

Avoiding Homosexuality: A Critical Perspective of Bangladeshi Readers to English Literature

Dipak Kumar Sarkar¹, Sharmin Rahman Bipasha²

¹Department of English, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science & Technology University, Dinajpur-5200, Bangladesh

²Department of English, Feni University, Trunk Road, Feni-3900, Bangladesh

Corresponding Author: Sharmin Rahman Bipasha, E-mail: bipasha2006ru@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: March 04, 2019

Accepted: June 10, 2019

Published: August 31, 2019

Volume: 10 Issue: 4

Advance access: July 2019

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

Key words:

Homosexuality,
Sexual Orientation,
Sexual Psychology,
Readers' Psychology,
Homosexuality in English Literature,
Bangladeshi Readers' Interdiction
towards Homosexuality

ABSTRACT

English literature has faced homosexuality in a progressive manner though it has been through a struggling history. That is why a lot of writers of English literature have expressed and enjoyed themselves in their own ways. This paper addresses a few famous writers whose approaches in this regard have been homosexual in type. After looking at the societal love, norms and analysis of Sigmund Freud, this paper approaches Bangladesh and her view in this regard. This paper finds a kind of interdicted move from Bangladesh toward the homosexually important texts and finds the need to have a reciprocal approach. Finally, the outcome of this paper indicates to explain a critical perspective of Bangladeshi readers' psychology that is how and why they avoid homosexuality as well as literary texts implied with it.

INTRODUCTION

Homosexuality, a different type of sexual orientation, can be found in plenty in English literature, created by some great writers who have celebrated this type of love relation, which largely depicts their approach to it, though it is interdicted in Bangladeshi context. Seemingly, this celebration is not that type the other famous love poets and society enjoy. Interestingly, Sigmund Freud has come up with a hypothesis that can analyze itself and predict its reason. This, being a different psychology, has a long struggling history since the birth of civilization. Bangladesh, as she is not out of the world, has to face it too but in her very own way. She has dealt with it but not in a progressive approach. Subsequently, it brings the conclusion that homosexuality cannot be talked about in Bangladesh though it is existent and understood. To make the point clear it is necessary to understand some of the great English literary pieces.

English Literature has provided some of the great writers who have shown inclination to homosexuality, though debated, but have emerged as very special. The central research problem of this paper is to locate the generalized critical response of Bangladeshi readers when they take

English literary texts themed and implied with homosexuality. The main discussion will continue with reviewing and interpreting some selected works from renowned English writers like Shakespeare's sonnets, Emily Dickenson and Tennyson's poetry, Herman Melville, Allen Ginsberg and D H Lawrence's novels. These literary works are exerted with homosexuality and it is attempted here to explore these writer's homosexual tendencies in writing. Therefore, this paper aims to explore how homosexuality has been chosen by the English writers as one of the most arresting subject matter of their works but neglected by the Bangladeshi readers. Finally the broader goal is to examine and evaluate the acceptance of homosexuality from Bangladeshi readers' context which leads to the outcome that Bangladeshi readers' reserved and conservative psychology cannot accept the idea of homosexuality which is popular in English literary texts.

HOMOSEXUALITY IN SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

At first a light will be poured on the sonnets of Shakespeare where he has enjoyed a love of different type. Shakespeare,

in his sonnets, is another person who praises his breath taking friend whose identity is somehow kept unknown. It is normal for a person to write a few poems for his best friend but writing as many as one hundred and twenty six sonnets is beyond normality. Shakespeare's approach towards his friend is the main thing of concentration here. In the very first sonnet, named Sonnet I, he opens the entire sequence of the sonnets and introduces a group of poems called 'pro-creation' where he urges the young friend to bear children as an act of victory against time. Here Shakespeare calls his friend as 'fairest creature' and in the couplet he proposes his friend to 'pity the world' and procreate a 'tender heir'. Otherwise, his friend will be a glutton who like the grave will eat the beauty. In this way till Sonnet XVII, Shakespeare emphasizes the procreation process. In this process Sonnet XVIII is the first rhyme to preserve the young man's beauty. Besides, he finds his beloved more 'lovely' and 'temperate' than the pleasing summer days. The uses of extremes like 'all too short'; 'too hot' gives emphasis on the young man's beauty. The male figure, which is being praised so far, has an appearance which is atypical of nature's steady progression. Shakespeare goes on with his attempt in boasting the beauty of his beloved which will turn even 'death' an impotent. Then Sonnet XXIII is about how Shakespeare, in the presence of the 'fair youth', is unable to express his feelings. His 'strength's abundance weakens his own heart'. In lines five to eight, he says that as his love towards the young man is very strong, very real and very overpowering, the young man's company turns him dumb. He goes on saying that the young man's looks are 'presagers' of his 'speaking breast' which knows the truth of his love. Shakespeare, as done by the lovers in heterosexual love, woos the young man to learn the signs of his 'silent love'. In the same manner in Sonnet LX, he says;

And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

(Sonnet LX, Line 13-14)

The beauty of this so called young man is so voraciously important for Shakespeare that he has turned it his duty to praise his beloved. At this stage Shakespeare asks how beauty of his beloved can resist the power in nature which overpowers brass, stone, earth and sea in Sonnet LXV. After that, in the couplet of Sonnet LXXIII, Shakespeare renews his plea for the young man's love. He says;

To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

(Sonnet LXXIII, line; 14-14)

Moreover, Sonnet LXXV puts fuel to the fire, Shakespeare's attraction towards the young man. This sonnet is an innocent tribute to the young man who is responsible for Shakespeare's well being. The poet himself is disgusted and frightened by the dependence on his young mate. Here, the poet is consumed by guilt over passion. His words with implicit sexual meanings permeate the sonnet. The words, 'enjoyer', 'treasure', 'pursuing', 'possessing', 'had' are the allusions to five of the seven deadly sins, such as; avarice, gluttony, pride, lust and envy. Such language with so much sensual 'feasting', uncontrollable urges and sinful consumptions makes it really difficult for anyone not to consider the erotic relationship between the poet and his mate true. However, in Sonnet LXXX Shakespeare says that the love for

the young man is his sole reason for living and also the sole reason of his destruction. He says;

Then if he thrive and I be cast away,
The worst was this; my love was my decay.

(Sonnet LXXX, line; 13-14)

Shakespeare shows a kind of special affinity with his mate who is a young man. And this is not an act of ignorance rather a deliberate and willful one to seduce a young man.

HOMOSEXUAL INCLINATIONS IN EMILY DICKENSON'S POETRY

Secondly the name of Emily Dickinson can be taken into consideration as she has a reputation of being a lesbian. Emily Dickinson's poetry of romantic love and longing leaves readers wondering who she has been writing about. Typically, the readers assume that her longing is for the love of a man as per society's norm but reviewing the letters, she has exchanged with women through her life, illuminates the possibility of romantic yearning for women. Emily Dickinson has a special affinity with nine days younger Susan Gilbert who has not only entered her life but also has kept Emily's world without men. Even Mount Holyoke has a kind of contribution to her sexual behaviors. In a letter to Susan, Emily writes;

I have but one thought, Susie, this afternoon of June,
and that of you, and I have one prayer, only; dear Susie,
that is for you. That you and I in hand as we e'en do in
heart, might ramble away as children, among the woods
and fields, and forget these many years, and these sor-
rowing cares, and each become a child again — I would
it were so, Susie, and when I look around me and find
myself alone, I sigh for you again; little sigh, and vain
sigh, which will not bring you home.

I need you more and more, and the great world grows
wider, and dear ones fewer and fewer, every day that
you stay away — I miss my biggest heart; my own goes
wandering round, and calls for Susie — Friends are too
dear to sunder,

And the letter ends in the following way;

Now, farewell, Susie, and Vinnie sends her love, and
mother her's, and I add a kiss, shyly, lest there is some-
body there! Don't let them see, will you Susie?

In her life Emily has been idiosyncratic as she has not chosen the prescribed life of a woman as befitted the women of her era. While "I trusted liquor never brewed" illustrates her devotion to intoxicating natural world. It is very hard to define the lesbian approach of Emily in her writing but her posthumous editor and friend, Thomas Wentworth Higginson worries about the inclusion of the poem "Wild nights-Wild nights" in the 1892 volume of her poetry lest the malignant read into it more than virgin reclusion. Again, the love enjoyed with Susan can be defined as that regard. There is no unsure way to say that in creation of a proper unmarried Victorian lady, Emily has been or can basically not cross the limit at least in the mind. The scandalous thing about her is that she has kept writing with the image of a woman in her mind. The last stanza in particular has a very clear reference of 'Eden', the place where forbidden sexual delights

has been first discoursed. Even after her death the dictions of her poem have been changed from 'she' to 'he' also with the changes like capitalization, punctuation to produce the flavor taken normally in a society.

HERMAN MELVILLE'S APPRECIATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY

Thirdly, in the process of discussion in this regard, Herman Melville is to be taken into consideration, which is best known for his, *Moby Dick*, a novel fraught with sexual imagery. The elaborate descriptions with which the author establishes his indulgent style of writing aptly reflect the often indulgent behaviors of characters. Choice of words by Melville is predominantly sexual. Meanwhile, it is noticeable in the relationship between Ishmael and Queenqueg. The evolutions of their relationship throughout the text associate homosexuality. As the story progresses their interaction become increasingly more erotic. As the story progresses their interactions become interestingly more erotic. Sexual references are often disguised by Melville's clever use of diction. Such reference can be found in the 94th chapter titled Squeeze of the Hand which is an illustrative part of this. Melville writes;

I squeezed that sperm till a strange sort of insanity came over me; and I found myself unwittingly squeezing my co-labor's hand in it, mistaking their hands for the gentle globules. Such an abounding, affectionate, friendly, loving feeling did this avocation beget; that at last I was continually squeezing their hands and looking up into their eyes

Moby Dick, Chapter 94, Lines: 322-323

The specific word 'Sperm' is the short form of spermatozoon, a mature male reproductive cell. Therefore, the language used here is symbolic in the meaning that it has a homosexual annotation in it. In this context the Sperm represents men and makes the passage serve as a metaphor for an intimate act. The author's choice to discuss hands as opposed to another body part can be taken as intentional. At the conclusion of this paragraph Melville states;

"Why should we longer cherish any social acerbities. let us all squeeze ourselves into each other" (323).

"Acerbity" means something sour or bitter in taste. Figuratively speaking, Ishmael could be referring to something broad such as the confinement of social norms that would prohibit him from freely engaging in this behavior. However when literally used, the word "acerbity" takes on a different meaning by directly tying back to the state of the sperm. The phrase is an apostrophe since it seems as if Ishmael were speaking to someone who is not there. Interpreted this way, it is as if Ishmael were asking why the act of sex is so pleasurable. This is where it becomes most apparent that Melville is speaking through Ishmael because the line directly addresses Melville's greater purpose. Melville intelligently follows this line with a more obvious reference to sex. The phrase "squeeze ourselves into each other" is overtly visual and immediately inspires a physical, penetrative image. Upon considering the prior interpretation of the phrase "social acerbity" it seems logical that the act of squeezing into

one another means sodomy. Again in the short story "The Paradise of Bachelors and The Tartarus of Maids" Melville offers an exploration of impotency and a portrayal of a man retreating to an all mate childhood to avoid confrontation with sexual manhood. In this way, Herman Melville represents a world of homosexuality around his writing.

HOMOSEXUAL EXPRESSIONS IN LORD ALFRED TENNYSON'S POETRY

Fourth in this succession is Lord Alfred Tennyson. In his poem "In Memoriam" Tennyson himself expresses man's supposed homosexuality and the desire of the same. The influential books by Judith Butler, Eve Sedgwick, D.A. Miller and others centering on gender studies have claimed the approach made by Tennyson is a homosexual one. The poem, in a sense, is a journey of the Christian faith, Tennyson experiences after the death of his friend, Arthur Hallam. Being submerged in deep sorrow Tennyson finds himself confronted throughout the process with question and challenges to his spiritual belief. There are critics who believe that Tennyson's faith is not based entirely on Christian principles, yet a careful reading of the poem in comparison with Biblical texts reveals that he underwent a spiritual transformation that deepens his belief in God, The Savior, and Such A Media That will help him to enjoy the companionship of Hallam once again. Here, Tennyson finds a ray of hope to unite with Hallam through the Christian faith. Tennyson is a voice here crying out in wilderness of societal and spiritual confusion clinging to the faith of Christianity to reach the ultimate goal. Moreover, androgynous male characters and homo eroticism have been found throughout his gay audiences and that is his a success also. Tennyson proclaims that his love will endure and making reference to Shakespearean's homoerotic sonnets he implies that his poem will itself immortalize his friend. He says;

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,
Where thy first form was made a man;
I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor can
The soul of Shakespeare love thee more.

(LXI, Line: 9-12)

Again, announcing them as 'a single soul' he says;
Arrive at last the blessed goal,
And He that died in Holy Land
Would reach us out the shining hand,
And take us as a single soul.

(LXXXIV, Line:41-44)

But the sense of physical loss takes years to diminish, as Tennyson cries long after Hallam's death;
Descend, and touch, and enter; here
The wish too strong for words to name,
That in this blindness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

(XCIII 13-16)

In any case, the poem thereafter moves toward its close, as if the quasi-physical reunion was enough to assure Tennyson that he and his friend would reunite after death;

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near in woe and weal,

O loved the most, when most I feel
 There is a lower and a higher;
 Known and unknown, human, divine;
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye;
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,
 Mine, mine for ever, ever mine"

(CXXIX 1-8).

Tennyson writes in his the short poem "On One Who Affected an Effeminate Manner";

While man and woman still are incomplete,
 I prize that soul where man and woman meet,
 Which types all Nature's male and female plan
 But, friend, man-woman is not woman-man.

This epigram condemns "effeminate" men for inverting the "natural" gender order and placing "feminine" or "womanly" characteristics above "masculine," "manly" ones. Such condemnation of inversion no doubt relates to the late nineteenth-century medical denunciation of sexual and gender nonconformity as unnatural and indicative of a stunted or warped "identity." In this way Tennyson's position towards homosexuality can be understood.

HOMOSEXUAL UN/CONSCIOUSNESS IN D H LAWRENCE'S WORKS

Fifthly, in this discussion comes the name of D.H. Lawrence for his special novel, *Sons and Lovers*, and also *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*. *Sons and Lovers* is seemingly more important in this context. *Sons and Lovers* is a novel showing a psychoanalytic struggle of a young boy suffering from Oedipus complex. After William's death, Paul becomes his mother's favorite and struggles throughout the novel to balance his love for her with his other relationships. Thomas L. Jeffers, Professor of Marquette University comments on the dynamism of a great novel like *Sons and Lovers*. He says about the energies of the sexual revolution and of a corrective counterrevolution. The creation and sustenance involves both the mind and spirit as much as the flesh and body. Sexuality is a hugely complex and embattled issue in the book. Paul fails with both Miriam and Clara because the relationships don't give him what he longs for. Perhaps he is himself not aware of what he is seeking. Paul yearns for a relationship that would give him complete peace and fulfillment. But he is aware of it only in an unconscious way. More precisely, for Paul, there are no fixed elements which can amalgamate to give a perfect 'full' experience. Unconsciously, in Paul's mind, the key to a successful relationship lies in 'spontaneity'. Lawrence said that he preferred things he could not understand with his mind. Living exclusively through the mind, he felt, was not living. At the same time, he didn't mean that living through the body was living. What Lawrence wanted was to feel as he thought that knowledge interfered with intense living. He objected to the mind as he felt it curbed his passion, withheld his out rush of emotion. To live a fuller life, one has to feel experience and be spontaneous. Paul, in his relationship with both the women, feels that he is losing contact with his real, spontaneous self. He finds himself being driven by certain demands and expectations that surface as the relationships progress. It is in this process that the relationships lose their

spontaneity and fall prey to certain individualistic norms and behavior patterns. To achieve that ultimate and ineffable consummation, one needs to let things be; to let them take their own course. Paul is unable to reach that final state of sexual ecstasy because the relationships cannot free themselves from their own burden. Paul's personality expresses itself fully in the company of women. When he ventures forth into the male world, it is women who help him find success. One cannot overlook Paul's timidity when he goes to collect his father's salary. He is too delicate to deal with his father's ordinary, working-class colleagues. He says to his mother;

They're hateful, and common, and hateful they are, and I'm not going anymore.

(*Sons and Lovers*, 87)

He feels tortured and intimidated by their coarse manners. His mother stands by him through the interview at Jordan's and infuses in him the much-needed confidence. This is also because Paul has always been a weak child, 'pale and quiet.' He is a delicate boy, subject to bronchitis. Lawrence himself was unhealthy throughout his life and was aware of his skinny frame and his lack of physical attractiveness. Lawrence quite absurdly believed that children who are loved too much by their mothers contract lung and heart disease and are unhealthy. We cannot speculate to what extent this belief went into Lawrence's depiction of Paul as a weak child. However, Paul is a favorite of all the girls in the office once he joins Jordan's surgical appliances. William, on the other hand, is outgoing, independent and strong. Mrs. Morel derives a sense of security from William which her husband had failed to give. The feeble Paul loves flowers and is very sensitive. He loves painting and dreams of having a cottage where he could live happily with his mother. Mrs. Morel's sexuality varies in the presence of William and Paul. With William, Mrs. Morel feels like a woman – who will be taken care of. William is "her knight who wore her favor in the battle" (*Sons and Lovers*, 93). He made her feel 'warm' inside. On the other hand Mrs. Morel becomes the caretaker, the male figure, with Paul. Privileged with a mother's boy status, Paul has imbibed many 'feminine' characteristics. Both spiritually and intellectually, he finds more interest in women than in men. However, the reality the novel through various relationships attempt to portray is too mysterious and complicated to be neatly compartmentalized. Later in the novel, we find Paul casting off the 'feminine' traits in his personality. He rejects this 'feminine' identity and longs for the sensual world outside of which his father is a part. Walter Morel has the coal pit as his territory. Like his father, Paul wants to leave behind the domestic territory of his mother and yearns to have a 'masculine' space that he can call his own. In moving outside, Paul detaches himself from confining influences and expands his physical and private space. He tries to come to terms with his own self, and in doing so gains a new identity. Mr. Morel has always been unavailable, as a father, to Paul for masculine identification. The developmental problems that Paul faces with respect to the masculine side of his personality stem from the lack of a male companion in the household. Mrs. Morel, perhaps to enhance her own sense of self, retains the identification of the sons with her. The strong bond that she develops with the children, especially Paul

and William, along with the estrangement she brings about between them and the father leads to the children's inability to identify with the father. It is, therefore, an over-identification with the mother that is the cause of Paul's weakened sense of his own self. Unconsciously however, Paul recognizes the need for identification with the father. He reaches out to his father unknowingly and metaphorically to gain an authentic, masculine self. In his relationship with his mother, Paul is confronted with two options. The first option, attachment, brings with it the threat of the loss of self-identity as the mother's love is too obsessive. The second, separation, is accompanied by the fear of abandonment. Paul's search is for an ideal balance between the two, an equilibrium that could be attained through the accomplishment of a healthy separation from the mother. It is important to note that this realization operates only on an unconscious level. The need for a healthy separation from the mother is accompanied by an equally urgent need to reach out and identify with the father. As I suggested earlier, the mother retains the identity of the sons with herself as a result of which Paul unconsciously begins to sense a need for a masculine identification. The introjections of masculine values, through a symbolic reaching out to the father, serve as a kind of defense mechanism against the engulfing power of the mother's love. It seems recuperating that the masculine in D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* looks at the presence of dirt in the novel focusing on the strikingly frequent associations between dirt and Walter Morel who is permanently branded by his occupation. Since Paul both identifies unconsciously with and seeks to distance himself from his father's position in the family, Walter's dirt and dirtiness embody both the attraction and the repulsion of what he represents for Paul's sense of self and identity. Paul's association with Baxter, who resembles Walter in his uncouth, dirty ways, also seems to suggest that Paul yearns for the dirt his mother has taught him as disgusting. Identification with the father, both unconsciously and symbolically help Paul in mitigating the effect of his unhealthy attachment to his mother and thereby make an attempt to restore his self-identity by achieving psychic independence from his mother. Paul is probably trying to get away from sex role stereotypes and is beginning to realize both the 'masculine' and 'feminine' in him. Therefore, D. H. Lawrence comes up with a sexual idea that may not be a social one.

HOMOSEXUAL PREFERENCES IN ALLEN GINSBERG'S WORK

Lastly in this analysis is considered a post modern writer, Allen Ginsberg who has not only written homosexually implicated texts but also has led a homosexual life. Allen, a prominent figure of 'Beat Generation' and living with Peter Orlovsky, has written "Howl" which is considered as his best and most important in regard to his view on sexual life and homosexuality. The entire first section can be summed up like this, he and his friends who are of the greatest minds have gone mad. The implications made from line 36 to 78 of section 1 are more than sexual. He says;

who let themselves be fucked in the ass by the saintly motorcyclist, and screamed with joy,

who blew and were blown by those human seraphim, the sailors, caresses of Atlantic and Caribbean love, Who balled in the morning in the evenings in rose gardens and the grass of public parks and cemeteries scattering their semen freely to whom ever come who may, who hiccuped endlessly trying to giggle but wound up with a sob behind a partition in a Turkish Bath when the blond & naked angel came to pierce them with a sword, who lost their love boys to the three old shrews of fate the one eyed shrew of the heterosexual dollar the one eyed shrew that winks out of the womb and the one eyed shrew that does nothing but sit on her ass and snip the intellectual golden threads of the craftsman's loom,

(Section I, Line 36-40)

So, after reading the text none should have any kind of confusion over Allen's approach to sexuality.

In this way, English literature has produced various writers possessing homosexual idea and they, though been criticized, have the reputation of being great writers as they have contributed to the development of English literature greatly.

TREATMENT OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN ENGLISH LOVE POEMS

The love that these writers celebrate is not the same with that of the poems known as love poems supporting our Bangladeshi approach. Andrew Marvel in his "The Definition of Love" says that love is something that has been begotten from despair. Moreover, love is something 'so divine a thing' and it is compared with two infinite lines, each of which forms a perfect circle. As the lines are parallel, they shall never intersect. Now, to know love's philosophy, it is worth having a look at P. B. Shelly's "Love's Philosophy" where Shelly says that people are meant to mingle with one another as the fountain does with river and the river with the oceans. He says;

In one spirit meet and mingle.
Why not I with thine?

(Love's Philosophy, line; 7-8)

He also longs to have a physical relationship with the person he loves as he believes this relation between him and his lover is a natural one. Besides, Robert Frost's "Meeting at Night" is another renowned love poem which has been written when he has been courting Elizabeth Barret. Here, Browning takes a picturesque journey at sea at night and reaches a farm where they, overwhelmed by their heart beats, reunite. So far the love is defined and philosophized but John Donne takes love to another level in his poem "The Canonization" where he pleads;

For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love,

(The Canonization, line: 1-1)

Donne, here, enjoys the physical love first then considers both, lover and beloved, as 'tapers' who by the cost of their death be one without any bodily presence. He further says that by the means of death, as they leave their body, they create 'half-acre tombs' and they will be 'canonized for love'. So by a natural love affair, the world means a special kind of affinity and relation between male and female personnel. But, what is found in Shakespearean Sonnets is quite a turn

out from the conventional notion of love. Andrew Marvel praises his lover's body with exaggeration in his poem, "To His Coy Mistress". He says;

An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.

(To His Coy Mistress, Line: 13-18)

Even, Shakespeare shows symmetry of the sexual logic of sonnets, a kind of little twist where he considers the love with the young man as something pure but he has to stalk the presence of lust with the women. Shakespeare also celebrates the woman in his sonnets. About the body of the woman he says;

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;

(Sonnet CXXX, Line: 1-6)

This Sonnet CXXX is an elaborate joke on the conventions of love poetry common to Shakespearean days. By this sonnet he wants to say that love does not need anything like sunny eyes, red lips, beautiful breasts, hairs and cheeks. It is a simple attempt to make his love towards women spiritual by overlooking the physical beauties. But he ends up saying;

I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

(Sonnet CXXX, Line: 9-14)

Interestingly these love poems, though also a great part of English literature, support the way Bangladeshi are likely to take.

ENGLISH WRITER'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DISPOSITION ON HOMOSEXUALITY

Sigmund Freud has a special hypothesis dealing with these kinds of love relations celebrated by several writers of English literature. During life time Sigmund Freud, who is best known for his psychoanalysis which is a clinical method for treating psychotherapy through dialogue between patient and psychoanalyst, has posed different theories of a etiology of homosexuality. He believes all human beings are innately bisexual and they become heterosexual or homosexual as a result of the experiences with parents or others. Freud hypothesises different psycho developmental events possibly involved in the emergence of adult homosexuality. According to Freud, homosexuality arises as a result of the Oedipus conflict where the boy discovers that his mother is castrated which produces an intense castration anxiety for the boy. This ultimately causes the boy to turn from his castrated mother to a woman who has a

penis. Besides, the boy, who is homosexual, is attracted to his mother in such a way that he identifies himself with her. The boy narcissistically seeks love from his mother. Again, if a negative or an inverted Oedipus complex occurs, the boy seeks his father's love. It is also possible that homosexuality, according to Freud, can result from sadistic jealousy of brothers and father which can safely be converted into the love for other men. Even when that boy tries to make a relation with a female figure he finds no pleasure since he sees the mother figure in her. So, the love, enjoyed by Shakespeare in his sonnets, can be categorized as of homosexual type due to his attraction towards the young man. Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden, comes from a family with good economic status and connection in society. Whereas Shakespeare's father, John Shakespeare, is the heir of Richard Shakespeare, Shakespeare's grandfather, who has been the tenant farmer on the land owned by Arden family. It shows that Shakespeare's mother has a better economic position than that of his father. Again, Shakespeare grows up in an overwhelmingly feminine family as most of the women in Shakespeare's family have outlived their brothers or husbands. Actually, he has grown up in a family which is predominantly female. In addition to his numerous sisters and cousin sisters, Shakespeare has eight aunts including one who have outlived her husband. Even his mother has outlived his father. He has been more close to girls than those of boys. Being brought up in a female dominated family, Shakespeare may have got attraction towards male as he cannot take himself out of the lady figures and considers himself a woman with a penis. Then Emily Dickinson's psychology can also be analyzed. Emily consistently has described her father in a warm manner; her correspondence suggests that her mother was regularly cold and aloof. In a letter to a confidante, Emily writes, she; ...always ran Home to Awe [Austin] when a child, if anything befell me. He was an awful Mother, but I liked him better than none. Wolff (1986), 45.

In 1840's, Emily and her sister, Lavinia starts together at Amherst Academy, a former boy's school that has been opened to female students just two years earlier. After completing her schooling at Amherst Academy, Emily attends Mount Holyoke Female Seminary which has been offering a curriculum that has been based on a college course of study and has been among the most rigorous academic in a young woman can attend. Emily has been sixteen and been younger than over 234 students. This academy sows a seed of a special affinity towards women in her and so Emily develops the strongest and most affectionate relationship with her sister in law, Susan Gilbert whose married life has not been a happy one too. This helps Emily eventually not only to send her over three hundred letters over the course of their friendship but also to find Susan playing the role of beloved, muse and adviser. Next Herman Melville's experience in sea, Tennyson's life style, D.H. Lawrence's own life like that of *Sons and Lovers* have paved the path of hidden desire they tend to show in their writings. But, most importantly Freud has defined this approach as not a disease rather as a different type of psychology grown due to several reasons.

HOMOSEXUALITY AS A UNIVERSAL SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Since the dawn of human civilization, there are examples of this kind of attraction called homosexuality. The *Laws of Manu* generally known as the *Manusmriti*, which is an ancient legal text for the kings in Hinduism, also mentions a 'third sex' member which includes nontraditional gender expressions and homosexual activities. Again, in the *Bible* there is indication of homosexuality in Genesis 9: 2-24 where the youngest son of Noah, Ham, commits a homosexual act on his father. Besides, in Greece the practice of pederasty is also worth mentioning. In ancient Greece pederasty has been more like a custom that has been practiced mainly in upper class where an older man, called Erastest, makes a young free boy, known as the Eromenos, his sex partner as supplement to marriage. This has been regulated by an institution of the state. Homosexuality reaches its most notorious stage in the ancient Rome. Famous English historian, Mr. Edward Gibbon in his book, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, writes that among the first fifteen emperors Claudius has been the only one whose taste in love has not been a negative one rather he has been a follower of correct type of love. Further evidence of homosexuality comes from satirists, poets and historians, Juvenal (C. 60-140) and Martial (C. 40-102) who write about the formal marriage unions of homosexuals. Romans accept this pederasty just as another way of sexuality. However, in China civilization there have been a lot of examples of this kind of relationships. In the middle or late seventeenth century, first gay brothels have appeared in London. Michael Drayton in *The Moon Calfe* (C 1605) and Edward Guilpin in *Skialetheia* say that plays and theatres have been the place of sodomy. And in 1611 John Florio, in his Italian English dictionary, defines catamito as one hired to sin against nature, an ingle, a gaymate. Interestingly Clement Walker refers that the possible gay brothel site is presently occupied by Buckingham Palace. In this way, the first homosexual victim has been Captain Edward Rigby in early 1698 that has been tried for sodomy at a court martial but acquitted. The trap laid by Thomas Bray, a member of the society for Reformation of Manners, Captain Rigby has been caught red handed. The Mughal Dynasty has also never been aloof from it. Babur is thought to be a secular sunni Muslim who never considers shia as Muslims. He sometimes called them 'detached', though Babur keeps religion as a sacred a thing his contemporary kings have not given such emphasize on religion. Despite being secular about religion, Babur, according to one of his uncles named Sultan Mahmud Mirza, has been addicted to non religious and sinful acts. His addiction to homosexuality is also highly worth mentioning and Sultan Mirza says that Babur has been used to taking boys of his noblemen and admitting them in the boy's harem. Babur in harem has enjoyed the company of beautiful boys. This practice has been a custom throughout his kingdom and noblemen. Whenever Babur has seen a nice calm young man or boy, he has had a desire to get him at any cost. In page 120 to 121 of the biography named *Baburnama*, Babur says that he has not much interest in his wife but has been maddened by a boy named Babri and confesses that he has not loved anyone the way he has been made for the boy. Babur has been a homosexual like any other king of South Asia. The list of name includes names like

Mahmud of Gazni, Akber, Bin Tuglaq, Bakhtyar Khilji, Nawab Sirajuddaulah and Mohammad Ali Jinnah, though no concrete evidence is found. Thus, with the development of human civilization this kind of relation has also developed with various names and ideas.

UNRESPONSIVE TREATMENT OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF BANGLADESH

Bangladesh, being a new country considering the history of homosexuality, has perceived the existence of homosexuality since its birth. It is said that, though there is no clear evidence, the West Pakistani army abused not only the female but also the males of East Pakistan sexually. It is directly heard from old Hindu people, who have witnessed the liberation war of Bangladesh, that West Pakistani army have used a special kind of identification method to identify whether a person has been Hindu or Muslim. The proof of being Hindu or Muslim has been dependent on having checks on the penis. This is significantly important that, though it is a thin evidence to prove the homosexual behavior of West Pakistani soldiers, men have been abused then in the name of politics but we still have no voice raised against that. The repetitiveness of this account is what makes this important. Dr. Nayanika Mookherjee, a faculty of Durham University in her article entitled, "The absent piece of skin: Gendered, racialized and territorial inscriptions of sexual violence during the Bangladesh war" says;

The constant evocation of the rape of women during the Bangladesh war stands in contrast, to the silence relating to male rapes and violation during the war.

(Page: 8, Line: 7-9)

She also says;

Along with the prevalence of the rape of women in public memories, I also came across instances of male sexual violence which emerged in various interviews and photographs.

(Page: 7, Line: 10-12)

Again Hindustan Times' photographer Kishore Parek has photographed all over the Bangladesh in mid 1960's and the photographs show how male have been abused during the liberation war of Bangladesh. With severe birth pain Bangladesh stands up with her own rules and regulations where she prohibits homosexuality. The Penal Code, 1860's section 377 says;

Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with [imprisonment] for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.

Explanation: Penetration is sufficient to constitute the carnal intercourse necessary to the offence described in this section.

(The Penal Code, The Act No XLV of 1860)

Even in religious sector, homosexuality is not simply prohibited but also has always been considered as a punishable act. Despite the law and religious prohibitions, there have been a significant amount of people, who hide their desire, are homosexual. Several people have been arrested due to this and punished as well. The story of "Lucky" and "Mishti" is known

to many who have been arrested as they have been continuing a homosexual life. In November 2, 2002, “Boys of Bangladesh”, the largest network of self identified Bangladeshi gay men living in Bangladesh and foreign, is formed with a motto ‘to build a strong gay community along with addressing, promoting and protecting the LGBT rights’. This non formal group is run by a pool of volunteers through social media. The first Bengali book written on homosexuality is *Somokamita* by Avijit Roy who has been hacked to death by machete wielding assailants in Dhaka on February 26, 2015. Though forbidden, prohibited, regarded extremely sinful, the existence of homosexual people cannot be denied rather they are waiting to come forward with a revolutionary zeal to get institutionalized and recognized.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, due to difference of time, place and person, homosexuality has not got the reciprocal attitude by the Bangladeshi. It happened because of the restrictions and reservations of religious and cultural life of Bangladeshi readers and specially the students of English literature in Bangladesh. The heterosexual culture and practice make the readers uncomfortable towards homosexual texts. Thus the unacceptability towards these texts has resulted from their heterosexual psychology made up by the religion, culture and society where there is no place for people with different sexual orientations such as homosexuals. Therefore this paper successfully discusses according to its aim that though the idea of homosexuality is unique, arresting as well as modern as a subject matter for the English writers but it remained unacceptable to the Bangladeshi readers. Finally the main goal of this paper reaches to the explanation that because of restricted sexual psychology Bangladeshi readers of English Literature avoid homosexual based texts as they cannot accept and connect to the idea. The way Shakespearean plays are taken close to heart, sonnets, though containing enough material within, have not been talked about a lot. Even if the syllabuses of the undergraduate level under the department of English of four biggest universities such as Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University, are taken into consideration, a picture of how Shakespearean sonnets are treated in Bangladesh can be found. The mentioned universities have used nothing but two to three sonnets out of entire number of sonnets and there is not even a ten marks course work on sonnets of Shakespeare. Such an esteemed writer, though prominently known for plays, does not get a place in the syllabus. May be the more attractive status of the plays is a reason to avoid Shakespearean Sonnets but there can be one reason for it and it can be nothing but his unique love approach. If Bangladeshi readers can take the illicit love relation between a mother and son as portrayed in *Hamlet* with a critical view, then why the homosexual love dealt in his Shakespearean Sonnets, In Memoriam, *Moby Dick*, Emily Dickinson’s poetry cannot be talked about keeping homosexual context in mind. Homosexuality is not a new born theory to Bangladeshi readership and so the progressive approach towards literature and life is needed. Ironically Bangladeshi readers consider a few sonnets of Shakespeare as few of the best love songs but they disagree to take all the aspects that Shakespeare brings to notice. Same is with Tennyson and other discussed writer in this article.

However the approach of readers is, it cannot change the pattern and very existence of writing itself. To enjoy English literature, all the aspects are needed to be taken into consideration so that the literature itself can present before the reader the thoughts and ideas that have been entertained by writer. It is the audience who is to decide what is best for society considering all the sides portrayed in literature. So, it is time Bangladesh were reciprocal in her approach towards literature.

REFERENCES

- Allison, W, Alexander. Barrows, Herbert. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, U.S.A, W.W. Norton & Company Inc, 1983, Print
- Bandopadhyay, Manabendu, *Manu-Samhita*, Kolkatta, Swadesh, 2004, Print
- Jones, Peter. *Shakespeare: The Sonnets*, London, The MacMillan Press Ltd, 1977, Print
- Katherine Duncan, Jones. *Shakespeare: An Ungentle Life*, London, Methuen, 2010, Print
- Katherine Duncan, Jones. *Shakespeare’s Sonnets*, Kundli, Haryana, Replika Press Pvt. Ltd. 2013, Print
- McDonald, Russ. *Shakespeare; An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1945-2000*, UK, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004, Print
- Mookherjee, Nayanika [HYPERLINK “https://www.cambridge.org/core/search?filters%5BauthorTerms%5D=NAYANIKAKA%20MOOKHERJEE&eventCode=SE-AU”](https://www.cambridge.org/core/search?filters%5BauthorTerms%5D=NAYANIKAKA%20MOOKHERJEE&eventCode=SE-AU). [HYPERLINK “https://www.cambridge.org/core/search?filters%5BauthorTerms%5D=NAYANIKAKA%20MOOKHERJEE&eventCode=SE-AU”](https://www.cambridge.org/core/search?filters%5BauthorTerms%5D=NAYANIKAKA%20MOOKHERJEE&eventCode=SE-AU) The absent piece of skin: Gendered, racialized and territorial inscriptions of sexual violence during the Bangladesh war, *Modern Asian Studies*, Volume 46, Issue 6 November 2012, pp. 1572-1601
- URL: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/modern-asian-studies/article/the-absent-piece-of-skin-gendered-racialized-and-territorial-inscriptions-of-sexual-violence-during-the-bangladesh-war/22F764E-A3EE638268F6DADFD08FB327B>
- Maguire, L. E. *Sudying Shakespeare*, Kundli, India, Replika Press Pvt. Ltd. 2004, Print
- Newar, Sanjeev. *Great Rulers of India: Exploring the “greatness” of most brutal rulers ever ruled India*. Kolkata. Agniveer November 25, 2015. Print
- Peck, John. Coyle, Martin. *Literary terms and Criticism*, UK, Palgrave, MacMillan, 2002, Print
- Roy, Avijit, *Somokamita*, Dhaka. Shuddhaswar, February 1, 2010, Print
- Smith, Emma. *The Cambridge Shakespeare Guide*, Noida, India, Cambridge University Press, 2012
- Selden, Raman. Widdowson, Peter. Brooker, Peter. *A Reader’s Guide to Complementary Literary Theory*, UK, Prentice Hall, 1997, Print
- Thackston Jr, W. M. *The Baburnama: Memoirs of Babur; Prince and Emperor*, New York, Modern Library; Modern Library Pbk. Ed edition (September 10, 2002), Print
- Dokkhina Batas. “Somokamita-Ekti Purnango Alocona. Blog post. [Http://www.somewhereinblog.net](http://www.somewhereinblog.net). N.p., 10 Sept. 2011. Web. 25 Jan. 2017.