distinction through cross-casting her characters; gender is viewed as culturally and historically variable interpretations of sexual difference; gender is believed to be imposed on the body, the anatomy; however, sex can follow from gender as gender is said to mirror the biological sexual difference: "Perhaps sex, far from being a 'given' and stable base onto which the variable constructions of gender are grafted, is itself more protean, more culturally mediated or shaped, more difficult to isolate from gender than might at first be supposed?" (Tripp, 12). The stage convention of having Edward played by a woman can be analyzed in two ways: one is when he is in drag, he is made to appropriate the traditional male behaviour, he is forced to be a member of the male domain; two is his relationship with Harry.

Churchill parodies Clive's attempt to introduce Edward into the traditional territory of male behaviour, duty, sports and heroism; due to the theatrical medium of

having Edward played by a woman, Clive is made to dissociate a woman from the feminine circle, and to incorporate her into the male circle. In order to secure Edward's manliness, Clive tells Edward that "Tomorrow I'll take you riding with me and Harry Bagley" (257); thus Clive attempts to associate Edward with the male company, yet on stage it appears that a woman is accepted into the territory of men, horses and riding owing to the split between the sex of the performer and the gender being acted out.

Similarly, in order to make his son identify with the conventional male world of aggression and cruelty, Clive lets his son watch the unfaithful servants flogged; the black servants are flogged because they are said to have sided with their own people and betrayed their master, Clive. This scene of flogging is crucial in terms of the sexual politics of the play since it indicates how the sexual difference is established; women are confined within the house, the blinds are down, men are outside beating the servants (273-4). Edward in drag announces that "they [the servants beaten] got what they deserved" (274). That Edward replicates the judgement made and put into practice by men becomes ironic as a woman impersonates a male character in this act. Edward's impersonation reveals one of the key mechanisms through which the social construction of gender takes place. The discrepancy between the *outside appearance* and the *internal essence* indicates that appearance is illusory; Edward's outside appearance is feminine, but his supposed essence inside the body is masculine. Butler states that "drag fully subverts the distinction between inner and outer psychic space and effectively mocks both the expressive model of gender and the notion of a true gender identity" (*Gender*, 186).

Edward is coerced to be wrenched from the feminine circle; Clive complains: "You [Edward] spend too much time with the women"; he urges his son to "spend more time with me and Uncle Harry, little man" (276). Churchill's employment of theatrical transvestism renders Clive's remarks ironic as it appears on stage that a woman is cut off from the female company and introduced into the male one; Clive's attempt is parodied since the sexual categories are turned upside down; the patriarchal exercise of segregating women and men is shattered. Likewise, the scenes where Edward is forced to stop playing with the doll become subversive as the heterosexual matrix is contested through inversion of the sexes by the technique of

cross-acting. Clive sees Edward holding Victoria's doll; Edward tells his father that he is minding Victoria's doll for Victoria; Betty interferes in the situation: "Well I should give it to Ellen quickly. You don't want papa to see you with a doll"(257). The image of a woman playing a man, holding a doll and being castigated for holding the doll on stage parodies the heteronormative imperative which reprimands a boy for playing with the doll. It becomes ironic that a woman is compelled to give up minding the doll although the patriarchal law makes women responsible for childrearing. Hence, this reversal of the sexes through the medium of cross-acting becomes a blow on Clive's assumed authority.

The process through which Edward is constituted to be manly continues throughout the first act. Clive tells Harry that the British army will come to Africa to see what the white men have done there, how they have civilised the local people; Clive, speaking of the army, considers that a view of the British army will be a good gesture toward manliness for Edward: "a treat for you, Edward, to see the soldiers. Would you like to be a soldier?" (280). Clive tries to make Edward notice the male supremacy through constantly emphasising the dichotomy between the two genders. Butler explains that "the substantive grammar of gender, which assumes men and women as well as their attributes of masculine and feminine, is an example of a binary that effectively masks the univocal and hegemonic discourse of the masculine" (*Gender*, 26). Having internalized the divide between the masculine and the feminine, Clive seeks to incorporate Edward into the male domain, and to perpetuate the hegemonic discourse of the masculine. However, Churchill subversively challenges Clive's attempt at severing the genders from one another; the masculine world of the army becomes available to a woman acting Edward; an agent of the feminine principle would be incorporated to the all-male community through cross-acting; thus Churchill mocks Clive's purpose once more.

Edward plays the master to shield his mother from Joshua's demeaning behaviour; Joshua takes no notice of Betty who tells him to fetch her sewing and he insults her; Betty makes Edward take the lead; Edward, assuming the authority of the master, orders Joshua to fetch his mother's sewing. At this moment of double reversal, a man, playing Betty, is reduced to a state of vulnerability whereas a woman actor becomes a wielder of power. The idea that a man should maintain the security

of women is also mocked. Edward's imitation of the masterly role exposes the tenuous ground of gender; Butler points out that "In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency" (*Gender*, 187). Thus, Churchill displays that gender is precariously achieved, acquired through mimicry, and gender fashions itself as an imitation without origin; gender is not inbuilt, but it is culturally determined and "learned postnatally" (Stoller in Tripp, 4). Churchill's theatrical displacement constitutes a fluidity of gender identities that suggests an openness to resignification and recontextualization; gender becomes a production that postures as an imitation; as a result of this imitative practice, the illusion of a primary, *ab ovum* self is shattered.

Churchill makes use of Edward's attachment to Harry in order to question the fixed categories of sexual and love patterns. Edward's commitment to Harry is twisted into a heterosexual love by Churchill, who has Edward played by a woman. Churchill criticizes the heterosexual binary logic by means of cross-acting, indicating that even a homosexual couple is subjected to the sexual difference established by the heterosexual imaginary. Edward, played by a woman, acts out the feminine side, and Harry the masculine side in this homosexual encounter as their passion for sameness is transformed into a desire for difference through a false divide between the sexes. Edward fantasizes about himself and Harry. Edward freely speaks to Harry about his fantasies when they are left alone during the picnic as the rest of the household are playing hide-and-seek:

Edward: I don't mind being awake because I make up adventures. Once we were on a raft going down to the rapids. We've lost the paddles because we used them to fight off the crocodiles. A crocodile comes at me and I stab it again and again and the blood is everywhere and it tips up the raft and it has you [Harry] by the leg and it's biting your leg off and I take my knife and stab it in the throat and rip open its stomach and it lets go of you but it bites my hand but it's dead. And I drag you open onto the river bank and I'm almost fainting with pain and we lie there in each other's arms (269).

Edward embellishes his dream with a lyrical splendour; his sense of love is romanticised as he imagines that he and Harry are on a raft, cut off from the society, which is reminiscent of the naval fantasy employed by the gay canon in literature. His imagery is characterised by his preoccupation with physical dismemberment; he

stabs the crocodile; the crocodile bites Harry's leg off; he rips open the crocodile's stomach. These acts of stabbing, biting and ripping have sexual connotations; they are suggestive of phallic and penetrative sexuality. He imagines himself as the penetrator, stabbing the crocodile and ripping open its stomach. In his imagery Harry is metaphorically castrated as his leg is bitten by the crocodile. At this juncture Churchill's sense of parody begins to operate; Edward assumes the traditionally constructed role of forward-thrusting masculine force; Harry, emasculated by the crocodile in symbolic terms, is reduced to impotency as homosexuality is associated with loss of manhood, manliness and phallic power in the heterosexual imagination; Harry asks Edward if he has lost his leg, which shows the sexual overtones of Edward's fantasy since Harry becomes anxious as he loses his leg. Also, Churchill satirizes the traditional attributes of womanhood and manhood. Edward and Harry act like a heterosexual couple; Edward, played by a woman, assumes the conventional image of femininity, sacrificing himself for his lover. The masculine and the feminine are blurred in his fantasy; he acts like a traditional hero, saving his beloved from the danger, dragging him onto the river bank; then he plays the traditional heroine as he almost swoons with pain.

Cathy is another instrumental character that Churchill utilizes so as to destabilize heterocentric foundations. Cathy, Lin's daughter, is four years old; Liz, divorced from her husband, brings her up on her own. By means of cross-casting Cathy, Churchill aims at an inversion of Edward being played by a woman in the first act. Besides she mocks certain attitudes and acts considered to be appropriate for a girl. Churchill also purports to reveal the energy, the spirit and the strong feelings embedded in the constitution of young children through "the size and presence of a man on stage"(246).

Cathy sings some jingles throughout the second act; these jingles are crucial to the theme of sexual politics; their subversiveness should be taken into account. The disparity between the sex and the size of the performer and the sex being performed provokes laughter as these seemingly nonsensical songs are sung by a grown-up man. Her songs are different from the traditional nursery rhymes sung in playgrounds or lullabies sung to infants to lure them into sleep. Churchill reverses the conventional songs sung by children; she makes Cathy sing offensive ones:

Cathy: Yum yum bubblegum.
Stick it up your mother's bum.
When it's brown
Pull it down
Yum yum bubblegum (289)

Cathy's jingles are extremely obscene; they are not marked by gentleness and innocence. The cultural construction of children occasions the view that they are innocent, and they have little or no experience of the world, especially sexual matters. Yet, her songs are full of sexual innuendoes. Churchill makes Cathy's songs strikingly ironic by means of the theatrical medium of cross-acting; a grown-up man, who is likely to have had some experience and knowledge of the world, sexual matters and the severity of life, plays a young girl who is imagined to be innocent and timid, yet who sings of unpleasant things which are not lyrical or comforting, but bawdy and harsh according to the normative categories:

Cathy: Under the bramble bushes,
True love for you my darling,
True love for me my darling,
When we are married,
We'll raise a family.
Boy for you, girl for me,
Boom tiddley oom boom
SEXY (313)

Similarly, this song is also characterised by obscenity that is traditionally considered to be beyond the reach of children. Churchill parodies the institution of matrimony through this song; the sober state of being married is made fun of, and sex is made its primary dynamic. Moreover, she mocks the heterosexual ideal of matching sons with their fathers and daughters with their mothers; Cathy sings of raising a family and having a girl for herself; she will be the mother who is discursively constructed to be in charge of her daughter. At this juncture Churchill's sense of irony points out that Cathy is in drag; thus, the heterosexual frame is disrupted. Churchill cunningly unsettles the heterocentric understanding of sex, gender and sexuality through theatrical transvestism.

Churchill undermines the heterosexual matrix by means of another ditty sung by Cathy who has become a gender-bender in this series of reversals:

Cathy: Batman and Robin
Had a batmobile
Robin done a fart
Paralysed the wheel.
The wheel couldn't take it,
The engine fell apart,
All because of Robin
And his supersonic fart (298).

Traditionally, stories, poems, riddles and songs for girls are filled with images of angelic beauty, weepy maidens and vulnerable heroines; they represent the idealized picture of femininity. On the contrary, Cathy's imagination is embellished with the items from the realm of mechanics; she speaks of the heroes such as Batman and Robin rather than the meek heroines of fairy stories. Her vision is marked by the images of movement and force such as engines and wheels; this interest in the practical world of machinery might be stemming from her fondness for motion and freedom of space, denied to the timid heroines of conventional stories who are entrapped in a castle, or to the ladies on the pedestal whose access to movement is barred due to the stagnant image of femininity put on a pedestal. Churchill's deconstructive strategy is accompanied by a sense of humour as she makes Cathy speak of Robin's fart *indecently*; thus, her attempt at parody is fulfilled through her mocking attitude. Churchill's subversiveness functions through double reversals; she reverses not only the masculine and the feminine genders, but also the male and the female sexes through the device of cross-acting. Her sense of parody proliferates beyond a simple inversion of the culturally fabricated roles; she confounds the normative categories through multiple contestations; she imagines a female child character who has an inclination for what is culturally constituted to be within the boundaries of the masculine gender; and she is subversively played by a grown-up man whose territory of maleness is usurped by the very character whom he impersonates. Hence, Churchill playfully denaturalizes the fixed notions of gender and sex by means of theatrical transvestism.

Churchill portrays Liz as an unconventional mother who seeks to make her daughter, Cathy, assume male aggression as it is understood in a traditional context; Liz defies the notion of submissiveness attributed to women. In a traditional model, boys are expected to "be active and willing to push one another around" because "maleness and aggression go together"; on the other hand, girls "must fantasize about falling in love, marrying, and raising children" (Fausto-Sterling, 109). Cathy does paintings to enjoy her time in the park; she tends to paint the things that are related to the masculine terrain:

Lin: Paint a house.

Cathy: No.

Lin: Princess.

Cathy: No.

Lin: Pirates.

Cathy: Already done that.

Lin: Spacemen.

Cathy: I never paint spacemen. You know I never.

Lin: Paint a car crash and blood everywhere.

Cathy: No, don't tell me. I know what to paint (289).

Cathy rejects to paint a house or a princess, the images of domesticity and femininity; she is prone to do paintings which are traditionally connected with the masculine gender such as the pirates. Liz urges Cathy to paint a car crash and blood, which suggests the perilous destructiveness of the male brutality, and which violates the mythical construction of the feminine as a safe haven and a healer. Cathy does not have a docile temperament; she rebels against her mother:

Lin: We go home and you have tea and you have a bath and you go to bed.

Cathy: Fuck off (304)

Thus, the innocence associated with children is subverted; Cathy is unexpectedly vehement in her opposition to her mother; she has the audacity to tell her mother to "fuck off". The normative understanding of daughters as submitting to the parental authority is reversed by Cathy's being assertive and unwilling to obey her mother's rules. Her appropriation of vulgarity is also exposed when she throws stones at the

ducks in the park (303). Lin tempts her daughter to be coarse and aggressive in order to turn the heterocentric foundations upside down; she tells Cathy to point the gun and kill rather than hit the ones who oppress her (291). Lin refuses to bring up a timid daughter; she undermines the construct of nervous and easily frightened women. Lin thinks of giving her daughter “a rifle for Christmas” (292). By means of intentionally shaping her daughter as an insolent, truculent and rude person, Lin aims to eradicate the false notion of female elegance and politeness. A deconstructive strategy does not consist of only reversing the binary terms, the feminine and the masculine in this case; it seeks to unearth the inherent instability of the terms. If Churchill was to change the hierarchy of the binary terms and to prioritize the feminine over the masculine, she would be entrapped within the boundaries of heterosexist understanding of sexual difference; she would be foregrounding another oppressor, employing the strategy of the dominant discourse; yet, Churchill fuses the binary terms into one another, challenges the normative foundations which reduce the sexual mosaic into two mutually-negating terms by means of cross-casting her players in a subversive way. A four-year-old girl who becomes crude, impertinent and belligerent would not serve Churchill’s purpose, but a four-year-old girl who is to be discursively constructed as a gentle and submissive person is played by a grown-up man who is an agent and effect of the dominant discourse which establishes men as assailant and offensive. Churchill turns all the terms upside down.

Cathy’s relationship with her mother is also made use of by Churchill who ardently strives to prove how fixed notions of sex and gender can be infringed and evacuated of certain idealized meanings. Churchill portrays Cathy as a young child in need of emotional support:

Lin: She’s [Cathy] frightened I’m going to leave her. It’s the baby minder didn’t work out when she was two, she still remembers [...] she clings round my knees every morning up the nursery and they don’t say anything but they make you feel you’re making her do it (290).

Churchill, employing a variety of points of view, dramatizes Cathy not only as an aggressive and offensive child, but also as a young child who needs parental affection and protection. Yet, Churchill does more than merely demonstrating a

mother-daughter relationship. Taking into consideration that Cathy is in drag, it appears on stage that a man is holding on to a woman for emotional support and protection; thus, Churchill's sense of parody is brought into play. Making use of the divide between the sex of the performer and the gender being performed, Churchill ridicules the cliché that women are considered to be acting like mothers to men in heterosexual relationships. Hence, Churchill queers a mother-daughter attachment, twists it into a heterosexual encounter in which a grown-up man is reduced to an infantile state. Moreover, the construction of this ostensibly heterosexual couple is ironic because Lin is sexually drawn not to men, but to women. Therefore, certain established terms are voided, and bombarded with new meanings through Churchill's wide range of disruptive reversals.

Cathy oscillates between the notions of femininity and masculinity; her oscillation accords with the dichotomy between the sex of the performer and the sex being performed. Although she appears to be severed from the shackles of femininity, she is amazed by Betty's earrings, beads, and necklace, the concrete manifestations of femininity:

Cathy: I like your earrings.

[...]

Betty: Do you darling? Shall I put them on you?

My ears aren't pierced, I never wanted that, they just clip on the lobe.

Lin: She'll get paint on you, mind.

Betty: There's a pretty girl. It doesn't hurt, does it? Well you'll grow up to know you have to suffer a little for beauty.

Cathy: Look mum I'm pretty, I'm pretty, I'm pretty.

Lin: Stop showing off Cathy (294).

A grown-up man who impersonates Cathy on stage aspires to embody the feminine through earrings, beads and a necklace. It is the necklace from Act I; ironically Edward has been reprimanded for having an interest for the necklace, but Lin does not allow Cathy to wear the necklace although Cathy wants to put it on. Edward is not supposed to look like a woman; Lin does not want Cathy to conform to femininity in appearance. Thus, cultural configurations are parodied and stretched beyond the normative understanding of sex and gender.

Cathy's presence is obtrusive in the world of boys; she is treated as an intruder; she is assaulted by the boys when she tries to join them in the park:

Lin: Oh Cathy what happened?

Betty: She's been assaulted.

Victoria: It's a nosebleed.

Cathy: Took my ice cream.

[...]

Cathy: They hit me. I can't play. They said I'm a girl.

Betty: Those dreadful boys, the gang, the Dead Hand (317).

The image of a man howling with a nosebleed is indicative of how Churchill satirizes the patriarchy; "those dreadful boys" push a girl out of their territory marked by male bonding, yet, in this case they drag another boy in female disguise, a member of the male species, to the margins of their society. Via the device of cross-acting, Churchill attempts to demonstrate how the female garb donned by the male person enfolds the body and inscribes it; cultural configurations emanate from the particular garments worn by the subjects.

2.6. Performance: *My beautiful Laundrette*

The notion of performance will not be analyzed in *My Beautiful Laundrette*; Kureishi portrays Omar as a person who has not yet come out of the closet and who unconsciously internalizes the culturally and historically specific meanings of sex and gender; Omar does not playfully unsettle the normative foundations; on the contrary, he unwittingly replicates them through his dissident sexuality. Since the idea of performance refers to theatricality, Omar's unintentional interiorization of the gender roles has been studied within the light of performativity. Kureishi deals with Omar as a mode of discursive production whereas Churchill handles her characters to illustrate a kind of theatrical production which is accomplished through the medium of cross-acting.

2.7. Performance: *The Invention of Love*

In *The Invention of Love* Stoppard portrays Housman as a repressed homosexual who internalized the dominant ideology, trying to perform the traditional practices of gender, thus conforming to the heterosexual norm. On the other hand, Oscar Wilde, incorporated into the play by Stoppard, parodies the heterosexual imperatives as a non-conformist by means of assuming a multifaceted body of selves, which is to be explored as a theatrical renunciation of the reductive and prescriptive norms. Butler's idea of performativity has been employed to analyze the character of Housman; her idea of performance can be studied through the character of Oscar Wilde. Housman unintentionally impersonates the gender roles which are embodied through him, yet Wilde does playfully unfix the normative foundations by means of disrupting the supposed symmetry between sex and gender; Wilde is in drag in the sense that his performance of his personality in a theatrical mode illustrates the split between the sex of the performer, Wilde in this case, and the gender being performed.

Wilde is a symbolic figure who embodies a way of being homosexual at a crucial moment in the emergence of the gay consciousness during the final decade of the nineteenth century. His greatest artistic creation is the complex and contradictory person reflected both in his work and in his life as he made his life into his art (*Invention*, 96). He became known as the spokesperson of aestheticism and a flamboyant dandy. He delighted in deflating Victorian sense of propriety and conformity; he defended individualism and pluralism.

According to those who defended the normative foundations, Wilde is a poseur; dressing up and being witty is not "manly" (56). Wilde is regarded as "an effeminate phrase-maker"; his articulateness contrasts with the masculine image of sobriety. Viewed as an aesthete, one who cultivates an unusually high sensitivity to beauty, Wilde is considered to have "a taste for the voluptuous and the forbidden in French literature" (62); he is "one of those Aesthete types" (77). Wilde is not posing "as a gentleman"; he is immersed in decadence which is seen as "a blind alley in English life and letters" (85). There is "something eye-catching about the way he dresses" (86); the garments that he puts on both cover and uncover his body; they articulate him. Wilde's penchant for dressing up elegantly with flowers as embellishments is suggestive of the fact that he is in drag, so of the disparity between

the inborn maleness and the so-called attributes of femininity that he embodies. This is how Wilde is perceived by the heterosexual frame of thinking; his verbosity, gendered as feminine, is considered to mar the masculine image; his homosexuality is associated with effeminacy.

Stoppard portrays Wilde playing cunningly with these cultural inscriptions; Wilde releases gender, a performatively enacted signification, from its naturalised interiority and surface, thus “occasion[s] the parodic proliferation and subversive play of gendered meanings” (Butler, *Gender*, 46). Wilde announces that art can not be subordinate to its subject; otherwise, it would be biography: “I was said to have walked down Piccadilly with a lily in my hand. There was no need. To do it is nothing, to be said to have done it is everything” (93); this paradox is connotative of the dichotomy located in the idea of drag performance; the discrepancy between the sex of the performer and the gender being performed is parallel to the distinction between art and biography, the fictional construction of life and its supposedly truthful representation. Wilde makes his first appearance in the play as “The faint sound of children singing the ‘Marseillarse’ is overtaken by Oscar Wilde’s strong fluting voice reciting” (92); his verbosity is foregrounded. Stoppard makes Wilde enter into the play, reading aloud from Housman’s poetry, *A Shropshire Lad*; Wilde articulates what Housman has sought to repress:

‘Shot ? So quick, so clean an ending?
Oh, that was right, lad, that was brave:
Yours was not an ill for mending,
T’ was best to take it to the grave’ (92).

Wilde reads one of AEH’s poems; AEH explains that he has based his poem upon a boy who shot himself, about whom he read in the newspaper. Wilde tells AEH that poetry should not deal with such an ordinary fact; he pronounces that art deals with exceptions: “Still if he hadn’t shot himself before reading your poem, he would have shot himself after. I am not unfeeling. I dare say I would have wept if I’d read the newspaper. But, that does not make a newspaper poetry” (93); he does not renounce the weepy image of the homosexual which is constructed by the Victorian morals; in contrast, he intentionally incorporates this image of a man in tears into his

personality. Also, his idea about the distinction between art and fact consorts with the image of Wilde in drag; the discrepancy between the anatomy of the performer and the gender being enacted is parallel to the opposition between fact and fiction; fact can be associated with the allegedly inner sex whereas fiction can be equated with the culturally fabricated gender.

Discussing with AEH how the artist differs from the scholar, Wilde, as the maker of his own life, reckons that he “must lie, cheat, deceive, be untrue to nature and contemptuous of history” (96); this desired state of deceitfulness and sham points to his being in disguise, in drag; AEH, being the scholar, toils to be true to *nature* whereas Wilde, being the artist, defies *nature*; Wilde impersonates the gender which does not proceed from his sex according to the normative understanding while AEH tries to perform the gender which is supposed to follow from his sex.

Wilde remarks that he “bought a huge armful of lilies”(94); his penchant for flowers makes him notorious in the normative concept; nevertheless, he playfully shows his interest for flowers. Wilde’s being a dandy becomes a force that unsettles the normative foundations of sex and gender; according to the codes of Victorian propriety, a man who cares a lot about his clothes and appearance is incompatible with the grave image of manliness. In a mocking mode Wilde deliberately assumes the culturally fabricated womanliness, thus unfixes the Victorian hypocrisy. The so-called Wildean aesthetics turns out to be a drag performance in the sense that Wilde consciously theatricalises the opposition between the anatomy-as-destiny configuration of the body through discursive means. He subversively mingles the two socially-sanctioned camps of the masculine and the feminine principles, obliterating the distinction between sex and gender; moreover, Wilde, being in drag, accomplishes to “exaggerate femininity [...] to the point of caricature”, dislocating it out of its regulated context (Feinberg, 23); thus, he parodies the binary logic of the heterosexual frame.

CHAPTER III

POWER AND SEXUALITY

Foucault offers a comprehensive analysis of power structures and how they dovetail with sexual practices. In a Foucauldian fashion, Jeffrey Weeks defines power as “mobile, malleable, giving rise to various forms of domination, producing constant forms challenge and resistance, in a complex history” (*Discontents*, 9); thus, power generates both submission and defiance. David M. Halperin elaborates on Foucault's view of power:

First of all, on Foucault's view, power is not a substance but a relation. Power is therefore not possessed but *exercised*. That means that power should not be conceptualized as the property of someone who can be identified and confronted, nor should it be thought of (at least in the first instance) as embedded in particular agents or institutions. Power [...] can not be divided into those who "have" it and those who don't (*Saint*, 16-17).

Hence, power is not to be perceived according to the model of the oppressed and the oppressor; it encompasses a mobile field where it constantly changes hands. In view of power and sexuality the dominant discourses are to be termed as the patriarchal, the Western, the heterosexual and the male; in response, counter discourses appear such as the matriarchal, the non-Western, that is, the Oriental, the Asian, the Black, the homosexual and the female. Yet, Foucault argues that the dominant discourses revitalize and reproduce their binary oppositions rather than eradicate them; thus, the homosexual leaves its mark on the heterosexual that appears to annihilate the homosexual at first sight, yet unwittingly rejuvenates it counter-productively. According to Foucault sexuality is not the expression of a seamless internal identity, but it is discursively constructed. Therefore, dissident sexualities are not repressed by the dominant discourse, but they are generated by the repressive machinery of power paradoxically (in Sullivan 40-42). Hence, perversion occupies a central place at the heart of civilisation.

3.1. *Cloud Nine*

Churchill's *Cloud Nine* explores the issues of sexuality and gender; she establishes an analogy between colonial and sexual oppression reified through the wielders of power. Churchill unearths the inner contradictions of the heterosexual norm through the patriarchal figure, Clive, by means of indicating the shifting power relations. According to Foucault's analysis, power can not be possessed by a single discourse; rather it flows all along the discourses. If power were within the hold of the heterosexual discourse, one would be unable to speak of its binary opposition, homosexuality. On the contrary, homosexuality imprints itself on heterosexuality; what is excluded from the binary frame is also produced by it in the mode of exclusion. Power is dispersed through a dense web of relations between the dominant and reverse discourses.

Clive's relationship with Harry and Mrs Saunders can be considered to be detrimental to the idealized image of the heterosexual man; it reinvigorates the reverse discourse, thus the dominant discourse, embodied through the figure of Clive, generates what it is supposed to obliterate. Foucault argues that "[t]he machinery of power that focused on this whole alien strain [of peripheral sexualities] did not aim to suppress it, but rather to give it an analytical, visible, and permanent reality" (44). The dominant discourse does not cancel the counter discourse out; therefore, heterosexuality and homosexuality are inclusive of one another because the power structures operate through the binary logic.

Heterosexuality centres on the norm of reproductive sexuality, so it regards non-procreative sexual practices as perverse, yet Clive, the supposed agent of heteronormativity, fantasizes about being indulged in certain forms of perversities which are considered to be consigned to an obscurity by the dominant discourse. Foucault indicates the multiplication of discourses within the hold of the dominant discourse through questioning the Victorian image of the family: "Was the nineteenth-century family really monogamic and conjugal cell? Perhaps to certain extent. But it was also a network of pleasures and powers linked together at multiple points and according to transformable relationships" (46). Foucault abandons the repressive hypothesis and points to an explosion of unorthodox sexualities. During a

family picnic, Clive is engaged in a sexual pursuit; he acts like a womanizer, trying to have a sexual encounter with Mrs. Saunders. Hidden from the view of the others, Clive speaks to Mrs Saunders in a manner which is thought to be wayward by the heterosexual norm. Clive lusts for Mrs Saunders; he tells her that she “will be shot with poisoned arrows” since he thinks that she is “disgustingly capricious” (262); he pictures in his mind that Mrs. Saunders is punished due to her being a seductress and leaving Clive’s sexual advances unanswered. Clive pronounces that she would be sexually harassed by the local people if he did not go after her, and offer to protect her from the primitive tribes:

Mrs. Saunders: Don’t fuss, Clive, it makes you sweat.

Clive: Why ride off now? Sweat, you would sweat if you were in love with somebody as disgustingly capricious as you are. You will be shot with poisoned arrows. You will miss the picnic. Somebody will notice I came after you.

Mrs. Saunders: I didn’t want you to come after me. I wanted to be alone.

Clive: You will be raped by cannibals (282).

Clive projects his desires onto the so-called savage people of Africa; his remarks are marked by the cruel imagery of penetrating, piercing and shooting as poisoned arrows, raping and whipping suggest; he unconsciously associates his perverse desires with savagery and cannibalism; thus, the sexual consummation is linked with the act of devouring the body and being devoured by the body in his masculine economy, that is reductive understanding, of sexuality. In opposition to civilisation, which reads heterosexuality, primitivism is made to stand for perversity which includes all kinds of sexual dissidence in the heterosexual concept. This conflation of heterosexuality and sexual discordance points to the fact that heterosexuality is not a taken-for-granted form of sexuality; Freud pronounces that “from the point of view of psycho-analysis the exclusive sexual interest felt by men for women is also a problem that needs elucidating and is not a self-evident fact based upon an attraction that is ultimately of a chemical nature” (in Rose, 126); thus, heterosexuality is queered, and its authority as the ideal path of sexuality is challenged.

Moreover, Clive imagines Mrs Saunders as “the sort of woman who would enjoy whipping somebody”(262); he assumes that women delight in inflicting pain;

his sense of sexuality is also suggestive of sadistic and masochistic impulses which are definitely repudiated by the moral codes of the heterosexual frame; also, Clive's sadistic and masochistic impulses point to "a sinister embrace of socially constructed fantasies" (Weeks, *Discontents*, 214). Thinking of himself as the sole object of Mrs Saunders' desire, rather thinking of her as the object of his own desire, Clive dreams of being whipped by Mrs Saunders whom he figures out as a cruel woman. Clive's unfruitful debauchery is condemned by the dominant discourse as it promotes the hedonistic principle which is antagonistic to the reproductive function of sex since it justifies sex for its immediate, pleasurable return (Weeks, *Discontents*, 212); all sexual acts that are non-procreative are considered to be perverse. His masochistic tendency, his desire of ripping open the female body and his penile inclination to thrust his manhood into the female body manifested in his sexual imagery of shooting, raping and whipping are suggestive of a zone of sexual possibilities that the heterosexual discourse seeks to repress. Thus, the heterosexual discourse, embodied through Clive, does not eliminate sexual perversity, but incorporates it. If Clive were the mere wielder of power, he would not disrupt the very discourse that he is made to represent, yet power flows through a range of discourses, and sexuality becomes a site for power.

Clive also fantasizes about having a sexual encounter with a dead body:

Clive: Caroline, if you were shot with poisoned arrows do you know what I'd do?
I'd fuck your dead body and poison myself. Caroline, you smell amazing (263).

Clive's desire for necrophilia points to a sexual territory to which he is denied access by the heterosexual discourse. He dreams of being poisoned by being sexually united with a body shot with poisoned arrows; this is a subtle image employed by Churchill to indicate the self-centeredness of the masculine sexual economy. Clive becomes both the cause and effect of the sexual act; the male shoots the female body with the arrows, highly expressive of the masculine thrusting tendency, and becomes the origin of the sexual practice that he initiates. Subsequently he is poisoned in the very body that he himself poisons, thus becomes the end of the sexual practice, too. Clive lavishes sexual excitement on the image of the poisoned arrows; this sexual imagery is marked by libidinal investment in conjured pain; he transforms it into psychic

experience. Clive regards the sexual act as something dangerous and destructive; he is not completely at ease with his heterosexual position. Therefore, the false romanticism of sacrificing his life for his beloved is totally disrupted, as well. Hence the dominant discourse of heterosexuality does not eradicate the sexual perversity, but produces it as Clive engages in non-heterosexual practices; Clive's desire for necrophilia makes him a pervert; Foucault states that violating cadavers is considered by the dominant discourse to be an unnatural sexual crime like homosexuality (39).

Mrs Saunders is associated with the culturally constructed image of *femme fatale* in Clive's mind, which demonstrates how power is not monopolized by a single discourse, but it is disseminated among a variety of discourses. In accordance with the dichotomy of the female and the male, the latter exerts power over the former; yet, Clive imagines Mrs Saunders as fear-inducing which is suggestive of the female dominance over the male; Clive tells Mrs Saunders that "You terrify me. You are dark like this continent. Mysterious. Treacherous" (263). Clive conceives of Mrs Saunders's womanliness as a mask, behind which he suspects some hidden danger; the feminine is configured as the obscure and the deceitful. Clive is distrustful of Mrs Saunders; she is the unfathomable for Clive. He also associates the unaccountable femininity with the dark continent, Africa, which represents the untutored, uncharted, primeval impulses in Clive's masculine conception of the world. It is generally considered that women are made to be submissive, timid and angelic by the dominant discourse of patriarchy. Yet, paradoxically Clive constitutes Mrs Saunders as baffling, unattainable and sly. Thus, the binary oppositions are intermingled in a way similar to the biblical construction of womanhood which represents the feminine gender both fear-inducing in the case of Eve and angelic in the case of Madonna; "the distinction between respectable women and the unregenerates (the virgin and the whore)" (Weeks, *Sexuality*, 34). The dominant discourse counter-effectively generates the reverse discourse; power is not usurped by the dominant discourse, but it flows among the points of relations between the discourses. Sexuality is a point of transfer for power. Mrs Saunders, an object of desire for Clive, exerts power over Clive through his own vision of the feminine as the confounding, strange, and artful traitor that can not be trusted. Power appears to be handled by Clive at first sight, and then transmitted to Mrs Saunders, yet she becomes powerful only in the way she is

culturally consolidated as the confusing, intangible, and intimidating force. Therefore, the mysterious and treacherous image of womanhood is also fuelled by the very heterosexual imagination which subjugates women into silence and meekness; the binary oppositions that seem to be mutually exclusive reinvigorate one another via the subtleties of power achieved through sexual relations.

Clive visualizes Mrs Saunders as a vacuum that is to be filled by him:

Clive: When I came to you in your bed, when I lifted the mosquito netting, when I said let me in, let me in. Oh don't shut me out, Caroline, let me in (263).

The metaphor of the mosquito netting stands for the image of Clive disappearing completely under Mrs Saunders' skirt. Also, it is implied that the female body becomes spidery, enclosing the male body within its confines. This is a telling metaphor with regards to the traditional configuration of the female body as an entrapping, and enfolding web. Paradoxically Clive, the powerful patriarch, implores Mrs Saunders to draw him into her body, and to imprison him in the so-called mosquito netting. According to the dichotomized perceptions of the male and female, "she" represents the lack, the void; "he" stands for the solid being that is to fill this emptiness; the female body exists only to the extent that it instantiates the male body; the sexualised female body is subordinated to male definitions of desire; Clive indulges in self-dissemination in accordance with his imperial, and expansionist attitude by penetrating and colonizing Mrs Saunders' body; similarly, Jeffrey Weeks speaks of maleness as "characterized by the tendency to dissipate energy" (*Discontents*, 84). Underneath this metaphor Clive is reduced to a petty being who begs the *imperial*, over-presiding woman to allow him to insert himself and slide into the vacated female body; he dreams of discharging himself into this mythical empty space. Foucault, speaking of the Victorian regime of sexuality, states that "the image of the imperial prude is emblazoned on our restrained, mute, and hypocritical sexuality" (3); as an administrator of the British Empire, Clive, the *imperial chaste*, engages in non-normative sexuality, thus illustrates the Victorian duplicity about sexual matters.

In this heterosexual encounter between Mrs. Saunders and Clive, power changes hands. In Clive's eyes, Mrs. Saunders supplies the site to which his phallus

penetrates; she signifies the phallus through being its absence; she embodies the phallus, thus she reflects, and signifies the power of the phallus; therefore, power is seized by the female subject. This male fantasy of heterosexual intercourse is explained by Lacan's psychoanalytic account which points out that the male has the phallus whereas the female is the phallus. Butler sums up this Lacanian approach:

By claiming that the Other [the feminine gender] that lacks the phallus is the one who is the phallus Lacan clearly suggests that power is wielded by this feminine position of not-having, that the masculine subject who "has" the phallus requires this Other to confirm and, hence, be the phallus in its "extended" sense (*Gender*, 59-60).

This rite of passage that governs certain bodily orifices presupposes a heterosexual construction of gendered exchange, positions and erotic possibilities; heterosexual intercourse becomes organ transplantation. This circuit of exchange can also be volatile; Butler questions the states of having and being the phallus: "men wishing to 'be' the phallus for other men, women wishing to 'have' the phallus for other women, women wishing to 'be' the phallus for other women, men wishing both to have and to be the phallus for other men" (*Bodies*, 103); thus, she challenges the heterosexual symmetry between the male state of having the phallus and the female state of being the phallus by means of figuring out some possible modalities of being and having the phallus; she puts forward the multiplication of subject positions along a pluralist axis.

Clive blames Mrs Saunders for being "voracious" (264) when she complains that he has ended the sexual intercourse before she achieves an orgasm. That Clive accuses her of being insatiable suggests that he covertly resents his being devoured by the female body; he enjoys the sensation, yet he becomes biting or cruel at the end of the coitus since he is unconsciously bothered by this mythical image of womanhood as an encapsulating force. He is horrified by "the dark female lust" which, he believes, will swallow him up (277). Clive is unconsciously worried that his manhood will be girdled by the female body, thus he will be devoid of his penis, and be castrated by the masculinised woman; Butler elaborates on the association of the phallus and woman: "This figure of excessive phallicism, typified by the phallic mother, is devouring and destructive, the negative fate of the phallus attached to the

feminine position” (*Bodies*, 102); this conflation of the female and the phallus sheds light on Clive’s anxiety and misogyny. Irigaray argues that “Lacan’s notion of woman as the lack is based on an unconscious projection of man’s symbolic castration” (in Alsop, *Theorizing Gender*, 55); Clive is resentful of Mrs Saunders, who carries his feared and despised unconscious, and who threatens Clive with potential disintegration; thus, Clive becomes “the gynophobic subject” owing to his aversion to femininity (Apter, 116).

Clive’s being disappointed about woman and being unconsciously uncertain of his relations with women triggers a supposedly brotherly conversation with Harry, which is very revealing because of its covert sexual connotations. Clive’s fear of the feminine principle resurfaces when he speaks of his commitment to Harry: “There is something dark about women that threatens what is best in us” (282); women as a threatening darkness terrorize Clive. He regards women as intruding upon the friendship between men. He dreads being taken in and taken over by the feminine which he views as “irrational, demanding, inconsistent, treacherous, and lustful” (282). His rebuttal of this mythical female power is informed by the dichotomized understanding which accords with the binary frame of heterosexuality: the male stands for reason, order and moderation whereas the female represents unreason, disorder and extremity. Clive believes in the bi-polar gender system. Yet, he becomes more demanding and lustful than Mrs Saunders when he craves for a sexual intercourse with Mrs Saunders. He associates the feminine principle with the dark continent, the uncivilized territory and the chaos; but he remarks that he envies Harry “going into the jungle, a man’s life” (282); he dreams of going beyond the allegedly civilized territory. Although he seems to make a clear distinction between the binary oppositions, he turns out to be the one who paradoxically shakes up the dichotomized order. His inconsistency, which he attributes to the female, indicates that the binary oppositions are not mutually exclusive; the male partakes of the female, the dominant of the dominated, and the powerful of the powerless. Thus, power slips through Clive’s hands and spreads to a plethora of channels.

Clive’s rejection of the female gives way to the glorification of male-bonding; he deems “the comradeship of men” with great esteem. He confesses that the heterosexual relationship is maintained for procreation and pleasure: “There is the

need of reproduction. The family is all important. And there is the pleasure” (282). He argues that heterosexuality is to be perpetuated for the sake of its fecundity, and the physical sensation that it provides. He utters that women “smell different from” men; he indirectly means that men smell alike, which he seems to favour; he unwittingly speaks of the passion for sameness, which informs the homosexual desire.

Being exhausted by holding such a hazardous post in Africa, Clive tells Betty that he has his “moments of weakness” (277). According to the dominant ideology that he embodies, Clive also shows a moment of frailty when he articulates his attachment to Harry which has strong elements of homosexual and homosocial desire that are veiled under his verbosity. His articulation of his commitment to Harry, though covertly, is expressive of a homoerotic tone. Thus, one might argue that Clive can be a straight-identified latent homosexual in whom one can spot the queer moments; according to the Freudian theory, a substantial quantity of homosexuality can be found in all heterosexually-identified people (*Theorizing Gender*, 49). Unearthing the obfuscated homosexual elements underneath the idea of the comradeship of men, Churchill aims to destabilize heterocentric foundations. From the Foucauldian point of view, Churchill evinces that the dissident sexualities can not be wiped out through repression; on the contrary, they are rejuvenated; the heterosexual in Clive reproduces the homosexual in him.

Clive shuns the feminine principle and celebrates male bonding. He believes that the friendship between men can not be spoiled by women, “the weaker sex” (282). Clive remarks that friendship between men is “the noblest form of friendship” (282). His vision is suggestive of “an all-male community linked by a common endeavour and the especially intense camaraderie” (Lilly, 157). In opposition to the female darkness that frightens him, Clive joyfully tells Harry that “Between men that light burns brightly”; he values the male bonding spiritually. He confides to Harry that he “suddenly got out of Mrs Saunders’ bed and came out here on the veranda and looked at the stars” (282); he, choked by the female darkness of Mrs Saunders’ bed, steps out of it and gazes at the firmament, the mythical abode of male deities, which attributes some spiritual aspect to his understanding of male friendship. His idea of male bonding is coloured by an astral longing, which renders male friendship

divine; Christopher Marlowe, who is known for his sexual dissidence, defines the spiritual love of male bonding: “the eyes of the seeker looking upward from the dungy earth” (Burgess, 33); Marlowe states the difference of the spiritual love from the earthly love.

His vision of the comradeship of men is also informed by a penchant for a homosocial world where men are “sharing adventures, sharing danger, risking their lives together” (282), away from the feminine territory. Likewise, Clive enthusiastically tells Harry that he is immensely impressed by the British soldiers “fighting those savages [the African tribes] to protect us”(282); thus, he envisions an all-male community dying for one another; he utters that he aspires to be a member of this all-male community. The homosocial world that is imagined by Clive, who takes an immense pleasure in engaging in all-male activities, also attests to the idea of the same-sex desire nesting in the heterosexual configuration of sexuality.

Clive’s understanding of inter-sexual relations is characterized by the dualism of body and spirit, which is aligned with the bi-polar configuration of gender; in the male economy of sexuality, the male stands for the spirit whereas the female represents the matter. Monique Wittig argues that “the category of sex is, under the conditions of compulsory heterosexuality, always feminine” (in Butler, *Gender*, 25); Clive, who is a concrete manifestation of the heterosexual norm, internalizes the view that woman stands for the body, thus the female body is sexed, associated with the state of the matter whereas the male represents the spirit, which informs Clive’s vision of male-bonding that does not involve carnal desire between men. Therefore, Clive’s commitment to Harry, a friendship between men, is to be *purified* of the corporeal side of love; when Harry touches Clive, he is struck dumb for a few minutes:

[*Harry takes hold of Clive.*]

Clive: What are you doing?

Harry: Well, you said –

Clive: I said what?

Harry: Between men.

[*Clive is speechless.*]

I’m sorry, I misunderstood, I would never have dreamt, I thought –

Clive: My God, Harry, how disgusting. (282)

Harry's desire for him is exposed to him in a physical fashion; Clive's speechlessness is indicative of the cruel machinery of the dominant discourse which reduces the discordant sexualities to silence. Clive is also appalled since he has become the one that has enabled Harry, the sexually wayward, to come out; in other words, the dominant discourse in the person of Clive has counter-productively given way to the reverse discourse.

In response to Harry's homosexuality surfacing, Clive becomes homophobic and assaults Harry's same-sex desire through certain discourses that are available to him in the nineteenth century. Homosexuality stirs up fears in Clive; "excessive fear of homosexuality is frequently a sign of homosexuality" (Clum, *Acting*, 198); he struggles to evade the hazardous truth of homosexuality; "moral panics erupt around types of dissident eroticism that simply serve as scapegoats onto which society projects its greatest anxieties" (Bristow, *Sexuality*, 203). In the nineteenth century homosexuality is regarded as a disease; Clive, as a bigoted moralist, regards homosexuality as "disgusting" (282); he feels "contaminated"; he is terrorized by the idea that his heterosexual image might have been spoiled by its binary opposition. He deploys the medical and religious discourses in order to make sense out of this ostensibly unaccountable perversion through fixing the sexual dissidence into the confines of the dominant ideology. In the nineteenth century homosexuality is regarded also as a sin in religion; likewise, assuming the strategy of the clerical discourse, Clive labels homosexuality as a sin; "The most revolting perversion. Rome fell, Harry, and this sin can destroy an empire" (283). Hence, homosexuality is acculturated by means of his allusion to Rome; it has become a part of the history, though in a demeaning way which renders it devastating. Clive attempts to domesticate this non-normative sexuality within the boundaries of the discourse of history which renders homosexuality unfathomable, thus unacceptable; yet, he unwittingly discloses the fact that homosexuality has always been discursively central to the human culture in spite of the fact that it has been culturally marginal. Butler explains Clive's fear of homosexuality: "Since anal and oral sex among men clearly establishes certain kinds of bodily permeabilities unsanctioned by the hegemonic order, male homosexuality would, within such a hegemonic point of view, constitute a site of danger and pollution" (*Gender*, 180). Bodily margins are

specifically invested with power and danger; the social system that Clive represents is vulnerable at its margins, thus the margins are accordingly thought to be hazardous.

Furthermore, Clive employs the medical discourse to help him sort out the so-called obscure, unfathomable figuration of sexuality: “A disease more dangerous than diphtheria” (283); homosexuality is equated with an ailment that can cause death since same-sex intercourse, being non-procreative, is regarded as fatally detrimental to the continuation of the human race. Same-sex desire is regarded as a dis-ease because it complicates the established form of sexuality, disrupts the binary frame of heterosexuality, thus becomes detrimental to the machinery of the conventional society. Likewise, Clive views Harry’s homosexuality as a state of “degeneracy” and indecency into which Harry has sunk (283); thus, heterosexuality is considered to be fruitful since its fertility is the means of reproduction whereas homosexuality is acknowledged to be a degenerative disease because it promotes sterility in the traditional context of sexuality.

Clive associates homosexuality with the loss of masculine attributes, rendering the homosexual a failed man, “a pseudo-woman” (Weeks, *Discontents*, 93); he tells Harry that “Effeminacy is contagious. How I have been deceived” (283). Clive’s remark uncovers his dread to be *infected* with effeminacy; “homophobia directed by men against men is misogynistic” (Sedgwick, “Introduction”, 477). Clive associates homosexuality with effeminacy which he finds abominable; his aversion to the feminine principle, which is revealed in his relationship with Mrs Saunders, forms his fear of homosexuality that he regards as a sign of femininity in men. Also, his fear stems from the fact that there is a very delicate (im)balance between the binary oppositions; they are very likely to collapse into one another; paradoxically the dichotomized structure of the heterosexual matrix occasions this fear by means of reducing a complex web of feelings, emotions, desires into two camps that are made to be mutually exclusive, yet they turn out to be reciprocally inclusive. Hence, Clive thinks that he has been deceived; in fact, he has been deceived by the dominant discourse that he embodies although he means that he has been misled by Harry. The dominant discourse overtly maintains the idea that the heterosexual frame obliterates

homosexuality; on the contrary, it covertly reproduces its opposite, which Clive finds deceptive.

Harry's confession of his homosexuality to Clive exemplifies a steady proliferation of discourses concerned with sex, which Foucault calls "a discursive ferment" (18); the tightening up of the heterosexual rules produces, as a counter-effect, an intensification of articulateness about *indecentcy between male subjects*; Clive has made Harry speak about his same-sex desire, thus made the multiplication of discourses possible; the dominant discourse through himself and the reverse discourse through Harry. That Clive unwittingly propels Harry to speak of his same-sex desire can be taken, by Foucault, to be "a determination on the part of the agencies of power to hear it [sexuality] spoken about" (18). Clive does not intend to push unorthodox sexuality back into some obscure and inaccessible region, on the contrary, he seeks to draw it out and bid it speak so as to implant it in his own domain of power.

Clive inadvertently incites Harry to confess his homosexuality, which can be explained through Foucault's analysis of the Catholic practice of confession:

[T]houghts, desires, voluptuous imaginings, delectations, combined movements of the body and the soul; henceforth all this had to enter, in detail, into the process of confession and guidance. According to the new pastoral, sex must not be named imprudently, but its aspects, its correlations, and its effects must be pursued down to their slenderest ramifications (19).

Clive speaks of the aspects of a man's love for another man in the form of male-bonding; he mentions the brightness of friendship between men, and he makes Harry articulate his desire by means of unknowingly ravishing Harry verbally through the ramifications of male-bonding such as sharing adventures together, yet he does not name sex imprudently. Clive makes Harry examine his soul and his will diligently; having been put into words in the form of a confession in confidence, Harry's homosexual desire is taken charge of and tracked down by Clive. Clive forbids certain words; the shame and disgust that it incites repels Clive. In order to allow it no obscurity, Clive transforms Harry's same-sex desire into discourse through labelling it as beastliness, sin, unnatural, and monstrous; within the Foucauldian frame of thinking, Clive's attitude can be regarded as the tactical exercise of the

dominant discourse which transforms Harry's sexuality into discourse (Foucault, 20). Thus, Clive manages Harry's deviant sexuality by inserting it into the domain of the dominant system; in Clive's eyes, Harry's sexuality is a thing to be administered; Harry's peripheral sexuality has come under scrutiny.

Clive is fooled by the intricacies of power; power can not be possessed by a single discourse, rather it plays with the discourses. Being anxious due to the binary oppositions threatening to coalesce into a state of mutual inclusiveness, Clive vehemently strives to deflate Harry's homosexuality through the derogatory remarks so as to inflate his own heterosexual image. He attempts to whiten his accepted image by means of darkening Harry's deviant sexuality pejoratively. As what has been traditionally conceived of as elusive is manifested, Clive is acutely worried since he fears that his heterosexuality will elude him. Heterosexuality's homophobic attitude is symptomatic of its essential constructedness and fragility; Calvin Thomas explains that "because there is no final 'proof' of heterosexuality, heterosexuality must constantly set about trying to prove itself, assert itself, insist on itself" (28). Clive's confrontation with Harry's homosexuality reveals that he is insecure about his heterosexuality; his homophobia results from his fear that "other men will unmask us [him], emasculate us, reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men" (Kimmel in *Theorizing Gender*, 144).

Clive's approach to sexuality is similar to Foucault's view about the Victorian bourgeoisie:

The conjugal family took custody of it [sexuality] and absorbed it into the serious function of reproduction. On the subject of sex, silence became the rule. The legitimate and the procreative couple laid down the law. The couple imposed itself as model, enforced the norm, safeguarded the truth, and reserved the right to speak while retaining the principle of secrecy (3).

Clive assumes the wayward sexuality nonexistent; non-normative practices have to be muted; sterile behaviour in the form of non-procreative sexual practices such as homosexuality has to remain invisible, or else it would have to pay the penalty of persecution as Harry is castigated by Clive; deviant sexualities do not merit hearing; they are made to disappear by the legitimate, procreative subject, Clive; the free circulation of dissident sexuality in speech is controlled as Harry is condemned to

silence; there is a policing of statements. Foucault states his objective for writing *The History of Sexuality*: “to examine the case of a society which has been loudly castigating itself for its hypocrisy for more than a century, which speaks verbosely of its own silence” (8); Clive is enraged by the emergence of Harry’s homosexuality; he berates himself for being unable to maintain the principle of secrecy, and for enabling Harry to articulate his non-normative sexuality which has to be silenced.

Harry, the persecuted and ostracized homosexual, appears to have internalized the homophobic attitude of the heterosexual norm; he tells Clive that “I struggle against it. You can not imagine the shame. I have tried everything to save myself” (283); he confesses that he fights against his homosexual desire which contrasts with the heteronormative ideal. He is unaware of the fact that his attempt to repudiate his same-sex desire is the very act that triggers his homosexuality because repression becomes un-repression from the Foucauldian perspective of sexuality. He tells Clive that he is ashamed of his sexual orientation that he views as a state of corruption from which he is to be redeemed. He acknowledges that he goes “into the jungle to hide” (283) from the surveillance of the heterosexual policing of homosexuality. Also, he seems to have agreed upon the traditional idea that the jungle, the uncivilized terrain, is compatible with the perverse desire.

Furthermore, he points out that he feels like “a man born crippled” (283); interiorizing the oppressor’s view about the sexual deviant, Harry associates himself with a disabled person and regards his homosexuality as intrinsic. Being crippled is also suggestive of emasculation as homosexuality is conceived of as effeminacy in the heterosexual imagination; the male homosexual is considered to be devoid of the phallus, the master signifier of power, since it is believed in the heterosexual frame that he is mutilated by effeminacy. Overwhelmed by the oppression that is inflicted upon him by himself and the heterosexual regime, Harry, succumbing to the command of the oppressor, implores Clive to help him, to rescue him from the dark abyss of perversion: “There is no way out. Clive, I beg of you, do not betray my confidence” (283). Harry does not recognize the fact that Clive will do his best not to betray Harry’s confidence since disclosing his sexual deviance is a blow on Clive’s assumed authority and his own allegiance to, and confidence in the dominant discourse that he embodies.

Clive is intrigued by the vagaries of power; he does not notice that power operates through the very binary system that he ardently seeks to perpetuate, and he can not be the sole wielder of power. Power is a puppeteer that plays with Clive and renders his attempts ridiculous. Assuming himself to be the agent of power rather than the effect of power, Clive vainly struggles to contain the sexual dissidence within the confines of the dominant discourse by means of purporting to *save* Harry from “depravity” through matrimony, the mandatory perpetuator of the heterosexual matrix (283).

Aiming to *ameliorate* his friend’s situation, Clive tells Harry to marry Mrs Saunders: “She’s a woman of spirit, she could go with you on your expeditions” (283); Clive acknowledges the marginal positions of both Harry and Mrs Saunders; he tries to integrate both Harry and Mrs Saunders into the straight path of the heteronormative ideal through marriage. Clive deep down believes that an emasculated, feminized man, like Harry, can only be *healed* by an assertive, empowered, and masculinised woman. Thus, Clive seeks to establish the binary frame through the supposed gender asymmetry between Harry and Mrs Saunders; he even cross-genders them for the sake of maintaining the bi-polar understanding, the masculine and the feminine. Yet, Mrs Saunders refuses to marry Harry since she chooses to be alone rather than be oppressed by the patriarchal structure of marriage:

Harry: Mrs Saunders, will you marry me?

Mrs Saunders: Why?

Harry: We are both alone.

Mrs Saunders: I choose to be alone, Mr. Bagley. If I can look after myself, I’m sure you can (283).

Clive seeks to *correct* Harry in order to ensure the moral cleanliness of the social body; he runs to the rescue of the heterosexual law; he promises to eliminate defective ideals, and aims to ground Harry in the heterosexual truth. However, he also exposes the constructedness of the heterosexual norm; likewise, Ingraham argues that “heterosexuality is, in reality, a highly regulated, ritualized, and organized set of practices, e.g. weddings or proms” (174); heterosexuality, far from being an inbuilt force, is a compulsory, contrived institution which serves the interests of male dominance, in this case Clive’s dominance. Foucault would suggest

that Clive's attitude is marked by "a stubborn will to non-knowledge" (55); similarly, Sedgwick would argue that Clive's power over Harry is implicated, not in his command of knowledge, but precisely in his ignorance (*Epistemology*, 7). Clive's approach to the emergence of Harry's homosexuality is characterized by systematic blindness; he refuses to see the very thing that has been brought to light; he bars access to Harry's same-sex desire, and strives to mask it through making Harry marry a woman. This production of the alleged truth of heterosexuality is thoroughly imbued with relations of power. Harry's confession is, in fact, a discursive mean to contain and govern perversions; Clive prescribes Harry's confession; he judges, and reconciles the sexually peculiar. Foucault examines confession as "a ritual of discourse"; Clive, the presence of the authority, "exonerates, redeems, and purifies" Harry, "unburdens him of his wrongs, liberates him, and promises him salvation" (Foucault, 61-62). Clive purports to establish a latency intrinsic to sexuality; the ways of sex are to be obscure, elusive and clandestine; thus, the proliferation of sexuality beyond the heterosexual frame is tailored to the requirements of power.

Clive also urges Harry to marry Ellen; thus Churchill lampoons the way that homosexuality is heterosexualized so as to contain it; gayness is gendered as feminine and lesbianism as masculine; the subliminal heteronormative proposition to marry Harry and Ellen reaffirms the logic of sexual difference and gender asymmetry. The heterosexual norm is repeated within the homosexual context since a gay man is made to marry a lesbian. Butler points out that "The replication of heterosexual constructs in non-heterosexual frames brings into relief the utterly constructed status of the so-called heterosexual original" (*Gender*, 43); the repetition of heterosexual convention within a homosexual frame denaturalizes the heterosexual norm and exposes its tenuousness; the so-called authentic, the heterosexual, desire is parodied so as to disclose the fact that heterosexuality is not the original form of sexuality. Yet, Clive's attempt to fix Harry the homosexual into the heterosexual frame is also disrupted by Ellen's repressed lesbianism, of which Clive and Harry know nothing. Joshua tells Clive that Ellen is sexually drawn to Betty; yet for Clive, lesbian desire is unaccountable, so he reprimands Joshua that his tongue outruns his subservient position and bids him out of his sight:

Joshua: The governess and your wife, sir.

Clive: What's that, Joshua?

Joshua: She talks of love to your wife, sir. I have seen them. Bad women.

Clive: Joshua, you go too far. Get out of my sight (285).

Having subdued Harry's sexual dissidence, Clive is unable to bear Ellen's lesbianism, another blow on the heterosexual discourse that he represents.

Clive's masculine economy of desire is so much self-centred that a woman's loving another woman is beyond his comprehension. For Clive the sexual drive is only masculine. Even though he reduces it to silence and condemns it, he may appear to acknowledge the existence of male homosexuality as he imagines that men engaged in a homosexual encounter might also replicate the heterosexual frame through the roles of the passive and the active, the penetrated and the penetrator. Male homosexuality might be inclusive of the phallic tendency to thrust and penetrate the orifices of the body in the heterosexual configuration of male homosexuality. Yet, the lesbian desire is unfathomable for Clive; lesbian sex is not sex as it does not involve the penile urge to enter the body. The point is that Clive ignores Ellen's love for Betty because he does not think that it challenges his authority, so he can never come into recognition that female homosexuality is not wiped out, but produced by the obligatory heterosexuality; that which is left out can not be contested whether it fits in or not.

Ellen agrees to marry Harry; she is crestfallen because Betty has not returned her love; Betty tries to lead Ellen into matrimony and motherhood:

Ellen: I don't want another place, Betty. I want to stay with you forever.

Betty: If you go back to England you might get married, Ellen. You're quite pretty, you shouldn't despair of getting a husband.

Ellen: I don't want a husband. I want you.

Betty: Children of your own, Ellen, think (281).

Having been disappointed, Ellen decides to marry Harry:

Harry: Ellen, I don't suppose you would marry me?

Ellen: What if I said yes? (285)

Harry's and Clive's speeches during Harry and Ellen's wedding ceremony are indicative of the Victorian hypocrisy. Harry, pledging allegiance to the centre, glorifies the heterosexual frame achieved through marriage:

Harry: My dear friends - what can I say - the empire - the family - the married state to which I have always aspired - your shining example of domestic bliss - my great good fortune in winning Ellen's love-happiest day of my life (287).

Harry's duplicity occasions the view that the homosexual is the one who goes astray from the ideal path of heterosexuality; he celebrates matrimony as a state which he has always yearned for. Similarly, Clive glorifies the heteronormative ideal:

Harry, my friend. So brave and strong and supple
Ellen, from neath her veil so shyly peeking.
I wish you joy. A toast - the happy couple.
Dangers are past. Our enemies are killed.
-Put your arm round her, Harry, have a kiss-
All murmuring of discontent is stilled,
Long may you live in peace, joy and bliss (288)

Clive, the perpetuator of the binary frame, speaks of the bride and the bridegroom in specifically gendered terms; he praises Harry for being brave and strong, thus attributing masculine qualities to him; he stereotypes Ellen as a bride shyly peeking, reducing her to a state of bashfulness, meekness and invisibility behind the veil. Clive declares that the hazardous time of perilous same-sex desire is over, they are safe; Harry and Ellen are *saved* from same-sex desire by means of matrimony. He does not recognize that the desire which is repressed returns via the mode of repression: the constitutive force of erasure, exclusion, and its disruptive return within the very terms of discursive legitimacy; furthermore, binary oppositions of heterosexuality and homosexuality do not cancel, but revitalize one another. Churchill communicates the idea that if same-sex desire could be really repressed in the persons of Harry and Ellen in the nineteenth century, that is in the first act of the play, homosexuality would be unable to reappear in the persons of Edward, Lin, Victoria and Gerry in the twentieth century, that is in the second act of the play. Therefore, the murmuring of discontent of sexual deviance is not muted, rather it is

roaring because the binary frame counter-productively promotes that content is defined in terms of discontent; sexual concord, heterosexuality, is to collapse into sexual discord, homosexuality; they are the opposite ends of the same spectrum.

In the second scene of the first act the household go on a picnic with their guests, Harry and Mrs Saunders. This picnic scene is carnivalesque which refers to a mode that subverts and liberates the assumptions of the dominant discourse through humour and chaos; it points to a time of revelry where ordinary rules and regulations are temporarily suspended and reversed; solemnities, pieties and ready-made truths established by the dominant discourse are profaned and overturned by normally suppressed voices and energies; opposites such as fact and fantasy, heaven and hell, masculine and feminine are mingled; alternative voices de-privilege the authoritative voice of the hegemony.

During the picnic scene in *Cloud Nine* Edward, Harry, Betty and Clive act transgressively, stepping beyond the heterocentric foundations. Yet, it is a closeted transgression in the sense that they are indulged in a licensed release of sexual tension, a kind of safety-valve which, far from undermining the existing order, actually contributes to its survival. There is a rebellion, but not against the authority but within it. The notion of the carnivalesque points to the strategies of the dominant discourse which tries to contain transgressions within its own confines (Dollimore, 82). They are in “an open space some distance from the house” (262); they are detached from the domestic ground; their immersion in sexual dissidence takes place in the forest, uncivilised terrain, outside the heteronormative territory, which is suggestive of primordial impulses. Although they are on the margins of the landscape of the established morality, they still have to disguise their sexual deviancy. Clive discloses his desire for Mrs Saunders in secret when they are distanced from the others; Edward speaks of his commitment to Harry clandestinely; similarly, Betty articulates her attachment to Harry in privacy when they are out of earshot of the group. These non-normative sexual practices show that the Victorian Age is not marked by repression and elimination of unorthodox desire; likewise, Jeffrey Weeks states that “the Victorian Age, the renowned period of moral certainties and fixed standards, was characterized less by an easy acceptance of traditional values than by a battle over conflicting beliefs and behaviours” (*Discontents*, 15).

The transgression of the characters can be regarded as disobedient dependence as they are not totally cut off from the heteronormative foundations of morality. They play hide-and-seek; this game is ironical within the context of the strategies of the dominant discourse. According to the conventional idea, that which is hidden should remain hidden and should not be sought after; yet, according to the Foucauldian analysis of the discursive means of the hegemony, one hides something intentionally so as to seek it afterwards (42):

Edward: I've found you.

Ellen: We're not hiding Edward.

Edward: But I found you (271).

This is a very telling dialogue; Edward, as an effect of the dominant discourse, focuses on the act of seeking rather than the act of hiding; although there is nothing hidden, he assumes that he has found the thing he has sought after. Edward's attitude is suggestive of the Foucauldian perspective in that something is hidden so as to discover it afterwards as if it were a secret; the dominant discourse constitutes non-normative sexualities as secrets, "forcing them into hiding so as to make possible their discovery" (42). Therefore, the sexual dissidents in this scene regard their sexual discordance as if it were hidden from the view of the heterosexual frame and it was about to be unearthed. They are not aware of the fact that "perversion is the product and vehicle of power, a construction which enables it to gain a purchase within the realm of the psychosexual (Dollimore, 106). Thus, sexual deviance becomes discursively central although it is culturally marginal. In other words sexual dissidence is not hidden or repressed; on the contrary, it is ubiquitous; however, the regulative discourse treats homosexuality as if it were a secret that is to be concealed.

Binary oppositions are fundamental to the workings of the dominant discourse which polarizes the concepts into two mutually-exclusive camps such as order and disorder, male and female, white and black; the previous is always assumed to be superior over the latter. Yet, the dominant discourse does not realize that binary oppositions partake of one another owing to the subtleties of power. Accordingly, in *Cloud Nine*, civilisation is gendered as both masculine and feminine, so is chaos as a result of the shifting characteristics of power. For instance, the

feminine principle is attributed to civilisation when Clive speaks of Mrs Saunders, who lives alone since her husband is dead, that she is in need of the civilised life to save her from the destructiveness of the primitive tribes of Africa:

Clive: Of course you heard drums. The tribes are constantly at war, if the term is not too grand to grace their squabbles. Not unnaturally Mrs Saunders would like the company of white woman. The piano. Poetry (259)

Clive associates the civilised life of literature and music with women, which demonstrates that civilisation is gendered as feminine; traditionally civilisation is considered to be emasculating man as it stands for the feminine principle. On the contrary, primitiveness is gendered as masculine in the case of the *brutality* of the tribal forces. Clive calls the local people of Africa “savages” (260), yet Harry reckons that the native inhabitants of Africa are “affectionate” and “beautiful” even though he acknowledges their cruelty as he is oppressed by the dominant discourse and he is forced to approve of its opinions. Harry, as a homosexual man, sympathizes with the primitive tribes since the so-called savagery of the African people is evocative of the primordial impulses, and homosexuality is associated with these primordial impulses in the heterosexist imagination. Butler points out that “homosexuality is almost always conceived within the homophobic signifying economy as both uncivilised and unnatural” (*Gender*, 180). Hence, primitiveness or chaos is alluring to Harry the homosexual; however, it refers to the masculine in the case of Mrs Saunders, a woman being protected from the male aggressiveness of the African tribes. Thus, fixed categories are disrupted by the dominant discourse which strives to fix them as a consequence of the dynamics of power.

Furthermore, Harry mingles the dichotomized concepts of civilisation and primitiveness, order and chaos. Harry tells Betty about his reminiscences when they have a romantic exchange of emotions for one another:

Harry: Built a raft and went up the river. Stayed with some people. The king is always very good to me. They have a lot of skulls around the place but not white men's I think. I made up a poem one night. If I should die in this forsaken spot. There is a loving heart without a blot, Where I will live - and so on (261).

Harry's remarks could be taken as the yearnings of a solitary homosexual, being stranded on the margins of civilisation and longing to reclaim his sense of belonging within the boundaries of civilisation, yet this would be a comment made from the oppressor's perspective. Harry's account of his memories indicates how the binary terms intersect with one another; primitiveness is alluded to through the skulls and the forsaken spot; civilisation is referred to through poetry; primitiveness and civilization are fused with one another in Harry's account.

Harry tells Clive that he climbs mountains and goes down rivers for "Christmas and England and games and women singing" (266). In accordance with the bi-polar understanding, Harry associates civilisation with the empire, the religion and women; he thinks of the untrodden terrains of mountains and rivers in opposition to the civilisation.

In a similar way, Edward thinks of his love for Harry fulfilled outside the boundaries of the civilisation; he fantasizes about himself and Harry, being on a raft, going down the rivers, having bloody adventures and encounters with the savage beasts; this vision of love between men is realized beyond the reach of the civilisation which is gendered as feminine; thus, male homosexual love is staged in this masculine setting of heroism. Yet, Edward takes on certain traditional elements of femininity in his mental landscape such as fainting with pain, swooning with love, sacrificing himself for his beloved. Thus, Churchill evinces the fact that binary oppositions are not mutually exclusive, rather they are densely interconnected.

Clive also covets Harry "going into the jungle, a man's life" since he thinks that the jungle, the rigid topography of steep mountains and fierce rivers, accords with the tough image of manhood (282). In this case, Clive associates the primitive abode with the masculine principle, being dissociated from the emasculating civilisation. However, Clive also regards savagery as feminine because he draws an analogy between the dark continent, Africa, and the dark female lust. Having flogged the unfaithful servants, Clive, feeling betrayed, talks to Betty whom he likens to the dark continent due to her sex:

Clive: You can tame a wild animal only so far. They revert to their true nature and savage your hand. Sometimes I feel the natives are the enemy. I know that is

wrong [...] Implacable. This whole continent is my enemy. I am pitching my whole mind and will and reason and spirit against it to tame it, and I sometimes feel it will break over me and swallow me up (277).

The dark continent, Africa, is configured as a chaotic, devastating, primitive, nebulous, irrational and devouring force. Clive as the embodiment of imperial patriarchy, remarks that he stands for light and reason. Clive defines Betty's womanhood in similar terms; he speaks of "the dark female lust" that "will swallow us [them] up" (277). The point is that the genders of civilisation and primitiveness are constantly shifting although the dominant discourse presupposes that they are fixed; they switch either to the masculine or to the feminine, yielding to the binary frame of the dominant discourse.

Moreover, Clive tells Harry, who wants to get rid of his homosexuality, to go to England when Harry discloses his homosexuality; Clive renders England, the majestic realm of the Queen, a site of manliness; he thinks that Harry has turned out to be homosexually inclined since he is cut off from England for a long period of time:

Harry: Clive, help me, what am I to do?

Clive: You have been away from England too long.

Harry: Where can I go except into the jungle to hide? (283).

Thus, the male body becomes a device through which an idea of the nation is realized; manliness/nation is represented as order, strength, rationality, stiffness; the conflation of masculinity and national sentiments disparages the emotional, effeminate, weak, corrosive, subversive, sensuous, irrational, corrupt and dangerous homosexual. In Clive's view, England is gendered as masculine although it has been seen as the centre of the civilisation which is regarded as a feminizing force. Therefore, those who seek to fix a wide range of possibilities into a single attribute are misled by the operations of power; they erroneously assume that power can be seized by the prioritized one of the binary oppositions, the heterosexual norm. The analysis of the floating quality of power makes it clear that power flirts with all the discourses; it can not be confiscated by one discourse. Also, the operations of power are realized through sexuality as the characters' approaches to power and sexuality

dovetail one another. The heterosexual norm tries to be powerful by rendering homosexuality invisible, yet same-sex desire resurfaces because it is the opposite of opposite-sex relations. The re-emergence of homosexuality shows that the power that the heterosexual discourse supposes to have is illusory.

The heterosexual discourse promotes a disjunction between desire and identification, which is fundamental to the gender system. In accordance with the resolution of the Oedipus complex one should identify with the parent of the same sex and desire the opposite sex. In John Fletcher's formulation, the law of the Oedipal polarity commands in effect: "you can not be what you desire; you can not desire what you wish to be" (in Dollimore, 195). Therefore, homosexuality becomes a refusal of the polarity at the heart of the Oedipal injunction (Dollimore, 198). That a homosexual identifies with the parent of the opposite sex and desires the parent of the same sex is a traditional explanation of homosexuality, which merely reverses the binary terms; the heterosexual's identification with the same sex is inverted to the homosexual's identification with the opposite sex in the binary understanding; yet, a deconstructive approach would uncover the relational interdependence of the terms rather than foreground their mutual exclusiveness; it would expose the interconnectedness between the homosexual and the heterosexual: "heterosexuality in the male...presupposes a homosexual neutralization phase as the condition of its normal possibility: homosexuality, obversely, requires that the child experience a powerful heterosexual identification" (Klein in Sedgwick, *Gender*, 479).

Edward, divided between desire and identification, oscillates between paternal and maternal identification. The Oedipal drama coercively pushes him into an irresolvable conflict; it leaves no room for formation and transformation of the differentiated categories into an interpenetrated state; it provokes elimination of one term and overvaluation of the other. Edward is forced to form his sexual identity by assuming the masculine gender and shunning the feminine gender. Yet, Jacqueline Rose points out that the construction of a coherent sexual identity along the disjunctive axis of the feminine/masculine is bound to fail (in Butler, *Gender*, 39). The binary logic of sexual difference overlooks the fact that the polarized sexes partake of one another; it seeks vainly to divide the sexes into two mutually-negating

compartments; therefore, Edward can not build a unified sexual identity owing to this injunction of the sexes.

Edward vacillates between his desire to be like his father and his desire to be like his mother. The heterosexual norm forces him to desire to be like his father; Clive is resolved to teach Edward to grow up to be a man like himself; nevertheless, Edward finds it hard to identify with his father (232). So as to promote Edward's paternal identification, Clive incorporates Edward into the male company such as taking him riding with Harry and himself (257). During the picnic scene Clive calls Edward "butterfingers" when Edward misses the ball (265); Clive aims to provoke his son so that he will be tempted to take on masculine attributes in order to be saved from his father's teasing and belittling manner. Nonetheless, Clive unwittingly articulates what has been clenched by the heterosexual frame. By calling Edward "butterfingers", and associating softness with femininity and rigidity with masculinity, Clive in fact lays bare the fact that such oppositions as feminine and masculine are likely to collapse into one another; he provides space for the gender dissonance although it has been traditionally argued that the dominant discourse leaves no room for gender and sexual deviance. Furthermore, Clive challenges Edward, belittling him that he is "so silly and you [he] can't catch. You'll be no good at cricket" (265). Paradoxically Clive pushes Edward out of the masculine territory of sports, which demonstrates the inherent instability of patriarchy. Being enraged by his father's demeaning behaviour, Edward refuses to be labelled as "butterfingers", puts the blame on Joshua for missing the ball, and calls Joshua "butterfingers". Thus, the colonized, which is feminized, resurfaces with Edward's utterance; race intersects with gender; McClintock argues that gays are figured as racial deviants while black people are called gender deviants (in *Theorizing Gender*, 86); race and gender overlap into one another through interlocking practices. The indeterminacy of the usage of the terms indicates how power changes hands between the dominant discourse and the counter discourse.

The heterosexual norm occasions the view that one can not desire what s/he wishes to be; the person whom one desires and the person whom one identifies with are forcefully severed from one another by the dominant discourse. Edward declares that he wants to be like Harry: "I'd rather be an explorer" (280); Edward identifies

with Harry who is an explorer. Also, Edward is sexually drawn and emotionally attached to Harry. Thus, Edward annihilates the disjunction between desire and identification. The point is that the patriarchal discourse struggles to engage Edward in the male terrain of adventures, aggression and toughness, yet it is unaware that Edward's desire also lies there; Harry's masculine world of going up the mountains and down the rivers incites Edward's desire as he fantasizes about himself and Harry on a raft. Hence, Edward's non-normative impulses do not pine away, rather they are reinvigorated. Being castigated for being *soft*, Edward aspires for *rigidity*, wishing to touch Harry's erect penis:

Edward: I wish the others would all be killed. Take it out now and let me see it.

Harry: No.

Edward: Is it big now?

Harry: Yes

Edward: Let me touch it.

Harry: No

Edward: Just hold me.

Harry: When you can't sleep (270).

Therefore, Edward's being paternally identified with Clive and Harry does not obliterate his homosexual desire, which shows that power can not be monopolized by a single discourse. This sexual encounter between Edward and Harry is also marked by a power-trip; Harry is endowed with the male supremacy owing to his erect penis; he wields penile power over Edward because Edward, yearning for rigidity, wants to wipe out his so-called feminine softness. In Edward's eyes, Harry signifies the phallus, thus power. Besides, this sexual encounter is related with paedophilia; queer theory, in its inclusiveness of all non-normative sexualities, regards paedophilic attachment as a possible zone of sexuality regardless of the social outrage that it incurs; queer theory pronounces the view that the rejection of paedophilia by the dominant discourse does not necessarily annihilate this kind of sexual intimacy, and shows it as one of the cultural configurations of sexuality; for the Melanesian peoples, "the insemination of boys is *necessary* for them to attain sexual maturity" (Adam, *Movement*, 152), so one form of sexuality which is unaccountable to one society can be acceptable within the cultural boundaries of another society because sexuality is culturally specific.

Edward's attachment to Harry also shows that Edward's childish body is precociously sexed; however, infantile sexuality is strictly dismissed by the normative foundations of heterosexuality; the dominant discourse refutes the idea that the infant's body is saturated with sex; Foucault states that children's sex is consigned to an obscurity, which does not mean that less is said about it (27). Likewise, Jeffrey Weeks points out that "children's sexuality has been conventionally defined as a taboo area, as childhood began to be more sharply demarcated as an age of innocence and purity to be guarded at all costs from adult corruption" (*Discontents*, 223). Gayle Rubin claims that prior to being gendered, "each child contains all of the sexual possibilities available to human expression (in Butler, *Gender*, 100). The dominant discourse upholds the heterosexual configuration of genital sexuality in accordance with its procreative potentials; Freud argues that genital sexuality is developmentally superior to infantile sexuality; nonetheless, infantile sexuality is more diffuse and less restricted than genital sexuality (in Butler, *Gender*, 37); elimination of infantile sexuality entails a "desexualisation of pre-genital sexual zones"; human beings' potentiality for pleasure is radically reduced and simultaneously harnessed to the reproductive function (Weeks, *Discontents*, 166). Infancy is characterized by polymorphous sexuality; the regulating discourse seeks to reduce this sexual plenitude into the heterosexual coitus. Nevertheless, this sexual abundance in infancy resurfaces in Edward's relationship with Harry although the dominant discourse attempts to suppress the polymorphous sexuality.

In opposition to the genital sexuality that the heterosexist hegemony favours, Monique Wittig subversively valorises anti-genital sexuality: "polymorphous perversity, assumed to exist prior to the marking by sex, is valorised as the telos of human sexuality" (in Butler, *Gender*, 37). The dominant discourse views infantile sexuality as an undeveloped sexuality or an arrested development of sexuality as it regards homosexuality as an inhibition, a failure of achieved normality, arrest of the sexual development (Weeks, *Discontents*, 154). Nevertheless, Butler states that "the notion of development can be read only as normalization within the heterosexual matrix" (*Gender*, 37). However, this discussion of genital and anti-genital sexuality is also entrapped in ancient dichotomies by which the dominant discourse of

heterosexuality manages to maintain its authority. That Wittig introduces anti-genital sexuality in opposition to genital sexuality, far from undermining the heterosexual hegemony, reproduces the binary frame, and thus perpetuates the oppressive system of pairing and polarizing interdependent terms. Power operates through this binary logic; the contestation of sexuality is to transcend the bi-polar organization of sexuality; otherwise, both the sexual dissidents and the sexual conformists would be deceived by the designs of power.

Edward is coerced to disengage his identity from his mother; he is reprimanded for playing with Victoria's doll, and spending too much time with women (276). Betty tells Edward that he "won't grow up to be a man like your [his] papa"; if he is maternally identified, his paternal identification will be harmed and spoiled. Overwhelmed by being split between desire and identification, Edward utters that "I don't want to be like papa. I hate papa"(275). Yet, afterwards he becomes regretful because he does not loathe his father. Edward tells Clive:

I was playing with Vicky's doll again and I know it's very bad of me. And I said I didn't want to be like you and I said I hated you. And it's not true and I'm sorry, I'm sorry and please beat me and forgive me (276).

Edward realizes that his father is the embodiment of the patriarchal system; he is subjugated by his father; he views his father as a punishing and frowning god, by whom he begs to be forgiven. Not only does Edward desire to escape his father's tyranny, but he also desires to succumb to and have his father's power. Hence, the way that the sexual identity is shaped indicates how sexuality becomes a point of transfer for power relations. Being convinced of his fatherly authority over Edward, Clive pardons Edward's impertinence in a moment of pretentious condescension:

Well there's a brave boy to own up. You should always respect and love me, Edward, not for myself, I may not deserve it, but as I respected and loved my own father, because he was my father. Through our father we love our Queen and our God, Edward. Do you understand? It is something men understand (276).

Clive, being sure of his paternal influence over Edward, lectures his son; he speaks of the importance of the paternal identification in the heterosexual communities. He

communicates the idea that sons must venerate their fathers so that they can get identified with them. Clive also elaborates on the chain of paternal identifications established through the patriarchal imperatives; he explains that the love for one's father opens up a love for the king, the royal paternity, (the Queen is just a historical *misfortune*), and a love for God, a male deity. Clive strengthens his paternal authority by means of blending it with royal, national, religious and divine implications, thus unwittingly discloses the male-privileged structure of the society through many levels.

Being enchanted by the reach and allure of power, Edward immediately yields to his father's authority: "I don't like women. I don't like dolls. I love you, papa, and I love you, Uncle Harry" (276). Disavowing the feminine circle, he is eager to be paternally identified. Yet, in his psyche he associates his father, with whom he identifies, with Harry whom he sexually desires; Harry becomes a surrogate father and Clive becomes a substitute lover in Edward's mental landscape; thus, the injunction at the heart of the Oedipal polarity is shattered. Patriarchy counter-effectively produces what it supposes to wipe away; Edward's sexual dissidence is revitalized by the dominant discourse. Leo Bersani elaborates on how non-normative sexualities are also manufactured by the regulating discourse: "power in our societies functions primarily not by repressing spontaneous sexual drives but producing multiple sexualities, and that through the classification, distribution, and moral rating of those sexualities the individuals practicing them can be approved, treated, marginalized, sequestered, disciplined, or normalized" (in Halperin, *Saint*, 19-20); thus, the prevailing discourse disapproves Edward's wayward desire, yet produces it in the very mode of disapproval; the force that gives way to this discordant sexuality is power itself, but power disguises itself behind the dominant discourse through making the rulers of the dominant discourse feel as if they were wielding the power over the sexually peculiar.

Having unconsciously aligned his desire for men and his desire to be a man in his psyche, Edward attempts to assume manliness. He plays at being the master, wields the so-called masculine authority over Joshua in order to protect his mother when Joshua insults Betty; he summons up his courage so that he could give an end to his being called "Eddy", "Sissy", "Girly" by Joshua, all of which, being

pejoratively used, point to his feminization and a loss of masculinity at the same time (278); the word 'Eddy' is an effort to dislodge him from the more manly 'Edward'; Joshua's tactic is marked by a diminutive and patronizing quality. Betty boasts of his son who has accomplished to claim his virile power: "Edward, you were wonderful" (278); subsequently Betty goes to embrace Edward, but he moves away: "Don't touch me" (278). Thus, Edward seeks to disidentify himself from his mother, aiming to sever his ties with the feminine circle and to cement his bond with the masculine domain. Churchill, deconstructing the mother-son relationship, introduces the song, "A Boy's Best Friend"; she subversively superimposes this song on the scene where Edward rejects his mother's affection:

This lesson we will learn
A boy's best friend is his mother (279)

Edward is forced to repudiate the maternal identification, yet they all sing this song to celebrate the mother-son relationship. Hence, Churchill disrupts the patriarchal hegemony which commands to break a son's maternal identification with his mother. Power changes hands between the maternal and paternal discourses.

Edward is torn by the division at the core of the Oedipal polarity; he is compelled to identify with the male and desire the female; likewise, Butler argues that "the heterosexual logic that requires that identification and desire be mutually exclusive is one of the most reductive of heterosexism's psychological instruments" (*Bodies*, 239). The internal contradictions of patriarchy in fact enable him to desire the male and to desire to be the male simultaneously, yet unaware of this instability, Edward is also entrapped in the binary logic of the heterosexual norm; he is sexually drawn to men and he identifies with women. Thus, the oppressive strategy of the dominant discourse still works itself out through disjunction; only the terms are reversed.

Oedipal drama is also to be contested because it implies restriction on the infinite field of sexuality. Deleuze and Guattari argue in *Anti-Oedipus* that the acceptance of the Oedipal complex is an acceptance of the social, political and religious forms of domination (in Weeks, *Discontents*, 173). Oedipal drama is predicated upon the antipodal dispositions of masculinity and femininity; the Oedipal

scenario speaks of an original sexual love of the son for the mother, and the punishing father as a rival. It is taken for granted that the masculine disposition is oriented toward the mother as an object of sexual love; the Oedipal scenario dismisses an original sexual love of the son for the father; the father can also be an object of desire who forbids himself (Butler, *Gender*, 80 – 82). These contestations of the Oedipal scenario demonstrate that it is already founded on culturally established terms; the resolution of the Oedipus complex commands in effect that only opposites attract. Correspondingly, it is not taken into account that Edward's masculine disposition can be oriented toward his father as an object of sexual love. Freud, the creator of the term Oedipus complex, announces that the boy child "also behaves like a girl and displays an affectionate feminine attitude to his father and a corresponding jealousy and hostility towards his mother" (in Harrison and Hood-Williams, 209); Freud acknowledges that there can be a primary sexual love of the son for the father, yet he introduces it through the gender-coded terms, rendering the male child who loves his father sexually feminine.

Edward is inculcated into the heterosexual law by means of a false divide between desire and identification which is hammered out in his personality. According to the pre-oedipal configuration of sexuality, the male issue both identifies with and desires his mother; thus, desire follows from identification; the resolution of the Oedipus complex requires that he should identify with the male sex and desire the female sex; yet, within this binary logic it is equally possible that desire can proceed from identification even in the post-oedipal period; hence, the male child may desire the male sex that he identifies with; this points to "a homoerotic identification with [the] father, a position of effeminized subordination to the father" (Klein in Sedgwick, "Gender", 479). Also, identification may proceed from desire as desire follows from identification; the heterosexual couples who come to resemble one another in the course of time is proof that identification can spring from desire, too. Furthermore, the male child is forced to repudiate his identification with his mother; otherwise, he would be castrated, that is, feminized; yet it is also possible that the male desire for the female body can be threatening since the female body might be figured as emasculating, that is castrating as Clive's resentment of Mrs Saunders's devouring sexuality suggests; heterosexuality in the male can be

considered to constitute “the feminizing potential of desire for a woman” (Klein in Sedgwick, “Gender”, 480). The binary logic that presumes that the male has the phallus and the female is the phallus promotes the idea that the male might be dismantled of his phallus once being enfolded in the female body during the heterosexual coitus. All these contestations of the Oedipal configuration of sexuality indicate that the heterosexual construction of sexuality, grounded in the so-called resolution of the Oedipus complex, is inherently unstable and indeterminate. Butler points out that the constitution of heterosexuality is dependent on the homosexuality that is excluded as heterosexuality is haunted by “inarticulate figures of abject of homosexuality” (*Bodies*, 96).

In the second act, Edward’s relationship with Gerry indicates how he has internalized the binary logic of the heterosexual norm; he is sexually attracted to a man and he acts like his wife, which is indicative of his maternal identification in the traditional context of sexuality and gender. Gerry tells Edward that he [Edward] “is getting like a wife” (306), “playing the injured wife” (307). Edward, intrigued by the designs of power, appears to have turned his relationship with Gerry into a heterosexual couple; Gerry is the husband and Edward himself is the wife; a replication of the binary system. Edward’s assumption of the so-called feminine roles of knitting, waiting up for Gerry, and cooking demonstrates that he has not *achieved* a paternal identification, which he should have done according to the dominant discourse.

Edward declares that “Everyone’s always tried to stop me being feminine” (306); furthermore he announces that he likes “being fucked” (306). Edward’s utterance demolishes the prohibition “that secures the impenetrability of the masculine” (Butler, *Bodies*, 51); the heterosexual regime panics over Edward’s being penetrated since Edward, once penetrated, becomes like *her*, effeminized in the heterosexual imagination; the boundaries of the body are crafted through sexual taboos. Edward is not allowed to invest the orifices of his body with sexual pleasure; yet Freud argues that “certain other areas of the body – the *erotogenic zones* – may act as substitutes for the genitals and behave analogously to them” (in Butler, *Bodies*, 60). Edward’s sense of identity mirrors the binary logic of sexual difference; he is the feminine, the passive and the penetrated whereas he regards Gerry as the masculine,

the active, and the penetrator. Thus, his relationship with Gerry becomes a site of power practice; he appears to have succumbed to Gerry's masculine authority; moreover, he seems to be willing to be subservient and to be dominated by Gerry.

The split between desire and identification becomes an irresolvable conflict in Edward's life. Suffering from an emotional turmoil when Gerry leaves him, Edward professes that he likes women: "I'd rather be a woman. I wish I had breasts like that, I think they are beautiful" (307). Desire and identification become one in Edward's eyes; for him, a sexual desire for women does not differ from a desire to be like women. Accordingly, he announces that "I think I'm a lesbian" (307). He views himself as a man who wants to be a woman who desires women. Thus, the binary logic is disrupted; instead the idea of the sexual continuum is upheld. Wittig considers that "the overthrow of the system of binary sex might initiate a cultural field of *many sexes*" (in Butler, *Gender*, 161); the limitless proliferation of sexual configurations is celebrated and sexual plurality is highlighted. Edward is no longer dangling between the notions of femininity and masculinity; he realizes that the sexual and gender identities are mutable and protean; he can switch from one to another: "People of all sexes have the right to explore femininity, masculinity – and the infinite variations between – without criticism and ridicule" (Feinberg, 25); Edward refuses to fit the cramped compartments of gender; he champions the iridescent hues of human sexuality.

Edward realizes that a person can not get hold of power by being the dominant one, or s/he can not lose power by being the subservient one; in fact, power flows through this binary frame. Mingling the established configurations of sexuality and gender, Edward is engaged in a zone of erotic possibilities, experimenting new sexual encounters with Lin, Victoria and Martin. He ventures beyond customary identities and diverts orthodox desires; he does not restrict his sexual potential only to homosexual desire; the sexual relationship between Edward, Lin and Victoria seems to cover heterosexual, incestuous and homosexual desire. For Edward, gender and sexual identity is a complexity whose totality is permanently deferred; multiple identities are alternately instituted and relinquished in Edward's being. In order not to be drowned by the shifting and overlapping identifications, Edward is to welcome

“an open assemblage that permits of multiple convergences and divergences without obedience to a normative telos of definitional closure” (Butler, *Gender*, 22).

Churchill glorifies the idea of sexual spectrum through a *ménage a trios* which is established between Edward, Lin and Victoria; this sexual plenitude promotes a flight from entrenched identities; they embark on a bold sexual experiment; they forge a sexual coalition, and refuse to be ferociously oppressed through being rigidly partitioned into either homosexuality or heterosexuality; they tear down the categories of male and female, thus display “a kaleidoscope of sexual characteristics” (Feinberg, 6); they do not want to be "pigeon holed" by identity categories, so they move into a pluralistic world of diversity (Halberstam, 19). Likewise, the constructionist approach to sexuality “tends to reject the value of a fixed identity, and to glory in the subversive effects of alternative lifestyle and of a plurality of sexual practice, in breaching the norms of sexual orthodoxy” (Weeks, *Discontents*, 200). They are immersed in a sexual liberation; they also subvert the masculine understanding of sex. In response to his being cut off from maternal identification, Edward gets united with “the maternal line” (309). Defying the conformist boundaries of sex, they are engaged in an orgy ritualistically; they try to reclaim the ritualistic essential of sex as it is practiced by pagan communities in ancient times. At a summer night in the park, Lin, Victoria and Edward, drunk, sit in a triangle, hold hands and call up a goddess; they view this sexual encounter as “a sacred rite in honour of the goddess”(310); they chant the names of the female deities of the pagan times:

Goddess of many names , oldest of the old, who walked in chaos and created life, hear us calling you back through time, before Jehovah, before Christ, before man drove you out and burnt your temples, hear us, Lady, give us back what we were, give us the history we haven't had, make us the women we can't be (308).

This chant indicates that they uphold matriarchy in opposition to patriarchy, so this non-normative sexual encounter is marked by the urge to reclaim the power of the matriarchal communities and to revolt against the patriarchal authority. This chant consecrates femininity and signals a gynocentric world in response to the male supremacy. Even this unorthodox sexual practice which purports to go beyond the

oppressor's definition of sexuality indicates the oppressor's inclination, that of the dominant discourse, for seizing the power. They revert to the mythical origins of womanhood, celebrating the goddess who fashions order out of disorder. Their vision of the feminine principle is not completely dismantled from the masculine economy of the sexes:

Victoria: Goddess of the sun and the moon her brother, little goddess of Crete with snakes in your hands (309).

They merely reverse the terms; the sun that traditionally stands for the male deities is associated with the goddess; similarly, the moon is cut off from its mythological connotations of femininity, and the masculine gender is attributed to the moon. Thus, this reversal of the terms indicates that they are entrapped within the binary logic of sexual difference. Moreover, they chant of the goddess with snakes in her hands, which replicates the patriarchal construction of women as destructive and fear-inducing. Likewise, they sing of the "Goddess of breasts", "Goddess of cunts", "Goddess of fat bellies and babies. And blood blood blood" (309); their vision mirrors the patriarchal strategy which reduces women to the body, foregrounding their reproductive quality. They are actually engaged in pseudo-liberation; they accept the male's definition of women, so they are not really emancipated. They change for the better, yet it is hard to learn a new system of sexual and gender identities: "The acquisition of our sexual and gender programming is much like the learning of our native cultural system or language. It is much harder to learn new languages, or to be as facile in them as in our first language" (Rubin, 43).

Furthermore, Lin argues that this matriarchal ritual will not involve the male species as she utters that the Goddess "won't appear with a man here"; yet, Victoria tells Lin that the goddesses "had sons and lovers", and Edward mentions that they "had eunuchs" (309). They appear to be stuck within the boundaries of the patriarchal discourse and male domination although they delight in reaffirming their sexual liberation. Yet, Edward recalls the eunuchs when the male species is mentioned, which evinces that the patriarchal intrudes upon the matriarchal through this image of castration. The three sexual dissidents turn this sexual rite into a power practice in the form of the discourses, the dominant and the subordinate.

Nevertheless, they are unaware of the fact that power can not be seized by a single discourse, but it flows among the discourses as the patriarchal vision leaves its mark on their matriarchal festivity, which shows the inherent instability of the terms.

Their sense of sexual liberation is celebrated by the song “Cloud Nine”. Being on cloud nine refers to a euphoric state of sexual freedom and fulfilment beyond the imperatives of the normalizing discourse. It upholds the same-sex desire:

Who did she meet on her first blind date?
The guys were no surprise but the lady was great
They were women in love, they were on cloud Nine.

Two the same, they were on cloud Nine.

The song also mentions that the sexual liberation subverts the authority of the system:

The wife’s lover’s children and my lover’s wife,
Cooking in my kitchen, confusing my life.
And it’s upside down when you reach Cloud Nin.

Upside down when you reach Cloud Nine.

It communicates the idea that the dominant discourse is confounded and undermined by the disclosing of the sexual continuum. They also sing of the intoxicating quality of love; they soar “Higher and higher on true love’s wings” above the solid ground through sexual liberation and fulfilment of a zone of sexual possibilities. Moreover, they regard the act of reaching Cloud Nine as attaining a divine state: “Simply divine in their silver Cloud Nine”. Correspondingly they view their orgy as a sacred rite.

Their festive celebration of the sexual liberation is susceptible to the discursive means of the dominant discourse. They appear to revel in the physical side of sex although they state that they are immersed in a sacred rite. Being drunk, they seem to act out the Dionysian instinct, setting free their impulses and sensations, regardless of the moral codes of the society; they are found not to be “sober”; they disregard the trait of being continent, a clear connotation of the Apollonian state of being (311). Thus, the binary logic is reactivated. They enthusiastically reclaim the

scene of sexual freedom which is denied to them by the oppressive system, yet their allegedly divine ritual does not go beyond the act of sexual intercourse; they only talk and theorize about the act; they do not practice it. Beneath this ceremonial glorification of sexual freedom lurks a pretentious attitude; far from recollecting the transformational powers of ancient rituals, they only engage in uninhibited sexual patterns. They do not appear to believe in what they are doing; Lin has a mocking attitude; she says that Victoria is making this rite up; she states that they might have called the goddess on the telephone; in response, Edward tells Lin that their ritual is “meant to be frightening”, yet they do not seem to be frightened. Lin says that Victoria, who is guiding the ritual through her speeches, is copying it out of a book. Also, Lin tells Victoria not to “turn it into a lecture” when Victoria speaks of the matriarchally established societies and how the property is passed down through the maternal line (308-9). The point is that their reputedly sacred rite is marked by their clumsy attempts; although they seem to be vibrant, they are not motivated by a genuine sense of the Dionysian release of sexual instincts.

They feign to be intoxicated and to transcend the limits of the established codes of sex; their orgy does not take a physical turn until they involve Martin, Victoria’s husband, who has come looking for his wife, into their sexual rite:

Victoria: Hello. We’re having an orgy. Do you want me to suck your cock?
Martin: There you are. I’ve been looking everywhere. What the hell are you doing? Do you know what the time is? You’re all pissed out of your minds
(They leap on Martin, pull him down and start to make love to him) (310).

Their sense of sexual emancipation is not put into practice until Martin arrives; they pretend to gratify their repressed sexual desires, yet they are only indulged in a verbal foreplay. That they have Martin to realize the ritualistic potential of sex is ironic since Martin is the oppressor in disguise. Martin accepts their offer to join them: “If all we’re talking about is having a lot of sex there’s no problem. I was all for the sixties when liberation just meant fucking”(310). Martin’s remark is quite to the point, despite the fact that he is the oppressor, since their sacred rite of sexual emancipation has turned out to be a simple case of sexual intercourse. Moreover, they have initiated the so-called sacred ritual by celebrating the goddesses and

recollecting the matriarchal system, yet they incorporate a man, outside their circle, Martin, who embodies the patriarchal mode of domination. They seem to envision an alternative sexual world which is attributed to a utopian stage before the acquisition of gender. They are engaged in an ideal state of sexual abundance after the dispersal of the heterosexual law; yet, the heterosexual norm re-emerges through Martin being involved in the celebrated realm of polymorphous sexuality. Yet, this idea of pre-discursive sexual domain is illusory; Butler states that “pleasure before the law is only fantasized” (*Gender*, 106). This origin of pleasure is always speculated about from a retrospective position; mobilizing the distinction between the discursive sexuality and the pre-discursive sexuality forecloses a zone of sexual possibilities, reproduces the binary frame, and thus helps the dominant discourse maintain its authority.

Martin’s being the oppressor in disguise is revealed in his behaviour toward his wife, Victoria. Martin acts like the dominant system which tries to contain the dissidence within its confines; he seeks to control Victoria although he pretends not to restrain her sexual deviance; he tells her that “You’re the one who’s experimenting with bisexuality, and I don’t stop you”(301). Martin seems to side with the sexual freedom; nonetheless, he assumes the power which, he thinks, can stop Victoria from being indulged in sexual dissidence. Martin’s attitude to peripheral sexuality can be taken to be permissiveness under surveillance as Foucault would suggest (40); rather than being lax, Martin’s attention testifies to his concern to bring his sexually deviant wife under close supervision; he does not seek to exclude disparate sexuality from, but to incorporate it into his own psychic territory.

Martin considers that sex is “a fine art we have to acquire” (300) so that he can give pleasure to his wife; he unwittingly discloses the constructedness of the sexual act; he also views himself as the agent that determines Victoria’s pleasure. Moreover, he believes that his “one aim is to give you [Victoria] rolling orgasms like I do other women”; he, being proud of his sexual potential, positions himself as the active part in sex that is to provide the passive part, Victoria, with sexual fulfilment; he reduces Victoria to a receptive position, by which she should delight in attaining the pleasure of sex. Therefore, he resents the fact that women can enjoy sex on their own through masturbation: “I don’t like to feel that you do it better to yourself”

(300). He urges Victoria to “learn to get” her pleasure; otherwise he would be disrobed of his authoritative identity that enables him to demarcate the boundaries of sex for women. He points out that he is not one of the American men who “have become impotent as a direct result of women’s liberation” (300); he states that he is in favour of women’s liberation, yet he covertly discloses his fear of impotency; he dreads the likelihood that women, when liberated, will not need men to enjoy sex.

Furthermore, Martin is unconsciously governed by the fact that his sexual capability is defined by his dominance over the passivity of women. He tells Victoria that “despite all my efforts you still feel dominated by me” (301); as the oppressor in disguise he is aware of the fact that sex bestows power on him as it reduces Victoria to a subordinate position. He pretends to be resentful of Victoria’s finding him “too overwhelming” (301). He acts like a typical wielder of power who is terrorized by the notion that he can lose his privileged situation. He is anxious, so he behaves as if he could sympathise with sexual dissidence which threatens his assumed authority; he remarks that same-sex desire is not unaccountable to him: “I think women have something to give each other. You seem to need the mutual support” (301); by means of communicating the idea that lesbian desire is not beyond his comprehension, he strives to keep sexual dissidence within the confines of his authority.

Martin tends to control Victoria through sex: “Nor am I one of your villains who sticks it in, bangs away, and falls asleep” (300); he makes use of sex in order to define his role as a man; he means that he is not self-centred in sexual intercourse, but he takes into consideration that he should toil so as to gratify his female partner’s sexual needs; he regards himself as the one who makes Victoria happy, thus decides her happiness. Likewise, he thinks of sex “as a driving lesson. Left, right, a little faster, carry on, slow down” (300); he demotes sex to a programmed activity; he sacrifices spontaneity so as to fulfil his partner’s sexual needs. Yet he also assumes the powerful position; he is in the driver’s seat; he drives Victoria, thus activates the patriarchal imagery which draws an analogy between cars and women, both of which are to be mounted on; he decides the progress of the sexual act as he finds it fit.

Martin announces that he is “writing a novel about women from the women’s point of view” (302); hence he repeatedly foregrounds his allegedly overwhelming presence; he means that women and their emotions, desires, fears and anxieties, are

not beyond his understanding. Victoria confesses that Martin makes her “tie” herself “in knots” (302); Martin strives to entangle her in his power by means of feigning to favour women’s sexual liberation.

Despite all his attempts, Martin is unsure of his dominance over Victoria as her husband; his being too concerned with Victoria and her sexual emancipation points to his insecurity about his manhood and masculine authority. Victoria is aware of the fact that she is “more intelligent” than Martin; she does not want to feel “apologetic for not being quite so subordinate”(303); Victoria’s definition of herself and realisation of her potential shakes up Martin’s privileged position and disrupts the inequality between the genders established through the heterosexual frame. Martin is yet to come into recognition that he can not seize power and he can not exert control over Victoria; power is not monopolized; it is floating among the binary terms. Martin strives to define his power in relation to Victoria; his assumed dominance over Victoria is determined by her alleged subordination.

That Martin is included in Lin, Edward and Victoria’s rite of sexual liberation becomes ironic; their motives are questionable; their idea of freedom from the shackles of the patriarchal authority turns out to be problematic. Lin, Edward and Victoria are frenzied with the notion of sexual emancipation, yet they pull Martin into their ritual of sex. Martin views their admittedly sacred rite of sensual liberation as an opportunity for having a sexual encounter as he himself announces that “liberation just meant fucking” (310).

3.2. *My Beautiful Laundrette*

In Kureishi’s *My Beautiful Laundrette* Omar appears to have internalized the binary logic of patriarchy as he understood his being as a contested site of irreconcilable opposites of the masculine and the feminine, the Asian and the English, the colonized and the colonizer. Omar’s understanding of gender and sexuality can be analyzed in three stages; first, he interiorises the dichotomous logic of the dominant discourse; secondly, he tries to reverse the hierarchy of the binary terms; finally, Omar unwittingly comes to assume his dual identity. Omar’s approach to power and sexuality can be studied within the Foucauldian perspective; how sex

has been discursively produced in historically and culturally specific ways; how the state of submissiveness and powerlessness is eroticized; how the oppressor is sexualized; how Omar's artificial masculinity is constructed and his femininity is imposed on him. Consequently, Omar's relationship with Johnny can be discussed as a power practice. Also, how the dominant discourse counter-productively generates the reverse discourse, and the former includes the latter which it seeks to exclude will be explored.

According to the poststructuralist context of the queer theory, no true self exists prior to its immersion in culture; the self is constructed in and through its relations with others and with systems of power. It promotes the idea of an (un)becoming subject; identity is a process; it flows over aspects of a person; an ambivalence in the very concept of identity is highlighted; the seeking out of a coherent identity can be deceptive; fragmentation is the core of human reality; the imposition of an entrenched identity can be seen "as a crude-tactic of power, designed to obscure the real human diversity" (Weeks, *Discontents*, 187). Accordingly, the body of selves that Omar assumes points to the Foucauldian notion of the subject as an agent and the effect of systems of power and knowledge. The three stages that Omar goes through indicate that identity is protean, that is shifting, and unstable; Omar's assumption of these selves is triggered by the underlying interconnections between the discourses.

At the beginning of the play, Omar emerges as a man having a feminine image since he practices the roles that are traditionally attributed to the female sex. In his relationship with his father, Omar impersonates the feminine principle; his father positions himself as the masculine one. Omar's relationship with his father is marked by a power practice that appears between the male and the female sexes. Papa assumes the position of a master and makes his son act like his subject:

Omar has been soaking Papa's clothes in the bath. He pulls them dripping from the bath and puts them in an old steel bucket, wringing them out. He picks up the bucket (5).

In his father's domain Omar practices a set of actions that are traditionally associated with the feminine gender. Omar becomes a stand-in for the feminine principle that is

represented by “a photograph of Papa’s dead wife, Mary” (6). The presence of Omar’s mother is foregrounded by her absence. Omar appears to have assumed the motherly role through his housewifely tasks. Omar’s appropriation of these traditionally-manufactured roles points to his maternal identification. Yet, the heterosexual frame command Omar to achieve a paternal identification. Omar occupies a place at home which is central to the feminine circle: “Omar is in the kitchen of the flat, stirring a big saucepan of dall” (6). Omar’s father acts like the oppressor that likes to exploit the ones under his power and control. Kureishi defines Papa:

Papa is as thin as a medieval Christ; an unkempt alcoholic. His hair is long; his toenails uncut; he is unshaven and scratches his arse shamelessly. Yet he is not without dignity (6).

Papa does not have the grave appearance of a revered and dreaded patriarch; rather he looks like a derelict and the dissolute sheikhs of the Orient. Nonetheless, his being in a disarrayed condition does not mean that he is devoid of an authority. Furthermore, acting like a king in his domain, Papa treats Omar like his jester so as to enjoy himself:

Omar is now pushing an old-fashioned and ineffective sweeper across the floor. Papa looks at Omar’s face. He indicates that Omar should move his face closer, which Omar reluctantly does. To amuse himself, Papa squashes Omar’s nose and pulls his cheeks, shaking the boy’s unamused face from side to side (6).

Squashing Omar’s nose and pulling his cheek might be taken as a sign of affection between a father and a son if Omar were a little boy of six or seven. Yet, his unwillingness and unsmiling face shows that Omar is not happy with being treated like a kid by his father. Papa reduces him to an infantile state, which indicates that Omar is not recognized as a grown-up man.

The master-slave dialectic informs Omar’s relationship with his father. Papa wields his power over Omar by means of leading him into a life style that Papa organizes:

I'm fixing you with a job. With your uncle. Work now, till you go back to college. If your face gets any longer here you'll overbalance. Or I'll commit suicide (6).

Papa exerts his control by fixing Omar with a job. Being aware of Omar's assumption of the feminine roles, Papa tries to urge Omar to be incorporated into the male circle through pinning him down with a job given to Omar by his uncle, Nasser. Papa asks Nasser for the job on the phone: "Can't you give Omar some work in your garage for a few weeks, yaar? The bugger's your nephew after all"(7). A *bugger*, in colloquial language, might be either an offensive word used to insult somebody or an inoffensive word used to refer to a person that you feel sympathy for; the word seems to be cut off from its sexual implications, yet buggery also means anal sex, which links with Omar's same-sex desire. Papa seems to be unsure of Omar's sexual inclination since he also tells Nasser to "fix him with a nice girl. I'm not sure if his penis is in full working order"(7). Hence, Papa tries to establish his son's heterosexual identification.

Omar's father is bothered by Omar's assumption of femininity; Nasser asks Papa if he has not trained Omar to look after him as Nasser has trained his girls (7); Omar is associated with his uncle's daughters. In response to Nasser's question, Papa replies:

He [Omar] brushes the dust from one place to another. He squeezes shirts and heats soup. But that hardly stretches him. Though his food stretches me. It's only a few months, yaar. I'll send him to college in the autumn (7).

Papa is disturbed by Omar's performing the roles that are conventionally associated with the female sex although he benefits from Omar's housewifely duties. He thinks that Omar's appropriation of femininity does not *stretch* him; it does not contribute to his masculine image and it does not help him bring out his potential. He decides what Omar should do on Omar's behalf, seeking a job for him, and wanting him to go to college.

Omar's feminine image is juxtaposed with a masculine one. The balcony of their flat overlooks the railway lines. Omar hangs out Papa's dripping pyjamas on the washing line on the balcony:

When he turns away, a train, huge, close, fast, crashes toward the camera and bangs and rattles its way past, a few feet from the exposed overhanging balcony. Omar is unperturbed (6).

Omar's amphibious image, foregrounded by the water from the pyjamas dripping down Omar's trousers and into his shoes, contrasts with the enormous train which has some masculine attributes such as its being phallic and forward-thrusting. Omar's feminine fluidity is overwhelmed by the masculine solidity of the steel, the iron, the rigidity of the train; softness is defeated by the toughness of the train. The association of the railway lines and the train with the masculine world is also related with the fact that Omar's mother committed suicide by jumping on to the railway line (24). Talking about his parents, Omar tells Johnny that "Papa hated himself and his job. He was afraid on the street for me. And he took it out on her. And she couldn't bear it" (53). Thus, the railway line becomes a symbol of masculine power in Omar's mind; a destructive and cruel site of power. He assumes femininity, identifies with his mother in the face of this merciless, devastating world.

Omar becomes more of a man in the traditional context as he starts working at his uncle's garage, venturing beyond the feminine terrain of dusting, cooking and washing; he grows "from his father's boy into a man in his own right, a necessary step in maturation" (Kaleta, 182); he step out of the *feminizing* realm of domesticity: "For men to conform to dominant ideas of manliness they must distance themselves from all traits and characteristics associated with femininity" (*Theorizing Gender*, 143). The masculine world of the garage is vulgar for Omar at first; yet, it is characterized by the vigour of the masculine territory: "Nasser is embracing Omar vigorously, squashing him to him and bashing him lovingly on the back" (10); this is the first sign of Omar's admission into the male domain marked by the masculine energy and force. Nevertheless, Omar appears to be restless in this world; trying to be disconnected from the maternal domesticity, Omar feels uneasy; he starts working in the garage by washing the cars; he appears there with "his car-washing bucket and sponge" (12): "The bucket is overfull. Omar carelessly bangs it against his leg. Water slops out" (11). He is still partially connected with the previous feminine world where he has also appeared with a bucket; yet he becomes familiar with the garage in

the course of time: “Omar is vigorously washing down a car, the last to be cleaned in the garage. The other cars are gleaming” (15); Omar seems to have adopted the sense of masculine force, energy and enthusiasm. Later Nasser wants Omar to “take a look at those accounts”; thus Omar goes into the glassed-in office from the garage; Nasser tells Omar that he is going to promote him. Omar is gradually climbing higher, thus closer, to the peak of the masculine world of success, power and authority to which he aspires. Also, his uncle gives him a car: “He points to an old convertible parked in the garage” (16). Omar is provided with the trappings of the male domain of privilege, and this change is also signalled by the *convertible* car.

Omar reclaims masculinity and repudiates femininity. Omar seeks to disconnect himself from the feminine because “when it is not camped up or disavowed, it constitutes a capitulation, a swamp, something maternal, ensnared and ensnaring” (Martin, 13). Attempting to dissociate himself from the maternal bond, Omar becomes more interested in the paternal side of his family in Pakistan. When he dines with a group of Pakistani men, Nasser’s friends, he seems to be curious about his father’s homeland:

Cherry: I know all your gorgeous family in Karachi.
Omar: You’ve been there? (17-8)

He tries to accommodate himself into this circle of powerful Pakistani men. Nonetheless, he is also bashful as he steps into the masculine territory of “shouting and hooting and boozing”, which he encounters in Nasser’s house: “Omar stands inside the door shyly, and takes in the scene” (18). His uncle notices his timid nephew and “unembarrassedly calls him over to be fondled and patted” by the grown-ups; he is treated like a child (19). Tania, Omar’s cousin, recognizes Omar’s uneasiness; when both are out on the veranda, she asks him: “Are they being cruel to you in their typical men’s way?” (21); Omar shrugs, yet he is not familiar with the way of this coarse masculine world. He is aware that he is devoid of traditional masculine attributes; talking to Tania who sympathizes with him. Omar announces: “I think I should harden myself” (22); he seeks to stiffen his image, shunning the so-called soft femininity.

Omar's formation of identity revolves upon the distinction between the disclaimed maternal identification and the-longed-for paternal identification. Kristeva regards "the notion of culture as a paternal structure and delimits maternity as an essentially pre-cultural activity" (in Butler, *Gender*, 109). Omar's attempt at integration into the circle of the powerful Pakistani men stems from this notion of culture as a paternal structure. The idea that a maternal realm exists before the paternal law also contributes to the perpetuation of the dominant discourse since it produces the binary frame; the governing principle of the pre-cultural maternal domain is the paternal law which is said to repress the former. Thus, the bi-polar understanding is established and it empowers the dominant discourse. The maternal identification is an effect of the paternal law, thus a cultural construct; for the paternal law to remain intact, the maternal realm is manufactured and dismissed. Accordingly, Butler argues that "the discursive production of the maternal body as pre-discursive is a tactic in the self-amplification and concealment of those specific power relations by which the trope of the maternal body is produced" (*Gender*, 125).

As Omar becomes more of a man, his father's image as a man weakens. The overwhelming presence of his father becomes less significant in Omar's eyes as he is gradually integrated into the male circle and begins to feel more powerful. After having had dinner with Nasser and the circle of men, Omar arrives at home, goes into Papa's room; his father appears like "just a shadow" on the balcony (25):

Papa is swaying on the balcony like a little tree. Papa's pyjamas bottoms have fallen down. And he's just about maintaining himself vertically. His hair has fallen across his terrible face. A train bangs toward him, rushing out of the darkness. And Papa sways precariously towards it (26).

Papa becomes a grotesque image; he is reduced to the state of an infant who is in need of parental help. He is unable to stand on his two feet; he is far from the grave image of a stiff father. He seems to be disfigured and dysfunctional. Papa tells Omar that he has got to the balcony to urinate; when Omar admonishes his father that he should have waited for him, Papa utters: "My prick will drop off before you show up these days" (26). The metaphor of Papa's penis being dropped off might be standing for the loss of manhood and manliness; this image of emasculation points to the

power imbalance between Papa and Omar; Papa's patronizing attitude over Omar is reversed as Omar is immersed in the masculine territory; correspondingly Papa's position is trivialized whereas Omar's stance is aggrandized.

Papa is not happy with Omar being promoted to Nasser's laundrette; he mocks Omar's new position; thrusting a pair of socks at Omar, Papa tells Omar to "illustrate" his "washing methods!" (27). Similarly, he belittles Omar, asking him a rhetorical question: "How is that scrubbing cars can make a son of mine look so ecstatic? (16). Papa has wanted to introduce Omar to the male circle of Pakistani men for a short period of time; in fact he wants his son to go to the college because Papa believes that "education is power" (17). He thinks that the Pakistani people living in England are "under siege by the white man"; therefore, he tells his son to study at university so that he will not be yoked by the English system. He reckons that education is very significant in order to be unbending in the face of English oppression, so he tells Omar not to "get too involved with that crook" (17), by which he means the group of the Pakistani men who have become wealthy in England through not education, but money.

Papa asks Omar not to let him down (17); he wants Omar not to disappoint him because he himself is a disillusioned man. In fact, he wants to be a powerful and important figure through Omar whom he expects to be powerful; "Papa fights to dominate his son's life with his dreams" (Kaleta, 182). During the dinner to which Omar is invited, Nasser remarks that his brother, Papa, was "a famous journalist in Bombay"; likewise, Zaki, a member of this group of well-off Pakistani men, declares to Nasser: "your brother was the clever one. You used to carry his type-writer"(19). Papa was a promising learned man, but according to Nasser the English system did not let him flourish in his career: "What chance would the Englishman give a leftist communist Pakistani on newspapers?" (20). Thus, Kureishi defines Papa as a man who was resourceful once, but whose prospects of attaining an important career were inhibited by the English system.

Omar actually sympathises with his father; he corrects his uncle who calls Papa a communist; Omar states that his father is a socialist, which indicates that Omar is aware of his father's ideas. Nevertheless, Omar aligns himself with the group of the so-called initiative Pakistani men who are unable to tell a communist

from a socialist; taking into account Omar's correction, Nasser calls his brother "a leftist communist socialist" (20). Omar sides with these men who think of themselves as unyielding to the English system of oppression since they are boasting about how they have torn out their chance with their hands from the Englishman (20).

These Pakistani men represent the *body* in opposition to Papa who stands for the *mind*. They underestimate Papa's belief in education, and regard Omar as "underprivileged" unless he makes a man out of himself through engaging with this masculine world of vigour, energy and force. Omar also wants to pull his father out of the flat, out of the bed; he dreams of picking his father up and pushing him outside the dark, damp flat: "And squeezed him, squeezed Papa out, like that, Uncle, I often imagine I'd get-"(13), yet his statement is cut through by Nasser and left unfinished. Turning the hierarchy between himself and his father upside down, Omar attempts to guide his father rather than be guided by him. Omar also wants his father to be more independent of him, to have a social life other than a father-son relationship.

At the end of the dinner given at Nasser's, Salim, one of the Pakistani men, is drunk and unable to drive back home; Omar is asked to drive them home. On the verge of belonging to this band of powerful men, Omar prides himself on being requested to help them; thus Omar drives Salim's car "enthusiastically into London" (23). When the car comes to a stop at traffic lights, a group of vagrant English lads, including Moose and Genghis, gather round the car, bang on it and shout; Moose climbs on the bonnet of the car and squashes his bottom grotesquely against the windscreen. Being thus assaulted and humiliated by the English lads, Salim tells Omar to drive on, yet Omar sees Johnny, who is "standing to one side of the car, not really part of the car-climbing and banging"; he gets out the car "[i]mpulsively, unafraid" (23). Omar walks past this group of lads who are ready for violence; he walks to "the embarrassed Johnny" (24). Kureishi dramatizes Omar as a fearless character in this scene; having affiliated himself with the powerful Pakistani men and been reassured of his masculinity, Omar sheds off his so-called feminine meekness.

Omar shakes hands with Johnny; thinking of his promotion to the laundrette, he tells Johnny that he is "on to something"; he tries to prove that he is not a loser any longer; he is proud of his new social standing. Johnny, indicating Salim and his

wife in the car, tells Omar to “leave ‘em there. We can do something. Now. Just us”(25), which shows that they have been friends for a long time. Yet, Omar replies that he can not leave them; Omar does not want to desert Salim and his wife in the midst of the shouting and banging lads because he does not want to risk his newly-formed ties with the powerful Pakistani men. However, he also wishes to show his affection for Johnny, so he “touches Johnny’s arm and runs back to the car” (25). Salim is relieved that they are out of danger; he is indebted to Omar for saving their “bloody arses!” (25); he expresses his gratitude to Omar, “grabbing him round the neck and pressing his face close to him”, and he makes a promise: “I’m going to see you’re all right!” (25). This is the crucial moment when Omar is admitted into the male circle of the Pakistani men.

The same night, Omar’s attachment to Johnny is rekindled when Omar feels more of a man and is reassured of his masculinity. According to the traditional codes of sexuality, male homosexual desire is associated with maternal identification; a boy who gets identified with his mother imitates his mother and assumes his mother’s desire for men, thus the object of desire becomes men. Yet, the more certain Omar is of his masculinity, the more intense his desire becomes for Johnny. The conventional association of homosexuality with effeminacy is shattered, and homosexuality comes to be correlated with hyper-masculinity; likewise, Genet, as a queer novelist, states that a “male that fucks another male is a double male” (225). Omar’s homosexual desire is empowered by his paternal identification; thus, the disjunction at the heart of the Oedipal polarity is disrupted; the division between desire and identification is wiped out; Omar identifies himself with the masculine and desires the masculine, as well. Hence, the dominant discourse which urges Omar to join the male circle counter-productively rejuvenates Omar’s same-sex desire which it seeks to obliterate; Omar’s sexual dissidence is reinvigorated by the very system that attempts to repress it.

Omar’s understanding of sexuality and gender is entrapped in binary oppositions; he is regarded to be on the side of the feminine, the colonized, the subordinate and the Oriental; he seeks to assume the masculine, the colonizer, the dominant and the English. He purports to reverse the terms; a simple reversal of the terms is an imitation of the dominant discourse; Omar replicates the heterosexual and

patriarchal strategies which are centred on sexual, gender, racial and class difference. Irigaray claims there is “only one sex, the masculine, that elaborates itself in and through the production of the ‘Other’ (in Butler, *Gender*, 25); Omar internalizes this dialectical sense of sex established by the dominant system; Omar seeks to empower his self by means of reducing Johnny to the state of the Other that is disengaged from the male supremacy. Yet, this dichotomy between the self and the other is not in accord with Omar’s homosexual desire which is informed by a passion for sameness. Omar’s divided self parallels the binary organization of the sexual difference; he reduces the amorphous sexual potential to two allegedly mutually-negating camps of gender which are historically and culturally specific and constructed.

Omar’s love for Johnny is marked by power differences. In their relationship, sexual meanings become “the bearers of important relations of power” (Weeks, *Discontents*, 177). Omar represents the feminine as his practice of womanly roles suggests; Omar positions Johnny as the masculine in his psyche. In accordance with the intersections of sex, race and power, Omar stands for the colonized, the powerless, and the oppressed whereas Johnny is associated with the colonizer, the powerful and the oppressor; Omar is stuck in oppositional sexualities which are merely social inventions. Omar’s desire for Johnny indicates how race intersects with sexuality; Butler points out that “racial presumptions invariably underwrite the discourse on gender” (*Gender*, xvi); Johnny’s being the superior race in Omar’s eyes makes Johnny more sexually enticing; Omar views Johnny “as a sex object, and maybe sees mounting him as a way to assert himself against racial discrimination” (Kaleta, 226). This power imbalance initially forms Omar’s desire for Johnny as the weak one’s desire for the powerful; later it also transforms his desire for Johnny since Omar begins to exert control over Johnny. Omar’s same-sex desire is shaped by the sense of difference; it is “articulated around a cluster of power relations” (Foucault, 30).

Omar’s first confrontation with Johnny is characterized by the difference between their social stances; Omar is promoted to the laundrette of which he thinks of becoming the manager, so he is self-confident and self-assertive. On the other hand, Johnny is “embarrassed” because he does not have a regular job, he is a derelict and he belongs to a parasitical group of young men who waste their life

strolling in idly in streets. At the beginning of the play Kureishi introduces Johnny as a squatter:

Genghis and Johnny are living in a room in the squat. It is freezing cold, with broken windows. Genghis is asleep on a mattress, wrapped up. He has the flu. Johnny is lying frozen in a deck chair, with blankets over him (3).

Johnny embodies the powerful colonizer in Omar's eyes, yet Johnny is in a low social status which renders him weaker than he is expected to be. So, it is easier for Omar to claim his superiority over Johnny, and to reverse the terms of the dominant and the subordinate. Butler would argue that Omar's sexuality that emerges within the framework of power relations is "a uniform repetition of a masculinist economy of identity" (*Gender*, 40); Omar is preoccupied with the binarized terms such as the colonizer/the colonized, the powerless/the powerful; his love for Johnny is predicated upon this binary logic; therefore his homosexual desire, which is presumably outside the heterosexual norm, is entrapped by the masculinist, patriarchal vision of sexual difference which results in the subordination and oppression of one part. Omar deploys the oppressor's strategy in order to consolidate his masculine identity; Omar's desire for domination makes him "inherit the patriarchal mantle of the white father figure" as he is enchanted by "the illusion of an undivided masculine plenitude" which he dreams of attaining through reversing the binary terms in his own favour (Rutherford, 99).

Omar tells his father that he has met Johnny; Papa recalls Johnny as "the boy who came here one day dressed as a fascist with a quarter inch of hair" (26). Johnny is regarded as a racist oppressor, yet Omar remarks that Johnny was once a friend; this simple utterance indicates that Johnny the colonizer and Johnny the friend are entwined in Omar's psyche. Papa tells Omar that Johnny did not deserve his son's admiration so much (26); Omar's respect for and attachment to Johnny are triggered by the imbalance between the colonizer and the colonized. Papa castigates Omar for flattering the oppressor and aspiring to be English: "They hate us in England. And all you do is kiss their arses and think of yourself as a little Britisher!" (26). Papa obliquely points to the cause of Omar's attraction for Johnny, the weak one's desire for the strong one within the bi-polar understanding of these terms.

The desire for the white man, as it is constructed, is fundamentally conceived of as a desire for the oppressor. Omar is called “wog” by Johnny’s white mates (31); wog is a very offensive slang word for a person who does not have white skin; having white skin means being the colonizer, the powerful; in contrast, having non-white complexion suggests an inferior position. Butler puts forward that “The body gains meaning within discourse only in the context of power relations” (*Gender*, 125); thus, Omar’s non-white body is equated with powerlessness whereas Johnny’s white body is invested with power. By means of gaining power through being the manager of the laundrette, Omar wants to inflate his image. When Omar shows Johnny round the laundrette, Johnny is impressed; Omar tells him that Johnny was the impressive one at school (33). Omar tries to reverse the hierarchy between himself and Johnny; he aims to deflate Johnny’s superior image by means of impressing him with the laundrette; he wants to whiten his dark complexion through obtaining a powerful stance over Johnny. Omar expels his non-whiteness from his body, discharges it as excrement, spits it out; thus the inner effectively becomes outer. As Iris Young would suggest, Omar’s expulsion of his *wog* skin is preceded by a “repulsion” that establishes culturally hegemonic identities along the axes of the racial and sexual difference (in *Gender*, 182)

One day, Omar runs an errand for Salim; he becomes more confident since he thinks that he has been admitted into the masculine terrain of the powerful Pakistani men. Salim gives Omar a piece of paper with an address on it; he also gives him some money:

Salim: Go to this house near the airport. Pick up some video cassettes and bring them to my flat. That’s all (29).

Omar delivers the cassettes in the evening. Salim tells him to watch something while he gets dressed in the bedroom. Omar puts a cassette into the VCR. When Salim comes back into the room, he realizes that Omar has put one of the cassettes he has brought; Salim screams savagely at Omar. He tells Omar that he has not given him permission to play those cassettes. Omar, appalled by Salim’s fury, asks Salim what business he does. In response,

Salim pushes Omar hard and Omar crashes backwards across the room. As he gets up quickly to react Salim is at him, shoving him back down, viciously. He puts his foot on Omar's nose (31).

Omar is crestfallen; he is assaulted and humiliated by Salim although he believes that he has become a member of this group of the powerful men. As he becomes more certain of himself as a man, trying to affirm his masculine identity, Salim's undermining and oppressing him in such a violent and demeaning way comes as a blow on his assumed masculine identity. Moreover, Salim insults Omar, swearing at his English blood: "you've got too much white blood. It's made you weak like those pale-faced adolescents that call us wog"(31). Salim looks down on Omar's maternal side of his identity; Omar's hybrid identity, having an English mother and a Pakistani father, harms his covenant with the masculine world of the Pakistani men; Omar's Englishness is considered to be weak; Omar is associated with the white Englishman. Furthermore, Salim claims that Omar has disappointed the paternal side of his family: "Your whole great family - rich and powerful over there - is let down by you" (31). This is a pivotal scene where Kureishi uncovers the inherent indeterminacy of the binary terms. Omar, having internalized the dichotomous logic of the dominant discourse, genders his hybrid identity: he regards his Asian side as feminine in the sense that it stands for the colonized aspect of his identity whereas he considers his English side to be masculine in that it stands for the colonizer. Yet, these binary oppositions collapse into one another; with an English mother, the English side of his being is associated with the feminine principle; on the other hand, with a Pakistani father, the Asian side of his being is associated with the masculine principle.

Omar is divided by the protean and shifting characteristics of the binary organizations of the masculine gender and the feminine gender. In order to be more masculine and more powerful, he shuns femininity and the so-called feminine weakness, repudiates the maternal identification, and he seeks to be paternally identified. Omar's attempt to reverse these terms is disrupted as the masculine aspect of his identity coalesces into the feminine one, and the feminine aspect of his identity into the masculine one. Omar is stuck in the multiplication and convergence of a

variety of culturally dissonant identifications; these shifting and overlapping identifications call into question the primacy of any univocal gender attribution.

After having been humiliated by Salim, Omar appears in his father's room in the next scene; he is "cutting Papa's long toenails with a large pair of scissors. Omar's face is badly bruised" (32). Omar seems to have reassumed his feminine self at home. Papa tells him that "Those people are too tough for" him, which suggests the idea that Omar, being soft, lacks the vigorous image of masculinity. Papa decides to phone Nasser, yet Omar, "who wells with anger and humiliation", breaks the connection after his father dials the number:

Omar grabs Papa's foot and starts on the toe job again. The phone starts to ring. Papa pulls away and Omar jabs him with the scissors. And Papa bleeds. Omar answers the phone (32).

Papa has become less powerful as Omar masculinises himself owing to being accommodated into the male circle; yet, Omar's being insulted has enabled Papa to reassume his authority over Omar, regarding himself as the authoritative figure who decides to sever Omar's ties with the group of the Pakistani men. However, Omar refuses to be controlled by his father; the act of jabbing his father with the scissors is symbolic in the sense that Omar mutilates his father; metaphorically he castrates his father, thus ends his father's phallic authority over him. Later on, hearing that Omar is speaking with Johnny on the phone, Papa insults Omar, calling him "a bum liability", which might be taken as a covert reference to Omar's homosexual desire. Nonetheless, Omar is resolved to shun his father's authority as he "is smiling into the phone and talking to Johnny, a finger in one ear" (32). Thus, he reduces his father to silence and cancels his father's powerful position.

According to the conventional dualism, the feminine principle stands for the body whereas the masculine principle represents the mind. Correspondingly, the dominant discourse positions the colonized as the body, thus feminizes him, and the colonizer as the mind, thus masculinises himself. Having internalized this cruel dialectical *understanding*, Omar seeks to identify with the *mind* and associate Johnny with the *body*, which emerges when they renovate the laundrette:

Omar and Johnny in the laundrette. Johnny with an axe, is smashing one of the broken-down benches off the wall while Omar stands there surveying the laundrette, pencil and pad in hand. Splinters, bits of wood fly about as Johnny, athletically and enthusiastically singing at the top of his voice, demolishes existing structures (39).

Hence, Omar attempts to invert the binary terms; Johnny, the colonizer, is disrobed of his identity as the mind, the incorporeal; Johnny, smashing the benches athletically, represents physical strength and, fitness. In contrast, Omar, the colonized, is severed from the identity as the body, the corporeal; Omar, pencil and pad in hand, associates himself with the mind, foregrounding his intellectual strength; also, his image of surveying the laundrette highlights his position as the employer. Omar also tells Nasser that he has “hired a bloke of outstanding competence and strength of body”, which indicates how he is eager to demolish existing structures that inform the inequality between the colonizer and the colonized. Omar’s relationship with Johnny shows that manliness is mutable: “men work very hard at *creating* masculinisms...There’s a lot of aspects of the way they behave which are highly cultural and extremely protean, [and] could change pretty quickly” (Greer in Tripp, 2).

Power demands strange presences for its exercise; it requires an exchange of discourses, which shapes Omar and his attitude toward Johnny. Omar’s attraction to Johnny stems from “a sensualisation of power” (Foucault, 44); power operates on Omar as a mechanism of attraction. Omar’s approach to sexuality is governed by “perpetual spirals of power and pleasure” (Foucault, 45); he enjoys the pleasure that kindles at being able to evade and flee from the regulating, monitoring power, embodied by Johnny in his eyes; he is ravished by the idea that he is able to travesty this state of being powerful in his own favour. His vision of sexuality is informed by compartmental sexuality: the disjunction of the dominant and the subordinate; a distribution of points of power, hierarchized and placed opposite to one another. However, the post-structuralist context of queer theory occasions the view that “[p]ower must never be regarded simply as diametrically opposed to powerlessness, that is, as discretely isolated from its alleged counterpart by a neat hierarchical chasm; rather power and powerlessness are intimately entwined and always of

necessity implicated in one another” (Schoene, 286); Omar’s supposed power over Johnny is dependent on Johnny’s supposed powerlessness.

Omar fetishizes masculinity in the person of Johnny; he over-values the masculine prowess and invests it with the state of power. According to the binary frame, Omar’s desire for Johnny is incited by Johnny’s manliness which Omar lacks; William S. Wilkerson points out that “desire is a need for something not at hand”(53); therefore, Omar does not have that which he desires. He is impressed by Johnny’s aptitude for physical work; he watches Johnny “up a ladder vigorously painting a wall and singing loudly” (39); he is enthralled by Johnny’s energy, force and enthusiasm. Johnny’s bodily vigour is in contrast to Omar’s mental dexterity in managing the laundrette. In accordance with Johnny’s association with the body, Omar employs Johnny as a bodyguard; he wants Johnny to work with him in the laundrette, and the first thing he tells Johnny to do is to “clean out the bastards” playing around the laundrette (33). Johnny assumes the state of the body to get rid of the lads kicking the laundrette dustbins across the pavement:

Johnny detaches himself from Omar and walks round the laundrette to the lads. Omar moves into a position from where he can see, but doesn’t approach the lads (45).

Thus, Johnny enacts the physical side of the binary frame while Omar, keeping aloof from the troublesome lads, assumes an over-presiding position as the manager of the laundrette. This power difference between Omar and Johnny revitalizes their desire for one another: “Johnny puts his arm round Omar. Omar turns to him and they kiss on the mouth. They kiss passionately and hold each other” (45). Thus, Kureishi connects the moment of love and affection with the scene of power imbalance which incites Omar’s desire for Johnny.

Salim wants Omar to run another errand for him; yet Salim, who has already diminished Omar to the state of powerlessness by putting his foot on Omar’s nose, tries to bully Omar to work for him; he goes quickly into the laundrette, drags Omar by the arm into the back room of the laundrette:

Salim lets go of Omar and grabs a chair to stuff under the door handle as before. Omar suddenly snatches the chair from him and puts it down slowly. And Johnny, taking Omar's lead, sticks his big foot in the door as Salim attempts to slam it (34).

Salim tends to use his strength to frighten Omar and make him run an errand for him, regarding Omar as a weak person. However, Johnny interferes with Salim's display of power and interrupts Salim's threatening gesture. Thus, Johnny empowers Omar. In the face of Johnny's backing Omar up, Salim gives up his intimidating behaviour: "Christ, Omar, sorry what happened before. Too much to drink. Just go on one little errand for me, eh?" (34). Thus Omar ascends to a powerful position through Johnny; he needs Johnny to achieve an awareness of himself, his masculinity, his manhood and power; Omar's dependency on Johnny exposes his assumed authority as illusory.

Omar thinks of Johnny in terms of the English, the colonizer, the masculine and the powerful; he has made use of Johnny's state of being a squatter and a derelict so that he can wield power over him. Omar has noticed that he is registered as feminine and weak in the White Western construction of the colonized and the Oriental (Sullivan, 60); the colonized is figured as the emasculated, thus homosexuality is associated with "the imputed sexuality of the colonized" (Butler, *Bodies*, 117). Therefore, he strives to reverse the binary terms in order to reclaim his masculinity and power; far from undermining the oppressor's discourse, he revalidates it through deploying the oppressor's strategy of hierarchizing the binary oppositions.

Omar refuses to be emasculated by the colonizer; he eroticizes the states of being submissive and powerless, and being assertive and powerful, the former through Johnny and the latter through himself; his desire for Johnny is a desire for being strong and dominant. According to this model of the dichotomous understanding of power and sexuality, the couple accords with the binary frame: one should be the masculine and the other should be the feminine. Omar is entrapped in this ideology; his homosexual desire contrasts with this logic of sexual and gender difference. In order to reclaim his masculinity, he is forced to attribute the feminine principle to his object of desire, Johnny, yet this bi-polar understanding is shaken up by the inherent instability of the terms; Omar reduces Johnny to the state of the body,

by extension the feminine, as the binary logic of the dominant discourse commands; however Johnny becomes more masculine as he enacts the *body* principle; he is endowed with the traditional masculine attributes of vigour, energy, force and enthusiasm; he turns out to be more daring, heroic and fearless in Omar's eyes, thus the binary logic is disrupted since it does not consort with Omar's same-sex desire which eradicates the division between desire and identification.

Omar both identifies with and desires the masculine principle. The binary logic of sexual difference would render him feminine since he is sexually attracted to the masculine, but Omar struggles to be dismantled of his imposed femininity. Moreover, the binary logic of the dominant discourse even heterosexualizes Omar's homosexual desire for Johnny, regarding Omar as the passive, the penetrated and Johnny as the active, the penetrator since the former, with a pencil and pad in his hand, is associated with the state of passivity and the latter, with an axe in his hand, is associated with the state of activity.

Sexuality is a point of transfer for relations of power. Attempting to cancel the gender difference between Johnny and himself, Omar tries to make use of other sites of being where the power differences are reversed in his favour and his desire is reinvigorated for Johnny.

Omar positions Johnny as a member of the lower class. Omar is invited to dine with Nasser and the circle of the Pakistani men; he goes to Nasser's house with Johnny, yet he makes Johnny wait outside. Omar tells Nasser that he has hired a man to work in the laundrette; when Nasser wants to see the person whom Omar has employed, Omar goes out to call Johnny. Tania asks him why he left Johnny out; Omar replies:

He's lower class. He won't come in without being asked. Unless he's doing a burglary.
(They get to Johnny, Omar not minding if he overhears the last remark) (42)

Omar looks down on Johnny, reducing him to the state of the lower class; he insults Johnny, remarking that he is liable to housebreaking. Moreover, he even wants to hurt Johnny by making him hear what he has said about him. However, Omar shows Johnny a little affection before they get into the house: "Omar stops Johnny a

moment and brushes his face” to remove an eyelash (43). This might be a moment of affectation rather than affection; Omar might be intending to indicate that he is the one who decides whether Johnny’s appearance is proper before they get into the house. If this moment of affection were taken to be sincere, it would demonstrate how Omar’s desire for Johnny is triggered when he feels powerful over Johnny. Omar’s attraction to Johnny is energized by a dialectical reversal of power; power seems to be an exchange between Omar and Johnny; sexuality between Omar and Johnny is saturated with power.

As the manager of the laundrette, Omar assumes himself to be a businessman. He walks around the laundrette, watching over it, proud and stern; he reassures himself of his powerful position through affirming the authority of the employer:

Johnny is working on the outside of the laundrette. He’s fixing up the neon sign, on his own, and having difficulty- Omar stands down below, expensively dressed, not willing to assist (50).

Thus, Omar makes clear the distinction between the employer and the employee; hierarchy is integral with Omar’s desire for Johnny; “power difference is the ground of the erotic” in Omar’s case (Sinfield, *Sexuality*, 58). The neon sign is vital with regards to the theme of power and sexuality; it says “POWDERS”. Kureishi might have intended a pun on the word “powders”; it is invocative of the word “power”, hence it refers to the power practice which informs Omar’s relationship with Johnny; yet it is plural, which suggests that power can not be seized and wielded by a sole person. Omar intends to exert control over Johnny with his attempt to reverse the binary oppositions of the powerful and the powerless; yet, his disavowal of Johnny’s power is also an acknowledgement of Johnny’s influence on him. Omar’s intention to define his power in relation to Johnny also makes Johnny powerful; therefore power can not be monopolized; it flows among the subjects and the discourses.

The name of the laundrette literally invokes the cleaning powders, yet it is connotative as well. When Omar tells his uncle that he wants to be the manager of the laundrette, Nasser responds: “I’m first thinking how to tell your father that four punks drowned you in a washing machine. On the other hand, some water on the brain might clear your thoughts (28)”. Nasser’s metaphorical remark might be

pointing to Omar's confusion which stems from his being divided by the aspects of his multifaceted identity. This metaphor of cleaning powders also denotes Omar's desire to whitewash his dark complexion, the wog image through being engaged in a liaison with the white man, Johnny; the laundrette is crucial for Omar as it endows him with power in his relation to Johnny. Omar's desire for Johnny also demonstrates that race is sexualized. Duped by the subtleties of power, Omar, having internalized the fact that the white is superior, finds Johnny attractive; Johnny's white skin is sexually alluring to Omar; he is manipulated by the interconnections of race and power; for Omar having a pale complexion is equal to having power, therefore being sexually enticing. Thus, the intricacies of power work through the intersections of race and sexuality.

The cycle of inversions includes the reversal of the hierarchy between England and Pakistan, the English and the Pakistani as well. According to the colonialist system, the English are superior over the Pakistani; correspondingly, Johnny is positioned to overmaster Omar. However, Omar turns this prioritized position of the English upside down by means of hiring Johnny and making him work for himself. Genghis, one of the vagrant lads with whom Johnny was hanging around before he was employed by Omar, resents the fact that Omar is Johnny's master:

I'm angry. I don't like to see one of our men grovelling to Pakis. They [The Pakistani] came here to work for us. That's why we [The English] brought them over. OK? (45).

Genghis reckons that Omar stoops to conquer the English and he views this as unacceptable. He dislikes Johnny humbling himself to Omar; he notes that Johnny is patronized by Omar, thus is reduced to the state of a powerless, crawling man; Genghis feels bitter as Johnny acts like a man of *humble* origins, kneels before Omar's authority and behaves in a servile manner.

That Omar is preoccupied with reversing the binary terms to gain power over Johnny is displayed in his demeaning approach to Johnny; he reproaches Johnny for leaving the laundrette before the closing time. Johnny tells Omar that he "is getting greedy", which provokes Omar and makes him announce his genuine motives:

I want big money. I'm not gonna be beat down by this country. When we were at school, you and your lot kicked me all round the place. And what are you doing now? Washing my floor - That's how I like it. Now get to work. Get to work I said. Or you're fired! (65).

Omar is on a power trip; he is resolved to defeat the colonizer's system. Omar makes use of his attachment to Johnny in order to overwhelm and diminish the colonizer. In other words, Omar's sexual attraction to Johnny becomes a site for relations of power since sexuality is coextensive with power.

The hierarchy between England and Pakistan promotes the view that England stands for the masculine state of dominance whereas Pakistan represents the feminine state of subjugation. Nasser, a potent man due to his wealth he has achieved in England, feminizes England when he is talking to Omar before he fixes him with a job:

In this damn country which we hate and love, you can get anything you want. It's all spread out and available. That's why I believe in England. You just have to know how to squeeze the tits of the system (14).

As a powerful man who has shunned the feminine submissiveness of the colonized in Omar's eyes, Nasser associates England with the feminine gender, reversing the binary organizations of the English masculinity and Pakistani femininity. When Nasser speaks with Salim about Johnny whom he thinks of hiring, Nasser assaults Johnny's alleged masculinity as the colonizer: "I'll have my foot up his [Johnny's] arse at all times" (48). Thus, Johnny is metaphorically buggered by Nasser; this coarse image, owing to its sexual connotations, reverses the binary oppositions, the colonized and the colonizer. However, towards the end of the play, Nasser also feminizes Pakistan according to the conventional understanding of sexuality which commands that passivity should correlate with femininity; talking to his brother, Papa, who thinks that they should go back to their country, Pakistan, Nasser utters that "But that country has been sodomized by religion" (86). Nasser, who has internalized the oppressive strategy of the dominant discourse, associates the state of infirmity with femininity, by extension homosexuality/sodomy, which is equal to

effeminacy in the heterosexual imagination. These three remarks about England and Pakistan, which have sexual connotations, indicate the inherent indeterminacy of the terms such as the masculine/the feminine, the subordinate/the dominant and the active/the passive.

The pattern of reversal also appears as Johnny is employed by Nasser. Nasser tries to get rid off his tenants in one of his houses, asks Johnny to remove the door, thus evict the tenants for not paying the rent; Johnny is to “unscrew” the hinges, to lift the doors off the frame (44). *Screw* is a slang word which means having sex, so the binary terms are reversed on a sexual level; the colonizer makes sexual use of the colonized since racial oppression correlates with sexual oppression. Johnny is made to change his role from the act of *screwing* into that of *unscrewing*. Hence, the domineering one, in the person of Johnny, is compelled to disclaim his potency. Nonetheless, the oppressive strategy of the dichotomous understanding of power is reactivated as the colonized in the person of Nasser forces the colonizer to compensate for the merciless persecution and harassment that has been inflicted upon the colonized. The colonized tries to weaken the colonizer and empower himself; the former avenges himself upon the latter who is made to atone for the colonial oppression he has practiced. Thus, they are tricked by the binary frame of the dominant discourse because the oppressive system does not change; moreover, Nasser helps this cruel system continue.

Nasser, too, aims to turn the binary oppositions upside down through Johnny as Omar does; thus, a similarity is established between Nasser and Omar, which indicates that Omar has managed to affiliate himself with the group of the powerful Pakistani men. Omar identifies with these men and assumes their crude manners; when Salim warns him not to spoil his uncle’s business in a coarse way, telling him “Don’t fuck your uncle’s business, you little fool”, Omar utters that “In my small opinion, much good can come off fucking” (41). Hence, Omar tries to evince that he has closely connected with these powerful men by means of replicating their way of speaking. Moreover, having felt self-confident in such a masculine environment, he tends to challenge them by giving his opinion freely and openly.

As Omar accomplishes to infiltrate himself into the male circle of the Pakistani men, he shows a child-like curiosity about his fatherland, Pakistan:

Omar: Tell me about the beach in Bombay, Uncle - Juhu beach. Or the house in Lahore. When Auntie Nina put the garden hose in the window of my father's bedroom because he wouldn't get up and Papa's bed started to float (38).

Having severed his link with the maternal aspect of his identity, Omar seeks to strengthen his paternal side of his being. He has refused to ground his identity in maternal identification; therefore, he attempts to make his sense of masculinity rooted in his paternal identification; Omar's "amor patriae" points to his phallic identification with his father's nation (Bhabha, 103). In response to his beseeching his uncle to tell him about their fatherland, Nasser, not recognizing the importance of the familial roots for Omar, scolds him for paying too much attention to his national origin and neglecting the work: "what about my damn laundrette? Damn these stories about a place you've never been. What are you doing, boy?" (39). Nasser renders their memories fictional by labelling them as stories; they belong to the past which has become vague; for Nasser the reality is their being in England and having to struggle for their fortune; Nasser might be worried that Omar, being carried away by those nostalgic reminiscences about their fatherland, will be cut off from the reality and the business will be sidetracked.

Nasser also ridicules Omar's hankering for a country he has never been to, thus he makes Omar confront the fact that his attachment to his fatherland might be pretentious, and the fatherland where Omar hopes to fortify his manliness is an unknown country to him. Omar is considered to be an "in-between" by Salim's wife when it becomes clear that Omar has never been to his father's country. Similarly, Omar is also made to face up to the fact that he does not speak Urdu, his father's tongue, when Zaki, speaking of business in Urdu, is asked by Nasser to switch to English so that Omar can understand them, too; Zaki is astonished: "He doesn't speak his own language?" (40). Omar's own language is his father's language, yet he speaks English, his mother's tongue, which disrupts his attempt at paternal identification since he is disconnected from the paternal aspect of his being. Nevertheless, Kureishi explains that Omar has started to speak Urdu towards the end of the play; Nasser's wife "greet[s] Omar in Urdu. And he replies in rudimentary Urdu" (73) as she welcomes him to her home. In order to complete his paternal

identification, Omar seems to have acquired the basics of his father's language; he strives to capture the sense of masculinity by basing his identity upon paternal ground; he seeks to be implanted within the paternal order of his family; Kate Bornstein quotes from *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex, and Politics* so as to shed light on the groundlessness of non-normative identities:

We are all longing to go home to some place we have never been - a place, half-remembered, and half-envisioned we can only catch glimpses of from time to time. Community. Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our town power. Community means strength to do the work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing. A circle of friends (in *Gender Outlaw*, 68-69).

Thus, Omar's desire to belong to the group of Pakistani men results from his wavering identity, his lack of a fixed identity in a traditional context and his urgent need to strengthen his self. Yet, he appears to speak Urdu only once in the play to address a woman; it would be more reassuring for Omar's place among the band of powerful Pakistani men if he conversed with them in Urdu.

Nasser also talks to Salim about Omar's paternal identification; he is boasting of Omar's achievement when the laundrette has been renovated: "Oh, Omo's like us, yaar. Doesn't he fit with us like a glove? He's pure bloody family" (47). Salim asks Nasser who has assisted Omar financially to do the laundrette up; in fact, Salim has noticed that Omar has swindled a large sum of money out of him when he has sent him on an errand. Nasser feigns not to see his point; he tells Salim that Omar has received some monetary assistance from the government, yet he "knowingly" glances at Salim and tells him: "So, like you, God knows what he's doing for money", by which he means to convey the idea that Salim should not bother himself much about the fact that Omar has pocketed some of his money. Thus, Omar is shielded and approved by Nasser, who is happy with the idea that Omar has practiced the same methods of gaining money as they have done, so secured the maintenance of the laundrette. So, Omar has become one of the men in the family with the same business traits.

As Omar becomes more masculine according to the traditional codes of manliness, Nasser urges him to marry his daughter, Tania. Prompted by his uncle, Omar proposes to Tania in a drunk state; yet, he is not genuinely interested in marrying her. Nasser, as a patriarchal figure, thinks that it is resting on him to “marry Omar off” (55). In the person of Omar, the colonized is equated with children; “imperial policies of tutelage, discipline and specific paternalistic and maternalistic strategies of custodial control” are imposed on Omar such as his father’s seeking a job for him, trying to fix him with a girl and his uncle’s making him marry Tania (in Bristow, *Sexuality*, 193). Through a superimposed shot, Kureishi subversively juxtaposes the image of Omar being forced into matrimony with the scene where Omar and Johnny are “making love vigorously, enjoying themselves thoroughly” (55). According to the conventional norms, Omar’s process of paternal identification requires that he should be sexually drawn to the female sex. However, the dominant discourse of patriarchy counter-effectively reproduces and reinvigorates Omar’s same-sex desire. As Omar has affiliated himself with the male circle to become more manly, his desire for Johnny has become more intensified. Omar’s desire to be a man is not disjointed from his desire for a man.

That Omar is made to marry Tania can also be interpreted as a homosocial relationship between men. Nasser, the head of the family, is resolved to unite Tania and Omar through a heterosexual marriage; Nasser views Omar as second to himself; he treats Omar as his heir. Thus, the heterosexual exchange of women between men, Nasser and Omar in this case, promotes a homosocial commitment along the patrilineal line of the family. The distribution of women “provides the means of binding men together” according to Levi-Strauss (in Butler, *Gender*, 55). Hence, a relation of reciprocity is established between men. Omar does not revolt against his uncle’s decision to marry him to his daughter although he is not sexually drawn to women. Omar agrees to marry Tania because the heterosexual convention of marriage cements his bonds with the male circle and fortifies his paternal identification. Therefore, the inherent instability of the heterosexual discourse is laid bare; the heterosexual norm appears to repress the homosexual desire, yet it counter-effectively occasions the emergence of homosocial relationship between men. This paradox points to the self-defeating generativity of the heterosexual law and to the

manipulative nature of power; power is not only repressive, but also productive; the heterosexual norm's supposedly repressive strategy reproduces the homosocial relationship between men.

The very patriarchal heterosexual discourse inadvertently makes Omar embark on a power trip in his relationship with Johnny. The last scene of love-making proves how Omar eroticizes power and powerlessness. The English lads beat up Salim; Johnny, wanting to stop them, interferes with the fight; he is badly beaten:

Johnny: He'll die

(Genghis kicks Salim again. Johnny loses his temper, rushes at Genghis and pushes him up against the car.)

I said: leave it out!

(One of the lads moves towards Johnny. Genghis shakes his head at the lad. Salim starts to pull himself up off the floor. Johnny holds Genghis like a lover. To Salim)

Get out of here!

(Genghis punches Johnny in the stomach. Genghis and Johnny start to fight.

Genghis is strong but Johnny is quick – Johnny tries twice to stop the fight, pulling away from Genghis)

All right, let's leave out now, eh?

(Salim crawls away; Genghis hits Johnny very hard and Johnny goes down) (87).

Omar arrives at the scene; he runs towards Johnny, who is being badly beaten, yet a lad grabs Omar, and he struggles. When the police arrives, the fight breaks up; Omar immediately "goes to Johnny, who is barely conscious" (88). Omar takes Johnny to the back room of the laundrette; he bathes "Johnny's badly bashed-up face at the sink" (88). Omar becomes immensely attentive to Johnny. When Johnny regains his consciousness and asks where he is, Omar tells Johnny that he is with him where he should be. Johnny is in tears, exposing his vulnerability; he wants Omar to kiss him; Omar tells him not to cry. Their attachment to one another is shaped by their states of being powerful and powerless; this imbalance incites their affection for each other. Johnny wants to leave, but Omar exerts his control over Johnny (88-9). The following dialogue demonstrates how their vision of love is linked with power relations:

Omar: You're dirty. You're beautiful.

Johnny: I'm serious. Don't keep touching me.

Omar: I'm going to give you a wash.

Johnny: You don't listen to anything.
Omar: I'm filling the sink.
Johnny: Don't.
Omar: Get over here! (89)

Both are beguiled by this power difference. Omar's juxtaposition of filth and charm in Johnny's personality points to his baffled state of mind which makes him oscillate between the two extremes. Omar tends to overwhelm Johnny; Johnny seeks to break loose of Omar's domination, yet he is unable to leave Omar. The play ends with the scene where "Omar and Johnny are washing and splashing each other in the sink in the back room of the laundrette, both stripped to the waist" (90). This moment of love and desire is triggered by the inequality between Johnny and Omar; both are duped by the intricacies of power. Omar sexualizes Johnny's state of defencelessness and his own protectiveness. Johnny's powerlessness empowers Omar; they are caught in binary oppositions; it does not occur to Omar that his assumed domination is defined in relation to Johnny's supposed subordination.

Halperin states that "Sexual identity was [...] polarized around a central opposition rigidly defined by the binary play of sameness and difference in the sexes of the sexual partners" (*Hundred*, 16); thus, the dominant discourse imposes its binary frame on the antipodal consolidations of sexuality, heterosexuality associated with difference, and homosexuality equated with sameness. However, homosexual desire can also be incited by difference although it is predicated upon sexual sameness; for instance, Omar's desire for Johnny is animated by the dissimilarity between their racial positions although it is founded on sexual similarity. Correspondingly, Sedgwick does not believe that "same-sex relationships are much more likely to be based on similarity than cross-sex relationships" (*Epistemology*, 159). The association of homosexuality with sameness is an assumption that underlies, and is underwritten by, the invention of homosexuality.

Butler points out that: "the substantive grammar of sex imposes an artificial binary relation between the sexes, as well as an artificial internal coherence within each term of that binary" (*Gender*, 26). Thus, the bi-polar organization of the sexes becomes illusory; also, it is misleading to think that the male gestures towards the masculine and the female towards the feminine developmentally; since these terms

are constructed, the male can also tend towards the opposite gender and become feminine because there is not a natural, internal force that introduces the divide between the male sex and the feminine gender. Moreover, it is wrong to think that the binary logic endows the masculine with power whereas the feminine becomes submissive; on the contrary, power floats among these culturally-established terms. Correspondingly, Omar seeks vainly to reverse these polarized terms in order to assume power and patronize Johnny because Omar perceives sex as “a focus of struggles over power, a site where domination and subordination are expressed” (Weeks, *Discontents*, 16).

Omar and Johnny are in an infantile mood when they appear to be washing and splashing in the sink; their pleasure is characterized by playfulness and a recovery of childhood feelings; homosexuality is also treated as “regressive” (Warner, 552). It is conventionally suggested that homosexual desire springs from an unrealized adult sexuality, the development of which is arrested. Moreover, Omar’s attachment to Johnny in the last scene of love-play is similar to the relationship between a mother and a son. Naomi Segal speaks of some elements that are said to mark women’s sexual desire: “a connection with nurturance [...] games with power (especially the pleasure of feeling power over the powerful) [...] a narcissistic sense of completion through access to the body of another” (in Sinfield, *Sexuality*, 76). These so-called feminine aspects of desire can be applied to Omar’s desire for Johnny; Omar’s taking care of a needy Johnny is suggestive of a nurturing mother; Omar takes pleasure in overmastering the white master; Omar also psychically makes use of Johnny’s white body to bleach his wog skin. Being nurturing would not be invocative of motherly care if the dominant discourse did not command that children should be reared by women. According to the traditional understanding of the same-sex desire, the homosexual reverts back to childhood in his relationship with other men so as to recapture his memories with his mother by means of imitating his mother, showing his mother’s affection to his lover, thus positioning himself as the mother. Yet, these notions do not reflect all the reverberations of homosexual desire. Omar’s desire for Johnny is related with the aspects of his multifaceted identity which has been culturally and historically produced; the mists and mystifications surrounding Omar’s sexuality have swirled, eddied and been only

partially lifted, so even Omar himself is unable to make sense out of his desire for Johnny beyond the cultural configurations of sexuality.

Freud argues that infantile sexuality is developmentally inferior to genital sexuality; infantile sexuality is considered to be undeveloped sexuality (in Butler, *Gender*, 37). Omar and Johnny are engaged in a retrievable sexuality before the marking of the heterosexual law; their sexual encounter is a subversive one that flourishes prior to the imposition of the heterosexual law. Wittig argues that infancy is characterized by polymorphous sexuality and the homosexual subject can recapture the pre-gendered integrity by means of transcending the heterosexual norm (in Butler, *Gender*, 39). Similarly, Rubin envisions “an alternative sexual world, one which is attributed to a utopian stage in infantile development, a ‘before’ the law which promises to re-emerge ‘after’ the demise of dispersal of that law” (in Butler, *Gender*, 102). Yet, the postulation of an ideal sexuality, a happier state prior to the gender acquisition reproduces the binary frame; the idea of a pre-discursive sexual plenitude in opposition to the discursive restriction of sexuality helps the dominant discourse maintain itself.

Throughout the play Omar strives to claim his masculinity. He tries to reverse the terms, the powerful/the weak, the masculine/the feminine, the colonizer/the colonized; he is stuck in the binary organization of the terms since he duplicates the dichotomous configuration of sexuality and power. Yet, the inherent instability of the terms and their resistance to be fixed shatters Omar’s attempt at dividing the concepts into two mutually-negating terms. For instance, the laundrette, the concrete manifestation of Omar’s gaining power and reclaiming masculinity, ends with a feminine suffix. The feminine principle which Omar ardently repudiates intrudes upon the site which provides Omar with superiority and renders him mighty in his own eyes; space metaphorically unfolds in the folds of Omar's body because not only bodies inhabit spaces, but also spaces inhabit bodies (Ahmed, 23); Omar's understanding of power saturates the laundrette, the space with bodily matter; the laundrette expands Omar's body and Omar becomes a part of that space. Likewise, Papa associates the laundrette with a feminine realm: “I thought I’d come to the wrong place. That I was suddenly in the ladies’ hairdressing salon in Pinner, where one might get a pink rinse”(67). The conflation of the laundrette with the ladies’

hairdressing salon connects the laundrette with femininity although Omar views this place as reaffirming his masculinity through endowing him with power. Similarly, Nasser associates the laundrette with Margaret Thatcher, the prime minister of England at that time: “We’ll drink to Thatcher and your beautiful laundrette”; Johnny unwittingly asks a pregnant question: “Do they go together?” (44). The association of Thatcher and the laundrette is many-layered; Nasser thinks of Thatcher and the laundrette simultaneously in the sense that Thatcherite government, which promotes capitalistic imitativeness, enables Omar to run the laundrette; however, this conflation of the laundrette with Thatcher might stem from the parallelism between the so-called femininity of the laundrette and Thatcher as a woman; yet taking into consideration that Thatcher is known as the Iron Lady, the boundaries of femininity and masculinity are blurred; thus, the rupture between the feminine and the masculine is eradicated.

Omar mimics the strategy of the oppressor by means of assuming a reverse-discourse, and trying to colonize Johnny; he gestures toward the self-aggrandizement; Omar’s attempt at gaining power over Johnny is structured by “the imperializing gesture of dialectical appropriation” (Butler, *Gender*, 19); he disclaims Johnny’s imperial superiority that is granted upon Johnny owing to his being the colonizer in Omar’s eyes. Omar is preoccupied with the binary organization of the states of power and powerlessness. However, Kureishi metaphorically demonstrates the inherent instability of the binary oppositions; the active and the passive collapse into one another when Omar, speaking with Nasser who is watching the horse race, is associated with the horse and the rider:

Nasser: (to horse) Come on, Elvis my son.

(to Omar) You’ll just have to run the whole family now. (to horse) Go on, boy!

(to Omar) You take control.

(to horse and others in the [betting] shop) Yes, yes, yes, he’s going to take it, the little bastard black beauty! (62).

Thus, a connection is made between Omar and the racing horse; Omar is configured as the head of the family, running the family business, thus riding the horse metaphorically; this active image contributes to his masculinity and powerful

position. However, this scene can be interpreted in the following way, as well: Omar is associated with the horse, ridden by the system; thus he is dismantled from his sense of male supremacy, given the traditionally acknowledged feminine state of passivity; he is both spurned and bridled by the oppressive system. His assumption of being powerful becomes illusory.

Duped by the vagaries of power, Omar strives to reverse the binary terms such as the masculine/the feminine, the dominant/the subordinate, and the colonizer/the colonized so as to achieve a sense of superiority and to disclaim his sense of inferiority. Yet, his understanding and handling of these terms is determined by the oppressive strategy of the dominant discourse; he is manipulated by the very system that he struggles to demolish. Omar has to grapple with the monumental pile of sexuality because “the majestic edifice of sexuality [has been] constructed in a long history, by many hands, and refracted through many minds” (Weeks, *Discontents*, 260). He is yet to assume his dual identity, overcome the urge to reduce the terms into two camps, and figure out their indeterminacy. Omar’s multi-faceted identity, his Asian side, his English blood, the colonized aspect of his being, his reclamation of manliness, his feminine disposition are sequentially arranged along a horizontal axis which does not allow their coexistence; these aspects of his complex identity seek to surpass one another; they are ranked, distributed among planes of originality; their convergence is to be realized so as to see how they really intersect with one another, how these fragments are to be stitched together in many different configurations and permutations, and how each one ramifies on its own and is also interwoven with the other manifold aspects of identity.

3.3. *The Invention of Love*

Stoppard’s *Invention of Love* indicates how the dominant discourse reproduces the counter discourses, how heterosexuality revitalizes its binary opposition, homosexuality, rather than eradicate it. Housman’s homosexuality is not repressed by the dominant discourse, but it is counter-effectively reinvigorated by the binary organization of sexuality. Although it is assumed that Housman’s dissident sexuality is suppressed, his same-sex desire returns via the mode of repression. Stoppard

announces that he “camouflaged myself [himself] by display rather than reticence. I [He] became a repressed exhibitionist” (in Zeifman, 186); Stoppard’s seemingly paradoxical remark points to the internal dynamic of the play; Housman’s repression and reticence becomes one with Wilde’s exhibitionism and display.

Sexuality is placed by power in a binary system; heterosexuality and homosexuality. In this hierarchical opposition, heterosexuality defines itself implicitly by constituting itself as the negation of homosexuality. Heterosexuality defines itself without problematizing itself; it elevates itself as a privileged term which problematizes and oppresses homosexuality. *The Invention of Love* indicates how power operates through this binary organization of sexuality; heterosexuality presupposes that it is superior to homosexuality; it tries to get perpetual hold of power; yet, power resists to be seized by a single discourse; it does not exist along a dialectical line by which the oppressor wields power over the oppressed; rather, power changes hands between the allegedly powerful heterosexual norm and the allegedly powerless homosexual form of sexuality. Heterosexuality depends upon homosexuality to lend it substance, to acquire its status of priority; therefore, heterosexuality can not claim precedence over homosexuality because the very logic of supplementarity entails the dependence of heterosexuality on homosexuality; heterosexuality needs homosexuality to generate itself as the superior term.

Housman’s repudiation of homosexuality shows that heterosexuality is an identification with homosexuality made and disavowed; therefore, his disavowal functions as a constitutive constraint; it is fundamentally enabling because homosexuality, being posited as the antithesis of heterosexuality, is rejected, thus acknowledged through this very rejection. Homosexuality and heterosexuality are imbricated in one another as they are interdependent. Yet, the intensification of heterosexual identification can not afford to acknowledge the exclusion of homosexuality on which it is dependent; thus, the dominant discourse causes potential cruelties; the binary frame “produces a violent rift, a dissension that will come to tear apart the identity wrought through the violence of exclusion” (Butler, *Bodies*, 118). Therefore, the regulative discourse, predicated upon the binary logic, deconstructs itself.

Stoppard introduces AEH at the beginning of the play when he stands on the bank of the Styx watching the approach of the ferryman of the Underworld, Charon: “AEH, aged seventy-seven and getting no older, wearing a buttoned-up dark suit and neat black boots” (1); Stoppard’s imagery is suggestive of Housman as a repressed man entrapped in the grave, gloomy suit and boots, in this case his repressed homosexuality. Similarly, when AEH, who has unexpectedly started to lecture about Cambridge, Oxford, Latin and Greek, is asked to be quiet by Charon, he replies that he can keep quiet since his “life was marked by long silences” (3), by which he refers to his repressed homosexuality. However, as he begins to reminisce about the past, the dark suit will be unbuttoned and it will be clear that his discordant desire has never been muted; on the contrary, his same-sex desire reaches a crescendo, which indicates that it has never been drowned out by the dominant discourse of heterosexuality. When Charon starts to row to cross over the Styx, three men in a boat row into view as they appear in AEH’s mental landscape; Housman, Jackson with whom Housman was ardently in love, and Pollard, one of their friends; AEH cries out in anguish: “Oh, Mo! Mo! I would have died for you but I never had the luck” (5); this term of endearment evinces the fact that his dissident sexuality has never been wiped out.

AEH speaks of Jackson as his “greatest friend and comrade” (5); he refers to one of Horace’s odes about Theseus and Pirithous, which celebrates male-to-male love. Charon remembers the ode: “Theseus-trying to break the chains that held fast his friend, to take him back with him from the Underworld. But it can’t be done, sir. It can’t be done”(5). The image of the chains invokes the idea that homosexual desire is fettered by the dominant discourse; the image of the chains cuts through AEH’s articulation of desire, yet it does not necessarily mean that AEH’s desire has been annihilated although it has been entangled and suffocated by the heterosexual frame. In a similar way, talking to Charon, AEH alludes to his latent homosexuality in a metaphorical fashion: “The desire to urinate, combined with a sense that it would not be a good idea, usually means we are asleep” (26-7); his life is likened to a state of being asleep in which such a connotative ejaculatory act as urination is expelled; the acknowledgement of the disavowal of such an impulse points to his awakening in opposition to being asleep. Being asleep is expected to trigger the repudiation of the moral imperatives dictated by the dominant discourse; yet ,oppressed by the codes of

propriety, he is unable to set his impulses free; although his impulses are not released, they are not obliterated. The discrepancy between the states of consciousness and unconsciousness correlates with the dichotomy between heterosexuality and homosexuality in AEH's psychic realm, yet the state of being conscious intrudes upon the state of being unconscious as he senses that it is not a good idea to urinate; likewise his unconscious being that emerges in an illusory state leaves its mark on his conscious being which is to be taken as his imposed straight image. The following quotation from Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, an acclaimed novel that deals with the same-sex desire, indicates how Housman is agonized due to his repudiation of homosexuality that intrudes upon his supposed straight image:

We are punished for our refusals... The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. Resist it, and your soul grows sick with it with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself, with desire for what its monstrous laws have made monstrous and unlawful (25).

The Invention of Love displays how sexuality becomes a battleground where the dominant discourse and the counter discourse seek to overmaster one another so as to get hold of power. The dominant discourse attempts to establish its authority through pairing such terms as homosexuality and heterosexuality; however, the very structure of pairing enables the reverse discourses to emerge as sites of resistance. Sexuality is partitioned into two camps of heterosexuality and homosexuality in a similar way that gender is divided into two parties of femininity and masculinity: "what was new from the turn of the century was the world-mapping by which every given person, just as he or she was necessarily assignable to a male or a female gender, was now considered necessarily assignable as well to a homo – or heterosexuality, a binarized identity that was full of implications, however confusing, for even the ostensibly least sexual aspects of personal existence" (Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, 2). Sedgwick points out that homosexuality is produced by the dominant discourse through its strategy of polarizing because the regulative discourse, perplexed by the infinite field of sexuality, narrows it to mutually-negating terms, and secures its authority through the binary frame, by which homosexuality is subordinated to heterosexuality. However, homosexuality and heterosexuality are binary oppositions

that depend on each other for their meaning; the supposed centrality of heterosexuality is shaped by the supposed marginality of homosexuality; the binary frame is self-corrosive: “the chisel of modern homo/heterosexual definitional crisis tends, in public discourse, to be hammered most fatally home” (Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, 12). While attempting to maintain its superiority through the cruel regime of pairing and prioritizing, the heterosexual discourse unwittingly deconstructs itself by the mode of excluding homosexuality and defining itself on this very exclusion.

Having internalized the binary frame, Housman succumbs to the fundamental division between desire and identification, yet paradoxically the polarity at the heart of Oedipal injunction is shattered by Housman’s desire for Moses Jackson; he not only desires to be like Moses, but also desires Moses himself. Also the autoerotic implications of AEH’s encounter with his younger self, Housman, points to his penchant for pre-gendered integrity. Yet, his utopic vision of pre-gendered integrity is disrupted by Housman himself since he yields to the binary logic of the dominant discourse by gendering his selves as a poet and a scholar. Housman seeks to depolarize his desire and identification; he desires Moses and he wants to identify with him. In order to identify with his desire he renounces his poetic side which he views as a site of same-sex passion, yet paradoxically he is cut off from his desire as well because his poetic side energizes his attraction to Moses. Thus, he is never able to repudiate his poetic side although he purports to repress it.

Housman appears to follow the heteronormative logic of sexual difference although homosexuality is a passion for sameness. His split identity is a manifestation of his conformity to the dominant discourse; Charon expects two people to take to the Underworld:

Charon: A poet and a scholar is what I was told.

AEH: I think that must be me.

Charon: Both of them?

AEH: I’m afraid so.

Charon: It sounded like two different people.

AEH: I know (2).

Housman’s divided self parallels the logic of sexual difference which is at the heart of heterosexuality. He genders his ripped selves, regarding his scholarly side as

masculine and his poetic persona as feminine. He attempts to repress his poetic side and assume a masculine image. Housman's scholarly identity is dependent on the supposed absence of his poetical identity. According to the Oedipal scenario male identity can only be achieved through a process of disidentifying with the mother, and forming a counter-identification with the father, involving a repudiation of the primary maternal identification. Correspondingly, Housman tries to disidentify with his poetical side and to form a counter-identification with his scholarly side.

In psychosexual terms the primary maternal identification points to the notion of completeness of mother and child prior to the paternal identification. Housman, Jackson and Pollard, talking about the Latin and Greek poetry, focus on the image of a *hoop*; a hoop is a kind of ring; the image of a ring is suggestive of a pre-gendered integrity before the son's paternal identification. Yet, this reversion to pre-paternal identity is supposedly shunned by the heterosexual norm; Pollard notes that they "are forbidden by the statutes to trundle a hoop" (6). Moreover, Housman explains that the hoop, being associated with the Greek in the Roman imagination, is invocative of homosexuality:

Housman: Well, to a Roman, to call something Greek meant - very often - sissylike, or effeminate. In fact, a hoop, a *trochos*, was a favourite gift given by a Greek man to the boy he, you know, to his favourite boy"(7).

Thus, allusion is to the conventional conflation of homosexuality with effeminacy; a homosexual person is considered to be unable to disidentify with the mother and repudiate the maternal identification in the heterosexual frame of thinking; William J. Spurlin speaks of "effeminophobia" which results in the persecution of the effeminate homosexual (77). Housman metaphorically points out that the same-sex desire is rejected by the male circle at the university: "It was clear something was amiss from the day we matriculated. The statutes warned us against drinking, gambling and hoop-trundling"(10); the statutes, which can be taken to be representative of the authority of the dominant discourse, consider hoop-trundling, rolling a hoop, that is homosexuality in symbolic terms, to be in the same category with such delinquent behaviours as drinking and gambling; Housman senses that

something is lacking since hoop-trundling, implied to be homosexual activity, is found to be transgressive, thus rejected.

To be disengaged from the maternal identification, Housman tends to base his love for Jackson on the so-called masculine terms; he tries to achieve identification through desire; positioning his lover as the agent of masculinity, he also attempts to construct a self-image of manliness. Jackson's masculine image is foregrounded by his being "keen on sport" and having "the science scholarship"; Jackson talks to Polard about his pursuits: "I prefer rugby football to Association rules. I wonder if the College turns out a strong side. I don't count myself a serious cricketer though I can put in a useful knock on occasion. Field athletics is probably what I'll concentrate on in the Easter term"(6-7). Thus, Jackson's manliness is highlighted through these remarks. Housman wishes to be like Jackson, regarding his classical scholarship as the science of textual criticism: "Jackson - we will be scientists together. I mean we will both be scientists"(7).

Talking to Housman about his undergraduate years at Oxford, "the sweet city of dreaming spires", AEH uses a biblical metaphor: "I felt as if I had come up from the plains of Moab to the top of Mount Pisgah like Moses when the Lord showed him all the land of Judah onto the utmost sea"(30); through this biblical allusion AEH, associating himself with the prophet Moses, identifies with Jackson whose first name is also Moses. Housman, his younger self, replies to AEH:

There's a hill near our house where I live in Worcestershire which I and my brothers and sisters call Mount Pisgah. I used to climb it often, and look out towards Wales, to what I thought was a kind of Promised Land, though it was only the Clee Hills really-Shropshire was our western horizon"(30).

The illusory land where Housman becomes one with Jackson is a promised but denied land in his case. He also links Shropshire with the Promised Land; Shropshire emerges in Housman's poetry as a site of homosexual love, a land of "light foot boys" (Abrams, 2044), and a land of "those ploughboys and village lads dropping like flies all over Shropshire" (88) as Chamberlain, who sees through Housman's homosexuality, alludes to Housman's poetry so as to make Housman confess his same-sex desire to him. Referring to his repressed same-sex desire, Housman views

Shropshire as “a country where I have never lived and seldom set foot”(1); he notes that his poetry is “quite unspeakable” since he writes about the love that dare not speak its name (35).

Housman is entrapped in ancient dichotomies; his personality becomes a site of contestation; having interiorized the binary logic of the dominant discourse, he even positions his homosexuality in opposition to heterosexuality. Housman is stuck in this bi-polar understanding established by the dominant discourse. That homosexuality is the antithesis of heterosexuality is a strategy deployed by the dominant discourse in order to contain same-sex desire within its confines and make use of its constructed notoriety so as to foreground the so-called ideal path of heterosexuality; this dichotomous logic of homosexuality and heterosexuality tries to fix the mobile field of sexuality and to reduce it to the cruel binary organization by which heterosexual regime is considered to be superior to homosexuality.

Housman regards homosexuality as essential and heterosexuality as constructed; his subversive attitude is limited to reversing the terms of homosexuality and heterosexuality; he is unable to go beyond the binary frame. AEH’s elegiac lines about Oscar Wilde’s being imprisoned due to his homosexual desire indicate that Housman views homosexuality as inborn:

Oh who is that young sinner with the handcuffs on his wrists?
And what has he been after that they groan and shake their fists?
And wherefore is he wearing such a conscience-stricken air?
Oh they’re taking him to prison for the colour of his hair. (82)

AEH laments Wilde’s destruction in the hands of the dominant discourse. AEH’s essentialist view of Wilde being imprisoned due to his homosexual desire which is metaphorically given as the colour of his hair reduces Wilde to a puppet “on genetic strings” (Birke, 68); the discursive formation of the homosexual is overlooked by AEH; he does not perceive that homosexuality is a culturally and historically specific configuration of sexuality.

Housman, having an essentialist approach, reckons that homosexuality is originally pre-discursive; homosexual desire flourishes before the heterosexual law. The dominant discourse drives men into heterosexuality; he also thinks that men are

innately homosexual prior to the intervention of the heterosexual norm. In other words, homosexuality is linked with the period where the infant is maternally identified; therefore, the intrusion of the paternal authority requires the child to assume the heterosexual norm. This accords with the Freudian proposition that infancy is marked by polymorphous desire and bisexuality; this sexual authenticity is twisted by the dominant discourse into the artifice of obligatory heterosexuality (Weeks, *Discontents*, 150).

Drawing on Butler's elaboration of the idea of "a subject before the law", the homosexual subject does not emerge prior to the heterosexual law, but s/he is constituted by the heterosexual law (*Gender*, 3). The notion that homosexual desire flourishes before the heterosexual law and it is repressed by the heterosexual law contributes to the perpetuation of the dominant discourse since the subject is temporally divided into two camps of desire, which is an effect of the binary logic of the oppressive system of heterosexuality.

Housman's ideal of the same-sex desire is predicated upon the metaphysics of substance; being an essentialist, he believes that there is a reality of substance evident in the pre-gendered person whom he views as authentically homosexual; this illusion of substance fosters the belief that the formation of the subject, the construction of the subject within the heterosexual norm, reflects the prior natural essence which is not marked by the cultural configuration of sex. Monique Wittig argues that the emergence of homosexual desire transcends the categories of sex: "If desire could liberate itself, it would have nothing to do with the preliminary marking by sexes" (in Butler, *Gender*, 35); Wittig views compulsory heterosexuality as a sophisticated and mythic construction; disclosing the fictiveness of heterosexual norm, she argues that the category of sex would proliferate beyond the heterosexual consolidation of sexuality if the marking of sex and gender were obfuscated. Likewise, Housman struggles to transcend the miscopied ancient manuscripts mutilated to suit the manuscripts to the heterosexual ideal; he tries to recapture the substance of these ancient texts, which he associates with the original, primeval homosexual desire.

Housman regards homosexuality as pre-discursive; Wittig points out that the person has a pre-social and pre-gendered integrity (in Butler, *Gender*, 99); her argument points to a retrievable sexuality before the marking of sex; likewise, AEH's

encounter with Housman is characterized by a retractile movement in pursuit of a subversive sexuality that exists prior to the imposition of the heterosexual law. Nonetheless, Butler pronounces that “the illusion of a sexuality before the law is itself the creation of that law” (*Gender*, 100); to divide sexuality into pre-discursive homosexuality and discursive heterosexuality reproduces the binary frame, thus contributes to the perpetuation of the heterosexual regime.

The dominant discourse regards homosexuality as the result of disappointed heterosexuality; homosexuality is viewed as an infantile game that is left behind at school. In response, Butler announces that it is equally clear that “heterosexuality issues from a disappointed homosexuality” (*Gender*, 67); thus, Butler turns the traditional view upside down. Yet, she does not mean to reverse the terms; rather than reproducing the binary frame, Butler tries to indicate that the bipolar organization of sexuality is bound to fail since these paired terms, heterosexuality and homosexuality, are haunted by each other, and they always threaten to collapse into one another. Similarly, Butler puts forward that the dominant discourse “produces both sanctioned heterosexuality and transgressive homosexuality” (*Gender*, 100). Butler thinks that “there are structures of psychic homosexuality within heterosexual relations, and structures of psychic heterosexuality within gay and lesbian sexuality and relationships” (*Gender*, 165); she refutes the radical disjunction between heterosexuality and homosexuality; homosexual desire is embedded in the larger structures of heterosexuality even if it is positioned in a subversive relationship to heterosexual configuration of desire.

Stoppard employs the metaphor of the corruption of ancient manuscripts in order to shed light on Housman’s conception of homosexuality as an inbuilt force. Housman laments the destruction of the authentic manuscripts: “I could weep when I think how nearly lost it was, that apple, and that flower, lying among the rubbish under a wine-vat, the last, corrupt, copy of Catullus left alive in the wreck of ancient literature. It’s a cry that can not be ignored” (36); ancient literature whose idea of exquisite includes the same-sex desire, is pruned so that the buggery, which the dominant discourse finds abominable, is wiped out. AEH resents that Euripides’s *Pirithous* was destroyed by the upholders of the heterosexual norm since it speaks of sexual dissidence: “Euripides wrote a *Pirithous*, the last copy having passed through

the intestines of an unknown rat probably a thousand years ago if it wasn't burned by bishops - the Church's idea of the good and the beautiful excludes sexual aberration, apart from chastity, I suppose because it's the rarest" (42). As a young scholar, Housman resolves to establish what the ancient manuscripts really wrote. Jowett, one of the renowned masters of Oxford, is preoccupied with the transformation of ancient manuscripts in accordance with the heterosexist foundations of heterosexuality: "In my [Jowett's] translation of the *Phaedrus* it required all my ingenuity to rephrase his [Plato's] depiction of paederastia into the affectionate regard as exists between an Englishman and his wife" (21); thus, the same-sex desire is transposed into heterosexual desire. Likewise, Jowett claims that ancient manuscripts have been miscopied throughout the centuries and their authenticity is soiled:

Think of all those secretaries! - corruption breeding corruption from papyrus to papyrus, and from the last disintegrating scrolls to the first new-fangled parchment books, with a thousand years of copying-out still to come, running the gauntlet of changing forms of script and spelling, and absence of punctuation - not to mention mildew and rats and fire and flood and Christian disapproval to the brink of extinction as what Catullus really passed from scribe to scribe, this one drunk, that one sleepy, another without scruple(24).

Hence, ancient manuscripts which are inclusive of the same-sex love metamorphose into the socially-approved texts. Free circulation of homosexuality in speech is controlled; silence is imposed on Housman's same-sex desire; so, he employs a rhetoric of allusion and metaphor so as to codify the homoerotic overtones in ancient manuscripts. Housman wants to rediscover those authentic manuscripts and go beyond the miscopied translations of the authentic manuscripts. The urge to go beyond the miscopied manuscripts consorts with the urge to go beyond the discourse, to achieve a pre-discursive integrity and to obtain pre-discursive authenticity. Stoppard likens textual editing and suppression of uncomfortable data to the eradication or repression of homosexual inclination in human beings. In Housman's eyes authenticity, homosexuality, is miscopied into inauthenticity, heterosexuality; the homosexual is translated into the heterosexual. Butler states that "within psychoanalysis, bisexuality and homosexuality are taken to be primary libidinal dispositions, and heterosexuality is the laborious construction based upon their gradual repression" (*Gender*, 105);

Housman regards homosexuality as original whereas he views heterosexuality as acquired; thus, through this reversal, power which is believed to issue from being authentic changes hands.

The binary understanding of heterosexuality and homosexuality, which Housman has internalized, is also betrayed by AEH himself. Housman is preoccupied with what the good and the beautiful truly is, and seeks to figure out the origin of these concepts. Bearing in mind that scholarly enthusiasm might be fruitless for Housman, AEH tells him that “You think there is an answer: the lost autograph copy of life’s meaning, which we might recover from the corruptions that have made it nonsense. But if there is no such copy, really and truly there is no answer. It’s all in the timing”(41). Thus, the idea that homosexual desire is the original one and the heterosexual desire is the miscopied form of homosexuality is shaken up since AEH, who has searched for the authentic homosexual passion throughout his life, comes to recognize that there is no original from which the *genuine* homosexual impulse can be recaptured. Pollard, speaking of the corruption and mutilation of ancient manuscripts, announces that “the copies get copied, so then you can argue about which copies come first and which scribes had bad habits”(67-8); Pollard’s view throws light on the idea that it is futile to try to discover which copies come first, for all the copies are more or less modified replications of one another without being based on an original source; those that have come to be considered to be original in the course of time are merely habitual perceptions which have become familiar and attained the status of the natural in the course of time. Correspondingly, there is no sexual origin; the established sexual formations have been naturalized in the course of time. That certain configurations of sexuality are authentic is also contested by Butler: “gay is to straight not as copy is to original, but, rather, as copy is to copy” (*Gender*, 43); she discloses the utterly constructed status of the so-called heterosexual original; she rejects the idea that heterosexuality is the original form of desire, but homosexuality is its copied form; both are copies since both are not original, but constructed.

While grieving over the extinction of the *unreadable* parts of ancient manuscripts which speak of same-sex desire, Housman elaborates on the metaphor of a cornfield after the reaping so as to display how the dominant discourse has sought to wipe out the sexual dissidence that it has disapproved:

Housman: Oh...Pollard. Have you ever seen a cornfield after the reaping? Laid flat to stubble, and here and there, unaccountably, miraculously spared, a few stalks still upright. Why those? There is no reason. Ovid's Medea, the Thyestes of Various, who was Virgil's friend and considered by some his equal, the lost Aeschylus trilogy of the Trojan war... gathered to oblivion in sheaves, along with hundreds of Greek and Roman authors known only for fragments or their names alone-and here and there a cornstalk, a thistle, a poppy, still standing, but as to purpose, signifying nothing (72).

Housman's agrarian metaphor associates the dominant discourse with the figure of a reaper that cruelly eradicates the dissidents, the unwanted. Yet, this metaphor reaches beyond the delineation of the dominant discourse as the merciless reaper. Housman does not understand why the reaper spares a few stalks; the dominant discourse does not reap what it sows, which Housman finds unaccountable; he reckons that the stalks that are not reaped signify nothing because they are made to signify nothing; however, Housman is unable to discern that these stalks are intentionally left in the cornfield; the unwanted stalks and thistles signify that they are the undesired ones which foreground the usefulness of the ones that have been harvested. Housman questions why the useless ones have not been reaped if the prevailing discourse seeks to obliterate them completely. The point is that the dominant discourse does not wipe out the counter discourse, rather rejuvenates it. Thus, the *unreadable* parts of ancient manuscripts manage to survive although they are supposed to be consigned to oblivion; the heterosexual assumption of authority which supposes that it has the power to eradicate the homosexual desire turns out to be whimsical.

Talking to Pollard about his being a classical scholar, Housman acknowledges his wish to profess in the field of textual criticism, and he also announces that his scholarship "doesn't mean I don't care about poetry. I do. *Diffugere nives* goes through me like a spear"(71). Housman describes his attraction to poetry, the site of his homosexual desire, by means of a phallic imagery; the spear imagery is suggestive of the thrusting tendency in sexual copulation; Housman is penetrated by the phallic power of poetry; thus, the sexual side of his love for men, which he reduces to comradeship, resurfaces through this erotic image. Likewise, when talking with his younger self about the idea of comradeship and the comrades' sharing adventure together, AEH likens the passion for companionship to "taking the sword in the breast,

the bullet in the brain” for the sake of one’s comrade (43); the image of the sword is also suggestive of phallic eroticism which emerges in his views about male-bonding. These images, metaphors, slips of the tongue indicate that Housman has not in fact repudiated the physical desire although he tries to convince himself that his affection for Jackson is informed by comradeship; friendship is not all though Housman argues that friendship is all (54); he seems to be satisfied with male bonding only; however, he also yearns for a sexual intimacy; the more his carnal desire is repressed, the more intense it becomes. Housman’s sexual identity is “liable to disruption from an unconscious realm into which has been repressed those aspects of ourselves which can not be fitted into our official identities” (*Theorizing Gender*, 64).

The binary frame which has invaded Housman’s perceptions also appears in his handling of life, death and after-life. AEH imagines that he journeys to Elysium, the mythical heaven in ancient Greece (26) when he dies. Ancient Greece is often romanticized as a land where both deities and mortals freely engage in same-sex encounters; it is suggestive of the bucolic innocence that thrives prior to the imposition of the heterosexual law. AEH makes ancient Greece into "a queer temporality" (Halberstam, 10); outside the heteronormative organization of time, AEH sexualizes ancient Greece, and envisions a *homotopia*, a utopia of homosexual desire. Jowett praises ancient Greek civilisation: “Nowhere was the ideal of morality, art and social order realized more harmoniously than in Greece in the age of the great philosophers”; yet he does not include the same-sex desire: “Buggery apart” (17). His disavowal of same-sex desire in ancient Greece suffices to prove its presence. Thus, ancient Greece becomes a longed-for realm of men-loving-men in Housman’s eyes where AEH imagines that he is reunited with his true desire. Hence, AEH’s life is marked by his suppression of homosexual desire whereas his after-life is glorified as he feels free to articulate his same-sex love in Elysium.

This dualistic understanding emerges in AEH’s interpretation of the states of being in a dream and being awake. He upholds the illusion of dreaming through which he ardently verbalizes his same-sex passion; talking to his younger self about the Greek male-to-male love, AEH utters that this kind of love is equal to dreaming “of taking the sword in the breast, the bullet in the brain” together as the male lovers are sharing the same adventures. However, the overwhelming reality intrudes upon this

lyrical imagery: the lovers “wake up to find the world goes wretchedly on and you will die of age and not of pain” (43). The gruesome reality pertains to his repressed homosexuality whereas the artifice of dreaming heralds the release of the same-sex attachment. Therefore, AEH, who is unable to move outside the binary organisation of all terms and concepts, unwittingly helps the dominant discourse maintain its sovereignty; likewise, the dominant discourse, which wields power through pairing and prioritizing the terms, unwittingly revitalizes AEH’s homosexual desire rather than eradicate it wholly. These binary terms are never stable; they are constantly shifting; AEH, sitting at a desk alone among his books, asks himself: “Am I asleep or awake?” (78); he can not figure out his state of being; being asleep is associated with suppression of his desire, and being awake with the release of his desire; he can not make out whether he has been really made to repress his desire, or the very mode of repression has reinvigorated his dissident sexuality. Towards the end of the play AEH comes to recognize that the binary organization of these terms is pointless since they are not fixed: “Neither dead nor dreaming, then, but in-between, not short on fact, or fiction” (101). This sense of in-betweenness points to the fact that the binary oppositions do not cancel, but partake of one another. AEH ponders on his sexuality through the metaphor of sleeping and waking up, life and death; he severs those terms from one another although he is uncertain of which term he belongs to; by extension, he tries to make sense out his homosexual desire; in accordance with the binary frame, homosexuality is sundered from heterosexuality since they are falsely polarized although they are merely two points on the sexual continuum.

The dichotomy between the body and the mind permeates Housman’s understanding of gender and sexuality. He oscillates between the states of the body and the mind; he sometimes favours the body over the mind, but he also identifies himself with the mind, disregarding the body. Charon asks AEH if he has been given “a decent burial”; AEH replies that he has been cremated (1). The act of cremation points to AEH’s desire to be disengaged from his body even after his soul leaves his body; he refuses to be bound to mortal corporeality. AEH remarks that “Life is in the minding” (48) in one of his lectures at university, thus he associates himself with the state of the mind. On the other hand, talking to Pollard about the Greek philosophy, Housman disregards Plato because he thinks Plato’s philosophy, which rests upon the

mind, is futile; it does not account for the state of the body. He utters that “Plato is useless to explain anything except what Plato thought” (46); moreover, he notes that “we need *science* to explain the world” (46). Housman is entangled by the ancient dichotomy between the mind, which stands for Plato’s philosophy of the ideals, and the body, which represents the notion of science as exploring the physical world. He oscillates between the concepts of the matter and the spirit. He seems to side with the state of the mind as his love for Jackson is predicated upon “Uranian persuasion” (86), which renders same-sex love as spiritual and wrenches it off from the corporeal side of love, the physical desire; Uranian persuasion points to “heavenly love which is associated with the motherless (Uranian) Aphrodite, daughter of the omnipotent Zeus, and therefore with the birth of a love in which the female has no part” (in Sullivan, 5). Christopher Marlowe, as a queer playwright, speaks of Uranian love: “Male and female are grossly conjoined following nature’s wish that that breed. There is an airier or more spiritual mode of conjunction” (Burgess, 33). Nonetheless, he also celebrates the state of the body as his repressed, thus spiritualized homosexual desire is intensified and enticed by the corporeal side of love. He vacillates between the polarized terms: the matter/ the spirit, the body/ the mind. Yet, his love for Jackson that rests upon the incorporeal does not necessarily eradicate his desire for physical love, rather revitalizes it. Thus, far from being mutually-exclusive, these binarized terms easily overlap into one another.

The divide between the classical scholar and the Romantic poet accords with the binary logic that Housman has interiorized. This dichotomy indicates an absolutist policy of sexual repression which dictates that “sexual drives [should be] sublimated towards ostensibly non-sexual aims” (Weeks, *Discontents*, 136). The dominant discourse commands in effect that the scholar and the poet should not coalesce into one another. Yet, the inherent instability of the terms make the scholar and the poet merge with each other; Housman the homosexual circulates through the pores of Housman the supposedly straight. Accordingly, his scholarly studies are energized by his poetic persona; by extension, his non-homosexual stance is fuelled by his latent homosexuality. For instance, as a classical scholar, he is interested in deciphering the ancient texts of Latin and Greek poetry; the scholar is enchanted by the theme of same-sex desire in ancient manuscripts; Charon mentions *Myrmidons*, a play written

by Aeschylus; AEH is enraptured by the story of Achilles and Patroclus, the two male lovers that Aeschylus's play features. He implores Charon to remember an actual line from the *Myrmidons* which did not survive:

AEH: The words, the words.

Charon: Achilles is in his-

AEH: Tent.

Charon: Tent - am I telling this or are you? - he's playing dice with himself when news comes that Patroclus has been killed. Achilles goes mad, blaming him, you see, for being dead. Now for the line. 'Does it mean nothing to you,' he says, 'the unblemished thighs I worshipped and the showers of kisses you had from me.'" (28)

AEH craves a genuine line from this ancient play which verbalizes the same-sex passion. Similarly, he is fascinated by the ancient bards, Horace and Catullus, who venerate the same-sex desire:

Horace is in tears over some athlete, running after him in his dreams across the field of Mars and into the rolling waves of the Tiber! -...Horace!, who has lots of girls in his poems; and that's tame compared to Catullus - *he's* madly in love with Lesbia, and in between - well, the least of it is stealing kisses from - frankly - a boy who'd still be in the junior dorm at Bromsgrove" (41).

It is clear that Housman's scholarly pursuits are intruded upon by his poetic side which he associates with his homosexual desire; the supposedly repressed feelings leave their mark on his imposed straight image which he tries to achieve through assuming a profession that is expected to cover his same-sex desire; the social construction of the natural does not entail the cancellation of the natural by the social in Housman's case; he views his homosexual desire as natural and his straight image as constructed. However, this primary homosexual love posited as prior to construction will, by virtue of being posited, become the effect of that very positing, "the construction of construction" (Butler, *Bodies*, 5).

The Romantic poet conflates with the classical scholar while AEH is lecturing at the university; teaching his students how to translate Latin poetry into English correctly, he bursts into tears as he remembers Jackson:

Jackson is seen as a runner running towards us from the dark, getting no closer.

- but why, Ligurinus, alas why this unaccustomed tear trickling down my cheek? - why does my glib tongue stumble to silence as I speak? At night I hold you fast in my dreams, I run after you across the Field of Mars, I follow you into the tumbling waters, and you show no pity (49).

While analysing one of Horace's odes, AEH is stripped off his scholarly being; he starts weeping, a manifestation of his poetic side. His glib tongue does not match his innermost feelings; he feels foolish if he only speaks of ancient poetry in terms of textual criticism. The scholar and the poet are fused into one another. The binary oppositions which are to be severed from one another revitalize one another. Butler mentions "the dual consequentiality of a prohibition that at once institutes a sexual identity and provides for the exposure of that construction's tenuous ground" (*Gender*, 39); Housman constructs his scholarly identity, his straight image, by prohibiting his poetic side, his homosexual desire; yet, this act of prohibition provides a loophole which exposes that his ostensibly straight identity is precariously achieved.

The split identity in the form of Housman and AEH is also indicative of how the binary frame forcefully regulates his being. The encounter between AEH and his younger self, Housman, is utilized by Stoppard in order to elaborate on some aspects of the same-sex love. Edmund White, a renowned English author who was a homosexual, introduces the notion of "pederasty of autobiography" (in Sinfield, *Sexuality*, 131); a mature and old writer who writes about the earlier parts of his life displays a sort of attachment to and love for his younger self. Accordingly, AEH's relationship with Housman has an autoerotic tone; Housman appears to be naïve and enthusiastic while AEH seems to be cynical and exhausted; AEH is impressed by the innocence of his younger self though he is bothered by Housman's ardent attitude in scholarly pursuit. Sinfield points out that homosexual love is also considered to be narcissistic: "a man loves what he was, what he would like to be" (*Sexuality*, 14); AEH's attitude is marked by self-love. Similarly, Housman is influenced by AEH's maturity and experience. AEH imagines a meeting with Housman:

Housman: Housman, sir, of St. John's.

AEH: Well, this is an unexpected development. Where can we sit down before philosophy finds us out. I'm not as young as I was. Whereas you, of course, are.

They sit.

Classical studies, eh?

Housman: Yes, sir.

AEH: You are to be a rounded man, fit for the world, a man of taste and moral sense.

Housman: Yes, sir.

AEH: Science for our material improvement, classics for our inner nature. The beautiful and the good. Culture. Virtue. The ideas and moral influence of the ancient philosophers.

Housman: Yes, sir.

AEH: Humbug.

Housman: Oh. (30-31).

AEH's relationship with Housman is also relevant to the notion of narcissism since homosexuality is considered to be self-love. A metaphor from Aeschylus's *Myrmidons*, which AEH finds enthralling, is related to the idea of same-sex desire as a form of narcissism. Charon tells AEH that "Achilles compares himself to an eagle hit by an arrow fledged with one of its own feathers" (28); like Narcissus who is drowned in his own image, Achilles is destroyed by himself. AEH's confrontation with Housman in his psyche is recuperative and nostalgic; he seeks to achieve wholeness by means of being reunited with his younger self in a psychic realm; when Housman utters a statement that AEH has made at the beginning of the play, AEH remarks that "I think we're in danger of going round again" (45); in fact, this image of going round points to his inclination for accomplishing a coherent and unified identity which he has been unable to assume due to his division of selves enforced by the dominant discourse. The urge to achieve a sense of completeness also accords with Housman's attempt at bridging the gap between desire and identification, both desiring Jackson and desiring to be Jackson.

Under the yoke of the dominant discourse, Housman even considers homosexuality in a dualistic understanding, dividing it into two forms: masculinist and effeminate homosexualities. Stoppard maps out a terrain for comprehending the ceaseless permutations of desire. In opposition to Housman who identifies with masculinist homosexuality, Stoppard introduces Oscar Wilde who stands for the effeminate homosexuality; thus, Stoppard aims to display the mobile field of sexuality as a zone of erotic possibilities.

Housman's idea of masculinist homosexuality shuns any hints of effeminacy; he makes use of the Roman and the Greek civilisations so as to make a distinction between these two configurations of homosexuality: "Well, to a Roman, to call something Greek meant - very often - sissylike or effeminate" (7). Trying to discover how the Greek words can be translated into English, Housman tells Jackson and Pollard that the Greek sense of homosexuality is confounded with effeminacy. Housman strives to view men-loving-men as comrades; he tells Charon that Jackson is his greatest friend and comrade (5). Similarly, AEH tells Housman that Theseus and Pirithous are "companions in adventure", not lovers although he is enchanted by the homoerotic overtones of the story of these heroes. Housman expands this notion of comradeship: "Companions in adventure! *There* is something to stir the soul! Was there ever a love like the love of comrades ready to lay down their lives for each other?" (39). Housman is cautious so that comradeship is not mistaken for spooniness, making love by kissing and caressing; AEH completes Housman's remark by means of uttering that Housman does not mean "the love of comrades that gets you sacked at Oxford" (40). Thus, they struggle to dissociate their notion of masculinist homosexuality from effeminacy. Housman builds his idea of masculinist homosexuality on the Greek heroes such as Achilles and Patroclus, praising their sublime qualities of friendship, virtue and companionship. Furthermore, AEH makes a clear distinction between comradeship and effeminacy:

In Homer, Achilles and Patroclus were comrades, brave and pure of stain. Centuries later in a play now lost, Aeschylus brought in Eros, which I suppose we may translate as extreme spooniness; showers of kisses, and unblemished thighs. Sophocles, too; he wrote *The Loves of Achilles*: more spooniness than you'd find in a cutlery drawer, I shouldn't wonder. Also lost. (41)

AEH, who admires Aeschylus, pretends to disregard him for his inclusion of spooniness into the play; he believes that male comradeship is spoiled by spooniness; his idea of male love does not include Eros, the God of Love, hence erotic connotations. Thus, the homosexual is desexualized; Housman's attachment to Jackson is marked by a demand for love that is pursued at the expense of desire; Housman does not admit to Jackson that he also desires him sexually.

AEH explores the idea of male comradeship and male bonding by alluding to the Sacred Band of Theban youths, an army of a hundred and fifty lovers in ancient Greece. According to the codes of comradeship, to be the fastest runner, the strongest wrestler, the best at throwing the javelin is a virtue; AEH's vision of male bonding is marked by masculine attributes practiced in a male realm. AEH, overjoyed with the idea of male bonding, quotes from Plato's *Phaedrus* in order to demonstrate the sense of attachment and commitment achieved among the comrades. "although a mere handful, they would overcome the world, for each would rather die a thousand deaths than be seen by his beloved to abandon his post or throw away his arms, the veriest coward would be inspired by love". AEH repeatedly explains that these lovers are never base; he believes in their elevated virtue: "Oh, one can sneer - the sophistry of dirty old men ogling beautiful young ones; then as now, ideals become debased" (42). Thus, any suggestions of sexual advance, which is viewed as ignoble, are rejected by AEH; he regards the lofty love of the comrades as an ideal which is uplifting as it is accomplished on an exalted plane.

In parallel with these Greek comrades, Housman imagines that his love for Jackson is based on companionship. He pictures himself and Jackson in a homosocial world of their own which resembles the comradeship of ancient times: "But here we are, you and I, we eat the same meals in the same digs, catch the same train to work in the same office, and the work is easy, I've got time to do classics...and friendship is all, sometimes I'm so happy, it makes me dizzy" (54). Housman is blissful since he is committed to Jackson as a friend. He reckons that his idea of friendship is not *betrayed* by any sexual implications; "male-male desire is legitimated on a homosocial basis" (Bristow, *Sexuality*, 205).

Housman's attachment to Jackson is *purified* of bodily aspects of love since his idea of masculinist homosexuality dismisses the corporeal side of love. Housman's commitment to Jackson is shaped by his internalized homophobia which views physical desire between two men as beastliness; Housman's repression of his carnal desire points to the circumscription of the homosexual: "Housman internalized society's judgment, converting his own guilt and shame into abject denial, unma(s)king Eros through transmut(il)ation into something less threatening – brotherhood, say, or comradeship" (Zeifmann, 194). His love for Jackson yields to the

conventional divide between the body and the mind. This dualistic conception of sexuality in the form of the spirit and the matter leads Housman into thinking of his love for Jackson on a spiritual, ideal level. His idea of comradeship is marked by Platonic enthusiasm which he elaborates on while talking about Theseus and Pirithous, two male lovers of ancient Greece:

They were kings. They met on the field of the battle to fight to the death, but when they saw each other, each was struck in admiration for his adversary, so they became comrades instead and had many adventures together. Theseus was never so happy as when he was with his friend. They weren't sweet on each other in the heroic age, in virtue, paired together in legend and poetry as the pattern of comradeship, the chivalric ideal of virtue in the ancient world (76).

Housman's vision of male-bonding rests upon being paired in adventure and knightly deeds; it is characterized by the shared experience of heroism and bravery; it does not involve corporeal love since Theseus and Pirithous are not sexually drawn to each other. The idea of virile homosexuality in ancient Greece does not involve a man acting like a woman; same-sex love is not tolerated if it feminizes the man; so Housman, basing his love for Jackson on the Hellenistic ideal, puts the emphasis on male heroism (Weeks, *Sexuality*, 28). It is an ideal form of love which leads the friends into appreciating beauty and virtue through their attachment to one another:

It was still virtue in Socrates to admire a beautiful youth, virtue to be beautiful and admired, it was still there, grubbier and a shadow of itself but still there, for my Roman poets who competed for women and boys as fancy took them; virtue in Horace to shed tears of love over Ligurinus on the athletic field (76).

This divine vision of love is not to be devalored by the *vulgarity* of physical side of love; these comrades are considered to be immersed in immortal love since mortality in the form of the matter is repudiated. Homosexual love is acknowledged under the disguise of male comradeship; therefore, male-bonding is a covert term, a euphemism for homosexual union. Butler explains how the discordant desire is contained by the dominant discourse: the subjects regulated by power structures "are, by virtue of being subjected to them, formed, defined, and reproduced in accordance with the requirements of those structures" (*Gender*, 3); same-sex desire is formed and defined

as male-bonding which is not disruptive of the heterosexual matrix, so accords with its conditions. The notion of male-bonding is both produced and restrained by the very structures of power through which liberation is sought so as to emancipate same-sex desire.

The association of male love with the spirit in opposition to the matter renders the comrades “the bearers of a body-transcendent universal personhood” (*Gender*, 13); they are alleged to be in pursuit of the intangible as they shun the tangible body. This dichotomy between the matter and the spirit is formed by the established dualism which regards the female as corporeal and the male as incorporeal; Butler points out that “This association of the body with the female works along magical relations of reciprocity whereby the female sex becomes restricted to its body, and the male body, fully disavowed, becomes, paradoxically, the incorporeal instrument of an ostensibly radical freedom” (*Gender*, 16). This binary logic stems from the patriarchal idea that women are the mortal bearers of humankind and men are the agents of the immortal spirit as God, in Christian theology, is said to have blown his spirit into men; women are reduced to the physical state of being as they give birth to human beings, and mortality, death, is the legacy of the maternal body; on the other hand, men are assumed to be closer to the idea of divinity, which supports the notion of male ascendancy; “women are said to contribute the matter; men, the form” (Butler, *Bodies*, 31). In other words, the masculine poses as a disembodied universality and the feminine gets constructed as a dismissed corporeality; the male is disembodied in accordance with his association with the spirit whereas the female is embodied in accordance with her association with the matter. Lévi-Strauss’s structuralist anthropology dwells upon the problematic nature/culture distinction; the binary relation between culture and nature promotes a relationship of hierarchy in which the female is associated with nature and the male with culture; the body is equated with the female, thus the subordinate while the mind is equated with the male, thus the dominant; Butler points out that “nature/culture discourse regularly figures nature as female, in need of subordination by a culture that is invariably figured as male, active and abstract” (*Gender*, 50).

The conflation of women with the state of the body results in the association of the sex with the body, thus with women. Wittig argues that sex is feminine (in Butler,

Gender, 25); the masculine remains unmarked by sex, yet the female body is saturated with sex. In accordance with this identification of women with sex, Housman believes that the masculine image he toils to construct can be fouled by the sexual, thus feminine, aspect of his attraction to Jackson, so he dismisses the corporeal side of love. Therefore, Housman equates Eros with spooniness and effeminacy. An articulation of carnal desire for Jackson would make Housman relapse into the maternal realms in Housman's eyes since he has internalized the heterosexist idea that homosexuality is connected with the continuation of the maternal identification and the disavowal of the paternal identification. He conforms to the heterosexual norm that the person who is sexually attracted to men has a feminine disposition.

Jackson's sexual orientation is also to be taken into account since he is the object of Housman's desire; Jackson is heterosexual, which contrasts with Housman's homosexuality. That Jackson's object of desire is a woman positions Housman as the female part in a possible encounter between Housman and Jackson in the traditional context. These two settled terms of heterosexuality and homosexuality leaves no room for Housman's sexual discordance. One of Housman's colleagues, Chamberlain, sees through Housman and understands the true nature of Housman's commitment to Jackson. Chamberlain warns Housman in a friendly way that Jackson will not yield to Housman's love for him: "but he'll never want what you want. You'll have to find it somewhere else or you'll be unhappy, even unhappier" (64).

Irigaray argues that sex is masculine in terms of the production of the Other as a result of sexual consummation: "there is only one sex, the masculine, that elaborates itself in and through the production of the 'Other'" (in Butler, *Gender*, 25); the masculinist configuration of sexuality depends on the idea of sexual difference in Irigaray's argument; the one whom Housman desires is to be different from himself; yet, Housman tries to be the same with Jackson; in order to identify with his desire, Housman renounces his Romantic side, which informs his homosexual desire in his eyes; however, he is paradoxically cut off from his object of desire as his attempt to wipe out the divide between desire and identification automatically eradicates sexual difference which incites desire within the heterosexist frame of sexuality. The logic of sexual difference commands in effect that Housman should regard Jackson as the

other, yet by means of identifying with Jackson, Housman views Jackson as not the other, but the same with himself.

Housman vacillates between the states of the matter and the spirit; there are certain loopholes in his vision of masculinist homosexuality which demonstrate that he betrays his idea of comradeship. Although he appears to base his love for Jackson upon the spiritual level, he also wishes to achieve a physical union with Jackson, which is covertly expressed in his remarks and attitude. For instance, Chamberlain, who sympathizes with Housman and the way he sticks to Jackson, discloses the erotic side of Housman's attachment to Jackson: "you want to be brothers-in-arms, to have him to yourself...to be shipwrecked together, (to) perform valiant deeds to earn his admiration, to save him from certain death, to die for him-to die in his arms, like a Spartan, kissed once on the lips" (64-5). Chamberlain, who is himself homosexual, unearths the homoerotic undercurrents of Housman's attachment to Jackson; Chamberlain speaks of the chivalric code by which Housman interprets his love for Jackson, but Chamberlain also uncovers Housman's sexual desire for Jackson; "to die in his arms" has sexual connotations since dying means having an orgasm in colloquial diction; the verb to 'die' "draws on sexual slang to indicate" reaching orgasm (Bristow, *Sexuality*, 116).

Housman's relationship with Jackson is marked by sexual imagery; for example the act of Housman's crowning Jackson is a sexually pregnant image. Jackson is training to be a runner; Housman, responsible for timing, is holding a watch. When Jackson asks Housman how long the first quarter of his running has lasted, Housman replies that he has forgotten to look at the watch because he has been watching Jackson (20); Housman admires Jackson's male physique and delights in watching Jackson's figure, his energy and vigour; Housman's admiration of Jackson's body is marked by the voyeuristic pleasure that derives from "the scopophilic drive" which involves looking secretly at other people's bodies as objects of curiosity (*Theorizing Gender*, 41); Housman's watching Jackson is homoerotic which "denotes the admiring, desiring gaze which one man may direct at another, or the images which elicit such a gaze" (Hammend, 5). After the running session ends, Jackson sits exhausted on the seat; Housman "has a home-made 'laurel crown'. He crowns Jackson- a light-hearted gesture"(20). The act of crowning, which has homoerotic

overtone, intrudes upon the so-called Platonic enthusiasm which Housman claims to assume through a glorification of gallantry among the comrades so as to reach the idea of beauty and virtue by means of his love for Jackson. The laurel crown is evocative of the ancient Greek culture where same-sex desire is venerated; it is also reminiscent of the stalwart deeds that the comrades engage in.

That Housman is sexually drawn to Jackson is also revealed in his slips of tongue. Jackson and Housman are talking about the Aesthetes such as Wilde who are associated with homosexuality:

Jackson: There were several at Oxford, I remember.

Housman: Do you remember he said your leg was a poem?

Jackson: Which one?

Housman: Left. Oh - Wilde. Oscar Wilde (56)

This Freudian slip discloses Housman's repressed desire for Jackson; his consciousness is overwhelmed by this attraction to Jackson. Butler states that the unconscious, "as a site of repressed sexuality, re-emerges within the discourse of the subject as the very impossibility of its coherence" (39). That Housman's repressed homosexuality resurfaces indicates that he has not achieved a unified identity; the homosexual desire that is believed to be repressed returns via the mode of repression; Butler calls the dominant discourse "a perpetual bumbler, preparing the ground for the insurrections against itself" (*Gender*, 39); paradoxically the dominant discourse jeopardizes its assumption of power through the binary frame that it toils to perpetuate.

Eventually Housman confesses to Jackson that he is both emotionally attached and sexually attracted to Jackson. Jackson does not admit that Housman is sexually drawn to him; he points out that it is "nonsense" and they are "chums since Oxford" (74-5). Housman also tells Jackson that he is his best friend and he mentions such comrades from ancient Greece as Theseus and Pirithous so as to convey the idea that their friendship is an ideal, chivalric one. However, as he elaborates on the idea of comradeship, Housman loses his spirit and he is no longer able to leash his desire for Jackson:

Housman: Will you mind if I go to somewhere but close by?

Jackson: Why? Oh...

Housman: We'll still be friends, won't we?

Jackson: Oh

Housman: Of course Rosa knew!-of course she'd know!

Jackson: Oh!

Housman: Did you really not know even for a minute?

Jackson: How could I know? You seem just like...you know normal...you're not one of those Aesthete types or anything - angrily how could I know?! (77).

Thus, the chasm between Housman the supposedly straight and Housman the repressed homosexual is bridged. Due to this conflation of the two aspects of Housman's personality, which are assumed to negate one another, Jackson is perplexed as Housman articulates his love for him. Confession compels Housman to articulate his sexual peculiarity; he appears to be extracting from the depths of his soul a truth which the very form of confession holds out like a glimmering illusion; the urge to confess is profoundly embedded in his consciousness; he no longer realizes that his homosexual desire is the effect of a power system that restrains him; it seems to him that his sexual truth, rooted in his innermost nature, demands to be disclosed; so he views his homosexual desire for Jackson as an inbuilt force rather than a constructed configuration of sexuality. An essentialist understanding regards sex as an all-pervading, deep-rooted, overpowering urge in the individual; likewise Housman thinks of his sexuality as "the guarantor of our [his] most profound sense of self" (Weeks, *Discontents*, 81); having internalized this essentialist approach, Housman supposes that his confession of homosexuality has nothing to do with the discursive shaping of sexuality.

Housman's idea of comradeship is disrupted since he finally verbalizes his desire for Jackson. Jackson tells Housman that his girlfriend, Rosa, thinks that Housman is "sweet on" him (74). Jackson tells Housman that Rosa thinks that Housman is sexually drawn to Jackson. Housman thinks Rosa's assessment is true; he reckons that Rosa is definitely able to figure out the true essence of his attachment to Jackson because his love for Jackson accords with Rosa's love for Jackson; thus he finds a similarity between his love for Jackson and Rosa's love for Jackson; this analogy attributes a feminine disposition to Housman; he eventually acknowledges that his commitment to Jackson, a heterosexual man, associates him with a woman, Rosa, and a feminine disposition. Hence, the false divide between the masculine

homosexual and the effeminate homosexual, the divide between the visions of comradeship on a spiritual level and men-loving-men who are sexually engaged is shattered; the difference between the virilised homosexuality he has been building and the feminized homosexuality that he has been rejecting is erased; the binary frame through which the dominant discourse tries to maintain its authority is disrupted.

In opposition to the idea of masculinist homosexuality, the figure of Oscar Wilde appears as the embodiment of “the indolent, upper-class, dandified, effeminate homosexuality” (Clum, “Gay/Queer”, 150); Wilde exemplifies the notion that homosexuality emerges out of inversion in the nineteenth century in “the form of the feminized man or virilised woman, gender transitivity” (Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, 46). Housman regards homosexuality as inborn whereas the personality of Wilde proves that it is constructed like other configurations of sexuality. Although Wilde himself appears towards the end of the play, his presence cuts through Housman’s understanding of sexuality. The homosexual love dares not speak its name in the person of Housman, yet it becomes extremely voluble in the person of Wilde. The Aesthete figure is associated with Wilde, thereby with homosexuality; the persona of Oscar Wilde came to link the new notion of homosexuality with effeminacy, aestheticism, and aristocratic decadence (Sinfield, *Wilde*, vii). Ruskin, a pre-eminent critic of the time, speaks of the Aesthetic Movement:

Aesthetics was newly arrived from Germany but there was no suggestion that it involved dressing up [...] nor that it was connected in some way with that excessive admiration for male physical beauty which conduced to the fall of Greece. It was not until the 1860s that moral degeneracy came under the baleful protection of artistic licence and advertised itself as aesthetic. Before that, unnatural behaviour was generally left behind at school, like football (9-10).

Ruskin’s questioning of the arrival of this movement into England is of crucial importance in terms of the consolidation of homosexuality as a culturally and historically specific construct. The same-sex desire is equated with this Aesthetic spirit; otherwise it would be unaccountable to the defenders of the opposite-sex relations. Being fastidious about the way one gets dressed, and appreciation of male charm are considered to be attributes incorporated into the homosexual personality. By means of an allusion to ancient Greece, the same-sex desire is acculturated, made a

part of the history, so that it could become understandable within the historical line. Homosexuality is also viewed as a sexual aberration that one should grow out of; thus, the same-sex desire is associated with infantilism that anyone might be susceptible to; yet, the figure of Wilde who freely expresses his same-sex desire and experiences this passion in his adult years is appalling for the dominant discourse.

Wilde is the concrete manifestation of the Aesthetic spirit. The Aesthetic admiration for male physical beauty is displayed in Wilde's regarding Jackson's left leg as a poem (18). Although Wilde adores a vigorous male figure, he does not delight in doing sports, which contrasts with Housman's vision of masculinist homosexuality that praises such virile qualities as throwing the javelin and wrestling. Wilde thinks that doing sports is tedious and pointless; Jackson asks Wilde if he is a rowing man; Jackson reports Wilde's reply: "he tried out for an oar in the Magdalen boat but couldn't see the use of going backwards down to Iffley every evening so he gave it up and now plays no outdoor games at all, except dominoes" (18). Wilde, being witty and foppish, embodies the figure of the Aesthetic effeminate homosexual; Wilde not only acts as a pole within the binary frame of homosexuality and heterosexuality, but also exceeds that binary doubling.

Wilde is Ruskin's protégé at Oxford; Ruskin describes him: "an Irish exquisite, a great slab of a youth with white hands and long poetical hair who said he was glad to say he had never seen a shovel" (15); Wilde's devotion to beauty and appearance is foregrounded; his white hands and long "poetical" hair, the symbols of the effeminate homosexual, are contrasted with the prosaic, masculine, thus tedious image of a shovel; Wilde is also constructed as an exhibitionist who delights in displaying his white hands and fair flowing hair. Ruskin continues to speak of Wilde: "My protégé rose at noon to smoke cigarettes and read French novels" (15); Wilde is seen as a decadent person; he shows an interest in pleasure and enjoyment rather than more serious pursuits; he trivializes the issues that are found to be serious in a traditional context.

The effeminate homosexual is associated with the figure of a poseur; for instance, Jackson, speaking with Housman about the Aesthetes, notes that "all that posing and dressing up, it's not manly" (56); thus the womanly image of the homosexual is highlighted through the personality of Wilde who leads a dissolute life.

The Aesthetic spirit, which Wilde represents, is illustrated in Wilde's remark that "he finds it harder and harder everyday to live up to his blue china" (16). Wilde's snobbish behaviour appals those who approve of the conventional codes of society. In opposition to the consolidation of the homosexual as effeminate, Housman puts forward the image of the masculine homosexual; he utters that "we have a blue china butterdish at Broomsgrrove, we never take any notice of it" (16); thus, the manly identity of the homosexual is secured by Housman. The Aesthete is also equated with debauchery; Pater, a scholar at Oxford, announces that the Aesthetic spirit is plainly seen "in Michelangelo's David- legs apart. The blue of my very necktie declares that we are still living in that revolution whereby man regained possession of his nature and produced the Italian Tumescence" (17) The idea of sexual dissidence is incorporated into the Aesthetic spirit; "David", sensuously carved by Michelangelo, is sexually arousing; the metaphor of the Italian Tumescence, which literally refers to the Renaissance, is also suggestive of a sexual connotation since tumescence, which stands for a part of the body swollen as a result of sexual excitement, is a symbol for the erect penis; men are sexually attracted to "David", a male nude figure. Accordingly, Wilde's sexual deviance is linked with the Aesthetic spirit.

The Wildean wit is reputed for its paradoxes; his usage of paradoxes accords with the reversal of the established terms that he dislocates out of their accustomed context. Housman, thinking of Wilde's way of unsettling the fixed terms, laments that "It'll be a pity if inversion is all he's known for" (15); Housman makes a pun on the word "inversion"; he literally refers to the reversal of the polarized terms which Wilde achieves through his paradoxes and ironies; but also Housman alludes to Wilde's inversion of the sexual instinct as the homosexual is also called the invert. This idea of inversion stems from the internalization of the binary logic of sexual difference; for example, a homosexual man is believed to have a woman's soul in a man's body, "*anima muliebris virili corpore inclusa*, a woman's soul trapped in a man's body" according to Ulrichs' description (in Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, 158). In parallel with his sexual inversion, Wilde revels in subverting the established norms; he deconstructs the masculine image of the male species by means of assuming the admittedly feminine attributes. Wilde embraces the image of the effeminate homosexual whereas Housman aligns himself with the masculine image of homosexuality; thus,

homosexuality, which is a refusal of sexual difference, conforms to the binary frame which divides even homosexuality into two camps.

Wilde and Housman are confounded with one another owing to a misunderstanding; hence the divide between the masculine homosexual and the effeminate homosexual is shattered. Jowett, mistaking Housman for Wilde, is addressing Housman: "If you can rid yourself of your levity and your cynicism, and find another way to dissimulate your Irish provincialism than by making affected remarks about your blue china and going about in plum-coloured velvet breeches, which you don't, and cut your hair - you're not him at all, are you? Never mind, what have you got there?" (22). Thus, Housman, who aspires to be manly, is conflated with Wilde, who enjoys masquerading as an frivolous effeminate homosexual; the binary organization of homosexuality is disrupted; the masculine homosexual collapses into the effeminate homosexual. Stoppard indicates the indeterminacy of these terms which the dominant discourse attempts to pin down so that they could fit in the sexual continuum through a method of pairing.

The homosexual is traditionally associated with effeminacy; Wilde, in a mocking manner, incorporates certain feminine attributes into his personality since he disclaims the authority of the dominant discourse over the individual. Being on the margin of the society, he cynically observes the community and inverts its moral codes. In order to accomplish his aim, he welcomes the image of the effeminate homosexual constructed by the dominant discourse. He becomes a peripheral figure who is aware of the fact that he is situated on the periphery. Sexual deviants are simultaneously culturally marginal and discursively central; Wilde's homosexuality is outside the boundaries of the decent society when it is taken at face value, yet it is at the core of the community since the dominant discourse defines its own decency in relation to the indecency of the deviant; the sexual deviant is banished to the margins of society, yet s/he remains integral to it because of that marginality.

The deviant can be analyzed as a construct in the person of Wilde; his deviancy is disavowed, thus acknowledged in terms of its straying from the ideal path of heterosexual desire. Jowett speaks with Pater about the "disgusting sonnet" Wilde wrote as an undergraduate at Oxford: "a sonnet on the honeyed mouth and lissome thighs of Ganymede, would be capable of a construction fatal to the ideals of higher

learning”; Jowett abhors Wilde’s sonnet which deals with the same-sex desire; his abhorrence results from the idea that the sonnet which mentions homosexual desire is detrimental to the sublime pattern of scholarly pursuit; Jowett’s remark that the sonnet saturated with homosexual desire is a construction indicates the constructedness of the sexual identity; Wilde’s sexual deviance is in fact manufactured by the dominant discourse. Wilde is known as “the Balliol bugger” (21); his non-normative sexuality is given a name, therefore acknowledged even though this makes him notorious.

Wilde, talking to AEH about love, declares that “before Plato could describe love, the loved one had to be invented” (95); Wilde comments on his love for Bossie, his beloved, yet the idea of invention is central to the theme of construction; love does not spring from an essence; it is not an internal force, but it is an invention, a construct that is acquired. The homosexual had to be invented before the dominant discourse could describe homosexuality; therefore, the prevailing discourse produces the effeminate homosexual in the person of Wilde, then it tries to make sense out of homosexuality; otherwise, homosexual desire would be unfathomable. Labouchere, a Liberal MP and a journalist of the time, who represents the dominant discourse, explains how the deviant is constructed:

We invented Oscar, we bodied him forth. Then we floated him. Then we kited the stock [...] But now he’s got away from us. No matter where we cut the string, the kite won’t fall. The ramp is over and the stock keeps rising. When he came home and had the cheek to lecture in Piccadilly on his impressions of America, I filled three columns under the heading ‘Exit Oscar’. I dismissed him, no doubt to his surprise, as an effeminate phrase-maker (57).

This account of Labouchere demonstrates that the dominant discourse produces the counter-discourse rather than wipe it out. The juridical discourse crystallizes a variety of shifting sexual ideologies and practices: “For what was at issue was not just the prosecution of homosexual acts per se or the delegitimizing of homosexual meanings. At issue was the discursive production of ‘the homosexual’ as the antithesis of the “true” bourgeois male” (Cohen, 69). Wilde as the effeminate homosexual is made by those in power; they include Wilde within the boundaries of their territory so that they can have power over him; sexual dissidence is contained by the dominant discourse: “Modern Western cultures produce a notion of the ‘deviant’ or ‘queer’ in order to

shore up a sense of heterosexual ‘normality’, a ‘queerness’ which the ‘straight’ must then simultaneously deny and depend on as its constitutive difference” (Tripp, 15). Wilde embodies the homosexual; homosexuality is theorized by the dominant discourse and Wilde puts it into practice. The metaphor of the kited stock is indicative of how Wilde is utilized and exploited by the dominant discourse. Wilde is labelled as an effeminate homosexual and he actualizes the label; he is compelled by law to inhabit “a structure in which transgression and law, homosexual delight and its arrest, are produced and reproduced as interlocked versions and inversions of each other” (Craft, 126). The invention of Wilde by the dominant discourse points to the fact that the heterosexual law perpetually reinstates the possibility of its own failure so that the law could be repeated to remain authoritative; through punishing its own failure, Wilde in this case, the law fortifies its authority; likewise, Butler argues that the prevailing discourse “seeks to confine, limit, or prohibit some set of acts, practices, subjects, but in the process of articulating and elaborating that prohibition, the law provides *the discursive* occasion for a resistance, a resignification, and potential self-subversion of that law” (*Bodies*, 109); the prohibition is also a frustrated form of power; through self-negating generativity, the heterosexual law reinvigorates itself. Therefore, in the person of Wilde, “the sexual revolution has merely strengthened the political powers that it has purported to overthrow” (Halperin, *Saint*, 20); so the kind of freedom that sexual liberation produces imposes on Wilde an even more insidious unfreedom; Wilde’s dissidence forfeits the heterosexual norm that he debunks.

The construction of the deviant is also carried out by the medical discourse and the psychological discourses that emerged in the nineteenth century. The attitude of the medical discourse to the same-sex desire is revealed in one of Jowett’s remarks, who thinks that homosexuality is detestable: “The canker that brought low the glory that was Greece shall not prevail over Balliol !”(22); homosexuality is regarded as a disease at the time. The psychological studies of the nineteenth century tried to understand the same-sex desire and to define it; Chamberlain tells AEH that it has been suggested that those who are engaged in the same-sex desire be called ‘homosexuals’:

AEH: Homosexuals?

Chamberlain: We aren’t anything till there’s a word for it.

AEH: Homosexuals? Who's responsible for this barbarity?
Chamberlain: What's wrong with it?
AEH: It's half Greek and half Latin! (11)

Foucault points out how the homosexual becomes a personage:

The nineteenth-century homosexual became a personage, past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology. Nothing that went into his total composition was unaffected by his sexuality. It was everywhere present in him: at the root of all his actions because it was their insidious and indefinitely active principle; written modestly on his face and body because it was a secret that always gave it away (43).

Before the nineteenth century, there were people who were sexually drawn to their own sex, but they were not defined. Homosexuality is a culturally and historically specific term; it does not account for the practice of sodomy, or pederasty, an erotic relationship between an adolescent boy and an adult man. Before the emergence of homosexuality as a definitional term, sodomy is used to define same-sex relation, but sodomy does not amount to homosexuality which is associated with the Aesthetic spirit towards the end of the nineteenth century. Likewise, Harris, a journalist, is speaking with Labouchere about the same-sex desire and its definition: "Actually in Greece and Rome sodomy was rarely associated with a taste for French novels, it was the culture of the athletic ground and the battlefield" (62); Harris intends to mean that the sodomitical act is not equal to the homosexual practice because these conceptions of sexuality are culturally and historically specific. The term homosexual is forged by the dominant discourse in the nineteenth century. Wilde's reaction to the fact that his sexual distinctiveness is placed within the dominant discourses of medicine and psychology shows how he is made to embody a form of sexual pathology and how his *peculiar* sexuality is contained and governed:

My life can not be patched up. Neither to myself, nor others, am I any longer a joy. I am now simply a pauper of a rather low order: the fact that I am also a pathological problem in the eyes of German scientists : and even in their works I am tabulated, and come under the law of averages! Quantum mutatus! (in Bristow, "Complex", 199).

The dominant discourse renders Wilde a construct. Wilde himself is aware of his position of the deviant as a construct:

I woke the imagination of the century. I banged Ruskin's and Pater's heads together, and from the moral severity of one and the aesthetic soul of the other I made art a philosophy that can look the twentieth century in the eye. I had genius, brilliancy, daring, I took charge of my myth. I dipped my staff into the comb of wild honey. I tasted forbidden sweetness and drank the stolen waters (96).

In accordance with his so-called inversion, he reverses the values such as art and philosophy; moreover he makes the polarized terms such as the moral severity and the aesthetic soul intertwine with one another. He views his life as mythical, yet he claims to have created his own legend. He is daring; he challenges the traditional codes and he subverts the established norms; he shuns the repressive regime of heterosexuality; he struggles to emancipate his desire. However, his dissidence is still defined in relation to the dominant discourse he has debunked. Butler points out that "the spectres of discontinuity and incoherence [are] themselves thinkable only in relation to existing norms of continuity and coherence" (*Gender*, 23); Wilde's discordance is fathomable only in relation to the prevailing norm of conformity. He revels in his fame of notoriety; he chooses vice over virtue as they are understood in the traditional context; he remarks that "wickedness is a myth invented by good people to account for the curious attractiveness of others" (102); he is considered to be *wicked* by the *virtuous* people since he wallows in vice, leads a life of reckless extravagance; yet, he is enticing; thus, he turns out to be a myth fashioned by the upholders of the conformity that he enjoys undermining; the dominant discourse tries to fortify its power through deflating Wilde's image so as to inflate the idealized heterosexual image.

Wilde, regarded as a myth, is unable to escape the discursive construction of sex. Foucault refutes the postulation of a subversive or emancipatory sexuality which could be free of the law; subversive configurations of sexuality are invoked with the terms of a normative framework and they are discursively instituted. Wilde's dissident sexuality can not escape the hegemonic prohibitions on sex. The Victorians invented and forbid his discordant sexuality; the law which prohibits the sexual deviance is the self-same law that invites it; the repressive function of the law can not be isolated from

its productive function; the regulating discourse manufactures dissident sexuality so that it could exercise and consolidate its own power: “Desire and its repression are an occasion for the consolidation of juridical structures” (Butler, *Gender*, 103); Butler explains clearly why the dominant discourse reproduces homosexuality: “for heterosexuality to remain intact as a distinct social form, it *requires* an intelligible conception of homosexuality and also requires the prohibition of that conception in rendering it culturally unintelligible” (*Gender*, 104). The dominant discourse exploits Wilde’s dissidence to exert their control and strengthen their power through disparaging Wilde and his non-normative sexuality.

Wilde’s unorthodox sexuality leads a discursive existence; the dominant discourse aims to intensify people’s awareness of it as a constant danger, and this in turn creates a further incentive to talk about it. The site of medicine and criminal justice focused on unorthodox sexualities in the nineteenth century; the former called sexual perversions “frauds against procreation”, and the latter regarded them as “heinous crimes and crimes against nature” (Foucault, 30). Hence, the wide dispersion of discourses such as medicine and jurisdiction induced Wilde to speak of his queerness publicly rather than hide it; the sexually peculiar was coercively transposed into discourse; Foucault views this as “a regulated and polymorphous incitement to discourse” (34). Foucault points out that this transformation of sex into discourse did not aim to banish sexual irregularity, but to implant the sexually perverse; the transformation of sex into discourse was not “governed by the endeavour to expel from reality the forms of sexuality that were not amenable to the strict economy of reproduction” (36). Thus, perversion was manifestly taken over by discourses; power produced and determined the sexual mosaic; manifold sexualities, concentrated in the person of Wilde, were manufactured by the discursive intricacies of power.

Wilde likens himself to “a fallen rocket”, which he prefers over Housman’s state of having never been “a burst of light” (96). At first sight, sexual liberation becomes a synonym for individual self-expression in Wilde’s case whereas sexuality points to a sense of embattlement, of hopes thwarted, dreams deferred in Housman’s case. However, it would be misleading to interpret Wilde’s liberation as a total overthrow of the dominant discourse and Housman’s repression as a complete failure in the face of the discursive oppression; both of their sexual identities are governed by

the prevailing discourse; Jeffrey Weeks also disregards the understanding of sexuality as a dichotomy of oppression and emancipation: “we must abandon the idea that we can fruitfully understand the history of sexuality in terms of a dichotomy of pressure and release, repression and liberation. Sexuality is not a head of a steam that must be capped lest it destroy us; nor is it a life force we must release to save our civilisation” (*Sexuality*, 19). Likewise, Butler argues that power is both perpetuated and concealed “through the establishment of an external or arbitrary relation between power, conceived as repression or domination, and sex, conceived as a brave, but thwarted energy waiting for release or authentic self-expression” (*Gender*, 129); Housman is not to be viewed as totally repressed or subdued, and his sexuality is not to be regarded as thwarted energy; likewise, Wilde’s case is not to be considered to be a powerful, courageous and authentic self-expression; both are within the hold of power itself. The distinction between the dominant discourse and the reverse discourse is illusory because both function as the screen for the operations of power. Differing from Housman, Wilde is more self-conscious; he does not refuse power; nor does he try to transcend it, yet he deploys it so that he can mock and undermine the dominant discourse; Butler thinks that “the normative focus for gay and lesbian practice ought to be on the subversive and parodic redeployment of power rather than on the impossible fantasy of its full-scale transcendence” (*Gender*, 169).

In conclusion, an analysis of the discursive formation of the subject displays how sexuality connects with power; the dominant and reverse discourses emerge as a consequence of the multiple convergences of power and sexuality; power links with sexuality either on a personal level as in the case of Omar and Johnny, or on an impersonal plane in the form of discourses as in the case of matriarchy/patriarchy and homosexuality/heterosexuality. The one in power is fooled by the designs of power; the one in power assumes that power is only monopolized by him/her; s/he does not take into account that his/her *supposed* power is determined by the *alleged* powerlessness of the one under his/her authority. Power can not be restricted to the binary level; it is not totally possessed by the oppressor; rather, power shifts between the points of the binary frame. Therefore, the heterosexual discourse can not wield power over the homosexual discourse because the binary frame entails the dependence of heterosexuality on homosexuality so that heterosexuality can define itself in relation

to its anti-thesis; the binary thought commands in effect that “sense is made out of nonsense” (*Invention*, 38). However, the bi-polar organization of sexuality is internally indeterminate; the binary oppositions of homosexuality and heterosexuality constantly threaten to collapse into one another; this very shiftiness of the binary frame stems from the intricacies of power which have always misled those *in power*.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The aim of the study has been to establish that gender and sexual identities are discursively constructed; the accounts of performativity and drag performance, and the analysis of power relationships have demonstrated that gender and sexual identities are culturally and historically specific, and they are produced by the discourses.

Gender and sexuality have always engrossed human beings; they have sought to make sense out of the immensely mobile field of sexuality and gender; they have produced ideologies, systems of thought to domesticate the admittedly complicated mesh of sexual possibilities; they have tried to impose cultural meanings on the raw material of sexuality. A wide range of sexual configurations indicate that deviant sexualities have been acknowledged through being disavowed; denial is survival. The dominant discourse has always been engulfed by the dissident sexualities it has attempted to annihilate. Terrorized by the idea of inexhaustible possibilities of sexuality, the dominant discourse has struggled to contain the flee-floating sexuality within the confines of its control by means of reducing sexuality to the binary frame; according to this oppositional model, one term is considered to be superior over the other term.

The regulating discourse has introduced the essentialist view; sexuality is inborn; the binary frame has necessitated the oppositional idea; the constructionist view; sexuality is culturally and historically determined. The dominant discourse has deployed the oppressive system of binary logic, and prioritized the essentialist view over the constructionist one; sexuality and gender are fixed and immutable. The binary logic appears in all configurations of sexuality and gender: the male/the female, the masculine/the feminine, the active/ the passive, and the homosexual/the heterosexual; the prevailing discourse seeks to seize power through this binary frame; it supposes that power is wielded by the oppressor over the oppressed; yet, power can not be monopolized by a single discourse; power operates through this

binary logic; the heterosexual depends on the homosexual to exert his authority; thus, the interdependence of these two terms demonstrate that power is not possessed by the heterosexual norm, but it functions as a result of the very mobility between the relational terms of the binary frame. Queer theory, drawing on post-structuralism, aims to go beyond the bi-polar organization of sexuality and gender; it contests the traditional categories of sexuality and gender, exposes their inherent instability, and defends the idea of sexual pluralism.

Butler's notions of performativity and drag performance disparage the essentialist view that gender and sexuality are naturally preordained; she upholds the constructionist view that gender and sexuality are culturally fabricated and acquired. Her account of performativity puts forward the idea that gender and sexual identities are performed, thus constructed; they are naturalized through repetition. She speaks of gender as a representation and learned behaviour; the individuals are made by the regulating discourse to impersonate the masculine gender and the feminine gender; by enacting a set of gestures and actions, the performing subject comes to be inhabited by the gender which is considered to be *appropriate* by the dominant discourse.

Butler's notion of performativity is employed in order to uproot the pervasive assumptions about sexuality and certain idealized expressions of gender which accord with the heterosexual norm. Churchill's *Cloud Nine* exposes the illusion of a stable gender core; the understanding of gender does not proliferate beyond the binary frame; the characters enact gender according to the imperatives of the heterosexual norm. In Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Butler's notion of performativity is handled in order to demonstrate how Omar performs gender; he genders his hybrid identity, and impersonates both the feminine gender and the masculine gender; Omar's replication of gender norms points to the constructedness of gender expressions. In Stoppard's *Invention of Love*, Butler's idea of performativity is deployed in order to display how Housman genders his split identity and performs gender, conforming to the heterocentric foundations of the dominant discourse. Gender is performative and the subject is an effect of cultural construction.

Butler's account of drag performance is also utilized so as to point out the *mismatches* between sex and gender; drag performance refers to the fact that the sex of the performer is different from the gender being performed. Through a theatrical dislocation of gender expressions, drag performance suggests that gender is not intrinsic because it is open to imitation; it subverts the preconceived notions of gender by presenting gender as an artifice.

Churchill's usage of the theatrical convention of cross-acting is in accord with Butler's notion of drag performance. By means of cross-casting her characters, Churchill celebrates sexual fluidity and gender dissonance, and challenges the sharp demarcations of gender and sexual categories. Stoppard parodies the heterosexual imperatives through the character of Oscar Wilde. Wilde playfully unsettles the normative foundations by means of disrupting the alleged symmetry between sex and gender; Wilde is in drag in the sense that his theatrical performance of his multifaceted body of selves exposes the incongruity between the sex of the performer and the gender being performed.

The notions of performativity and drag performance indicate how gender norms inhabit the subjects, and how they manage to consolidate the subjects. The underlying principles that form and govern these gender constructions open up the way to analyze the discursive strategies which reify and naturalize the heterosexual norm. The discursive formation of the subject brings into light the interconnections of sexuality and power. The dominant and counter discourses rise out of the ground where sexuality and power intersect with one another. Within the Foucauldian perspective, power produces both domination and resistance; Foucault disregards the hierarchical binary organization of the oppressor and the oppressed; rather, he points out that the oppressor depends on the oppressed in order to prove his authority, thus power is not exercised by the ruler over the ruled, but the mobility between the two terms shows that power flows among the discourses; the dominant discourse revitalizes and reproduces the counter discourse; likewise, dissident sexualities are not eliminated by the dominant discourse, but they are counter-effectively generated by the dominant discourse; the heterosexual does not eradicate, but reproduces the homosexual.

Churchill's *Cloud Nine* explores how the binary frame of the dominant discourse is both oppressive and enabling, how the regulating discourse contains and governs non-normative sexualities, and how the prevailing discourse is disrupted by its own inherent instabilities; these three traits appear as a result of the shifting quality of power. Churchill exposes the indeterminacy of the binary terms; binary oppositions constantly threaten to coalesce into one another. The dominant discourse tries to maintain its authority through the binary frame, yet the binary frame is bound to fail.

In Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette* Omar also succumbs to the dichotomous logic of the dominant discourse; therefore, he is fooled by the intricacies of power. He internalizes the binary frame which makes him oscillate between the notions of femininity and masculinity; entrapped in ancient dichotomies, he attempts to reverse the hierarchy of the binary terms such as the colonizer/the colonized, the masculine/the feminine. Nevertheless, the internal indeterminacy of the bi-polar organization of the terms inhibits his attempt at creating a unified and coherent identity. Power is shifting and mutable; one's being the powerful is defined in relation the other's being the powerless. Omar's attempt to assume the prioritized one of the binary terms is disrupted by the inherent instability of the terms.

Stoppard's *Invention of Love* investigates power practice in the form of the dominant discourse and the counter discourses; the former produces the latter although the former claims to obliterate the latter. Accordingly, homosexuality is not eliminated by heterosexuality, but it is counter-effectively generated by the binary organization of sexuality.

Housman's sexuality is alleged to be repressed, yet it is reinvigorated in the very mode of repression. Housman internalizes the binary logic of the heterosexual norm; under the yoke of the dominant discourse, Housman imposes a dualistic pattern on his split identity and his homosexual desire. Also, Stoppard employs the figure of Wilde to contrast him with Housman, and to expose how homosexuality is forged, contained and governed by the dominant discourse.

In conclusion, the dominant discourse is predicated upon the binary frame; it seeks to perpetuate its authority through reducing certain concepts to a dualistic understanding, polarizing them, and prioritizing one over the other; the binary frame

is oppressive because it represses one term and overvalues the other one; hence, the prevailing discourse presupposes that it wields power over the repressed term. However, this dialectical understanding is bound to fail because the repressed returns via the mode of repression, and the overvalued term depends on the banished term to define itself; thus, the regulating discourse reproduces that which it purports to eradicate.

The dominant discourse polarizes gender and sexuality; gender is considered to be the cultural interpretation of sex whereas the authority of sex issues from biological *facts*; the masculine/feminine divide results from “the meaning ascribed to anatomical differences, of male and female sexual organs” (Wright, 246). Gender is made upon the so-called sexual difference; yet, the distinction between sex and gender is illusory; “perhaps this construct called “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” (Butler, *Gender*, 9-10). Queer theory questions the “mimetic relation of gender to sex whereby gender mirrors sex or is restricted by it” (Gamble, 40). The regulating discourse argues that gender mirrors sex; Butler subverts this idea by claiming that sex also follows from gender; sex is gender’s “fictional origin” (Elam, 173). The sex/gender duality suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders; this duality becomes illusory when culturally-fabricated gender imposes itself on the so-called raw material of sex. The asymmetrical dialectic of sex and gender disrupts itself because these binary oppositions collapse into one another. The dichotomy between sex and gender is a false divide because sex “extends indefinitely beyond chromosomal sex” and “its history of usage often overlaps with” gender (Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, 28); sex as a certain group of biological differentiations merges with gender as an elaborated and rigidly dichotomized social production of male and female identities.

The heterosexual discourse commands in effect that desire and identification should be severed from each other; one is to desire the opposite sex whereas s/he is to identify with his/her own sex. The heterosexual discourse ignores the possibilities that one can desire both the same sex and the opposite sex, one can both desire and identify with the opposite sex, or one can identify with the opposite sex and desire

the same sex; these inexhaustible permutations are restricted by the binary frame. This dichotomy between desire and identification is shattered when Omar both desires and identifies with his own sex; his homosexual desire is not repressed, but rejuvenated as he reclaims his sense of masculinity and reasserts his manliness. Hence, the binary oppositions of desire and identification are fused into one another since they revitalize each other.

The patriarchal discourse struggles to maintain its authority through the dichotomy between the central normative identities and the marginal non-normative identities; the established norm defines its *normality* in relation to the peripheral identities. Within poststructuralist perspective, the marginal is also the central; Oscar Wilde is discursively central although he is culturally marginal; his peripheral sexuality is employed by the dominant discourse to figure out the boundary of the central sexual conformity. Hence, the binary oppositions do not cancel out one another, but they entwine with each other.

The regulating discourse retains the power structure between the dominant and the subordinate; it assumes that the dominant wields power over the subordinate. However, power is not monopolized by the allegedly dominant part; it also shifts from the supposed dominant to the supposedly subservient one because the oppressor needs the oppressed in order to prove its authority; the dominance of the dominant depends on the subordination of the subordinate in order to define itself. Under the yoke of the binary frame, Omar needs Johnny to exert his power; Clive's dominance turns out to be false in the face of his fear of Mrs Saunders's so-called devouring sexuality. Thus, the binary frame fails; the dominant mingles with the subordinate; the boundaries are blurred.

The prevailing discourse bases its authority upon the discrepancy between prohibition and release of sexuality; it tries to inhibit sexual deviancy whereas it promotes a release of orthodox sexualities. Yet, that which is prohibited returns in the very mode of prohibition. Housman's repressed sexuality is embedded in the larger structures of his being; his repressed desire is counter-effectively refashioned by repression itself. In Wilde's case, his so-called sexual liberation becomes false since his sexual dissidence is invented and managed by the dominant discourse.

Hence, the dichotomized terms of suppression and emancipation do not eliminate one another; they are imbricated in each other.

The dominant discourse is founded on the divide between the states of the body and the mind; this false divide issues from the dualism of the matter/the spirit, the corporeal/the incorporeal; according to the dominant discourse, either the psyche imposes on the body, or the body acts upon the psyche; yet, these binary oppositions, far from being mutually-exclusive, partake of one another. Housman's allegedly spiritual love for Jackson does not annihilate his carnal desire for Jackson. Therefore, the immortal spirit, which is given precedence over the mortal body, does not obliterate the body, rather rejuvenates it.

Dividing sexuality into discursive heterosexuality and pre-discursive homosexuality is conforming to the dominant discourse because it reproduces the binary frame. The association of the same-sex desire with the pre-Oedipal realm strengthens the heterosexual norm because it defines homosexuality in relation to its binary opposition. Therefore, Housman's view of homosexuality as authentic, pre-cultural, and flourishing prior to the imposition of the heterosexual law, indicates how he internalizes the binary logic of the heterosexual frame. The dichotomized understanding of sexuality does not recognize its proliferation beyond the bi-polar organization of sexuality; therefore, queer theory challenges the binary frame: "We need more language than just feminine/masculine, straight/gay, either/or. Men are not from Mars and women are not from Venus [...] we need to refocus on defending the diversity in the world that already exists, and creating room for even more possibilities" (Feinberg, 28).

Sexuality is also placed in the binary frame of heterosexuality and homosexuality; the dominant discourse reduces sexuality into two mutually-negating terms; it fashions homosexuality in opposition to heterosexuality so that the former could be deployed to foreground the idealized status of the latter. Paradoxically, the dominant discourse both produces and disavows homosexuality, but homosexuality survives through being denied; its disavowal entails its acknowledgement, as well. The false divide between heterosexuality and homosexuality is bound to fail; *straight* does not wipe out *queer*; rather, they are implicated in one another; heterosexuality is haunted by homosexuality. Churchill spots the queer moments in Clive the allegedly

straight; the homoerotic elements in the idea of male-bonding and comradeship evince the fact that homosexuality and heterosexuality merge into each other.

Queer theory undermines the binary frame because binarism structures reality into a series of either/or oppositions as active/passive, culture/nature, rational/irrational, head/heart. Hélène Cixous assaults this dichotomous logic: “Always the same metaphor: we follow it, it transports us, in all of its forms, wherever a discordance is organized. The same thread, or double tress leads us [...] whenever an ordering intervenes, a law organizes the thinkable by (dual, irreconcilable, or mitigable, dialectical) oppositions” (“Sorties”, 138). Within each of these oppositions, one term tends to be privileged over, thus governed by the other; control is abusive behaviour; binary thought can be seen as both reductive and restrictive; it attempts to polarize plurality and complexity into a simple question of either/or, collapsing a multiplicity of variations into a single opposition.

The binary frame multiplies itself in the very space of power; the existing order seeks to empower itself through the binary logic; it assumes that one can get hold of power by hierarchizing the binary terms, favouring one over the other; the oppressor presupposes that the heterosexual is superior to the homosexual; the masculine overmasters the feminine; yet, the binary frame deconstructs itself because the polarized terms are interconnected; rather than annihilating each other, they reproduce one another; the heterosexual is defined in relation to the homosexual; heterosexuality depends upon homosexuality to exert its assumed power; thus, power does not proceed along an oppositional direction; the heterosexual does not wield power over the homosexual; the heterosexual dominance turns out to be subservient to the homosexual subordination in order to assert its dominance. Hence, power is not seized by a single discourse, but it flows among discourses; the one in power is in constant fear of losing his/her power; therefore, control also victimizes the one who controls; the moment s/he lets go of the victim, s/he loses his/her identity as the controller. The heterosexual one in power can not tolerate the homosexual other to be different; the former only feels safe when his/her fixed ideas and beliefs are adopted and implemented by the latter; otherwise, the heterosexual would totally feel isolated and disintegrated.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Churchill, Caryl. *Plays: one*. New York, Routledge, 1985.

Kureishi, Hanif. *Collected Screenplays*. London: Faber and Faber, 2002.

Stoppard, Tom. *The Invention of Love*. London: Faber and Faber, 1997.

Secondary Sources

Abrams, M. H., ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 7th ed. Vol. 2. New York: W.W. Norton and Camp. , 2000

Adam, Barry D. *The Rise of A Gay and Lesbian Movement*. New York: Twayne, Publishers, 1995.

_____. "From Liberation to Transgression and Beyond". *Handbook of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Ed. Diane Richardson and Steven Seidman. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2002.

Ahmed, Sarah. *Queer Phenomenology*. Durham: Duke U P, 2006.

Alsop, R., Fitzsimons, A. and Lennon, Kathleen. *Theorizing Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002.

Apter, Emily. "Reflections on Gynophobia". *Coming out of Feminism?*. Ed. Mandy Merck, Naomi Segal and Elizabeth Wright. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998.

Aston, Elaine. *Caryl Churchill*. Devon: Northcote House Publishers Ltd, 1997.

Bersani, Leo. "The Gay Daddy". *Homos*. Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard U P, 1995.

Bhabha, Homi K. "Are You a Man or a Mouse?". *Gender*. Ed. Anna Tripp. New York: Palgrave, 2000.

Bornstein, Kate. *Gender Outlaw*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Bristow, Joseph. "'A Complex Multiform Creature': Wilde's Sexual Identities". *The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde*. Ed. Peter Raby. Cambridge: Cambridge

- U P, 1997.
- _____. *Sexuality*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Burgess, Anthony. *A Dead Man in Deptford*. London: Vintage, 1994.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- _____. *Bodies That Matter*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Califia, Patrick. "Gay Men, Lesbians, and Sex: Doing It Together". *Queer Theory*. Ed. Iain Morland and Annabelle Willox. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Calvin, Thomas. *Straight With a Twist: Queer Theory and the Subject of Heterosexuality*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Carter, Angela. *The Sadeian Woman: An Exercise in Cultural History*. London: Virago, 1979.
- Cixous, H el ene. "Sorties : Out and Out: Attacks / Ways Out / Forays". *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*. Ed. Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore. Basingstroke, 1997.
- Clum, John M. "Gay/Queer and Lesbian Studies, Criticism and Theory". *Modern British and Irish Criticism and Theory: A Critical Guide*. Ed. Julian Wolfreys. Edinburgh: Edinburgh U P, 2006.
- _____. *Acting Gay*. New York: Columbia U P, 1992.
- Cohen, Ed. "Writing Gone Wilde: Homoerotic Desire in the Closet of Representation". *Critical Essays on Oscar Wilde*. Ed. Regenia Gagnier. New York: G. K. Hall and Co., 1991.
- Craft, Christopher. "Alias Bunbury: Desire and Termination in *The Importance of Being Earnest*". *Critical Essays on Oscar Wilde*. Ed. Regenia Gagnier. New York: G. K. Hall and Co., 1991.
- Dollimore, Jonathan. *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*. Oxford: Oxford U P, 1991.
- Edwards, Tim. *Erotics and Politics: Gay Male Sexuality, Masculinity and Feminism*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Elam, Diane. "Gender or Sex?". *Gender*. Ed. Anna Tripp. New York: Palgrave, 2000.
- Fausto-Sterling, Anne. "How to Build a Man". *Gender*. Ed. Anna Tripp. New York: Palgrave, 2000.

- Feinberg, Leslie. *Trans Liberation*. Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1998.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Penguin Books, 1990.
- Gamble, Sarah. "Gender and Transgender Criticism". *Introduction to Criticism at the 21st Century*. Ed. Julian Wolfreys. Edinburgh: Edinburgh U P, 2002.
- Garber, Marjorie. "The Return to Biology". *Queer Theory*. Ed. Iain Morland and Annabelle Willox. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Hall, Donald E. "A Brief, Slanted History of 'Homosexual' Activity". *Queer Theory*. Ed. Iain Morland and Annabelle Willox. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Jean, Genet. *Our Lady of the Flowers*. Trans. Bernard Frechtman. New York: Grove Press, 1991.
- Halberstam, Judith. *In A Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York U P, 2005.
- Halperin, David M. *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*. New York: Oxford U P, 1995.
- _____. *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality*. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Hammend, Paul. *Love Between Men In English Literature*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.
- Harrison, Wendy Cealey and Hood-Williams, John. *Beyond Sex and Gender*. London: Thousand Oaks, Calif. : SAGE, 2002.
- Ingraham, Chrys. "Heterosexuality: It's Just Not Natural!". *Handbook of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Ed. Diane Richardson and Steven Seidman. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2002.
- Jagose, Annamarie. *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York: New York U P, 1996.
- Kaleta, Kenneth C. *Hanif Kuresihi: Postcolonial Storyteller*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998.
- Kritzer, Amelia H. *The Plays of Caryl Churchill*. New York: Palgrave, 1991.
- Lilly, Mark. "Tennessee Williams". *Lesbian and Gay Writing: An Anthology of Critical Essays*. London: Macmillan, 1990.

- Martin, Bidy. "Sexualities Without Genders and Other Queer Utopias". *Coming out of Feminism?*. Ed. Mandy Merck, Naomi Segal and Elizabeth Wright. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998.
- Purvis, Tony. "Problems of Sexual Identity". *An Oxford Guide: Literary Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Patricia Waugh. Oxford: Oxford U P, 2006.
- Rose, Jacqueline. "Femininity and Its Discontents". *Gender*. Ed. Anna Tripp. New York: Palgrave, 2000.
- Roseneil, Sasha. "The Heterosexual/Homosexual Binary". *Handbook of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Ed. Diane Richardson and Steven Seidman. London: SAGE, Publications Ltd, 2002.
- Rubin, Gayle and Butler, Judith. "Sexual Traffic". *Coming out of Feminism?*. Ed. Mandy Merck, Naomi Segal and Elizabeth Wright. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd, 1998.
- Rusinko, Susan. *British Drama: 1950 to the Present*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989.
- Rutherford, Jonathan. "Mr Nice (and Mr Nasty)". *Gender*. Ed. Anna Tripp. New York: Palgrave, 2000.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "Introduction from Between Men". *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl. New Jersey: Rutgers U P, 1997.
- _____. "Gender Asymmetry and Erotic Triangles". *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl. New Jersey: Rutgers U P, 1997.
- _____. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Schoene, Berthold. "Queer Politics, Queer Theory, and the Future of "Identity": Spiralling out of Culture". *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Literary Theory*. Ed. Ellen Rooney. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 2006.
- Sinfield, Alan. *On Sexuality and Power*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- _____. *The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde and the Queer Movement*. London: Cassell, 1994.
- Spurlin, William J. "Sissies and Sisters: Gender, Sexuality and the Possibilities of Coalition". *Coming out of Feminism?*. Ed. Mandy Merck, Naomi Segal and Elizabeth Wright. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998.

- Sullivan, Nikki. *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory*. New York: New York U P, 2003.
- Tripp, Anna. "Introduction". *Gender*. Ed. Anna Tripp. New York: Palgrave, 2000.
- Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc. , 1999.
- Walters, Suzanna Danuta. "From Here to Queer: Radical Feminism, Postmodernism, and the Lesbian Menace". *Queer Theory*. Ed. Iain Morland and Annabelle Willox. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Warner, Michael. "Homo-Narcissism; or, Heterosexuality". *Contemporary Literary Criticism: Literary and Cultural Studies*. Ed. Robert Con Davis and Ronald Schleifer. New York: Longman, 1989.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. *Sexuality and its Discontents: Meanings, Myths, and Modern Sexualities*. London and New York: Routledge and K. Paul, 1985.
- _____. *Sexuality*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Whittle, Stephen. "Gender Fucking or Fucking Gender?". *Queer Theory*. Ed. Iain Morland and Annabelle Willox. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. London: Penguin, 1992.
- Wilkerson, William S. *Ambiguity and Sexuality: A Theory of Sexual Identity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Wright, Elizabeth. "Coming out of the Real: Knots and Queries". *Coming out of Feminism?*. Ed. Mandy Merck, Naomi Segal and Elizabeth Wright. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998.
- Zeifman, Hersh. "The Comedy of Eros: Stoppard in Love". *The Cambridge Companion to Tom Stoppard*. Ed. Katherine E. Kelly. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 2001.

