



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 3. Issue.4.,2016 (Oct.-Dec.)



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

REPRESENTATION OF MASCULINITY CRISIS AND QUEERNESS: A PSYCHO ANALYTIC
QUEER READING OF JAMES BALDWIN "ANOTHER COUNTRY"

MOHAMMAD DANISH SIDDIQUI

Ph.D Research Scholar,

Department of English Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh



MOHAMMAD
DANISH SIDDIQUI

ABSTRACT

The subject of present paper entails Masculinity crisis and queer identity which foreshadows Psychoanalytic queer Sexuality in terms of identity crisis in the Baldwin's novel. Masculinity crisis is seen as a Queer relational element which goes to build a homoerotic desire and identity formation among homosexual gay men and their social benefactor. Moreover Psychoanalytic theory is focused in terms of Sexual identity and Sexuality as a special case of psychosocial fulfillment at large. Queer theory as well in connection to psychosexual theory finds its place amidst sexual relation in Lgbt community which defines the praxis of Homosexual Social matrix. Through this paper, I would like to highlight the treatment of Sexuality under queer theory and Psychoanalytic framework and rebuilding of Masculinity crisis in the Baldwin's novel "Another Country" which upholds its Significance in the Queer theory and Psychoanalytic Sexuality.

Keywords: Masculinity Crisis, Queer identity, Psychoanalytic Sexuality, Psychosexual theory.

©KY PUBLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

James Baldwin, an Afro-American novelist, is well read and a controversial figure whose Sexuality was seen under Question owing to his Homosexual identity. He is one of the few novelists to gain eminence in the White American Society which regard Black men and women as Prejudiced filthy and Untouchables as compared to white men and women who are superior and are capable of belonging to the Society. Racial ethnicity and Gender taxonomy figures in Baldwin's novel which characterizes Masculinity crisis and identity politics. His novel projects the issue of Marginalization of gay men and homoeroticism which transposes a sense of identity and Homosexuality against racial and sexual disharmony. Baldwin Novel depicts a strong sense of disillusionment and an aura of detachment from the Society. Owing to his own homosexual nature, Baldwin was isolated, marginalized, truncated hegemonic figure and portrayed a sense of aloofness and his sexuality was under-questioned at large. His novel projects a queering Psychoanalytic fulfillment and seeks to establish a quite blending of identity formation which is seen as a re-building of Baldwin's Sexuality and Queer desire in his work. Masculinity Crisis finds its place in psychosexual theory as it focuses on the marginalization

of ethnic and racial abridgement of homosexual gay men at large. Masculinity crisis entails a reworking and reshaping of gender identity which itself is under the structures of power and oppression. In his book 'Discovering Men', David Morgan states: 'masculinity is best seen not simply as some kind of quality that is attached to individuals, but a kind of Cultural resource of a set of Potentialities which may be realized and shaped in particular context'. The Crisis of Masculinity arises due to the Political conflicts which takes the place of personal in the novel of Baldwin. The novel is full of Sexual undertone and depicts a homosexual world where each character finds its place amidst other forming desire and breaks this crisis of Masculine fervor which forms a strong establishment of Sexuality under Crisis. 'Another Country' candidly displays queer desire particularly the relationship between Eric and Yves in Paris and homoerotic relationship between Rufus Scott and Vivaldo—at the same time calls into question the Social Conflation of gender and Society.

'Another Country' calls into question and depicts a Gender taxonomy and identity crisis as Baldwin's recast his characters in terms of homo-eroticism which seeks to fulfill the sexual pleasure. 'Another Country' began in Greenwich Village in 1948 and got completed in the year 1962. Thematically it explores the homoerotic love and Sexuality which is in itself an element of Psychoanalytic discourse and favors a queer relational development in the building up of sexual identity of homosexual gay men. Two characters that are full of contrastive bisexual come in contact with each other and explore a dynamic relationship amidst every racial and sexual tension of 1980s American Society. Baldwin's postwar village Italians lived in a time when African-Americans were forming their own Sub-culture. Marginalization of gay men was at large and they were abused and raped owing to their racial ethnicity by white Americans. Rufus Scott, who is projected as haughty angst man is full of insanity because of his racial ethnic origin of being black. Rufus psyche upholds a mirror of marginalized, condemned, filthy black musician who dies just because of his traumatic in queerness as his sexuality projects his racial gender oppression. Eric on the other hand emerges out to be character full of life and displays a sense of 'whiteness' in the novel. Both the character involves in sexual intercourse and gives an endowment with ability for healing. Eric transfer the power of love sex. Moreover aggression of "flagrancy" incites discursive and institutional strategies to 'expose' homosexuality to mark its difference. Lee Edelman has noted that gay resistance in a homophobic regime through assertive and unapologetic representation of gay sexuality ("flaunting it") Signifies in the view of dominant order "an act of aggression, an assault that sodomistically unmans the very body through which that dominant order represent itself".

Sexuality as contrastive of queer theory has its significance in Psychoanalytic discourse as it foreshadows the strong sense of homoerotic desire in Eric and Vivaldo. Vivaldo and Eric emerge out as a character full of libidinal force which guarantees psychosexual fulfillment among each other. Despite belonging to the black, marginalized, racial ethnic gay man, Baldwin forecasts a homosexual matrix of desire among Rufus the black personage and Eric. As Rosenblatt roger comments on Eric sex as: "homosexuality in the person Eric becomes the main liberating force of the novel and thinks the novel is about sins of mission and a modern of inferno that contains them". Vivaldo's sexuality as that of Eric get an outlet for expression when he sees in himself the image of Eric and describes his body like him. Vivaldo emerges as a queer figure whose sexuality is well portrayed in dialogues between Eric and vivaldo and Baldwin describes it thus:

"He murmured at last, in a strange voice,
As he now heard himself murmur oh, Eric.
Eric. What was fury like? Eric. He pulled Eric
To him through the ruined sheets and held him
Tight. And thank you, vivaldo Whispered thank you.
Eric curled against him like a child and salt from his
Forehead dripped onto vivaldo's chest"

Signifies and highlighted the homosexual love amongst each other and Freud contending in " Three Essays on Sexuality"(1905) states that ' Genital stage leads to the concept of maturity and orientation to the phallus in both sexes is given over to procreation' thus fulfills the erotic love for fulfillment of wishes and drives that lead to libidinal attachment in Psychosexual development. As Cynthia Cockburn examines, "The Power imbalance of

gender relations in most (if not all) societies generates cultures of masculinity prone to violence. These gender relations are like a linking thread, a kind of fuse, along which violence runs" (44). In his book 'Homosexual oppression and Liberation' (1972) Dennis Altman discusses the relation between American gay liberation and the other counter-cultural challenges to dominant Culture. He argues that "the critique of American society that gay liberation has adopted bears the marks of a decade of rising expectation and rising frustration".

Thus establishes a strong queering sexuality among characters of 'Another country' and Rufus, one of the figure-head from the novel remains the most disgruntled and rejected being. Sexuality as the part of queer theory and Psychoanalysis finds its place of expression as it goes to set up a new norm and a sense of defining identity categories in the novel. Rufus is the most victimized figure damaged by his city and sexual culture. He is also the incarnation of Baldwin who never left Newyork. His last visit to bathroom defines his sexuality which Baldwin himself has seen through and through:

"It smelled of thousands of travelers, oceans of
Piss, tons of bile and vomit and shit. He added
His stream to the ocean holding the most despised
Part of himself loosely between two fingers of one
Hand. But I have got to stay there so long..... He
Looked at the horrible history splashed furiously
On the walls----- telephone numbers, lock, breasts
Balls, cunts etched into these walls with hatred.
Suck my cock. I like to get whipped. I want a hot
Stiff prick up my ass. Down with Jews. Kill the niggers.
I Suck Cock" (83)

Reflects the glaring sexual encounter with the whites who marginalized gays and Rufus Scott remains a puppet full of sexual filth and slave like creature who owing to his identity crisis has to suffer the sexual loss of his virginity and thus seeks gratification in sucking of cock and getting fucked up at large by the Homosexual Americans who uses Rufus like as slut and thus fulfill their desire. The bursting of anger in Rufus oozes directly from the identity formation which he carries owing to his Black African- American man who has been discarded by American Society is in itself a self-reflection of Baldwin's own identity. Rufus views about experience as a threat to his self- definition which is not a self-definition at all because of its cultural source. At one point Rufus is talking to vivaldo:

"Have you ever wished you were queer? " Rufus asked
Suddenly Vivaldo Smiled looking into his glass". "I used to think maybe I was. Hell I, think I even
wished I was". He Laughed. "But I' m not. So I' m stuck". Rufus walked to vivaldo's window. "So you
have been all up and down that
That street, too, he said.
"We've all been up the same street. There aren't hells of a lot of streets. Only we 've been taught to
lie so much about so many things, that we hardly even know where we are" (52)

Confirms the Rufus-Eric Homosexual stasis and a connection strongly welded for the want of sexual needs which the two men fulfill in the sexual encounter with each other. Rufus-Eric queering of the body entangled with Psycho-Sexual desires goes to form the very nature of libidinal fulfillment among gay men and moreover rejects the ethnic void which Rufus encountered with the white Americans who use Rufus to their Sexual pleasure and rift apart the racial Angst towards Negroes. Psycho-sexuality amidst queer theoretical renderings fulfills its aim at homosexuality which singles out the individuals in their drives and thus establishes a sexual phallus and get merged with anal jouissance. Whereas vivaldo-Eric bridges the Masculinity crisis and thus forms a Homophile endearment towards each other and seeks pleasure in the Activity.

'Another Country' depicts the same sex desires among the characters that fulfill the sexual needs by 'Give and take' relationship. Vivaldo and Eric emerge out to be a queering Cripple who fulfills their desire and thus create a homosexual identity per se. Eve kosofsky Sedgewick contends in "Epistemology of the closet"

that "Coming out" is not a Simple dichotomy. "Coming out" signifies the influence of homosexual/heterosexual dichotomy on perception of Public and private, Secrecy and disclosure Heterosexuality is the Public face, Homosexuality is restricted to the Closet"

Leads Eric to emerge as a homosexual cowboy in the novel and viz-a-viz establishes a homoerotic desire and fulfills the needs and comes out to be the leading figure of the Novel and resolves the conflict in the end. Eric learns love which he sees through the "closet". Closet for Eric serves as a venturing out of identity in the novel and thus stands as a leading character who balances the relationship between all the characters and thus bridges the Masculinity Crisis and Sexuality which upholds a significant place in Psychoanalysis and queer theory and homosexuality as a special case of sexuality focuses on the homo-social desire which the characters in 'Another Country' carries and breaks the closet of sexual identity among each other. Gay liberation also stood as a rampant movement for the emergence of the Gay- lesbian people and thus Eric emerges as a mouth –piece of Baldwin himself. Identity crisis amidst crisis of Masculinity occupies a central role in 'Another country' and goes to build a separate black gay movement in totality. Masculinity crisis in 'Another country' gets dissolved in lieu of Sexuality at work and through Eric emerges as a new aura of delight and pleasure.

In the light of the Analysis of James Baldwin's 'Another Country', one may conclude that the closet and sexuality acquires a new dimension under queer construction and sheds light upon the Psychoanalytic sexual theory which Eric and Vivaldo establishes a homosexual desire and identity crisis rules out in Rufus who dies in the end owing to his black male homosexual being who was discarded and used by white Americans only to fulfill their lust. The novel depicts a strong sense of rebuff and a racial prejudice for black people who are often thought to be outcast and as such worthy of neglect among American. Sexuality also rules out negatively as characters often become an object of ridicule and are perversely treated and harshly condemned owing to their "Blackness" which is a racial condemnation at large. Sexual degradation also acquires a symbolic pattern and thus acquires a psychoanalytic queer dimension.

WORK CITED

- [1]. Morgan, D. "*Discovering Men*", pp.111. Print.
 - [2]. Edelman, lee "*Homographesis: Essays in Gay literary and Cultural theory* Newyork: Rout ledge 1994, PP.5. Print.
 - [3]. Roger, R. "Out of control: Another Country and Go tell it on the Mountain". Newyork: Harold Bloom.1986. Print.
 - [4]. Baldwin, J. "Another Country". England: penguin books.2001. Print.
 - [5]. Freud, Sigmund "Three Essays on theory of Sexuality", Standard Edition, and London: Hogarth Press. Print.
 - [6]. Cockburn, Cynthia: "The Continuum of Violence: A Gender Perspective on War and Peace". Print.
 - [7]. Sedgwick, Eve kosofsky: "Epistemology of the Closet". Berkley: University of California Press, 1990. Print.
-