

A Caged World:

A critical analysis of Queer oppression in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Statovci's *Crossing* and Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*

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partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Abstract

Whether it was acknowledged or not, homosexuality and same-sex interactions existed in every society. In the past, homosexual individuals faced discrimination due to their gender identification in Christian-based societies. In writing about homosexuality, early LGBT writers like Oscar Wilde and James Baldwin experienced great suffering. Laws have been developed to secure society against LGBT individuals. They are perceived as a hazard that has the potential to undermine traditional society's moral standards. The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde made a groundbreaking statement since it depicted gay characteristics in Victorian culture, where homosexuals were referred to be demons. Wilde always tried to challenge the established social structure and the bourgeois throughout his works. He became a victim for pursuing his personal choices which were considered a sin in Victorian society. However, his sufferings made him a pioneer figure in Gay liberation later on. Subsequently, the novel *Giovanni's Room* by James Baldwin was published during the mid of 19th century when homosexuality was considered a mental illness in American society. Statovci's *Crossing* comes at a time when many of us have become sceptical of binary classifications, such as gay, heterosexual, woman, and man, and have started to see how insufficient they are to capture the reality of human lives. This paper aims to analyze Queer oppression in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Statovci's *Crossing* and Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* by exploring Queer theory which challenges the established norms. Also, the paper aims to analyze the domination of class differences towards queer people by exploring Marxist theory. Lastly, the paper aims to acknowledge the battle of queer people to understand their true selves by exploring the psychoanalytical approach.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

How will it feel to live in a caged world? A world that imposes restrictions and beliefs to limit one's development. How will it feel to live in a world with no opportunity, freedom or self-identity? Simply, no human being would like to live in such imprisonment. However, some people live in imprisonment since their birth. There is an enormous sky over them yet not allowed to see, there is a gigantic world ahead of them yet not allowed to explore. Ironically, human beings do not want to live in a caged world yet they are the ones who made the world caged for other human beings. Here, the cage symbolizes the oppression that LGBT people faced from the beginning of their existence. They have been abandoned, tortured, and tormented for their sexual identity. In this homophobic society, they have been forced to live in a caged world because they are 'different' from the majority. Does a heterosexual person ever face oppression for their sexual identity? Probably not, as being heterosexual seems 'average' or normal in our society. Apart from that, people who get attracted by the same sex are constantly identified as a different group or 'minority'. Besides, this community is not considered normal like 'others' in society. But what is the definition of being normal? Who sets the bars in the name of these societal rules? If we think about the other side of the coin, then the definition of being normal can be reversed. LGBT people also can think of heterosexual people as not being normal. If something is not matching with the majority, it does not mean that it does not exist. The trait of homosexuality can be found in the history of ancient Greek. However, in earlier days, Christian rulers made homosexuality a crime in many western countries. In 1972, the American Psychiatric Organization asserted that

homosexuality is a disease. This declaration had created an impact on Gay liberation. Since the beginning, homosexuality has been considered disgusting or unnatural. The majority of heterosexual society ignored or neglected them which lead to queer oppression. This paper aims to analyze Queer oppression in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Statovci's *Crossing* and Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* by exploring Queer theory which challenges the established norms. Also, the paper aims to analyze the domination of class differences towards queer people by exploring Marxist theory. Lastly, the paper aims to acknowledge the battle of queer people to understand their true selves by exploring the psychoanalytical approach.

1.1 Research Questions

How did the homophobic society oppress queer people for their sexuality? How did class differences dominate and oppress queer people? How did queer people struggle to develop their self-identity?

1.2 Thesis Statement

This paper analyses Queer oppression in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Pajtim Statovci's *Crossing* and James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* in the light of Queer theory, Marxist theory and Psychoanalytical approach.

1.3. Background

Oscar Wilde, James Baldwin and Pajtim Statovci: The life of a queer writer in a homophobic society

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was born in Dublin in 1854. He was an Irish novelist and playwright who got known for his homosexual scandal in 1895. However, it was not the first homosexual condemned at that time, the extreme attention and concern of the public made Wilde iconic in the 19th century. Wilde always tried to challenge the established social structure and the bourgeois throughout his works. Indeed, he was influenced by secular beliefs which he could not avoid. Although Wilde got married in 1884 and had two sons, the rumours of his homosexual passion grabbed all the attention at that time. In 1886, Wilde met with Lord Alfred Douglas, a son of Marquess of Queensbury was a young and undisciplined boy. He was the person who introduced Oscar Wilde to a forbidden part of Victorian society, homosexual men's brothels. Wilde started to encounter Douglas sexually which inspired him to do his best work at that time. For instance, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *A Woman of No Importance* etc. Later on, the father of Douglas wrote on a card, 'To Oscar Wilde, posing *somdomite*'. Intentionally, he misspelled the word 'somdomite'. The close ones of Wilde suggested ignoring it but Wilde took legal action against Douglas's father. In the trial, Wilde did not win but rather condemn engaging indecent relationships with men. The media started bashing Wilde and questioning his moral values by using his own works. However, Wilde had the chance to leave England but refused to do that. He had been imprisoned for two years for being a homosexual. He became a victim for pursuing his

personal choices which were considered a sin in Victorian society. After his release, he changed his name to Sebastian and went to Paris where he died in 1900. Although Wilde was negatively criticized at the beginning, his sufferings made him a pioneer figure in Gay liberation later on.

Another writer, James Arthur Baldwin was born in New York, in 1924. He was bought up by his stepfather, David Baldwin and his mother. His father was a Baptist preacher. James Baldwin was one of the few brave writers who wrote about black gay men. He has been one of the most significant gay authors of the twentieth century, although his reputation as a racial advocate and his sophisticated analysis of American race relations seem to overshadow this aspect. James Baldwin's writings were frequently misinterpreted as a result of homophobia among Americans. It took a lot of guts for James Baldwin to publicly identify as a black homosexual author amid the Cold War and Civil Rights struggle. His knowledge of racism and homophobia in American culture, as well as his challenging role as a public person and an advocate for Afro-Americans, left deep marks in his works and shaped his career as a novelist. In light of racial prejudice in America, Baldwin felt artistically imprisoned in 1948. As a result, he moved to Europe and wrote works that would eventually be recognized as classics in American literature. Baldwin was capable of separating himself from the homogenous society of the United States while residing in Paris, which helped him write more effectively about his experiences in American culture. Baldwin participated in the Civil Rights Movement and became good mates with Lorraine Hansberry, Medgar Evers, and Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. His writings about racial relations in America were all inspired by the passing of many of these acquaintances. Baldwin's writings contributed to educating the public about sexual and racial injustice. The open discussion of his personal observations in a broader national context pushed America to maintain the ideals of equality and fairness it had pledged. In works like *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, *The Fire Next Time*, *Giovanni's Room*, and *If*

Beale Street Could Talk, he examined these subjects. Baldwin was certain that sexuality should not be rigidly classified and was of the opinion that it should be treated as a fluid concept. Baldwin acted as a reformer for the aesthetic and intellectual traditions in American culture through his fame and writings created both nationally and internationally. Baldwin continued to be a vocal critic of racial dynamics in American society. At the age of 63, Baldwin passed away from stomach cancer in this residence in France in 1987.

Pajtim Statovci, a Finnish-Kosovan author, was born in 1990. When he was two years old, his family emigrated from Kosovo to Finland. He has an MA in comparative literature from the University of Helsinki and resides in Helsinki. He is a PhD student at the University of Helsinki and the recipient of the 2018 Helsinki Writer of the Year Award. *My Cat Yugoslavia*, his debut novel, got a great deal of praise from reviewers and fans alike and was awarded the renowned Helsingin Sanomat Literature Prize. The panel that selected the winner complimented the author's young age (just 24), his ability to blend the surreal with reality, and his capacity to give a fresh image of life. In 2017, Pantheon Books and Pushkin Press jointly released *My Cat Yugoslavia* in English. The second book by Statovci, *Crossing*, which was published in 2016, also received praise for its wonderfully constructed writing and unique handling of the themes. *Crossing* comes at a time when many of us have become sceptical of binary classifications, such as gay, heterosexual, Albanian, woman, and man, and have started to see how insufficient they are to capture the reality of human lives. The story brilliantly captures the suffering that labels may bring, and it also makes the argument that we might not be capable of surviving without them.

Chapter 2: Research Methodology

2.1. Queer Theory

The term ‘queer theory’ has been reinterpreted by theorists to refer to a study that deviates from established norms and standards. However, in the context of sexuality, the term ‘queer’ refers to behaviour that deviates from societal standards and encompasses LGBT people (homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender). Hence, queer theory can be used to investigate the potential for offering the LGBT community, which has been excluded or marginalized by society for years. When many academics, primarily from liberal arts, started to theorize about sexuality and sexual identities which specifically challenged prevailing cultural beliefs in the late 1980s, the queer theory was born as a result. Many people consider the beginning of queer theory to have coincided with the conference organized by theorist Teresa De Lauretis regarding queer theory at the University of California, in 1990. However, intellectuals had penned down the term before 1990, specifically Gloria Anzalda in the 1980s. That conference was followed by a topic of *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* which was later edited by Teresa De Lauretis. Therefore, many academics responded favourably to this work and started building upon it, particularly feminists who were keen to refute the idea that gender is an essential component of the self. On the other hand, researchers of Lesbian and Gay studies started using queer theory as a new perspective for exploring widely accepted social beliefs about sexual identities. Regardless of the name, the queer theory does not represent a specific point of view or set of ideas on gender and

sexuality. Instead, it refers to a variety of viewpoints—some of which may be in conflict with one another—about gender, and sexuality. However, the title "queer theory," such as the word "queer," is frequently disputed and is interpreted differently by many academics and activists. Even though lack of consensus over the definition of queer theory may be a drawback for certain theoretical views, queer theorists frequently consider it as a strength since it allows for a variety of insights into how gender and sexuality might be perceived, examined, or performed in cultures. Also, Queer theory is frequently used as a framework to explore the political dimension of gender, and sexuality. In addition, queer theorists frequently examine sexualized behaviours that are construed as abnormal in many societies, particularly those that may be perceived as heterosexual in character. Queer theory opposes the classification of individuals into sexualized categories, particularly binary categories like male and female or heterosexual and homosexual. Only the subject is fundamental, particularly when it comes to how cultural influences categorize or create opinions. In an effort to give marginalized people respect, queer theorists collaborate alongside authors and activists to critique essentialist practices and aim to reintegrate marginalized groups into society's mainstream. They aim to provide the LGBT community with a setting and possibilities that will enable them to live exactly what they desire.

2.2. Marxist Theory

Marxism has its roots in the writings of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx. Therefore, Marxism, often known as 'political economy,' offers key theoretical ideas to anthropology, particularly in regard to struggle, social inequality, profound human history, commodities, and

labour. Besides, Marxism is a way of knowing the world, as an analysis of the world, and as a way for transforming the world. (Patterson, 61). Although, Marx and Engels were revolutionaries who established their theories and empirical research in a strong activist setting. They attempted to understand the capitalist exploitation that was forming the world ahead of them, but their writing offered more than simply a portrayal. Indeed, their criticism revealed systematically concealed features and suggested alternative arrangements for the social environment. An examination of 'wage labour capitalism', which was still in its infancy in Europe and North America, was the first thing Marx and Engels did. There can be no wage labour capitalism without labourers, and conversely. It is the connection between capitalists and employees that creates inequality.

According to Marxist theory, there are two fundamental economic components that make up the capitalist mode of production: the substructure and the superstructure. In a capitalist society, the bourgeoisie, or the ruling class, is the sole owner of the facilities and tools that are used to produce high-value items. On the other hand, the proletariat also known as the working class only has access to their labour power. Therefore, they trade their labour power to the ruling class in exchange for wages in order to live. The connection between employee and employer, differences between labour, or the relationship of production or property- they are considered substructures, according to Marxists. Therefore, these substructures emerged as superstructures in capitalist society. The superstructures, for instance, philosophical ideas and cultural beliefs of the society. The bourgeoisie or ruling class set the standards and rules for the capitalist society which the working class need to follow and accept. Indeed, the standards and rules made by the ruling class are the keys to continuing class exploitation. Therefore, exploitation became the reality for working-class people.

2.3 Psychoanalytic Theory

The purpose of Psychoanalysis theory is to understand the personality of a person. Also, it helps to understand the developing process of personality. The pioneer of psychoanalytic theory was Sigmund Freud. Focusing on the progression of physical technology at the time, he established this concept. The id, ego, and superego are three crucially conceived aspects of the human psyche, in Freud's view. The primitive mind, known as the id, seeks out the immediate satisfaction of biological or innate wants. Therefore, basic bodily requirements are known as biological desires, whereas instinctive needs, such as those related to starvation, appetite, and sex are unlearned or innate requirements. Firstly, the id is the part of a mind which works unconsciously. Indeed, it does not require much thought to differentiate between right and wrong. However, the superego is connected to the cultural and social beliefs that a person achieves gradually. It builds up through the rise of an individual's maturity. Besides, it works as an ethical trait that helps to develop an individual's conscience. As a person develops in society, he absorbs the standards and traditional influences that enable him to distinguish between good and evil. Lastly, the rational and conscious element of the mind known as the ego is linked to the reality principle. In the framework of actual life events, it thereby strikes a compromise between the requirements of the Id and super-ego. Since the ego is conscious, it may control the id by properly analyzing the surrounding environment.

The mystique established by Freudian interpretations peaked when French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan adopted it into the standard of literary criticism. Therefore, Jacques Lacan

constructed a start with a concave mirror and a flat mirror in the 1950s, using them as the foundation for his description of the nature of human identity. He also developed theories on how identification affects psychoanalysis. Lacan elaborates on the idea of the mirror stage in his work *Mirror Stage* (1949), which he claims to happen between the age period of 6 and 18 months in a growing child. However, in this stage, the child starts to make basic distinctions between the self and the other when it sees its reflection in a mirror. The mirror stage, according to Jacques Lacan, is a critical one in a child's development. One must look in the mirror truly to identify identity. As the identification helps to develop the true 'self'. However, it must be acknowledged as well that the reflection is not completely the true being. Indeed, when this identification takes place, one may be cut off from the 'dyad'. It can create a haunting sensation of lack that we experience throughout our lives.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1. *Forbidden History*: Queer Oppression

The beliefs and ideas behind Queer theory emerged drastically as it explores and analyses homosexuality like gay and LGBT studies. Notably, early Queer theorists took various key elements from feminism and feminist theory along with the AIDS crisis. So, the origin of the ideas behind Queer Theory can be found in feminism and feminist theory. However, the theory grabbed the attention of scholars and thinkers despite these studies being comparatively new to the traditional or established ideas. The main focus of Queer Theory is not to combine with traditional beliefs rather it challenges the traditionalist perspective. Homosexuality, on the other hand, opposes the social norms set forth by essentialists about sexual orientation, as shown in queer theory, which also investigates cross-dressing, sex, and gay desire. Many scholars and thinkers contributed to the development of Queer Theory which emphasized the injustice, marginalization, oppression, and discrimination that homosexual and bisexual people face in society. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault asserted how society emphasized sexuality as a crucial truth, not a socially constructed element. According to Foucault, sexual identity is not 'intrinsic', yet often depends on the desire for hierarchies which came as a form of oppression. In volume 1 of the History of Sexuality, Foucault asserted,

Afterwards, in the seventeenth century, the bourgeoisie suppressed sexuality. The repressive hypothesis states that the bourgeoisie was worried about economic efficiency and did not even want energy invested in sexual activities. (Foucault, 3)

Foucault disagreed with the repression of sexuality that Western society continued doing since the 17th century, which is the main purpose of writing *The History and Sexuality*. Likewise, Foucault challenged that sexuality is constantly oppressed and condemned to express by society whereas it is a constant aspect of psychological and biological existence. According to Foucault, the concept of 'sexuality' didn't exist until the 18th century because it is a relatively modern concept. In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault asserted how homosexuality is considered an offensive act and brutally punished by European law. Also, any kind of same-sex activity was forbidden by European law back that period. In the 19th century, people started coming out as homosexual individuals and speaking about it. Foucault refers to how homosexuals became a specific group having unique characteristics rather than a tempted aberration to anyone.

‘The homosexual was now considered a species, whereas the sodomite had been a transient aberration.’ (Foucault, 43)

Authorities like psychiatrists and physicians firstly used the term ‘homosexual’ to indicate a problematic group in society. Moreover, a problematic group is meant to be punished and treated. People who favoured this problematic group in the first place also declared their ‘medical condition’ unchangeable. Gradually, the problematic group accepted the term ‘homosexuals’ and consider themselves as representatives of a marginalized community that involves in social oppression resistance. This marked the beginning of protest that lasted from the period of Oscar Wilde until the 1970s Liberation Movement of Gay protesters.

‘also allowed for the development of a "reverse" discourse, in which homosexuality started to advocate for itself and demand that its validity or "naturalness" be recognized, frequently using the same terminology and criteria that were used to exclude it from receiving medical care.’ (Foucault, 101)

In 1984, Gayle Rubin explores the way society prioritizes some specific sexual activities over others in 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality'. In Rubin's opinion, the normalizing of these sexual obligations expands the framework of marginalization and oppression in society.

‘A single instance of consenting anal penetration was cause for death throughout a significant portion of European and American history. Variations in the menu seldom cause the types of fury, anxiety, and outright horror that frequently accompany differences in sexual taste, although individuals might be intolerant, foolish, or pushy about what constitutes healthy eating. (Rubin, 310)

The article also explained how the dangerous thought of sexuality spread out during the period 1900 in the society of the UK and US. They succeeded in passing explicit laws prohibiting any sort of ‘sexual expression’ in public. Also, they persuaded parents to adopt various methods to keep their children protected from expressing any kind of sexual release. Moreover, they made homosexuality, and prostitution illegal considering these an act of criminalization. In addition, during 1970, massive propaganda was launched in the cities of America against homosexual and gay people. They were sent to jail for suspecting to engage in any homosexual activities. Therefore, bars and pubs were routinely searched to get homosexual and gay people. Besides, many political personas utilized these threats to gain support from the ‘frightened’ homosexual and gay citizens. The seminal work *‘Epistemology of the Closet’* was written by activist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick regarding queer studies in 1990. Basically, this seminal work linked the theoretical framework with practices by analyzing homoerotic relationships with a marginalized group. It explains how society views sexuality by defining gender identity. To clarify, gender identity refers to one's personal experience of its gender. It can be the same or differ from anyone's birth-assigned sex. In

chapter one, Sedgwick stated about a legal case about Acanfora, a teacher from eighth grade, who was removed from his teaching position as he engaged with a homosexual group during his college years. Sedgwick asserted,

'It reveals that the anonymity and disclosing of one's homosexual orientation created a situation in which remaining "in the closet" permitted Acanfora's occupation and skill to earn a livelihood while his "coming out" provided the Board of Education with the legal means of blocking Acanfora's access to continue teaching in the schoolroom no other cause than his homosexuality becoming publically available.' (Sedgwick, 39)

This legal battle explained by Sedgwick highlighted the paradoxical nature of homosexuality where staying in the 'closet' meant running the risk of being discovered while coming out meant facing discrimination and oppression.

The analysis of gender and sex at its heart is how Judith Butler is most commonly associated. However, she borrowed various ideas from Foucault but primarily emphasized the topic of gender. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler emphasized gender as a reality rather than referring to it as vital truth of anyone's body. Besides, the essential truth of sexuality makes opposite sex or heterosexuality an ultimate image of society. Butler argues in *Gender Trouble* that,

'The established ideas made the category of feminine and masculine which marginalized others.' (Butler, 92)

Indeed, considering oneself as a male or female is the creation of the cohesive binary that draws a limitation to others. Butler illustrated that 'gender performativity' can be a tactic to resistance to the representation of feminine sexuality like drag queens or cross-dressing. In Butler's opinion, gender performativity requires the subject to be the subject. In the book *Undoing Gender*, Butler

stated gender performativity is not a performance but rather a repeating process which does not marginalize gender through sexuality. (Deutsch, 110) Butler's work highlights the formation of gender while challenging existing hierarchical binaries, which makes her work essential in queer theory.

3.2 Treated and Tormented: The Domination of Class Differences

Throughout history, every ruling class has proclaimed their way of governing is a 'natural' way or image of any society. This kind of claim demonstrates how the prevalent system has oppressed the marginalized group. It also applies to the discrimination against homosexual, gay or lesbian individuals. Indeed it is a characteristic of capitalism that stretches back to the formation of class society. The common criticism of the Marxist approach is basically its economic characteristic. It has been condemned for not being categorized as the oppression of homosexual, gay and lesbian people. Also, it became inapplicable for the movements held for LGBT oppression since homosexual liberation could not be categorized by using any method of social change. Moreover, it can be said that homosexual or gay liberation is the result of a socialist revolution. Furthermore, the origin of gay oppression lies in capitalist society as it fulfils the benefits of the ruling class. The main purpose of the ruling class is to control the working class to hold their position. For that reason, they divide the working class as it served their ultimate purpose to oppress and rule. Indeed, the divide makes the working class weak. So, they established many categories to compete with each other such as homosexual against heterosexual, female against male, and race against humanity. This competition between class, gender and race encourage inequality and prejudice. The significance of the nuclear family in capitalism occurred the oppression of LGBT people. However, the family works as a key element for what Marx referred

to as the 'reproduction of labour force'. As a result, it functions as a key institution in capitalism. The whole concept of a family occurred to work forcefully in factories during the early stage of capitalism. However, both Marx and Engels believed that it could be threatening the survival of the working-class family. (Engels, 255)

The ruling class made a deliberate effort in the late 19th century to establish the family as the primary institution for the replication of labour from one generation to another. However, the current idea of a gay identity first emerged during this period. Notably, the word 'homosexuality' originally appeared in a German booklet published anonymously in 1869. It is not the starting point of homosexuality rather an argument arises where homosexuality is considered an 'unnatural' activity discovered throughout society and civilization. The ruling class made homosexuality illegal considering it an offensive activity at the end of the 19th century. Laws had been developed to secure society against LGBT individuals as they were perceived as a hazard that had the potential to undermine traditional society's moral standards like Jeffrey Weeks mentioned in his book *Coming Out*,

'All male homosexual actions, short of buggery, were prohibited in Britain under the 1885 Criminal Law Amendment Act, regardless they were conducted in public or private. The Vagrancy Act of 1898 imposed strict restrictions on gay "soliciting" 13 years later.' (Weeks, 31)

In "*On Queer and Capital: Borrowing Key Marxist Concepts to Enrich Queer Theorizing*" Evangelista explains,

‘These two laws ‘marked a unique hardening of the law and were a significant element in forming contemporary attitudes.’ (Evangelista, 331)

To guarantee the availability of essential labour, the ruling class a low-cost technique in the form of a ‘working-class family’. It became more crucial to present the nuclear family as the sole viable form of family organization as the nuclear family's importance to capitalism increased. Because of this, the first laws criminalizing homosexuality appeared concurrently with the strengthening of the family.

The family has undergone significant alteration in the recent past century. Besides, capitalism works to destroy the family in various ways such as migration and stretching out the need for more labour mobility. The increased divorce rates and single parents slowly became a threat to the image of a perfect family. In addition, the decreasing rate of getting married in the first place and giving birth to children without getting married was also not accepted. So, they started burdening the family to keep these things controlled. However, the family is still considered an ultimate organization for the production of labour. On the other hand, people from the working class still depended on the family and thinking it as a source of getting love and peace in the world. Nonetheless, the reality of the society was completely different yet many women from the working class viewed marriage and giving birth to a child as irrelevant events.

Sociologist Bernhard Stern explains in *‘Engels on the family’*,

‘The extraordinary persistence with which most individuals still cling to the family is one of the most startling aspects of modern society. Millions of workers' families have been substantially transformed by these developments, but there is a propensity for employees

to cling to the family and uphold its supposedly traditional ideals. This is demonstrated by the growing ideological significance of the family and the house in late capitalism.’

(Stern, 51)

Homosexuality and gay people pose a danger to the ideal of the modern family in two ways. The first one by undermining the family's justification for increasing the labour force. Secondly, by undermining the family's ideology. The bond between man and wife is crucial to the nuclear family which is questioned by the thought of same-sex couples.

Sociologist Bernhard Stern explains,

Homosexuals are destined to be viewed as deviants as long as the traditional family serves as an economic unit for raising children and meeting the consumption needs of the adults.

The homosexual male is not seen as acting the role of a man who provides for his wife and children, and the homosexual female is not seen as acting the role of a mother and wife.

The modern family enslaves individuals who do not conform to the associated sex-role norms and serves as a prison for those who are already members. (Stern, 65)

This is an overview of the numerous idea that Marxists have created regarding the oppression of the LGBT community and the family. But there are a few crucial aspects of it that should be emphasized. First of all, Marxism shows how capitalism is designed to persecute homosexual people. It is more than just a result of reactionary views yet such ideas are based on how we are compelled to live in a capitalist society. Notably, exploitation is the major driver behind capitalism and its primary contradiction. However, the way capitalism has historically evolved has given rise to kinds of oppression that are so deeply ingrained in capitalism that they cannot simply be eliminated. Marxism was sometimes condemned by homosexual thinkers for minimizing gay

discrimination by explaining it as a result of economic exploitation. Conversely, they asserted, the source of LGBT persecution lies in the ongoing rivalry between gays and straights. Indeed, several of them even claimed that this type of heterosexism was the cause of all other forms of oppression and the separation of society into classes. It is quite fascinating that such a large number of people now view the partial progress made by gays in capitalism as proof that the oppression of homosexuals, which they believed to be unchangeable in the first place, can be eliminated by the expansion of gay business and advocating for legal reformation quietly. The second aspect of the Marxist theory of homosexual oppression is not just explaining how the oppression is accounted for itself but also clarifying how false beliefs become so prominent. Furthermore, exploring the societal class divisions is not the ultimate element of understanding oppression. The facilities middle-class people get in society are different from the facilities middle-class gay or homosexual people get. So, the class interests vary for gay or homosexual people in society as the experiences they have are different from the majority.

3.3 Self Vs Reality: The Battle of Acceptance

'An Outline of Psychoanalysis' is an unfinished work by Sigmund Freud which explores various psychoanalytic methods, mental frameworks and interpretations of dreams. However, the key element of this book is explaining the framework of id, ego and superego which shape the development of one's 'self'. However, homosexual, gay or lesbian people find it difficult to develop or understand the true self due to their sexual minority status. In an environment where the majority of the people are heterosexual make the 'other' sexuality is marginalized. Here, in the battle of queer people started to understand their true selves. According to Freud, three elements primarily affect the development of one's self. Firstly, extreme dependency on parents took a long

time for children to be matured. Freud emphasized the development of human being that influenced by parental relationship as,

‘the lengthy period of childhood, during which the developing human being lives in dependence on his parents, precipitates the construction in his ego of a specific agency in which this parental influence is perpetuated.’ (Freud, 110)

However, the whole concept of parental relationships works differently for LGBT (homosexual, gay, lesbian) people. Coming out to parents was often very traumatic for LGBT people, and those who did had experiences of rejection that ranged from regret and shock to physical abuse and being expelled from the house. According to early research on LGBT children, those who came out to parents experienced severe physical abuse. Since then, researchers have examined a variety of factors or actions associated with family rejection; they have discovered substantial links between parental rejection and a variety of psychological health issues in LGBT people. For heterosexual people, the maturity level is measured through parental dependency whereas LGBT people struggle to get any dependency from their parents.

Secondly, extreme punishment or traumatizing childhood is a drawback in developing a true self. According to Freud, childhood plays a vital role to have a strong self.

‘This is possible through hereditary; but it is rarely possible without the help of upbringing, of parental influence, which is the precursor to super-ego, which limits the activity of the ego by prohibitions and punishments, and encourage or compel the establishment of reverse flows.’ (Freud, 165)

All children's childhood should be secure, uplifting, and caring in order to promote their growth and development. Youth who identify as sexual minorities typically face marginalization and

victimization despite this widespread expectation. This might involve a significant number of stresses, such as homophobic harassment in person or online, rejection from classmates and instructors, and prejudice.

Thirdly, without having any inspirational character or strong role model which motives to shape true self.

‘Throughout later life, it signifies the effect of a person's upbringing, the care and education given to him by his parents, and his dependency on them — a childhood which is substantially prolonged in humans by family life in general.’ (Freud, 214)

The LGBT community, however, was not used to seeing individuals who were like them portrayed in society in the past due to a mixture of societal restrictions and the shame associated with coming out. Adolescent growth includes having role models, which is necessary. To feel represented, encouraged, and driven to be their best selves, LGBT individuals need to see other people who belong to the ‘minority’, not the ‘majority’ in society. It inspires people to discover and grow into their actual selves. Indeed, coming out is a procedure of knowing, embracing, and respecting one's sexuality or identity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBT) people. The process of coming out involves both discovering one's identity and expressing it with others. Therefore, having pleasant and well-adjusted role models among LGBT individuals might ease their conflict with society.

Chapter 4: Textual Analysis

4.1 *'The Picture of Dorian Gray'* by Oscar Wilde

Homosexuality has never been accepted in Victorian society. Besides, people who are engaged in same-sex activities are considered the 'devil' and brutally criticized. The idea was established from the reference to Bible which said that God created only men and women. On the other hand, homosexuals have been created as the epitome of the 'devil'. Undoubtedly, Victorian society was embedded with Christian beliefs which became a curse for homosexual people. Gradually, it shifted from curse to mental illness which oppressed and tortured homosexual people in every possible way. Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* had a revolutionary remark as it showed how implicated homosexual traits are in an oppressive society. The name of Dorian Gray in the novel itself has the connotation of homosexuality. Dorian Greeks to whom same-sex activity has been initiated to implicate characteristics between men through semen for tribal recruitment. In the novel, the controversial pattern occurred when Basil and Lord Henry, two men started admiring Dorian Gray. Indeed, normal admiration has shifted its way to physical attraction and feeling which overtones the homoerotic traits. In the novel, Basil said in the conversation with Lord Henry that 'he (Dorian) is my absolute necessity' and concluded by adding, 'he (Dorian) is my art'. (Wilde, 41) These dialogues highlighted the true affection which turned into love, a love for a man to another man. At the beginning of the novel, Basil and Henry started fighting to get Dorian's interest. However, Henry won with his witty description. The way Henry praised Dorian by saying that 'his (Dorian) youth need to be preserved' (Wilde, 44) has indicated his desire to have Dorian's body. Wilde dared to present the love between two men through these praises and admiration when society was against homosexuality. Not only against it but condemned same-sex

activities as a matter of shame. Wilde also challenged the conventional marriage in the novel by portraying the scene when Basil hesitated to take the name of Dorian to Lord Henry. Then Lord Henry suggested Basil by saying that ‘marriage has the charm to make a life of deception which is important for both individuals’. (Wilde, 85) According to Henry, Basil can admire or show interest in another man, even if he’s married. The conversation between Henry and Basil not only indicates sexual interest toward another man but also portrays how Victorian society has forbidden men to express their interest in another man openly in public. Basil also refers to the ‘effeminate youth’ with shame who are attracted to Dorian Gray. (Wilde, 86) Hence, Dorian’s more than friendly relationship with young men was a shame to society. Especially, for the fathers of those young men with whom Dorian was connected showing how Victorian society demean homosexual people. Therefore, gay men hide their sexual identity and keep it a secret as they lose social status and prestige for coming out. When Dorian murdered Basil, he asked help from his friend, Allan Campbell for decomposing Basil’s Body. Next, Dorian threatened Campbell to reveal his secret through a letter if he disagreed to help him. The letter indicated an intimate relationship between them. Campbell became hopeless and helped Dorian to hide his crime. It shows that Campbell did everything not to save Dorian, but to save his own honour in society. As Campbell said, ‘I am doing what you force me to do, not thinking about your life’. (Wilde) It shows how much Victorian society oppressed homosexual people. The fear of losing honour and respect in society became more important than committing a crime. Most of the male characters in the novel have gone through extreme tragedies. For example, the divorce of Lord Henry, the murder of Basil, the suicide of Allan Campbell or the destiny which made Dorian Gray stab the portrait. All these tragedies indicated that the only way to get rid of the homophobic society is death, the ultimate solution of getting acceptance or forgiveness.

In the novel, the relationship Dorian Gray had with some nameless working-class men depicted class domination towards queer people. Indeed, these relationships showed the vulnerability of lower-class queer people as they were considered the lowest spectrum in society. As a result, Dorian could engage or make sexual relationships with lower-class people easily as it would not be shared with other upper-class groups. Also, Dorian could behave in any way with the lower class men as there was no obligation or rules for them in the society. It did not apply to people who were heterosexual, but to queer people. So, anyone could get rid of anything only homosexual or gay working-class men. So, the facilities vary for people's sexuality. In the novel, Wilde flourished homosexual identity through class differences to portray the position of gay working-class men in society. It shows oppression, discrimination and injustice towards queer people. During the Victorian period, upper-class men made sexual relationships with lower-class men for experimenting or exploring their sexual desires. They could not do these with upper-class men as they were afraid to get exposed or humiliated in society. In the novel, Dorian's continuous outing to the back alley pubs or various theatres indicated his intention of establishing relationships with lower-class men. On the other hand, the most obvious reason for lower-class men to engage with upper-class men was transactions or money. Wilde also belonged to a reputed middle-class family which made him not cross some societal barriers. No matter how much he adores any relationship, the societal barriers in class differences would not let him achieve that. As Basil was surprised when he got to know about Sibyl and Dorian's engagement and said to Lord Henry that, 'despite of having such position and wealth, it would be a complete absurd if he (Dorian) has to marry so much beneath of him.' (Wilde, 86) So, it shows how Dorian's privileged position did not give him complete freedom to marry in a lower class. When Basil called the relationship of Sibyl and Dorian a 'silly infatuation', Lord Henry agreed with Basil by suggesting that Dorian could do

many interesting things outside the 'men-women' relationship. (Wilde, 90) It explained the experimental sexual relationship as Dorian's privileged position gave him the facility to explore 'cross-class' sexual relationships. Therefore, Dorian's secret outings to the red light areas also indicated his unconventional sexuality which was not allowed in society. It was Dorian's money which allowed him to explore those red light areas, brothels and pubs. However, Dorian's sexual preference includes both men and women, but mostly he was interested to engage with lower working-class men. Indeed, the physical appearance of working-class men was compared to 'nature' as extreme labour gave them a perfect shape body. Also, Dorian did not have to limit his behaviour as those men were bound to tolerate his demands. The mobility of Dorian gave him this privilege as Wilde said in his novel, 'Only rich are privileged to do beautiful sins to get beautiful things'. (Wilde, 98)

Oscar Wilde painted his own belief and desire through the character of Dorian Gray. In the preface, Wilde wrote that 'to reveal art and conceal the artist is the aim of art' which showed how his own interpretation of life echoed in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Even if Wilde is considered an important pioneer figure in Gay liberation for his novel, he did not directly discuss homosexuality. Indeed, he portrayed homosexual traits as his hidden desire. In real life, Wilde also tried to hide his passion and desire for homosexuality, for example, in his marriage. All of his close ones were shocked when he got married. However, his underlying homosexual traits could be identified in many of the creations which he made after his marriage. Desire or wish controls the human mind unconsciously which is evident in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as it explored the hidden truth of beauty, age, relationship and life. According to Freudian psychoanalysis, there are three states of mind- Id, Ego and Superego. In the novel, the character of Henry Wotton represented the state of mind Id which is embedded with extreme unconscious desires. Besides, Wotton

prioritized self-development over moral value. On the other hand, Dorian prioritized happiness over anything else in life. Secondly, the superego was represented by Basil Hallward who painted the young and handsome portrait of Dorian Gray. According to psychoanalytic theory, the superego is somewhat aware and stands in for parental conscience and social norms and expresses shame and guilt through consciousness. Lastly, the ego represented by Dorian Gray was an organized conscious between an individual and reality by adapting one's interpretation. According to Freud, one must keep balancing these three states of mind to understand their true self or self-identity. However, for homosexual people, it is not easy to balance these states of mind. They have to hide their desire or passion to fit in this society. Therefore, they could not differentiate between reality and imagination, which happened to Dorian Gray.

4.2 '*Giovanni's Room*' by James Baldwin

The novel *Giovanni's Room* by James Baldwin was published during the mid of 19th century when homosexuality was considered a mental illness in American society. David, the protagonist of the novel proposed to his girlfriend Hella who went to Spain. At that time, David met Giovanni in a gay bar and instantly felt attracted to him. Therefore, David felt loved and precious, the moment Giovanni looked at him. According to David, nobody could make him feel this way before. Despite having such a beautiful feeling, David became anxious as soon as he realized that it could be dangerous. A zombie-like figure explained to David the consequences of desiring Giovanni. Besides, the attraction could burn David in hell. Through David's inner anxiety, Baldwin showed how brutally the homophobic society oppressed queer people that even the thought of desiring someone would be prohibited. In the novel, Baldwin described the setting of Giovanni's room in detail. David asserted that the room was not even enough for two people and 'looked out' on a small courtyard. (Baldwin, 21) The little space in the room illustrated the frustration of homosexual people in this homophobic society. Therefore, the heteronormative world went beyond the limit and continuously oppressed queer people. On the other hand, the little room was the only place where people like David and Giovanni could live safely, even if the room felt claustrophobic. It illustrated the claustrophobic feelings of queer people by living in this oppressive society. Throughout the novel, Baldwin tried to convince that David was heterosexual. Behind the heterosexuality, David tried to hide his homosexuality by saying that he was in a much better place than other 'effeminate' men who could not hide their attraction toward queer men. Therefore, David expressed his shame towards those 'effeminate' men. For instance, David considered the bar owner Guillaume shameless by referring to him as 'a disgusting old fairy'. (Baldwin, 35) Giovanni worked in Guillaume's bar. It showed how society demean queer men

who could not hide their sexual identity. In the novel, David also wants to be with a woman which could make his father happy and protect his manhood. The engagement between men and women could predict David as bisexual. However, David's sexual intimacy with men expressed peace whereas his intimacy with women always showed his desperate behaviour. In the novel, David expressed how he tried to burn the essence of Giovanni's touch by kissing Hella. (Baldwin, 60) In another interaction, David searched for 'any girl at all' for making a relationship. (Baldwin, 60) Here, David was just trying to save his homosexual desire behind his heterosexual relationship. It showed his incapability of not being able to accept his sexuality. These behavioural changes in David showed the societal expectation and pressure every queer people feel on regular basis. Desiring Giovanni was David's inner pleasure whereas wanting to be with a female was for pleasing society.

Both Giovanni and David were homosexual yet the character of Giovanni suffered more than David in *Giovanni's Room*. Indeed, David, an American blonde, had options to explore his sexual identity by engaging with men or women. He could easily experience any kind of sexual intimacy or hide his sexual desire. It did not impact his earning source. On the other hand, Giovanni was an Italian man who came to Paris out of sadness as he cursed God for his child's death. He had no money or work permit to survive in Paris. However, Guillaume gave him a bartender job in exchange for a sexual relationship. It has been discussed in chapter 3.2 of this paper how class differences led to queer oppression. The lower-class men wanted money to survive in society. So, they agreed to do anything with privileged men. Therefore, privileged men engaged with lower-class men to explore their sexuality. They could do anything with the lower class men and easily got rid of them as there was no accountability. Giovanni was not the only young man who used his physical attraction to earn money. In *Giovanni's Room*, chapter one, there were other boys at

the bar who were calculating money and copains (friends) which would need in the upcoming days. (Baldwin, 53) They set a value to Guillaume. However, the moment Giovanni denied having a sexual relationship with Guillaume, he had been fired from his job. Indeed, Giovanni did not want to make a sexual relationship with Guillaume as he was committed to David. On the other side, David was having sex with another woman which he did not tell Giovanni. He wanted to leave Giovanni without saying anything as Hella was coming back. Even if David loved Giovanni, he wanted to stay with Hella for social acceptance. Hella wanted to have a baby which also was David's desire. It could satisfy his white masculinity and hide his homosexual desires. It was not possible with Giovanni, even if David loved him. The class differences were one of the core reasons why David's feelings were not constant for Giovanni. He loved Giovanni, at the same time, Giovanni made him vomit. (Baldwin, 44) It indicated how the race and class of Giovanni overshadowed his love for David. Therefore, David made Giovanni devastated which led Giovanni to kill Guillaume as Giovanni wanted to escape from Guillaume. As a result, Giovanni was executed for Guillaume's murder. David could have gotten an ideal family, social acceptance, prestigious life in society by staying with Hella whereas Giovanni only could give him suffering and humiliation. David tried hard to get involved with Hella yet Giovanni's execution took David into a pang of deep guilt at the end.

Throughout the novel, David tried to hide his homosexual identity. He was running from his true self as he knew the consequences of coming out. From family to society, his homosexual identity would not be accepted. It showed how sexuality could influence one's identity or perspective about his life. At the same time, sexual identity could destroy one's true self with shame and guilt. In the novel, David could not find peace by not accepting his sexual desire. It changed his perspective on life and his surroundings. Also, he lost in deep guilt when he came to

know about Giovanni's execution. It showed that no matter what people do, they could never get rid of his true identity. However, the oppressive society and its conventional belief was the reason why David never accepted himself, also his relationship with Giovanni. According to Freudian psychoanalysis, family played a crucial role to develop anyone's self-identity. The protagonist of the novel, David raised by his father and aunt without having his mother. Throughout David's life, his father showed him the importance of masculinity and told him to be a true man. His father never wanted David to be a homosexual or gay man. In one conversation, David's father told him, 'You are an American pork or bean, whether you accept it or not.' (Baldwin, 91) It showed the typical American white masculine thought which never went against society's conventional beliefs. Men only can be straight or heterosexual as that is how they showed their masculine traits. There is no place for different identities as different does not consider normal in the homophobic society. Though David's father always had high expectations from David, he never really gave him love or took proper care of David. In the novel, David said how his father was continuously reading a newspaper and hiding his face behind it. (Baldwin, 91) At some point, David became annoyed as he never found proper affection or care from his father. Gradually, David started hating his father for not having emotions and bonding. He wanted to be accepted by his father which never happened. As a consequence, David struggled to accept his homosexual self, till the end.

4.3 'Crossing' by Pajtim Statovci

The story of *Crossing* started with a 22 years old Albanian man, Bujar who dressed in a padded bra and shorts. He has lost interest to live out of frustration and anxiety about his sexual identity. Therefore, Bujar was pretending to be someone else in the chapter *God's Rib*, he stated that he was a man with a desire to be a woman that could not possible. (Statovci, 11) However, his unfulfilled wish is often fulfilled when he dressed like a woman. According to him, he has an amazing quality to dress like a beautiful woman. This dressing game gave him pleasure yet not for the longest time. People often asked him about his gender identity out of confusion. Bujar replied to them by saying man or woman, or sometimes replied nothing. The continuous curiosity about his gender identity from everyone showed how frustrating life a same-sex individual could have. This frustration made Bujar 'silent' and not confront society, sometimes his own self. As he said, 'I can choose any gender, nationality or name. Nobody is required to remain with the same gender that they were born with.' (Statovci, 12) People who are opposite-sex do not face any questions regarding their sexuality like queer people have to face. As the majority of society is heterosexual, they try to marginalize others by referring to them as 'different' or 'not normal'. There are societies named homophobic but there is nothing called a 'heterophobic' society. This is the core point of starting the oppression and discrimination towards queer people. At the beginning of the chapter *God's Rib*, Bujar said that 'women have been created from man's rib to be his companionship'. (Statovci, 11) It indicated the conventional belief of society regarding gender and their roles. There is no such place for queer people or no role for them to play. In the chapter *Marbles*, Bujar mentioned his friend, named Agim who wrote flawlessly and raised questions on the topic which Bujar could not even think of in his imagination. Such as, 'It is so narrow-minded to have only two specific genders- men and women'. (Statovci, 30) It indicated

how society ignored the existence of queer people by categorizing only men and women. The novel showed many homoerotic traits through Agim's character. Besides, Statovci showed the intimate relationship between Bujar and Agim. In the chapter *The Swept City*, Bujar explained how Agim grabbed his neck and kissed him on his mouth when Bujar was leaving. (Statovci, 63) However, Bujar immediately pushed him back from kissing. They had a romantic but complex relationship which haunted Bujar throughout his life. In the chapter *Ugly / Beautiful*, Bujar met with a man in the writing creative class. Gradually that man showed interest in Bujar as he was dressed like a woman. When that man tried to make a sexual relationship with Bujar in a hotel room by pressing his 'non-existent breast', he found out Bujar's real gender identity. (Statovci, 86) The moment he realized the truth, he started beating Bujar. With a glance, all love, care and respect turned into abuse and violence, the affection into humiliation. Bujar begged and cried for letting him go, but that man did not stop. However, Bujar somehow managed to exit from that hotel room. Later, he thought of complaining to the police but could not as he said, 'To justify the incident, I might have to reveal my gender identity which I do not have.' (Statovci, 86) It showed the extreme discrimination toward queer people and how their basic rights were violated in society. That man from the hotel could get rid of any crime because society made violence towards queer people normal. Bujar did not want to categorize himself by defining his sexuality or gender. However, he also understood that the refusal for not being put himself into any category made him ignorant, humiliated and lonely in this society.

The setting of the novel shifted from one country to another, from Albania to Italy, from various cities of Europe to New York, and again shifted from Helsinki to Tirana. The journey of travelling to various places meant to find freedom and acceptance for the people like Bujar and Agim. However, Bujar's gender identity and nationality kept changing with the places. He dressed

up both like a man and a woman depending on the place and culture. Therefore, he refused to identify his gender, sexuality or nationality. In the chapter *Sammy And The Dragon* of the novel, Bujar said how he wanted to focus on uniqueness or individuality rather than any gender identity. (Statovci, 102) It somehow challenged the conventional practices in society. It has been mentioned in chapter 3.2 of this paper that the ruling class is divided into categories to control and hold their power such as men and women, black and white, heterosexual and homosexual, and upper and lower class. As a result, minorities are being oppressed by the majority for mobility, status and position in society. In order to continue the oppression, the capitalist society focused on the nuclear family which could replicate labour from one generation to another. It helped to increase the reproduction of labour in the working middle-class people. Indeed, homosexual people were considered a threat to demolishing this ideal image of a nuclear family. For this reason, homosexuals were abandoned and oppressed for not having an ideal family which happened in *Crossing*. In chapter *Love*, Bujar fall in love with a woman with curly hair and green eyes, Rosa whom he met at a café on Calle Gran Via. Interestingly, Bujar fall in love with Rosa because she looked exactly the way Bujar always wanted to look like. (Statovci, 88) On the other hand, Rosa wanted to start her family with Bujar as she expressed her desire to have a baby with Bujar. Also, she thought that Bujar would be an 'ideal' father. (Statovci, 89) Everything falls apart when one day Rosa caught Bujar wearing her clothes. She made fun of him which led Bujar to punch her in the stomach. All the love turned into hatred at a glance when Rosa called Bujar and said, 'You are such a sick. Admit it that you're one of those trannies.' (Statovci, 90) After that, Rosa disappeared from Bujar's life and left him all alone. The way Rosa used the word 'tranny' as slang showed why homosexuals could not be a part of an ideal family in society. According to conventional beliefs, an ideal family starts with men, women and children whereas queer people could not be a

part of making children. Thus, society turned queer people into a 'minor' group which can easily be oppressed or exploited. There are no rules or laws made to protect them in society. For example, in the chapter *Sammy And The Dragon*, Bujar met with Sammy who was known as Sandy Ho. He worked in two different cafes along with a drag show. After some interactions, Sandy Ho invited Bujar to come to his drag show. Indeed, Bujar was extremely excited to see his transformation as he said, 'I have never seen as beautiful as her leg, shoulder and high heels.' (Statovci, 102) The magnificent performance of Sandy Ho made Bujar attracted and disturbed at the same time. He was attracted to the beauty of Sandy as well as disturbed for not being able to be like him. After the show, Bujar invited Sandy to stay in his apartment which he agreed. Somehow he found peace in Sandy's companionship in this 'crowded' world. However, Bujar's dream shattered when he woke up in the morning and saw Sandy leave his apartment by taking all of his savings. Bujar went to work without reacting to it as the city was already 'frozen' for him. Earlier, working-class men agreed to engage with privileged men for money. Conversely, privileged men engaged with working-class men to keep their sexual identity secret in society. Here, Sandy took advantage of Bujar for money. On the other hand, Bujar did not make any scene or complain about this incident. Both of them knew that this act of stealing would not register in any police station like their existence has not been acknowledged in this homophobic society.

In the chapter *The Sense of Snow*, Bujar said that Agim never used the word home, Albania. He did not even believe in God, his people or the idea of having his own place where he could take home. (Statovci, 134) On the other hand, Bujar also expressed how his father's name, Albanian legacy and wealth became a 'burden' rather than an opportunity. Both of these characters did not share any spiritual or emotional bond with family or God. According to Freudian psychoanalysis, developing self-identity depends on the relationship with family and childhood experiences. A

traumatized childhood or negligence from family could destroy the individual growth of a human being, which could easily relate to the life experience of queer people. Agim and Bujar both came from a place where homosexuality was considered a sin. Not only that, they abused and tortured queer people. When Bujar came to Italy, he told one of the police officers, 'I am homosexual, that's why I do not want to go to my homeland. They beat me and I'm scared.' (Statovci, 75) It showed how homosexuals were treated in Albania and the need of escaping that place for Bujar. Even if Bujar or Agim escaped from that place, but could not escape from the oppressive society. Agim was once beaten by her father as he was caught dressed like a woman. In the case of queer people, the oppression for expressing gender and sexual identity started in the family along with society. These traumatized experiences from childhood could stay with one's mind. Bujar always wanted to dress a certain way, like a woman. He always wanted to look desirable and accepted. That is why he fell for Sammy (the drag woman) or his girlfriend Rosa. It reflected his hidden desire, his true identity which he wanted to achieve. Unfortunately, every time he tried to taste that very true self, it tormented by this oppressive system. Thus, people like Bujar or Agim realized that in this society, there is no place for them.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

To conclude, homosexuality or same-sex relationships were existed in every culture, whether it has been accepted or not. In earlier days, Christian oriented society punished homosexual people for their gender identity. An intimate relationship between same-sex considered a sin or disease. Early queer writers like Oscar Wilde and James Baldwin suffered from writing homosexual content. As the majority of society is heterosexual, same-sex people are considered a 'minority'. As a result, the heterosexual community created a homophobic society to oppress them. Thus, laws have been created to protect society from LGBT people. They are seen as some kind of threat which can demolish the moral values of the conventional society. It tormented the existence of homosexual people. In a capitalist society, queer people had been dominated by class differences. They had been used for the sexual experiments of upper-class privileged men in exchange for money. Homosexuals were not allowed to form a family as they were unable to give birth. Throughout their life, homosexuals battled for accepting their self-identity. They barely get support from their family. Also, society never accepted them the way they are. Mostly, they get a traumatized childhood or bitter memory which stayed in their mind forever. Therefore, they hide their identity out of humiliation and shame. No matter how they tried, society never let them have a safe place, a safe home of their own.

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