

Tribhuvan University

Lesbian Obsession in Carole Ann Duffy's Selected Poems

A Thesis submitted to the department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, Kathmandu, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Degree of Master of Arts in English

by

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Declaration

I here declare that the thesis entitled,
"Lesbian Obsession in Carole Ann Duffy's Selected Poems"
Is my own original work carried out as a master student at the department
of English at Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus except to the extent that
assistance from others in the thesis design and
conception in presentation Style and linguistic
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All resources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no
material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the
award of any other degree at Tribhuvan University or
any other Educational institution, except where
due acknowledgement is made in the thesis.

.....

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September 29, 2018

Letter of Approval

This thesis, entitled "Lesbian obsession in Carole Ann Duffy's Selected Poems" submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, by Bhakta Bahadur Bishokarma, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research observes Carole Ann Duffy's selected poems as a lesbian point of view with its focus on female characters and rejection of essential notion of heterosexuality. It further tries to analyze how the rejection of heterosexuality in the text projects the female emancipation from unequal gender roles with the discussion of women's writing, queer theory and Lesbianism. Lesbianism is the sexual and romantic desire between females. Lesbianism is often referred as female homosexuality. The term lesbian is frequently used as a synonym for homosexuality. Thus, the major concern of this research is to mark the female independence through the lesbian relationship which through the character-sketch of the speaker and her relation with male and female differently.

Duffy has earned her reputation as major British poet and activist since 1980s. Most attention has been paid to her extraordinary poems and prose. However, the issue of lesbianism has seldom been focused on or fully discussed. In her collected poem entitled "Warming Her Pearl" the narrator engrossed with her mistress and wants to have sexual relation and when her mistress dance with the tall man she is burned. She thinks about her mistress undress and lying down naked on the bed. Carole Ann Duffy, in her poem "Valentine" challenges the traditional way to giving the gift in the Valentine's Day except giving the red rose she wanted to give onion for her sweet heart. Duffy's writing mainly defends upon the thought, emotion, feelings and desire of lesbian or third sexes and revolting against this domination by mainstream of the society.

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Introduction: Lesbianism and its theoretical position

Lesbianism is the quality or state of intense emotional and usually erotic attraction of a human female to another female. Lesbianism is the sexual and romantic desire between females. Lesbianism is often referred as female homosexuality. The term lesbian is frequently used as a synonym for homosexuality. Homosexuality is the sexual interest in and attraction to members of one's own sex. Regarding the concept of lesbianism Zimmerman, Bonnie argues:

As it was first used in the late 16th century, the word Lesbian was the capitalized adjectival term referring to the Greek island of Lesbos. Its connotation of "female homosexuality" was added in the late 19th century, when an association was made with the tender and often passionate poetry written by Lesbian poet Sappho. (457)

Bonnie clears that the lesbianism is connected with female homosexuality. The term was coined from Greek island of Lesbos. It is fact that the history of lesbianism to the present has been largely reconstructed by European and American theorists starting in the late 20th century. Perceptions from other cultures are not readily available.

A lesbian is a homosexual woman. Furthermore Zimmerman argues "The word lesbian is also used to describe women in terms of their sexual identity or sexual behavior regardless of sexual orientation, or as an adjective to characterize or associate nouns with female homosexuality or same-sex attraction (453). This definition proves lesbianism as asexuality. Asexuality is the lack of sexual attraction to others, or low or absent interest in or desire for sexual activity. It may be considered the lack of a sexual orientation, or one of the variations there of, alongside heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality.

At different times and in different cultures, homosexual behavior has been

variously approved of, tolerated, punished, and banned. Homosexuality was not uncommon in ancient Greece and Rome, and the relationships between adult and adolescent males in particular have become a chief focus of Western classicists in recent years. Judeo-Christian as well as Muslim cultures have generally perceived homosexual behavior as sinful.

It can be understood that lesbians are oppressed people, they share in common the political, economic, social and psychological oppression with gay men but they are 'polar opposites'. Because many lesbians identify exclusively with women while many gay men identify exclusively with men. In this regard, Tyson explains; "Lesbians are closeted [and] have experienced the gender oppression, the all women straight or gay have experienced, while closeted gay men have had the opportunity to enjoy the patriarchal privileges extended to gay men" (323). It proves that lesbians are double marginalized in the society.

Lesbians, hence, are known 'double biased' by racism and homophobia. They are psychologically and physically suppressed by the patriarchal and heterosexual society. It is the heterosexual society who treats female as the object and commodity, so Adrienne Rich expresses her anguish towards the heterosexual society, she says:

Heterosexuality as an institution rejects the realm of literature which depicts woman bonding and woman identification as essential for female survival from the women in general and lesbians of color in particular by profoundly erasing them from academic feminist scholarship. (48)

Rich refuses heterosexuality because of its pervasive politics that cripples women to identify their actual position within and among. Furthermore she finds Rich finds women being controlled by patriarchal motherhood, economic exploitation, the

nuclear family, compulsory heterosexuality. According to her, these institutions are validated by legislation, religions fiat, media imagery and efforts at censorship due to homophobia. Furthermore through her political essay, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian existence:"

Adrienne Rich argues that heterosexuality is not "natural" or intrinsic in human instincts, but an institution imposed upon many cultures and societies that render women in a subordinate situation. It was written to challenge the erasure of lesbian existence from a large amount of scholarly feminist literature. (47)

From this text Rich argues that heterosexuality is violent political institution which supports the patriarchal society. It always put forwards and supports the role of male and dominates to female. So she argues women to drive their feeling towards female rather than male and portrays Lesbianism as an extension of feminism.

Lesbian poetry is a social constructionist project. Although some lesbians in the 1970s tended to essentialism, early radical writers questioned the institution of heterosexuality and self-consciously worked to create lesbian identity and community. However, Garber says; "Lesbian is a socially constructed category. Over time this construct became more rigidified in practice, in some communities leading to censure of certain lesbian behaviours and ideologies" (13). After 70s Lesbianism had a split. For this, many queer theorists in the 1990s dismissed lesbian feminism in wholesale as an unsophisticated essentialist politics. Diana Fuss says, "lesbian feminists have both deployed and lapsed into use of identity categories, however it is for the latter that they are most well-known today" (Fuss 12). She argues that the 'risk' taken by a variety of lesbian feminist writers, laid the groundwork for lesbian subjectivity by the 1990s. Hence Lesbianism, in the beginning, seems to be trying for unity of women

through pamphleting in order to raise consciousness among women. And being selective or inventive about the language systems and discursive rules with which women compose themselves is major endeavour of lesbian feminist work.

Lesbian and feminist criticism grew in responses to dominant power and many lesbian critics are feminists. But they differ in depth and breadth. Because lesbian criticism is concerned with issues of personal identity and politics to those analysed by feminists. Anne Almenario says:

However, lesbian critics address issues related to sexism and heterosexism, they deal with the psychological, social, economic, and political oppression fostered not only by patriarchal privilege but also by heterosexual privilege. Heterosexual privilege has, thus, put women at odds. (6)

The given statement clears that feminist women in general have been often charged of heterocentrism for their tendency to focus on the oppression of heterosexual women rather than the oppression of the all women. Thus, lesbians are erased from the feminist inspired academia.

This thesis on "Lesbian Obsession in Carole Ann Duffy's Poetry" studies largely from lesbian feminist perspective and other relevant texts on concerned topic. Primary focus of the study will be on the textual analysis of some selected Duffy's poems. This study will be accomplished along the library consultations, literary commentaries, journals and internet source.

Carole Ann Duffy was born 1955 is a British poet and playwright. She is a professor of contemporary poetry at Manchester metropolitan university and was appointed British Poet Laureate in 2009. As the Lesbian writer she addresses the issue of LGBT (Queer), oppression, gender and violence in an accessible language. Duffy's

work explores both everyday experience and others. In dramatizing scene from childhood, adolescence and adult, she discover moments of consolation through love, memory, and language. She slides in out of her characters live on a steam of possessions, aspirations, idioms and turn of phrase.

Carol Ann Duffy's long poetic career mirrors her position as a female artist witness to the violence, exploitation and injustice, not only in America but also all over the world. The writing of Duffy has helped to transform the current understanding of women's experience and of such facet of identity as motherhood, lesbianism, gender and ethnicity. Over the past thirty years, she has become one of the most eloquent, provocative voices on the value of art and the politics of sexuality, behind the well accepted paragon of women's stories encouraging the modern women to revise the old literature from female perspective.

Duffy in many poems has depicted her anxiety regarding the limitations Placed on women in the society. Regarding the writing of Duffy Phyllis Franklin writes: "She views the heterosexual structure in the society as the root cause of oppression on women" (54). It is the fact that within such society, for a few years, many women spent their intellect, time, energy and lives in search of their own individual identities but they could not pay attention to dismantle the existing views, values, traditions and limitations given to women. But Duffy argues that within the heterosexual world, women cannot achieve their identities and liberation.

In Duffy's view, if a woman, in the past, got her identity in the patriarchal world, other could not, and even that identity could not contribute for living to other women. Because the existing monolithic patriarchal world is constructed on the perceptions of men that wields women. The exclusion of women, in this way, is a politics of heterosexuality. The politics of heterosexuality has veiled women

identification implicitly, and explicitly. As a result, a woman has a traumatic relationship with another.

This research defends that Duffy expresses the internal desire of homosexual activity. She asserts that the LGBT has also feeling, emotion and desire but Mainstream of the society has always suppressed to express and they are thought a cursed by the god by doing bad karma in past life and not allow coming out openly in the society. In "Warming Her Pearl" the narrator engrossed with her mistress and wants to have sexual relation and when her mistress dances with the tall man she is burned. She thinks about her mistress undress and lying down naked on the bed. Carole Ann Duffy, in her poem "Valentine" challenges the traditional way to giving the gift in the Valentine's Day except giving the red rose she wanted to give onion for her sweet heart. Duffy's writing mainly defense upon the thought, emotion, feelings and desire of lesbian or third sexes and revolting against this domination by mainstream of the society.

Her works are read and enjoyed equally by critics, academics, readers and it features regularly on both university syllabuses and school syllabuses. Some critics have accused Duffy of being to populist but all her work is highly acclaimed for being both literary and accessible. She is regarded as one of the most loved, well known and successful contemporary British poet. Duffy's themes include language and representation of reality and the construction of the self-gender. Pamela Annas writes:

Carole Ann Duffy was named as the first lesbian poet laureate today. She succeeds current incumbent Andrew Motion, who steps down today after holding the position for ten years. She will become the first lesbian, Scottish and female holder post. Carole Ann Duffy is the first

female as well as lesbian poet laureate. (5)

However different critics have explored her poem her poem from different perspective. Michael Ryan views that Anne Duffy's writing are deeply rooted in personal experience he further views:

Carol Ann Duffy uses everyday experiences and fantasy for inspiration. She uses dramatic scenes from her childhood, adult life, and idioms in her poetry. She writes her poems from memory, love, and language using simple words and in a way that doesn't sound from her perspective. (70)

Duffy's writing is highly acclaimed for being both literary and accessible, and she is regard as one of the British most well- loved and successful contemporary poet.

Different critics have explained the writing of Anne Duffy's in different way Linda Wagner says:

Carol Ann Duffy owes both her stature as a modern poet and her deserved popularity to her repeatedly tender treatment of the theme of loss. Behind her major poems seems to lie a conviction that human life promises little and delivers less; from her early years, she has concluded that the length of a human life is likely to be a bitter experience: in short, a mean time. (45)

Duffy's choice of words in her literary writing is hard to forget. Each poem has a beautiful life of its own, but together as an anthology. In this regard former American laureate Robert Pinsky declared:

Duffy's early amorous lyrics depict the agonies of errant, or neglectful, male partners; even *The World's Wife* demonstrates that men and masculinity remain a site of (albeit critical) negotiation for the amorous

subject. By following the development of Duffy's amorous poetics across the various collections since "Standing Female Nude" a discursive trend can be detected in which men are, at first, desirable. (53)

Another critic Phyllis Franklin forwards his idea regarding the writing of Anne Duffy. He says that her writing can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one for this he writes:

Her poems appeal to those who wouldn't usually read poetry and they appear on the national curriculum. Here, an *Observer* reviewer celebrates her popularity and her technical adroitness: Duffy's poems are at once accessible and brilliantly idiosyncratic and subtle". She writes of life in all its sadness - life, as what Eliot calls, that "infinitely gentle, infinitely suffering thing. (15)

Above given statement clears that in comparison to the other feminist poets utterly aggressive in their attack, Duffy is very compromising. Her feminist attitude, guided as it is by a more humanistic vision and need for social change, does not allow her to be too harsh towards the patriarchs. The concept of androgyny in many of her poems also supports this vision. In this sense, Duffy's feminism embodies broader political scope as compared to the parochial polemics of other feminisms. Among the poem like "the Scottish Prince" in this poem she shows that homosexual is the entity that is integral part of human being.

In general obsession means a continual thought, concept, picture, or urge which is experienced as invasive and not proper, and results in significant fear, distress, or discomfort. *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines Obsessive "is an anxiety disorder in which people have unwanted and repeated thoughts, feelings,

images, and sensations (obsessions) and engage in behaviors or mental acts in response to these thoughts or obsessions (332). This statement clears that when someone is obsessed they lost their control of their feelings about the object of their obsession.

Regarding psychological obsession Fadul A. Jose says: "Some people with Psychological obsession experience sexual obsessions that may involve intrusive thoughts or images of "kissing, touching, fondling, oral sex, anal sex, intercourse, incest, and rape" with "strangers, acquaintances, parents, children, family members, friends, coworkers, animals, and religious figures", and can include "heterosexual or homosexual content" with persons of any age" (252). As with other intrusive, unpleasant thoughts or images, some disquieting sexual thoughts at times are normal, but people with psychological obsession may attach extraordinary significance to the thoughts. For example, obsessive fears about sexual orientation can appear to the person with OCD, and even to those around them, as a crisis of sexual identity. A relatively vague obsession could involve a general sense of disarray or tension.

Lesbian Feminism and Gender Study

Although lesbian feminist theorizing has significantly contributed to feminist thought, it has also generally treated lesbianism as a kind of applied issue. Feminist theories developed outside the context of lesbianism are brought to bear on lesbianism in order to illuminate the nature of lesbian oppression and women's relation to women within lesbianism. Early radical lesbians began from the feminist claim that all male–female relationships are power relationships. They then argued either that the lesbian is the paradigm case of the patriarchal resister because she refuses to be heterosexual or that she fits on a continuum of types of patriarchal resisters. In taking this line,

lesbian theorists made a space for lesbianism by focusing on what they took to be the inherently feminist and anti-patriarchal nature of lesbian existence. In this connection, Cheshire Calhoun writes, "Somewhat later, lesbian theorists were less inclined to read lesbianism as feminist resistance to male dominance" (25). Instead, following the trend that feminist theory itself took, the focus largely shifted to women's relation to women: the presence of ageism, racism, and anti-Semitism among lesbians, the problem of avoiding a totalizing.

Lesbian feminists used feminist critiques of heterosexual women's subordination to men within the family as a platform for valorizing lesbian existence. "Lesbian feminists like Monique Wittig and Charlotte Bunch argued that the nuclear family based on heterosexual marriage enables men to appropriate for themselves women's productive and reproductive labor"(Calhoun 134). This statement clear that lesbians do not enter into this heterosexual nuclear family, they can be read as refusing to allow their labor to be appropriated by men.

Judith Butler through her essay "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity" mentions about the Lesbian feminism, "Lesbian feminists also used feminist critiques of heterosexual women's confinement to the private sphere of family and exclusion from the public sphere of politics and labor to argue for a new vision of lesbians' personal life" (582). In that vision, lesbians would reject the private family. They would opt instead for a politicized life of connection to other women outside the family.

Judith Butler is a popular lesbian feminist theorist who puts forward the constructionist approach to gender. She takes gender is a social construct. She states certain roles, gestures, desires; instructions are repeated by females and males as well. The per-formative repetition of these norms, desires and gesture helps to create in

territory within an individual. To her gender is a performance:

According to Judith Butler heterosexual normativity is formed by the foreclosing homosexual. The basic forming Heterosexual is on norm and the foreclosure of innate, primordial same sex attraction Homosexuality. Subjects became melancholic because of necessity to foreclosure of primordial homosexuality. In other words subjects are melancholic because of the compulsion to accept of Heterosexual norms by foreclosing Homosexual desire. (583)

This is the root cause of melancholy. Gender is a disciplinary production. It is produced through the circulation of social discourses. Through the per-formative act of repeating prescribed role, norms, practice and instruction gender originates.it remains stable and takes the form of discipline. Gender is stabilized by construction of heterosexuality.

Judith Butler believes gender is the social construct. She rejects the universal validity of concept of gender. Judith butler utilizes Freudian concept of foreclosure of the same attraction to elaborate her view on the social construction of gender.

According to Judith Butler: "Heterosexual normativity is formed by foreclosing, 'Homosexual'. She views that Gender is the disciplinary production. It is produced through the circulation of social discourse (585). Through the performativity act of repeating prescribed role, norms practices and instruction, gender originates. It remains stable and takes the form of Discipline.

Judith Butler points out three different aspects of construction gender. The process of construction of gender involves three aspects they are: Anatomical sex, Gender identity, Gender performance. LGBT self wants to achieve complete sense of freedom from all those fixed rules, responsibilities, function and position that of

society assign. They want to be the subject of 'I' not 'IT' It is fact that their sexual and passionate choices differ signifying from the traditional Heterosexual choice. LGBT could not 'come out from closet' it means they are hesitated to say I am Homo, lesbian or gay due to the restriction of the society. LGBT are suppressed and silence by the society.

Lesbianism in Duffy's Poems

Carol Ann Duffy in her poetry has played the significant role to social and political change. She has largely influenced women's lives. Her poetry reflects challenges to heterosexuality and a chronicle of the evolving consciousness of the modern women. Her writing opposes the traditional heterosexual normativity, and shows the Obsession towards lesbianism. Her poem "Warming Her Pearls" explores the very intimate and co-dependent relationship between a maid and her mistress. In this dramatic monologue narrator is mate she falls in love with her mistress. She cannot express her love attraction towards her mistress because it is taken illegitimate by the heterosexual society. Speaker expresses her attraction towards her mistress in following manner:

Next to my own skin, her pearls. My mistress
bids me wear them, warm them, until evening
when I'll brush her hair. At six, I place them
round her cool, white throat. All day I think of her. (1-4)

Above stanza depicts the unusual daily task of mate and mistress. Everyday Mate wears her mistress pearls during the day time. When she wears her mate pearls she feels erotic towards her mistress. When she brushes her mistress hair and place her pearls round her white throat she feels pleasure. So whole day she keeps on thinking that moment. Furthermore speaker expresses the beauty and charming of her

mistress:

She's beautiful. I dream about her
 in my attic bed; picture her dancing
 with tall men, puzzled by my faint, persistent scent
 beneath her French perfume, her milky stones. (9-12)

In this stanza Duffy is presenting the difference desire between mate and mistress. Mate day dreams her. She wants to make her partner, and wants to sleep in her attic bed. But her mistress wants to fall in love with elite handsome man. Speaker keeps her dreaming through whole day but she cannot express her love towards her mistress.

It is fact homosexual is taken as insane in today's society. Heterosexual normativity take it as evil and curse so even today transgender cannot come in front of the society. Transgender are marginalized by the heterosexual society. They are forced to suppress their desire. Speaker of this poem also cannot come front of her mistress and express her desire due to the norms of heterosexual society. Regarding the hierarchy of gender Judith Butler argues:

Gender is a social construct. Certain roles, gestures, desire; instructions are repeated by females and males as well. The performative repetition of these norms, desires and gesture helps to create in territory within an individual. Heterosexual normativity is formed by the foreclosing homosexual. (583)

Butler claims that gender is social construct and it is formed by the performance. Heterosexual is formed by the foreclosure of same sex attraction. From it can be clear homosexual is suppressed by the heterosexual society.

I dust her shoulders with a rabbit's foot,
 watch the soft blush seep through her skin

like an indolent sigh. In her looking-glass
 my red lips part as though I want to speak. (13-16)

In the above stanza speaker applies various cosmetics on her mistress skin. One of the main duty of speaker. Her mistress is rich but she is not happy because her relationship with man is not success. "My red lips part as though I want to speak" from this line speaker want to say she wants to be her red lips and want to speak her. But she cannot do it. Similarly she expresses her felling followingly:

Full moon. Her carriage brings her home. I see
 her every movement in my head.... Undressing,
 taking off her jewels, her slim hand reaching
 for the case, slipping naked into bed, the way. (17-20)

In this stanza speaker imagines in erotic way. She imagines her mistress undressing and going to bed after putting her pearls in their case. From this stanza speaker wants to say that prince come to search Cinderella at midnight due to her beauty. But speaker says she is unlucky because she doesn't attract any man. So she falls in love with her own lips. Speaker falls in love with herself because she doesn't attract opposite sex. In the final stanza speaker says:

she always does.... And I lie here awake,
 knowing the pearls are cooling even now
 in the room where my mistress sleeps. All night
 I feel their absence and I burn. (21-25)

In the above stanza, maid lays awake thinking about the pearls cooling in their case. She knows mistress is always alone. The maid misses the cool feeling they gave her throat. She burns when she sees her mistress sleeping alone in her room. Maid is also so excited to touch her mistress body. Duffy's poems could be interpreted in term Queer theory.

Girlfriends is another poem of love between women, is derived from a poem by the French Symbolist poet, Verlaine. This poem explores the lesbian relationship between two women. This poem is against the traditional norms of heterosexual norms. Heterosexual code and conduct restrict the homosexual relation. They take homosexual as the sin and injustice. Queer theorist like Judith Butler and Adrienne Rich are against the heterosexual normativity.

Being a feminist activist, she ultimately deals with the female issues, but her method of dealing is not usual attack on males and heterosexual society her emphasis is on the creation of the female's community for the consolidation of their strength. While doing so, she supports lesbianism, which is a strategy to downplay the importance of men for women.

Advocating a lesbian relationship among women, she challenges the notion of heterosexuality as a natural biological phenomenon. What is called natural is in fact constructed, and heterosexuality is also constructed by males for their pleasure. Thus, to challenge this masculine opportunism, she celebrates love among women. She rejects the heterosexual normativity she expresses the homoerotic theme following way. Thematically she tries to reveal the suppressed female passions for creativity, strength, equality and freedom, but poetically she could not free herself from the male set norms and the true freedom that she passionately aspired is hindered in these poems:

That hot September night, we slept in a single bed,
naked, and on our frail bodies the sweat
cooled and renewed itself. I reached out my arms
and you, hands on my breasts, kissed me. (1-4)

The above stanza is taken from Duffy's poem "Girlfriends" this poem is full of

complete erotic sense of lesbian lover. Through this poem Duffy addresses issues of lesbian visibility, lesbian identification, lesbian desire, and lesbian performativity. Above lines concentrates on the passion of lesbian lover they are ready for sexual course in a hot summer night Liz Yorke writes in his Dissertation: *British Lesbian Poetics: A Brief Exploration* that:

Post-feminist, post-lesbian feminist, queer feminist works remain clearly identifiable. . . Scanning anthologies from the past three decades of lesbian poetry. . . Maureen Duffy, Marge Yeo, Dorothea Smartt, Gillian Spraggs and Carol Ann Duffy, Liz Yorke addresses issues of lesbian visibility. (5)

Liz Yorke concludes the post-feminist, Queer feminist like Maureen Duffy, Marge Yeo, Dorothea Smartt, Gillian Spraggs and Carol Ann Duffy, Liz Yorke addresses issues of lesbian visibility. Their writings focus on the identity of minority lesbian women. Through this poem "Girlfriends" Duffy is raising the voice of lesbian couple, their identity, desire and passion furthermore she express the desire:

Our nightgowns lay on the floor where you fell to your knees
and became ferocious, pressed your head to my stomach,
your mouth to the red gold, the pink shadows; except
I did not see it like this at the time, but arched
my back and squeezed water from the sultry air
with my fists. Also I remembered hearing, clearly
but distantly, a siren some streets away – de. (5-11)

These above lines present the images of oppressive couple's sexual desire. This line describes the lovers to explore each other's naked bodies. The excited activity that follows is quite directly described as one lover 'became ferocious' and orally explored

the other's most intimate parts as suggested by 'red gold' and pink shadows'.

From the above expression Duffy wants to bring her experience of her lesbianism love before her reader. In the above stanza persona reveals her inner desire to show her female lover and to make her lesbian love and life visible. "Duffy has used the symbol "Red gold" which indicates the power that Duffy would like to utilize to disclose the unspeakable and ignored love of women.

Lesbian Feminism, which has evolved as one of the major approaches in the literary studies, is like most broad-based philosophical perspective and accommodates several species under its genus. It is no longer taken as a certain movement that is bound by certain set of assumptions and nor it is completed after certain time period. Lesbian- Feminism is not a theory of certain group but has its presence all over the world. Basically the theory of being oppressed and the victims of prejudice, it has its relevance all the time and in all places of the world. Though variety and diversity is prevalent in lesbian-feminism, yet all of them share some of the fundamental characteristics that are common to all.

As lesbian-Feminist critic Duffy protest against heterosexual normativity and patriarchal society. Indeed she has often focused upon what is absent rather than what is present, reflecting concern with the silencing and marginalization of lesbian women in a patriarchal and heterosexual culture, a culture organized in favor of men. This culture has remained pervasively dominant in the civilization since the emergence of human community. The dominance is felt and conspicuous in all areas of human concern. So, post-feminism protests against this constructed but not natural dominance and oppression. As Carolyn J. Allen also writes "... feminists... see the necessity for insisting not only on the oppressive nature of patriarchal power but on its systematic construction as well" (278). Through the poem "Lizzie, Six"

She has protest against the patriarchal society:

The Abuser

He doesn't 'care' about Lizzie.

He promises her the 'moon' but this gives Lizzie false confidence as she will never get the moon.

He intends to keep her to himself and as she is so young Lizzie knows no different a life than the one she is living. (1-6)

Through the above expression she is presenting male oppression, usurpation, biased attitude, injustice, unequal treatment towards females. Patriarchal society treats female as the commodity and object. The expression of female voice have remained at the heart of her poetic career since the very beginning. Through this poem thematically she tries to reveal the suppressed female voices and fights for creativity, strength, equality and freedom.

Being a feminist activist, she ultimately deals with the female issues, but her method of dealing is not usual attack on males; her emphasis is on the creation of the females' community for the consolidation of their strength. While doing so, she supports lesbianism, which is a strategy to downplay the importance of men for women. Advocating a lesbian relationship among women, she challenges the notion of heterosexuality as a natural biological phenomenon. What is called natural is in fact constructed, and heterosexuality is also constructed by males for their pleasure. Thus, to challenge this masculine opportunism, she celebrates love among women. Charlotte Malcolm in his Article "Carol Ann Duffy: A Corus of Female Voice" writes:

Duffy re-presents gender and challenges traditional binary definitions

The near ubiquitous use of the dramatic monologue speaks both to and for women, and is used to explore a wide range of themes and

experiences. Deceptively 'plain' language is used to ironically draw attention to the limitations of language itself in conveying desired meaning. (11)

Carol Ann Duffy Re-define the myth of Gender constructed by patriarchal society through her writing. She advocates the voice of womanhood and raises the voice of lesbianism.

Duffy expresses her anger regarding the position of women in the culture constructed by heterosexuality. This cultural construct is represented in the form of old myths that presents women as dualistic creature as well as the 'other'. Domination, depersonalization and dehumanization of women's sexuality are the treatments that women have been getting from males since mythical time. Thus taking a humanistic perspective, Duffy wants to reconstitute the prejudice culture, which has silenced women's identity. To uplift the silenced female identity she has focused in women-women relationship.

"Oppenheim's Cup and Saucer" is the another poem where she has expressed her lesbian love attraction towards another woman. Through this poem she advocates the women relation with woman. Through this poem she supports lesbianism, which is a strategy to downplay the importance of men for women. Advocating a lesbian relationship among women, she challenges the notion of heterosexuality as a natural biological phenomenon. What is called natural is in fact constructed, and heterosexuality is also constructed by males for their pleasure. Thus, to challenge this masculine opportunism, she celebrates love among women. She express her feeling:

She asked me to luncheon in fur. Far from
the loud laughter of men, our secret life stirred.
I remember her eyes, the slim rope of her spine

This is your cup, she whispered, and this is mine. (1-4)

In the above stanza speaker is presenting the conversation of with her lady partner. She finds sensual pleasure when she starts conversation with her. She feels ashamed when she whispered her. Speaker still remembers the beauty of her; she still images her eyes and her slim body and hair. She feels pleasure when she remembers her. "The loud laughter of men, our secret life stirred" (2). Through this statement she is presenting, her anguish against the male dominated patriarchal society, which always opposes the female sensual pleasure. Through this line she is indirectly opposing the domination of patriarchal society. The fact that heterosexuality enables men to control women's sexual desire.

Carol Ann Duffy as female artist opposes the violence, exploitation and injustice, towards female. The writing of Duffy has helped to transform the current understanding of women's experience and of such facet of identity as motherhood, lesbianism, gender and ethnicity. Over the past thirty years, she has become one of the most eloquent, provocative voices on the value of art and the politics of sexuality, behind the well accepted paragon of women's stories encouraging the modern women to revise the old literature from female perspective Roger Brill says:

Duffy's many poems, has depicted her anxiety regarding the limitations placed on women in the society. She views the heterosexual structure in the society as the root cause of oppression on women. Within such society, for a few years, many women spent their intellect, time. . . But Rich argues that within the heterosexual world, women cannot achieve their identities and liberation. (23)

Carol Ann Duffy opposes the patriarchal and heterosexual codes and normativity.

Being a feminist activist, she ultimately deals with the female issues, but her method

of dealing is not the usual attack on males; her emphasis is on creation of females' own community for the consolidation of their strength. While doing so, she supports lesbianism, which is the strategy to downplay the importance of men for women. Advocating a lesbian relationship among women, she challenges the notion of heterosexuality as a natural biological phenomenon. What is called natural is in fact constructed, and heterosexuality is also constructed by males for their pleasure. Thus, to challenge this masculine opportunism, she celebrates love among women. She argues that it is heterosexual society which oppresses the minority lesbian voices and identity.

We drank the sweet hot liquid and talked dirty.

As she undressed me, her breasts were a mirror

and there were mirrors in the bed. She said Place

your legs around my neck, that's right. Yes. (5-8)

Above stanza describes the homoerotic activities between two female lovers. Both the lovers drank the hot liquid wine. And they talked erotic sexual chat. They were completely undressed and embracing their breast. They feel extremely pleasure when they slept together in the same bed. From the above stanza Duffy is challenging the heterosexual normativity.

This poem can also be taken as voice of voiceless women who is lost in the patriarchal domination. This poem is the representation of women voice. This poem does not only focus on the physical domination of heterosexual normativity but also present biological domination of patriarchal society, so even today these minority marginalized female cannot come directly in front of the society.

As feminist writer W.B Carol Ann Duffy has opposes the traditional concept of myth, which presents male as active and female as passive. She revisits myths that

shows the women as secondary being and valorizes the male actions and questions patriarchal values. She believes patriarchal and heterosexual values make women victim and took away the chances to gain access to the knowledge and improve their choices. Duffy while revisiting and questioning the patriarchal myth about the status of women makes distinct place for herself in history. Through this poem she presents women as active, who have sexual passion and desire as male member have. It is fact that in heterosexual society women desire and sexual passion is suppressed. Male's passion became the passion for female.

Duffy, in her poetry, has played the significant role to social and political change. She has largely influenced women's lives. Her poetry reflects challenges to heterosexuality and a chronicle of the evolving consciousness of the modern women. Rich raises the voice of opposition in accepting patriarchal definitions of femininity by separating from the political and social reality that trivializes and subordinates females.

Conclusion: Rejection of heterosexuality

Duffy, in her poetry, has played the significant role to social and political change. She has largely influenced women's lives. Her poetry reflects challenges to heterosexuality and a chronicle of the evolving consciousness of the modern women. Duffy raises the voice of opposition in accepting patriarchal definitions of femininity by separating from the political and social reality that trivializes and subordinates females.

Duffy has questioned the heterosexual institution in her poetry and has consciously worked to re-create women identity taking oppositional stance towards heterosexuality and trying to establish women's positional stance. Heterosexuality as a political institution is so pervasive that it has not only controlled women's body by

various means but also has controlled their consciousness. That is why; women should seek their primary emotional and erotic tie in themselves in order to have women-identified experience, and towards freedom.

Heterosexuality distorts women experience. It is so powerful that it has made women believe that heterosexuality is a compulsory union among sexes. Duffy says that women who believe that women's primary emotional and erotic energy is towards men is their 'false perception'. It is the propaganda of heterosexual politics that percolates false conviction regarding sexuality to cramp women's creative potential, and to strip women of their autonomy by implicating them in more than profit motive.

Duffy, in her poetry, has played the significant role to social and political change. She has largely influenced women's lives. Her poetry reflects challenges to heterosexuality and a chronicle of the evolving consciousness of the modern women. Duffy raises the voice of opposition in accepting patriarchal definitions of femininity by separating from the political and social reality that trivializes and subordinates Females.

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