

Queer Shakespeare; Focus on *Henry IV* (Part I & II)

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Abstract

Shakespeare has undoubtedly shown his mastery in the depiction of the characters in his world celebrated dramas. Despite, being among the bests, Shakespeare has not been able to disregard homosexuality and its presentation in the characters' activities. The objective of this paper is to find out how queer Shakespeare and his characters have been in *Henry IV* plays. Moreover, the queer approach of Shakespeare as a writer and person is the aim to be found out in this paper. For this investigation, a queer analysis of the texts along with critics' view, historical review, theories like feminism, psychoanalysis and queer are to be applied here to find out Shakespeare's attitude towards sexuality for the better understanding of the works of Shakespeare in general.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Homosexuality, Psychoanalysis, Feminism

1. Introduction

Shakespeare's approach towards sexuality is been transparently represented by his depiction of masculine characters and their queer activities in *Henry IV* (Part I & II). Besides, the relationship, between Sir John Falstaff and Prince Hal, is one of the greatly suspicious examples to bring queer theory in analyzing both the characters and Shakespeare's approach to manly friendship. Again, there is another attachment between two young men named, Hal and Ned Poins, which indicates much more than mere friendship. Moreover, Hotspur, a foil character, has been also a part of Shakespeare's way of approaching manhood. Even, King Henry IV, who does not even have a single talk about his queen even though he is nearing death, is been shown obsessed with kingship, right and societal inheritance by his rioting son. Then, the rejection of Prince's companion and soul mate, Sir John Falstaff, and his companies brings enormous questions about the life Prince Hal has enjoyed earlier. These dramas being part of royal history a flashback of the sexual lifestyles of many members of royal family strengthens the doubt of being queer in regard to both Shakespeare and the royal characters used in these dramas. However, the adaptations of these dramas in cinema also give a lot of directives to analyze the approach of Shakespeare and his characters. Furthermore, feminism, psychoanalysis and queer theory help out greatly to bring the hidden meaning and explanation of the text to light. Thus, Shakespeare by *Henry IV* (Both Parts) portrays such a kind of society and characters that reveal him and his queer look.

2. Relationship between Prince Hal and Falstaff

Henry IV (Part I & II) offers a significant meditation on the relationship between Sir John Falstaff and Prince Hal who turns out to be a societal king as Henry V in the later part of the dramas giving a lot of colors to paint the relation from a critic's perspectives. From the start of part 1 of this drama, Falstaff and Hal are seen very close and intimate one sharing thoughts, ideas, desire and bed too. A man of the stature of Sir John Falstaff finds what he seeks for his life from Hal. Again, Hal, though he possesses a different intension of passing away the holidays, also finds what has been going on at present with his life a pleasing one. In the very first speech, John Falstaff asks Prince Hal the time of the day. At this stage, in order to reply Hal describes sun as:

And the blessed sun himself a fair
Hot wench in flame-colored taffeta (I.ii.11-12. Part 1)

And, in answer to that Falstaff clarifies his idea of their activities:

Hal, for we
That take purses go by the moon and the seven
Stars, and not by Phoebus (I.ii.14-16. Part 1)

This puts a light on their lifestyle and the thoughts in the mind of Falstaff as he rather chooses the moon, as the sun is signified with the color of women, showing that the approach to coldness is preferable for a man like Falstaff. Besides, Falstaff urges Hal to call themselves 'Diana's Foresteres', 'Gentlemen of the shade', 'Minions of the moon' (I.ii.26. Part I). This is how Shakespeare introduces the relationship which seems not normal from the very beginning of the drama putting some kind of doubt in the mind of readers as they prefer darkness and cold to light and heat. Moreover, Falstaff calls Hal 'rascaaliest sweet young prince' (II.I.68). In this oxymoron, Falstaff quite plainly shows how evil and yet sweet their relationship is. With the passing on the dialogues between these two, Falstaff wishes to find a name and acclamation of their relationship:

I would to God thou and I
Knew where a commodity of good names
Were to be bought. (I.ii.71-73, Part 1)

Again, in reply to Hal, Falstaff says:

Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal, God forgive thee for it. (I.ii.82-84, Part I)

This shows that there are various meanings of this bonding between these two. Otherwise, Falstaff has nothing to blame Hal which also indicates to personal bodily attachment they have been carrying on and this may have, perhaps, have made Falstaff say so due to the attraction for Hal which gets heightened by the behavior of Hal. And, Falstaff plainly claims:

Before I knew thee, Hal,
I knew nothing, and now am I,
If a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked.
I must give over this life, and I will give it over.
By the Lord, an I do not, I am a villain.

I'll be damned for never a king's son in Christendom. (I.ii.84-90, Part I)

The feelings of guilt and fear due to religion, society jumps over Hal's head here and turns out to be burdened with the life which both of them are enjoying right now in the drama. After that, Hal bids away Falstaff by calling him 'Latter spring' and 'All-hallowsummer' (I.ii.135, Part I) which clarifies the bonding from Hal's point of view. Falstaff is some kind of relief from the dead coldness of November and quite similar to the spring, that, though lately and unexpectedly, has come to the life of Hal fulfilling his desires and had made him bloom in full. Meanwhile in Act II, Scene II, at the robbery scene when Hal calls Falstaff a coward, protesting Hal's words Falstaff addresses himself not as a coward but Hal's 'grandfather'. If it has been a mere friendly bonding with no further associations, Shakespeare would have used any blood relation but 'grandfather'. Because, it is known to all what a relationship of a grandfather usually has with grandchildren. Even in Bangladeshi culture, this relation among the grand's is thought as a semi sexual one as the grandparents are often seen making sexual jokes over their relationship. Falstaff can be a friend to Hal but the mention of grandfather relates sexuality in their bonding. Again, in Act II, Scene IV, just after the robbing scene Hal calls Falstaff 'butter' (108) which signifies the fact that globulous bodied Falstaff is yet luscious to devour. In the same way, Falstaff calls Prince Hal a 'bull's pizzle, you stockfish' (II.IV.217) which connotes sexuality as pizzle means penis and stockfish means cod. Cod oil is known to have a sexual association as it is been used to enhance sex power. These names used by both the characters plainly suggest this in something more than social friendship which is engrossed with the idea of sexuality. This love is confessed by Falstaff when Hal says for an act of play on robbery scene where Falstaff says; 'Ah. No more of that Hal, an thou lovest me' (II.IV.250). However, Falstaff shows his desire to be with Hal when he acts as King and comments on Falstaff saying:

I see virtue in his looks. If
Then the tree may be known by the fruit, as
The fruit by the tree, then peremptorily I
Speak it: there is virtue in that Falstaff; him
Keep with, the rest banish. (II.iv. 78-82, Part I)

Again, in the same scene the role being alternated, Prince Hal as King says Falstaff 'a misleader of youth' and 'Satan' (409). Here, according to Hal, Falstaff like a Satan turns the young people to live a satanous life of darkness of which Hal is known but yet cannot leave it due to irresistible attraction towards it. Again, in this act Hal, as a King, justifies his position:

...God help
The wicked. If to be old and merry be a sin,
Then many an old host that I know is
Damned. If to be fat be to be hated, then
Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. (II.iv. 16-20, Part I)

By the meantime in Act 3, Scene 3, Prince Hal asks Falstaff if he owes a thousand pounds. In reply, Falstaff counters Hal with very passionate and shocking speech:

A thousand pound, Hal? A million.
Thy love is worth a million; thou owest me thy love. (III.iii.122-23, Part I)

Love can never be bought or counted but if that can be done, Prince Hal owes a lot to Falstaff. This expressive and indicating speech of Falstaff lucidly shows the love relation between these two which is not a mere friendship rather it is a wistful one where Falstaff has given Hal much more than he is capable of giving. This kind of love between two men can never be a love of friend, father, brother but a soul mate which indicates the homoeroticism that is been celebrated and enjoyed by these two men. In the battle field, just before the start of battle, Falstaff sees danger coming to Hal and so he wishes:

I would 'twere bedtime, Hal, and all well. (V. i. 125, Part I)

Here, Falstaff becomes emotional and nostalgic in a sense of losing Hal forever either by his or by Hal's death. The specific use of the word, 'bed', noticeably links the image of battle field with that of their past experience at bed where they may have been in ecstasy. Besides, the down memory lane of Falstaff shakes him up for the fear of not having that kind of lascivious life again. Meanwhile, after the war in Part II of *Henry IV*, Hal desires for a 'small beer' (II.ii.6, Part II) and laments over his father's sickness but yet he cannot leave the life. It is more of a kind of addiction to that life and this attraction is not sure to come only for living a youthful holiday life rather a secret life calls him back and so, he is seen fighting so much with himself where he has to make a choice between his father and Falstaff. In midst of this kind of dilemma one may wish for something intoxicating to get a mental relief which can give his soul a space to breath. As a reason of Hal's soreness, Poinc says:

Why, because you have been so lewd and
So much engrafted to Falstaff. (II. ii. 50-51, Part II)

Even, Ned Poinc finds the attachment of Hal with that of Falstaff is much more than simple attachment of youthful enjoyment. Just before going away from Hal's life Falstaff writes a letter to Hal which speaks:

(reads) I commend me to
There, I commend thee, and I leave thee. Be not too familiar
With Poinc, for he misuses thy favors so
Much that he swears thou art to marry his sister

Nell. Repent at idle times as thou mayest, and so, farewell. (II.ii.107-111, Part II)

This has been the last emotional touch as soul mate because this mate, Henry V, gets a new poster and new identity where he has no past but present and future. In this regard, Vin Nardizzi in the essay 'Grafted to Falstaff and Compound with Catherine; mingling Hal in the Second Tetralogy' says:

... both suggest that the social mingling of Falstaff and Hal are instances of sodomy. My chapter arrives at a similar conclusion about the nature of these relations. (Gaze, 2009, p. 150)

Vin also says;

... it connects the mingling of Falstaff and Hal to the tetralogy's final gesture toward marital alliance, Harry's proposal to the French Princess Catherine that they 'compound a boy, half French, half English' (Henry V, V. ii, 194-95) ... Hal's match with Falstaff and Harry's marriage to Catherine would likely be characterized, respectively, as 'homosexual' and 'heterosexual' under the sex/gender dispensation of modernity... (Gaze, 2009, p. 150)

So, Shakespeare's depiction of the Falstaff and Hal relation plainly puts a question about their approach to sexuality and friendship which is called 'transgressive sexuality' by Lois Tyson. At the time of clarifying the term Tyson says;

...those that involve several characters, the leading double lives, the relaxing of inhibitions associated with alcohol and riotous parties-create an atmosphere of sexual experimentations that sets the stage, so to speak, for a queer interpretation. (Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, 2015, p. 326)

Thus, Shakespeare's presentation of this relation is depicted because of not only the demand of plot but also his own approach to sexuality which has been queer. For the historical background Shakespeare has been bound to portray Hal's rioting life but there has been no necessity of a so sodomic character like Falstaff.

3. Ned Poins and Prince Hal

Ned Poins is a character of young age who acts as Prince Hal's dissentious sidekick in the *Henry IV* plays. Though his name alludes to his being tiny and insignificant not only to the plot but also to many critics, he is in unusual relationship with Prince Hal. Queer study and critics mostly regard Falstaff and Hotspur as the matter of study but Ned Poins has also a contribution in regard to queer studies of *Henry IV* plays. Interestingly, Poins calls himself 'a second brother' (II. ii 53, Part 1) implying that Poins family has something to inherit though his social rank cannot be definitely said. Besides, he is shown more of a courtier who is not seen in court usually. Poins says in Act 2, Scene 2 in the 127th line of Part 1 that he is Hal's 'shadow' and he will follow him. Here, the word, 'shadow' is a pregnant word with a lot of possible meanings. It can also mean something ephemeral, a parasite, and a feeble person whose presence brings darkness by intercepting the focus of light. As the parasite live on by others and day by day decays the other, Poins does the same which can be associated with homoeroticism as there is association of body too. Moreover, he can be called a gallant not because of doing something brave but because of his concern for fashion and pleasure. However, Poins' way of approaching life with drinking and jesting may be associated with the rioting youths of the society depicted by Shakespeare in his drama. Here, Poins is been presented more as a vociferous young man with ungentelemanly and petty behavior as he has been seen calling Prince Hal as Sirrah several times in the drama which is not considered as a moderate behavior from a low ranked person to call a person of higher rank. By the way, Poins is been labeled with the term rogue which is been done for his love of mischief and willful disregard of life style that he willingly shares with Hal and Falstaff. However, Poins trickery and exaggerated desire associate a place of weariness in the mind of everyone including the readers. In Act II, Scene II of *Henry IV* part II, Hal and Poins are met at the same moment where Hal says Poins that he is 'exceedingly weary' (01) and Poins teases Hal for his talking 'idly' (23) after he has 'labored so hard' (24). With this speech of Poins, there arise a lot of questions about the reason of Hal's exhaustion. It is possible that strenuous journey from Wales back to London may have made Hal weary or tired. But, it is also conceivable that Hal is tired because of the disparity between his high rank and recent activities with his poisonous companies. And, Hal is seen, giving a speech on Poins' dress:

To take note how
Many pair of silk stockings thou hast—with these, and those
That were thy peach-colored ones—or to bear the inventory
Of thy shirts, as, one for superfluity and another for use. (II. ii. 13-16. Part II)

Here, Hal discusses the fashion and ware drove of Poins and this speech of silk and lilen focuses that Poins is closely and intimately connected not only to Hal but also to the representation of masculinity of the drama. Being expensive and foreign material of that time England, Silk commonly represents lust, wastefulness. Even, the color of Poins' stocking represents extravagance in regard to a person like Poins. This attire by Poins highlights the deficiency of the character that disgraces Hal by accompanying. Here, male homoerotic desire is consistent with both the characters, Poins and Hal. The problem with Poins is that he loves Hal in the Boar Tavern. Because of this, the allegation of sodomy comes before friendships to this relationship where one is superior to other in rank. Laurie Shannon has said that Renaissance friendship discourses highlight the likeness of sex and station (Shannon, 2002, pp. 17-55). To add to this, Angel Day's *The English Secreterie* says that there cannot be any friend where there is an inequity of any kind. Even, Superiority is highly discarded at the time of same sex friendship. Again Falstaff's letter to Hal speaks about being 'familiar' with Poins which means Poins taking the position of Falstaff in the heart of Hal. Falstaff says:

Be not too familiar with Poins, for he misuses thy favours so much
That he swears thou art to marry his sister Nell" (II.ii.103–104, Part II)

Moreover Falstaff's letter repeatedly underscores Hal's intimacy and close friendship. Falstaff's first words about Poins are:

O, if men were to be saved by merit,
Whathole in hell were hot enough for him?"
(I. II. 84–85, Part I)

Falstaff's repeated complains about Poins reveal the dislike and may be the envy for Poins in Falstaff's mind, as the play places two of them in competitors' place. In this regard, Falstaff tells Doll that Poins is Hal's friend because of Poins' some special ability that Falstaff does not possess. Falstaff briefs:

Because their legs are both of a bigness, and he plays at
Quoits well, and eats conger and fennel, and drinks off
Candles' ends for flap-dragons, and rides the wild mare with
The boys, and jumps upon joint stools, and swears with a
Good grace, and wears his boots very smooth, like unto the
Sign of the Leg, and breeds no bate with telling of discreet
Stories, and such other gambol faculties he has that show a
Weak mind and an able body, for the which the Prince admits
Him; for the Prince himself is such another. The weight of a
Hair will turn the scales between their avoirdupois. (II.iv. 204-213, Part II)

In the second scene of the play, Poina mocks at Falstaff and addresses Hal as 'sweet Hal', my good sweet honey lord' (I.II.88, 125, Part I). Due to the trick made by Poina Falstaff gets laughed at in the robbery scene which may have been made, by Poina, to overdo Falstaff in the fight of love. Again, in another scene, Poina and Hal intimately evaspor what Falstaff tells about Hal to a whore. Besides, Poina calls himself 'a proper fellow of my hands' (II.ii.54) or a man of valor and skill for fighting but quite astonishingly he has not been seen in the battle field which denotes that he uses his skills for immoral acts instead of doing something justified for love or monarch. So, here, a love triangle is been created by Shakespeare where Hal is at the centre and two opposites are Falstaff and Poina. Later, when Hal bids Falstaff good night, Poina leaves with him showing Poina to be the winner in regard to getting Hal's love. Though Poina seem to win the competition of love, indecisively Poina gets vanished where Falstaff gets rejected. Thus the text provides plentiful potentials for a queer reading of Poina's and Hal's relation. Even, Jonathan Goldberg points out that the bonding between Hal and Poina is an "illegitimate relation". (Goldberg, 2010, p. 111). Again, Vin Nardizzi argues that the rhetoric of sexuality of grafting a plant points to a charge of sodomy between Hal and Falstaff, and the scene exposes the same about Poina when Hal adds, "And to thee" (2.2.51). This reaction implies that the same range of unseemliness can be applied to the bonding of Hal and Poina which makes Poina to retort in self defense that he is "well spoke on" (2.2.52). (Gaze, 2009, p. 190). Daniel Juan Gil also mentions that Poina is a part of the play's "eroticized male-male camaraderie" (Gaze, 2009, p. 117). So, Shakespeare's presentation of Poina and his relation with Hal are part of queer view as they delineate the symptoms of homo erotic male relation which again puts Shakespeare in the streamline of doubt in regard to male to male relation.

4. Hotspur: A symbol of Masculine Identity

Hotspur is the embodiment of Shakespeare's queer thought who promotes homoerotic thought of wounds, homosocial bonds, disavowal of women and the homoerotic aggression in the *Henry IV* dramas. In this drama, Hotspur's thought of his wounds is conflicting to how he views the wounds of other soldiers of the battle field. Besides, he defends himself saying that the other soldiers need others' tongues to act according to the problematic process of signification and identification that he has been making the strategy of. But, significantly he refuses himself to get involved in the same process. It is, perhaps, Hotspur's fantasy that his masculine identity is different from all others in the play, *Henry IV*, which proves to be discrete and stable rejecting the fantasy side by all means. Even not before his final words, he accepts his identity as determined by chronicles, he cannot control. Synthesizing these circumstances is the prime theme of Hotspur's position in the drama. About this Roberta Barker in *Shakespeare Quarterly* writes:

If titles are any indication, it may be fair to argue that Hotspur [...] played a crucial role in fashioning the early success of the play we know as *1 Henry IV*. (Barker Roberta, 2003, p. 288)

Barker, moreover, enhances Hotspur's popularity as rivaling to that of King and King's rioting son. However, Hotspur's accepting the prospect of other rejoicing over his body has, to some extent, draws attention of the audiences more which plainly exemplifies the queerness of Hotspur's position in the drama by Shakespeare. Besides, Hotspur's thought of his injured body signifies a lot about the identity of soldier in the works of Shakespeare. This important aspect of drama collapses and brings itself out to be nothing but a fantasy of martial masculinity inclined to the thoughts of Shakespeare though the King signifies Hotspur's wound with honor. However, Hotspur asserts his wounds turn to intolerable when another character's tongue tries to invade it. He counts on as:

I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold—
To be so pestered with a popinjay!—
Out of my grief and my impatience,
Answered neglectingly, I know not what—
He should, or should not—for he made me mad
To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman
Of guns, and drums, and wounds, God save the mark!
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmacity for an inward bruise,
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villainous saltpetre should be digged
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroyed
So cowardly, and but for these vile guns,
He would himself have been a soldier (I. iii.48-63.Part II)

The recommendation of discomfort, shown here by Hotspur, is nothing but the result of a non-soldier like endeavor to get cured and signified but this seems to have grown cold. Furthermore, this also links Hotspur to King's representative and the very smell and appearance of King is quite unbearable to Hotspur or even a matter of disgrace as he thinks of his identity and fate to be controlled by himself only. Besides, Hotspur exhibits his hatred to king in the way where he says:

Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dressed,
Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin new reaped

Showed like a stubble land at harvest home;
 He was perfumèd like a milliner,
 [...]

with many holiday and lady terms
 He questioned me, amongst the rest demanded
 my prisoners in your majesty's behalf.
 [...]

for he made me mad

To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
 And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman

Of guns, and drums, and wounds—God save the mark!(I.iii.34-37; 47-49; 54-58, Part I)

The first time Hotspur is heard directly offering a lame excuse about why he has refused to hand over the prisoners to the king. Though there may be truth to some account in Hotspur's speech. He seems to be revealing himself up about his very idea of gender. Here, the very presence of the certain Lord who talks like a 'gentle woman', smells of perfume and perfectly groomed on his battle field makes Hotspur hyper. This is the indication of Hotspur's hyper masculinity where there is no place for woman at least at battle field. Even, he cannot tolerate because of the opposite position in the drama where Hotspur works as a foil character to that of Prince Hal. This delineates his social bonding to be criticized from the queer point of view where he deletes the womanish characters from his life. The family bonding also seems to be masculinized by Hotspur. It is pretty fair that Hotspur's personal life relation with his wife, Kate, suffers or his preoccupied nature about battle and warfare masculinity. Kate says:

O my good lord, why are you thus alone?
 For what offence have I this fortnight been
 A banished woman from my Harry's bed?
 Tell me, sweet lord, what is 't that takes from thee
 Thy stomach, pleasure, and thy golden sleep?
 Why dost thou bend thine eyes upon the earth,
 And start so often when thou sit'st alone?
 Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks
 And given my treasures and my rights of thee

To thick-eyed musing and cursed melancholy? (II. iii.39-48, Part I)

However, Kate, here, is seen bold enough to express her desire for sex as she insists on knowing the reason of her rejection from her 'treasures' and her marriage 'rights'. Besides, Kate is put on a marginalized figure though she is witty, sharp, outspoken and confident enough. Shakespeare, here, takes his character, Hotspur, further not only from wife but also from the social bonding of heterosexual relationships. In the argument over her desire, Lady Percy also says:

In faith, I'll break thy little finger, (II. iii.92, Part I)

Perhaps, the playful threat to maim Hotspur genitals is a bold step from Kate's side. Later, she also threatens to break his 'head' (III. I) to push her husband's button go on. Due to Hotspur's insistence that any sexual activities with his wife can make him weak and soft which he does not want before a war, his is so much obsessed with. Even though Kate seems likable and sensuous character, the rejection of her desire assuredly dramatizes a major concern about the threat imposed by emasculating women. Here, Kate represents the castrating women and Hotspur's attitude to her is not a common one as he thinks women dangerous and hindrance to the path of masculinity. This is simply the disavowal of women. But, this Hotspur also says:

Come, Kate, thou art perfect in lying down.

Come, quick, quick, that I may lay my head in thy lap. (III. I. 234-236, Part I)

This may give critic as well as the audience a satisfaction as Hotspur desires for love from Kate. But, it is not been asked till Hotspur sees Mortimer with his head in Lady Mortimer's lap as the Welsh woman sings a song which, in fact, grows a demand in Hotspur's mind. Here, Hotspur also uses his wife as a way to compete with other men, in this regard Mortimer. Besides, Hotspur's carelessness to Kate denotes that he considers women like tools or trophies that can help the husbands be more important or successful. In this regard, DiGangi contends:

The representation of disorderly homoeroticism [...] stigmatizes not male homoerotic desire in particular, but
 the 'effeminacy' of men who act like women or desire women. (Gangi, 1997, p. 25)

Here, Gangi clarifies the martial masculinity which is not necessarily conciliated, as men become, according to Gangi, the objects of homoerotic violence when men associate with or too closely resemble the feminine other. Again, homoerotic aggression is a mere condition of Hotspur's masculine martial selfhood depicted by Shakespeare. This is the same aggression that has gifted Hotspur with a win in the battle at the border. Despite his uncle's instance which he accepts but he refuses to see himself in the same predicament till his own death is imminent. Judith Butler finds this sense of self is conspicuously diverse from the way in which Hotspur receives his uncle's the body. Besides Butler argues that this behavior of Hotspur validates and becomes a part of a site of debated narratives of martial valor. At the time of tracing this deformed view or thought throughout the play, *Henry IV, Part 1* which makes one to see a difference that the play makes between Hotspur and his rival, Hal where the former chooses to exhibit his wounded body in an attempt to control the chronicles

circulated about it while the latter keeps his body hidden and deceives the identity of being a soldier till his, Hal's, martial aggression turns out to be unavoidable. Moreover, neither of these two soldiers finds the meaning of their wounds, as both the characters' existence depends on only in others' tongues and others' texts. But, at last, their diversified approach to the pattern and appearance of a martial identity seems a bare and futile process. In contrast, Hotspur's wound signifies the seasonal crisis that queers all soldiers of Shakespeare. (Butler, 1993, p. 95) Again, Lee Edelman points to the same issue in his essay on "The Sodomite's Tongue and the Bourgeois Body in Eighteenth-Century England," explaining that putting one's tongue into another person's aperture is a ethnically 'transgressive gesture', where one underestimates the respect for the notions of bodily autonomy:

The representation, however formulaic, of one man's tongue in another man's mouth can not only figure the penetration of one orifice as an inlet for, and an image of, the sodomitical penetration of another, it can also suggest the connotative overlay in sodomy's cultural construction of an anxiety about the authority and autonomy of one's own signifying practices. (Edelman, 1994, pp. 121-128, 125)

Though earlier, Hotspur has defied 'the tongues of soothers' (IV.i.6-7), Hot sees his death in a way where his aggressive, brave identity belongs to other's tongue proving his ideology of masculinity a futile one. His last speech with Hal is:

PERCY: O, I could prophesy,
But that the earthy and cold hand of death
Lies on my tongue. No, Percy, thou art dust
And food for— [He dies]

HAL: For worms, brave Percy (V.iv.82-85, Part II)

Here, the loss of his 'proud titles' (V. IV. 77, Part II) forever is the result and a part of his homoerotic aggressions and thought of masculine identity which he has hankered after. This is how Hotspur's wound becomes the 'food for' others' tongue. Thus, by means of a character, Hotspur, Shakespeare opens up his considerations regarding masculinity, courage and honor in fight which exposes his queer ideology.

5. Remorseful King and His Desire

King Henry IV spends most of his time lamenting, remorseing, weeping and screaming for his masculine ideology of his crown and its proper inheritance where there is no space for any woman at all. King Henry IV plays an important role in these plays but his role and activities are concerned about power, war, and kingship is kept far away from any idea of woman. At the very start of the drama, he howls over his rioting son, Prince Hal, upon whom the kingship is depended in future. Besides, his weariness of his son makes him think that fairies from the old folk may have changed Hotspur with Hal at birth bed because he sees the capability of being King in Hotspur. He says about Hal:

Yea, there thou makest me sad and makest me sin
In envy that my Lord Northumberland
Should be the father to so blest a son,
A son who is the theme of honour's tongue;
Amongst a grove, the very straightest plant;
Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride:
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,
See riot and dishonour stain the brow
Of my young Harry. (I.i.78-84, Part I)

Moreover, the king is so remorseful about his son that he says :

I know not whether God will have it so,
For some displeasing service I have done,
That, in his secret doom, out of my blood
He'll breed revengement and a scourge for me;
But thou dost in thy passages of life
Make me believe that thou art only mark'd
For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven
To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,
Could such inordinate and low desires,
Such poor, such bare, such lewd, such mean attempts,
Such barren pleasures, rude society,
As thou art match'd withal and grafted to,
Accompany the greatness of thy blood
And hold their level with thy princely heart? (III.ii.36-50, Part I)

However, seeing his future identity, Prince Hal, rioting in the streets and living such a lecherous life Henry IV breaks down a lot. But, his masculine life of court, battlefield and domination over revels keeps him awake even in the midnight. In this regard, Henry IV says:

How many thousand of my poorest subjects

Are at this hour asleep! O sleep, O gentle sleep,
 Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
 That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down
 And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
 Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
 Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee
 And hush'd with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
 Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
 Under the canopies of costly state,
 And lull'd with sound of sweetest melody?
 O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile
 In loathsome beds, and leavest the kingly couch
 A watch-case or a common 'larum-bell?
 Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
 Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
 In cradle of the rude imperious surge
 And in the visitation of the winds,
 Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
 Curling their monstrous heads and hanging them
 With deafening clamour in the slippery clouds,
 That, with the hurly, death itself awakes?
 Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
 And in the calmest and most stillest night,
 With all appliances and means to boot,
 Deny it to a king? Then happy low, lie down!

Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown (III.i.4-32 .part II)

Here, in this speech it is found that he cannot sleep but his subjects are said having 'gentle sleep'. Besides, he personifies sleep and thinks that he has frightened them and so they are not coming to him. Here, sleep is the possible image of womanhood that scares of him as there is no place for them to him. Even though, he desires them to come, it is not a simple heartfelt desire rather the sickness, competition with others who have this and his arrogance of masculine idea why he cannot have it as he is the King, a leader of masculinity asks him desire so. This 'drowsy god', even though he is the master of everything, does not accept his invitation. Out of this disgust and tiredness, he gets surprised thinking that how this god can disavowal the royal bed. Next he finds this god soothing the eyes of a ship boy but does not admit the command of the supreme masculine. For this supreme ideology of manhood, he finds himself in midst of dilemma of what to do and how to do. It is his father figure which looses against Falstaff and so his son and son's life style are unbearable to him as these do not supplement the royal image of masculine identity. In a sense, he is in war with that of Falstaff where he finds himself looser which makes him upset. But, at the end of the drama he wins over Falstaff as his son, Prince Hal, finally accepts his identity and follows the tradition of masculinity to future. Despite all these, there is another interesting thing to be discussed that he is not seen in touch with any woman or even talking to any women. Here, Shakespeare plainly keeps Henry IV out of the contact with any kind of women even when he is paralyzed and about to die. This misogynist ideology of keeping his character out of the touch of female character is a queer approach of not only that character but also of Shakespeare. Lisa Jardine, in this regard, says:

Shakespeare's society is taken to be oppressively chauvinistic...Shakespeare's maleness therefore makes it inevitable that his female characters are wrapped and distorted. (Jardain, 1983, pp. 1-3)

Again, Valerie Traub says:

theHenriad is a "seminal" point for an examination of the construction and maintenance of phallogocentric ideology . . . [embodying] a marginal, subversive discourse . . . (Traub, 1992, p. 53)

King Henry IV is the representation of Shakespeare's idea of power, helplessness and existence of male in the society where women possess a very tiny position. This approach of disavowing women is also a part of queer view. This kind of presentation of a character, King Henry IV, who is so much in ideology yet so feminine by body, can nothing but be the portrayal of Shakespeare's own homophobia.

6. A Betrayal in True Friendship

The rejection of Falstaff by the King Henry V is not a simple rejection of friendship but it is more of a renunciation of giving the relationship a social status or name which happens with Poinas as well. Hal is born in royal family, flies to Boar's head tavern and confronts the world before he triumphs himself to the position of a prince which eventually makes him the King. This has been the plan not only of Shakespeare but also of the prince from the early stage of the drama. As a character, Prince

Hal exists between the spaces of his youthful rioting and courageous, masculine King of the society. His intention has been very clear in the monologue addressing to Falstaff and his friends where he says;

I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyoked humor of your idleness.
Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wondered at
By breaking through the foul and ugly mist
Of vapors that did seem to strangle him
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work,
But when they seldom come, they wished for come,
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
So when this loose behavior I throw off
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
And, like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glitt'ring o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend to make offense a skill,

Redeeming time when men think least I will. (I. ii. 166-187, Part I)

It is in this speech that Hal acknowledges his intention to go back to royal identity. According to Hal, all these rioting and lecherous activities are acts that will help him to cast off the hidden desires and adhere the hard life of a social hero. Besides, he considers these, as holiday acts to gear him up in the later period of his life. Despite his firm intention to live a so called social life, he is somehow attracted to this rioting life, Falstaff and his companies. Again in the speech with Poin, Hal says;

Belike then my appetite was not princely got, for, by my
troth, I do now remember the poor creature small beer. But
indeed these humble considerations make me out of love
with my greatness. What a disgrace is it to me to remember
thy name, or to know thy face tomorrow, or to take note how
many pair of silk stockings thou hast—with these, and those
that were thy peach-colored ones—or to bear the inventory
of thy shirts, as, one for superfluity and another for use. But
that the tennis-court keeper knows better than I, for it is a
low ebb of linen with thee when thou keepest not racket
there, as thou hast not done a great while, because the rest of
the low countries have made a shift to eat up thy holland; and
God knows whether those that bawl out the ruins of thy linen
shall inherit His kingdom; but the midwives say the children
are not in the fault, whereupon the world increases and
kindreds are mightily strengthened. (II.ii. 9-24, Part II)

Here he finds that 'these humble considerations' makes him a far from the nobility he belongs to. Besides, he regrets over the fact that he is familiar with people like Poin and Falstaff. Yet, he cannot get himself released from this company as he belongs to this tavern by body and soul, while his mind keeps battling over the thought of being noble. His heart yearns for the closeness with Falstaff and Poin which is significantly been seen in his speeches and activities. His homophobic look at the peach colored stockings of Poin and homoerotic relation with Falstaff have been the source of enjoyment which he cannot partake further due to the social demand and Shakespeare's desire of giving a meaningful, worthy life. Both, Shakespeare's and Hal's thought in this regard have been clear. On the other hand, Falstaff and Poin have not been aware of the fact that their existence to Hal's life is at stake. In this drama the rejection of the life has been obvious as it has been indicated from the early stage of it and especially due to the reason of Shakespeare's urge to present something societal. But, the way, Falstaff is been treated is beyond imagination for the present audience. In regard to Poin, Shakespeare has kept him in coming and disappearing like a shadow and so rejection of Poin does not hurt one as much as that of Falstaff. The most horrible scene of the drama is the rejection scene where Falstaff and his company fail to recognize the King Henry V and the response of society in regard to their approval. When the march of king starts coming, Falstaff says to Mr. Shallow:

Stand here by me, Master Robert Shallow. I will make the
King do you grace. I will leer upon him as he comes by, and

do but mark the countenance that he will give me. (V.v. 5-7, Part II)

This speech is nothing but the confidence in the love that has been offered to Hal. Because of this confidence, Falstaff desires not only a good talk with the king but also something good from the King. He again says to Pistol:

Come here, Pistol, stand behind me.—(to SHALLOW) O, if I
had had time to have made new liveries, I would have
bestowed the thousand pound I borrowed of you. But 'tis no
matter. This poor show doth better. This doth infer the zeal
I had to see him. (V.v. 9-12, Part II)

This kind of joy, that he desires to spend a thousand pounds on dress to be presentable to a king, does not come merely from a somehow known person rather it is the gesture of a soul mate who is proud seeing his another part of soul in such a high position. The activities and the relation, that both Hal and Falstaff have enjoyed together, have given him the hope that he is to be taken to the royal society. But, Shakespeare makes Hal do a different thing to satisfy the society which breaks the heart of not only Falstaff but also who will hear or read it at present. In reply to Mr. Shallow, Falstaff says that he loves Hal sincerely and with 'devotion'. (V. v. 15, Part II) By this kind of love, Falstaff gets:

FALSTAFF

My King, my Jove, I speak to thee, my heart!

KING

I know thee not, old man. Fall to thy prayers.
How ill white hairs become a fool and jester.
I have long dreamt of such a kind of man,
So surfeit-swelled, so old, and so profane;
But being awaked, I do despise my dream.
Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace;
Leave gormandizing. Know the grave doth gape
For thee thrice wider than for other men.
Reply not to me with a fool-born jest.
Presume not that I am the thing I was,
For God doth know—so shall the world perceive—
That I have turned away my former self.
So will I those that kept me company.
When thou dost hear I am as I have been,
Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,
The tutor and the feeder of my riots.
Till then I banish thee, on pain of death,
As I have done the rest of my misleaders,
Not to come near our person by ten mile.
For competence of life I will allow you,
That lack of means enforce you not to evils.
And, as we hear you do reform yourselves,
We will, according to your strengths and qualities,
Give you advancement. (to CHIEF JUSTICE) Be it your charge,
my lord,
To see performed the tenor of my word.—

Set on. (V.v. 41-66, part II)

This is not a simple rejection but a slap to the life Hal and Falstaff have lived together. Prince Hal after being a king behaves like a real king demolishing all the corruption and negativities of the society. In this regard it is necessary to quote:

The idea of order that constantly makes its claim, most insistently in the history plays. Scholars have observed the presence in Shakespeare's works of the so called Tudor myth ... Shakespeare may, for all we know, have personally subscribed to its premises but a closer scrutiny of his plays has disclosed so many ironic reservations and qualifications and subversions as to call into question any straightforward adherence to a political line. The plays manifest a profound fascination with the monarchy and with the ambitions of the aristocracy, but the fascination is never simply endorsement... The idea of order, though eloquently articulated ... is always shadowed by a relentless spirit of irony. (Greenblatt, 1997, p. 61)

Perhaps, Shakespeare has shown Prince Hal a good disciple of Machiavelli who just stepping onto the stage of Kingship, breaks the vow of past. And so, Jean E. Howards points:

In his sophisticated manipulation of power, Hal shows himself a good student of Machiavelli, and the Machiavellian strand of his characterization has caused a split in critical assessments of him. (Greenblatt, 1997, p. 1150)

In *The Prince*, Niccolo Machiavelli, edited by Philip Smith, says about the new princes:

The difficulties which they have in acquiring arise mainly from the new laws and institutions which they are forced to introduce in founding and securing their government. And let it be noted that there is no more doubtful matter to take in hand, not more dangerous to conduct, not more doubtful in its success, than to set up as a leader in the introduction of changes. (Smith, 1992, p. 13)

However, following the theories of Machiavelli one can be a good leader but what about the mind, love and soul that have been killed so far. Shakespeare may look for the theory of establishing a real king to be prosperous and successful in a philosophical or historical text but being a part of pure literature, soul and mind cannot be neglected here thought it is a historical play. Besides, this is of no question that Hal has enjoyed the life to the full but he as well as Shakespeare does not have the courage to speak it out especially about a man of the highest rank. The transgressive behavior, both by Shakespeare and Prince Hal in rejecting what Hal has been a part of, is nothing but the lack of bravery to conceal the hidden truth. It is, as if can be enjoyed but cannot be revealed as the then audience, society may not take it easily.

6. Queer Royal Culture

Henry IV plays, being the historical dramas, are associated with the real royal family who has a long history of LGBT and queer life styles pointing to the fact that real life Henry V is not beyond doubt. If the discussion is started from Edwardians, it can be found that Edward II is often been associated with homosexual love. Besides, Piers Gaveston has been very close political and emotional partner of the King, Edward II. It is also thought that they have been in love. Their love affair is often illustrated with the terms like fraternal and they are thought to be in a bond of wedded brothers. Even, at King's wedding programme, he is said to put more attention to Gaveston than to his new queen. The first meeting of Edward II and Gaveston is described in *The Chronicles of The Civil Wars of Edward II* in such a way where it is said that when Edward II has looked upon Gaveston, he has just felt the love in a much deep way for him that he finds himself into a covenant of brotherhood with him and he decisively makes his mind to get him before everybody to be in a non-detachable bond of love. (Historic Royal Palaces, 2020). Besides, Marlowe's *Edward II* has also presented him in a cynical way due to his sexuality where Edward is shown in a way that he can be pleased by lovely boys. Again, in *Edward II; The Unconventional King*, Kathryn Warner says:

King and favourite arrived at Scarborough on 10 May. Edward left Gaveston there and set out for Knaresborough, where he spent several days at Gaveston's castle... Isabella was so anxious to be reunited with her husband that she left most of her belongings at South Shields, and ignored a letter sent to her by her uncle the earl of Lancaster, promising that he would rid her of Gaveston's presence. (Warner, 2014, p. 35)

The next example of this royal queer culture is James VI and I. This James has the reputation of loving men throughout his life. He, moreover, has been so fond of the young boys that powerful families have sent their sons to court to gain James' favors bestowed by power and aristocratic titles. He is also associated with being in love with Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset. Again, David M. Bergeron in his book, *King James & Letters of Homoerotic Desire* says about the bonding between James and Esme Stuart d' Aubigny:

In September 1579 the thirty seven year old Frenchman Esme Stuart d' Aubigny entered for the first time into the Presence Chamber at Stirling Castle, where he immediately prostrated himself before the thirteen year old King James VI of Scotland, "desiring the King of Heaven to bless his Majesty with perpetual fecundity". (Bergeron, 1999, p. 32)

Not the royal men only have been seen showing this desire but the royal women have also not lagging behind in this race of LGBT mindset. As for example, Queen Anne has been in love with Sarah Churchill in childhood. After Sarah's downfall due to her arrogance, Queen Anne grows a relation with the cousin of Sarah, Abigail Masham. In the same way King Henry V is also associated with the idea of homoeroticism. Nobody is unknown to the fact of Henry V's rioting life though it is been published that the rumor is been propagated due to political enmity. But, the character, Falstaff, is a real one as in real the act of Falstaff is been done by Sir John Oldcastle. It is been found that Richard Courtney has been a very close friend of Henry V since they have met in Oxford. Besides, Richard has been made Treasurer of the royal household. Moreover, Richard has been used as diplomat also. About King Henry V, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley says:

-Richard Courtney, Bishop of Norwich, who during his illness at Harfleur was tenderly nursed by the King himself... (Stanley, 1868, p. 205)

This somehow gives a hint of homoeroticism of Henry V and due to the custom of his contemporaries it cannot be blown out with any importance at all. But there is no mention of direct homoeroticism about the Henry V. In *Misinterpretations*, Graham Bradshaw says:

History never tells us what Henry's motives were, because it can't; in this simple but important sense a history play that pretended to make Henry's motives clear would be historically irresponsible. (Bradshaw, 1993, pp. 46-47)

Thus, Henry V's presentation in the dramas by Shakespeare has been a mark of question in regard to queer activities of Henry V in real.

7. Queerness in Adaptations

Henry IV plays are not frequently been adapted due to its two parts but a few adaptations can be found to discuss how others have portrayed Shakespeare's characters. In the cinematic version the first adaptation, *Chimes at Midnight*, comes in 1965 which is been directed and starred by Orson Welles, edited by Frederick Muller, Produced by International Films Alpine Productions and casted in Spain, Switzerland. Here the role of Falstaff, Hal, King Henry IV, Ned Poins and Hotspur are been casted by Orson, Keith Baxter, John Gielgud, Tony Beckley and Norman Rodway respectively. This movie revolves round Shakespeare's two Henry plays. In the movie, quite like the drama, King Henry IV is shown as greatly dissatisfied and upset about his son, Prince Hal, who exhausts most of his time at Boar' Head Tavern where he accompanies Falstaff and all others in drinking, robbing, and carousing with prostitutes under the influence of Falstaff. Here, in this movie the bondage of sexuality about Falstaff, Hal, and Poins is been keenly depicted resting the decision to be taken by the audience. Here, Hal is seen kissing prostitutes several times. Moreover Hal is shown in Falstaff's bed also where they cut jokes and deliver lively speeches full with laughter and enjoyment. They both are been shown in intimate positions but not directly indicating sexuality between them.



Picture: 1 Hal and Falstaff in intimate position of love. (Orson Welles, 1967)

However, the scene when Hal eavesdrops Falstaff with Poins, is shown something homoerotic as they, all three, are shown sharing bed with a prostitute.



Picture: 2 Hal, Falstaff and Poins are seen with a whore in bed. (Orson Welles, 1967)

Despite, being a escapist, what Orson here shows in picture 2 is much indicative to the fact of life style led by Hal, Falstaff and Poins. But the rioting life of Hal is been a total disgrace to royal family. Besides, Orson quite like Shakespeare does not directly shows any homoerotic activities except a few moments like that of picture 2. But, the queer view of masculinity is been seen in the acts of Hal, Henry IV and Hotspur. After a bathing scene, Hotspur is been shown half naked too.



Picture: 3 Hotspur being naked. (Orson Welles, 1967)

Hotspur is shown, by Orson, in such a way obsessed with the idea of war that he goes for queering soldiers for his horse and then he loses his cloth, as shown in picture: 3, that has been covering him just after bath. This is something more than what has been expected from Orson as he, here, clinches the homoeroticism in the mind of audience and tries to cover up by making it a laughing scene. Despite mixed reviews of the critics, Orson thinks in a different way and in an interview taken by Leslie Megahey in 1982 for *BBC Arena*, Orson says:

"It's my favorite picture, yes,"

If I wanted to get into heaven on the basis of one movie, that's the one I would offer up. I think it's because it is to me the least flawed; let me put it that way. It is the most successful for what I tried to do. I succeeded more completely in my view with that than with anything else. (Welles, 1982) (Estrin, 2002)

It is clear from Orson's speech that he is satisfied with work but he conceals the part of homoeroticism in the movie. In another adaptation, *My Own Private Idaho* directed and produced by Gus Van Sant and Laurie Parker respectively. Sant's film is about the confused friendship between two male swindlers, Scott and Mike casted by Keanu Reeves and River Phoenix respectively. These two hustlers move on from a place to another in search of identities that begin in Seattle, cross Portland, Idaho, Rome and finally return to Portland. Here, the role of Falstaff is being played by Bob casted by William Richert. Mike and Scott, son of Mayor, becomes friends very fast. About this film David Roman in his essay, 'Shakespeare Out in Portland: Gus Van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho*, Homoerotics, and Boy Actors' says:

But, the implicit homoerotics of male bonding of those earlier films are foregrounded in *My Own Private Idaho* with Mike's growing unrequited love for Scott, who travels in this crowd of hustles, druggies and petty thieves mainly to infuriate his patrician father... Like Shakespeare's Hal, Scott has a surrogate father in the figure of the coke-sniffing and boy loving Bob, a stand-in for Falstaff... (Roman, 1994, p. 313)

While Orson presents his Tavern full with whores and a few male hustlers, Sant here in this film shows the tavern as a place of homoerotic pleasure led by Bob. Though the ancient ones have also enjoyed the same, they do not have the courage to express as Sant does in his film directly. Due to the course of time the approach to homoeroticism has changed a lot and that is what can be found in Sant's. Even, the homoeroticism is shown quite clearly among the characters, Scott, Bob, Mike.



Picture: 4 Bob and Scott Kissing Scene. (Keanu Reeves, 1991)

There are lots of scenes where Scott and Mike have the sexual pleasures as shown in picture 5.



Picture: 5 Homosexual pleasures by Scott and Mike. (Keanu Reeves, 1991)

Even in the Sheriff scene, Mike and Scott are shown in homosexual poster which is given in Picture 6 here.



Picture: 6, Sheriff Scene. (Keanu Reeves, 1991)

Back at Portland Scott rejects Mike and Bob in the same way that of Falstaff's rejection but the setting is a different one, a renowned fashionable restaurant. Interestingly, Scott is seen falling in love with a young lady and has sex with her too. So, Scott though has a homoerotic past he continues the common way of life in the same way as Shakespeare's Prince does. Like these adaptations, there has been another very recent adaptation, *The King* in 2019 by Netflix which adds a new flavor by accepting the Falstaff and his homoeroticism. Besides, in the movie Falstaff is been recruited as Hal's chief Military Strategist as it is said by Hal that Falstaff is the only person whom he trusts most. In these way with the time, changes the approach of these two characters in the adaptations. This shows that the way homoerotics are been treated, it is easy for any author to present that directly now in European context which has been not possible for Shakespeare. Even at present, in many countries any word relating to homoeroticism can cause death but it does not mean that it is not been exercised in those countries. In the same manner, though Shakespeare and his characters have enjoyed, they cannot and must not express.

8. Theories in Application

Literary theories bring out the intimate hidden thoughts in any literary text and when theories like feminism, psychoanalysis, and queer are applied to a text like Shakespeare's *Henry IV* plays, the text becomes pregnant with various directives. In this text of Shakespeare, the patrician ideology of dominating women is found if simply been looked at the number of the women characters in the plays. There are many oppressed groups like oppressed classes, races, religious minorities in the world. Like those oppressed, Shakespeare has depicted the presence and role played by women in the society portrayed by Shakespeare here. Besides, they, the women, have almost been taken out not of the main plot but also of sub plots. Shakespeare portrays the women in *Henry IV* plays in such a way that reminds Simone de Beauvoir's speech where talking about the male dominated women, she says:

...They have no [collective recorded] past...no religion of their own. ...They live dispersed among the males, attached through residence, housework, economic condition, and social standing to certain men- fathers or husbands- more firmly than they are to other women. (Beauvoir, 2000, p. 10)

This is quite similar to the condition of women characters used in this drama. Only three are been used here by Shakespeare and they are Lady Kate Percy, Lady Mortimer, and Mistress Quickly. These three characters do not even play important role in the main theme or the conflict of the drama. Lady Mortimer is been shown to be married with a man who betrays his own country. Again, though the name, Mortimer, is been used, there is no printed speaking lines in the play. It

seems that the very existence of this character is been denied by Shakespeare. Moreover, Lady Kate and Mortimer are been used as laborer whose situation gets matched with the speech of Delphy who says:

... depend on the unpaid labour of women for domestic services and child rising. These services are furnished within the framework of a particular relationship to an individual (the husband). They are excluded from the realm of exchange and consequently have no value. (Delphy, 1984, p. 56)

Taking from Delphi the term basic need of women is also been denied in case of Kate. Sex is not only a right but also a basic need to keep healthy body and mind. However, this has been denied by Hotspur in the scene with Lady Kate where she wishes for sex but Hotspur neglects that away due to being obsessed with the idea of war saying:

Away!

Away, you trifler. Love, I love thee not.

I care not for thee, Kate. This is no world

To play with mammets and to tilt with lips.

We must have bloody noses and cracked crowns,

And pass them current too.—Gods me, my horse!—

What say'st thou, Kate? What would'st thou have with me? (II.III. 83-88, Part 1)

Instead of giving heed to his wife Hotspur keeps thinking and talking with soldiers about war, horse. Here, it is shown that a horse is more important to Hotspur right now as the war is knocking the door. Again, Mistress quickly is shown basically as the supplier of the needs of criminal. Thus the women characters have been degraded here in these dramas to the least level of humanity where their existence is at stake. This is not a simple repression of women but the psychology of Shakespeare and their male characters is been in such a condition that they do not have time to think about women except as a product or compeering tools to uphold themselves in the mind of others. Such is the situation when Hotspur asks for Kate's love only to prove his superiority over Mortimer's husband. Here, the male characters like, Henry IV, Hal, Hotspur suffer from 'insecurity or unstable sense of self'. About this state of mind, Lois Tyson says:

-the inability to sustain a feeling of personal identity, to sustain a sense of knowing ourselves. This core issue makes us vulnerable to the influence of other people, and we may find ourselves continually changing the way we look or behave as we become involved with different individuals or groups. (Tyson, Critical Theory Today, 2015, p. 16)

This is what can be found I all these three characters of these dramas. First, the King from the opening till death suffers from the insecurity of his thrown and his identity. Moreover, he continues planning, remorsing although the play. Again, Hotspur is presented as a keen example of the fear of losing his masculine identity in the process of being rebellious. In the same manner, Prince Hal also shows his deficiency of identity at the earlier stage of dram where he gets involved with the rioting groups. Again about the sexual life to understand the psychic condition of these characters, Tyson says:

Freud realized that our sexuality is part and parcel of our identity and thus relates to our capacity to feel pleasure in ways that are not generally considered sexual. This is why he believed that even infants are sexual beings who pass through stages- oral, anal and genital- in which pleasure is focused indifferent parts of body. (Tyson, Critical Theory Today, 2015, p. 24)

In these dramas, Shakespeare has depicted the sexual life of all the important characters in such a way that brings forth their culture of sexual life in question. In Elizabethan period, homosexuality and homoeroticism have not been recognized with the terminology of Homosexuality but they have practices in the way to satisfy themselves and its example can be found in the royal families of that time also. About homosexual bonding Tyson says:

The depiction of strong emotional ties between same sex characters can create a homosocial atmosphere that may be subtly or overtly homoerotic. Whether homoerotic or not, however, the depiction of homosocial bonding foregrounds the propound importance of same sex emotional ties in the development of human identity and community, which is a human potential often devalued, marginalized, or trivialized by the homophobic anxiety of heterosexist culture. (Tyson, Critical Theory Today, 2015, p. 325)

The strong emotional ties of Hal and Falstaff, Hotspur and his masculinity, Hal and Poins, King Henry IV and his remorseful life are of that kind of bonding that Tyson says about here. In regard to Hotspur, masculine identity problem is shown the most while King Henry IV is also been shown of that king as they both consider the absence of women and identity by other to be the way of getting established in a society. In Hotspur's world the 'macho' (Tyson, Critical Theory Today, 2015, p. 330) identity is the one that takes him close to queer view of sexuality. Moreover, Prince Hal's attraction to Falstaff, Poins and their lifestyle delineates the idea of being queer. In this way, Shakespeare's misogynist ideology of keeping women aloof of the main stream of the drama brings questions about the psychological state of these characters which takes them to be queer within. Thus the queer characters are found in *Henry IV* plays where Shakespeare is of course not a dead writer as he prominently keeps him alive by the characters he has depicted.

9. Conclusion

Shakespeare in the plays of *Henry IV* has been deceitfully simple where he has shown himself and his desires in such a confusing way that draws everyone to have a queer look at him. Besides, by the plays, Shakespeare presents the thought of the then sexual culture. However, Prince Hal's despire hidden intention to have a pleasure of different kind, he is shown to be

societal and abiding at the end by killing not only his own desires but also the heart of Falstaff and others. Here, Falstaff's rejection is a part of the way to be addressable to the society as a king. Besides, the dramas are the presentation of the conflict between heart and society and where, of course, society wins due to the wish of Shakespeare because Shakespeare may not have the courage to express boldly what he has done or wish to do. Moreover, Hal's affection to the both men, Falstaff and Poins, is so symmetrically been depicted that it suggests him to be in tune with them. In the other way, unlike heavy father, King Henry IV is been portrayed ebulliently verbal, social and warmly responsible to all others except to anything that are in between him and his social life. Prince's soliloquy at the beginning of the play vows an amputation but the Plays' extempore has ended in a very heart breaking way to banish Falstaff. This rejection may have given the then audience a comic satisfaction but it has not been necessarily must do option for Shakespeare as it darkens the world for those who consider Boar Tavern a paradise. Whether the decision has been right or wrong by Shakespeare, it does not matter but the way Shakespeare has turned his back on the life led by Poins, Falstaff and Hal is an embracing one showing the lack of courage in Shakespeare to face the reality. It is also true that, living in the postmodern world it is easy to say but the scenario of that time may have been so adverse that Shakespeare may not have anything but this to do. Even in this present world there are countries where men speaking about sodomy are hacked to death. Considering the social impact on such a celebrated write of that time, it may seem not so severe an act in regard to Shakespeare but this makes it also clear the masculine view of Shakespeare's character is a part of their homosexual bonding and queer look to sexuality of which Shakespeare also cannot be cut out. So, the ambiguity of Shakespeare's attitude towards his characters and his own self, points to the presence and practice of homoeroticism in real.

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