ATILIM UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE MASTER'S PROGRAMME

FEMALE MASCULINITIES IN SELECTED BRITISH QUEER NOVELS: *THE WELL OF LONELINESS* BY RADCLYFFE HALL AND *TIPPING THE VELVET* BY SARAH WATERS

Master's Thesis

Merve ÖZTÜRK

Ankara-2023

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Ankara-2023

ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis titled "Female Masculinities in Selected British Queer Novels: *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall and *Tipping the Velvet* by Sarah Waters" and prepared by Merve OZTURK meets with the committee's approval unanimously as Master's Thesis in the field of English Language and Literature following the successful defence conducted on 10/01/2023.

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I accept and acknowledge that I have prepared this thesis study, prepared in line with the Thesis Writing Guidelines of Atılım University Graduate School of Social Sciences;

- within the framework of academic and ethical rules;
- presented the information, documents, evaluations, and results in a way that meets the rules of scientific ethics and morality,
- I have referenced each work from which I have benefited while preparing my thesis, and that
- I hereby present a unique study.

I hereby also understand that I shall accept any loss of rights against my behalf in cases otherwise.

10/01/2023

Merve ÖZTÜRK

ÖZ

ÖZTÜRK, Merve. Seçilmiş İngiliz Queer Romanlarında Kadın Maskülenlikler: Radclyffe Hall'un *The Well of Loneliness* ve Sarah Waters'ın *Tipping the Velvet* Adlı Romanları, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2023.

Kadın eşcinselliği edebiyatta 20. Yüzyılda görünür olmaya başlamıştır. Öncesinde şifrelenmiş veya çok sıkı arkadaşlıklar arkasına gizlenmiş bir kadın eşcinsel edebiyatı vardır. Yüzyılın başında seksologların çalışmaları ile lezbiyenlik konuşulur hale gelir. Lezbiyen tanımı ise erkek seksologların eserleri doğrultusunda "maskülenlik" ile ilişkilendirilir. Yüzyılın başındaki lezbiyenler erkek olmak isteyen kadınlar olarak tanımlanırken yüzyılın sonunda özneleri tarafından kendi kimliklerine dair farklı teorilerini okuruz. İngiltere'de yazılmış ilk "açık" lezbiyen roman olarak kabul edilen *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) adlı eserde döneminin seksologlarının teorilerine romanda pek çok yerde rastlarız. Başkahramanı Stephen Gordon maskülenliğini ancak erkek olmak istemekle ilişkilendirir. Gordon'un lezbiyenliği transseksüellik üzerinden değerlendirilse de bu tezde onun maskülenliği döneminde adlandırılmayan "kadın maskülenliği" üzerinden incelenecektir. *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) ise alternatif bir Viktoryen dönem sunar; Waters, eşcinselliğin açıkça yaşandığı bir neo-Viktoryen topluluğu yaratır. Romanda queer teoriyi açıkça görürüz; başkahramanı Nancy Astley'in cinselliği döneminin ve günümüzde de kabul gören lezbiyen maskülenliğini yansıtır. Kadın maskülenliğini anlamlandırmak için erkek maskülenliğine ihtiyaç duyulmaz. Erkek kılığı ile görünür olduktan sonra cinsel kimliğini aramaya başlar. Cinsiyet rollerini "giyer", "çıkartır" ve en sonunda lezbiyen kimliği ve kadın maskülenliği arasındaki dengeyi bulur. Erkek olmasına ya da erkek gibi davranmasına gerek yoktur. Böylelikle, bu tezde kadın maskülenlik kavramı birbirinden çok farklı olan iki başkahraman üzerinden incelenecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kadın Maskülenliği, Lezbiyenlik, Kuir, Radclyffe Hall, Sarah Waters

ABSTRACT

ÖZTÜRK, Merve. Female Masculinities in Selected British Queer Novels: *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall and *Tipping the Velvet* by Sarah Waters, Master Thesis, Ankara, 2023.

It was at the beginning of the 20th century that female homosexuality began to be written openly by its subjects, namely lesbian women. Previously, encrypted or hidden behind close friendships, there is not-so-extensive female homosexual literature. Lesbianism becomes visible, and a historical mannish-lesbian image is created based on the theories of sexologists at the turn of the twentieth century. This perception, which exists as stereotypes such as "lesbians are women who want to be men," "masculine women based on heterosexual relationships are perceived as men in lesbian relationships," or "women who are not liked by men are lesbians," was written by male sexologists at the beginning of the 20th century. We come across the theories of the sexologists in *The Well of Loneliness*, which is accepted as the first "out" lesbian novel written in England. The protagonist, Stephen Gordon, associates her masculinity with the desire to be a man. Considering the social conditions of the period, it is quite reasonable to want to be a man. Therefore, in this thesis, Gordon's masculinity will be analysed not through transsexuality, but through female masculinity. *Tipping the Velvet* offers an alternative Victorian era; Waters creates a neo-Victorian community where homosexuality is openly practiced. We clearly see queer theory in the novel; her gender does not stay the same, nor does the sexuality of the protagonist, Nancy Astley. She begins to search for her sexual identity after she becomes visible in men's clothing. She "puts on" the roles and "takes them off," and in the end, she discovers the balance between her lesbian identity and her masculinity. She does not need to be a man or act like one. Thus, the concept of female masculinity will be analysed through two very different protagonists.

Keywords: Female Masculinity, Lesbianism, Queer, Radclyffe Hall, Sarah Waters

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TABLE CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the concept of female masculinity in the 20th century British fiction through the novels *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) by Radclyffe Hall and *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) by Sarah Waters. This thesis aims to analyse the sexual orientation experiences of the protagonists in *The Well of Loneliness* and *Tipping the Velvet* around female masculinity and within the framework of queer theory. I will analyse masculinity-femininity terms, lesbianism-feminism intersection, lesbian masculinity in gender studies, and Butler's and Halberstam's theories in the first chapter. The protagonist of *The Well,* [1] Stephen Gordon's masculinity will be discussed to question whether it is transgender or lesbian masculinity and the protagonist of *Tipping the Velvet*, Nancy Astley's masculinity will be discussed in light of queer theory and in connection with the ideas of Judith Butler and drag king theory by Jack Halberstam.

The Well of Loneliness (1928*),* a well-known novel from the beginning of the century that represents the ideas of the period, and *Tipping the Velvet*, (1998) a thrilling book with overtly sexual scenes and a joyful ending, both reflect the ideas of their respective eras. Theoretically, it would not be incorrect to say that there is a century-long difference between two books. At the beginning of the century, Radclyffe Hall believed in the "sexual inversion" theory, which claims that homosexuality is a disease derived from birth. Havelock Ellis, who proposed sexual inversion theory in *Psychology of Sex* (1897), was even asked to write a preface for *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) by Radclyffe Hall herself (Dellamora 197). It shows that Hall was well aware of the studies on female homosexuality at her time. Hall's protagonist resembles what sexologists proposed in their theories. Stephen Gordon is a perfect example of a sexual invert who is a masculine lesbian who wants to be a man. On the other hand, Sarah Waters' protagonist in *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) is rather different from Stephen Gordon's sexuality. Nancy Astley has a performative sexual orientation; her sexuality is an excellent example of the "fluidity" theory. Throughout the novel, her sexuality and masculinity shift and transform. While comprehending Stephen's sexuality, we read her queer loneliness. Such loneliness is a possible shared feeling for masculine women who felt social pressure and had to hide their sexual identity. Stephen Gordon

[1] Hereafter, *The Well of Loneliness* will be also referred as *The Well*.

searches for his identity throughout the novel, and even if she finally accepts herself, she does not see happiness as something inherent in her. Nancy Astley, on the other hand, was in an alternative Victorian period in which lesbian does not feel pessimistic about her sexuality. Nancy learns to be a man, and that gives her a lot of opportunities. As a drag king, she has different sexual experiences. She realizes her feminine side in her relationship with Florence. She also realizes that her femininity does not prevent her from being masculine or finding another lesbian woman. She is completely at peace with herself at the end of the novel. Therefore, by analysing both novels, which represent their times at the beginning and end of the century, it is aimed to present the evolution of female masculinity in the 20th century. Against Stephen Gordon's unchanging "stone" sexuality, which I evaluate with Halberstam's "stone butch" theory, we see Butler's "fluid" theory in Nancy Astley's sexuality.

There will be some questions and answers in the first chapter, such as “What does lesbian mean at the beginning of the 20th century?” or "How was understanding of masculinity in gender and feminism studies?" or “Does a woman need to have masculinity in order to be a lesbian?” An overview of the relationship between lesbianism and feminism in the 20th century will be provided so as to comprehend lesbian visibility. Feminism is an activist movement that began with suffragette currents in the beginning of the 20th century, progressed through the first and second waves, and continues to the present day as post-feminism. Lesbian women also take part in those feminist activisms or studies Focusing on the relationship between feminism and lesbianism, it is seen that the two fields have not always had a "friendly" relationship. The reason relationship between feminism and lesbianism is included at such length in the first chapter is primarily: due to the fact that the presence of women is the "subject" of both fields. Being a woman is a common notion in both fields. A lesbian is a woman who defines herself as a woman regardless of her sex at birth and feels sexually and emotionally attracted to her sex. Therefore, I discuss whether she is or *ought to be* aware of “being a woman” before “being a lesbian”. What I discuss shortly, is that lesbian visibility has needed feminism. However, this claim is not intended to consider Stephen Gordon or Nancy Astley as feminists. In fact, there are many lesbians, especially radical lesbians such as Monique Wittig, who do not accept being defined as a "woman" due to its heteronormative discourse. However, I will argue that with feminism and masculinity, lesbians gained their visibility in society.

The reason for claiming lesbianism and its visibility is parallel to feminism movements based on Esther Newton's "The Mythic Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman" (1984) as Halberstam also refers to in his book. For example, Newton asserts that:

> Before they could find one another, they had to become visible, at least to each other. What they needed was a new vocabulary built on the radical idea that women apart from men could have autonomous sexual feeling. (565)

In order to discuss lesbianism, women had to be visible in society. And they did it with "New Woman" notions. "New Woman" was a radical woman and a modernist who rebelliously wore pants or ties, cut her hair short, and smoked in pubs. Lesbians embraced New Woman's bold masculinist actions. And they wanted to create their own literature, their own language, and their own sexuality. However, while lesbians were doing their own activism, their masculinity was evaluated problematically in feminist studies. The problematic relationship between feminism and lesbianism until the 1970s is examined in detail in the first chapter. For instance, first-wave feminist women did not want masculine lesbians (contemporarily used as butch) in front of the lines in feminist marches. Heterosexual feminist women did not want to be "accused" of lesbianism in suffragette cases, which were already accused of being feminist by men. These masculine lesbians' notorious in fact come from the famous sexual inversion books of sexologists such as Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis, and Freud. According to sexual inversion, an "invert", in other words, a lesbian is a woman who wants to be a man (Krafft-Ebing 503). This inversion comes from birth, but it is diagnosed as "abnormality" (Ellis 127). An invert necessarily needs masculinity in order to love another woman, and in short, she imitates maleness.

In the second chapter, Radclyffe Hall's life is analysed in detail since the author is the subject of lesbianism: she is a lesbian and is infamous for her female lovers, male suits, or her lavish parties. There are numerous similarities between the novel and her own life. Sexual inversion theory is a salvation, or at least an explanation, for many lesbian women, and Hall is one of those who supported it (Halberstam 96). Stephen Gordon's lesbianism is based on sexual inversion theories, especially Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) and Havelock Ellis' "Sexual Inversion" (1908). There is explicit reference to Krafft-Ebing's book in the novel (Hall 222). *The Well*'s mirror scene, which has been cited the most and divided critics into many discussions,

is one of the crucial scenes to analyse her masculinity. Based on this mirror scene, critics examined Stephen Gordon's sexual identity as a lesbian; today's critics are divided those who examine Stephen as a transexual person and those who examine her as a butch lesbian (Castello 166). In this thesis, Stephen is evaluated through Halberstam's stone butchness theory. And Stephen Gordon is evaluated in the "stone butch" lesbian category, which is considered the latest level of masculinity. Based on Stephen Gordon's words about her body in the mirror scene, Halberstam analyses her masculinity not as a deviance of male masculinity but unique female masculinity (97). Hence, I accept Halberstam's perspective and discuss Stephen Gordon as a stone butch whilst justifying her masculinity.

The neo-Victorian novel, *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) by Sarah Waters, who is aware of queer works from the 1990s and has a PhD in Victorian women, is analysed in the third chapter. One of Sarah Waters' major motives for writing *Tipping the Velvet* is to build a canon for queer individuals' untold stories during the Victorian era. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were coded love letters from lesbian women and hidden lesbian love stories disguised as romantic friendships. Waters in her novel recreates the hidden lesbian women while portraying explicit sexual scenes, relationships, and visible lesbians. It offers an alternative history for lesbians. Nancy Astley's adventure of searching for her sexual identity is similar to the phases of the definition of a lesbian woman in the 20th century. At each stage, Nancy experiences differences in her sexual identity. I will divide Nancy Astley's journey into three stages: at the first stage, she realizes her lesbian feelings and she becomes more masculine. At the second stage, she becomes a male impersonator and then a drag king which is a contemporary usage for male impersonator (Halberstam 235). At the final stage, she is a butch lesbian who embraces New Women notions, in other words, feminist notions. Nancy Astley's sexuality is fluid, she plays a male role on the stage, becomes visible as she becomes masculine. After becoming masculine, she has a relationship with her first lover, Kitty. As cross-dressed, she experiences many sexual acts such as with male homosexuality or tribadism with a rich sapphic[2]. Nancy's sexuality and presence on stage is reminiscent of Butler's performative theory. The changes in Nancy's sexual identity are evaluated using Butler's argument that genders

[2] In reference to Sappho, a Greek lyric poetess of the isle of Lesbos who lived in 600 B.C. and was famed for her love for women and for the passion and loveliness of her verse, which survives mostly in fragments. (Harper)

are social constructions (*Gender Trouble*). The connection between her drag king and female masculinity is evaluated in Halberstam theories. At the end of the story, Nancy finally finds happiness as a masculine lesbian who has equalized her feminine features.

CHAPTER 1: FEMALE HOMOSEXUALITY IN 20TH CENTURY

1.1 A Brief Overview of Female Homosexuality in England in the 20th Century

"For a long time, the story goes, we supported a Victorian regime, and we continue to be dominated by it even today. Thus, the image of the imperial prude is emblazoned on our restrained, mute, and hypocritical sexuality" (Foucault 11). Michel Foucault in his book *History of Sexuality* (1985) begins with these sentences in the chapter titled "We Other Victorians" claiming that the 20th-century people still had Victorian understanding and values for sexuality. What Foucault discusses is that Victorian understanding of sexuality, not only for homosexuality but also for heterosexuality, was a taboo, secret, and unknown subject for people. Foucault states: "Sexuality, sex, female sexuality were hidden in the home" (11). Because of not being able to talk about it, there was a strict conservative understanding of sexuality. That is why it was silenced and approached as if it was non-existent. As for the matter of homosexuality, we see more cruel laws against it from century to century. Weeks analyses the history of homosexuality in England in the 19th century, and he asserts that Queen Victoria in the 18th century banned male homosexuality by law, yet female homosexuality was found unnecessary to be banned as their sexuality had not been considered being significant as male homosexuality (99-108). In the 19th century, homosexual acts under the "gross indecency" term were defined as a criminal offense by the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, yet female homosexuality was not explicitly clarified by the law's prohibitions (Weeks 126-7). There was a well-known tragic example of a "gross indecency" case towards the end of the 19th century. Oscar Wilde in trial was accused of being homosexual in 1895 and sentenced for two years. While in court, the prosecutor asks him what is "the love that dare not speak its name" in his writings, Wilde's response was historically one of the most eloquent explanations of homosexuality; "It is in this century misunderstood, so much misunderstood that it may be described as the love that dare not speak its name, and on that account of it I am placed where I am now. It is beautiful, it is fine, it is the noblest form of affection." (qtd. in Merkler 63). The 'misunderstanding' of homosexual love continues in the new century, yet female homosexuality visibility increases as male homosexuality does.

Sharon Marcus, in *Comparative Sapphism in Nineteenth-Century Literature*,

compares female homosexuality in French literature and British literature and she interestingly asserts that: "[…] the critic who compares nineteenth-century French and British Sapphism in the paradoxical position of comparing something to nothing" (251). With the beginning of the new century, many psychologists and critics discussed sexology; their analyses could be read by society, which was also an opportunity for homosexual individuals to read about other homosexuals. That was a significant opportunity for homosexuals to know that they were not alone or not the only "abnormal" people in their time. Owing to increasing of sexuality research, the first citation for lesbianism as a female passion in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary was in 1908 as "sapphism"[3] (Stimpson 365). In the first years of the new century, female homosexuals also used "sapphic" word as well as "lesbian" to express themselves but other terms which were used by sexologists such as "sexual invert", "congenial invert" were accepted by some lesbians who internalized sexologists' theories. Before her "real" definition, Stimpson presents how lesbian love was understood: "Before the end of the nineteenth century, homosexuality might have been subsumed under such a term as "masturbation" (365). According to this discourse, masturbation later helps women to have a good sex life in marriage with men. Also, Lillian Faderman points out how lesbian relationships were seen as "romantic friendships" in the 19th century and these relationships were ignored till marriage. In the next century, there was a different attitude towards those harmless "romantic relationships" since they had been recognized as sapphics or inverts. Victorian principles oppressed female sexuality much more than male sexuality, thus lesbian love was almost invisible or unheard. One of the possible reasons for this could be the position of women in the society. Since lesbian visibility has been influenced by feminism movement year by year, there are many intersections between both concepts. Inequality between men and women also happens between female and male homosexuality; lesbianism was perceived as not such a "serious" problem, lesbian love was not considered as equal as gay love. Even in LGBTIQ+ activism, lesbianism was thought to be ignored in the second half of the 20th century which has been discussed by many feminist and lesbian activists.

Lillian Faderman argues in *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth Century America* that beginning with sexologists'

[3] It refers to "lesbianism."

homophobic theories in the 20th century, female homosexuals were forced to "react" in four ways. Faderman numbers these four reactions, which were peculiar to female homosexuals particularly for the first half of the 20th century. First, lesbians had to struggle with sexologists' explanation of lesbians. "Man trapped in women's bodies" was a common hypothesis among sexologists for lesbian theory. They were identified as 'abnormal' or 'sick' therefore, female homosexuals had to perceive their love in another state except for sexologists' ideas (3). Second, in their inner world, they were frightened of feeling passion for another woman. As already in heterosexual society, the denial of their feelings was an expected process (3). Third, Faderman continues with the "closet" expression, which is still a common usage among queer people who do not want to share their sexual identities and their relationships in public (3). The feeling of fear reached a certain point, homosexuals had to have a dubious life, and they had to act differently during the day and at night. That is why most lesbians had to be in the "closet" (3). Finally, Faderman points out that some lesbians internalized sexologists' congenital theories so that they could find an accepted field (3). At least this acceptance meant that they could search for ways to live with their lover (Faderman 3).

One of female homosexuals who accepted sexologists' theories that Faderman pointed was famous female homosexual author Radclyffe Hall. *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) was accepted as the first British lesbian novel; Hall uses the term "congenital invert", which was used by sexologist Krafft-Ebing, to describe her homosexual protagonist. In *The Well*, Stephen Gordon's finding and reading the sexologist Krafft-Ebbing's book shows us that there was a close interaction between science and literature, psychologists, and queer people. They affected each other, as Foucault indicates that no matter how deeply Freud's ideas affected homosexuality in a homophobic way, his ideas contributed to homosexuality, at least, they helped to rationalize understanding of "sexuality". It is apparent that homosexuality visibility in public was increased by the press, literature, feminism, and psychology. The sexologists' works show that they were following the sodomy news and investigating this news as a case. In literature, there were homosexual relationships, mostly behind "friendships". Literature was one of the most significant ways to voice homosexuality and raise awareness among homosexual individuals who could not name their feelings. Blanche Wiesen Cook's statement in "Women Alone Stir My Imagination" shows how

literature was valuable for female homosexuals: "So most of us lesbians in the 1950s grew up knowing nothing about lesbianism except Stephen Gordon's swagger" (719). The beginning of the new century was fruitful for female homosexual literature; an androgynous protagonist, in *Orlando* (1928) by Virginia Woolf, and a lesbian theme in , *Ladies Almonock* (1928) by Djurno Barnes, were published in the same year as *The Well*. Only *Orlando* could escape from the censorship, while Hall and Barnes's novels were banned for their inconvenient themes. Stimpson mentions how authors avoided this censorship: "If the lesbian writer wished to name her experience but still feared plain speech, she could encrypt her text in another seize and use codes" (366). Rebecca Jennings points out the images of lesbians:

> These representations of lesbians as isolated and potentially destructive figures were reinforced by a trend towards media coverage of divorce cases and violent crime involving lesbians. […] Lesbian characters appeared as isolated figures in the crime novels of Agatha Christie and, in the 1950s and 60s, the explosion of mass-produced pulp fiction imported largely from the US, brought with it a flood of lesbian-themed novels. (Jennings 3)

As Jennings claims, lesbian portrayals in literature were portrayed more openly, but they were lonely, "isolated", dangerous, and more masculine figures in the second half of the century. Therefore, lesbians growing up in a heterosexual culture had to create their own culture, identity, and language. The doctors' attachment of 'masculinity' to lesbianism, as Jennings argues, remained as a stereotype figure even in the lesbian community till the post war period (19). Lesbian women had to create their own narratives; they gradually progressed according to the era's economic, political, and social events. While constructing their culture and language, besides literate tools such as lesbian novels, women magazines and newspapers, lesbian bar culture was significant for lesbian identities. As they could meet, gather, and communicate in these bars, they had a chance to create their own terms, language and at least partly visibility among each other. While the invisibility of lesbian love in the 19th century mostly was due to illiterate women's majority in society, in the next century, researchers could access letters, autobiographies, and journals. Thereby they could have more information about the lives of queer women. Beginning with the suffragette movement, these number of educated women was increasing, especially in the working class, but also in the middle class. Jennings states that those women who had an education and a career were called "bachelor women" or "spinsters" (27). They had enough power to get by, and therefore most of them saw marriage as an

unnecessary event to do. Those bachelor women were labelled as "lesbians" because their single life, like a man, was meant to be a masculine trait. Masculinity was attached to lesbian women by sexologists, and it continued in the latter part of the second half of the century. Deborah Cohler analyses female homosexuality in Britain after the First World War, and she claims that late nineteenth century sexology and homophobia embodied female homosexuality and "xenophobia and nationalism" shaped the images of female homosexuality (68-69). During the war, the discourse on homosexuality changed, as Cohler asserts that:

> […] discourses of nationalism aligned male homosexuality with sedition and femininity at the same time that women were encouraged to illustrate their patriotism by adopting a maternal femininity but also in the expression of masculine cultural attributes. (70)

Male homosexuality had been accused of deteriorating political and military stability as male homosexuality was associated with "femininity". On the other hand, the masculinity produced by women was too much for nationalists. They argued for the position of women in both male and female homosexuality as they were the keystones; they were mothers, sisters, wives for strong Britain (Cohler 72). The fear of homosexuality must have reached some point that there was speculation that the government recorded homosexuals in a book called *Black Book* (Cohler, 84). A journalist, Noel Pemperton Billing, in 1918, published an article titled "As I See It-The First 47,000", and he claimed that the government had blacklisted 47,000 people for being homosexual and they were blackmailed for being spy, working for Germany (Cohler 84). Laura Doan in *Fashioning Sapphism* (2000) discusses the trials of Maud Allan and Radclyffe Hall related to this *Black Book*. Maud Allan was a Canadian dancer who had a role in Oscar Wilde's *Salome*, and she was accused of being a lesbian spy. Both her identities of nationality and sexuality were attacked by the time's nationalist politics. (Cohler 85 and Doan 32-33). They linked homosexuality to German spying. Therefore, it was seen as a German 'disease' that was disabling the systems of Britain (Cohler 90).

In the early years of the century, masculinity in women was seen as a result of modernity, feminism, and later lesbianism. After the Second World War, a masculine outlook was directly associated with lesbianism. Rebecca Jennings in *Tomboys and Bachelor Girls* (2007) discusses how the masculine outlook became a clear sign of homosexuality and had to be hidden and many lesbians were accused of being

"tomboys" (1). In the 1950s and 60s, lesbianism discourse was again shaped by the field of psychiatry, since;

> […] an increasing number of popular psychiatry books and self-help guides sought to explain lesbianism as the result of arrested development, and characterised the lesbian as immature and emotionally stilted, unable to develop equal relationships and prone to angry outbursts and alcoholism. (Jennings 3)

In addition to the immature figure of lesbians in psychology, the media illustrated lesbians as the reason for high divorcement rates and domestic violence (Jennings 22). Many female boarding schools were considered essential places for lesbianism. The behaviours such as kissing each other and bed sharing, which had been regarded as a normal aspect of female friendship in the 1920s, were no longer accepted because of the awareness of two female passions (Jennings 22). In the boarding schools, "bachelor, single" teachers' sexual identities were suspected. In the 1960s, the "sexual revolution" with second-wave feminism was supported by the Gay Liberation movement. The term "gay" included both male and female homosexuals, many lesbians called for their identity as gay. In the 1970s, the government under Margaret Thatcher's lead had a hostile attitude towards homosexuality. Homophobia escalated in the public and with the HIV/AIDS virus in the 1980s and 90s, it reached its peak. It was popularized as the "Gay Plague" (Jennings, 381) and, towards the end of the century, homosexuality was once accused of being "sick" or carrier of "sickness". There was a parallel between the high rates of homophobia and awareness of homosexuality. New contemporary theories in academy studies such as Queer Theory and other gender studies at the end of the century have influenced contemporary understanding of homosexuality.

At the end of the 19th century, the sexual theories of doctors and sexologists emerged. Sexologists coined new terms and definitions such as bisexuality, heterosexuality, and homosexuality. Homosexuality, as a term was coined first by Karl Maria Kertbeny in 1868 (Lang and Sutton 419), and it was densely discussed at the end of the 19th century. Many sexologists' works were translated into English and new words about sexuality arose in English. The first translation of sexologist's book in England was by Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1886). The normal and abnormal binary opposition was the centre of the doctors' theories about sexual inversion. They brought a new aspect of sexuality, but their homosexuality theories were problematic in themselves; they did not claim that it was a criminal act or morally disrupting. On the

contrary, they asserted it was congenital. The problematic point was in their language; according to them, it was congenital, but at the same time, it was an "anomaly". In fact, unlike Ellis and Ebing, Freud does not agree that it is congenital in Oedipus and Elektra complexes theories. He defends that such complexes affect the child and their "sexual object" in the future. As doctors' personal thoughts and male perspectives influenced their homosexuality theories; they mostly evaluated homosexuality through male homosexuality. Therefore, there are few works about female homosexuality.

In Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), there is one chapter devoted to 'sexual inverts', titled "Congenital Sexual Inversion in Women" (499-552). He asserts that female homosexuality is "less noticeable" (500) because he compares women to men and finds women's nature "not as sensual and certainly not as aggressive in the pursuit of sexual needs as man" (500). In The Mythic Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman (1984), Esther Newton states that Krafft-Ebing divides female homosexuals into four categories in order of their masculinity levels (566). For first and second grade lesbians' masculinity is much more "effeminate," and they desire to have "male garments" and "mental masculinity sexual characteristics" (qtd. in Newton 566). However, third and fourth grade lesbians are sexual inversions and the ultimate masculine women; they possess only the feminine qualities only the genital organs: thought, sentiment, action, even external appearance are those of the man" (qtd.in Newton 566). Krafft-Ebing also classifies female homosexuals such as unsatisfied wives who desire better sexuality (502), high-class women because of their "hyper-sexuality" desire to seduce their servants (502), prostitutes who were disgusted by male sexuality (502), hermaphrodites, and masculine women. Krafft-Ebing analyses many cases under the congenital invert theory, and mostly he links masculinity with female homosexuality. He lists his cases, such as "CASE 161. Masculinity. Miss N." (530) and he gives details about his consults. In his personal examination, sexuality between women is no different from heterosexuality. They are imitating a male role or a woman's role like in a heterosexual relationship (503). He solely takes into consideration masculine lesbians, therefore, he asserts that sexual inverts are interested in men's sports, men's fashion, and men's courage and desire (504).

Henry Havelock Ellis (1859-1939) was an English physician, eugenicist, and intellectual who studied human sexuality. His major work, *Studies in the Psychology*,

was published between 1897 and 1910. In his *Sexual Inversion* (1908), he claims that sexual inversion was congenital, but it was an "abnormal passion" (121). Ellis starts with how sexual inversion in women was studied less than in males. He criticizes Krafft-Ebing and states that “he has devoted but little attention to sexual inversion in women" (121). There are several reasons for "little space to women" (121). To Ellis, one reason is that the laws had no criminal act for female homosexuals, there were no well-known cases in public. Another reason was that it was too difficult to recognize homosexuality between women because of their close "intimacy" with each other. He evaluates sexual inversion in women as an abnormality. This "abnormal passion" (121) was not just seen in England, but also in other countries. He tries to show that it had existed for a long time. He gives news from other countries, letters, and psychological works about sexual inversion in women. It may be understood that he tries to increase visibility of sexual inversion; because of not being common in public, even "normal" sexuality was not known among women, this abnormal sexuality was less known (Ellis 123). Therefore, he exemplifies many countries, such as France, Egypt, where sexual inversion in women was common and well-known, whereas in England or Arabic countries, there was no common knowledge about sexual inversion among women. He asserts that: "In England, it is seldom that anyone cares to investigate these phenomena, though they certainly exist (127)." He has a much more anatomical analysis; he examines a sexual invert’s vulva and searches for differentiation from heterosexual women. For instance, his experimental subject, Miss M.’s pelvic measurements, were normal to Ellis, and she had a feminine body that could give birth (136). He searches other masculine traits in her character. Miss M. states that after Krafft-Ebing’s book, she realizes that she was not aware of feelings like hers “were under the ban of society" (Ellis 137). As well as other theorists’, Ellis searches for a masculine trait in the lesbian body. There must be one or more "remarks" of masculinity in her that one thinks of her as "ought to have been a man" (143). The masculine traits may be as characteristically or physically as he states:

> The brusque, energetic movements, the attitude of the arms, the direct speech, the inflexions of the voice, the masculine straightforwardness and sense of honor, and especially the attitude toward men, free from any suggestion either of shyness or audacity, will often suggest the underlying psychic abnormality to a keen observer. (143)

Therefore, he concludes with the idea that sexual inverts are not attracted to men (144). Even if man is attracted to her, she must be "rather a feminine type" (145).

He claims sexuality between women is "mutual masturbation" (145). Softly kissing, sharing the same bed, sharing the same sexual experience are innocuous acts. Towards the end of the essay, he mentions women's movements in society. He asserts that "marriage is decaying..." (148), the independence of women economically and socially strengthens their free space to experience their own sexuality. However, he claims that these "modern movements" are not necessarily associated with the increase in sexual inversion. These movements probably "develop the germs of it" and "cause a spurious imitation" (148).

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was an Austrian neurologist, called "the father of psychoanalysis," and a well-known psychologist for his sexuality theories. His works deeply affected psychology, and, although his ideas are controversial, they are still popular in modern psychology and in many fields of social sciences. The homosexuality and heterosexuality divisions did not particularly belong to him, because the popularity of his ideas about homosexuality affected LGBTIQ+ history in a more negative way. Many academics criticized his works on homosexuality for being written from a male perspective. Among his works, there are few that evaluate female homosexuality. One of his particular works about female homosexuality, “The Psychogenesis of a Case of Female Homosexuality” was published in 1920, in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis. He examines a young girl whose parents applied psychology to ‘cure’ their daughter’s "homosexuality". Sigmund Freud examines her life, relationships, and childhood, revealing his views on lesbianism. He never uses the word "lesbian" in the essay, instead, he uses "congenital" (131) or "homosexual" (136). Although at the beginning of the essay he claims that female homosexuality has been ignored by the state and in psychology (125), his approach can be called ‘homophobic’ throughout the essay. He calls it "less perturbing" (125) for female homosexuality compared to male homosexuality. His patient was a young girl who was obviously forced to have therapy by her parents. After her father finds out about her relationship with a woman, he applies to Freud to get her "back to normal" and "overcome her mental illness" (127). He constantly underlines the binary opposition between masculinity and femininity in his analysis. To him, the girl had good looks, but she had no "girlish pleasures" (126). Freud’s observation is that the young girl’s rejection of her femininity, her motherhood went against her love for her father, and, as a reaction to her mother, she was attracted to mature women. Her love

object was a mature woman because of a failed Oedipus complex. She wanted a child with her father, but she could not do it because of her mother, she unconsciously hated her mother, so she turned her back on all men (135). To Freud, her love resulted from an internalized hatred of her mother. Also, he connects masculinity to homosexuality. He states:

> What is certainly of greater import is that in her behaviour towards her love-object she had approximated throughout to the masculine type: that is to say, she manifested the humility and the tremendous over-estimation of the sexual object so characteristic of the male lover, she renounced all narcissistic satisfaction, and she preferred to be the lover rather than the loved. She had thus not only chosen a feminine love object but had also developed a masculine attitude towards this object. (132)

Freud draws a certain binary opposition between femininity and masculinity; one must be feminine and the other must be masculine in a homosexual relationship. Nevertheless, he underlines her physical features as feminine, but he finds her inner world more masculine; "Some of her intellectual attributes also could be connected with masculinity: for instance, her acuteness of comprehension and lucid objectivity, in so far as she was not dominated by her passion…" (132). He concludes with his diagnosis: "envy of the penis", she suffered from a masculine complex in her childhood, and there was a connection between her feminist personality and her sexuality. According to Freud, feminists rebelled against marriage, childbirth, and the desire to have power like a man (146). Therefore, the young girl desired to have what a man had.

Lillian Faderman asks a rhetorical question: "Why some lesbians accepted the congenital invert theory?" (57). Her answers enlighten us about the female homosexual mindset at the beginning of the century. Congenital theory in general claims that if one is born as an invert, he or she was determined by God, though it was an abnormal inheritance. They preferred to believe their homosexuality came from God rather than being heterosexual and choosing to be homosexual. Also, since they could finally name their feelings, the explanation relieved many homosexuals. Sexologists' sexual inversion theory is a significant step toward allowing lesbians to be more visible, but Esther Newton claims:

> Thus the true invert was a being between categories, neither man nor woman, a "third sex" or "trapped soul." Krafft-Ebing, Ellis, and Freud all associated this figure with female lust and with feminist revolt against traditional roles; they were at best ambivalent, at worst horrified, by both (568).

Female homosexuals read about other sexual inverts and understood they were not alone, not the only "abnormal" individuals, which also opened a new gate for lesbian women: they could meet, socialize, and create their own language, their own narratives. The feminist movement provided one of the most significant opportunities to gain social visibility.

In the introduction to *The New Woman in Fiction and Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms* (2001), Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis argue that the New Woman did not appear out of nowhere in the late nineteenth century. Her roots date back to the 18th century and pro-feminists such as Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1787) or socialists such as Thomas Pain (l737–1809) (edts. Richardson and Willis 1). Esther Newton in *Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman* (1984) discusses the New Woman's features in the 19th and 20th centuries. Newton divides New Women into two generations: first-generation New Women were born in the early nineteenth century, and second-generation New Women were born in the 1870s and 1880s. According to Newton, the most important action for second-generation women to take is their autonomy (562). Leaving their families' homes meant that they were abandoning Victorian rules. They simply demanded to have what male privileges existed in society. There were cartoons in the newspapers by journalists who drew New Woman as smoking, living alone, riding bicycles, or studying (Richardson and Willis 14-20). These images created some popularity as well as criticism in satirical writings about women. New women's social positions emerged day by day, with not only white heterosexual women defying old rules, but also lesbian women joining them. Women were interested in being modern in almost everything, such as politics, fashion, education, sexuality, abolition, or law. Esther Newton makes a significant comment about the New Woman's sexuality:

> How could the New Woman lay claim to her full sexuality? For bourgeois women, there was no developed female sexual discourse; there were only male discourses-pornographic, literary, and medical-about female sexuality. To become avowedly sexual, the New Woman had to enter the male world, either as a heterosexual on male terms (a flapper) or as-or with-a lesbian in male body drag (a butch). (573)

In Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928), we will see a protagonist who believes that she is a "sexual invert" and seeks her sexual identity, Newton analyses Stephen Gordon as the New Woman. In Sarah Waters' *Tipping the Velvet* (1998), sets in the fin-de-siècle, we will analyse the protagonist as first a "drag king" and at the

end of it as a butch. Jeannette King in the *Victorian Woman Question in Contemporary Feminist Fiction* (2005) analyses Nancy Astley as the New Woman. The reason for labelling them as the New Woman is their rebellious acts for their sexual identities, their fight for their autonomies, and their search for a logical explanation for their female masculinities. In both novels, there was and still is a lesbianism and feminism transgression in the twentieth century.

In the first wave of feminism, "womanly woman" became a slogan among suffragists and femininity was the main concept of feminists (Cohler 18). As they defend "women's rights," women are defined by their femininity. In the meantime, lesbians were defined as masculine by sexologists. Most lesbians, who came out, such as famous author Radclyffe Hall, were in the mannish style, smoking and drinking in the pubs, Newton states that: "They rejected traditional feminine clothing. They drank, they smoked and lived as expatriates "(564). The masculine "lesbian" was seen as an abject in the women's movement in the first wave of feminism. In fact, there were also feminine lesbians, but only the masculine ones were more visible in public. They became the target of hatred from both the heterosexual world and feminist women. Until the 1970s, lesbian invisibility was stuck between two separate activisms: gay liberation and women's liberation. In gay liberation, although many homosexual women called themselves "gay" as an umbrella term, the gay movement failed to express lesbian and women's oppression due to its "patriarchal attitudes" (Calhoun 560). On the other hand, in women's liberation, lesbian women's presence in the movement was controversial for heterosexual women. Heterosexual feminists were bothered by the accusation of being "dykes" by heterosexual men. This let most of them have homophobic discourses, like the president of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1969, Betty Friedan claimed that lesbians were being mannish or man-hating stereotypes and that they were obstacles to the women's movement, and she called lesbians "lavender menaces" as an insult (Samek 400). As a reaction the next year, the "Lavender Menace" protest during the NOW conference was a turning point for lesbianism in the feminist movement (Samek 394; Summer 10). 17 women wearing lavender-coloured t-shirts took the stage and read their own manifesto. "Woman-Identified-Woman" (1970) by numerous authors who called themselves "radical lesbians" (Woman-Identified-Woman 1) was accepted as a significant manifesto for lesbian visibility in women's liberation. After the manifesto had been

read at the conference in New York City, at the next conference the lesbian presence was officially recognized as a "legitimate concern for feminism". In England, the Women's Liberation Movement held eight national conferences and it started in 1970 in Oxford. In 1974, "to end discrimination against lesbians" was a demand by lesbians from the conference. Samek argues for the long silence of lesbian feminists within the movement:

> The story of the homophobic treatment lesbians endured within feminist activist circles during this era is a well-worn tale. Lesbians had long participated in the women's movement (often silent about their sexuality) and served in leadership roles, yet if they opened up about their sexuality they were ignored or viewed as a threat. (Samek 400)

Even though lesbians and feminists shared common problems such as racism, sexism, classism, and inequality, heterosexual feminists failed to see homophobia, which is a product of patriarchy. Since the 1970s, feminism and lesbianism have been intertwined, via many movements, such as liberal feminism, radical feminism, black women, or other ethnic movements, feminism has evolved and expanded its lines. Nevertheless, there were other contradictory ideas about feminism and lesbianism relationship. For instance, Calhoun resembles the relationship between lesbian theory and feminism to Marxism and feminism. She claims that: "Lesbian theory and feminism, I want to suggest, are at risk of falling into a similar unhappy marriage in which "the one" is feminism" (558). One of the reasons for claiming that is the problematic definitions of lesbian and woman. Many theorists have offered different definitions, such as Monique Wittig claimed that a lesbian is neither a man nor a woman. Asserting that a lesbian is not a woman connected with the woman's definition in the heterosexual order. As Witting claims, the woman in a heterosexual society is the submissive one, the Other of the man, the mother, wife, daughter. That is why she is defined by man (Wittig 105). However, a lesbian is not the other of man, she is not supposed to be the "wife" of a man, she does not have to be a "mother" in order to be a real "woman" (Wittig 105). Like Witting, Adrienne Rich, Kate Millet, Charlotte Bunch, and Gayle Rubin, called radical feminists, accepted "woman-identified-woman" as a lesbian definition. Their perspectives on heterosexuality are based on much of the slave-owner relationship: heterosexuality is a system and women socially, emotionally, economically, and sexually depend on men in this system. In their manifesto they were criticised for claiming true feminist is a "woman-identified-woman". In other words, the real feminist is a lesbian woman. Also, in the manifesto

they claim: "In a society in which men do not oppress women and sexual expression is allowed to follow feelings, the categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality would disappear." (1) Calhoun brings a criticism related to this radical lesbian claim, as she states:

> First, lesbianism ought not to be read solely as resistance to patriarchal male-female relationships. One misses a good deal of what it means to live life as a lesbian as well as much of the political significance of lesbian practices by doing so. Second, even if empirically and historically heterosexual dominance and patriarchy are completely intertwined, it does not follow from this fact that the collapse of patriarchy will bring about the collapse of heterosexual dominance. (Calhoun 562)

To understand lesbianism, feminist theories ought to be analysed, but that does not mean there is no separate lesbian theory, except lesbian feminism (Calhoun 555). Calhoun suggests that there is feminism, lesbian feminism, and lesbian theory (555). According to Samek, many lesbians preferred to be activists in women's liberation instead of separatist activism because of "intersectional" feminism; "Reframing women's liberation in this way allowed some lesbian-feminists to reassess their identity process without necessarily fully embracing a radical and or separatist ethic, creating space for an intersectional articulation of identity" (404). Calhoun claims that radical lesbians' reading of heterosexuality depends upon a feminist perspective; heterosexuality means patriarchy in their reading (572). She asserts that " Patriarchy can survive just as easily in a non-heterosexual society as it can in a non-capitalist society" (572). In the following part, her claims continue with butch-femme relationships; patriarchal relations can be in homosexuality. Homosexuals are born into a heterosexual society, and they can internalize patriarchal values and sexual roles. Butch-femme relationship in a philosophical state is a problem for, particularly radical lesbians. As they already declared a lesbian "woman-identified-woman", the masculinity-femininity relationship resembles a man-woman relationship for them. Yet, if masculinity is a product of patriarchy or belongs to men, how would femininity be explained without heterosexuality or patriarchy? Are both the products of patriarchy? From the 1970s to the 1990s, radical feminism and lesbianism were the major streams of gender studies. In the 1990s, with Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and J Jack Halberstam's *Female Masculinity* (1998), feminists and lesbians dealt with much more masculinity, femininity, and queerness at the end of the age.

1.2 Female Masculinity

Masculinity and femininity terms are the initial points of "female masculinity" to explain its concept. The terms "femininity", "feminine" and "femininities" are used to refer to characteristic traits or behaviours that are mostly attached biologically to females. What one is identified as feminine can vary in several ways. These are associated with the societal or cultural background of places. For example, a woman who is considered masculine in Europe can be seen as "feminine" in one of the Middle Eastern countries. How one is identified as feminine can vary in several ways. What makes someone feminine or more feminine is determined by the so-called standardization of the feminine body or fashion, or traits classified as behaviours or feelings. On the face of femininity, the terms "masculinity," "masculine," and "masculinities" are heavily researched in gender studies (Nyguen 198). While femininity indicates weakness or passiveness on female bodies, masculinity indicates power or activeness on male bodies. With the emergence of queer theory, these terms could finally be considered together; in other words, "femininity" and "masculinity" are blurred in opposing bodies.

In 1926, there was a song named *Masculine Women! Feminine Men!* by a British band (Savoy Havana Band), and its lyrics show the reactions to new styles at the beginning of the century. The first lines start with "Hey! Hey! Women are going mad today! […] Go anywhere just stand and stare You'll say they're bugs when you look at the clothes they wear ", so it indicates lesbianism was being visible, though gay men were already notorious for their femininity. The song continues with an amusing refrain; "Masculine Women, Feminine Men, which is the rooster, which is the hen? It's hard to tell 'em apart today. As in the song, women's wearing suits, smoking, playing billiards, and cutting their hair were called "manly," and the song criticizes this 'unpleasant' situation in a humorous way. This song's lyrics refer to how masculine and feminine traits were characteristically and psychically evaluated in the 20th century; they were attached to birth sexes. As physically, cutting short hair, being tall, wearing mannish styles, having sharp face lines, and having small breasts are associated with masculinity for women. And in the patriarchal order, they are expected to be in certain ways, such as men ought to be rational, leaders of the family, dominant figures in the relationship. On the other hand, women ought to be passive, sensitive, and submissive in the relationship. Therefore, in heteronormative society, man is

attached to masculinity and woman is attached to femininity, yet homosexual relationships reverse this concept; in gay relationships there could be two feminine men or in lesbian relationships there could be two masculine women. Due to sexologists' theories, masculinity in woman is associated with lesbianism, as mentioned before. Although most masculine women's sexual orientation could be lesbian, female masculinities do not exist only in "masculine lesbians" but also there are masculine women who identify their sexual orientations as bisexual, pansexual, or heterosexual. The early sexologists' theories about the stereotype of masculine lesbians had not vanished, but queer theory in the 1990s challenged the hegemonic gender and sexuality dichotomy. Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and Jack Halberstam's *Female Masculinity* (1998) are significant works for a new perspective on these binaries. Butler gives a radical discourse about masculinity and femininity; she claims that these concepts are social constructions. Halberstam theorises masculinity without males, especially white males (Female Masculinity 2) Nonetheless, the patriarchy's subordination of women and masculinity's relationship with the patriarchy had many feminists estranged from masculinity. It has come under attack of patriarchal values. It was opposed by feminist criticism, particularly radical feminism; the oppressor was masculine, male, and the oppressed was feminine, female. Athena Nguyen in *Patriarchy, Power, and Female Masculinity* (2008) analyses their relationship with each other and asserts that:

> While the development of more nuanced understandings of women's oppression have made some lesbian feminist analyses appear simplistic or outdated, value remains in arguments that have been put forward regarding the oppressive effects of masculinity upon women. Masculinity has been regarded as a sign, a reward, and an instrument of men's power (Gardiner, 2002), and as central to the maintenance of patriarchy and women's subordination. (667-8)

As Nguyen shows how masculinity is perceived in different feminist groups. This hostile approach to masculinity was often directed to masculine lesbians (Tong 1014). This debate is about whether or not masculine lesbians, also known as "butches," behave in a hetero patriarchal manner. Nguyen asserts that during the 20th century, butch women were abhorred for bringing undesirable masculinity into women's areas. Carrie Paetcher defends the idea of butchness allowing access to male privilege by rejecting classic forms of femininity (257). She points out stone butches and states that "[…] rejection of the feminine goes along with identification with boys, with the adoption of a form of hegemonic masculinity and a claiming of a share of male power

through acting as an honorary boy" (257). Therefore, butches and tomboys deny the disempowerment that comes along with feminine identity (Paetcher 258). It is not only masculine women who are accused of producing hetero patriarchal values. Also, femme lesbians who have relationships with butches are accused of imitating "hetero" women in their relationships. Butches are called "pseudo-man" and femmes are their wives. Halberstam agrees with Esther Newton's statement in *The Mythic Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman* (1984), Newton states "Masculinity often defines the stereotypical version of lesbianism […] the bull dyke, indeed, has made lesbianism visible and legible" (qtd. in Halberstam 119). Since masculinity has engaged in a significant role in lesbian history, rejecting "butchness" or "butches" seems unfair to masculine women.

In *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler argues that choosing a gender or "doing" a gender, male or female, feminine or masculine, is not necessarily related to "sex" by means of biology (1). By performing it, a gender can be masculine or feminine, male, or female. She underlines that performativity is not merely imitating certain roles but "producing" them; it is not "being" but "doing" it (33). Butler's theory dismantles binary oppositions in sexuality, which means that an escape route for those who are stuck in their bodies. In a heterosexual society, certain gender roles are linked to biological sexes. Butler, on the other hand, claims that gender is fluid; it transforms and can be dragged. There are some categories that define gender in homosexuality, but "queer" has become an umbrella term for all sexual orientations. Those who identify as "queer" do not feel obligated to label themselves in one of the categories. Labels such as lesbian, gay, pansexual, asexual, and so on, on the other hand, demonstrate plurality and diversity, and one may feel more confident knowing they are not alone or that there are others who feel the same way. There are two significant terms in the canon of contemporary homosexual culture for those who reveal or do not reveal their sexual orientation. Besides gender fluidity, "closeted" and "coming out" terms have been popular since queer theory's rise. To be "closeted" or "in the closet" has been used for those who do not reveal their sexual orientation due to many reasons, such as personal preference, society pressure, family, and so on. Coming out, on the other hand, has been applied to people who declare their sexual orientation in their social and professional lives. There is a process for those who are closeted, such as

first exploring themselves, then accepting their identity, and finally searching for others who are like them so they can find the LGTBIQ+ community, friends, or canon.

Jagose argues in *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (1997) that queer theory is not a movement that just theorized in the 1990s but that it had already begun before the 1990s (1). Yet, Judith Butler's ideas have become mainstream theory in gender studies (2). According to Jagose, queer theory is not a finished work or movement; rather, it is still evolving; an ongoing process (2). Jagose claims that the concept of gender in queer theory is an ongoing process. Gender is created by one's repeated gender performance. It is connected to the notion that the language patterns produce subject positions that you might represent in discourse (n. page). However, Butler's gender structure is non-verbal and psychical. Butler claims that there is no such thing as a stable gender:

> Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts. The effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self. This formulation moves the conception of gender off the ground of a substantial model of identity to one that requires a conception of gender as a constituted social temporality. (179)

As Butler asserts above, performativity means not a theatrical role but learnt imitations or "stylized repetitions." In our collective consciousness, those acts have been associated with our biological sex, even one's birth. Our room colours, our professions, our roles in relationships, our fashion, etc. have been decided for us or attached to us. However, Butler underlines how her performativity theory has been misunderstood. She refuses the reading of *Gender Trouble* as "consumerism" of genders and she states: "The bad reading is […] I can get up in the morning, look in my closet and decide which gender I want to be today. […] the understanding of taking on gender as a kind of consumerism." (qtd.in Kotz 83) What Butler asserts that repetitions do not mean as "freedom". We cannot escape from these repetitions that we have adopted for many decades.

In "The Lesbian Phallus and the Morphological Imaginary", Judith Butler intends to explicit lesbian phallus in post-structuralist scheme (*Bodies That Matter* 57-91). By using Lacanian terms, she subverts "phallus" on lesbian body to claim that if one can imagine lesbian phallus which means that it can be separated from male bodies

(Gardiner 588). At the start of the essay, she mockingly makes no promise to her readers that they will find a palpable theory, as phallus does not always offer in the same way (57). However, she enlightens the reader with Freudian and Lacanian readings. Admitting that reading "sexist" Freudian and Lacanian works could be seen as irrelevant to explicit lesbian theories, she assures us that without reading them, lesbian phallus cannot be understood (57). Gardiner points out Butler's aim:

> Her purpose, then, is to separate the phallus from the penis; that is, to detach the symbol of power from the male organ and so burst the bubble of an inviolable "masculine … imaginary." This rupture is immediately accomplished in the very imagining of the lesbian phallus. (589)

By imagining a phallus on a female body, Butler refutes a masculine discourse that is only associated with the male sexes. In lesbian feminism, the lesbian phallus is both a misogynist and a feminist discourse which Butler asserts that many lesbian theorists could see this as a "pathetic mimicry of man" (86). In Lacanian scheme, "having" produces masculinity in heterosexual in a symbolic way (57). Yet Butler dismantles this binary opposition between "having a phallus" and "being" a phallus. In such a discourse, in opposition to "having," which means holding power, stability, and rationality, femininity is a lack of "having," so it can be an object of "being" phallus (58). Instead of dismantling such a "sexist" discourse, Butler separates the phallus from the penis. She declares that the phallus is not power but an "idealization" of the male body. A male body that has a phallus pursues his object, which is a female one. Here there is a restrictive binary opposition. In homosexual relationships, a man can be objectified by a man, or a woman can pursue another woman. If the phallus means "power" in the Lacanian scheme, a lesbian or a gay can have the power to possess the other. On the other hand, there are some questions that should be asked: should there be a "necessary" phallus in order to show that lesbian sexuality is not phallogocentric? Or should there be a necessary symbolic power to name masculinity in lesbian sexuality? To Butler, using "sexist" theories or discourse is a necessary process to explain lesbian sexuality. Therefore, she analyses Freud's "*On Narcissism*" reading to deconstruct it.

Freud claims in "*Id and Ego*" that knowledge of self and body starts with a feeling "pain" (qtd. in Butler 57) . To Freud, any body part may become erotogenic, as the process based on real and "hypochondriacal pain (qtd. in Butler 60) However, in his previous books, he sets erotogenic zones merely in the genital zones, which

transmits erotogenic status to other body parts. Therefore, the penis is the centre of the body and other body parts in a sort of way serve it. To him, a phallus cannot be transported, it can only be imitated. Butler reminds us here that Freud uses only "penis" as a biological organ and makes it the centre of the body, but Lacan uses phallus as a philosophical state rather than biologically (89). Freud's pain and guilt connection to sexuality is not surprising in sexuality history; it produces more moralistic discourse. Furthermore, the Freudian phallogocentric scheme complicates the heterosexuality order; those with the phallus are afraid of losing it through castration. While under castration fear, they desire to have more phallic power. In this scheme, women who have no penis are the objects of phallic desire, and they have penis envy to possess the power. Butler turns back to the transferrable erotogenic parts in the body of Freud and claims that phallus is a transferable thing in an epidemiological process not based on biology. The phallus is just produced in a theoretical state and then it can be attributed to materiality.

Butler shows that binary oppositions are too restrictive. Such binary oppositions as "having" or "being" and "castration fear" or "penis envy" can occur in any biological sex (88). Heterosexual relationships may appear in lesbian relationships, yet it does not mean she wishes to possess a penis as a biological organ. She may wish to have it in an epistemological state (88-89). Imagining having "power" is not based on biology, hence she brings a new anatomy: a lesbian is a man and is not a man. She successfully reaches what she brings up at the start of the essay; there is no satisfying explanation at the end of her claim. She does not specifically use female masculinity as a term, but with the phallus theory she equalizes both biological sexes while defining it as a "failure".

Female Masculinity (1998) by Jack Halberstam is one of the main sources for specific usage of "female masculinity" and "female masculinities". Halberstam points out that sociologist Raewyn Connell (1987) first attempted to use female masculinities as plural form of it against the binary opposition of masculinity (Halberstam 7). There are female masculinity, lesbian masculinity, and female masculinities. Female masculinity does not represent specifically lesbian masculinity, yet lesbian masculinity represents female masculinity. It indicates that not every masculine woman is a lesbian. Therefore, female masculinity cannot be identified in one concept; there are unique masculinities in women. There are vernacular terms in lesbianism, such as

butch (masculine representing) and femme (feminine representing). Halberstam theorizes female masculinity upon butches, especially on stone butches, and on transgender men (144). The reason for choosing them is that butches are categorized into diverse groups and stone butches are in the ultimate masculine group and most transgender men experience stone butchness or butchness. Their masculinities are essential for his female masculinity theory, yet in the first chapter of her book she claims there is no definite answer to it but "a few proposals" (1). He claims that female masculinity is not simply the opposite of female femininity, nor is it a female version of male masculinity (29). To him, it is an "artwork", a performance and its outcome is much more than what has been predicted (Halberstam 29). Halberstam claims that there is no primary source of female masculinity before him, so his intention is to "validate" the diversity of masculine expressions in lesbian women and "theorizing masculinity without men" (2). He analyses androgynes, the tribade, female husbands, sexual inversions, stone butches, transgenders and drag kings in a historical and theoretical aspect.

Butches cannot be divided into certain categories because of their variety of masculine outlooks and masculinities. Some of them feel like men or hate men so much that they feel insulted by the question of whether they are men or women (Halberstam 120). Halberstam considers all the diversities of masculinity in women, she calls them "transgender butches" (as they transform gender), transsexuals (female to male transsexuals/ F2Ms), drag kings, and stone butches. Before evaluating their masculinities, he claims that masculinity in women, not only in queer people but also in heterosexual women, could be safe, allowing them to give them more freedom (268). Against the criticism of masculinity in feminist studies, Halberstam defends the idea that butch women transform and create their own masculinity. What we understand is that in the masculinity and femininity dichotomy, masculinity is perceived as the opposite of femininity. Halberstam suggests that if you take out "butch" beneath of butchness, there is a female body. This body is essential for butch women. Masculine women do not desire to be a man. On the contrary they are women who desire to be with another woman. The masculine lesbian body breaks the patriarchal dichotomy, it creates a new dichotomy. Yet there are also excessive masculine lesbians identified as "stone butches". Their masculinity blurs this new dichotomy. Stone in the "stone butches" refers to stability, non-performativity, while

Halberstam explains their sexuality, he uses "impenetrability", which could be a sign of denying their sexuality or preference (123). He explains the enigmatic stone butch's sexuality:

> The stone butch, as I will argue, is a dyke body placed somewhere on the boundary between female masculinity and trans gender subjectivity and seems to provoke unwarranted outrage not only from a gender-conformist society that cannot comprehend stone butch gender or stone butch desire but also from within the dyke subculture, where the stone butch tends to be read as frigid, dysphoric, misogynist, repressed, or simply pre-transsexual. (124)

Their dubious sexuality challenges lesbian sexuality, as they deny their sexuality by only being in the position of "giver". They make love with a femme lover but "not orgasm" with her lover. According to Halberstam, stone butches challenge Butler's "performativity" theory as it is based on gender and sexuality. One performs sexuality according to their gender. While stone butches help their lovers' performativity, they do not want to be touched. To Halberstam, stone butches' gender and sex fail to be matched as they represent the ultimate in female masculinity, but they also completely reject their femininity (126). At this point, Halberstam points out Butler's intriguing reference to stone butchness, Butler affirms that stone butches' self-sacrificing sexuality understanding and being only in the "giver" position and their "providingness" intertwines them "in the most ancient trap of feminine self-abnegation" (Halberstam 127).

Halberstam discusses how male impersonation has evolved into "drag king" (231-66). A male impersonator is a woman who acts a man on the stage. Its history is back to Shakespearian theatre (233). Drag king is much recently usage for women who "acting a man, not just on the stage but in the clubs, shows or on the Tv shows (233). Male impersonation is not being used anymore since women only took part on stage as "male" and women roles were acted by female impersonators till the 20th century. (233). Male impersonators acted only "immature, boyish" characters with their "pretty masculine" clothes or make up. To Halberstam, mature masculinity once remains "untouched"; it belongs to only adult male bodies (233). Some male impersonators take their "maleness" off the stage. And there were some examples not just male impersonators but writers such as Annie Hindley or Hall were publicly known by their cross-dressing. Not all male impersonators were possibly lesbian or female impersonators as gay men, queer of them used their masculine look to be noticed against feminine dressing. Therefore, cross-dressing has become a sign of

"homosexuality". In the second half of the century, drag culture developed in lesbian bars (235). According to Halberstam, drag queens who are biologically a male act like a woman with costume, attitude and make up culturally were popular more than drag kings. Halberstam gives many points of this reason. Drag queen or drag king is in fact a performance artist who mocks with "masculinity" or "femininity" by their shows. By doing it, they use many cultural notions such as cliché macho behaviour or body movements, an exaggerated feminine make-up and so-on. To Halberstam drag queens has much things to do with femininity; femininity enables them numerous possibilities such as glamorous make-ups, dresses and dances (238). On the other hand, masculinity gives the impression of stability, seriousness. Since the main of point of their shows is "imitating" gender roles or costumes in a humorous way, drag queens succeed it. Yet, drag kings could be understood as "too real" so the audience cannot separate their "acting" or mocking with masculinity (266). Halberstam criticises drag kings' performances:

> In the contests, we notice a lack of performativity within drag king presentations that can be attributed to the fact that dominant male masculinities tend to present themselves in the register of the real, eschewing the performative and the artificial. For this reason, the challenge of the drag king performance is to bring to light the artifice of dominant masculinity; this is often accomplished by highlighting the tricks and gadgets of the sexism on which male masculinity depends. (266)

Halberstam shares his own observations shows at bars. Instead of "highlighting the tricks and gadgets of the sexism", drag kings cannot bond the masculinity and maleness. Yet there are still drag king bars and shows which have been developing every year (Halberstam 266).

In conclusion, since masculinity and femininity historically and culturally have been attached to biological bodies, many homosexual people have been seen as abnormal for their genders. In heterosexual binarism, masculine lesbians who are noticed by their style, hair, or "unfeminine" behaviours have been accused of being imitators of men. This point of view has evolved since the beginning of the century. Once even lesbian women saw themselves as "abnormal" for being masculine, thanks to gender studies, many lesbian women could find more liberal fields to define their genders in the second half of the century. In chapters two and three, there are two examples from the 20th century that represent female masculinity. As we can see in chapter two, *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) represents what it meant to be a masculine

lesbian at the turn of the twentieth century. In chapter three, *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) represents a masculine lesbian whose masculinity is very close to today's understanding at the end of the century.

CHAPTER 2: *THE WELL OF LONELINESS*

2.1 The Life and Literary Career of Marguerite Antonia Radclyffe Hall

As a lesbian author Marguerite Antonia Radclyffe Hall's life is the subject of her works. She not only became newsworthy for being a lesbian, but her notorious life made her novels famous in public. Her lavish, flamboyant lifestyle was in the headlines. Adding to this, her virile style at parties with her female partners made more sensational news. Indeed, she was a debauched woman; it was newsworthy for journalists and for society. Her convoluted relationships, which can be traced in her novels and poems, were problematic. Yet they were the source of her art. Radclyffe Hall (1880-1943) was born in Bournemouth, United Kingdom. Her father, Radclyffe Hall (1846-98) was an affluent philanderer and an educated man, studied at Eton and Oxford. He did not work much throughout his life since he had been left an inheritance by his father, a former chancellor of *British Medical Association*. He left Hall and her mother while Hall was a baby. Young Hall's mother, Mary Jane Sager, remarried to a singing teacher, Alberto Antonio Visetti who was infamous for seducing his pupils. It is understood from Hall's writings that she hated both her mother and her stepfather; she refers to him as "my disgusting stepfather" in her writings. The reason for her hatred against her mother was mostly her lack of love. Therefore, young Hall had a challenging childhood and had to struggle with her mother's cruelties and with Visetti's sexual overtures.

Having lost her first baby and being left by her husband, Mary Jane became more depressed and hysterical after Hall's birth. Hall became an unwanted child during her first years of life and was neglected by her mother. She had difficulties with learning, reading, and writing because of her possible dyslexia condition, which had never been diagnosed or noticed. In fact, Mary Jane considered this pertness of her own, so her reaction was violent instead of taking care of her daughter. The only good memory from her childhood was of her grandmother. She says, "Without her, I think I must have died of sheer starvation of heart and spirit." (qtd, in Souhami 18). She had stayed multiple times with her; she was the only shelter for Hall. Mary Jane was hoping to have her ex-husband's heritage after his death. However, the heritage was left to the only child of her father, and this created another controversy between them. Hall had 100,000 Euros, which enabled her to have freedom and a wealthy life.

At twenty, Hall left her mother's house and settled in London. It is a fact that her mother played a significant role in her gender identity. Mary Jane was an ultra-feminine woman; her mindset was based on the traditional understanding of womanhood. Hall despised her femininity. Some critics question whether her masculinity stems from her mother's view of "weak" femininity or not. Once she had control of her heritage from her father, she started to live her gender more openly. She used John instead of her first name, "Marguerite". In fact, using a male name was a common trait of the lesbian community in the early twentieth century. She did not change only her name; her hair style and clothes were also changed in a masculine way. In her childhood, there were violent acts and sexually abusive moments, and her adult life was full of infidelity and lots of love dramas. She used her money to seduce women, such as by buying expensive jewellery or having luxurious holidays with them. She had a typical masculine role in her relationships; it was no surprise after her two father figures, one of whom was absent and the other one was adulterous (Edmunson 56).

Hall's romantic relationships are significant in order to comprehend *The Well*. Her romantic life heavily influenced her poems and stories. She devoted her many poems to her lovers. She had three long relationships, and all of them were with married women. Her first long relationship was with Jane Randolph, who was middle aged and from Washington. Randolph was sailing to England because of her husband's business. When she returned to the States, her husband died, and Hall went to visit her. She brought her and her children to England to live with her grandmother. While visiting the States, she had another affair with Dolly Diehl, who was Randolph's cousin. Hall devoted her many poems to Dolly. In the *Twixt Earth and Stars* (1906) collection, there are many poems with sexual and sadistic themes devoted to Dolly. In the summer of 1906, Dolly and Hall went to a tennis tournament for their friend, Troupie Lowther, whom Hall called "brother." In the hotel they were all staying in, they met Mabel Veronica Batten, who was a fifty-year old colonial expatriate. They continued to see each other after the tournament, and Batten edited Hall's poems, corrected spellings, and offered some advice. They became lovers, and Batten had a significant role in Hall's writing career. She encouraged her to write and, thanks to their stable relationship for a long time, Hall could focus on her writing career.

Batten called her John and convinced her to convert to Catholicism. Although the Catholic Church condemned homosexuality, Souhami states: "They considered themselves blessed and respectable. They were royalists, patriots, Conservatives, Christians, with allegiance to country, God and class." (183). These contradictions exist in *The Well*, as well. Hall's protagonist, Stephen, who is religious and a patriot, tries to be a good Christian. During their relationship, she published *Poems of the Past and Present* in 1910, and after her grandmother died, another collection, *Songs of Three Countries* (1913), was published. Hall had become a well-known figure in the public, they had a group of other lesbian friends. Thanks to their economic status, they could go to places in which only women could gather and meet. Yet the age gap between the two lovers showed itself. Mabel Batten became elderly with some health conditions. Hall was in her thirties and had changed her attitude towards Mabel. She had an affair during her relationship, though she did not hide this from Mabel, she had lots of guilty feelings. Although she bought her many expensive gifts and jewellery, as understood from Batten's diary, she could not forget her betrayal (Souhami 83). With the outbreak of the First World War, they moved to Malvern. Because of her gender, she could not attend the war as a soldier, so she helped in other ways. They had a different life in Malvern than in London. This must have affected Hall since she was approached to write prose. She started to write short stories and novels. Batten read her short stories to guests at a café. Her stories were about heroism and religion. As Souhami quotes Hall that: "'I always write about misfits'," Radclyffe Hall said, the inference being that she always wrote about herself." (238). Her characters, such as Stephen Gordon, have chivalric attitudes and profound religious thoughts.

Hall's short stories were all rejected by publishers. In 1915, Hall met Batten's cousin, Una Troubridge. This meeting was the end of Mabel and John's relationship. Troubridge was the unhappy wife of a naval officer who was much older than her and an old-fashioned man. While he was abroad, Troubridge spent her time in London instead of being with him. She had a daughter whom she did not desire to have. She needed her husband only for economic reasons. When Hall flirted with her, she was aware that she could do many things as she desired to do. Batten wrote in her diaries about them and knew that they were together, yet she did not leave John. In 1916, her health condition was getting worse and during one of the arguments with John, she had a stroke and died after this incident. At the same time, Una's husband came back

from London and asked his wife about her relationship with Hall. Troubridge told him everything, but they could not get divorced since, in Catholic belief, divorce was not an option; consequently, they remained married but lived separately. Finally, Hall and Troubridge had no obstacle to being free to live their relationship, yet their remorse over Batten's death haunted them. John was feeling guilty about her death, and Troubridge felt that she had betrayed her cousin. Interestingly, they consulted a medium, who was advised by the president of the Society for Psychical Research. They tried to solve this problem inside of them. They reached Batten's soul during the meetings, and between 1916 and 1920, they documented information about the meetings. Finally, they found peace and left behind their grief. Hall and Troubridge tried to publish their documents about medium sessions, and they published their two-hundred-page essay in the journal. Some of the critics were disgusted by the story of homosexuality and criticized Hall. After news was spread about Hall that she was a lesbian and a seducer of married women, St George Lane Fox Pitt consulted the council of society and accused her of being immoral. However, Hall was not afraid and was not silent about this. Being wealthy again helped her to win this case. After this case, she was known as a lesbian in society. Una and she connected with each other more, and Hall started to write her life as a novel. As discussed in chapter one, Hall accepted Krafft- Ebing and Havelock Ellis' sexual inversion theory which is linked with masculinity and argues that homosexuality is a congenital but an "abnormal passion". Halberstam states that Hall's approach to inversion theory:

> That *The Well of Loneliness* closely resembles Havelock Ellis's model of female inversion should come as no surprise, for John [Hall] had read Ellis and was quite influenced and convinced by his thinking. But before we attribute enormous power of definition to the medical discourse, we must remember and note well the actual discrepancy between John's life and her fiction. Her life, as critics have noted, was far from lonely and isolated, and she and Una knew many other masculine women as well as many other same-sex couples. (96)

Her first novel is *Octopi,* retitled by Una Troubridge and published as *The Unlit Lamp* (1924). It is about a lesbian woman whose manipulative mother denies her daughter. The mother-daughter relationship, which resembles Hall's mother and her, is the centre of the novel. According to Newton, Hall's real lesbian novel that ought to have been praised is *The Unlit Lamp* (559). *The Well* is an unfortunate novel for lesbians, according to Newton and other critics, who think that it is not a lesbian novel

but full of myths of being lesbian that are theorized by men. In 1928, *The Well of Loneliness* would be published, and *The Unlit Lamp* would not reach the popularity of *The Well*'s. However, *The Unlit Lamp,* like *The Well,* has lesbian themes, sexual moments, and comments. Souhami briefly analyses *The Unlit Lamp* and points out Hall's life; "... the strength of the book was that it was about herself, her precarious identity, her black view of mothers, her alienation from men, her desire to find a compensatory replacement for Mrs. Visetti, whom she loathed." (420).

Hall and Troubridge moved closer to London, they wished to be with their lesbian friends. Their friends, such as Toupie Lowther, Gabrielle Enthoven, Ida Wylie, May Sinclair, Romaine Brooks, and Natalie Barney, were queer, and they were economically strong and independent women. Some of them supported feminism, the suffragette movement, and modernism, while Hall was not interested in feminism or modernism. She was very conservative and had Catholic virtues. In her novels, she prefers traditional structure to the fragmental way that most of her time's authors wrote, called it modernist technique. After *The Unlit Lamp* was published after its rejection of publication, she wrote *The Forge* in the same year and, with *Adam's Breed* in 1926, won the Femina Prize. Although these books had lesbian themes, they only received good reviews. On the contrary, *The Well of Loneliness*, called the Bible of lesbianism (caused a scandal in British society as well as abroad. After her previous novels and prize, Hall gained more confidence, and she thought that God's plan for her was to write her own identity "being congenital invert". She writes about her duty to write:

> I knew that I was running the risk of injuring my career as a writer by rousing up a storm of antagonism; but I was prepared to face this possibility because, being myself a congenital invert, I understood the subject from the inside as well as from medical and psychological textbooks. I felt therefore that no one was better qualified to write the subject in fiction than an experienced novelist like myself who was actually one of the people about whom she was writing and was thus in a position to understand their spiritual, mental, and physical reactions, their joys, and their sorrows, and above all their unceasing battle against a frequently cruel and nearly always thoughtless and ignorant world. (Souhami 527)

The Well of Loneliness, first titled as *Stephen*, is about a sexual invert's life from her childhood to her adult life. In spite of its queer theme, it is a bildungsroman written in the traditional sense. Hall claimed that the book is not relevant to her life but only Stephen's psychological state resembles hers. However, the places, the friends, parental crisis, and love affairs are familiar features in Hall's life. In the novel, the

places such as London, Paris, and even the Spanish islands that Stephen visits are the cities that Hall lived in with her partners. Her friends, Noel Coward and Natalie Barney's, representations are in *The Well* also. Stephen Gordon's strong Catholic beliefs and motherhood issues are also similar to Hall's. Hall was a fan of Havelock Ellis, so she asked him to write a preface for *The Well*, which he agreed to do because his theories about female homosexuality corresponded with the protagonist's.

The Well's publisher, Jonathan Cape, was aware of the risks of publishing such a lesbian story, but he also foresaw how the sales would be high after this sensational book. It had never been done before, so he accepted to publish it. *The Well* was published on July 27th, 1928. Over the next four weeks, the book received both positive and critical reviews. On August 19th, the editor of the Sunday Express, published a page-long analysis of the book, and the editor underlined its immorality with a large headline; "A BOOK THAT MUST BE SUPPRESSED" (Souhami 623). Cape predicted the outcome of any trial against the book, so he sent its copies to France and later to the USA. The publisher was right to do it so; on November 9th, 1928, the trial was started by Sir Charles Biron, presiding magistrate. He demanded from the court to execute the Obscene Publications Act of 1857, to which Oscar Wilde was sentenced by law. Although this law includes only male homosexuality, it was constituted against *The Well*, and on November 16th, all copies of the book were ordered to be destroyed. It would be banned in England until 1949. Hall was deeply affected by the trial, so she left London and settled in Paris. She opened another trial against the court, and while waiting for the results, *The Well*'s sales were rising in the USA. Till Hall's death, it sold over 100,000 copies, which was a great number for raising awareness of female homosexuality. Radclyffe Hall never wrote about lesbianism again. And she died due to her worse health conditions in 1943 in London.

2.2 The *Well of Loneliness* and Female Masculinity Theory

It is worth noting that Hall's first novel, *The Unlit Lamp* (1923), is hailed as her "definitive lesbian" novel (Newton 559), whereas her second novel, *The Well*, divides critics into many discussions. Many critics such as Blanche Wiesen, Wiesen Cook, Lillian Faderman, and Catherine R. Stimpson analyse *The Well* that it is not "completely" a lesbian book, even an "unfortunate" book for lesbians, as they perceive Stephen Gordon's masculinity too much for lesbians (qtd. in Newton, 559). On the

other hand, Esther Newton, Sonja Ruehl, and Gillian Whitlock address it as a "vital" work for lesbianism with all its missing points. Newton addresses Stephen as "the most infamous mannish lesbian" (559), she stresses that she is created not by a male but "by Hall, herself an out and militantly tie wearing lesbian" (559). Although Newton's claims that Stephen is a product of a subject of lesbianism, Stimpson states that; "Hall projects homosexuality as a sickness" (368). Newton also accepts the novel's drawbacks, such as her point that "looking like a man contradicts lesbian feminism's first principle: the lesbian is a woman-identified-woman" (557). However, this is a radical-lesbian discourse, and it has changed and been evolving in contemporary gender studies. As Newton points out, *The Well* was accepted as a lesbian novel till the 1970s, when its lesbian theme became a subject of debate. Besides the question of whether it is a lesbian novel or not, Wiesen, as an anti-Well, confesses that; "So most of us lesbians in the 1950s grew up knowing nothing about lesbianism except Stephen Gordon's swagger" (719). Among all these debates, I will analyse Stephen Gordon's sexuality in Halberstam's female masculinity theory. Halberstam claims Stephen's masculinity is based on her female body rather than a deviation from male masculinity. Halberstam claims:

> I want to argue that Stephen represents something more than the "mannish lesbian: she embodies a sexual and gender identity that is not fully contained by the term "lesbian," and hence we must examine the characteristics of inversion and take seriously Hall's representation of female masculinity as part of an ongoing transformation of gender binarism. (97)

Stephen Gordon's sexuality is illustrated as being based on inversion theory. Even before her birth, the expectation of a "boy" child by her parents is a symbol of her possible congenital masculinity. As discussed in chapter one, in *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) Krafft-Ebing examines real "perverse" cases and creates a medical discourse on his observations of inverted cases. He claims that female homosexuality is an imitation of heterosexuality (503). A sexual invert transforms her femininity into masculinity (503). Havelock Ellis agrees with Krafft-Ebing that inversion is a "congenital" feeling. Yet unlike Krafft-Ebing's natural approach to inversion, he condemns inversion as referring to "abnormal passion" (*Sexual Inversion* 121). The omniscient narrator gives some references indicating that Stephen's masculinity resembles the cases of sexologists such as Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis.

Stephen Gordon is born into an upper-class family as an inverted person who struggles with the drawbacks of society. After 10 years of childless marriage, Sir Philip and Lady Anna Gordon expect a child. Sir Philip has already plans for the baby, he chooses Stephen's name after his favourite saint. When Stephen is born, as a girl, not the boy that the couple are dreaming of having, they do not change her name. She has a joyful childhood with the advantages of being born into an upper-class family. She has her maids, tutors, riding horses, wrestling with her father, and her father's library. Thanks to her father, she is treated as an equal to boys. She never fits with her girly-girl friends, but she gets along with her masculine boys. Her mother never disapproves of her daughter's masculine behaviour, and throughout the novel, she rejects showing intimacy toward her daughter. Her first love is one of her maids, Collins. She dramatically falls in love with her, but when she sees her with another man while kissing, she becomes depressed. Her father realizes his daughter's feelings; therefore, he dismisses Collins. She feels her father's support and his understanding, but Sir Philips passes away. She has been left an inheritance and her father's library. Her first serious love is their next-door neighbour, a married American woman, Angela Crosby. Although Stephen thinks of her as innocent, she appears to be a bored housewife who is willing to flirt with Stephen as she is curious about her queer gender. Stephen finds out that Angela has another affair, and she writes a letter to her about her feelings. Angela's husband hands the letter to Lady Anna, and this causes more dispute between mother and daughter. Stephen leaves Morton and moves to London. She becomes a successful writer with her governess, Puddle's support. In Paris, she experiences being alone and having freedom but when World War 1 breaks out; she moves back to London to serve in the army. While serving as an ambulance driver at war, she meets her romantic love, Mary Llewellyn. They start a relationship after the war ends. The couple goes to Paris, and they have a lesbian couple friends, Barbara and Jamie. When Barbara dies of illness, Jamie deeply falls into depression and commits suicide, this incident affects Mary and Stephen. The social pressure of living as lesbians and their friends' death makes them more pessimistic about the future. A male friend of Stephen's falls in love with Mary. While Mary chooses Stephen over Martin, Stephen tells Mary that she has another affair. The reason for this lie is Stephen's belief that this lesbian love will make Mary unhappy, so she sacrifices her love. Mary is frustrated with Stephen, so she chooses to go with Martin. At the end of the novel, Stephen is anguished and suffers from her loneliness.

Stephen Gordon was born in such an idealistic place and house. Lady Anna Gordon and Sir Philips Gordon are described as ideal parents; Anna is described as "[…] – the archetype of the very perfect woman, whom creating God has found good" (3). And Sir Philips is a tall, intellectual, sensitive, loving, and tolerant man (4). They have been married for ten years and have no children, but finally they are expecting a child, hopefully a "boy". When Stephen becomes seven, her physical features appear to her mother not as beautiful but as "handsome" (8). It is clearly seen in later chapters that since Stephen's birth, Anna tries to force herself to love her daughter. Although she manages to do it from time to time, she reveals her cruel inner thoughts about her queer identity. After young Stephen's first love, Anna and Sir Philip's attitude towards Stephen changed in different ways. In her childhood, Stephen's first love is Collins, who is a housemaid at their house. She dramatically loves her; on the contrary, Collins is first amused with Stephen's boyish desires as she talks with another housemaid, she says;

> Mrs. Wilson! Doesn't Miss Stephen look exactly like a boy? I believe she must be a boy with them shoulders, and them funny gawky legs she's got on her!' And Stephen would say gravely: 'Yes, of course I'm a boy. I'm young Nelson, and I'm saying: "What is fear?" you know, Collins--I must be a boy, 'cause I feel exactly like one, I feel like young Nelson in the picture upstairs.' (Hall 12)

Stephen's desire to be a man first appears with her love for Collins. While walking with her father, Stephen asks him; "Do you think that I could be a man, supposing I thought very hard- or prayed, Father?" (19). She wants to be like "Nelson," who is a fictional character and a superhero. Hence, it illustrates that Stephen has a masculine mind. Her sexuality is awakened by Collins. Once Collins holds her hands and complains her "very dirty nails" (Hall 12). Heike Bauer argues this scene as:

> The moment of touch signals the emergence of Stephen's sexuality and the potential of her hitherto unnoticed sexual body, specifically her hands as sexual markers. The gesture appears nonthreatening and spontaneous, thus again emphasising the 'naturalness' of desire. The 'very dirty nails' suggest Stephen's masculine appearance, which is noticeable to others, such as in this case the housemaid, who disapproves of it and makes the child self-conscious. (28)

Bauer discusses that Stephen's mind and also body are associated with masculinity (23). Stephen's hands become a significant reminder of her sexuality. Collins' image takes over Stephen's dreams and sexual fantasies (Bauer 28). According to Bauer,

Stephen's masturbation is similar to Krafft-Ebing's notion that sexual inversion "is often accompanied by early acts of masturbation" (qtd.in Bauer 28). It also indicates that sexologists' theories about the natural development sexuality in childhood. Stephen is not aware of her approach to Collins but as an adult, Collins is fully aware of sexuality. She feels something wrong with the child and almost irritated by Stephen's attention. Following the days, Collins gets hurt by her knees and Stephen constantly prays to Jesus to heal Collins' knees or wants to feel the same pain in her. The narrator describes Stephen's dream as being a saviour for her; "[…] to dream that in some queer way she was Jesus, and that Collins was kneeling and kissing her hand, because she, Stephen, had managed to cure her." (14) When she sees Collins' kissing a man, she experiences her first betrayal. While Stephen cries over Collins' betrayal on her father's shoulder, Sir Philip comforts her; "I'm going to treat you like a boy, and a boy must always be brave, remember." I'm not going to pretend as though you were a coward; why should I when I know that you're brave? " (22) Later, we learn that he has the sexologists' books in his library and keeps them to show Stephen when she is old enough. He has been analysing her daughter's behaviour and gender. Sir Philip is always a comfort zone for Stephen; he is now sure that his daughter is a true invert after Collins' incident, and he decides to treat Stephen as sexologists proposed. She is not "unnatural", her invert derives from her birth, by God.

At seventeen, Stephen is nearly as tall as her father; she begins to question her body and her face. Her mother is her beauty standard; Anna is always described as an idealistic beautiful woman. Stephen cannot find "beauty" in her mirror reflection. She already feels deprived of her mother's love and now, her physical appearance is another obstacle to gaining her mother's sympathy. Therefore, she is trapped in between her mother's beauty standard and her father's expectation of a son. Stephen was born "narrow-hipped" and "wide-shouldered" (4), now she is as tall as her father. Already lacking femininity, she seems to be a parody of him. When Stephen feels the real social stigma of her unusual gender, she loses her father. While she needs an explanation, Sir Philip dies without explaining the "invert" theory to her. In fact, Sir Philip's silence creates a "dark shadow" (94) in the Gordon's house. His silence resembles the same silence about lesbianism in British history. As discussed in chapter one, lesbians were perceived as non-existent, so they were not even punished by law. Therefore, Sir Philip's silence is no different than the "tyranny of silence" (123). He

already has medical discourse and definitions, instead of protecting Anna and Stephen, he prefers to be quiet. He sometimes tries to tell Anna but “stands there tongue-tied” (113). Meanwhile, Stephen knows that there is something different about her, but she cannot name her feelings. She does not have the right words to describe herself. While she goes out, she “would fancy people were laughing at her” (75). The social pressure always follows her whenever she goes out with her boyish clothes or hairstyle. For instance, one of her mother’s friends says:

> It's a terrible pity you dress as you do, my dear,' she remarked, with the manner of sixty, 'a young girl's so much more attractive when she's soft--don't you think you could soften your clothes just a little? I mean you do want to get married, don't you! No woman's complete until she is married. After all, no woman can really stand alone, she always needs a man to protect her.' (188)

The social stigma is that if you are not a feminine woman to be admired by men, you are not a “real” woman. Although Stephen answers this woman, “I'm all right--getting on nicely, thank you!'” (188), she falls into depression and gets anxiety about her body. Competing with her mother’s beauty standards and society’s understanding of women, Stephen’s wish to be a boy is a subject of both gender studies and psychology. It will be discussed in detail in the next part. While Stephen is confused about her identity, she asks her father; “Is there anything strange about me, Father?” (110). There is a chance to tell her the truth, but Sir Philip’s major fault could be that moment since he answers;

> My dear, don't be foolish, there's nothing strange about you, some day you may meet a man you can love. And supposing you don't, well, what of it, Stephen? Marriage isn't the only career for a woman. I've been thinking about your writing just lately, and I'm going to let you go up to Oxford; but meanwhile you mustn't get foolish fancies, that won't do at all--it's not like you, Stephen. (110)

He terribly lies to her and, a short time later, he passes away. Sir Philip has always supported her education as he deeply knows that the society will condemn and leave her alone, she will need the books. He tells her; “No friends in the world like books” (4). When he dies, besides his legacy, he leaves his library to Stephen, which will be significant as she will find hidden books about the congenital inversion. Before discovering her identity, she experiences her first serious love with a married American woman; Angela Crossby. After mourning her father over one year, now she is twenty-one, rich and young, Stephen meets Angela while she is defending her dog’s life. She seems to be “desperate” and “young” (138) at first, and Stephen feels close to her.

Angela has a profound influence on Stephen's gender. Even though she cannot name her feelings fully in her inner world, Angela's femininity gives her a heteronormative masculine role in their relationship. Since Angela is not an invert but a heterosexual, she expects the same roles that she has with her husband, Ralph. However, whenever Stephen offers her to leave her husband and live with her, as being a typical heterosexual woman who experiences a relationship with a woman for the first time, she reminds Stephen that she is not a real man. At the beginning, described as "innocent", Angela turns out to be a deceitful character. She is a bored housewife who wants to have affairs, Stephen's queer identity takes her curiosity. In other words, she plays with Stephen's queer heart for a while. On the other hand, Stephen, who is still naïve and vulnerable to love, believes that she is completed by her. She tells her:

> Stephen answered slowly: 'I'm frightened now--I'm frightened of you.'
>
> [Angela:] 'Yet you're stronger than I am--'
>
> Yes, that's why I'm so frightened, you make me feel strong--do you want to do that?'
>
> Well--perhaps--you're so very unusual, Stephen.'
>
> 'Am I?'
>
> 'Of course, don't you know that you are? Why, you're altogether different from other people. (153)

Their relationship begins with Angela's "acceptance" of Stephen's identity. However, they have a toxic and one-sided love relationship. Angela tells Stephen that she has a marriage because of economic reasons rather than love, Stephen offers to take care of her and she can leave her husband. Stephen plays the archetypal saviour role as a heterosexual man. Nonetheless, Angela already has two male figures in her life; one is her husband, who saved her life in America while she was desperate. The other one is her lover, Roger, who was a bully in Stephen's childhood. While Angela and her husband travel to Scotland, Stephen hears some gossip about Roger and Angela. She cannot believe this relationship is over and is desperate for her lover to return. One day, she follows Angela and waits to see them together. She is betrayed and devastated, but she still wants Angela. Or maybe she wants to win against heterosexual men right now. She threatens her by saying their relationship to Ralph, Angela firmly responds to her;

> 'You're raving mad. Tell him what? Have I let you become my lover? You know that I've always been faithful to Ralph; you know perfectly well that there's nothing to tell him, beyond a few rather schoolgirlish kisses. Can I help it if you're--what you obviously are? Oh, no, my dear, you're not going to tell

> Ralph. […] Ralph's not much of a man, but he's better than nothing, and I've managed him so far without any trouble. […] I won't have you interfering in my home.' (160)

Angela's brutal response crushes Stephen, her voice echoes in her head. The heterosexual woman does not find their relationship serious and describes it as "schoolgirlish kisses". Angela's betrayal makes Stephen realize that whatever she does with her short hair, manly clothes, or behaviour, she is not a man and will not be a man. While in the absence of her father, Miss Puddle gives her consolation. She says, "'You're neither unnatural, nor abominable, nor mad; you're as much a part of what people call nature as anyone else; only you're unexplained as yet" (165). Miss Puddle is also aware of Stephen's inversion and keeps quiet. She desperately writes a letter to Angela to come back; it has only repeated words that Stephen declares her love again and again. Angela hands the letter to Ralph and claims that she cannot handle it. She blames Stephen. Ralph's letter to Anna is a warning to her daughter not to visit their home again. This creates a fierce bond between mother and daughter. Although after Sir Philip's death, Anna seems to be very tolerant; she loses all sympathy towards Stephen after Ralph's letter. Their conversation could be the climactic moment for Stephen. Anna brutally admits her inner thoughts about her daughter;

> All your life I've felt very strangely towards you', she was saying, 'I've felt a kind of physical repulsion, a desire not to touch or to be touched by you--a terrible thing for a mother to feel--it has often made me deeply unhappy. I've often felt that I was being unjust, unnatural--but now I know that my instinct was right; it is you who are unnatural, not I..."Mother--stop!' (218)

Anna ironically accuses Stephen of being "unnatural," though Stephen has been the same since her birth. She continues with these lines such as; "[…] – against nature, against God who created nature" (219). She repulses by her resemblance to her husband. She says; "Above all, this thing is a sin against the father who bred you, the father whom you dare to resemble." You dare to look like your father […]" (218). The patriarchal parents fail to protect Stephen. In patriarchy, the mother loves her children unconditionally and the father protects his children no matter what happens. Nevertheless, Sir Philip fails to protect Stephen by not telling the truth about her and Anna fails to love Stephen, as she does not want to hate Stephen. She offers to leave Morton. Before she leaves, she goes to her father's library and finds the hidden book by Krafft-Ebing's *Sexualis.* Stephen feels that she is also betrayed by her father. She talks to herself as if he is there:

> 'You knew! All the time you knew this thing, but because of your pity you wouldn't tell me. Oh, Father--and there are so many of us--thousands of miserable, unwanted people, who have no right to love, no right to compassion because they're maimed, hideously maimed and ugly-God's cruel; He let us get flawed in the making.' (223)

She now has the words that describe her, but as discussed in the chapter one, the sexologists' problematic language passes on her. Since they offer that inversion is from God, but at the same time, it is a sinful and abnormal act. Stephen reads her father's old Bible, and the chapter ends with Cain's story. She now feels like a sinner who is marked like a Cain. As a woman "marked" by God, her real journey begins with moving to London.

In London, Stephen Gordon writes a novel that achieves considerable success. Her father's death, cheated by her first love, and her mother's refusing her in Morton, drag Stephen into alienation. It is no surprise that she begins to write. In addition to all these, her being between femaleness and maleness makes her more pessimistic and queerer. She now has the language of her identity; she knows what it means to be "invert" thanks to sexology; but how does knowing what it means to be invert help her? She does not seem relieved by the explanation; even more, the Cain story and normalities or abnormalities in nature linger in her thoughts. After living a few years in London and losing her horse, Stephen decides to travel to Paris at her gay friend's suggestion. The narrator portrays Jonathan Brockett as a stereotypically feminine gay man who is talkative, quick-tempered, and melodramatic and who is the only friend of Stephen in London. As Brockett eagerly introduces a new place where their inversion will not be seen as deviant, Paris seems to be a new beginning for Stephen. Although she does not want to leave England, Stephen is pleased after their visit to Paris, so she settles down to "her new life in Paris" (251). After meeting Valerie Seymour, who runs a salon for inverts like her, Stephen has now made a circle of invert friends. In the salon, where are artists, writers, expatriates, and outcasts, Stephen finds the energy and confidence to write her second book. A while later, the First World War breaks out, and she returns to her homeland to attend to the army. Although she desires to be a soldier like other patriot men, her womanhood does not let her be a soldier, so she becomes an ambulance driver. Her patriotic and religious thoughts reflect those of the time's British heterosexual men. Also, her masculinity is no different than heterosexual men's. Stephen's butch masculinity appears after her relationship with Mary Llewellyn, whom she meets at war while serving as an ambulance driver.

Stephen's loneliness seems to disappear with love. The omniscient narrator describes these moments as love conquers all feelings of being outcast. However, Stephen's happiness turns into a prison for Mary as her masculinity transforms into a toxic kind. Brockett warns Stephen that their relationship is kind of "as bad as marriage" (380) since Mary is isolated by Stephen. He suggests her to take Mary to Valerie Seymour's place to feel, at least, "so-called normal" (381). Although Stephen's butchness has always been visible since her childhood, she has had a femme lover. Their butch/femme relationships blur Stephen's gender more. Before their butch/ femme relationship dynamic, Stephen's ambiguous gender should be taken into consideration.

The narrator describes her inner thoughts after she sees her reflection in the mirror. The mirror scene could be one of the most significant hints to the reader to comprehend the reason for her gender dysmorphia and her relationship with masculinity.

> That night she stared at herself in the glass; and even as she did so she hated her body with its muscular shoulders, its small compact breasts, and its slender flanks of an athlete. All her life she must drag this body of hers like a monstrous fetter imposed on her spirit. This strangely ardent yet sterile body that must worship yet never be worshipped in return by the creature of its adoration. She longed to maim it, for it made her feel cruel; it was so white, so strong and so self-sufficient; yet withal so poor and unhappy a thing that her eyes filled with tears and her hate turned to pity. She began to grieve over it, touching her breasts with pitiful fingers, stroking her shoulders, letting her hands slip along her straight thighs--Oh, poor and most desolate body! (202)

Stephen's hands wander around her body as she views herself as a fault of nature; there is "nothing to see" (348). Her body and mind do not match each other. The disconnection between her mind and body makes her hate herself. The reason for this hatred is ambiguous. Does she hate her body for not having a feminine body, such an idealistic body that her mother has, or does she hate her body for not having a male body like her father? The questions seem to have similar meanings, but the right emphasis on these questions is significant to evaluating her gender. Even though she claims that she needs to be a man at the beginning of the novel, which is why many critics claim that this text is a transgender text. In the mirror, she disconnects with her masculine features, such as "muscular shoulders." She does not have a fruitful or productive body, so Esther Newton praises her as "the mythic mannish lesbian" who desires to have a feminine body like her mother, but she cannot have that, so she loves feminine bodies. This paradox about whether the feminine body that she desires to be or to have could be explained by her feeling of failure in her womanhood. According

to Halberstam, the narrator's comment about the "strangely ardent yet sterile body that must worship" for Stephen's body shows that her masculinity negotiates her female body (101). Her fruitful body is strong and "sufficient," yet "never be worshipped in return by the creature of its adoration." Stephen is stuck with her "queer" body and feels an outsider among feminine women. It is very significant statement to object those who argue that Stephen is a transexual (Halberstam 101). Since transexual criticism is mainly associated with the narrator's those sentences: "She began to grieve over it, touching her breasts with pitiful fingers, stroking her shoulders, letting her hands slip along her straight thighs--Oh, poor and most desolate body!", Halberstam criticises the argument that implying Stephen's hands down found nothing, such as a "penis" therefore she is unhappy with her female body (102). To Halberstam, it indicates that Stephen's stuck in between being a female and having masculine body (102).

In the first chapters, there are mirror scenes, and she talks to herself; "Am I queer looking or not? ", she wonders, "Suppose I wore my hair more like Mother's? ", and then she would undo her splendid thick hair [...]" (73). Then she states: "It's my face [...], something's wrong with my face" (73). So she is disappointed with herself for not having feminine features. She compares her womanhood to that of Anna, Collins, Angela, and Mary, all feminine characters, and she compares her womanhood to their femininity; hence, she feels she failed to complete her womanhood. Halberstam argues De Lauretis' theory about Stephen's Freudian reading. De Lauretis claims that Stephen desires to have her mother, but Hall could not find the courage to write this, so Collins, Stephen's first love, reflects her mother, Lady Anna. In her chivalric love, she loves feminine women like her mother, Collins, and Angela, in return, she has only betrayals; she can never be loved. De Lauretis also analyses Stephen's mirror scene as her desire to be feminine rather than being a man. Halberstam refutes the ideas about Stephen's lesbian love derives from her lack of femininity by arguing over De Lauretis' claims. De Lauretis theorises lesbian masculinity upon a negative reading of Freudian and Lacanian theory. De Lauretis claims that Stephen, without a phallus, experiences an Oedipus complex. In Lacan's reading, the penis, which is associated with "power", is defined in broad terms as "phallus". The phallus means the signifier of desire; without castration fear of the phallus, one cannot stir the phallus as a means of "desire". Freud asserts that a woman who does not have a penis cannot feel "desire".

They could only be in a “desired” position. As it comes to lesbian women, he attaches masculinity to inverts as the only explanation for their passion for each other. In other words, a lesbian is a woman who wants to be a man to possess another woman. Although de Lauretis claims that Freudian theory ought to be “retooled” for lesbian theory, Halberstam criticises her for “recuperating” what Freud and other sexologists proposed (109). According to de Lauretis, a masculine lesbian experiences a “fantasy-phallus” to have her lover, which she exemplifies over Stephen (93). She states about Stephen’s body that:

> Because it is not feminine, this body is inadequate as the object of desire, to be desired by the other, and thus inadequate to signify the female subject's desire in its feminine mode; however, because it is masculine but not male, it is also inadequate to signify or bear the subject's desire in the masculine mode. (90)

To De Lauretis, Stephen’s body becomes insufficient to be desired by other women, since her lack of phallus. She only fantasies to be like her mother or to possess her mother hereby she cannot do neither of them, she hates her body and herself (89-91). Because of understanding that she cannot be a feminine woman, she fantasies to be a man or to look like a man. With her clothes, hair, her scar-face, these become her fantasy- phallus features (97). Her feminine lovers, such as Angela is attracted to her “lure of pyjamas” or Mary is attracted to her scar on her face (97). So, eroticism towards masculine lesbians is not because of a penis since their lovers are fully aware that they are women. De Lauretis seeks this eroticism's foundation. So, eroticism towards masculine lesbians is not because of a penis since their lovers are fully aware that they are women. De Lauretis seeks this eroticism's foundation and finds in masculine lesbian’s “appearance, performance, clothing, costume” (95). Halberstam draws attention to the significance of evaluating female masculinity that ought to be out of binary oppositions. That is why she criticizes de Lauretis’ “phantasy-phallus” theory, Lauretis evaluates Stephen as having “lack of femininity and seek her femininity in women bodies” (Halberstam 102). Even it is “retooling psychology” for lesbianism, it creates phobia against masculine lesbians. De Lauretis forms Stephen’s lesbianism upon a failure of her femininity, it is a problematic propose which Halberstam objects it. Halberstam reproaches and asks; “let alone a female sexuality that functions separately from male sexuality, or masculinity that functions apart from femininity?” (103). She states;

> Why is the masculine female body inadequate to bearing the subject's desire "in the masculine mode"? Whereas male masculinity all too often depends on the functionality of the penis and its ability literally to be phallic; the masculine woman, on the other hand, is not limited to the unpredictable movements of phallic desire; she can "bear the subject's desire in a masculine mode" through an artificial phallus, in her fingers, through tribadism, and so on. (104)

Halberstam uses a masculine lesbian as the subject, declaring her to be in between subject and object because she is neither male nor "fully" female. If there needs to be a phallic context to desire, lesbians can have a phallus with their body or tribadism, which is seen in female homosexuality as a tool not a purpose during sexual interaction. If a masculine lesbian is a masculine because she cannot fit into femininity, then the following questions must be addressed: does masculinity only belong to men, or does every masculine woman despise her body for not fitting into society's ideal body form? Halberstam enlightens us that there are many different groups of female masculinity, but in art, such as films or novels, it is a classic figure that an unhappy lesbian hate herself, is often portrayed angry or outcast, and finally commits suicide or is killed at the end of the novel, which is why Hall employs such a figure in The Well. Therefore, Lauretis' reading of the mirror scene as "hatred," as Halberstam points out, is no different from those stereotypical characterizations. Halberstam asserts that there was no possibility to change sex in the 1920s or any language that identified queer individuals separately. The mirror scene shows Stephen's "disidentification" with her naked body (106). As mentioned before, it is a fact that there is a hatred against herself. Her mind and body do not match each other. Yet the reason for this unmatching is not related to wishing to be feminine but, as in Halberstam's theories, her betweenness in stone butch and transgender identities. She analyses her gender ambiguity as in stone butchness.

Halberstam demonstrates Stephen's stone butchness upon the point of "that must be worshipped yet never be worshipped in return" in the mirror scene (Hall 202) as stone butchness is associated with "impenetrability". She is defined by her stone position during sexual activity. It is understandable that a person who is extremely uncomfortable with her body in the mirror claims that she has gender dysmorphia. Although there is almost no hint of sexual scenes between Stephen and her lover, there is a slight possibility that she will be comfortable with her naked body to show another person to take pleasure from her or to be admired by her. Therefore, Stephen's rejection of herself could be interpreted as her stone butchness. As mentioned in chapter one, butchness, or stone butchness, has become a target in lesbianism. They

have been accused of imitating heterosexual male and female roles. Butler objects to this and claims that if it has to be associated with any concept, since they have a stone position during sexual intercourse. So, they are not imitating men, but women. Yet their rejection of having orgasm with their lover and their outlook and characteristic features make lesbian feminists' question that, -since a lesbian is a woman who loves another woman- is a stone butch really a woman? That is why *The Well* is analysed as a lesbian novel or a transgender novel.

Halberstam does not fully contradict the idea that Stephen is a transgender person: she could be, but Halberstam points out that in those times, surgery or taking hormones to be a transgender person was not optional for those who lived with gender dysmorphia. Yet even if it was optional, Stephen would be stuck in betweenness. Halberstam's interpretation of Stephen's identity is a type of female masculinity: she desires not "maleness" but "masculinity." However, Stephen is confused by the maleness concept. At the beginning of the novel, she finds and reaches for the sexologist's book. For a while, she believes that she has found the secret behind her. She is relieved by the answer. Nevertheless, it does not help her till the end. She becomes more depressed and melancholic about her identity. In the mirror, she feels that she is "incomplete." This thought never leaves her, and finally she leaves her love to a "completed" man. With the knowledge of invert theory, she compulsorily sees the need to be a man. She cannot do it, so she becomes more masculine. Since her masculinity means that she can find and love a woman. Her masculinity evolves after many incidents. Indeed, she achieves her masculinity against nature and society. After her dispute with her mother, she leaves Morton for London, where she experiences being alone and living her true self. She is rich and a writer in such a big city, she has the same privileges as men. When her horse is about to die, she takes the decision to kill him and shoots him in the head. After this incident, she is alone without her father and her horse, and she always finds solace in him. After attending to World War I and getting a scar on her face because of a mortar shelter, we see more different characters. She is no longer looking in the mirror and questioning herself, she wears luxurious suits, travels a lot, and attends homosexual parties with her girlfriend. Yet her gender dysmorphia is triggered by a man: Martin, who once falls in love with Stephen in their childhood, falls in love with Mary. She becomes jealous and stricter towards Mary;

> 'You've no right to go off without letting me know where you're going--I've told you before I won't have it!' Her voice would be harsh, and Mary would flush, unaware of those nerves that were strained to breaking. (423)

Whereas Mary comes from Jamie and Barbara's home, stating Barbara is not well, Stephen jealously does not listen to her. Since Martin enters their lives, Stephen's self-esteem weakens against him. She constantly wants to be assured of Mary's love;

> [Stephen] 'Why were you so beastly to Martin this evening?'
>
> But Mary pretended not to understand her: 'How was I beastly? I was just as usual.'
>
> And when Stephen persisted, Mary kissed her scar: 'Darling, don't start working now, it's so late, and besides... Stephen put away her work, then she suddenly caught the girl to her roughly:
>
> 'How much do you love me? Tell me quickly, quickly!' Her voice shook with something very like fear. (473)

This fear never lets her up, she becomes harsh and quiet against Mary. After Barbara's death due to illness and Jamie's suicide, Stephen is now sure that there is no happiness for inverts. She becomes a more pessimistic character and quieter. Her masculinity cannot cope with a man's. Her previous experience with Angela is a traumatic memory for her. On the surface, the reason for leaving her lover can be seen as wanting Mary to have a family and a marriage, yet it can also be interpreted as she does not want to experience the same things that she has with Angela. At this time, she does not wait for Mary's leaving her, she leaves her in order not to be unhappy. Even though many critics claim that Mary would not leave Stephen, who is her true lover, there is still an uncertain future for them. Mary could wish to have a child at any time. Then who could blame her for having such a wish? There is always the possibility of that, and Stephen takes that for granted that.

I agree with Halberstam that Stephen is a stone butch lesbian, not a transgender person, and that Stephen must have been too masculine to be a lesbian due to her sexologists' beliefs. There are many reasonable grounds for this claim: Considering that there is no enough conscience about being a tomboy as a normal process of the child in this times, her tomboyishness does not welcome by her family or by the society, on the contrary it is stressed as querness in many times. It does not mean that if her tomboyishness welcomed by her family or the society, she would be a heterosexual. In fact, many heterosexual or homosexual women experience being tomboys in their childhood. Yet as marked by society, Stephen questions her body all the time. Secondly, while growing, she realizes that she can love another woman if she

is a man or acting "like a man." This was such an obligation for lesbian women in the beginning of the 20th century that they became visible among the lesbian community and could meet each other. Thirdly, even if Stephen never mentions feminism or injustices for women, she experiences the drawbacks of being a woman in a closed Victorian society where women's roles are already determined. Left a heritage from her father, she experiences the advantages of being a man in society, such as travelling freely, wearing what she wishes, and writing her novels without having a compulsory marriage. Her economic independence gives her many opportunities, this enables her to experience her masculinity more. ~~Having it is understandable that Stephen's wish to be a boy in the 1920s.~~

As in the beginning of the chapter mentioned, *The Well* is called a bildungsroman by Hall, Halberstam objects to this. She mentions the differences between Hall and Stephen; while Stephen experiences gender dysphoria with her feminine body or clothes, Hall was wearing skirts and suits and having fun at women's bars. While Stephen is portrayed as pessimistic, quiet, and lonely, Hall had a much more colourful life (Halberstam 127). Even though The Well does not entirely reflect upon Hall's life, there are many similarities. Hall and her mother's relationship is significant in her life. Although her father leaves her at a very early age, she does not have hate feelings against him. On the contrary, she idolizes her father like Stephen does. Hall's religious and patriotic beliefs are no different than in Stephen's life. That the novel ends with Stephen's outcry against God;

> 'God,' she gasped, we believe; we have told You we believe...We have not denied You, then rise up and defend us. Acknowledge us, oh God, before the whole world. Give us also the right to our existence!' (492)

Stephen is alone at the end of the novel; she leaves her lover to marry another man. In the previous chapters, one of her lovers, Angela, reminds her that they cannot get married or have a child because of her gender, so this crushes her and lingers in her mind through the end of the story. She intentionally chooses to be left alone since her Catholic beliefs do not let her live her identity. Hall believes in sexologists' theories, so Stephen trusts them, yet this does not make her happy since these theories are problematic in many ways. Her search for her identity does not reach an end point; she finally finds solace in God.

Her body and gender do not match, which drives her into an enigmatic situation. One of the climax points is the mirror scene, which we have discussed in

detail above. Aside from their stoniness in a lesbian relationship, which blurs lesbianism against its performative act in the mirror scene, the reason for her gender dysmorphia is also ambiguous.

CHAPTER 3: *TIPPING THE VELVET*

3.1 Life and Literary Career of Sarah Waters

Sarah Waters OBE[4], born in 1966 in Wales, is a contemporary novelist, essayist, and lecturer. *Tipping the Velvet* (1998), her first debut novel, was published after she completed her PhD thesis in English Literature. *Affinity* (1999), *Fingersmith* (2002), *The Night Watch* (2006), *The Little Stranger* (2009), and *The Paying Guests* (2014) are her other novels, which are performed on stage and adapted into films in the UK and the US. *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) is winner of the Betty Trask Award, *Affinity* (1999) is winner of the Somerset Maugham Award, Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year Award, and Mail on Sunday / John Llewellyn Rhys Prize, *Fingersmith* (2002) is winner of the South Bank Show Award for Literature and the CWA Historical Dagger, *The Night Watch* (2006) is Orange Prize finalist, and winner of the South Bank Show Award for Literature. *The Little Stranger* (2009) is winner Man Booker Prize and the South Bank Show Literature Award and *The Paying Guests* (2014), which was nominated for The Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction and was released in paperback in June 2015. She was elected to Granta's respected list of the "Best of Young British Novelists" in 2003. In the same year, publishers and booksellers voted her Author of the Year at the British Book Awards, the BA Conference, and she ended up winning the Waterstones Author of the Year Award. In 2015, she received the Stonewall Writer of the Decade Award. In 2017, she won the Diva Magazine Author of the Year Award. And in 2018, she received The Sunday Times Award for Literary Excellence, which honours a writer's entire body of work.

It is possible grasp Waters' author persona and background through the numerous interviews she has given whereby she outlines the writing of her novels. In one of her interviews, she states that *Tipping the Velvet* is an outcome of her PhD thesis, which is about lesbian and gay literature in the late nineteenth century. Having read much about Victorian homosexuality, she realizes that there is not enough room for female homosexuality. As it is mentioned in chapter one, Sarah Waters points out that while analysing "homosexuality" in the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, one can easily have access to much of the literature about

[4] OBE; is a reward and a title; The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, which recognizes a person's contributions to the arts and sciences. Sarah Waters received an OBE at Buckingham Palace from the Duke of Cambridge on the 22nd of October 2022

gays, especially Wilde and the people around him. This intrigues Waters as a lesbian individual, so she begins to read specifically lesbian works.

Bonnie Zimmerman asks a rhetorical question in *Feminist Studies* (1972); “Does a woman’s sexual and affectional preferences influence the way she writes, reads, and thinks?” (2341) The lesbian is the subject of being lesbian, so she needs the words, canon, and consciousness. Zimmerman dwells into lesbian writing and asserts that: “[t]he establishment of a lesbian literary tradition, a “canon”, […], has been the primary task of critics writing from a lesbian feminist perspective” (2353). Nevertheless, she adds that this task is not the only “focus” of being a lesbian author (2353). Waters has never denied her lesbian identity, stating in one interview, "I've done so much work to label myself a lesbian writer" (qtd. in “About Sarah”). What makes her successful as a “lesbian author” is reinventing a lesbian consciousness in history by retelling the stories of untold ones. She states that:

> I wanted to take that confidence about lesbian and gay life and put it into a historical novel. It was a very deliberate project, I wanted to make it fun and sexy, as well as fairly intelligent about the way it was making us think about the past (qtd. in “About Sarah”)

Waters does not bother being called a “pornographic” author. She radically states that: “[w]omen could write their own porn themselves” (qtd. in Dennis 43). As stated above, she is willing to deliberately create a reinvention of lesbian history. Naoise Murphy discusses *Tipping the Velvet*’s historical significance for lesbian history (10). She asserts that Waters broadens lesbian past and it is a protest against Victorian lesbian sexuality (10). In *Tipping the Velvet*, there are pornographic scenes, yet they are veiled in a Victorian style. Waters intends to write her own "pornography" to differentiate between female sexuality written by female subjects and that narrated by male authors' fantasies. Mandy Koolen in “Historical Fiction and the Revaluing of Historical Continuity in Sarah Waters's *Tipping the Velvet*" discusses that contemporary queer novels can be traced back in 1990s (371). Since queer studies began in 1990s, many authors have been aware of the time’s studies (Koolen 371). It can be seen in *Tipping the Velvet* that Sarah Waters uses “queer” word many times in the novel. Koolen claims that; “This novel thus demonstrates that historical fiction may use the past to comment on issues of contemporary concern and, by establishing temporal distance between readers and characters, make difficult social critiques more likely to be heard

and taken seriously" (373). Although *Tipping the Velvet*'s setting is during Victorian years, Waters uses contemporary elements to establish the novel's plot.

Due to the conventional features in Waters' works that are reminiscent of British classics, she has been likened to well-known authors of British classics in related genres, such as Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, and Daphne Du Maurier. (Meuwese 6). In return for these comparisons, she never denies other authors' impact on her writing. However, she does not accept being compared to Dickens; "People say 'you're like Dickens', but I'm not like Dickens. Zadie Smith is a Dickensian writer because she's writing about society now, just as Dickens was writing about his society. To write these faux Victorian novels is quite different." (qtd. in Meuwese 6). On the other hand, she explains how Angela Carter has influenced her writing as an admirer of her "utterly" feminist literary works (Dennis 42). To Waters, Carter writes in a politically charged and completely feminist way that would not be encountered in literature (Dennis 42). Inspired by Carter, Waters uses feminist politics in alternative historical texts that she creates.

The concept of tipping the velvet[5] cannot be easily understood by everyone since it has a sexual meaning. Although Waters writes explicit sexual scenes, there are some "coded" symbols and sexual discourse, which is a way applied by most Victorian authors. Tipping the velvet means "cunninglius" and "clitorisis". In the novel, the protagonist, called Nancy Astley or Nancy or Nan King, witnesses some conversations about veiled sexuality, but she does not have the knowledge of the vernacular term.

> I looked again at Florence, and frowned. 'Are they French, or what?' I asked. 'I can't understand a thing they're saying.' And indeed, I could not; for I had never heard such words before, in all my time upon the streets. I said, 'Tipped the velvet: what does that mean? It sounds like something you might do in a theatre… (Waters 416)

Nancy Astley has many times had sexual encounters with female homosexuals as well as male homosexuals, but in these moments, Waters makes readers aware of the prelude and "unwritten, untold" presentation of "lesbianism" in fiction. Waters plays with language and plot wittingly. Louisa Hadley, in *New-Victorian Fiction* (2010), describes neo-Victorian fiction as "contemporary fiction that engages with the Victorian era, at either the level of plot, structure, or both" (4). Hadley points out that

[5] Here, Tipping the velvet has been used as a "phrase", not as a reference to the whole book. Therefore, it is not in italics. And from now on, if it is used as a phrase, it will not be used in italics.

Waters' trilogies *Tipping the Velvet* (1998), *Affinity* (1999), and *Fingersmith* (2002) are post-modern lesbian fiction, and they all share neo-Victorian fiction features (5).

3.2 *Tipping the Velvet* and Female Masculinity Theory

Tipping the Velvet is about a young girl, Nancy, or Nan Astley, a naïve oyster girl who works with her family in a small-town Victorian England. With a male lover, she is an "ideal" daughter who helps her family and welcomes societal expectations. However, she goes to a local theatre and falls in love with a male impersonator, Kitty Butler. She goes to watch her every night and becomes friends with her. They become so close that when Kitty Butler is offered a job in London theatre, she asks Nancy to move together to London, as a dresser. Baffled by London's rush, Nancy has a role on stage as a male impersonator with Butler. They become lovers, yet a while later, they tumultuously break up since Butler falls in love with a man. After Butler, Nancy becomes a rent-boy dressed in male. While wandering in London streets, she encounters a wealthy woman, Diana Lethaby who uses Nan for the sake of her fantasies. Nan becomes almost a slave in Diana's house. Diana has some wealthy lesbian friends and their "sweethearts", like Nan, and they have a club called The Cavendish Club. Every week, they gather, and male impersonators perform to these wealthy women. Nan is caught with a housemaid and thrown out by Diana. Nancy is desperately wandering the London streets again when she encounters Florence, whom she had met as a rent-boy before. Florence is a socialist and a queer woman living with her brother. Nan finds her true self and mature love with Florence.

The story is set in the late 1890s, in England, and Nancy Astley, the first-person narrator, is the queer protagonist who explores her sexuality throughout the novel. Nancy's queerness starts with her feelings towards a woman who acts as a male on stage. Her journey begins with dealing with these "unusual" thoughts about a woman. There are three stages of her journey, which are symbolically related to the significant developments in her sexuality. First, she falls in love with a male impersonator and transforms her characteristics and appearance in a masculine way. Second, she drags her "king" identity into social life, and she becomes "Nan King." In the final stage, she falls in love with a socialist woman, she embraces her masculine lesbianism with Florence. Her first stage, transforming a regular oyster girl into a male impersonator, intersects with Judith Butler's queer theory. There are many intersections between

Butler’s performativity theory and Nancy’s performance on stage. And also, Nancy and her stage partner and lover Kitty’s relationship is "closeted,” which is a contemporary usage for "hiding" a homosexual identity or relationship in order not to be condemned by others, family members, or society. As a drag king, Halberstam’s theories interact with her second stage. And finally, her female masculinity is revealed thanks to Florence and other masculine lesbian figures.

The story begins at Nancy’s family house in Whitstable, where her family runs an oyster business. It is a small town in England, and it is depicted as a living, cosy, and ordinary rural place in England. Nancy Astley is a regular girl who helps her family's business. With her siblings, she goes to the music hall at the weekends. Once she watches Kitty Butler’s show as a male impersonator, she falls in love with her. She becomes addicted to her shows, so she goes to the music hall almost every night. Why she is so interested in her is narrated by her in long passages: “It was the hair […] her accent […] her figure […] her voice” (14-16). Kitty Butler is depicted as a beautiful young man but at the same time a “rounded” woman (16). Nancy’s intense attention to Kitty’s show is quite odd for her family. After becoming “close friends” with Kitty, Nancy invites her to her family's oyster house. Nancy’s father talks about oysters to Kitty, but in fact, it is completely a reference to queer theory: “Don't let the beards mislead you. For the oyster, you see, is what you might call a real queer fish - now a he, now a she, as quite takes its fancy. A regular morphodite, in fact!” (54). Nancy’s father's “morphodite” example is a significant symbol for Butlerian performativity theory. Performativity is not acting "theatrical" role, but rather "doing" gender role repetitions. While imitating this role, the body rhetorically transforms into it. While Nancy explores her sexuality, she will become the “morphodite” that her father has indicated before. Nancy analyses her feelings towards Kitty by examining her masculine features on the stage. She first falls in love with Kitty’s male impersonation on the stage. Here, we see the stereotypical link between masculinity and lesbianism, which manifests that a masculine woman is possibly a “lesbian” or that a woman cannot feel something for another woman without masculinity. However, Halberstam argues in *Female Masculinity* (1998) that there are different female masculinities as well as a diversity of sexualities. Waters employs a different masculine and feminine relationship, which is vernacularly called butch and femme. Nancy and Kitty's relationship appears to be similar to a butch-femme relationship at first, but their

masculinities lead them in the opposite direction, in general view. Before having a lesbian relationship, Walters portrays a “close friendship” between Nancy and Kitty as a reference to lesbianism.

In the first chapters, Nancy and Kitty become close friends, contrary to Nancy’s feelings towards Kitty. Before meeting with Kitty, Nancy visits theatre hall almost every night. She knows every second of the show, in which a chivalrous young man sings ballads and flirts with other female audience members by dancing and singing. Nancy explains her show:

> Her final song was a gentle one - a ballad about roses and a lost sweetheart. As she sang she removed her hat and held it to her bosom; then she pulled the flower from her lapel and placed it against her cheek, and seemed to weep a little. The audience, in sympathy, let out one huge collective sigh, and bit their lips to hear her boyish tones grow suddenly so tender. (15)

At the end of the show, Kitty throws a rose to the most beautiful woman in the audience. This is the peak moment of her show. Everyone who feels sorry for the young man is now looking forward to receiving the rose. Nancy dreams of catching a rose from Kitty, and finally she receives the rose. Kitty notices her, and after the show she wants to meet with Nancy. Their meeting is expressed by Nancy in an almost romantic or flirtatious way. However, Nancy dreams of her as a lover, and Kitty seems to be bored in a small city and wants to make a friend. Nevertheless, Kitty is also curious about Nancy’s feelings, and she seems delighted with her attention. Despite being unhappy about her unrequited love, Nancy continues to be with her as a friend. Different from the stereotypical close friendship in literature, Nancy is fully aware of her feelings. She writes her inner thoughts about Kitty without hesitation or in a pessimistic way. For example, Alice, her closest sibling, notices Nancy's interest in Kitty. She questions her attention: “You’re rather keen on her, ain’t you?” (22). Nancy unwittingly talks about Kitty as she says: “I never saw a girl like her before. I never knew that there were girls like her” (23). She feels Alice’s disapproval looking at her, in fact, she is right to feel that, as we will see later, Alice will abandon her for her queer feelings. Kitty’s image lingers in her mind, and she talks to herself: “How queer it is! -and yet, how ordinary: I am in love with you!” (36).

Kitty and Nancy live in Whitstable before moving to London. As mentioned in chapter one, locations have an impact on queer people. Compared to the big cities, in small cities, queer people’s exploration of their identities and those of others like them

is quite difficult. In Whitstable, Nancy experiences this difficulty. She does not feel comfortable about revealing her thoughts about Kitty to her sister, Alice. In fact, Alice is the person she is closest to, but the novel proceeds, we will see her as a foil heterosexual character who condemns her sister's feelings and regards her as abnormal. When Kitty offers Nancy the opportunity to accompany her to London, Nancy inquires as to why. She does not find the answer that she has been expecting: “[b]ecause I - like you. Because you are good for me and bring me luck. And because London will be strange; […] and I shall have no one ..."(61). Even though Kitty declares that they are friends, before this speech, she asks manipulative questions. In other words, she prepares Nancy to say "yes" to her offer. She asks:

> Do you think that I look handsome today?' she said. 'Do you think I have been kind, and pleasant, and good? Do you think your parents like me?' Her words seemed wild. I did not speak, but only nodded wonderingly. 'I came,' she said, 'to make them. I wore my smartest frock, so they would think me grander than I am. I thought […] they'll trust me like a daughter. (60)

The first question is really intriguing; it shows that Kitty is aware of Nancy’s admiration of her “handsomeness” and most probably her feelings. Therefore, this can be interpreted as emotional manipulation. In London, her true persona is revealed, but here still, she seems to look for a comrade. Nancy blindly agrees to go to London. With Kitty and Nancy's trip to London, they enter a new phase of their relationships as well as their identities.

Upon arriving at the “Temple of Variety” (74), Nancy is amazed by London’s diversity. The novel's emphasis on London's diversity also refers to the plurality of sexual identities. Ciocia states that: “It is clear that Nancy’s ease with her own sexuality progresses alongside her orientation within the exciting metropolitan scene” (20). However, Nancy has not been able to see queers in this crowd yet. She describes almost everyone in a long paragraph when they first arrive in London. She describes the first moment as follows:

> There were girls with trays of flowers and fruit; and coffee-sellers, and sherbet-sellers, and soup-men.
> There were soldiers in scarlet jackets; there were off-duty shop-boys in bowlers and boaters and checks. There were women in shawls, and women in neck-ties; and women in short skirts, showing their ankles.
> There were black men, and Chinamen, and Italians and Greeks. There were newcomers to the city […] (73)

While Nancy notices people of different nationalities, different styles of clothing, and especially women with "neck-tie" in the crowd, she does not realize that those soldiers

with “scarlet jackets” that we will read about the following chapters of the novel are likely homosexual men who look for rent-boys on the streets. Nancy's own queer consciousness and language are formed as she discovers her own masculinity. Kitty's stage show is not as well received as in Whitstable. The manager, Walter Bliss, who once caught her singing, offers Nancy a partnership with Kitty as a male impersonator. And when Nancy stands on stage in a man's suit, Walter ironically says, "there's something queer about it!" (134). At first, Nancy finds this masculine appearance strange since it is not something she has always wanted to behave. Kitty is the masculine archetype of Nancy; she admires Kitty's masculine appearance. However, Kitty's female masculinity is very different from the masculinity that Nancy will become. Therefore, we should first consider Kitty's female masculinity and then analyse their lesbian relationship around Nancy's masculinity.

Kitty Butler is a possible bisexual character in the novel, although she does not declare it herself. However, she has an internal homophobic attitude towards her sexual orientation and displays the same homophobic attitude towards other queers in the novel. Kitty wears a “rose” in her lapel and “lavender gloves”, lavender colour is a symbol of lesbianism (Callaghan 248). As mentioned in chapter one, radical lesbian movement in 1970s was called “lavender menace”, therefore, the symbol reminds us of lesbianism-feminism discourse. Kitty can be associated with certain aspects of masculinity. On stage, her masculinity is visible; she is a “handsome” boy with her chopped hair and well-suit. Such a masculine attitude, stance, and appearance on stage show us how easily genders can be bent and confused. As mentioned earlier, male impersonation on stage reminds us of the Butlerian theory of performativity. But, as Butler emphasizes, what she calls "performance" does not mean performing a theatrical role, but “being” that, which means “doing” or “being” gender (*Gender Trouble* 33). Performativity is not the same as imitation; genders are not something that can be pulled out of the closet and chosen in a single day. However, it is also significant to give this concept theatrical expression on the stage.

Kitty Butler acts like a flirty man on stage and attracts female audience members. However, some male audiences also enjoy Kitty's effeminate male appearance in this show. Backstage, Kitty refers to these audiences as "cracked" (147). Kitty experiences masculinity entirely through a role; she does not internalize it. Yet there is a masculinist attitude in her behaviour toward Nancy. She is dominant and

jealous of her. For example, one night when they go out to have fun, Nancy meets a young musician who thinks that she is a young boy, and they dance together. Once Kitty sees them, she is jealous and calls her "Miss Flirt" (111). She finally admits her jealousy, and they have intimate moments together on the same night. The morning after they have their first sexual intercourse, she dominates Nancy, telling her that it should be kept secret. Therefore, Nancy and Kitty's relationship is similar to the butch-femme relationship. It is Kitty who makes the decisions, and Nancy who obeys. It is Kitty who goes out and has a late-night party, and Nancy waits for her.

Kitty always seeks Nancy's attention and now has a "closed" partnership with her, as in the onstage partnership. When Nancy takes the stage, she meets and begins to notice other queer characters. She enjoys the attention of a female audience. Kitty is disgusted by this situation. Kitty sets herself apart from both female impersonators and other queer women. Speaking to Nancy about female impersonators, she says: "They're not like us! They're not like us at all!" (149). Nancy continues to express her thoughts about "toms" :

> Now, when Kitty said it, she flinched. Toms. They make a -a career- out of kissing girls. We're not like that!'
> 'Aren't we?' I said. (150)

Although Kitty claims that they are not "toms," a drunk man in the audience starts talking loudly, and a female spectator tells him to shut up because she cannot hear the "girls" (160). The man shouts loudly: "Girls? You call them girls? Why, they're nothing but a couple of a toms?" (160). This incident has a significant impact on Kitty because she goes through the most terrifying experience of her life. After this, their career is at stake, and they do not appear on stage in that music hall anymore. Kitty seeks an escape route as soon as their economic situation worsens. During their relationship, just once, Nancy leaves Kitty alone and goes to Whitstable to visit her family. She returns a little bit early to surprise Kitty, and she catches her in their bed with Walter Bliss. Callaghan discusses that Kitty's sexual orientation is "to seek to pass as a heterosexual woman" (248). While being in a "closeted" relationship with Nancy, she betrays her in a dramatic way with her manager Walter. It is obvious that she married to him because it is understood in the following episodes that she wants to achieve a political position.

Nancy Astley's female masculinity can be evaluated in three parts: being masculine on stage and offstage, being an "out" drag king, and finally being a lesbian with a "New Woman" notion. As a partner with Kitty on the stage, Nancy also adapts to "being" masculine offstage. Contrary to Kitty, Nancy embraces her "masculinity," as Butler points out in *Gender Trouble* (1999). She becomes "out," which means she reveals her sexual identity in public. And she becomes a "drag king," a term Halberstam analyses in detail in *Female Masculinity* (1998). In the final stage, she equalizes her femininity and masculinity when she has a relationship with Florence. Florence, whose depiction looks like a "New Woman" in the 19th century, affects her, and she becomes a "New Woman" at the end of the novel.

Nancy Astley's engagement with masculinity for the first time happens as a male impersonator on the stage. When she wears a suit and chops her hair, Walter and Kitty are concerned for her "too real" appearance. Kitty states: "There is something queer about it, and I can't say what…" (134). At the same time, when the theatre's landlady notices her "abnormality," she speaks with Walters:

> She's too real,' she said at last, to Walter.
> Too real?'
> Too real. She looks like a boy. Which I know she is supposed to - but, if you follow me, she looks like a real boy. Her face and her figure and her bearing on her feet. And that the idea now, is ain't quite it?' (134)

Nancy's body contours are also masculine. Nancy has a flat chest, dull hair, and is tall and rather lean (7). The above quote is actually an important symbol of Halberstam's theory of male impersonation and "Drag King". As explained in detail in the first part, the masculinity of male impersonators, which will later be referred to as "drag kings," is problematic. Male and female impersonators make fun of masculinity and femininity and express this to the audience in a theatrical way with dance or song performances. In doing so, they present the masculine-feminine behaviours associated with extravagant makeup, glamorous clothes, and genders to the audience on the stage in an inspirational way. However, according to female impersonators, since male impersonators are able to look very realistic, their shows have no theatrical form. They do not attract the attention of the audience because they appear too realistic and are understood as "real", not as if they were roles (Halberstam 235). The landlady's statement "[A]nd that the idea now, is ain't quite it?" (135) demonstrates that a male impersonator ought to look like a man but somehow Nancy' cross-dressing, who stands in front of them, bother them. However, Kitty's male impersonation does not

bother anyone. The reason for this can be explained as follows: Kitty's male form is “effeminate. Nancy will be partnering with Kitty. Since two male impersonators are not very common, their manager, Walter supports this idea, thinking it will be profitable. When Nancy describes him, she says:

> She looked [...] like a very pretty boy, for her face was a perfect oval, and her eyes were large and dark at the lashes, and her lips were rosy and full. Her figure, too, was boy-like and slender - yet rounded, vaguely but unmistakably, at the bosom, the stomach, and the hips, in a way no real boy's ever was; and her shoes, I noticed after a moment, had two-inch heels to them. (14)

It is obvious that Kitty is a woman and acts a man on the stage. Nancy's masculine features, such as being tall and having small breasts, blur her gender. Here, we see the justification of Butler's performance theory. Butler describes genders as “repetitions” created culturally and historically. Nancy renders gender with makeup and clothes. If one is able to look like a "real man" with make-up and hair, how is birth sex the only main source of gender? Sexes are evaluated based on their natural masculinity or femininity, but performativity contradicts this notion. Unlike the early sexologists, such as Havelock Ellis and Sigmund Freud, who saw lesbians as masculine figures who aspired to be men, Nancy does not aspire to be a man, but she does enjoy dressing like one. While Kitty never accepts her own identity and hates it, Nancy sees the male impersonator on stage as something that helps her own identity. She is very happy with the interest that arises when she is on stage and afterwards. She does not feel lonely in any way and is delighted to attract the attention of other queer women. Nancy explains:

> what astonished and thrilled me now was the thought that girls might look at me at all - the thought that in every darkened hall there might be one or two female hearts that beat exclusively for me, one or two pairs of eyes that lingered, perhaps immodestly, over my face and figure and suit. Did they know why they looked? Did they know what they looked for? (147)

After experiencing this awareness, he begins to see the queer individuals around him. After this quote, for example, the two women in the locker rooms look like her and Kitty. They have a brief conversation with them, but Kitty then accuses the two women of being “toms” (148). While Nancy would like to be “out” about her sexual identity, Kitty is willing to be "closeted,” even though, as mentioned before, she does not embrace her sexual identity or her sexual relationship with Nancy. Jeremiah argues that: “the idea of collective lesbian identity is not questionably and simply embraced in the novel, although it is confirmed” (139). As Jeremiah points, although Kitty does not embrace their relationship, she is "confirming" the queer identity or existence of it

in the novel. Their act on the stage ends by a heckler in the audience. King claims that: “A double act in which two women are dressed as men, however, threatens to destabilise that norm, exposing the limits of acceptable transgression” (Performing gender: Sarah Waters, Tipping the Velvet 147). The "transgressive limits" of Kitty's show are initially acceptable, but with Nancy, they are judged as "toms" by the male gaze. As if the admiration of the audience lent her wings” (19), now Kitty loses her "wings," self-esteem, and power on the stage, as well as her faith in her relationship. She explains to Nancy why they can no longer be on stage or together:

> [Kitty] It is all right, that sort of thing, when you are girls. But as we got older . .. We're not a couple of scullery-maids, to do as we please and have no one notice it. We are known; we are looked at -' […]
> [Kitty] And so long as I am looked at, I cannot bear also to be - laughed at; or hated; or scorned, as a -'
> As a tom!'
> 'Yes!'
> 'But, we could be careful -'
> We should never be careful enough! You are too much -Nan, you are too much like a boy ..." (196)

Kitty's perception of lesbian relationships as some sort of "immature girl" thing is a similar cliché from the 20th century. As mentioned before in chapter one, Rebecca Jennings in *Tomboys and Bachelor Girls* (2007) discusses how, with the increase of psychology and sexology in the first half of the 20th century, lesbianism was seen as an act between two immature women before a real marriage (3).As the excerpt above shows, Kitty does not want to be perceived as a woman who is not "real" by society, because Nancy's masculinity draws attention to their relationship. Her marriage to Walter gives her both economic status and the status of a real woman. On the other hand, Naoise Murphy analyses Kitty's marriage as symbolically losing her queer identity:

> […] the stage-names “Kitty Butler” and “Nan King”, evoking the pioneering queer theorist Judith Butler and the contemporary term “drag king”, and thus encouraging the reader to connect the male impersonation practised by the characters to more recent understandings of gender performativity. When Kitty betrays Nancy to enter a sham heterosexual marriage, she is described as having “lost her Butler”. (6)

Kitty symbolically leaves this immature identity, but Nan is now a “king” outside. She now walks the streets in public in drag. After that, we see the second stage of Nancy's sexual identity as "drag king." As mentioned in the first chapter, Halberstam explains that dating back to Shakespearean theatre, the history of male impersonation has come to be known as drag king. Nancy Astley's transformation from a male impersonator to

a drag king is an example of cross-dressing history. Halberstam also underlines the significance of cross-dressing in public. Some lesbians, such as Radclyffe Hall, who cross-dresses, ensured visibility for lesbianism. By cross-dressing, queer individuals were able to be noticed and meet each other (Halberstam 234). Nancy is aware of this "notice" by other women and feels much better in a male costume. She explains this situation as follows; "[t]o walk as a boy, as a handsome boy in a well-sewn suite, whom the people stared after only to envy, never to mock-well, it had a brittle kind of glamour to it, that was all I knew, just then, of satisfaction" (221). Waters illustrates Butler's theory of performativity through Nancy by employing her as a gender bender. Nancy's sexual identity is where Butler points as "re-enactment" (*Gender Trouble* 178). So Nancy uses the male persona not because she wants to be a man, but only to attract women's attention. Waters portrays the protagonist as a queer lesbian who takes pleasure in the idea of being a man rather than being a "real" man. However, the following questions also come with it: Does Nancy need to have male persona in order to be a lesbian? So far, the historical connection between lesbianism and masculinity through the work of Radclyffe Hall in previous chapters and the criticism to lesbianism as an accusation of masculinity that is no different from heteronormative norms have been analysed. As a result, considering "queer" theory, what Nancy offers that differs from the historical "mannish" masculine lesbian can be asked. By subverting Nancy's sexuality from female homosexuality to male homosexuality, in a sense, Waters surprises the reader. Nan King satisfies male customers as a "rent boy" for a while. In the narrative of open sexual scenes, we see that Nancy tries this more anatomically and experimentally than to "enjoy." She examines male organs. She even imagines gay men as "Walter Bliss" on several occasions and wonders what Kitty has been experiencing with a man (225). During these fluid and experimental sexual moments, most of his customers, who are soldiers, never realize that she is a woman. Here, we see that Waters subverts homosexuality just as Butler subverts gender. Nancy is not a stereotypically masculine woman; she allows her sexual orientation and identity to be fluid. Most importantly, she does not feel melancholy or depressed while experiencing them.

Having worked as a rent-boy on the streets for a short time – as she has to do it since she has become economically miserable after Kitty - meets a rich woman. When Diana Lethaby meets Nancy, she is a cross-dresser and thinks that Diana

misunderstands her and really thinks she is a man. However, Diana is an upper-class sapphist and recognized her as a “drag king”. Heimonen argues that Nancy's cross-dressing fails in front of another lesbian (56). There are many reasons of her failure. Diana invites Nancy to stay at her home, which is called Felicity Place (294), and Nancy has another sexual experience here. Diana asks her to perform for the other rich sapphists and herself at the club they call The Lavendish Club. This offer is attractive for Nancy, who is away from the stage and misses being on stage. Although she is afraid to stay with Diana at first, an opportunity arises for Nancy, who makes ends meet in London's back-alleys. However, the imbalance of power in their relationship affects her seriously. The power balance between Diana and her is similar to that in which one dominates and is dominated, as in traditional male-female relationships. It is no different from the heteronormative male-female relationship, but again, Waters subverts the roles here. As a king, she becomes a kind of slave to Diana, even though Nancy plays the male role. She was an effeminate passive male during her rent-boy period with men; however, she evolved into a kind of rent-girl who was active masculine with Diana but served her as a slave.

Diana presents Nancy as if she were her own product at their lavish parties, calling her "tart." Nancy’s sexual orientation has been objectified by Diana. Nancy does not have free will to do what she desires to experience like before. She does not enjoy what she is obliged to do, including sexual intercourse. Therefore, she is disgusted with Diana touching her and performing. We see an unhappy Nancy, whose passing has failed; she does not know what to do. On the other hand, Diana is depicted as a selfish, masochist, and powerful character who dominates Nancy like a man. She is upper-class, adopts male-female roles, and declares herself a "sapphist," which reminds us of the theory of sexual inversion. Since there is reference to Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), Jeanette King says that Diana fits the definition of sexual inversion (150-51). While Diana and her friends are at the party, there are talks about a “filthy” book. Dickie Reynolds, who is one of Diana's sapphist friends, argues that the book is not a "filthy book." She describes the book as follows: "it is not a filthy book, it is a very brave one. It has been written by a man, in an attempt to explain our sequence so that the ordinary world will understand us. " (354). Diana reads the book aloud, and each of them has a comment about it. Nancy mockingly speaks of the book.

Waters, so to speak, makes fun of the "sexual inversion" theory; Nancy describes it as follows:

> I cannot remember the words of it now. I know that, as Dickie had promised, they were not at all filthy; indeed, they were rather dry. And yet, her story was lent a kind of lewdness, too, by the very dullness of the prose in which it was told. All the time Diana read, the ladies called out ribald comments. When Dickie's history was complete, they read another, which was rather lewder. Then they read a very saucy one from the gentlemen's section. At last the air was thicker and warmer than ever; even I, in my sulkiness, began to feel myself stirred by the doctor's prim descriptions. (355)

On the one hand, Dickie Reynolds, who thinks that the book will "assist" and "advertise" them (355), and Nancy, who thinks that this is quite "dry," give us a historical view of the theory of sexual inversion. As mentioned in chapter one, the sexual inversion theory of male doctors asserts that a lesbian is a masculine woman who wants to be a man. There are many problematic points in their statements, one of which is clearly stated above: the doctors evaluated lesbianism only in masculine women. Also, they searched for “abnormalities” in those women, which is also an initial problematic perspective. For instance, in Havelock Ellis’ article “Sexual Inversion” (1927) which anatomically examines some inverts, he refers to Krafft-Ebing and finds that the "pelvic" muscles of the inverts are different as a masculine trait and therefore considers them "abnormal" (*Sexual Inversion* 137-143). On the other hand, Krafft-Ebing establishes a link between masculinity and female homosexuality. According to his theory, female homosexuality is an imitation of heterosexuality (503). Diana is described as having that abhorrent “sexual inversion." She is a sensual, insensitive woman who only thinks about sex and is not very feminine. For example, she forces Nancy to make love with her, even though Diana sees her sobbing about her past. She makes many sexual requests according to her own wishes. However, when Nancy sees Diana touching her own breasts, she feels “like a man being transformed into a woman of” (239-40). Hence, we see Diana's depiction as having “toxic masculinity” features. While Krafft-Ebing defines lesbians as "high-class women because of their hyper-sexuality desire to seduce their servants" (502) in his book, Nancy's cheating on Diana with her "servant" is a subversion of myth of inversion theory. To them, lesbianism belongs to merely bored upper-class married women. Yet in the novel, there are many depictions of working-class lesbians, not only Kitty, Florence or Nancy but their other queer friends form bars, stages or streets. Diana is able to create her own spaces with upper-class women like her, but Nancy

belongs to the working class. Ciocia argues that Diana “in virtue of the greater power and freedom attached to her privileged social status, can find ways of expressing her homosexuality without fear of incurring into public censure” (11). For example, Kitty cannot escape from this “public censure”. In chapter one, it has been stated that lesbianism gained its visibility in the working class with feminism. It has been an important factor in allowing working-class women to gain economic independence and live out their identities without being bound by forced marriage. Florence Banner reflects this depiction of women at the end of the 20th century. Although she does not call herself a "feminist," she works for "women's unions." She is a worker and a socialist. After their paths cross again with Florence, their relationship has a healing effect after Diana’s slavery days. Her sexual identity journey in the novel passes to the final stage where she stabilizes both her sexual identity and her happiness.

While Nancy Astley wanders the streets without knowing what to do, she encounters Florence. Florence is a single woman who has adopted a child and lives with her brother. When we learn the story of the baby later, we encounter a queer story again. The baby is the daughter of Florence's beloved, Lillian, and after her death, Florence takes care of her baby for the sake of her memory. Florence is a socialist philanthropist. Nancy admires her conscientious personality, she constantly reads, thinks, and writes about women and social issues. For instance, Nancy witnesses one of her speeches:

> Things are changing. There are unions everywhere — and women's unions, as well as men's. Women do things today their mothers would have laughed to think of seeing their daughters doing, twenty years ago; soon they will even have the vote! If people like me don't work, it's because they look at the world, at all the injustice and the muck, and all they see is a nation falling in upon itself and taking them with it. But the muck has new things growing out of it - wonderful things! - new habits of working, new kinds of people, new ways of being alive and in love ... (445)

Florence has been depicted as the “New Woman." New Woman figure defends suffragettes, education, self-dependency, social freedom, masculinity, femininity, socialism, or humanitarianism (Richardson and Willis). She is active in sexual and social politics (6). She has been depicted as a “positive and tangible fact” and an intellectual heroine in literature (10) Compared to Nancy, Florence, with her library in her house, is more knowledgeable. Nancy has read only sexual books in the Felicity place, so Florence gives her books to read. She starts to think about socialism or

women, and she gives speeches in front of others. This also gives her some confidence to live out her sexual identity freely.

Nancy and Florence become lovers a while later. Nancy starts helping Florence with the housework, and we see her babysitting, cleaning, and cooking. For Nancy, who is bored with pretending to be a “man” in Diana's house, this feels normal at first. She expresses her feelings as follows: “I had been a regular girl once" (423). She grows her hair up and stops wearing masculine clothes. She thinks that if she looks feminine with Florence, she will not attract attention. It will not last long. She is used to her masculinity; she hates the way she looks in the mirror. She says:

> The truth was, I had looked awful ever since leaving St John's Wood; and now, in a flowery frock, I only looked extraordinarily awful. The clothes I had bought, they were the kind I'd used to wear in Whitstable and with Kitty; and I seemed to remember that I had been known then as a handsome enough girl. But it was as if wearing gentlemen's suits had magically unfitted me for girlishness, for ever - as if my jaw had grown firmer, my brows heavier, my hips slimmer and my hands extra large, to match the clothes Diana had put me in. (433)

She does not feel comfortable with a completely feminine appearance. Her butch identity confronts certain kinds of feminine traits. She reveals her butch identity thanks to Florence. Florence makes her realize that having both her masculinity and her lesbian identity at the same time is a normal act. There are many references to this in the last part of the novel. During their sexual encounters, Florence, for example, makes Nancy realize her feminine side. She was previously expected to use sex toys on Diana for “one-sided” pleasure, but now she enjoys the sexual experience in which Florence is more active (489). While Nancy is concerned to tell Florence about her past, Florence thinks freely enough to go to "toms" bars with her. Nancy cannot believe Florence:

> 'Is it to be all toms, then?'
> To my surprise she nodded, quite seriously: 'Yes.'
> All toms! The thought sent me into a fever. It was twelve months since I had last passed an evening in a room full of woman-lovers: I was not sure I still possessed the knack. What would I wear? What attitude would I strike? All toms! What would they make of me? And what would they make of Florence? (467)

Nancy seeks an accurate "attitude". She is now concerned about what other people will think of her as a lesbian, as she is with a female masculine outlook. The reason for her concern is that she has previously been on stage with Kitty as a “male impersonator." She has been with Diana as a “drag king,” so she never reveals her sexual identity

since only “queer” people understand her real identity. But now, with her “lost military sharpness” (423) hair and feminine clothes, she can be perceived as “masculine woman”. Although this makes her feel insecure, when she hears that other masculine women in the bar are her idols (478) , she embraces her self-confidence and female masculinity. It is also interesting that when they first go to the bar, she asks Florence where the “toms” are:

> I thought you said it was to be all toms here? There are blokes over there.' 'Blokes? Are you sure?' She turned to where I pointed, and gazed with me at the billiard players. They were rather rowdy, and half of them were clad in trousers and waistcoats, and sported prison crops. But as Florence studied them, she laughed. 'Blokes? she said again. 'Those are not blokes! Nancy, how could you think it?'
> I blinked, and looked again. I began to see ... They were not men, but girls; they were girls - and they were rather like myself. . .(475)

Nancy had met other male impersonators and drag kings, but now she thinks masculine lesbians are men since it is the first time, she sees them. Nancy, who searches for the right "attitude" throughout the novel, always stays between duality. For example, she sees a house advertisement on the wall before she meets Diana. What she has seen attracts her. In the advertisement “Respectable Lady Seeks Fe-Male Lodger” is written and this “Fe-male” appeals to her. She sees herself as in this “hyphen”. It is a great reference to Judith Butler's lesbian phallus. As analysed in chapter one in detail, Butler argues that thinking of a lesbian as “having a phallus” creates a new anatomy; a lesbian is a man, and she is not a man (53). Imagining “having phallus” on a female body refutes the idea that phallus, which is thought of as femininity's lack of, is only associated with a male body or as a male organ. Nancy has a phallus; she is aware of the "wings" that being a male gives her; an escape from male gaze.

In Felicity Place, Nancy finds a community of upper-class Sapphics with whom she has no connection, since there are not many masculine women like her. When she is with Florence, she is satisfied with her sexual orientation and identity. She can find other queer people on Quilter Street without having to assume a male role. Unlike Felicity Place, there is sexual liberation on Quilter Street. Florence refers to a poem by Walt Whitman. Whitman is a famous American poet who advocates democracy, and Nancy adds her own interpretation of this famous poem:

> 'O my comrade!' I began. 'O you and me at last -and us two only; O power, liberty, eternity at last! O to be relieved of distinctions! to make as much of vices as virtues! O to level occupations and the sexes! O to bring all to common

> ground! O adhesiveness! O the pensive aching to be together - you know not why, and I know not why (447)

Nancy is not as intellectual as Florence about such as socialism, equality, and democracy, but she surprises Florence with her subjective sexual identity ideas. She is more experienced than Florence in sexuality. Nancy is influenced by Florence's liberation and becomes a "New Woman" at the end of the novel (King 155). She pulls out her dignity and honor. She is aware of her female masculinity and accepts her feminine side. At the end of the novel, Kitty once again shows up and asks Nancy to have a relationship with her again. But Nancy does not have any intention to be "closeted" her relationship or her identity again. With Florence, she does not feel the "shame" that Kitty has made her experience before. For the first time, she is not being dragged by others to other cities or relationships, which indicates that she is now a mature woman who knows what she wants to do or be.

As a result, we see three important stages of Nancy Astley, or Nan King, in the novel. Each stage interacts with Judith Butler's Queer Theory, Halberstam's Drag King Theory, and female masculinity theories. First, we see Nancy Astley's encounter with masculinity as a male impersonator, which helps her have a lesbian relationship. In the novel, the close friendship with Kitty turns into a relationship, indicating that one of the codes of lesbian relationships in literature is "close friendship." Nancy, who has been cheated on by a man, publicly becomes Drag King, and adopts the king identity solely to attract women in order to avoid male gaze. This fluidity reflects Butler's theory of fluid sexuality. Nancy experiences sexuality and adopts masculinity as a demeanour and attitude for new things. She plays the male role first on stage and then on the streets. Female homosexuality is subverted when she is with men as a rent-boy. And finally, together with Florence, she accepts female masculinity in her inner world without the role of a man. Meeting other masculine lesbians and Florence's thoughts are important factors in revealing her female masculinity. There is nothing wrong with being a masculine or a lesbian. She does not lose her masculinity while cooking in the kitchen or babysitting. Nancy Astley is not alone at the end of the novel, where she finds her best version of.

CONCLUSION

While homosexuality is still a taboo in some countries, homosexual or “queer” people are able to freely live their orientations and identities in certain countries. It has been evolving throughout the millennium.2000s to today, in such a short time, there have been rapid changes in many parts of life. Today, lesbian women in England have had legally recognized rights to get married and have children since 2014 (gov. uk). From the trial of Oscar Wilde to today’s homosexual marriages, the acceptance of homosexuality has taken a long time in England. Even though, the laws and regulations have legally defined homosexual individuals, homophobia has not ended in England or in other countries. It is apparent that homophobia will exist more in public. Today, the LGBTQ+ community has found more liberal fields to express their studies, work, identities, or arts. With the support of the media and the cultural mainstream, queer people have more opportunities than ever before to live openly as their sexual orientations. The end of the twentieth century marks the beginning of queer studies, which peaked in the 1990s. *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) and *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) present their time understanding of sexuality. Before the twentieth century, being lesbian meant being in the closet. We see those characters in novels such as lonely and unhappy women who either commit suicide because of stereotypical lesbian melancholia or are killed at the end of the novels. In the 20th century, there was a revolution the New Woman started that led to innovations in everything, and sexuality is one of them. They wanted to create their own fashion, literature, and sexuality. Among the New Women, there were lesbian women who embraced women's movements. They earned their economic freedom and established their lives alone or with the "female wives" they loved without feeling the pressure of marriage with a man. A lesbian community was born who wore pants, took part in manly work, smoked cigarettes, and set up their own language in women's bars. Bar culture is an important element for lesbians and other queer individuals. While masculine lesbians are visible, it is difficult for women who are feminine, or whose lesbianism is not understood through masculinity, to find other lesbian women. With the rise of the feminist movement, lesbians began to create their own canon. In the first part, I examined the rise of the lesbian movement in relation to feminism by analysing the relationship between lesbianism and feminism. In *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) and *Tipping the Velvet* (1998) lesbianism and feminism were evaluated through the theory of female

masculinity by addressing notions of lesbianism and feminism in the adventures of two masculine women written in the 20th century to build their own sexual identities.

In both novels, the "struggles" of the two lesbian characters with masculinity are discussed. Stephen Gordon, the protagonist of *The Well of Loneliness*, learns that she is a "sexual invert" in Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886). Krafft-Ebing is a sexologist who believes that being masculine is the cause of sexual inversions' same-sex love, but he considers this a congenital disorder abnormality. Stephen believes in this theory since it suggests a "salvation" for her queer body. After all, there is no explanation other than male sexologists during the period. In Morton, she has a safe area of masculinity with the contributions of his father, but after losing his father, she cannot get along with her mother and moves to London. Here, she meets a lot of queer people and goes to lesbian pubs. While the sexual inversion theory is expected to make her relaxed, she becomes more pessimist and unhappy about the future. With mirror scenes, we understand she cannot understand this incompatibility by adhering to the ambivalent structure (in which femininity attached to female body and masculinity attached to the male body) between her masculinity and her own body. Her body and her mind do not match each other which is why she believes if she were a man, she could live her sexual identity easily. Given the drawbacks of being a woman, it is a reasonable request to want to be a man. Mirror scenes are an important reference for analysing her sexual identity. Through Halberstam's *Female Masculinity* (1998) I have analysed her as a stone butch. A stone butch is the most masculine category of masculine lesbians. The name stone implies impenetrability in their sexuality. Since Stephen is a "giver" in her relationships, she does not give the impression of a "taker". Although there are not many explicitly written sexual scenes, her sexuality can be interpreted as in stone butch. As a result, she cannot be masculine with being a woman in the dichotomy in the Stephen period; it is incompatible. In this incompatibility, he does not consider happiness worthy of him and another lesbian novel ends with an unhappy ending.

Nancy Astley, the protagonist of *Tipping the Velvet*, is amusing, occasionally lonely, but ultimately a self-accepting butch lesbian in an alternative neo-Victorian era. I have discussed Nancy's three phases in the final chapter before calling her a butch lesbian. First, as a male impersonator on stage, she learns how to be a man by imitating a man's attitudes or fashion. According to Halberstam, male and female impersonators

used to stage feminine and masculine phenomena with a sarcastic approach. Nancy also adapts to the male roles that she plays. Compared to her first lover, Kitty, who is also a male impersonator, her male impersonation is found "too real." She cross-dresses outside, and people cannot realize that she is a woman. Judith Butler says that genders are social constructions, and we start to perform them from the moment we are born. Nancy's male clothing, combined with her masculine body, further blurs gender. After getting used to her masculine clothing for a long time, she does not prefer the feminine look as before. During his life as a drag king in public, she has had different sexual experiences. As a drag king, she experiences male homosexuality with another man; while working as a rent boy, men cannot perceive her as a woman, and they have sexual relations as if she were a "man." Soon after, Diana Lethaby meets a wealthy sapphic and settles down in her house. Here, she tries tribadism, but Diana treats her like a slave. While portraying Nancy with male homosexuality, Waters subverts female homosexuality. Then, she subverts the butch-femme relationship, in which butches are dominant and femmes are dominated, in the relationship where Diana dominates Nancy even though she is a femme. When Nancy Astley meets Florence, she gives up being a drag king and starts dressing femininely in order to fit into society. But Nancy, who has been dressing for a long time as in masculine, does not like her appearance in the mirror. In this case, Nancy begins to dress in both masculine and feminine clothes. Now that we see Nancy with her hair little longer and feminine and masculine clothes, she is perceived as a woman outside. She uses fashion and her hair as a way of expressing female masculinity. She gives up on the notion that she has to be completely male to be with a woman. We see her doing chores, babysitting, or smoking in bars with other masculine women. At the end of the novel, Nancy finds the balance between being a woman and being masculine.

Thus, the understanding of female masculinity in the 20th century was examined through two novels. Both novels present two very different understandings. *The Well of Loneliness* creates the mannish-lesbian archetype of the turn of the century; Stephen Gordon cannot understand female masculinity other than wanting to be a man. According to Halberstam *Female Masculinity* (1998), Stephen's masculinity is considered as “stone butch”. In *Tipping the Velvet*, on the other hand, Nancy Astley has a fluid and variable gender identity as opposed to Stephen's stoneness. Throughout the thesis, I have discussed Stephen's and Nancy's female masculinity, which means

there are many drawbacks to being both a woman and masculine during their periods. And, with references from the novels, their female masculinity and relationship with lesbianism provide a sense of two different understandings of the twentieth century.

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Bibliyografyayı Çıkart Üzerinde
Eşleşmeleri çıkar Kapat

RESUME

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