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Queer Sensibility in Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy*

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Letter of Approval

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Abstract

This thesis deals with unconventional sexual practices of the characters in Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy* and questions the contemporary normative form of heterosexuality. This novel depicts queer sensibility which is outplayed by the central character Jay and other characters being contradictory with traditional thoughts and practices of sexual relation. The protagonist is unable to decide about his sexual orientation and he experiments both heterosexuality and homosexuality. Similarly, another character Victor who is rejected by his wife plays with dildo and goes frequently to pubs and brothels to kill his sexual instinct. Likewise, Nina's marriage was against her will, so she avoids her legitimate sexual relationship with her husband and enjoys her illicit relationship with her boy friend Jay and cousin brother Victor. Ian breaks familial relation to his wife and starts gay relation with his friends. Moreover, the characters even perform abnormal and group sex. Thus, the novel is an outstanding depiction of subversion of heterosexuality by various form of sexuality like multiple sexual relation, paraphilia, incest relation, masturbation, gay and lesbian relations. All these evidences raise the questions on the binary opposition between heterosexuality and homosexuality considering that heterosexuality is just a construct and process of socialization in the main stream.

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I: Unconventional Sexual Practices in Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy*

The present research entitled "Queer Sensibility in Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy*" probes into the sexual practices questioning conventional practices of sexuality. Conventionally, heterosexual penetration used to be thought as natural sexuality since it was the product of social structure in the then society suppressing the other forms of sexuality. Later heterosexuality got established as the discursive construction which got entrenched in human psyche. Thus, such conservative and rigid normative is ruptured by the central character Jay and other characters Susan, Nina, Victor, Asif and Ian in the southern suburbia of London performing several forms of sexuality like gay relation, multiple sexual relation, masturbation, paraphilia, etc. Overall, this research blurs the traditional sexual practices of heterosexuality by queer perversity claiming that the conventional concept of sexuality is just a construct and process to the socialization in the main stream.

The protagonist Jay performs unnatural sexual practices of gay relation with Victor and Asif, multiple sexual relations with Susan, Nina and others. Moreover, he also masturbates to quench his sexual thirst. He even gets sexual satisfaction by peeping the naked legs and thighs of his lady teacher. Sometimes he also visits pubs and brothels to have sexual intercourse. Other character Nina keeps her multiple sexual relations with Victor and Jay. Victor another character frequently visits pubs and bar to consume gay relation. He even goes to Chinese prostitutes for his sexual pleasure. So this research with all above mentioned evidences subverts the stereotypical conventional norms and values for sex, gender and sexuality by giving equal justice to both heterosexuality and non-heterosexuality in the society.

Hanif Kureishi is a writer of Pakistani origin but born in Bromely, South London. He is well recognized as an English playwright, screenwriter, filmmaker and

novelist. But he introduced his career as pornography writer during the decade of 1970s. He has written *My Beautiful Laundrette* in 1985, a screenplay about a Pakistani-British boy growing up London. His novel *Intimacy* (1988) reflects the story of a man leaving his wife and two young sons after feeling physically, mentally and emotionally rejected by his wife. Similarly, sex dominated theme is pervasive in his novel *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990). Among many other genres of him; *The Black Album* (1995), *Gabriel Gift* (2001), *The Body* (2003), *Something to Tell You* (1987) and many others pre-dominate the theme of racial discrimination, identity crisis, diaspora, cultural conflict, etc.

The author is victim of dual identities: Western and Eastern which ultimately leads him to cultural conflict and he expresses his feelings and reality through his writing. In his personal life Kureishi himself experimented with both of heterosexuality and homosexuality. In his life time of writing history, he has been rewarded with many awards and honours. In 1981 he won the George Devine Awards for his plays *Outskirts and Borderline*. He was also appointed Writer-in-Resistance at the Royal Court Theatre. In 1984 he wrote *My Beautiful Laundrette*, which received an Oscar nomination for Best Screenplay. His second screenplay *Sammy and Rose Get Laid* (1987) was followed by *London Kills Me* (1991) which he also directed. *The Buddha of Suburbia* won the Whitbread Prize for Best First Novel in 1990 and was made into a four part drama series by the BBC in 1993. His version of Brecht's *Mother Courage* has been produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Royal National Theatre. His second novel, *The Black Album*, was published in 1997. His second collection of stories, *Midnight All Day*, was published in 2000. *The Body and Seven Stories and Dreaming and Scheming*, a collection of essays, was published in 2004. A film of his most recent script, *The Mother*, directed by Roger Michael, was

released in 2003. His memoir of his father, *My Ear at His Heart*, was published in 2004. He has been awarded the Chevalier del' Ordre des Arts des Letters.

Intimacy (1998) is a semi-autobiographical fiction and tells to some extent the story of the writer himself which is reflected from the main character Jay who has Pakistani root but born in Southern suburb of London. He is born of Pakistani father and English mother. So he suffers from the problem of cultural identity. Due to such dilemma he practices abnormal sexual relationship of heterosexuality and homosexuality. He even keeps multiple sex relation with several women. He also enjoys masturbation and gets pleasure by peeping sexy body of the girls.

Intimacy by Hanif Kureishi is a genuine sketch of queer sensibility practiced in the society, which is wonderfully outplayed by the central character, Jay and other characters like Nina, Susan, Asif, Victor, Ian being contradictory with the conventionally thought practices of sexual relationship on the post modern period. In the text, the protagonist performs sometimes as homosexual and other times as heterosexual. He moreover practices the abnormal sexuality by peeping erotic organs of women. He keeps illicit relationship with Nina leaving Susan alone. Not only that he quenches his sexual desire by masturbating himself. Victor, Jay, Ian, Asif are the gay friends who themselves keep gay relations to get rid of sexual frustration. At the end of the novel Jay, the main character, leaves his six years long girlfriend Susan for Nina with whom he keeps illegitimate relationship.

Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy* presents Jay as a hero who subverts the traditional stereotypical concept of heterosexuality. From the first publication of this book, it has been a matter of huge discussion among the various novel critics and readers throughout the world. Some critics seem to be interested in its style of artistic presentation whereas some of them seem to have concerns over its dexterity of

language use. Some critics point out this novel's glue of plot construction whereas some of them argue on the performance of the characters. It means different critics have supplied their views regarding this novel. But what seems uniformity in these critics' opinions is that this novel is a great matter of discussion.

But research includes only some of the relevant as well as worthy opinions and views of the novel critics. Clark Blaise has interpreted this novel from the perspective of abnormal sexuality. He further writes:

Jay's enigmatic presence, his departure from Susan and eventual remarriage to Nina are-despite the promise of the title- only minor elements in the book's episodic plotting. Nina who is beautiful and attractive lady involves in illicit relationship sometimes with Jay and other times with Victor and the like. Victor who markets himself as the punk rocker also leaves his wife and follows several prostitutes. Asif, a young guy keeps his gay relation with Jay and Victor. All the characters in the novel perform abnormal sexuality challenging the so called stereotypical normative of sexuality. (25)

It claims for the unusual sexual activities which is controversial to the contemporary normative form of heterosexual penetration. The characters are not limited to wife-husband sex, rather they perform multiple sex and gay relation.

In a similar tune, critic Micheal Irr argues that this novel is a quite straightforward and realistic. It is not simple novel as well. He argues:

And even though it is quite straightforward and realistic, it is certainly not simple. It conveys all the complexity, the darkness, the contradictoriness of relations and leaves them unsolved and obscure as it found them. But don't be fooled: it is not nothingness of the starting

point, but one that can only be reached after strenuous reflection. I don't know if it speaks for or against is that it is full of all emotions, with all his range and violence, is just the other side of the coin in which you will find, well. (44)

The above criticism by Micheal Irr suggests that this novel delineates the complexity, darkness and the contradiction of relation. Michael Irr says that he doesn't know whether the novel speaks for or against the relations.

Likewise, for another critic Anthony Barker, this novel is full of surprise and suspense. The writing style is lovely and poetic which is in a nice stark style that Barker loves. Anthony Barker notes, "A very suspenseful fun ride with full of surprise as you go along. The writing style is lovely and peptic in a nice style that I love. One gets a sense of the main character right away without being told what the character looks like" (32). Barker opines that a reader can grasp the sense of the main character without being told what the character looks. The reader easily knows how the character feels.

Mark Flanagan in his article "Something to Tell You" published in *The New Yorker* illustrates the sexual frustration and adventure of a middle-aged man Jamal who is dissatisfied by his girlfriends:

Kureishi's latest novel returns to the subject of immigrant life in London- a theme that brought him early success, with the screenplay for *My Beautiful Laundrette* and the novel *Intimacy* –but adds to it the jaundiced outlook of middle age. Jamal, an outwardly respectable psychoanalyst, harbours dark secrets, which generate the novel's thriller like plot, and darker desires. Kureishi fulsomely depicts the sexual frustration and adventures of middle-aged man: "the underbelly-

or potbelly, more like- of British suburban sexuality,” as one of Jamal’s many disaffected ex-girlfriends puts it. (55)

It is all about Jamal's sexual frustration and adventure of middle-aged man that is usually practiced in suburban of Britain.

Similarly, Ben Lawrence in “Too Sharp by Half” argues that the novel *Intimacy* by Hanif Kureishi is populated by irresistible characters who ploughed through life with a feckless sexual voracity which over-specializes every character in the claustrophobic atmosphere of a shabby country house. He gives Freudian interpretation to the novel:

It is six years since Hanif Kureishi’s last novel *Something to Tell You*, kaleidoscope meditation on life and death seen through the eyes of a Freudian analysts striving to make sense of middle age. It was regarded as a return to the high of *Intimacy*, Kureishi’s first and still best loved novel, populated by irresistible characters who ploughed through life with a feckless sexual veracity. The Last World displays a similar chutzpah, although things are hampered by an unlikely story which over sexualizes every character in the claustrophobic atmosphere of shabby country house. (39)

Lawrence studies it from Freudian perspective striving to make sense of middle age and the characters ‘feckless sexual voracity. It is even over sexualization of every character in the claustrophobic atmosphere of a shabby country house.

John Frank’s criticism is associated with the technical aspects of the novel. He argues that it mostly consists of queer perversity settings. The novelist uses a good choice of weather and settings. The novelist uses a good choice of weather and setting

to create a claustrophobic atmosphere that represents Jay's nauseous life. Frank remarks:

The settings are great. Mostly claustrophobic, the writer uses a good choice of weather and settings to create nauseous atmosphere that represents Jay's life. Everything creates claustrophobic and nauseous atmosphere. Jay is a character who's constantly daydreaming and gazing out of the window, so you'll notice that the weather tends to fit in with his mood. (84)

Frank claims that Jay is a character who is constantly dreaming and gazing out of window. So one can notice the weather that tends to fit in with Jay's mood.

The critics have analysed this novel from multiple perspectives. They raise various issues regarding the novel. Though different critics have critiqued this novel from multiple perspectives like sexual perversity, unfulfilled desires, psychoanalysis, but no researchers have studied this novel from the perspectives of queer sensibility. This thesis looks into how the novel deconstructs the traditional normative thoughts of sexual practices. Though the critics have outwardly raised the issue of sexual perversity but this research particularly deals with the queer sensibility in depth. And their concepts of sexual perversity supports this research paper based on queer blurring the conventional normative thoughts of sexual practices.

Queer sensibility refers to an acute perception of or responsiveness toward something such as the emotion of other through the medium of sexuality. It focuses on mismatches between sex, gender and desire. It has prominently based on the bisexual, lesbian and gay subjects, but analytic framework also includes such topics as cross-dressing, inter-sex, gender ambiguity and gender corrective surgery. It generally questions the hetero normative of sexual practices. Queer theory challenges the idea

that gender is part of the essential self and upon gay/lesbian studies' close examination of the socially constructed nature of sexual acts identities. It also focuses its inquiries into natural and unnatural behaviour with respect to heterosexual behaviour and expands its focus to encompass any kind of sexual activity or identity that falls into normative and deviant categories.

Queer is a product of specific cultural and theoretical pressures which increasingly structured debates (both within and outside the academy) about question of lesbian and gay identity. Queer by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. It has brought deconstructionist critical approaches to bear on issues of sexual identity, and especially in the construction of a normative "straight" ideology. It has challenged the validity and consistency of hetero normative discourse, and focused to a large degree on non-hetero normative sexualities and sexual practices.

These terms "sex", "gender", "sexuality" and "identity" are the basic concepts to understand the queer theory. They are interrelated for the comprehensive understanding of gender / sexuality. Though the words gender and sexuality both imply 'the state of being male and female', but they are typically used in different ways: sex tends to refer to biological differences, while gender tends to refer cultural and social one. Sex is the biological term which distinguishes male and female with their sexual organs and reproductive functions. There are a number of indicators of biological sexual chromosomes, gonads, internal reproductive organs and external genitalia. But according to Foucault "Sex and its effects are perhaps not so easily deciphered; on the other hand, their repression, thus reconstructed, is easily

analysed”(6). And in other words, Judith Butler's claim is that “the body is itself a consequence of taboos that render that body discrete by virtue of its stable boundaries” (133), for sexual identity.

The term “queer” was originally derogatory used to stigmatize male and female same sex love as deviant and unnatural; since the early 1990, however, it has been increasingly adopted by gays and lesbians themselves as a non-individual term “to identify a way of life and an area for scholarly inquiry” (Abrams 274). This theory suite to the current modern and experimental based society which challenges the orthodox norms and values on sex, gay and lesbian in hidden form questioning normative heterosexuality. From earlier period to this moment, human beings are performing the unusual sexual relationships as multiple sexual relations, incest relation, group sex, gay and lesbian. So, it explores the categorization of gender and sexuality; identities are not fixed and they can not be categorized and labelled because identities consist of many varied components.

Queer theory is a field of poststructuralist critical theory that emerged out of queer studies. Queer theory includes both queer reading of texts and theorisation of queerness itself. Heavily influenced by the work of Judith Butler, Jack Halberstam, Leo Bersani, and David Halperin, queer theory builds both upon feminist challenges to the idea that gender is part of the essential self and upon gay/lesbian studies’ close examination of socially constructed nature of sexual acts and identities. Whereas gay/lesbian studies focused its inquiries into natural and unnatural behaviour with respect to homosexual behaviour, queer theory expands its focus to include any kind of sexual activity or identity that falls into normative and deviant categories. Queer has been associated most prominently with bisexual, lesbian and gay subjects, but its

analytic framework also includes such topics as cross dressing, intersex, gender ambiguity and gender-corrective surgery. Queer theory examines the constitutive discourses of homosexuality developed in the last century in order to place “queer” in its historical context, and surveys contemporary arguments both for and against this latest terminology.

Queer theory challenges the validity and consistency of heteronormative discourse, and focuses on non-heteronormative sexualities and sexual practices. It is a dimensional field of study. To assign a single-sentence definition to this theory would be incomplete as it would fail to touch on the various ways it is interpreted, applicable and used. In particular, queer theory’s goal is to be sought out as a lens or tool to deconstruct the existing monolithic ideals of social and cultural construct of normative sexuality. In addition, it analyses the correlation between power distribution and identification while understanding the various facets of oppression and privilege. Queer is an inclusive umbrella term for those not only deemed as sexually deviant in relations to social hegemony but also used to describe those who feel marginalized as a result of social practice and identity. Queer is slang for homosexual and has been used as umbrella term for a coalition of sexual identities that are culturally marginalized. It is also used to create discourse surrounding the theoretical model that arose through traditional lesbian and gay studies. It is important to understand that queer theory is not predominantly about the binary of the homosexual and heterosexual. There is an abundance of identities in which queer theory not only recognizes but also breaks down in relation to other contributing factors like race, class, religion, etc.

This thesis is structured into three parts. The introductory part of thesis constitutes of the objective and problems of research, hypothesis, literature review, theoretical insights and an outline to the overall dissertation. Likewise, the second part of thesis consists of textual analysis and the final part of thesis summarizes the ideas and finding of thesis.

II: Queer Sensibility in Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy*

Intimacy by Hanif Kureishi tries to justify that heterosexuality is a social construct by emphasizing the queer sensibility. This novel is all about the different characters performing the queer sexuality. Text reflects the multiple heterosexual and heterosexual practices, paraphilia, masturbation, group-sex and incest taboos. Such modern sexual practices deconstruct the binary opposition created against the normative and orthodox practices of heterosexuality claiming it as a construct. This is well supported by the Judith Butler's notion of queer and gender performativity.

Gender performativity is well exercised by the characters in the novel. It is especially executed by the main protagonist, Jay. He makes the multiple sexual relationships with Susan, Nina and Helen. He even makes gay relation with his friend Victor, group sex among Nina, Helen and Asif and incest relation with his cousin sister Jamilia. He also takes the pleasure of peeping other sexual mating called paraphilia. Here in the text other character Nina also performs the unusual practices. She keeps on sex relations with different guys. Victor, a married man but fade up with his wife goes to Chinese prostitutes to quench his sexual thirst. He even falls in love with Nina whom Jay also follows. Asif despite his marriage shows his unnatural sexual behaviour playing with dildo and goes to pubs and bar to enjoy with several whores. Finally all of them come to a condition that they start living with their new spouse. Thus these sexual evidences from the text denote that sexuality is not limited within heterosexuality but there are even multiple forms of sexualities which were addressed by the queer sensibility.

This novel plunges into a concern on the cultural limits that drive our primary libidinal with a creation of law which comes forth with meaningful language. Jay refutes the traditional stereotypical ideals of heterosexuality. He is assertive and

rebellious in nature. So he yearns the society to accept the abnormal forms of sexuality as coherent to heterosexuality. He performs several forms of sexuality like masturbation, gay relation, paraphilia etc., challenging the social and cultural constructive norms of heterosexuality. He quenches his sexual thirst by performing masturbation when he is rejected by his girlfriend Susan. Culturally and socially doing masturbation is an illicit activity, but for the protagonist it is natural and becomes the answer to sexual frustration. The theorist Butler supports it bringing the Lacanian concept "Law creates the possibility of meaningful language and, hence, meaningful experience, through the repression of primary libidinal drives, including the radical dependency of the child on the maternal body"(Butler 101). This notion of Lacan is conceptualized by Butler claiming that human instinct for sexuality always drives to satisfy own satisfaction but the human made cultural norms and values always bound him/her to do so. Thus, as a result against the normatively created social boundaries, human beings act as per their will to satisfy their instinct. The following lines in the text show the secondary option of masturbation to answer sexual frustration:

I push down my trousers and look for a suitable lubricant. The last time I did this, when Susan had some friends round dinner, I used my children's shampoo, and felt as if a wasp had been pushed into my urethra. I should have complained to the manufacturer and had them conduct an experiment on animals. Even masturbation can be a medical minefield. (105)

The above lines imply Jay's multiple forms of sexuality. He has strong sexual desire for his girlfriend Susan who rejects him several times. He is unloved and dissatisfied. So he masturbates which for him is the way of solution to sexual frustration since he

has been repressing his sexual desire against the social and cultural boundaries. Hence Cultural and social norms as barrier limit his libidinal desires. He even knows that sexuality drives human to happiness. Finally, Jay who gets influenced with the contemporary practices of Indian culture on sex limiting own sexual desire, got the solution that masturbation is the key to satisfy his sexual satisfaction.

Jay and Susan are instrumentalizing sex as matter to culture since their love are not significant rather it has been purposive and to satisfy own desire. They lived together more than ten years and even have two children. But their relation becomes futile as they are not serious in love to each other. They do not share their feelings and emotions to each other. Most of the time, they spend their days outside home. Susan runs her own business on the one side while Jay writes scripts for the films on the other side. At the same time they have other lovers, too. Butler claims, "This very concept of sex-as-matter, sex-as-instrument -of-cultural signification, however, is discursive formation that acts as a naturalized foundation for the nature/culture distinction and the strategies of domination that distinction supports"(47). Butler significantly distinguishes between the nature and culture where culture always ties to impose the hegemony over nature imposing the wrong meaning. Even sex has been materialized and instrumentalized as a product to cultural significant. There exist the binary relationship between the nature and culture. Because of such existed binary opposition nature has to be always submissive and dominated against the culture. Culture significantly hegemonies the sex as a matter and instrument. That can be well replicated in the reference of the following lines:

At university I met a woman as sad as me, if not sadder. For six years, before I met Susan, we lived together. To me now, that seems a long time. We slept in the same bed every night, and cooked and ate

together. Our friends took it for granted that we were one, though at times we had other lovers. About once a month we would have sex.

(24)

Here, no one is serious and sincere in love; love has been futile rather than being significant. Their familial relation has been just the compromise. Each of them is trying to monopolize the love from his or her own side without respecting others' reaction on his/her action to him/her. To rescue from such boring and burden lives, Jay starts extra love relation with other girls. Ultimately, he leaves Susan for Nina. Love and relationship here becomes insignificant and futile.

Susan Jay's partner is not much more interesting. She is a capable and organized woman. She is also nagging, rigid, and fantasy. She tries to mask her identity so as to establish her position in business and to satisfy her romance as a local monitor of love establishing numerous affairs, warning, advising, cajoling and shoring up certain marriage while ripping unsustainable liaison to shred. To support this, Butler addresses the idea of Lacan that mask in conjunction is an account of female homosexuality which reinforces that female sexuality has been masked and under repressed:

Significantly, Lacan locates the discussion of the mask in conjunction with an account of female homosexuality. He claims that "the orientation of feminine homosexuality, as observations shows, follows from a disappointment which reinforces the side of demand for love".

(Lacan quoted in Butler 62)

Butler emphasizes the Lacanian focus on the mask which is ultimately used to hide the female homosexuality. According to him, feminine homosexuality is the cause resulted after disappointment from the reinforcement on the side for the demand to

love. And this disappointment is caused by the domination and resolution. Even female homosexuality is a subject which strengthens the idealization that demands for love. Over all female homosexuality and their desire for sexuality is masked that is well executed by Susan in the following extract:

Susan excelled in the business of introduction, both business and romantic. She was a local monitor of love, mediating in numerous affair, warning, advising, cajoling and shoring up certain relations while ripping unsuitable liaisons to shred. She knew what was happening everywhere, on account sheets and under bed sheets. Susan seemed invulnerable until she pursued and started an affair with twenty nine year old Asif councillor from an old and well regarded middle class Sevenoaks family. (59)

Susan masks her identity as she wants to establish her position in business and to satisfy her romance being engaged in love affairs with a twenty nine year old Asif from middle class family. It represents that she is really good enough to manage both business and affairs. She is practical and conscious woman who knows how to act according to situation. Thus, to maintain both business and romance she engages in several affairs.

Jay visits several places when he gets leisure. Once he is in town where his cousin sister lives. There he meets his cousin sister Jamilia and in no time he begins to eroticize himself seeing the charming and sexy body of her. Later on he falls in love with her and they start copulation breaking the socially and culturally constructed boundary of incest relation. To clarify this Butler associates Levi-Strauss' claim that "the artificial accomplishment of a non incestuous heterosexuality extracted through prohibition from a more natural and unconstrained sexuality" (Butler 52). She

forwards her idea that social taboos about the incest relation generate the heterosexuality. It is all about the social boundary that considers that incest relation is an illegitimate act that has to be prohibited from the consideration to be as natural and unconstrained sexuality. Even Kristeva comes up with her notion that “poetic language breaks the incest taboos and, as such, verges always on psychosis” (Butler 110). Here Jay and Jamilia break their cousin brother and sister relation and establishes incest relation where ever they get an opportunity which is considered to be illegitimate:

Then she got this thing about wanting to be Simone de Beauvoir, which is when she and I started having sex every couple of weeks or so, when is when she and I started somewhere to go – usually a bus shelter, a bomb -side or a derelict house. Those books must have been dynamite or something because we even did it in public toilets. (45)

Jay and Jamilia both cousin brother and sister break the social and cultural boundaries and establish the incest sexual relation between one another wherever and whenever they get chance. Butler claims with reference to Levi-Strauss that incestuous heterosexuality is extracted through the prohibition from a more natural and unconstrained sexuality and even refers Kristeva's concept that poetic language breaks the incest taboos. Jay being hybrid resulted from East and West doesn't limit himself on the contemporary form of sexuality. He dismantles all the form of sexuality and enjoys them even with his cousin sister, Jamilia who is grown up in west used to western culture but her marriage is against her will by force of her father that is why she avoids her legitimate relation with her husband and commits incest relation with her cousin brother.

The display of the subversive spirit of heterosexuality can be seen in Ian's character. Ian like Jay also involves in abnormal sexuality. He lives in southern suburbia of London city and takes stand against heterosexuality as he keeps in contact with many gay friends. He frequently hopes to be fucked by several men. He is also interested in keeping unnatural sexual relation like paraphilia. Such abnormal behaviours of Ian show his sexual attraction both on man and woman as other form of sexuality. For Butler gender identity is an internalized truth that is expressed through performance. She argues:

Gender identity as an interior depth that is said to be externalized in various form of "expression." The implicit construction of the primary heterosexual construction of desire is shown to persist even as it appears in the mode of primary bisexuality. (188)

Here Butler considers gender identity as an internalized truth expressed through our performance. She even focuses on the implicit construction of the primary heterosexual construction shown to persist the primary mode of bisexuality. It is also the cause of the exclusion and hierarchy. Ian, the gay friend of Jay likes to stand outside the tube station hoping for both women and men to have both heterosexual and homosexual penetration. The following reference shows Ian's sexual attraction both on men and women:

My young gay friend Ian liked to stand with me outside tube stations where I would watch the flocks of boys in the summer, after I had finished work for the day. There was certain location that guaranteed more interest than others. 'A picture of impotence,' he called it. With him, looks would be exchanged and off he would go, while I waited, having coffee somewhere. Sometimes he fucked five people in a day,

shoving my arm up to the elbow into men whose faces he never saw.

Every night of the week there were orgies he might attend. (21)

The above lines imply Ian's sexual attraction both on man and woman as other form of sexuality which queer theory takes as an issue. Gender identity is an interior depth and it is said to be externalized in various forms of expression like gay and lesbian as claimed by Butler. In the text too, Ian visits several locations where he finds many people whom he shares his feelings and emotions. Every night of the week there were orgies he might attend to enjoy sex. He prefers to have gay relationship with different boys on the one hand while on the other hand he also performs heterosexual relationship with several girls.

Victor another character in the novel has his multiple erotic sexual desires to be caught by anyone. He is married to a woman and spends eight years with her. With the time passes on, the relationship between them grows as loveless. They do not share emotions and feelings to one another rather they keep interest in others. They want to stay separately. Finally, Victor breaks his contact to his wife. Now he wanders and searches several pubs and brothels to have sex. He delimits his sexual needs. Because of his unfulfilled libidinal desires for different girls, he searches various pubs and brothels. For him staying with a partner only is boring and meaningless. So to achieve multiple sexual relation, Victor is ready to break all kinds of socially and culturally constructed boundary of marriage. This condition has been conceptualized by Kristeva that "the semiotic expresses that original libidinal multiplicity within the very terms of culture, more precisely, within poetic language in which multiple meanings and semantic non-closure prevail."(Butler 101-102)

According to her our libidinal desire is bound by culture within poetic language to give multiple meanings. The following extract from the novel suggests this fact:

Eight years ago Victor left his wife. Since then -even excepting the Chinese prostitute who played the piano naked and brought all her belongings to their assignments- he has had only unsatisfactory loves. If the phone rings he does a kind of panicky dance, wondering what opprobrium may be on the way, and from which direction. Victor, you see, can give women hope, if not satisfaction. (6)

Above mentioned lines show Victor's multiple erotic desires. After he has left his wife, Victor goes to Chinese prostitute who played the piano naked and brought all her belongings. As Butler forwards her concept with reference to Kristeva that original libidinal multiplicity which is bound within the very terms of culture, more precisely, within poetic language in which multiple meanings and semantic non-prevail. Victor's hunger for sexual desire is numerous that's why he desires for different form of sexuality to satisfy his sexual anxiety.

Jay's sexual attraction to his aunt Najma is the concern on the oedipal complex which affects gender identification through not only the incest taboos but the taboos against homosexuality. Butler claims:

The resolution of the oedipal complex affects gender identification through not only the incest taboos, but, prior to that, the taboos against homosexuality. The result is that one identifies with the same-sexed object of love, thereby internalizing both the aim and object of the homosexuality. (80-81)

Jay eroticizes his aunt and even takes sexual advantage. The extreme sexual instinct affects on the human psychology that even affects on the gender identification that is taboos against homosexuality. Due to such a condition one's desire for sexuality gets

identified with the same-sexed object of love that internalizes both the aim and object of homosexuality. Hence Jay is a role player of oedipal complex to his aunt Najma:

One afternoon I went to her house to pick up my children. While they played in the garden, Najma was drawing crayons at the kitchen table. I love looking at crayons, and scrawling with them on big sheets of coloured paper. But the serenity made me uncomfortable, I don't know why. I couldn't sit still because I wanted to kiss her and push her into the bedroom, thereby, it seemed to me, smashing everything up, or testing it, or trying to see what was there, what the secret was. (40)

Jay is the victim of oedipal complex affects gender identification through not only incest taboos but the taboos against homosexuality that eroticizes and takes sexual advantage of his aunt Najma. When his oedipal complex resolution gets incomplete then he goes on establishing the gay relation with Ian.

One day Jay and Susan attend yoga classes where most of the people especially women are attractive. They are in bright leotards taking up adventurous positions reflected in the polished mirrors. In such circumstance Jay begins to fantasize eroticizing himself looking at the adventurous sexy bodies of the women. Psychologically he wishes to fulfil his erotic desires. He increases infinite desire for sex. For him sexual release is the mysticism as our souls lifted into nirvana on a collective 'oommm'. This evidence implies Jay's delimitation of heterosexuality. He is not confined within the boundary of formal sexuality rather he believes in something else apart from heterosexuality to relinquish sexual thirst. The following lines from the text show Jay's sexual release by eroticizing himself looking at the adventurous positions of the women in yoga:

Susan and I attend yoga classes in a hall at the of the street. There were

in this class, many attractive women, most in bright leotards and all taking up adventurous positions reflected in the polished mirrors. In such circumstances I found infinite desirelessness a strain to bring on. As our souls lifted into nirvana on a collective ‘oommm’ my penis would press against my shorts as if to say, ‘Don’t forget that always I am here too!’ Sexual realise is the most mysticism most people can manage. (52)

The above lines imply the sexual release of Jay who always dreams of having erotic desires with several girls. He is not static in legal relation. Instead, he runs after various forms of sexuality. He prefers all forms of sexuality either heterosexual or homosexual.

Anwar being the representative of patriarchy forces his daughter for marriage of his choice to continue his generation with birth of his grandchildren. That is case of power as Butler addresses Foucault that sexually is also the product of power that it is always produced or constructed within the historical practices, both discursive and institutional, and that recourse to sexuality before the law is an illusory and complicitous conceit of emancipatory sexual politics. According to Foucault; “sexuality is always situated within matrices of power” (124). Foucault basically focuses on the sexuality and power as they coextensive. Here he talks about the power created by society to limit the sexuality. It means that accepting to sex is to ignore the power. According to him sexuality is limited within the boundary of power which is constructed within the specific historical practices in form of discursive and institutional. The representative of patriarchy forces by Anwar can be seen in the following lines:

I also learned in the store -room-of-secrets that Anwar was looking forward to having grandchildren. According to Anwar, Jamilia would become pregnant immediately, and soon there'd be little Anwars running all over the place. Anwar would attend to the kids' cultural upbringing and take them to school and mosque while Changez was, presumably, redecorating the shop, moving boxes and impregnating my girlfriend Jamilia again. As Anwar and I had these conversations Jamilia liked to open the door to the store -room and just point the black barrel -ends of her eyes at me as if I had these conversations Jamilia liked to open the door to the store room and just point thee black barrel ends of her eyes at me as if I were sitting with Eichmann.

(56)

Jamilia's father Anwar representing the patriarchy with the contemporary thoughts forces his daughter to marry with an Indian guy Changez so as to continue his generation. He always dreams for Indian guy as son-in-law and select Changez for his daughter's marriage though it was against his daughter's will for the reproductive function so that he could have his own grandchildren. Finally he can grow up his children according to his cultural orientation. He forcefully restricts his daughter's will and fulfils his dream.

Jay explores his unlimited sexual thirst by peeping other's sexy legs as the maternal libidinal economy as a product of a historically specific organization of sexuality. Such sexuality is a form of repression of one's sexuality that has been explored by Jay in the form paraphilia. Butler conceptualizes the notion of Foucault that "the discourse of sexuality, itself suffused by power relation, becomes the true ground of trope of the prediscursive maternal body" (118). Foucault frameworks and

re-describes the maternal libidinal economy which is a product of an historical specific organization of sexuality. It is generated as the product to the power that is based on economy on pre-discursive maternal body.

From the beginning, starting with the girls at school, and the teachers in particular, I have looked at women in shops, on the street, in the bus, at parties, and wondered what it would be like to be with them, and what pleasures we might kindle. At school I would toss my pencil under the teacher's desk in order to crawl underneath and examine her legs. The desultory nature of the education system enabled me to develop an enthusiastic interest in girls' skirts -in the material and texture, and in whether they were billowy, loose or tight, and in which places. (19)

Jay by examining different bodily parts of school teacher shows his extremity for sexual frustration that the libidinal economy is a product of a historically specific organization of sexuality. His libidinal extreme crosses the limit and kills his desire by observing the sexy female organs of the school madam. To support this event Butler addresses the idea of Foucault that the discourse of sexuality becomes the true ground of the trope of pre-discursive maternal body.

Even Jay's mother and grandmother show their illicit desires for the younger ones. They delimit and cross the social barrier of marriage institution wishing to be joined with new young partners. Here age limitation does not harm on them. The extra relationship of mother and grandmother makes the son shudder. To drive happy and meaningful life in old age, they start living with new young ones. This condition is well supported by queer sense as it dose take multiple relation blurring the demarcation of culturally and socially constructed marriage institution. The following

lines from the text might be the justifiable evidences of the queer sense in the lives of mother and grandmother:

After a certain age there are only certain people, in certain circumstances, whom we allow to love one another. Lately, mother has been joining a young man, and even looks at the boys on the street and says, 'He's pretty'. It makes me shudder. Grandmother, at eighty, found a paramour with whom she held hands. She started to wear perfume and earrings. She imagined we would be pleased that she was no longer alone. (44)

The above lines suggest the queer perversity in the character of Jay's mother and grand mother who cross the limitation of their conjugal lives enjoying with new partners even in their old age. They are not limited to their real husbands rather they challenge the social norms and values of marriage life and start living their remaining days with new ones.

Ian gets happy when he becomes able to have sexual relation with dog owner's daughter Helen because he is bound not to get in touch with him since he was the representative of non-west. This is the issue raised by Butler highlighting the notion of Foucault that sex is the outcome of social regulation and control of sexuality. Foucault focuses on "...sex is produced in the service of social regulation and control of sexuality..." (Butler 121). He is concerned about the construction of sex under the certain circumstance of social regulation. For him sexuality is controlled, sexual functions are artificialized and all the manner of sensation, pleasure and desire are made sex specific. In other words, bodily pleasures are not the concern to sex specific essence rather they are the interpretation to manifestation.

That evening I was so ecstatic about my triumph in seducing the dog

dog-owner's daughter. She sounded distant and cold as she told me she would marry the man her father had selected from million, and that was the end of it. She would survive, she sad. Not one more word on the subject would she tolerate. (72)

Ian, when he becomes able to have sexual relation with the daughter of dog's owner who used to show hegemony towards orient is on non-west. Butler addresses Foucault's claim that sex is the outcome of social regulation and control of sexuality, conceals and artificiality of sexual function and postures within discourse. Here Helen's father wants to impose hegemony against her will and right to choose own life partner. Her right has been obliged by the contemporary patriarchal hegemony to continue her life.

Some women characters in the novel have been considered to be submissive as their sexual repression is so firmly anchored historically under the limitation of power. Foucault's notion that "... repression is so firmly anchored, having solid roots and reasons, and weighs so heavily on sex" (Foucault 9). Foucault today's repression is not the recent phenomena but it is historical evident. It has been practiced since a long time that is firmly anchored having solid root and reasons and weigh so heavily on sex that it requires more than one denunciation to free ourselves from it. That is condition of many women who has been repressing their sexual desire under the boundary of power orientation. That is supported by the extract from the text "Yes. Women aren't like us. They don't have to have it all the time. They only want it if they like the guy" (76). Here women are considered to be submissive, exploitative and dominative considering them as inferior to man. Their sexual desire is not given any respect and accomplishment. They are bound to keep their sexual desire within

themselves. Hence Jay and Nina delimit and dismantle sexual practices considering it as delegitimate discourse of truth.

The text also sought to undermine any and all efforts to wield discourses of truth to delegitimate minority gendered and sexual practices. That all minority practices are to be condoned or celebrated, but it does mean that we ought to be able to think them before we come to any kinds of conclusions about them. (Butler viii)

Jay practices multiple heterosexuality and sexual penetration with Nina. Butler forwards her idea that sexual practice are the delegitimate discourse. According to her each and every minority practices have to be celebrated before we come to any kinds of conclusions.

I were nodding -with my face between Nina's legs, my hands holding her are up like a dish I am hungry for, my tongue in all her holes at once -tears, dribble, cunt juice, strawberries! I suck the soup of your love. Soul doctor, therapist -who tickles their tongue in your old hole? I am not ready for the wisdom of misery; I have had that with Mother. I am all passion, frivolity, childish pleasures! Yes, it is an adolescent cry. I want more. Of what? What have you got? (98)

Jay and Nina practice multiple forms of heterosexuality and sexual penetration like sucking breasts, keeping tongue in all holes, leaping cunt juice. This shows that gender and sexual practices are delegitimize. Not only that they practice masturbation, "Nina encouraged me to masturbate on her back, stomach or feet while she slept" (104). They have explored all the form of sexual pleasure by condoning and celebrating them.

It was during Victor's performance on a small stage with dark setting, kit and mike -stand on it. Many audiences have come to see the performance. Among them,

girl's appearance have been sexually appealing for the sexual attractions with their skin-tight skirts and holed black stocking, with white face-slap and bright-red lipstick. This is the claim of Reviere on her essay "Womanliness as a Masquerade" that "femininity as masquerade in terms of aggression and conflict resolution..." (Butler 64) where the reality that we see from an appearance is just masked through our performance. According to her, she visualizes the submissive nature acquired by woman under the mask particularly to limit their sexual desire and activities. She even focuses on blurring the boundary created between the heterosexual and homosexual referring to Witting the "imaginary formation" sex. That is well executed by this extracts,

The girls were in rubber and leather and wore skin-tight skirts and holed black stocking, with white face-slap and bright-red lipstick. They snarled and bit people. Accompanying these kids were what appeared to be three extravagant South American transvestites in dresses, rouge and lipstick, one of whom had a used tampon on a piece of string around her in self-pity as we took in this alien race dressed with an abandonment and originality we'd never imagined possible. (120)

The above extract clarifies that girls' appearance and performance have been sexually appealing for the sexual attraction with their skin-tight skirts and holed black stocking, with white face-slap and bright-red lipstick which is an illusion for attraction. Since their sexuality has been restricted so they have been masked their instinct for sexuality. They have been appealing their sexual instinct by their sexy dress up.

Characters in the text performs unusual and unconventional practices of sexuality like masturbation by Jay, illicit love relations by Nina, Victor, Jay, Susan,

Asif's illegitimate relation, Ian's sexual attraction both on male and female, Jay's multiple erotic desires for different women, Susan's refusal to go in bed with his husband, Jamilia's marriage with Shiniko as representation of lesbian relation with the notion of Lacan concept of culture to limit our libidinal desire, Butler's notion of sex as matter and instrument of culture, Levi-Strauss's thought of taboos that generates exogamic heterosexuality, Butler's idea on sexual attraction on male and female, Kristeva's notion on semiotic expresses original libidinal multiplicity, Levi-Strauss Incest taboos, Foucault's sexuality and power as they coextensive, Joan Riviere's Womanliness as a masquerade.

Above mentioned form of sexuality by different characters show the multiple forms of sexuality blurring the boundary between normative heterosexuality and non-conventional forms of sexuality. As Judith Butler has claimed that heterosexuality is a cultural and social construct and that all forms of sexuality are natural and unbiased since they depend on the performativity.

III. From Normativity to Construction of Sexuality

With due and close investigation this researcher has come to the conclusion that the novel *Intimacy* by Hanif Kureishi is about the questioning of heterosexuality existing in the society. It focuses on the acts and attributes of the characters like Jay, Susan, Victor, Asif, Nina, Ian, and many others living in the southern suburb of London where they practice various forms of queer sexuality like multiple sexual relation, paraphilia, incest relation, masturbation, dildo, gay and lesbian relation to rupture the contemporary normative form of heterosexuality.

Most of the characters in the text involve in abnormal sexualities to erase their sexual thirst; so they go on having many experiences of queer sensibility that gives equal norms and values to all forms of sexuality. They are not limited to heterosexuality that has belief on opposite sex relation only. Rather they celebrate different forms of sexualities either of homo or hetero. Similarly, they enjoy paraphilia, dildo, masturbation and incest relation which the orthodox society can't digest. Here all the characters stand against stereotypical form of sexuality. For them heterosexual penetration is just the social and cultural construct existed in the society where they are struggling to subvert it by queer perversity. All these evidences raise the questions on the binary opposition between heterosexuality and homosexuality considering that heterosexuality is just a construct and process of socialization in the main stream.

These different forms of sexual demonstration by different characters are the solution to satisfy one's sexual anxiety but the society has created the norms that legitimate heterosexuality is only a single medium to satisfy one's sexual pleasure. Here the postmodernist theory: Queer theory dismantles the boundary between the heterosexuality and homosexuality claiming that both forms of sexuality are natural to

satisfy one's sexual pleasure. It also takes that identity and sexuality are fluid and fragmented.

In this regard, this present research proves how the characters of the novel *Intimacy* by Hanif Kureishi subvert the traditional stereotypical ideals of heterosexuality by living with queer sensibility. By creating these characters such as Jay, Victor, Asif, Ian etc., this novel proposes a critique of traditional sexual division between heterosexuality and nonheterosexuality.

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