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This book first published 2018

Taken from the dissertation *Perpetuation of the Gay Male Stereotype: A Study on Camping & Closeting the Gay Male Subculture in Hollinghurst's Fiction* by Serkan Ertin

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-5275-0408-5
ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-0408-0

To love that dare not speak its name

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I offer my sincerest gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurten Birlik, who supported me throughout my DPhil studies with her enthusiasm, great effort, patience and kindness, as well as her academic experience, which is invaluable to me. She always provided encouragement, good company, and good ideas. She is also the one who encouraged me to transform my dissertation into a book and get it published, and this book is the end product.

I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Nursel İçöz and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nur Gökalp Akkerman for their kind assistance, positive attitude, and sound advice throughout the process of writing the dissertation which now has become a monograph.

I am also indebted to my colleagues, friends, and students for providing a stimulating and fun environment in which to learn and grow. I feel blessed to have met and to have you in my life.

I would like to include a special note of thanks to Barış Doruk Güngör, who has enriched my life since he broke into it and made my world a much better place to live in with his charm.

Lastly, and most importantly, I wish to thank my family for their unconditional love and support, even though from distance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Queer theory has been employed in the analyses of a great number of literary or non-literary texts in the last few decades. These analyses aspire to detach sexuality from the heterosexual gaze and re-establish its previously stolen fluid and indeterminate character by subverting heteronormative texts, movements, and genres. Queer studies are by their very nature contradictory and subversive; they lay bare the heteronormative oppression and its mechanisms behind the deployment of sexuality; and it is within these contradictory and fluid frames that "queer theory emerges to augment lesbian and gay studies of the recent past.... Similarly, theorizations of performativity and speech act theory, drag, camp, the carnivalesque, and masquerade point in the direction of a reconceptualisation of sexuality and identity" (Waugh 444). Indeed queer studies are anti-essentialist in nature which interpret and regard any and every cultural form, not only sexuality and identity but also gender, class, race, desire, norms, and so on, as discursive constructions which can be altered, subverted, repeated, or recreated. Likewise, queer fiction is supposed to question heteronormative ideology and subvert mainstream values by laying bare the power mechanisms which configure and maintain the perpetuation of stereotype identities.

This book intends to explore the terms camp and closet against the background of Alan Hollinghurst's fiction, since all four of his novels - *The Swimming-Pool Library* (1988), *The Folding Star* (1993), *The Spell* (1998), and *The Line of Beauty* (2004) – give a hearing to and reveal the gay male experience throughout the late-twentieth century, and falsely claim to employ a queer narrative style, which is supposed to be without any centralising or judgemental positions. Along with these terms, this book will also employ a genealogical approach to GLBT terminology in order to prepare the ground for a more comprehensive understanding of the gay male subjectivities in these novels.

Alan Hollinghurst's novels have been chosen for this monograph since in his novels he deals with gay issues, and in his interview in *The Guardian*, after receiving the Booker Prize, he underlines that he does

employ gay narrative techniques. This is of great significance for the study: Some writers themselves are gay; some writers –gay or not- write on gay characters and themes; and some –gay or not- take up a subversive and queer approach in their works. Hollinghurst claims that he is all! In the interview, he explains his approach and authorial position: "From the start I've tried to write books which began from a presumption of the gayness of the narrative position. To write about gay life from a gay perspective unapologetically and as naturally as most novels are written from a heterosexual position" (2004). His remark shows that his approach aims to problematise dominant Western ideology, which is phallocentric, as his work is, allegedly, freed from the mainstream binaries. He does not intend to justify homosexual desire or apologise for being gay on behalf of all others. What he says he wants to achieve is the naturalisation of homosexuality just like that of heterosexuality. He does not mind being called a gay writer as long as people can see all the other vital issues going on in his novels. His work deals not only with sex but also with such significant issues as race, class distinction, history, culture, and so on. His so-called subversive attitude and playful approach could be seen in the epigraph to *The Line of Beauty*, which is an extract from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*:

> `What do you know about this business?' the King said to Alice.
> `Nothing,' said Alice.
> `Nothing *whatever*?' persisted the King.
> `Nothing whatever,' said Alice.
> `That's very important,' the King said, turning to the jury. They were just beginning to write this down on their slates, when the White Rabbit interrupted: `*Un*important, your Majesty means, of course,' he said in a very respectful tone, but frowning and making faces at him as he spoke.
> `*Un*important, of course, I meant,' the King hastily said, and went on to himself in an undertone, `important—unimportant—unimportant—important—' as if he were trying which word sounded best. (ii)

The extract, which is promising in terms of a queer approach, is a witty play on signifiers, and repeating the important/unimportant binary it blurs and erases the difference between the opposite poles. Thus, this short extract could be suggestive of the position and approach which the writer claims to possess. While exploring gay subjectivity and its fight for recognition in a non-gay world, Hollinghurst does not attempt to reach a single stable or universal truth: "I don't make moral judgments," Hollinghurst says, in the same interview, "I prefer to let things reverberate with their own ironies and implications" (2004).

However, a close look at Hollinghurst's fictional contexts reveals that while trying to naturalise homosexuality, he overemphasises the previously and traditionally shadowy leg of the binary, and as a result, in his work the non-gay world almost perishes, and the gender roles and the mainstream culture of the heteronormative discourse are kept alive and mimicked by gay individuals, ironically. Tim Edwards argues that the denial of the dominant culture and ideology culminates in a paradox, i.e., "in separating oneself from mainstream culture and asserting difference there is a tendency to assert sameness within that separate community whilst the opposite process operates in a politics of assimilation" (113-114). In Hollinghurst's novels, the assertion of sameness in the gay community not only re-establishes the campy gay male subculture but also closets them by depicting gay male characters as promiscuous and beastly figures that cannot distinguish between love and sex, often mistaking the latter for the former, and sooner or later come down with AIDS and die an *unnatural* death. As a gay writer he cannot escape the traps of the homophobic discourses within the dominant Western epistemology. In such a context, it would not be wrong to say that his authorial position falls short of meeting the expectations he verbally promises and that, in fact, he undermines with his novels what he claims in his interview given above.

The English context –under Thatcher's government—in which Hollinghurst wrote these novels has already changed and he is well aware of the fact: "When I began, there was an urgency about it which isn't there now. Things have changed so much over those 20 years; attitudes towards homosexuality are so different now." Gays' struggle for recognition or their own space and voice would be redundant in the contemporary English context. His approach to queer movement and his narrative style in these four novels sound repetitive and outdated considering the relatively emancipated space occupied by gay male subjectivities at present. Moreover, although he claims to maintain a queer and subversive approach in his work, he cannot go beyond producing mainstream gay novels which are inevitably in line with identity politics. This monograph is an attempt to analyse the first four novels of the writer since all four relate to one another in some way. Hollinghurst does not regard them as a tetralogy, yet admits the parallelism: "I do have a sense of having completed a quartet of books which, while not a tetralogy in any narrative sense, do cohere in a way" (2004). *The Stranger's Child*, his fifth novel published in June 2011, is not included in this study since it does not fit in the tetralogical frame –regarding camp and closet—of the first four novels. The first four novels are important for the gay canon because they point

out an era in the historical deployment of homosexuality in England, which seems to be over by the twenty-first century. However, they fall short of the claim as queer texts since they are unable to reveal the ideological mechanisms at work in constructing subjectivity, gender and sexual identity, and the discursively-constructed nature of these epistemic categories.

1.1 Scientia Homosexualis: Historical Background

Although the [1]Stonewall riots, commencing in New York on 27 June 1969, are widely accepted and celebrated as the origin of gay liberation and queer movements in the Western world, the theoretical base feeding and enabling the awareness of gay subjectivity and the rejection of institutional oppression indeed dates back to the work of such significant theorists and philosophers as Freud, Althusser, Saussure, Lacan, and Foucault. Prior to these major thinkers, who led the way to the post-structuralist ambience which problematised the taken-for-grantedness of gender itself, there had already been quite a few abortive attempts to explore the reasons for and the nature of same-sex desire and subjectivity, though there had been none to seek the origin of heterosexual desire and identity. These attempts were extensions of modernity with its positivism, which had an unquestioning faith in knowledge and progress, and which took the innocence and naturalness of knowledge and language for granted. However, they could not see through the gender politics of the dominant discourse within which the meaning of *woman* is created "by excluding everything that is non-Woman, and vice versa for Man" and idealised templates are configured "for what is perfectly masculine or perfectly feminine by excluding whatever doesn't fit: the queer, the different, the mixed" (Wilchins 36). Their method was trapped in binarism and dichotomous thinking, and accordingly they could not see that in these binaries what one leg of the polarity refers to depends on the existence of the other, and thus, it cannot be reliable or stable.

Many theoreticians, even while trying to get out of the heteronormative system, failed to do so, since they could not go beyond binaries. In fact, they modelled themselves after the previously established models of

[1] The Stonewall riots, a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969 at the Stonewall Inn, New York, are frequently cited as the first instance in American history when gays and lesbians fought back against a government-sponsored system that persecuted homosexuals, and these reactions marked the start of the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world.

thinking. For instance, in the nineteenth century German lawyer and social commentator Karl Heinrich Ulrichs attempted to decriminalise homosexuality by defining and categorising it. He claimed that *urning*s and *uringin*s, feminine male attracted to men and masculine female sexually drawn to women respectively, have the physical features of one sex and the instincts of the other (Sullivan 5). By relying on the mind / body binary, he ended up re-establishing the same old Cartesian dualism and excluded many other undefined minorities like masculine gays or feminine lesbians. Hirschfeld attempted to develop Karl Ulrich's model and claimed that homosexuality was "an intermediate condition, a 'third sex' that combined physiological aspects of both masculinity and femininity" (qtd. in Jagose 23). These attempts were, indeed, the results of homophile movements in the nineteenth century, which tried to increase tolerance for homosexuality and even rouse pity and sympathy for homosexuals, in order to decriminalise homosexuality. Homophile movements, thus, differ highly from gay liberation movements, which were mass movements aware of their presence as a socio-political minority imprisoned in a dominant heteronormative discourse. Whereas the former wanted to present an acceptable image of the homosexual –based on the principle of similarity— within the mainstream, the latter antagonised and shocked the society highlighting their difference, which is very similar to what Hollinghurst does in his novels. Edward Carpenter, British socialist pioneer of homosexual freedom and women's rights who had an enormous impact on the cultural and political life of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, stated that homosexuals were superior to heterosexuals (qtd. in Sullivan 12). In this way, while trying to naturalise homosexuality, he reversed the heteronormative binary Heterosexual \ Homosexual and created a new one: Homosexual \ Heterosexual. These binary Western accounts fail to avoid being prescriptive and reductive, and none of them is convincing for Claude J. Summers, who states that "many individuals repeatedly participate in a wide range of homoerotic behaviour without defining themselves as homosexual" (13). The signifier 'same-sex sex', therefore, does not necessarily refer to the signified 'homosexuality'. Moreover, the binary relation of the 'homosexual' to the 'heterosexual' is not a real dichotomy; it is just one of the numerous reifications of Western thought. Peter Barry states that apparently elemental classes like heterosexual and homosexual do not refer to fixed essences at all; they are just like Saussurean signifiers flying in a structure of differences without fixed referents (145). However, being an end product of power relations and mainstream discourses on sexuality, the reified relation between 'heterosexuality' and 'homosexuality' persistently centralises and

normalises the former, whereas it marginalises and stigmatises the latter as the 'other'.

The banishment and stigmatisation of the homosexual, though still a common phenomenon in the twenty-first century, is not a universal truth whose existence dates back to the earliest existence of mankind on earth. Sexuality, disregarding the heterosexual / homosexual binary, has been moulded and reconfigured in different forms by dominant ideologies and discourses in the course of history, which have employed simplistic binaries to create totalising hierarchies. Within the frames of totalising ideologies and discourses, many theorists and philosophers since Plato attempted to account for the construction of gender and sexuality; however, they failed in their attempts as they could not move beyond binarism. They were still moving on a Platonic discursive ground as they were looking for a single transcendental truth. None of these philosophers and thinkers accused these frames or grand narratives of being totalistic before Derrida, for whom all these frames were just myths to be demystified. Derrida's deconstructing Western thought led the way to the deconstruction of any and every grand narrative. Wilchins reveals how the former process paved the way for the latter: "If Derrida had deconstructed thought, it fell to another French philosopher, Michel Foucault, to deconstruct the thinker" (47). Foucault expanded the margins of deconstruction since it was him who critiqued the universalising and totalising aspect of Western thought creating Certainty, Knowledge, and Truth, and his groundbreaking work *History of Sexuality* was the first extensive analysis of the production, configuration, and deployment of sexuality. History and a diachronic approach to history were of great significance to Foucault in that they would reveal the constructed and variable nature of sexuality. Drawing on history, Foucault demystifies and deconstructs sexuality, by contrasting the practices in his own society with those in Ancient Greece and Rome. In Ancient Greece, for instance, there were not any rules or norms restricting sexuality. They never regarded same-sex sex as unacceptable and "never imagined that sexual pleasure was in itself an evil or that it could be counted among the natural stigmata of a transgression" (Foucault, *Sexuality* 2: 97). The space of sexuality, for Foucault, is a historically constructed apparatus; an elaborate system of morals, discourses, and procedures created in order to control and lead sexual practices to the desired political ends. Through the apparatus, Foucault argues, sexuality "was driven out of hiding and constrained to lead a discursive existence. From the singular imperialism that compels everyone to transform their sexuality into a perpetual discourse, to the manifold mechanisms which, in the areas of economy, pedagogy,

medicine, and justice, incite, extract, distribute, and institutionalize the sexual discourse, an immense verbosity is what our civilization has required and organized" (1: 33). Science is one of the major sources of heteronormative discourses which deploy and control sexuality. Accordingly, science is not always reliable. Chrys Ingraham underlines the fact that it was science in the nineteenth century that claimed women should not be exposed to college education lest it would harm their reproductive organs (74). Science disregards relativity since there must be only one truth applicable in any context. Foucault exemplifies the medical discourses which stigmatise homosexuality by mentioning the science of perversion and the program of eugenics during the second half of the nineteenth century, culminating in the theory of degenerescence, which

> explained how a heredity that was burdened with various maladies (it made little difference whether these were organic, functional, or psychical) ended by producing a sexual pervert (look into the genealogy of an exhibitionist or a homosexual: you will find a hemiplegic ancestor, a phthisic parent, or an uncle afflicted with senile dementia); but it went on to explain how a sexual perversion resulted in the depletion of one's line of descent -rickets in the children, the sterility of future generations. The series composed of perversion-heredity-degenerescence formed the solid nucleus of the new technologies of sex. (*Sexuality* 1: 118)

These technologies attempt to reify the so-called correlation, or rather a cause-effect relationship, between perversion and other *illnesses*, and normalise heterosexuality. However, trying to set norms on sexualities is not always possible. In the case of intersexuality, for example, the individuals having both male and female sexual characteristics and organs are revered in some societies because they are able to inseminate and give birth, though not always in a literal sense. In many other cultures, however, the intersexual individual is regarded as a deformity and is forced to undergo surgery; s/he must choose male or female genitals. In patriarchal societies privileging masculinity, parents tend to prefer male genitalia. This extreme sense of discrimination stems from a misrecognition; the belief that the male is completely different from, even opposite and superior to, the female. According to Laqueur, since the first Greek anatomists, there had been one sex, the male. The female body was regarded as an inferior version "lacking in some vital essence that caused it to be smaller, more delicate, and come with an *inny* instead of an *outty*" (qtd. in Wilchins 90). Greeks, Foucault argues, believed that the desire for a boy or a girl was subject to the single condition that the motive was noble. However, he adds;

> they also thought that this desire called for a particular mode of behavior when it made a place for itself in a relationship between two male individuals. The Greeks could not imagine that a man might need a different nature—an 'other' nature—in order to love a man; but they were inclined to think that the pleasures one enjoyed in such a relationship ought to be given an ethical form different from the one that was required when it came to loving a woman. In this sort of relation, the pleasures did not reveal an alien nature in the person who experienced them; but their use demanded a special stylistics. (*Sexuality* 2: 192)

Misogynous and dualistic as this claim is, it reveals the fact that Ancient Greeks defined sexuality on the principle of similarity, not difference. Accordingly, for Foucault, human body is not sexed or gendered before it takes its place within a discourse. Only after that and through its positionality among power relations can the body have a meaning. Sexuality is a "historically specific organization of power, discourse, bodies, and affectivity. As such, sexuality is understood by Foucault to produce 'sex' as an artificial concept which effectively extends and disguises the power relations responsible for its genesis" (qtd. in Butler, *Gender* 117). He denaturalises the heterosexual / homosexual binary by contextualising and historicising it. In this way, he reveals the fact that since sexuality is discursively constructed and it is history-specific and culture-specific, there cannot be a fully reliable account of it. Thus, terms such as invert, faggot, dyke, sodomite, and so on, are cultural artefacts "tied to ways of understanding and of being that are specific to a particular cultural milieu" (Sullivan 2). This is the reason why Foucault constantly compares the modern cultural milieu to the others while denaturalising the dogma of sexuality and desire. For instance, in his diachronic analysis of desire, he refers to the Ancient Greeks again and states that they did not categorise desire into two; one for women and the other for men. They were not bisexuals, either, since they did not have the modern dualistic way of thinking. For them:

> what made it possible to desire a man or a woman was simply the appetite that nature had implanted in man's heart for 'beautiful' human beings, whatever their sex might be. True, one finds in Pausanias' speech a theory of two loves, the second of which—Urania, the heavenly love—is directed exclusively to boys. But the distinction that is made is not between a heterosexual love and a homosexual love; Pausanias draws the dividing line between 'the love which the baser sort of men feel'—its object is both women and boys, it only looks to the act itself (to diaprattesthai)—and the more ancient, nobler, and more reasonable love that is drawn to what has

> the most vigor and intelligence, which obviously can only mean the male sex. (*Sexuality* 2: 188-189)

This does not mean they avoided categorising or naming desire, but they categorised desire on the basis of the faculties of the brain rather than the biological givens, which resulted in the conclusion that the desire for boys was more heavenly, as in Shakespeare's sonnets, than the one for women, which was seen as a procreative act and thus more nature-al, i.e., bestial.

The term 'homosexuality' is quite a recent phenomenon. The relation of the virile man to the effeminate one in Ancient Greece does not coincide with the modern hetero / homo binary opposition nor with the active / passive homosexual binarism. In the former, Foucault states, one's attitude to pleasures determined his femininity or masculinity. Provided that a man was able to control his pleasures and was active during the sexual intercourse, he was not charged with effeminacy; however, a man who became a slave to his desires was considered, disregarding his sexual object of desire, feminine (*Sexuality* 2: 85). Contemporary traditional signs of effeminacy, also signs of camp, such as too much preoccupation with looks, refusal to engage in the relatively rough activities like sports, fancy for perfumes and adornments, interest in visual arts, graceful use of gestures and so on, were not necessarily associated with men in Ancient Greece who would be called effeminate or homosexual in the nineteenth century and afterwards. Identifying individuals based on their object of desire is a recent phenomenon invented by dominant heteronormative discourses. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argues that it is "a rather amazing fact that, of the very many dimensions along which the genital activity of one person can be differentiated from that of another... precisely one, the gender of object choice, emerged from the turn of the century, and has remained, as *the* dimension denoted by the now ubiquitous category of 'sexual orientation'" (8).

Tracing the reasons for the sharp discrepancy between the past and his own time on a diachronic level, Foucault, in the first volume of *History of Sexuality*, puts the blame on the seventeenth century, the beginning of an age of repression by bourgeois discourses, in which censorship and silence controlled the free circulation of sex at the level of language. Ironically, for the last three centuries there has been a discursive explosion, and too many allusions and metaphors have been codified. Foucault's "objective is to analyse a certain form of knowledge regarding sex, not in terms of repression or law, but in terms of power" (*Sexuality* 1: 92). Power, which may be taken as the origin of closet, in his view, is not a concrete or visible institution; it is just a name attributed to complex strategies in a particular society. There has always been resistance to power, for sure, but

it has developed inside the discourse power has created, since one is always inside power and there is no escaping it. As for the relation between camp and closet, accordingly, it would not be wrong to state that "[t]he closet has given us camp" (Case 189). Power is omnipresent, produced from one moment to the next, at every point. It is everywhere and it actually comes from below; there is no binary opposition between the ruler and the ruled at the root of power relations (*Sexuality* 2: 94). In this way, Foucault located the long-mistaken space of power and determined the way to fight it back.

Same-sex sexual activities, disregarding the extent to which they were accepted or rejected, have been documented in all primitive or civilised societies. Until the late nineteenth century, when Western civilisation condemned and stigmatised it, there was no categorical identification to refer to 'the class' of men having same-sex sex acts. Richardson & Seidman acknowledge that same-sex feelings, desires, or sexual acts may have always existed, but they deny the existence of 'homosexuals', since it would be an anachronistic use of the term for individuals (2). The term 'heterosexuality' actually appeared after the term 'homosexuality' was coined first. Thus, the heterosexual was able to define himself only against the homosexual, employing the homosexual as the suppressed leg of the binary. In such a context, it might be interesting to give a hearing to Jagose, who summarises the historical background and deployment of sexual categories in a rather humorous manner:

> First there was Sappho (the good old days). Then there was the acceptable homoeroticism of classical Greece, the excesses of Rome. Then, casually to skip two millennia, there was Oscar Wilde, sodomy, blackmail and imprisonment, Forster, Sackville-West, Radclyffe Hall, inversion, censorship; then pansies, butch and femme, poofs, queens, fag hags, more censorship and blackmail, and Orton. Then there was Stonewall (1969) and we all became gay. (75-76)

This short diachronic explanation mocks the configuration of sexual identities in the course of time based on one's sexual object of desire. It contrasts the freedom in Ancient Greece where there were no sexual categories defining the participants of same-sex sex acts to the Victorian Era when gay-banishing broke out and the clear-cut distinction between the heterosexual and the homosexual was created. Eve K. Sedgwick , being against defining sexual identity based on one's sexual object choice, mocks the formation of these two terms: "The word 'homosexuality' wasn't coined until 1869 — so everyone before then was heterosexual" (52). The term 'homosexuality' was coined in 1869 in Germany and preceded the invention of its so-called binary pole 'heterosexuality' by

almost eleven years. However, the term, which originally intended to decriminalise and normalise homosexuality, turned out to be a medical and legal prescriptive term. This is the reason why critics like Sedgwick counterstrike the fictitious 'nature' and reified essentialism of the terms which tend to categorise sexual identities. Anti-essentialism regarding sexual identity is taken further by Judith Butler, too. Butler argues that terms like homosexual and heterosexual function as instruments of regulatory regimes. As a genealogical critic rereading Foucault, she does not look for the origins of gender or a genuine sexual identity. Instead, she states that "genealogy investigates the political stakes in designating as an *origin* and *cause* those identity categories that are in fact the *effects* of institutions, practices, discourses with multiple and diffuse points of origin. The task of this inquiry is to center on—and decenter—such defining institutions: phallogocentrism and compulsory heterosexuality" (*Gender* xxx). Even the discourse of homosexuality, as long as it is produced within the phallogocentric heteronormative discourse, cannot break away from the oppressive regimes. In other words, the concept and term of homosexuality is itself inevitably a tool employed by homophobic discourses.

In England, during the pretentious Victorian Era, where the 'other' Victorians were marginalised to the very end, homosexuality began to define "not simply what one does but who one is" (Summers 14). The marginal Victorian figures, the most famous of whom was Oscar Wilde, started to live as homosexuals, since homosexuality had transformed into an identity and "for the first time it was possible to be a homosexual" (Jagose 22). The radical change in the conception of homosexuality marked its transition from *doing* to *being*, which paved the way for the emergence of a distinct gay male subculture and identity seen in Hollinghurst's fiction. For Foucault, homosexuality as an identity "appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (*Sexuality* 1: 43). In terms of GLBT struggles for more rights or equality, this might imply recognition to some extent; however, this transition did not mean liberation in practice for the homosexual whose being was eventually recognised. Halperin argues that Foucault draws on homosexuality just in order to gain insight into power relations and their influence on the deployment of sexuality and that he did not regard homosexuality "as a newly liberated species of sexual being but as a strategically situated marginal position from which it might be possible to glimpse and to devise

new ways of relating to oneself and to others" (68). In other words, it was not Foucault's main target to differentiate homosexual identity from same-sex sex acts, but his work yielded invaluable results and prepared the ground for his followers. His work led GLBT activists to form a counter-discourse to fight heteronormativity:

> There is no question that the appearance in nineteenth-century psychiatry, jurisprudence, and literature of a whole series of discourses on the species and subspecies of homosexuality, inversion, pederasty, and "psychic hermaphrodism" made possible a strong advance of social controls into this area of "perversity"; but it also made possible the formation of a "reverse" discourse: homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or "naturality" be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified. (*Sexuality* 1: 101)

This counter-discourse, whose counterpart in gay liberation movements is camp, used the same weapons as the heteronormative discourses to fight homophobia, an agent and effect of closet, which is in accordance with Foucault's argument that discourses have their counter-discourses within their own domain. There is no discourse of power out there and another one opposite it; they are, instead, elements of power relations.

In the mid-twentieth century U.S, the American sexologist Alfred Kinsey amazed his readers when he published his famous reports demonstrating how common homosexuality was among Americans (Richardson and Seidman 1). His reports, starting with the publication of *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and followed by *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), carried the discussions regarding homosexuality to a more radical ground and pushed it out of the closet. His publications, which led to a storm of controversy, became bestsellers catapulting Kinsey to an instant stardom and are still regarded by many as an enabler of the sexual revolution of the 1960s. The increasing visibility of homosexual subjectivity, however, did not lead to a higher recognition for the homosexual individual. On the contrary, in many Anglo-American and European nations, homosexuals were considered to be inverts until the mid-twentieth century and "the idea was well established that the homosexual was an abnormal or deviant and dangerous type of person" (Richardson and Seidman 1). In the 1950s homosexuals faced a severe form of discrimination, harassment, and repression. Furthermore, homosexuality was criminalised, psychologised, and psychiatrised institutionally. Particularly judicial formulations, Sedgwick states, codified "an excruciating system of double binds, systematically oppressing gay people, identities,

and acts by undermining through contradictory constraints on discourse the grounds of their very being" (70).

In addition to legal discourses, religious doctrines closeted homosexuals, too. Dawne Moon argues that religions are inherently neither pro-gay nor anti-gay, yet "many religious thinkers assume that homosexuality is a sign of humanity's fall, that human beings were created heterosexual and that homosexuality is a part of society's degeneration" (314). However, sexualities and even same-sex sexual acts have received different treatments and reactions in different historical periods and different cultures. Therefore, legal or religious formulations have been incoherent and contradictory, raising the recognition of homosexuals on one hand, i.e., allowing them to camp, and denying their right to exist on the other, i.e., closeting them. Very suitably, Jagose states that "modern knowledges about the categories of sexual identification are far from coherent" (19).

After the 1950s, especially in the following two decades, gay individuals began to define and identify themselves as social and political entities to fight back the closet. They realised that they had to unite around a common purpose and, thus, began establishing activist liberation organisations to seek social and legal reforms and equality. Mattachine Society, for example, the earliest homophile organization in the United States, emphasised the fact that homosexuals did constitute a population unaware of its status as a social minority imprisoned within the heteronormative system and aimed to "foster a collective identity among homosexuals who, recognising the institutional and hegemonic investments in their continued marginalisation, might consequently be energised and enabled to fight against their oppression" (Jagose 25). In such a context, the initial objective was to achieve public acceptance of homosexuality. Nonetheless, especially in the 1960s, these movements turned out to be more revolutionary and aggressive. Especially after the Stonewall riots, which were actually "modelled on the black civil rights struggle, the anti-war movement of the day, and the new wave of feminism," gay liberation movements challenged the stereotypical ideas about homosexuality and foregrounded their shared social and cultural experience, instead of their identification based merely on their sexual activities (Summers 16). This was a sign of the transition from homosexuality to gay identities, which would be hard to destroy once established. In this period, the influence of religion on sexuality lost its earlier power, and it was replaced by medical, literary, psychological, legal, and scientific discourses. There was a sense of dissatisfaction with the earlier quietist methods and soon the activists began "to critique the structures and values of heterosexual dominance. Instead of representing

themselves as being just like heterosexuals except in their sexual object choice, gay liberationists… challenged conventional knowledge about such matters as gendered behaviour" (Jagose 31). The discontent with the previous pacifistic policies paved the way for the increasing radical liberation movements. Adam states that, in addition to the factors mentioned above, increasing divorce, extra-marital births, children raised by a lone parent, and infertile women helped decentre heterosexual institutions. Marriage as an institutionalised practice lost its privileged status and the heterosexual couple married with children was no longer considered "the centre-ground of western societies and... the basic unit in society" (34). Today even gay marriage, once a dream, is a controversial topic and many activists are against the long waited and demanded right. For them, marriage is a product of heteronormativity and it could, on the one hand, sound like more freedom and recognition for gay couples, yet it is the reestablishment of heteronormativity on the other hand. There are different arguments about gay marriages; for some, gay marriage is a way of normalisation, it dismantles gender norms, and it is more equal, whereas for others marriage bond is less important in the twenty-first century, it is always-already transforming and not fixed. The institution itself is very complex and the future regarding same-sex marriage may be analysed referring to the term 'precarity', literally meaning 'precariousness', but now referring to existence without predictability, certainty, or security, which does bind the disenfranchised and criminalised GLBT individuals. In the past, Foucault says, precarity referred to the fleeting character in a man's erotic relationship with an adolescent, i.e., the beloved losing his charm and the lover turning away from the beloved. Foucault mentions this fear and makes some suggestions:

> these relations needed to rid themselves of their precariousness: a precariousness that was due to the inconstancy of the partners, and that was a consequence of the boy's growing older and thereby losing his charm; but it was also a precept, since it was not good to love a boy who was past a certain age, just as it was not good for him to allow himself to be loved. This precariousness could be avoided only if, in the fervor of love, philia—friendship—already began to develop: philia, i.e., an affinity of character and mode of life, a sharing of thoughts and existence, mutual benevolence. (*Sexuality* 2: 201)

It is obvious that while precarity in Ancient times meant faithlessness or volatility in same-sex relationships, in contemporary cultures it refers to the external threats and agents of power who police and criminalise GLBT individuals, finally ending up becoming criminals themselves.

1.2 Genealogy and Deployment of Crimen Contra Naturam

It was Henry VIII who accepted sodomy as a civil offence in 1533. The law was confirmed by Elizabeth I. At first the term 'buggery' was not defined. Later jurists attempted to define it and in 1642 it was defined as anal penetration of a man or a woman by a man. Regarding sexual acts between animals and men, only penetration by a man was considered sodomy, whereas between animals and women any sexual act was regarded as sodomy (Cocks 32). In the nineteenth-century Britain, sodomy referred not only to anal sex but also to all sexual practices without a procreative aim. Sullivan underlines the fact that the laws prohibiting *crimen contra naturam* were only against sexual acts; not against sexual identities. However, sodomy had already been gendered, due to a law in 1781. In order to convict someone of sodomy, penetration and emission of seed had to be proved (3). This law meant that sodomy was a crime attributed only to the male. There are still some countries in the world which criminalise and persecute male homosexuality, while totally ignoring the female one: "We have more words that insultingly describe men who are feminine for the same reason that we fear and hate a man in a dress more than a woman in a suit: His transgression is more of an affront to the politics of gender and therefore more threatening" (Wilchins 38). This misconception is a direct consequence of the patriarchal male \ female binary, which praises masculinity in a woman while condemning femininity in a man. That is why all the interviewees in Wilchins's experiment accepted their homosexuality but denied being bottoms in same-sex sexual intercourse.

In the 1950s homosexuality, regarded as the opposite of heterosexuality, was still seen as a deviation to be treated. Many organisations were trying to decriminalise homosexuality in the world and their work bore fruit with the emergence of liberation groups. However, Sullivan critiques their arguments and policies which were based on the principle of sameness as the objective of these groups "was (and still is) to be accepted into, and to become one with, mainstream culture" (23). In other words, they were trying to prove that homosexuals were just like other people and they never posed a threat to the heteronormative society, an argument which depoliticised the movements.

In the 60s, gay liberation movements came up with the word 'gay', the nineteenth century slang for immoral women, and redeployed it. Though the word 'gay' originally referred both to male and female homosexual individuals, later on it turned out to signify only the male, and the female

gay employed the term ‘lesbian’. Finally in the 1980s, they started forming gay and lesbian communities, clubs, and institutions. Ambiguity fascinated people in this era and the trend was to reject traditional forms of categorisation. Transsexuals and transgendered individuals blurred the rigid binaries like male / female or heterosexual / homosexual (Sullivan 99). In this process, the term ‘homosexual’, which came into circulation in the late Victorian period, was phased out since this term was originally associated with and created by pathologising medical and scientific discourses. It was insufficient because it just referred to the sexual-acts of its members and excluded their existences as individuals with subjectivity and agency. ‘Gay’ and ‘Lesbian’, popular terms in the 1960s and 1970s, were also challenged by such terms as ‘bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and queer’. Joseph Bristow argues that “these labels emerge from dynamic mid- and late twentieth-century struggles to emancipate anti-normative sexual desires and gender identities from legal, medical and moral oppression” (217). In this way plurality and variety of sexual identities would be established in the dominant discourse, and thus, recognised. In addition to liberating anti-normative sexual desires from various tools of oppression, the use and deployment of such terms as ‘homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and queer’ also highlight the change in how the mainstream culture saw the stigmatised individuals and how these individuals defined themselves.

Non-heterosexual subjectivity is characterised by plurality and multiplicity, as in the examples given above. ‘Queer’ is quite a recent term to signify this multiple conceptualisation of reality; however, it is sometimes incorrectly used instead of gay or lesbian. In fact the scope of the term ‘queer’ is not limited to homosexuality; it marks “a flexible space for the expression of all aspects of non- (anti- , contra-) straight cultural production and reception” (Doty 73). Queer is “by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers*” (Halperin 62). During the last decades of the twentieth century, gay and lesbian studies emerged as an academic field, yet some activists and thinkers started to criticise their exclusionary politics. In 1990 Queer Nation arose from the campaigning of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power and they reclaimed the word ‘queer’, which had previously been used to insult and discriminate homosexuals: “They eagerly resignified the meaning of queerness in the face of what they saw as an inert lesbian and gay politics that commonly refused to admit anyone into its ranks who did not subscribe to an inflexible homosexual politics of identity” (Bristow 219). They accused GLBT studies and politics of being in Western identity politics and

rejected their exclusive approaches. Queer Nation, instead, aimed to embrace all stigmatised and marginalised individuals who did not conform to the requirements of heteronormative ideologies. Posing a threat to all 'normalising' regimes, 'queer' is definitely "not the Other of straight; in fact, its deconstructive position outside the hetero/homosexual binary makes its relationship to concepts like straight and gay oblique" (Barnard 11). Queer is a slippery term and it is ungendered. It means and covers a lot more than 'homosexual' or 'gay' do; cross-dressing, drag queens, hermaphrodites, and even gender-corrective surgeries are all among the numerous signifiers of the 'Queer'. Jagose claims that the definitional indeterminacy and ambiguity of queer is its main characteristic as queer studies analyse mismatches between sex, gender and desire (3). Richardson and Seidman highlight the factors moulding sexual identities, such as gender, class, race, and nationality; they argue that there is no universal experience of being gay, and therefore, "queer approaches to identity emphasize the fluid, performative character of identities" (5).

Jagose agrees that a number of dynamics configure and pattern queer identity and an all-inclusive approach is essential to fight back the heterosexist oppression. For her, it is essential to achieve "the unity of all oppressed people –that is, there can be no freedom for gays in a society which enslaves others through male supremacy, racism and economic exploitation" (34). Some liberation movements fail since they represent only one site of oppression, such as issues concerning white gays and lesbians; therefore, these different forms of exploitation must be handled together. These movements, whose traces abound in Hollinghurst's novels, tend to regard their experience as singular, and thus "universalize their limited understanding by colonizing other subjects" (Barnard 3). Such exclusive attempts in the past have always been bound to fail.

1.3 Heteronormativity and the Gay Male Subculture

As this study focuses on how Hollinghurst fictionalises camp and closet in his novels against the background of queer theory, a brief genealogical look at the theory might prepare the ground for a thorough analysis of these terms in his novels. Queer theory adopted and, in fact, was based on the key points Foucault made in his *History of Sexuality*. Particularly his analysis of the relation of power to the formation and emergence of homosexual identity led to queer thought. Donald Morton states that "the return of the queer has to be understood as the result, in the domain of sexuality, of the (post)modern encounter with –and rejection of- Enlightenment views concerning the role of the conceptual, rational,

systematic, structural, normative, progressive, liberatory, revolutionary, and so forth, in social change" (qtd. in Jagose 77). It was a reaction to clear-cut categories imposed by the Enlightenment and Western metaphysics. It was a continuation, of course, of gay liberation movements, yet a clear break with them. Queer theory focuses on heteronormativity, i.e., the institutionalised heterosexual hegemony, and questions the validity of all categories, even those of 'man' and 'woman', which have always been taken for granted, although they are reified and constructed. Just as one is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one, in Simone de Beauvoir's famous quote, so does a gay man; one is not born 'a gay man' but becomes one.

Unlike gay liberation movements which sought equality and reforms, queer politics "aims to be transgressive of social norms, of heteronormativity. It is not about seeking social inclusion, but nor does it want to remain on the margins" (Richardson and Seidman 8). What it intends to achieve is decentralisation of heterosexuality and disruption of the principle of difference and, in this way, to reveal the artificial division between heterosexual and homosexual. Queer theory does not want to establish primary signifiers or organising principles, but its goal, as Turner summarises, is "to investigate the historical circumstances by which 'sexuality' —especially the charge of 'homosexuality'– can automatically render subjects the somewhat pitiable victims of a determinism that 'heterosexual' subjects supposedly remain free of" (38). Queer theory intends to denaturalise and deconstruct gender in such a way that it will not end up in another reconstruction of the heterosexist normative hegemony. This is why it intentionally avoids any specific definitions or becoming a fixed normative discipline.

Regarding the intentions and elements of queer politics, it is obvious that Hollinghurst deliberately sacrifices political aims for the sake of popularity. He employs heteronormative definitions and attributes in his representation of the gay male experience and he creates a new gay mainstream culture, which contradicts the goals of queer theory. "Traditional gay culture is neither necessarily produced by nor addressed to gay people: it is high straight culture or showbiz, and always an identification with the 'feminine'" (Finch 143). The subculture he represents is, in fact, a discursive product of heteronormativity which partly covers the white middle-class and male gay community. In other words, his work is in accordance with the mainstream identity politics which reifies and regards the gay male as a distinct identity.

With references to poststructuralist thinkers like Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan, Judith Butler studied the production and deployment of sexualities

and gender in Western epistemology. Butler's "mainly philosophical exploration frequently integrated Foucauldian insights into her analysis of the ways in which modern culture tended to use sexual categories as if they were natural, rather than socially constructed" (Bristow 232). Integrating Foucault's study on power relations and sexuality into her own work, she states that sex is always-already normative and all gender is, in fact, nothing but drag, which suggests "imitation is at the heart of the *heterosexual* project and its gender binarisms, that drag is not a secondary imitation that presupposes a prior and original gender, but that hegemonic heterosexuality is itself a constant and repeated effort to imitate its own idealizations" (*Bodies* 125). For her, drag cannot be an imitation since there is no original man or woman to imitate. She claims that gender is performative, a metaphorical sort of theatrical performance, and her conceptualisation of performativity cannot be grasped disregarding the process of iterability, and a regularised and constrained repetition of norms. She intends to denaturalise heterosexuality by way of illustrating a displaced repetition –like womanliness reperformed on a male body— of its performance. However, the repetition she mentions "is not performed *by* a subject; this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal condition for the subject. This iterability implies that 'performance' is not a singular 'act' or event, but a ritualized production" (*Bodies* 95). Jagose sees eye to eye with Butler on the constitution of the subject by performativity. For her, the subject does not deliberately assume; it is not something the subject does, but "a process through which that subject is constituted" (87). By enabling access into the formation of sexuality and gender, Butler denaturalises and lays bare the working mechanisms of heteronormative frameworks and compulsory heterosexuality.

For theorists of queer studies it is essential "to investigate the historical and cultural underpinnings of nouns such as 'woman,' 'homosexual,' 'gay,' and 'lesbian' in order to examine what sorts of generalizations and assumptions enable the referential functions, and determine the meanings, of those terms" (Turner 33). These investigations drained the social, cultural, and historical meanings attributed to the so-called categories and this new perspective has led the way to the conceptualisation of sexual identities as:

> a constant switching among a range of different roles and positions, drawn from a kind of limitless data bank of potentialities. Further, what is called into question here is the distinction between the naturally-given, normative 'self' of heterosexuality and the rejected 'Other' of homosexuality. The 'Other', in these formulations, is as much something within us as beyond us, and 'self' and 'Other' are always *implicated* in each other.… As basic

> psychology shows, what is identified as the external 'Other' is usually part of the self which is rejected and hence projected outwards. (Barry 145)

This notion, reconciliating self and Other, indicates one of the ways postmodernism approaches sexual identities; "identity as a series of masks, roles, and potentialities, a kind of amalgam of everything which is provisional, contingent, and improvisatory" (Barry 146). This approach is anti-essentialist as it focuses on the fluidity of identities, highlights the infinite nature of potentialities, and rejects any fixed or stale sexual identity. Moreover, it is claimed that homosexuality is stigmatised as it is the outward projection of heterosexuality. To put it differently, it is not possible to draw a clear-cut boundary between the two terms since both are discursively produced and there is no essential distinction at all.

In the heteronormative project of subordination, a drag, i.e., a man dressed as a woman, will always be a man, since the second term will always lack the so-called reality. Butler reveals the constructed nature of sexuality and denaturalises its apparent naturalness, by way of which she undermines and lays bare the imposed obligatory heterosexuality. What she tries to achieve is quite similar to what Foucault does; to indicate that sexuality and gender are discursive products constructed by cultures and ideologies. Developing her account of gender performativity, she draws on Foucault's work on subjectivity and sexuality, Simone de Beauvoir's account of gender as an acquired set of attributes and actions, Joan Rivière's notion of womanliness as masquerade, J. L. Austin's speech-act theory, and Derrida's deconstruction of speech-act theory. In deconstructing acquired gender stereotypes, however, Butler does not intend to subvert binaries lest it would culminate in new hierarchies: "Sexual practice has the power to destabilize gender" and thus, one is a man or a woman as long as one functions within the dominant heteronormative system, and questioning the system might end up in loss of place and identity (Butler, *Gender* xi). For Butler, gender is neither true nor false. The reason why she celebrates drag is that drag subverts the notion of a true and stable sexual identity. Drag is a female outside but has a male body inside; without woman's dress, drag is male outside but this time feminine inside. By giving this male drag example Butler aims to indicate that there is no nature; what we have, instead, is mere naturalisation or denaturalisation of things originally unnatural.

Although it has been nurtured and advocated by great philosophers and critics, queer theory has provoked quite a few reactions and criticisms, too. One of the defamations was the allegation that queer theory represents the values, desires, and expectations of particular people and groups, ignoring or silencing those of others. Accordingly, some theorists accused it of