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Romana Kohl

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PREFACE

Since the Greek philosopher Plato has born his glorious idea that any other sexual relationship than those between women and men was against nature, more than 300 years B.C., human beings belonging to the homosexual subculture have been stigmatized, prosecuted, convicted, tortured, or in the best case, had to suffer under the prejudices of their hetero environment because of their 'unnatural' proclivity. Many of them paid dearly for their sexual preference, some even with their death.

This work is dedicated to all those victims of society's ignorance and unwillingness of accepting sexual diversity simply as the freedom of individual choice. In the name of all tolerant and liberal hetero human beings I apologize for the hypocrisy and injustice my species has provoked, carried out, or quietly tolerated in connection with homosexuals in the course of time – it has always been wrong.

Romana Kohl

Drösing, December 2012

INTRODUCTION

> *Any male person who, in public or private, commits, or is a party to the commission of, or procures, or attempts to procure the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and being convicted shall be liable at the discretion of the Court to be imprisonment for any term not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour.*
> (Criminal Law Amendment Bill. Section 11. August 7, 1885. Hansard 1803-2005)

On the 6th of April 1895, the famous British author and latent homosexual, Oscar Wilde, was arrested in room 118 at the *'Cadogan Hotel'* in London's Knightsbridge, after he had been found guilty of violating section 11 of the 'Criminal Law Amendment Act' by a London jury, and he was sentenced to two-year imprisonment and hard labor at Reading Jail. Originally, it was Wilde who had claimed legal support against the Marquess of Queensbury Douglas, who had accused him of negative influence on his son, Sir Alfred Douglas, due to his homosexual orientation; finally it was Wilde who was charged with committing acts of gross indecency. For the first time in British Victorian history an author was sentenced to such harsh legal punishment because of his sexual proclivity.

Part of the judgment claim was based on the assumptions of the law authorities who had come to the conclusion that several sequences in Wilde's famous novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* were representing homosexual activity, or depicting homosexual preferences. When Wilde was questioned on cross-examination by Queensberry's defense attorney, Edward Carson, whether he considered Basil Hallward's feelings for Dorian proper or improper, the author answered without doubts: "I think it is the most perfect description of what an artist would feel on meeting a beautiful personality that was in some way necessary to his art and life. [C: You think that is a feeling a young man should have towards another?] Yes, as an artist (…) I think it is perfectly natural for any artist to admire intensely and love a young man" (Wilde Trials, 1895). For the law authorities the author himself had confirmed the assumptions of the court with that explicit statement. Wilde's legal punishment to the representation of latent homosexuality in a literary work set precedence in British legal decisions.

To what extent the representation of latent homosexuality in Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, as well as in an additional selection of British and American novels is 'de facto' traceable, is examined through the identification and analysis of particular homosexual signifiers, or signifying systems, within the texts under examination. The focus is, on the one hand, on the analysis of the social, cultural and scientific perception of the social construct 'homosexuality' in the course of time, in particular, which meaning and which identities were associated with homosexuality at the time the examined pieces of work were written and published in the countries of their origin; on the other hand, it is examined in which way semiotics, symbols and other encoded information can be decoded, and interpreted in reference to latent homosexuality in literary texts, in America and Great Britain, during the late 19th century, and the early 20th century. Additionally, the etymology of the term *'sodomy'*, and its alterations are examined through various perceptional traces of civilizations from the ancient times to the early 20th century; in connection with the cultural development of the term *'sodomy'*, the underlying legal, scientific, medical and philosophical aspects of the social concept are analyzed.

1. THE ETYMOLOGY OF A DANGEROUS WORD

1.1. Pederasty and Pedophilia

Providing persons who are performing other than 'common-sex practices' with a particular definition has a long tradition. In Greek and Roman language the term *'pederasty'* was used to describe a particular age-graded relationship between males, whereas *'pedophilia'* was the common term for the attraction of adults to pre-pubertal children, independent on which gender. Both expressions derive from the Greek term *'pedja'*, which is the equivalent to the English unisex *'child'* (Menasco, 2000: 672).

Modern psychological science defines the sexual relationship between a pre-pubertal child and an adult as *'pathological pedophilia'*, a term that dates back to 1896 when Richard Krafft-Ebing first used the expression to describe a 'specific form of sexual pathology' (Krafft-Ebing, 1998: 295-308). The notion of *'pathology'* was, and still is associated with pedophilia because the power balance between the adult and the child is expressed to a degree that implies the oppression and exploitation of the younger participant. Furthermore, it must

be doubted that the child is provided the free decision to terminate the relationship at any time.

Generally, pedophilia is a universal phenomenon and not gender related, although differences in cultural conceptions may influence the degree of the performance. According to psychologists, the sexual practice is based on the exaggerated instinct of nurturing and protecting the young of a species by focusing on an educational purpose, including sex-educational aspects. When pedophilia is accepted in a society, it is usually constructed meaning-related to the acculturation process of boys, and it co-exists with the fulfillment of cross-gender marriage and family responsibilities, as the example of ancient Greece demonstrates (Bleibtreu-Ehrenberg, 1988: 3-15).

Historically, pedophilia developed out of pederastic traditions in Greece and the Roman Empire, however, under different circumstances. While in Greece only free-born boys who could attain citizenship were predestined to consume the pedophile 'elite practice', such universal education was illegal for Roman free boys. Wilde presents the exception to the rule, and refers to the pedophile relationship between Hadrian and Antinous, who was eleven when the relationship began (See: 6.2.6). By the time, same sex relationships became increasingly hedonistic, and, as parallel development, the age limits broke down. Even in the religiously strict Middle Ages pedophilia continued although it was publicly damned by the church, particularly, by monastic figures like Alcuin, Hilary and Baudri.

During the Renaissance, the reflection of classical values of the antiquity resulted in a temporarily more liberal approach to pedophilia. For the first time, the image of the 'Ganymede' appeared, and symbolized pedophilia in literature and the various fields of art, as the works of Michelangelo and Marlow, for example, depict. That Ganymede was more than a single artistic symbol shows the high number of artists charged with 'sodomy with boys'. In Britain there was no age-related distinction at that time (Geraci, and Mader, 1990: 965-966).

A remarkable change was brought by the Romantics, which were generally defined by a tendency towards adult male-male 'friendships', and which subordinated boy love. However, famous exceptions like Byron and Beckford (See: 6.1.) demonstrate that the individual male cannot be measured by tendencies, at no time in history.

1.2. Sodomia, Buggery and Homosexuality

The abstract noun *'sodomia'* originated in Medieval Latin, about 1180, and derives from the agent noun *'sodomita'*, which means *'sinner'*. The term was originally used in the Septuaginta and Vulgate versions of the bible to define an inhabitant of the town 'Sodom', which was destroyed for the sexual depravity of its male population, in particular for the gang rape of two angels (Die Bibel, 2002: 31). Later, it was used to define a 'crime against nature', committed in three possible ways:

'Ratione Mode' defined the process when an individual obtained venereal pleasure with the member of the opposite sex, either male or female, but in a wrong manner, for example, fellation. *'Latione Sexus'* was the description of the sexual activity with an individual of the same sex, while *'Ratione Generis'* described sexual activity with a brute animal (Boswell, 1990: 133-173).

In the English language the term *'sodomy'* was alternatively used with the term *'buggery'* to define the anal intercourse between two males, or a male and a female; it was later replaced by the expression *'homosexuality'*, an 'international' term which has also been derived from Greek language, and describes the sexual relationship between two males, or two female individuals (Greenberg, 1990: 25).

Against the sometimes occurring speculation that the expression *'homosexual'* might bear the morphological stem *'homo'*, defining the Latin *'man'*, it is an entirely Greek creation, including the morphological stem *'homo'* meaning the *'same'*, and it was originally used to define both genders, males and females. Considering this fact, the later added term *'lesbian'* has probably been introduced as a means to define the particularity of female homosexuality (Dynes, and Johansson, 1990: 555).

Actually, it was the French Bishop Etienne de Fougeres who first focused on the homosexuality of women, in the 12th century. He divided homosexual women into three categories: virtuous, adulterous and lesbian, and by the latter he introduced a distinctive term for homosexual relationships when women were concerned. Since the 1730s the most common French term for a person practicing homosexuality has been *'pédérast'*. When the term originated, it was associated with an entirely secular identity, and not used to describe sinful behavior according to the dogma of the Bible (Rey, 1992: 273-285).

A ‘real’ subcategory of homosexuality is described by the phrase *‘latent homosexuality’*, which appears in two different semantic forms; firstly, it defines conscious homosexual desire which is presented publicly, but controlled by the subject; on the other hand, it is also used to describe a process of unconscious homosexual drive. Both aspects are based on Freud’s theory of psychical development. He clearly defines the beginning of a latency period as the time of the decline of infantile sexuality, a process that he describes as ‘not pathological’, but based on the ‘universal bisexuality’ of human beings, an idea that is again based on the suggestion that all humans have a capacity to experience same-sex attraction, even though for most this option is not experienced during adulthood (Salzmann, 1965 : 234-236).

2. THE CULTURAL AND LEGAL PERCEPTION OF THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCT ‘HOMOSEXUALITY’

Plato’s work *The Laws*, published about 380 B.C., is generally considered as the first recorded attempt of defining the distinction between heterosexuality and homosexuality in the European hemisphere:

> When the male sex unites with the female for the purpose of procreation the pleasure so experienced is held to be according to nature, but when males unite with males or females with females, to be considered contrary to nature. (Plato, 2008)

From Plato’s statement it becomes obvious that in Ancient Greece, probably not for all Greeks, heterosexuality was associated with a ‘natural’ sexual practice, whereas same-sex acts were labeled as the ‘unnatural’. Moreover, for the first time in history, male and female homosexuality, which were formerly categorized as different sexual concepts, were equated, and generally defined as the ‘unnatural’ in contrast to the ‘natural’ female-male combination. Plato’s theory may be based on Christian ideas and ethics in defining the purpose of sexual interaction. In Christian belief sexual interaction is solely focusing on the production of offspring, a process that is definitely impossible as a result of the sexual relationship between identic genders (Boswell, 1980: 91-94).

2.1. Homosexuality in British Law

Almost two thousand years later, during the reign of Henry VIII, a similar idea found entrance into British Law, in particular, in the *'Buggery Act of 1533'*, which was introduced to attain a legal means for the punishment of anal intercourse between two males, or a male and a female. The punishment for persons convicted of buggery was the death penalty, a lesser offence of attempted buggery was punished by two years of jail, and a certain range of time on the pillory. Both kinds of punishment lasted until 1861, when the *'Offence against the Person Act'* replaced the former law act. In section 61, entitled *Sodomy and Bestiality*, the legal punishments for the "abominable Crime of Buggery", committed either with a human being or with an animal, were revised.

In 1885, the English Parliament enacted the *'Criminal Law Amendment Bill'*, which was often mocked as the 'Labouchere Amendment', a reference to its creator, and later Wilde's 'grave digger', Henry Labouchere. The purpose of the amendment was the prohibition of any kind of gross indecency between males, including all 'unnatural' male homosexual acts (Hogg, and Hardinge, 2002).

The most remarkable aspect concerning the law act may be the fact that the social purity movement, which succeeded in pushing through the major revision of England's law regulating sexual behavior, was originally not focusing on same-sex relationships, but tried to protect adolescent girls by revising the age of consent for girls from thirteen to sixteen years, due to the fact that until 1885 indecent assaults on persons over the age of thirteen were not legally punished. It was Henry Labouchere who finally contributed 'section 11' to the *'Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885'*, which should make any indecent assault legally punishable, regardless of the age of the victim.

The problem was that the general words Labouchere had found to define 'gross indecencies' were too vague for a legal text; thus, they were later interpreted more broadly than it was the original intention of applying to consensual same-sex activity between adults. Considering the time when Labouchere proposed his amendment, the weakness of his words may be rather considered as the result of Victorian morality than a matter that happened accidentally. As Victorian Puritanism did not allow the precise description of sexual activity, the law could also be used to prosecute male homosexuals, even though the actual act of sodomy, the anal intercourse, could not be proven before the court, as it was the case in the Oscar Wilde-Trial.

Why Labouchere proposed his amendment at the very last moment is still in question. The journalist Frank Harris later harshly criticized the fact that the amendment was rushed through without debate, and finally passed in the early hours of August 7, 1885, becoming section 11 of the act, and he provides a possible explanation for Labouchere's surprising activity that focuses on Labouchere's effort to sabotage the entire bill:

> Mr Labouchere, the Radical member, inflamed, it is said, with a desire to make the law ridiculous, gravely proposed that the section be extended to apply to people of the same sex who indulged in familiarities or indecencies. The Puritan fraction had no logical objection to this extension and it became the law of the land. It was by virtue of this piece of legislative wisdom, which is without a copy in the law of any other civilized country, that Oscar Wilde was arrested and thrown into prison.
> (Kaplan, 2005 : 175)

The law was not repealed until the introduction of the *'Sexual Offences Act 1967'*, which decriminalized homosexual acts in England and Wales, but still contained provisions on the subject (Hansard, 1803-2005).

2.2. Homosexuality during the late 19th and early 20th Century in the United States

The first recorded law suits in the United States date back to the Colonial Times, around 1650, when sodomy was punished by death according to Dutch Roman Law. After the English conquest a new statute was enacted to deal with 'unnatural' sexual practices, however, criminal records depict rare prosecution at homosexuality. During the first seven decades of the 19th century the newly independent American states were seemingly safe of anti-sodomy bigotry, and focusing on more important subjects than undertaking spying, or other activities to bring cases of sodomy or other 'unnatural' sexual behavior to justice, which was a great difference to the situation in the former motherland that was seemingly troubled by 'unnatural' sexual relationships throughout the Napoleon Wars.

After the Civil War, the liberal attitude towards sexual diversity changed remarkably due to the developing activity of purity and censorship movements on the subject. The fact that the number of those movements was permanently increasing put massive pressure on public authorities to intervene against spreading homosexual activity in American cities. In such a way poisoned with Puritan hypocrisy, the public's attitude towards sexual diversity turned to the negative; however, it could not stop the homosexual community from

establishing a pulsating bohemian subculture in the cities, as well as from forcing the establishment of a great number of male brothels during the late 1890s.

The first two decades of the 20th century are often defined as the glorious days of sexual liberation in the United States, a development that was supported by the fact that politics and police authorities were obviously more concerned with controlling the rocketing number of speakeasies in the cities during the days of economic crisis and prohibition than to investigate in the sexual preferences of the Americans. Greenwich Village became the center for the toleration of white homosexuals, while the majority of black homosexual intellectuals celebrated *'Harlem Renaissance'* in one of the countless nightspots of the district. The appearance of homo bars, which were the only public institution where male homosexuals could meet, were not of much variance compared with hetero establishments, due to the fact that in both establishments 'the forbidden' was the fulcrum upon which social life moved (Dynes, and Donaldson, 1992).

Homosexuality as an issue found entrance in American Literature at the end of the 19th century. However, one of the most famous pioneers in American homosexual culture was not a novelist, but the east coast poet Walt Whitman, whose poems and correspondence achieved great international recognition at the turn of the century. His work consists, among other poetry, of a superb collection of travel poems about cruising experiences in the urban landscape, and romantic relationships with traveling companions by associating the freedom of expressing sexual diversity, in particular, homoerotic sentiment, with the freedom of going west. Whitman's work did not only have a catalytic effect on the other American poets, such as George Santayana and Bayard Taylor, but also influenced the works of English homosexual theorists like Edward Carpenter and John Addington Symonds.

Whitman's era is also often associated with the beginnings of the American gay novel, introduced by writers such as Alfred J. Cohen in his novel *Chester Alan Dale*, E. I. Prime-Stevenson's work *Imre: A Memorandum*, and Charles Warren Stoddard's early works.

Little evidence of homosexual activity can be recognized in the theatre scene, which was tight closely by the cordon of censorship at the end of the 19th century, whereas during the American post-war period, the heyday of the Hollywood silent film, homosexuality was openly practiced by some of the more rebellious examples of the rising movie stars. In later biographies of Ramon Rudolph Valentino, often said to have been the most charismatic and adored film star of that time, a variety of legendary stories deal with the actor's proclivity to homosexuality. However, such specific circumstances do certainly not reflect the average

American life; the average American did neither glorify homosexual activities nor same-sex relationships (Katz, 1976).

3. THE PERCEPTION OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE FIELDS OF SCIENCE

3.1. Medical Normality

With the publication of medical literature the idea of finding sin or even criminality in same-sex relationships was replaced by a pathological approach to the subject, at the end of the 19th century, which led to the assumption that the source for the preference of sexual activity with the same-sex partner was based on mental disorder, something that could be healed with the right medicine. The aim of medical treatment was to change the homosexual individual to the 'normal', which meant to make him heterosexual, either by rather dubious surgical procedures such as castration, or by a great variety of entirely absurd other cures, among them, as less rigorous treatments of the disordered, strict diets and different kinds of water-cures, which could often be found in the front position of long curiosity lists (Kaplan, 2005 : 175-176).

A significant example of the problematic perception of homosexuality in the field of medicine is the famous British mathematician, logician and computer scientist, Alan Turing, who was, almost seventy years after the Oscar Wilde trial, charged with gross indecency under the same Section 11 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885. The scientist was provided a choice between imprisonment and hormonal treatment aiming on the reduction of his libido. Turing accepted the latter, and was 'cured' by injections of the synthetic estrogen Stilboestrol over the course of one year, which finally led to his impotence, and caused severe *'Gynecomastia'* (Hodges, 2012). The term describes the abnormal development of large mammary glands in males resulting in unnatural breast enlargement. (Braunstein, 2007: 1229-1237).

3.2. The Philosophical and Sociological Notion of Homosexuality

In contrast to the medical understanding that is based on the perception of homosexuality as a genetically based concept, this approach is criticized by scholars of the

philosophical and the sociological field of science, such as Michel Foucault, who claim that the medical-theoretical state is neither satisfactory concerning the *'planophysical'* nor the *'doliophysical'* path of enquiry. While the planophysical theory is based on the idea that homosexuality is an error of nature that arises because of a disturbed fundamental psychical development, a theory that is also advocated by medical scientists in a similar way, doliophysicians support the idea that "homosexuality is produced by the very subtlety of nature's devices to achieve her ends"(Thorp, 1992: 54-65), which would mean that homosexuality is a kind of trick of nature to guarantee the survival of a particular population.

Foucault does neither advocate the one nor the other theory, but claims that homosexuality is not a natural category but a social construct that is hardly older than one hundred years. What are labeled are not genetic differences, but different sexual tastes and desires than those depicted by the majority of individuals at a certain time. For the French philosopher and sociologist the remarkable cultural shift in the perception of same-sex relationships was in the 1870s, and he clearly defines the change in the perception of same-sex relationships:

> Homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of superior androgyny, a hermaphroditism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species. (Foucault, 1980: 43)

Following Foucault's suggestions, it was the society itself that created the species 'homosexual', and gave them a single name, focusing on a series of superficial practices and tastes that occurred among a particular group of individuals, and which were different from those of the majority of the co-existing individuals.

The Greek philosophical contribution to the question how the homosexual as such came into being is provided by Aristophanes, who contradicts not only the medical assumptions, but also Foucault's theory, and who describes his observations in a speech in Plato's *Symposium* (Dover, 1988: 102-114). For the Greek philosopher homosexuality is not only an anatomical or mechanical sexual preference, but a whole way of life, defined by different tastes, habits and social activities, which are all expressions of something that cannot be found on the surface, but lies deep in the soul of an individual. The homosexual male does not only want to copulate with a male, but wants to spend his whole life with a member of his own sex. When homosexuals agree to cross-sexual marriages and having children, they thoroughly act contrary to their inner convictions, only to refer to the constraints and the customs of a particular society. Oscar Wilde and many other female and male homosexual

writers, who were married and had children, on the one hand, but also lived in relationship with a member of their own sex, on the other hand, support Aristophanes' theory.

In contrast to Plato, Aristophanes focuses on three original sexes: male homosexuals, female homosexuals and heterosexual individuals, additionally, he also mentions in his speech the relationship between adult males and boys, as a kind of limited sexual arrangement, a common practice in ancient Greece, in which the whole male population of a certain Greek region was involved, and which had a strong current of scholarship. The boys' education was transferred from the parents' home into the hands of an experienced male adult; it was an initiation rite that actually legalized pederasty as a universal habit, from which boys might extricate psychically and physically unharmed. Aristophanes' observations differ remarkably from the common Greek opinion; he argues that boys who have had a homosexual relationship with a male adult will in turn love boys when they grow up.

3.2.1. The Third Sex

The idea of the 'third sex' recurred during the second half of the 19th century, in particular, the German scholars and sexologists Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and Magnus Hirschfeld were the first who used the term in their works focusing on the subject of homosexuality in West-Europe, and they both traced its origin back to Plato's *Symposium*. Ulrichs, who defined himself as a 'Uranian', a female soul trapped in a male body, describes the problems of the 'third sex' in a letter to his sister, on September 22, 1862 (Bauer, 2012). For the scholar this new category of males are not men in the common sense of a particular culture, but individuals who are defined by a 'decidedly female element' in them. Although they have a male body, they are mentally and spiritually female concerning their preference in sexual activity, thus they represent a specific sexual class which differs remarkably from the common men and women categories at a certain time. Later Ulrichs extended his studies, and included the examination of female Uranism.

Hirschfeld first used the term *'third sex'* in his work at the end of the 19th century, and made it popular in the early 20th century, when it was preferably used in self-descriptive contexts. The positive aspect of defining a certain group of individuals sharing the same 'uncommon' sex-practices as the 'third sex' was the fact that the term was entirely free of moral or medical implications, and could be interpreted in many ways. Hirschfeld himself did not only refer the term to the perception of the homosexual, but included all intermediate

forms of sexuality that did not fit into the classical male-female scheme of his time. Later Hirschfeld partly disavowed his former categorization of the sexes, and he claimed that there was neither a qualitative distinction between men and women, nor could the 'third sex' be considered as a complete and closed system, but should only be used to overcome the other fictional male-female classification. He finally came to the conclusion that the difference between the sexes could only be measured from a quantitative perspective in relation to the ratio of male and female components in an individual (Bauer, 2012).

3.2.2. Freud's Inversion Theory

Sigmund Freud opposes categorically any attempt to consider homosexuals as a separate group of individuals on account of their specific sexual disposition. In his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, published in 1905, he refuses to use the common term *'sodomy'* or *'homosexuality'* to define the phenomenon of same-sex attraction, and he strictly claims that such an attraction does not warrant the assumption of a sex distinct from that of males and females, but is an additional perspective of carrying out sexual practices of those two categories, which clearly replaces the pathological aspect by an anthropological approach to the issue of same-sex activity.

Furthermore, Freud coins the term the *'inverted'* to define individuals who deviate from the sexual standards of a certain time and place, and he subdivides those individuals into three sub-categories:

'Absolutely inverted' individuals are only focusing on same-sex objects in the case of sexual relationships, while cross-sex partners have never been the subjects of their sexual desire. The males in this category can develop such a distinctive aversion to females that they may become unable to perform the act of coition with a female partner.

'Amphibiously inverted' individuals lack the character of sexual exclusivity, which makes them attracted to both categories, same-sex partners and cross-sex partners, and both kinds of sexual relationship can be satisfying and meet the sexual desires of males and females.

The last sub-category, the *'occasionally inverted'*, make the largest group among counter-sex performers. They agree to same-sex activity either when 'normal' sex-objects are not available, or when the sexual action has been a matter of imitation. In both cases sexual as

well as emotional fulfillment are possible, no matter whether the sexual act with the other sex was a single experience, or happened out of a sexual habit (Freud, 1909: 5-11).

Although Freud tries to explain the different possible categories among counter-sex performers, he admits that it is not possible to explain the phenomenon of *'inversion'* as such satisfactorily. Neither the assumption that inversion is genetic; nor the idea that it is a matter of gradual acquisition can be proved scientifically, as more as there are a variety of single cases that have led to a complete change and reversion of the original libido. Freud mentions as example young males who have changed their sexual preferences after they had had very negative experiences with female sex-partners.

An important aspect is, according to Freud, the appearance of the inverted, which strongly refers to which sub-category the individual belongs. While absolutely inverted males mostly develop a habit of copying the female counterparts in behavior, dressing and attitudes towards living and housing, for example, and thus provoke the imagination of femininity, occasional inverted males may not even be recognized as such by their social environment. An interesting aspect is that the latter, males who have preserved the psychological character of masculinity, and hardly depict secondary characteristics of females, are mostly interested in male sex-objects that are defined by feminine psychological features (Freud, 1909: 11).

3.2.3. Labeling the Other

Besides the medical, philosophical and scientific interest in the phenomenon of homosexuality, the preference of same-sex activity has logically always encouraged also the private sphere to label individuals who publicly express roles and behaviors that are considered inappropriate to a person's genital sex. This may include a series of verbal or physical cues that are deemed progressively unnatural, or any other deviation from the common norms. Generally, labeling a particular group of human beings implies the introduction of a new social concept that is based on the notion of *'the other'*, those who do not fulfill the normative criteria of a particular society at a particular time. All the norms created by this society are social constructs that are based on the power position of single individuals or institutions in this society. The names with which 'the others' are provided are usually unique, used for a purpose other than originally intended, or they are encoded, and only recognizable for a specific group of individuals. In any case, those names have only meaning in connection with a certain context (Foucault, 1997: 286-288).

A good example for private labeling are the expressions of the British author Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who already wittily observed in the early 18th century that the entire world consisted of three sexes: men, women and Herveys; the latter is a reverence to Lord John Hervey, a well-known archetypical pansy, and a good friend of Lady Mary (McDowall, 2012). Madame d'Orleans, an obviously quite competent mistress at the court of Louis XIV, broadened the varieties of sexual orientation without providing her categories with particular names, and stated more generally: "Some prefer women, some like both men and women, some prefer men, some prefer children, and some have little interest in sex at all" (Boswell, 1990: 133).

In consideration of the experiences of centuries on the subject, the modern scientists will probably agree with Madame d'Orleans' comment, without claiming completeness in the list. What the lady defines with her statement is not only a very liberal approach to sexual diversity, but she also provides a possibility to elude being trapped in 'homosexual ambiguity', because she understood very early that one expression was not enough to label a variety of sexual alternatives. From simply labeling an individual 'homosexual', it cannot be defined to which sub-category the person belongs. Even those individuals who are practicing bisexual relationships more than incidentally may disavow 'bisexual' as their label of identity, and perceive their basic identity as heterosexual or homosexual who occasionally have sexual experiences apart from their 'natural origin'. The question is how the particular features of 'the other' as such can be recognized and decoded by the 'normal' to allow the categorization of 'the other' at all.

3.2.4. Secret Living in the Closet

Secrecy in connection with homosexuality was not only an urgent need in the private sphere during the Victorian era, due to its strict laws and social constraints on the sexual preference, but it is also reflected in a variety of literary works of that time, in which the concept is used for the same reasons, escaping prosecution, stigmatization and social bans. For married Victorian males being decoded as something different than the 'normal' heterosexual, which was usually the 'unnatural' homosexual, could have even meant the loss of child custody, and in particular surroundings, the risk of physical assault. The result of that specific view of 'the other' was that the necessarily invisible homosexuals were generally brandmarked 'in absence' as pathetic losers, perilous child molesters, and licentious barflies

who were inherently impaired and psychically too handicapped to live a decent life (Neumann. 2012).

Under such circumstances, the logical consequence of the Victorian homosexual community was to remain in the closet, which Foucault defines as "a concept first materialized, along with the homosexual as a historical subject toward the end of the 19th century in Western Europe" (Foucault, 1980: 43-45). Actually, not only in the late Victorian, but also in the first half of the 20th century the term *'closet'* was associated with a consciously separated space of secrecy and discretion, and 'being in the closet' meant to make a secret of the individual sexual preference, and to limit sexual desire and practice solely to a kind of private parallel-world.

Coming out of the closet, which was later defined by the modern term *'outing'*, was a social concept that provoked heavy debates among later scholars on the subject. Didier Eribon claimed that leaving the safety of secrecy, the closet, could never be a matter of admitting the individual homosexuality solely at one occasion, but is a process of repetition in any new context, otherwise, the position of the homosexual might be out of the closet within a particular circle of friends, however, he may remain in the closet when the superior sphere, the common public, is concerned (Eribon, 2004: 46).

Judith Butler sees the cardinal problem in connection with the closet in its circularity of the in/out-controversy. The fact that someone comes out of the closet to signify himself implies that there is, on the other hand, a parallel situation defined by the fact that other individuals are in the closet, which maintains the structure of the closet as such (Butler, 1991: 13-31).

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick is opposed to Butler's theory, and advocates the idea of associating the closet with a transparent enclosure. According to her theory, on the one hand, the homosexual is protected and hidden in sexual anonymity for outsiders, but on the other hand, there are countless ways and tools to make homosexuality identifiable by people who are provided with a particular knowledge of the homosexual sphere. Thus homosexuality may be considered as a kind of 'open secret' (Edwards, 2009: 46).

In any case, coming out of the closet has always been a risky business, as the history of this social concept depicts, and it has always been depending on which degree homophobia was spread among a social community. The term generally encompasses a pronounced negative approach towards other than heterosexual individuals within a particular society. It may be expressed as antipathy, prejudice, aversion or even hatred, mainly based on irrational

fear. One of the first and most prominent, even though involuntarily, de-closeted males lived in ancient Rome, Julius Caesar. He was defamed by his enemies of having had a youthful experience as the passive partner of the King of Bithynia, Nicomedes IV (Suetorius, 2011: 45-53). Defaming campaigns focusing on sexual diversity continued to function as perfect means to eliminate adverse individuals also during the Reformation, when religious controversialists were regularly accused of practicing sodomy, which often cost them their lives.

The rise of homosexual emancipation movements, hundreds of years later, gradually effected a change in the perception of the homosexual individual in Western Europe, although homosexuals had to withstand countless setbacks in the course of time. For example, the practice of 'coming out of the closet' provoked an incredible scandal at the German court of Kaiser Wilhelm, which was historically recorded as the *'Eulenburg Affair'*, precipitated by a storm of debates surrounding a series of courts-martial and civil trials as response to accusations of homosexual demeanor among prominent members of Kaiser Wilhelm's cabinet, from 1907 - 1909 (Steakly, 1990), and threatened the progress of the early German homosexual emancipation movement, but could not stop it.

The destiny of the American homosexuals was difficult, too, at the end of the 19th and in the early 20th century. Although they rarely dared to come out publicly because of social consequences, many were forced out of the closet because of the American notion of the freedom of the press. A common habit was to publish the names of men and women who were arrested by police raids on gay bars or in cruising areas. Although those persons did not have to expect legal consequences, such an involuntary outing could result in ruined careers and family relationships (Neumann, 2012).

At the same time Great Britain had its very sophisticated way of dealing with its homosexuals, they were simply not existing, which represents a very productive method of ignorance practiced by a whole nation, and which functioned perfectly until Oscar Wilde entered the scene. The result of his highly publicized trials and the rocketing homophobic panic among the Puritan British discouraged most of the British homosexuals to come out of the closet, instead, they started to cover their sexual preference with pro forma-marriages or by converting to Catholicism. Others left to an established gay colony on the Italian island of Capri, or to the relatively tolerant France, where homosexuality was not illegal, for not being prosecuted as representatives of sexual diversity, and to sustain their ideologies and values (Latimer, 2012).

4. THE REPRESENTATION OF DIVERSITY

According to Aristotle any individual of the species human being is equipped with an inborn instinct for representation which is based on three aspects: The *'object'*, which is the symbol that is represented; *'manner'*, which defines the way the symbol is represented, and the *'means'*, the material that is used to represent it. Representations are considered essential means to define a certain set of ideologies and values, and they logically always develop in association with a particular culture, and the society that produces them. Problems like misunderstandings or any other errors may arise due to the fact that representations operate in a system of signs that are based on cultural and social factors. Analogous to any other field of human life, the encoding and decoding processes of homosexual representations function in the context of a set of rules for interpreting, and within the social group that is responsible for the establishment of the used codes and conventions. Usually, such codes and conventions are introduced in agreement with the single members, or at least of smaller sub-groups of members within the superior social group.

Another important aspect is that the process of representation is not a static concept. Experience depicts that objects and identities do not have a constant meaning, but may change within the course of time; objects may simply disappear, and new ones may be introduced (Mitchell, 1995: 5-6).

4.1. Semiotics and Symbols

In the case of homosexuality, representation has often been a matter of veiled semiotics and symbols that could only be decoded by the members of a particular target group at a certain time, which was often an essential need in history, due to the fact that homosexuality has not always been accepted by the society and the laws, and homosexuals were prosecuted and convicted because of their sexual preferences.

Generally, semiotics is based on the idea that visual images and their respective signs can function as an explanation of an individual's personality and character, which means, that gay semiotics can function within the limited sense of the repertoire of symbols and artifacts displayed on the person to signal one's membership in the homosexual community, or some sector of it. Apart from social or legal aspects, for various reasons such as anonymity or other personal necessities, first information about an individual's sexual preferences or allegiance is

mostly provided in the form of non-verbal communication so that the meaning is evident to initiates, but incomprehensible to outsiders who do not share a common system of codes. The important difference to other semiotics, for example the symbolism of freemasonry, is that gay semiotics are not introduced and regulated by a central authority, from above, but develop gradually from below, and are, as Mitchell already says about objects of presentation, always involved in a process of change and renewal.

However, not only symbols and objects that serve as signifiers are subjects to permanent changes, also the degree of secrecy may change within the course of time, due to different approaches to homosexuality from the society and the law. During the late 1970s symbols like pink triangle buttons could 'already' be worn publicly by homosexuals even in prudish Anglican Britain, without having to expect reprisals from authorities; and also the symbolism of Oscar Wilde's blue button holes was well-known among the Victorian society, many years earlier (Fischer, 1977: 3-5).

4.1.1. The Body

In a neutral environment the body is often the only means to articulate delicate but important characteristics of individuals, including sexual preferences, specific desires, or even the emotions of a certain moment in time. This means, the body is the perfect object to project one's own identity, and to communicate it to a selected audience, which mainly functions via a particular way of dressing, or any other body adornment. Acts of representing and presenting rhetoric through fashion has a long tradition, based on the fact that fashion as such can be considered as a language of signs, symbols and iconography that non-verbally communicate meanings about individuals, groups, and even nations (Davis, 1994: 6-8)!

Problems of misinterpretation may arise when specific body fashion codes signaling homosexuality or heterosexuality, in the wider sense even masculinity and femininity, become vague or ambiguous in a society, and thus are difficult to decode, which may have been the case with the character of the dandy.

4.1.2. The Dandy – a lucid symbol of homosexuality?

As a matter of fact, not all the dandies that appeared in the course of time were homosexual or bisexual, since the typical symbols and signs of the species were also elements

of a certain leisure class ostentation, and snobbery that was partly defined by a particular male-female antithesis in style of dress. What all dandies have had in common since antiquity is their representation as male individuals who pride themselves of being the incarnation of elegance and fashion. It was their specific appearance and their uncommon life-style that made them paragons of hedonism and aestheticism not only in the strongholds of dandyism, England and France, but also across the big ocean, where the dandy first found entrance in the American folk song *Yankee Doodle*, particularly in the line "Stuck a feather in his cap and called it macaroni", the latter is a synonym of the term *'dandy'*, and a reference to the Macaroni Club in the London of George III., when a particular group of the British Renaissance upper class became famous for their elaborate costumes.

The origin of the character type, however, was much earlier in ancient Greece, when two classical specimens of the dandy appeared: Agathon, who is described in Plato's *Symposium* as a poet and tragedian, who was not blessed with outstanding beauty, but obsessed with the most trivial details of his wardrobe in the latest Ionian fashion; and Alcibiades, who is presented as the most dazzling figure of the *'jeunesse dorée'* of Athens, richer and more influential than Agathon, and never sparing any expenses when the improvement of his person was concerned. The British equivalent to the Greek *'jeunesse dorèe'*, which actually is a French term, were the *'bright young people'*. The mock-term was commonly used to ridicule the bohemian young aristocrats in 1920s London (Taylor, 1994). The heyday of the dandy was in the early nineteenth century, when George Bryan 'Beau' Brummel, the arbiter of men's fashion, entered the scene, and presented with pride what half a century later became part of Oscar Wilde's doom, ostentatious clothing that allowed associations with the brilliant plumage of the peacock, or the flowing mane of the male lion, as portraits of that era depict. Legendary, for example, is Wilde's striking costume, capitalizing on a character featured in the Gilbert and Sullivan opera *Patience*, which he wore during a lecture tour through the United States, in 1881 (Johansson, 1990: 293-294).

At the same time in France, Charles Baudelaire became the embodiment of dandyism. His notion of the cross-cultural concept, which he expressed in his essay *The Painter of Modern Life*, in 1863, includes almost all facets of dandyism, except information about a homosexual aspect:

> The wealthy man, who, blasé though he may be, has no occupation in life but to chase along the highway of happiness, the man nurtured in luxury, and habituated from early youth to being obeyed by others, the man, finally, who has no profession other than elegance, is bound at all times to have a facial expression of a very special kind. Dandyism is an ill-defined social attitude as strange as dueling; it goes back a long way, since Caesar, Catilina, Alcibiades provide us with brilliant examples of it; it is very wide spread since Chateaubriand found examples of it in the forests and on the lake-sides of the New World. Dandyism, which is an institution outside the law, has a rigorous code of laws that all its subjects are strictly bound by, however, ardent and independent their individual characters may be. (Baudelaire, 1986: 98-99)

The first four lines of Baudelaire's statement could be easily associated with the description of Wilde's literary figure, Dorian Gray; so many parallels can be found between the historical examples and the fictional character. However, the relation of the historical dandy, and in the wider sense the literary dandy, to male homosexuality is not uncomplicated. As an indication for the connection between both social concepts may be summoned the experience that the male homosexual is much more likely to feel the need of distinguishing his person from the male masses, he is more conscious of fashion and clothing, and he tends to express a much more pronounced narcissistic way of behavior than heterosexuals.

As clothing is not only an indication for social group and status, but can also function as a means to define the body's sexual appeal, and thus it can be used by homosexuals to indicate that they are potential sex partners for other males, for example, by the choice of a particular color, or the specific pattern of a costume. Aulus Gellius mentions in his *Noctes Atticae* that the tunic covering the arm is an "unmasculine style of clothing that is preferably used by men seeking the recipient role in male-male sex" (Aulus Gellius, 2012: VI. 12.); and Havelock Ellis reports in his extensive work about Philadelphia's homosexual subculture that a red tie was "almost a synonym" for homosexuality in large American cities (Ellis, 1915: chs. II/III). Much later, during the 1970s, an elaborate system of colored rear-pocket bandannas in combination with a visible key ring emerged among American Gay men, and signaled interest in leather or S/M sex. The position where they were worn indicated the preferred role in sexual activity (Eisenberg, 1990: 246).

These examples depict clearly that the variety, material and color of clothes used to indicate sexual preference has always been a large one; and its degree of secrecy has been based on the degree of sexual freedom at a certain time. The dandy living at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century, who usually was the typical aristocratic male obsessed with his costume, could wear clothes that were not normally worn at one's daily work, without being prosecuted by the law, however, deeper expressions of homosexuality were forbidden in

public. The culture critic Michael Bronsky brings it to the point when he states that dandyism as a cultivation of surface, and the dandy itself as embodiment of style over substance, are most famously linked to homosexuality, however, dandyism could also be nothing more than a concept that is "all style and no content" (Bronsky, 2001: 129-163).

Therefore, taking in account only dandyism as indicator for sexual preference would make it difficult to trace homosexuality in a literary work; it would need more information beyond the surface to be able to speak about the representation of latent homosexuality. Wilde, for example, provides more information in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, even though it is veiled, for example in a particular language system, and has to be decoded carefully to become aware of what is really behind his literary characters, and what do they stand for.

4.2. Camp-Language

Language as "message transporter" has an important function in the homosexual society. In the late 19th century a new term entered the social scene, *'camp'*, a concept that was originally introduced as a kind of wit that should stand the world on its head by the means of inversions, such as taking the serious for the humorous, and, vice versa, taking the humorous seriously. Core describes the 'newly invented' concept, which was closely linked to the beginnings of the modern world of mass entertainment, as "the lie that tells the truth" (Core, 1984: 190).

Actually, in the beginning camp was not a solely verbal concept, but could also be expressed by gestures, and a certain way of performance and public display. When it was verbal, the deeper meaning of the message provided was not simply found in a statement itself, but it was transmitted via implication, innuendo and intonation.

Etymologically, the term *'camp'* may derive from the French verb *'se camper'*, which can be translated, among other alternatives, as *'to pose boldly'*. Another theory suggests that the term dates back to the 16th century, when a particular slang was introduced in English theatres, and used by males dressed as women, which again is a reference to the French word *'campagne'*, which means *'countryside'*, and refers to the habits of French strolling actors who were often dressed as women (Rodgers, 1979: 6-8). Generally, the English variation *'camp'* was used, even though not exclusively, to refer to male homosexuality. In Australia

'camp' has become the common meaning of *'gay'* or *'homosexual'*, without defining other qualifications.

The most important benefits of using the camp concept were that the direct confrontation to cultural values and constraints could be avoided, and social constraints such as customs, traditions, or sexual ethics could be undermined through cleverly placed send-ups, or veiled mockery, which could have been an urgent need at certain times. In any case, camp provided a great alternative to the classic satire, which is generally based on the idea of emphasizing social solidarity by exposing its targets to scornful ridicule. Camp played with the artificial, the ironic, it functioned as a means to narrow the distance between performer and victim, suggesting that it was the latter who laughed last (Core, 1984: 189-190).

Soon it became obvious that camp had much more power and dynamic than to be only used as a preferably homosexual concept of wit; it developed into a perfect concept of gay identity through providing the linguistic means of encoding homosexual information that was not destined for the public's ears, but could only be decoded by other homosexual campers. As such it helped cement solidarity between the members of a subculture, and bound them together by a cordon called secret. Furthermore, it allowed them to communicate 'undiscovered' in the presence of a hostile dominant culture, which reduced the risk of being indentified, stigmatized and abused.

A perfect example for performed camp are Henry James' letters to John Addington Symonds, which seem to be the harmless transmission of ideas and information of an American novelist addressed to his English poet colleague, at first sight. If an unsuspecting postal inspector had come across them, he would have recognized nothing but a sociable and friendly note within them. However, advocates of the camp idea might have a different view of the meaning of the letters, and they might argue that they contain a great variety of veiled camp expressions and phrases that would have been thoroughly 'visible' for gay readers, who would have easily understood that James' had been signaling his homosexuality to another homosexual. In one of the letters James refers to an article on Venice he had sent to Symonds some time ago:

> I sent my article to you because it was a constructive way of expressing the good will I felt for you in consequence of what you had written about the land of Italy (…) and of intimating to you somewhat dumbly, that I am a sympathetic reader. I nourish for the said Italy an unspeakably tender passion, and your pages always seemed to say to me that you were one of the small number of people who love it as much as I do (…) for it seemed to me that the victims of a common passion should exchange a look.
> (James, 1987)

Based on the assumption that the letter was sent to Symonds at a time when the homosexual society was already aware of the camp concept, the encoded information packed in the letter can be decoded in the following way: Firstly, James refers to an article Symonds had written about "the land of Italy" which can be considered as a reference to Symonds' homosexuality, because the taste for the country was not compared to a kind of mass enjoyment, but a common hidden indication of homosexuality among the gay scene at that time; furthermore, James informs the addressee of his letter that they both share a common passion, and that this "unspeakably tender passion" cannot be expressed publicly, but has to remain in secrecy, and can only be exchanged with a look. The notion of secrecy in this sequence implies that James talks about something forbidden, something the environment is not allowed to know, and he specifies the passion by adding the information that this kind of love is only shared by a small number of people, who are "victims of a common passion" (Bergmann, 1993: 92-94).

Considering the perception of homosexuality both by the Victorian society and by the law in Britain at the time James wrote his letter, it appears logical that homosexuals tend to hide their sexual preferences from the public, and it is difficult to believe that the high density of camp-terms in James's letters are nothing but mere accidentalness. Based on all these assumptions, it can be considered that there is much more behind the author's lines than a simple, shared affinity for a southern country; it is more likely that James' indirectly describes the sexual orientation of two males, and that he tries to express his solidarity with his counterpart, arising out of this secret and forbidden sexual behavior.

Scholars are increasingly sure that via the practice of using camp-language in the private sphere, the linguistic concept found entrance in literature, and became one of the most important indicators for defining a homosexual background in literary works of art. As a kind of 'bridge' between the natural and the fictional world may be considered Robert Hichens' novel *The Green Carnation*, which was published in 1894, and provoked a great scandal because of its pungent content. In his work Hichens features the characters of Esmé Amarinth and his young friend Lord Reginald Hastings; and both characters are closely based on the real figures of Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas; even more, Hichens lets his fictional figures speak with the words of their originals, all of them statements he had collected during the time he had spent with the illustrious couple over more than one year. His long companionship with Wilde and Douglas allowed him a very authentic description of the life, so that it was Wild himself who was finally accused of having been the anonymous author of

the novel, which he clearly denied in an open letter to the Pall Mall Gazette, on October 1, 1894. The book was finally withdrawn from circulation in 1895 because of its clear reference to Wilde's homosexuality, but not early enough to avoid being considered part of the staging for the author's disgrace and downfall, introduced by the three consecutive trials for gross indecency in 1895 (Sutherland, 2009: 699-702).

Passages like the following that finally used against Wilde in the course of his prosecution, because they were considered to be violating Victorian norms, and they were interpreted based on camp considerations:

> That would be the object of the performance, to unfit one of the duties of the day. How beautiful! What a glorious sight it would be to see a great audience flocking out into the orange-coloured sunshine, each unit of which was thoroughly unfitted for any duties whatsoever. It makes me perpetually sorrowful in London to meet people doing their duty. I find them anywhere. It is impossible to escape from them. A sense of duty is like some horrible disease. It destroys the tissues of the mind, as certain complaints destroy the tissues of the body. (Hichens, 1894: 7)

The most remarkable key term in this passage is the phrase "doing their duty", which is obviously not a reference to any military experience, but may be interpreted as the euphemism of performing the conventional masculine task of cross-gender marriage, which was, according to Victorian ideas, based on social constraints, and not on love or sexual desire. The speaker in the sequence objects clearly against the social and cultural constraints of a certain era, because they cause physical and psychical illness in a person. Moreover, he calls upon a "great audience", particular upon those people who are "thoroughly unfitted for any duties", to contravene to any constraints that influence the personal life by claiming "that would be the object of the performance, to unfit one for the duties of the day", a statement that may have been considered to be a veiled appeal to civil disobedience by Victorian authorities (Bergmann: 1993: 92-94).

5. THE VICTORIAN VEILED GAY NOVEL AND INFLUENCING LITERARY WORKS

5.1. George Gordon Byron – *Don Leon*

The first more or less unveiled representation of latent homosexuality in literary works may be determined with the creation of a phenomenon, the long poem *Don Leon*, written around 1833, but unpublished until 1866. The poem is considered as "one of the strongest

apologies for homosexuality of the period, militant in its arguments in defense of it, scathing in its condemnation of society's hypocrisy and its condemnation of what the poet calls 'natural passions'" (Fone, 2001: 255). Although it derives from another literary genre than the later novels representing latent homosexuality, it can be deemed as the literary basement for the later development in British homosexual novel writing, due to the fact that it is the first plea for sodomy law reform, and a clear defense of homosexuality in general, packed into a literary work of art (Crompton, 1983: 53-71).

However, the phenomenal aspect is not connected to the poems world-shaking content, but to the fact that the author of the poem cannot be defined without doubt. Some scholars support the idea that the poem is Lord Byron's own account of his homosexual life, but others claim that it is the work of another, unidentified author who had much insight into Byron's private life, George Colman, for example, Byron's good friend and colleague in art (Kellog, 1983: 58).

In any case, the character of Don Leon, the protagonist in the poem, has been interpreted as the fictional equivalent to Byron, and the poem itself is considered to contain a record of the author's homosexual adventures, in particular, his relationship with Nicolas Giraud, the Greek youngster whom he met during his stay in Athens, in 1809. Such assumptions are not without doubt, as the numerous debates on Byron's sexuality depict. Since there is only vague evidence about his real sexual orientation available, the determination of his sexual preferences is rather a matter of speculation than proved facts. The most logical consideration is that Byron was bisexual, which is actually a theory that is shared by many scholars. It is based on the fact that, on the one hand, Byron had several more or less legitimate children, which are a clear reference to sexual cross-gender relationships; on the other hand, he left Britain to escape the censure of British society, which was mainly based on his allegations of sodomy and incest, and to free himself from the rigid constraints set upon sexual interests (MacCarthy, 2002: 33). Typically for a sexually free spirit, Byron visited Venice, and he later joined the Greek War of Independence, a historical event that greatly attracted him. However, the poet and later freedom fighter was said to have been even more attracted by his young Greek page, Lukas Chalandritsanos; unfortunately, the youngster did not requite Byron's affection (Bostridge, 2008).

Who seems to have been attracted by the British lord was Nicolas Giraud, a young Greek for whose education Byron paid, and whom he left 7,000 pounds in his will, which is the remarkable equivalent of 390,000 pounds in today's currency. Exactly Giraud's

consideration in Byron's last will may be another indication for the poet's bisexuality, as more as he changed his will after the "couple" parted, and he excluded Giraud from his will.

Giraud is the second protagonist in the poem *Don Leon*, which refers in the opening lines to the 'crippled Talleyrand', William Beckford and William Courtenay, both real figures in 19th century Britain, and a homosexual couple that was rather different in age:

> Thou ermined judge, pull off that sable cap!
> What! Cans't thou lie, and take the morning nap?
> Peep thro' the casement; see the gallows there:
> The work hangs on it; could not mercy spare?
> What had he done? Ask, crippled Talleyrand,
> Ask Beckford, Courtney, all the motley band (…)
> (I. 1-6)

The homosexual relationship of the uneven couple was intercepted by Courtney's uncle, who advertised the affair in the newspapers. The result was Beckford's stigmatization, and his voluntary self-exile from British society. Byrne Fone, a famous historian of homosexuality-related issues, points out how the poem and the fictional discourse around the protagonists, Giraud and Byron, in particular their homosexual relationship, reflect the views of homosexuality in 19th century Britain. Beckford and Courtenay stay for the unfair treatment of homosexual men who have committed no real crime, nonetheless, they are stigmatized by the society, and have to suffer under the people's hypocrisy when their sexual preferences are concerned (Fone, 2001: 258-265).

In the poem, the only solution to escape British homophobia is seen in Don Leon's emigration to Greece, where he can fulfill his sexual desires, which are embodied in the marvelous person of Nicolas Giraud, a paragon of beauty and temptation, whose relation to Don Leon is described throughout the poem,

> Gave pleasing doubts of what his sex might be;
> And who that saw him would perplexed have been
> For beauty marked his gender epicene (…)
> Spent half in love and half in poetry!
> The muse each morn I wooed, each eve the boy,
> And tasted sweets that never seemed to clay
> (II. 26-28. 71-73)

The aspect of an extraordinary beauty in a young male remarkably reawakes in another literary work of art, created more than sixty years after the poem was written, when Oscar Wilde introduces his famous character Dorian Gray in the Victorian novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and for later generations, Dorian should become the paragon of dandyism,

hedonism and latent homosexuality, represented in a work of art. Like his literary ancestor, Giraud, he is the target of desire, and the sweet muse, in his case it is 'the painter of his ruin', who is most amazed by his beauty and sweetness. There is even an equivalent to Don Leon, the Byron in Wilde's novel, Sir Henry Wotton, the mature tutor and seducer of the initially innocent beauty. What is different concerning the protagonists in both works of art is the aspect of the acceptability of their homosexual affections. While, in the wider sense, Byron's actions are acceptable, because he does nothing more than following the customs of the country where he has settled, Wilde must veil his protagonists' sexual desires in hypocritical Britain. Grebanier refers to the historical evidence of performed homosexuality in Greece, and he argues: "Once Byron had seen a beautiful Ganymede of fifteen attending the Turkish Governor, a Grecian youth, publicly known as the Governor's 'catamite' (4). Was it criminal to do what the Governor was doing?" (Grebanier, 1970: 78). What Dorian and all the characters in Wilde's novel, and later Wilde himself, were missing in 19th century Britain, was a person in political power position who publicly shared their own sexual preference. Then Wilde could have ended his novel with similar words like those the 'author in doubt' of *Don Leon* provided his audience: "And like the satirist, who gravely said, When wives are tiresome take a boy to bed" (II. 94-95).

5.2. Oscar Wilde – *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

5.2.1. The Preface

Due to the political, cultural and social circumstances in Britain during the Victorian times, and the fact that his work was neither based on the customs of a country far away from his motherland, nor was he as physical author, who was well-known by name, safe in anonymity, Wilde was certainly not in the position to provide his audience with a text representing homosexuality in a way that it was instantly recognizable as such by the public, but he had to camouflage homoerotic sequences substantially. Based on this assumptions Wilde was probably aware of the thin ice he intended to walk on with his work, and thus he explicitly stated in the preface of his novel:

> There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all. (…). The moral life of a man forms part of the subject matter of the artist, but the morality of art consists in the perfect use of an imperfect medium. (…) Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril. Those who read the symbol do so at their peril. It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors. (Wilde, 1995: preface)

What Wilde meant with his statement can be interpreted in two different ways; firstly, Wilde might have used the preface of his novel as a kind of insurance, to protect himself from legal persecution. As history depicts, if it should have been a diplomatic move, it was not crowned with success, because it was exactly his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* that was used as confirmation of his amoral and perverse tendencies by the prosecutors. On the other hand, Wilde may have consciously placed the references of 'going beneath the surface', and 'reading the symbol', and his purpose was to inform a particular target group, the homosexual community, of the "content behind the content" in his work. Unfortunately, Wilde's message was not only decoded by the members of his own socio-sexual group, but also by the conservative heterosexual antagonists. For the analysis on the representation of latent homosexuality within the novel, the preface is an important indicator of obviously existing symbolism in the text and the existence of messages that are veiled beneath the surface of the text, otherwise Wilde could have renounced such explicit information, though presented in an indirect way, in the preface of his novel.

5.2.2. Name Symbolism

In which way, and to what degree homosexual readers responded to the book's undercurrent of gay feelings and desires was certainly dependent on the knowledge of gay symbolism, the camp concept and a proper knowledge of Greek and Venetian history. Actually, the ambiguity and disarticulation in Wilde's work starts already with the protagonist's name, Dorian Gray.

'Gray' is a surname that is commonly used in Scottish and Irish history, and as such it is much likely that the Irish man, Wilde, was familiar with it. Etymological, the surname is of Gaelic origin, and it has undergone a variety of phonetic transcriptions in the long process of the forced Anglicization of Gaelic surnames. For example, the very common Irish surname *'MacRaith'* was Anglicized to *'McGrath'* or *'McGraw'*, which means "the son of grace", and it finally turned up as *'McGray'* in genealogical trees (Gray Family, 2012). Ellman suggests that Wilde chose Dorian's surname partly to honor one of his probable lovers, a clerk named John Gray (Ellmann, 1988: 308).

Whether Wilde wanted to refer to his own ancestry, remembered a possible homosexual love affair, or tried to create a reference between his protagonist and the notion of *'grace'* by giving him the surname *'son of grace'* cannot be defined, due to the lack of

explicit information. However, there is probably another interesting aspect concerning name symbolism veiled in Wilde's choice, which is very obvious, but has not been examined satisfactorily so far. Leaving apart the etymological and social aspects, and leaving apart one letter, in particular the 'r', the surname *'Gray'* suddenly appears as *'Gay'*, which is the common definition of homosexual males! Assuming that Wilde had wanted to inform his audience very early about the specific content of his literary work, the introduction of his protagonist's surname was a very clever and successful move, because the prosecutors in Wilde's sodomy-trial did obviously not get to the bottom of its meaning, campers, on the other hand, probably did.

The second part of the protagonist's name, the commonly used prename *'Dorian'* dates back to the Dorians, who were one of the four major Ancient Greek ethnic groups, who are said to have invaded Greece around 1000 B.C, and it simply defines one individual of the entire group. In the wider sense, the name certainly has much more potential; on the one hand, *'dorian'* is generally a reference to Greek beauty, and defines an aesthetic ideal face and form, based on the historical tradition of marvelous art in the ancient Dorian states, and as such it may be a reference to Dorian Gray's extraordinary beauty; on the other hand, Wilde may have used it on the purpose of referring to a very specific way of life and social organization experienced in the ancient Dorian towns, particularly in the town of Sparta, and as such it could function as a veiled reference to an early form of homosexuality, pederasty, which was commonly practiced in the Dorian state (Hall, 2006: 240-242) .

The *'polis'* Sparta, the *'town'* of Sparta, was the military center of the Dorian state, which gradually became the dominant military land-power in ancient Greece. Its power was based on the strict education of the later warriors which started very early during their boyhood, at the age of seven. Sparta, however, is also often considered to have been the first city where athletic nudity was introduced, and where pederasty was formalized, based on the characteristics of Spartan education. The most important aspect of this education was that it was not only concerned with military activity, but also with the physical development of the boys, who were assisted by an older mentor, usually an unmarried young man who should have fatherly qualities, and function as a kind of role model to the boy. The exact nature of the uneven relationship is not undisputed among ancient sources. While Xenophon, for example, claims in his *Constitution of the Lacedaimonians* that Spartan customs were unsuited to pederasty, Aelian explicitly states that it was considered to be a deficiency in character if a Spartan man was not able to present a young boy as lover at his side, he could

even be punished for failings in pederast relationships, which were generally temporally limited. For Aelian, however, there was a clear distinction between that kind of noble love that was not clearly defined, and that kind of love that was based on temptation and carnal relation. Spartans consuming the latter were, according to Aelian, not punished by the town authorities, but they had to leave Sparta in respect to the honor of the town (Wilson,1997: 135-138).

Surviving Dorian Greek vase paintings, however, depict another truth. The represented scenes provide distinctive evidence of same-sex relations between a younger and an older male participant. Dover's research on the subject, which is mainly based on Sir John Beazley's results in interpreting Greek decorated pottery, in particular black- and red-figure scenes, reveals the particular roles of the represented two male lovers in action: the *'erastes'* who represents the older and active part in the relation, the *'lover'*, and the *'eromenos'* who represents the adolescent *'beloved'* male.

Generally, the paintings focus on three different types of same-sex relationships; in the first category the older male, who is usually defined by a beard, offers the younger one a present, there is no sexual intercourse expressed. The second kind shows the typical up-and-down gesture which indicates that the older male masturbates the younger one while he turns the young male's head to look into his eyes with the other hand. In the third category the erastes and the eromenos are presented engaged in an interfemoral, or more rarely, anal intercourse (Dover, 1978).

5.2.3. The Transformation of Dorian Education

Wilde represents with Dorian Gray a young man, naïve and unformed, who is introduced to the various fields of life by an older man, Lord Henry Wotton, and by that the author mirrors the Dorian education system. Dorian is the *'eromenos'* who is destined to live a life in luxury and pleasure, based on his family background which guarantees him affiliation to upper class society, financial independence, and the freedom to choose the partners at his side. And it is exactly these qualities that predestine him to become an object of desire, on the one hand, and the centre of an experiment, on the other hand. The *'erastes'*, Lord Henry, identified as such but the fact that he could function in vase paintings as that one who "stroked his pointed brown beard" (Wilde, 19), does nothing more than try to create his own piece of art, like Basil does under other circumstances, like the Spartan tutors did with the

upper class boys who were sent to them in order to be prepared for their further life and fights, like Don Leon/Byron did with Nicolas Giraud for whose education he paid a great deal of money, and finally, like Wilde did himself when he met the blond, slender, famously good-looking Lord Alfred Douglas.

It is this particular attraction that the appearance of a young man releases in the mind of an older male individual, and vice versa, that indicates the beginning of a relationship that goes beyond the social construct called friendship. In Basils Garden, a surrounding which can be associated with the Biblical Garden Eden, a place where snakes are expected to seduce innocent humans, metamorphosis creates the snake in Dorian's life, Lord Henry, who from the first moment impresses the young man not only because of his influencing wisdom, which may be based on years of experience in living a life of secrets, but also by physical features like his low musical voice, and "that graceful wave of the hand that was characteristic to him since his Eton days" (Wilde, 31). And Lord Henry obviously knows how to play the game, which indicates his practice in similar former situations, he is aware of any glance in the young man's eyes, and any emotion he manages to provoke in him with his insisting words, when he watches him with his subtle smile. Like Mephistopheles, the great seducer, he ensnares Dorian, and pretends to share with him the tragic truth of life,

> We are punished for our refusals. Every impulse that we strive to strangle broods in the mind, and poisons us. The body sins once, and has done with its sin, for action is a mode of purification. Nothing remains then but the recollection of pleasure, or the luxury of regret. (Wilde, 32)

To emphasize his words, the mature man introduces the unspoiled youngster to his philosophy of the new Hedonism, which he defines as a kind of pleasure that has nothing in common with ratio and virtue, but is defined only by the individual sensorial perception of the sweets of life, the intensive experience of the moment, ignoring the consequences of the fulfillment of one's own urges. For Lord Henry the beautiful young man is the embodiment of the new concept who is fated for the realization of the new philosophy, and he insistently urges him:

> Live! Live the wonderful life that is in you. Let nothing be lost upon you. Be always searching for new sensations. Be afraid of nothing… A new Hedonism – that is what our century wants. You might be its visible symbol. (Wilde, 38)

Dorian is deeply impressed by the charismatic man's words, which have enough blandish quality to strike him as the solution for his confused feelings towards Basil and the Lord himself, but what the youngster does not understand is that Lord Henry is not the

friendly tutor who feels obliged to bestow the best education to his pupil, who sees it as a kind of Spartanian honor to be chosen as the one who paves the way for his further life in any possible direction; he is a cynical, disillusioned seducer whose homoerotic attraction to Dorian is primarily whetted voyeuristically by Basil's worship of the young man. His greatest desire is not of ordinary carnality, but it is aimed at influencing the young man, which defines, as Summers suggests, "a process that is itself a sublimated expression of homosexuality" (Summers, 1992: 17-21).

While Lord Henry's method of educating the unformed *'eromenos'* is entirely self-reflexive, a perfect exercise of influence on an inferior male individual, based on his homoerotic attraction to this person, Basil's contribution to Dorian's education is generally based on idealism and an aesthetic world view. He wants to make Dorian aware of his extraordinary beauty, and provide him with confidence to develop vanity. At the same time, the painter appears as the true victim of homoerotic feelings, and he is the one, who does not dare to expresses his attraction to the young man:

> When our eyes met, I felt that I was growing pale. A curious sensation of terror came over me. I knew that I had come face to face with some one whose mere personality was so fascinating that, if I allowed it to do so, it would absorb my whole nature, my whole soul, my very art itself (…) Something seemed to tell me I was in the verge of a terrible crisis in my life. I grew afraid, and turned to quit the room. (Wilde, 15)

The initial lines of Basil's statement could be interpreted as the passionate outburst of an artist who is fascinated by Dorian as an artistic object, by his beauty, and the opportunity that is offered him as an artist to create a wonderful painting. The following sequence, however, depict the feelings of a man who is visibly more than merely attracted by an abstract object; it is the notion of fear that indicates a much deeper level of sexual magnetism, and as it is the attraction of a male for another male, it indicates homosexual attraction. The interpretation that Basil's desirability is of homosexual character is supported by his further information: "Suddenly I found myself face to face with the young man (…). We were quite close, almost touching. Our eyes met again" (Wilde, 16), and his statement that "he [Dorian], too, felt that we were destined to know each other" (Wilde, 17).

On the one hand, the physical closeness of the two males, and the way in which Basil describes their eye-contact indicate that the men meet at a level that is far beyond plain artistic aesthetics, an assumption that is again supported by the information that Dorian has the same feelings, and Dorian is not an artist who may recognize his vis á vis as an artistic object. On the other hand, Basil clearly defines his dependence on the younger man, and the specific

position he has already occupied in his life when he answers to Lord Henry's question how often they see each other: "Every day. I couldn't be happy if I didn't see him every day. He is absolutely necessary to me (…) he is much more to me than a model or a sitter" (Wilde, 20-21).

To understand how far away from the common male-to-male friendship, practiced during Wilde's Victorian times, Dorian's relationship to Sir Henry, on the one side, and to Basil, on the other side, are, it is necessary to examine the figure of the typical hetero Victorian man, to be able to point out the remarkable differences in heterosexual and homosexual male 'friendships'.

5.2.4. The Archetype of the Victorian Man

Generally, Victorian society operated with a binary male-female distinction, attaching to it cultural expectations which were different for men and women. Both, the concepts of masculinity and femininity were based on a strictly traditional view of gender roles. For example, 'lived' masculinity did not only exist as theoretical proposition, or in the form of the written word, but was understood as an adequate form of social performance. Wilde was probably the most famous opponent of the traditional idea, and that one who, at least potentially, rebelled against the Victorian corset in sexual affairs.

Due to remarkable changes in the British society in the 19th century, as direct result of the Industrial Revolution, manliness became a matter of belonging to the 'right' class, and it turned out to be a double edged sword. While the poor working class male, who was fighting for a bare living for himself and his family, was not really concerned with the representation of masculinity, because hunger and disease had become the main issue he had to deal with, male members of the rising middle class, however, had a clearly defined status in society. The archetypal Victorian man was encouraged to represent in the public sphere, and to behave in accordance with the popular male mystique of the time period which associated masculinity with adventure and risk, thus he was either an explorer, soldier, gentleman, intellectual, or above all, a politician. He was publicly and competitive orientated, and the possession of elevated work was crucial in order to achieve a fully masculine status. Male members of the aristocracy were considered idle because they usually did not work.

As a family man the Victorian middle-class male was considered to be the *'pater familias'* with extensive power. He was the head of the household, but his duty was not only

to rule, but also to protect those whom he viewed as weak, his wife and their children. Being active in enterprise he fulfilled his duty as breadwinner in the sense that he had to provide for his family. His vision of the ideal woman, which was shared by most in the society, was the virtuous *'Virgin Mary'*, a thankful creature, a little bit brutish, similar to children concerning legal rights, and completely satisfied with raising the children and tending the house. Referring to its biblical ancestor, the common definition for the Victorian woman was the *'angel in the house'*. The necessity and correctness of the male role within the public sector was continuously reinforced via literature and other popular forms of entertainment, such as theatre and opera.

The second half of the Victorian period was defined by a shift in social philosophy regarding legal and customary gender relations, and this shift was marked by a move away from the patriarchal pattern of male supremacy, which had usually been justified by the notion of public and private as two separate spheres, towards modern concepts of gender equality in legal, professional and personal affairs (Sussman, 1992: 366-377).

The gradual evolution towards liberalization, and a change in the representation of masculinity is impressively described in William Thackeray's novel *Vanity Fair*, in which the author, as one of the first popular male writers, introduces masculinity as a concept that has many facets. While George, the husband of one female protagonist, Amelia, is the embodiment of a man's man, a brave soldier, even dying on the battle field , Rawdon, the husband of the second female protagonist, Becky, is a foolish and weak person who tends to gambling and drinking, however, he transforms, and he becomes eager to change his personal misery. Finally, Josh, Amelia's brother, an obese, self-important but shy and insecure man who is neither courageous nor intelligent, displays cowardice at the Battle of Waterloo. Only George corresponds to the classic example of Victorian masculinity, which is reflected in his character as well as in his appearance. As a symbol of his masculinity he wears a mustache, which was integral to the representation of masculinity in the Victorian Age, and which was also serving as an outward mark of inward qualities such as independence, hardiness and decisiveness, the foundations of masculine authority. Thackeray probably created the figure of George so typically for the established concept of what a Victorian man was supposed to be to emphasize the fact that there were also men who did not at all correspond to the iconic male picture (Hammond, 2002: 19-38).

Considering the Victorian male ideal, Wilde's figures seem to be from another planet. They do neither correspond to any of the traditional role models, nor can they be associated

with the alternative male categories Thackeray provides in his novel *Vanity Fair*. Lord Henry, for example, is a married man, but there is no visible relation between him and the image of the *'pater familias'*, which he impressively underlines when he states:

> I am married, and the one charm of marriage is that it makes a life of deception absolutely necessary for both parties. I never know where my wife is, and my wife never knows what I am doing. When we meet – we do occasionally when we dine outside (…) – we tell each other the most absurd stories with the most serious faces. My wife is very good at it – much better, in fact, than I am. She never gets confused over her dates, and I always do. (Wilde, 12)

The very liberal relationship between Sir Henry and his wife may be the result of the shift in social philosophy regarding gender relations during the second half of the 19th century in Britain, however, it appears much more logical that this relationship is based on a pavement of disinterest for the partner, which is indicated by the total lack of any Victorian value. The wife has no name, but is introduced as an abstract person who has nothing in common with the image of a *'Virgin Mary'*, or the *'angel in the house'*, she goes wherever she wants without informing her husband about her moves, and she is perfect in veiling her activities outside the house in front of him, who, on the other hand, does not express any intention of protecting his wife, which would be a rather difficult venture as they only meet occasionally. The marriage that is described by Sir Henry has the likeness of a practical working arrangement rather than a life-long covenant, blessed by God, there is no emotional aspect, and there is no reference to the production of off-spring. Aristophanes explains such a situation with the habit that homosexuals often agree to cross-sexual marriages only in reference to the constraints and the customs of a particular society, and he claims that such agreements represent an action that is completely contrary to their inner convictions (See 2.3.2). Wilde himself was going through a similar situation in his private life. In the case of Sir Henry, such an assumption would explain why the relationship between him and his wife is so particular.

According to Freud's Inversion Theory, Sir Henry could even consummate his marriage occasionally or regularly without creating a situation that is antagonistic to his homosexual orientation. As Freud states, there is one category among homosexuals, the *'amphibiously inverted'*, who lack the character of sexual exclusivity, which makes them attracted to same-sex partners as well as to cross-sex relationships (See 2.3.4). The homosexual aspect is then not expressed by a single preference, but by the personal context of an individual. It was probably rather untypical for the traditional Victorian man to pluck a

pink-petalled daisy from the grass, pull it to bits with long nervous fingers, before plucking another one, or to say to a beautiful younger man while he was standing closed to him, putting his hand softly upon his shoulder: "I thought how tragic it would be if you were wasted. For there is such a little time that your youth will last" (Wilde, 35), but it would have been a very common situation for a Victorian man if the object of desire was a young female. In that case the process of seduction would have been a very legal part of the traditional pre-marriage game.

In one of his former works Wilde still sticks to the traditional binary cross-gender concept when he lets a dandy, Lord Darlington, insistently persuade his object of desire, Lady Windermere,

> There are moments when one has to choose between living one's life, fully, entirely, completely – or dragging out some false, shallow, degrading existence that the world in its hypocrisy demands. You have the moment now. Choose! Oh, my love, choose (…). Yes, you have the courage. (Wilde, 2008: 29)

Several years later Wilde puts almost the same words on the tongue of another dandy, Sir Henry, however, his target is not a woman, but the very young and unspoiled Dorian Gray:

> Live! Live the wonderful life that is in you! Let nothing be lost upon you. Be always searching for new sensations. Be afraid of nothing (…). With your personality there is nothing you could not do. The world belongs to you for a season…The moment I met you I saw that you were quite unconscious of what you really are (…). There was so much in you that charmed me that I felt I must tell you something about yourself. (Wilde, 38)

Comparing both sequences, it becomes visible that there is a variety of semantic parallels contained in both speeches; but what is even more important is the fact that in both sequences Wilde describes the beginning of a desired relationship between two individuals who are different in character, maturity and experience. Although Wilde presents a veiled version of this persuasive communication in the second example, which is certainly the logical result of Victorian constraints that forced authors to make homosexuality a secret (See: ch. 6) in their works, both described situations are typical moments of seduction, featuring the essential figures in such a process, the powerful seducer and the young and innocent seduced. According to Faustian tradition, it is Faust himself who seduces the virginal Gretchen, both of Wilde's works are reflections of the traditional theme; the only difference is that in one case Gretchen is an effeminized young man.

5.2.5. Effeminacy – the Androgynous Dorian

The social concept of effeminacy, which describes any form of feminine or female-like behavior, was rather condemned in Victorian society, due to the assumption that effeminate men were solely interested in same-sex partnerships, which meant in the wider sense, effeminacy was considered bad due to the hostile perception of homosexuality as such, which again is a matter of great contradictoriness, because at that time most homosexuals avoided whenever possible any manner of effeminacy in public for not being decoded as homosexual (Tripp, 1990: 346-347).

Wilde seems to play with this antagonistic approach to homosexuality when he introduces the paragon of an androgynous individual like Dorian Gray, who almost celebrates the characteristics of both sexes, although his fusion of male and female is obviously not anatomically expressed by the development of the genitals of both sexes, which would have been an aesthetic handicap in Dorian's occasionally practiced sexual cross-gender relationships, which never becomes an issue in Wilde's work.

The more logical interpretation would be that Wilde intended to introduce with Dorian a young man whose effeminacy, his female-like mannerisms, originated from still existing identity problems, which could be considered as typical for his age. Dorian is simply not yet certain about his maleness, and this sexual confusion makes him identify more with women than with men, which is expressed in gestures and movements that are very similar to those typical in women, but which would be 'heterosexualized' later . What contradicts this interpretation is the way in which Dorian explores his environment, the roundness of his moves, his sensibility, and the complete lack of the decidedly male signifiers, energy and sharpness. Dorian does not express a combination of those male and female qualities, which would be characteristic for temporary effeminacy, but he totally disregards his inherited and socio-culturally defined masculine role which confirms his androgyny, which is typically expressed by an essential process of mitigating maleness (Bem, 1974: 155-167).

Dorian's homosexual tendency, as well as the latent homosexuality of Lord Henry, are without doubt at the moment when the latter goes out to Basil's garden, and:

> (…)found Dorian Gray burying his face in the great cool lilac-blossoms, feverishly drinking in their perfume as if it had been wine. (…) He was bare-headed, and the leaves had tossed his rebellious curls and tangled all their gilded threads. There was a look of fear in his eyes, such as people have when they are suddenly awakened. His finely-chiselled nostrils quivered, and some hidden nerve shook the scarlet of his lips and left them trembling. (Wilde, 35)

This sequence is predestined to function as the key scene in Wilde's novel, it is the moment that even the unskilled reader may understand that neither the author, who describes a scene in this particular war, nor his protagonists are members of the typical heterosexual Victorian world, but are homosexual figures who act and suffer in their voluntary closet. The proof for this theory is Wilde's own fate; the legal authorities decoded his secret, and he was forced out of his closet, and finally he confessed his guilt (See: Introduction).

None of Wilde's protagonists could be considered as the archetypical heterosexual Victorian men, who, no matter to which class he belonged, was engaged in anything but romanticism. He was not an individual who was feverishly reacting to the beauty of a landscape, but discussed issues like "the feeding of the poor, and the necessity of model lodging-houses" (Wilde, 25). Fever and passion were characteristic for the Romantic bohemian, for the self-defined genius who had nothing in common with the bitter reality of his time, but was in a permanent process of metamorphosis with nature. Dorian is neither a Romanticist, nor is he a poet. Dorian's nerves shake, and his lips tremble because he has realized that he likes the tall, graceful young man who stands close to him, and has put his hand upon his shoulder. "His romantic olive-coloured face and worn expression interested him" (Wilde, 35), and at the same moment Dorian instinctively understands the forbidden quality of his emotions.

Also Dorian's counterpart in this intensive moment of realization, Sir Henry, the cynical, provocative manipulator, experiences a kind of emotional overflow by watching Dorian melting with the blossoming flowers in his hands that he, for one moment, forgets that verbal stimulation is the core of his erotic desire for the young man. The unexpected release of his own exaggerated feelings dumfounds him, so that he can only murmur:

> You are quite right to do that. Nothing can cure the soul but the senses, just as nothing can cure the senses but the soul. (…) You are a wonderful creation. You know more than you think you know, just as you know less than you want to know. (Wilde 35)

Although in this particular situation there is not one moment in which one of the two men reveals his feelings and attraction to the other explicitly by word of mouth, the unsaid can be read between the lines: the older worldly-wise homosexual, Lord Henry, understands that the younger inexperienced homosexual, Dorian, is just discovering his sexual desire for men, embodied by the older one. Lord Henry is also aware of the inner fights Dorian has to get through at the moment, probably from his own experience with 'awaking', and the shame

and the fears that go hand in hand with this new knowledge that still leaves many questions open due to the lack of sexual experience at all.

Wilde cleverly supports the homosexual theory by adding a detailed description of Dorian's inner condition immediately after the awakening-scene, when he lets the young man reflect on the recent excitements that have frightened him so much. In the course of his brooding the young man soon discovers the sources of his attraction, which are exactly the same features that men usually consider as attractive in women: beautiful appearance, a fascinating voice, and cool, white, flower-like hands that move like music when the person speaks. The unusual of the situation is not the realization of a particular appearance or body language, but the fact that a man recognizes these attributes not in a woman, but in another man, which is again a reference to latent homosexuality. Moreover, Dorian recognizes that there are obviously different kinds of male friendships which have a different impact on the participants in this social connection. Basil Hallward, who has been Dorian's friend for months, has never been in the position to alter him, whereas Sir Henry just comes across his way, equipped with a great amount of power that allows him to turn Dorian's life upside down, and to seemingly "disclose to him life's mystery" (Wilde, 36).

5.2.6. The Ambiguous Concept of Male Friendship

As the countless examples in the examined novels depict, the term *'friendship'* is over-strained in novels that contain the representation of latent homosexuality, and thus may be considered as one of the most important camp expressions that spread among the homosexual community. Generally, it can be observed that the term is seemingly always then inserted when the clear definition of a male-male relationship shall be avoided, for what reason ever. Dorian had a long friendship with Basil that, as he claimed, did not alter him; Basil, however, saw in Dorian his "dearest friend" (Wilde, 26), and he did not want Sir Henry to meet his friend, because he feared the aristocrat's negative influence on the young man. Sir Henry, on the other hand, has a completely different perception of what a friend is, and he argues:

> Some day you will look at your friend and he will seem to you to be a little out of drawing, or you won't like his tone of colour, or something. You will bitterly approach him in your heart, and seriously think that he has behaved very badly to you. The next time he calls, you will be perfectly cold and indifferent. (Wilde, 24)

Actually, the way Sir Henry describes a friendship can be associated with any relationship that has lost its attraction by the time, except a relationship that is commonly

defined as ‘asexual’ friendship, due to the cross-cultural assumption that the main quality of a friendship, no matter whether between males, or females, or of cross-gender character, is primarily concerned with inner values rather than the appearance of the participants. When aesthetic considerations are the fulcrum upon which a relation moves, it may be assumed that the term *‘friendship’* is misleading, and should be replaced by *‘love affair’* or *‘sexual relationship’* to avoid ambiguity.

In another sequence of the novel Sir Henry gives an explanation himself for his particular approach to friendship. He announces that for him there is a great difference between friends, who he chooses for their good looks, which may imply a homoerotic interest in the other, or acquaintances who he selects because of their good characters (Wilde, 18). The following conversation between Basil and Sir Henry supports the interpretation of friendship as a sexual male relationship:

> (Basil) According to your category I must be merely an acquaintance. (Sir Henry) My dear old Basil, you are much more than an acquaintance. (Basil) And much less than a friend. A sort of brother, I suppose? (Wilde, 19)

Basil’s contribution to the conversation, on the one hand, supports the idea that Sir Henry uses the term *‘friendship’* to describe an erotic relationship which is based on aesthetic attraction, on the other hand, it also gives information about the quality of his and Sir Arthur’s relationship. From the common understanding of the social concept *‘friendship’* and the previous conversation of the two men, one might have concluded that Basil and Sir Henry are good friends. After having learned more about the categorization of the latter, it becomes obvious that there is no sexual interest behind their relationship, particularly because Sir Henry considers Basil as a man who is provided by nature only with a “rugged strong face and coal-black hair” (Wilde, 10), which excludes him from the category of friends, probably those group which contains, more or less, potential sex-partners, and integrates Basil in the group of the asexual *‘brothers’*.

Of completely different quality appears the relationship between Sir Henry and Dorian Gray, which is apparently based on an attraction that has gone far beyond the common notion of empathy from the very first moment. How close they have finally got in their relation may be decoded from Sir Henry’s reflection on their relationship, and Dorian’s complaints about the subject in the following conversation:

> (Sir Henry) You and I will always be friends. (Dorian) Yet you poisoned me with a book once. I should not forgive that. Harry, promise me that you will never lend the book to any one. It does harm. (Sir Henry) My dear boy, you are really beginning to moralize (…) warning people against all sins of which you have grown tired. You and I are what we are, and will be what we will be. As for being poisoned by a book, there is no such things as that. Art has no influence upon action. It annihilates the desire to act. (Wilde, 316)

Stuart Miller investigates in his work *Men and Friendship"* (Miller, 1980: 10-21) explicitly in the relation between the social construct *'friendship'* and homosexuality, based on the assumption that two approaches are possible when the two concepts are concerned. The result of his research is that *'friendship'* is a rather ambiguous term which is sometimes defined in a manner that excludes the homoerotic element, while others advocate the idea that male friendship encompasses the phenomenon of homosexuality, mainly for covert reason, because the neutral term perfectly functions as a code name for a homosexual relationship.

Additionally, Miller suggests that there must be considered a third player in the game, *'love'*, which might answer the whether-or-question. According to Miller's theory, the distinction between friendship and love that denied the erotic component of the former, and by that only legitimized that kind of eroticism that is expected to be between men and women, "redrew the boundary between them in a manner which defenders of homosexuality tended not to contest directly, but rather to modify by placing their own markers" (Miller, 1980: 10).

Fifty years earlier, the Transcendentalists, a philosophical movement focusing on individualism, and rejecting any countervailing pressures of society, developed around their most famous representative, Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose infatuation with his Harvard classmate, Martin Gray, was well known by his social environment (Richardson, 1995: 9), expressed his perception of male friendship in an essay on the subject. Emerson, who was not making a secret of his interest also in same-sex relations, explains his theory about male friendship through his understanding of Platonic philosophy and German Romanticism. In his essay on friendship, he reflects on the social concept which for him was gendered male and superior to heterosexual love:

> Friendship is a select and sacred relation which is a kind of absolute that leaves the language of love suspicious and common (…) My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me. By oldest right, by the divine affinity of virtue with itself (…) and in them derides and cancels the thick walls of individual character, relation, age, sex, circumstances, at which he usually conceives, and now makes many ones. High thanks I owe you, excellent lovers, who carry out the world for me to new and noble depths, and enlarge the meaning of all my thoughts (…) I have often have fine fancies about persons who have given me delicious hours; but the joy ends in the day; it yields no fruit. (Emerson, 1841: VI)

The tragic with Emerson, an American pioneer in the exploration of same-sex relationships, which he commonly described as *'male friendship'*, was that his desire for friendship and love obviously did not allot him adequate satisfaction, as the complaints about the short-lasting quality of such relationships signify in his essay.

Male friendship as encoded semantic device, however, is not the only tool Wilde employs in order to transmit a particular meaning in his novel. Throughout his work a variety of veiled semiotics and symbols are introduced, as if the author had wanted to guide the informed reader through a jungle of decoded messages, to finally provide him with the entire truth concerning the representation of latent homosexuality. Like in any other field of life, gay semiotics and symbols function as a form of non-verbal communication, and their meaning is only detectable to initiates while those who are not provided with an appropriate key that unlocks the imaginary door to the code system are forced to grope in the dark.

One of Wilde's 'encoding methods' is his reference to famous figures all around the globe, either from mythology or the history of the countries of their origin, who were popular for their employment in homosexual activity. Antinous, the darling-boy of the Roman emperor Hadrian, for example, represents the pederasty aspect of Greek homosexuality. After his death he was glorified in a range of artifacts, on order of his former *'erastes'*(Wilde, 20). Messalina, the cruel Roman queen, was famous for her disorderly life and her great interest in little boys and girls as sexual entertainment (Wilde, 111). Orlando represents both sides of human nature, and is probably the most appropriate choice when the binary concept of mankind shall be emphasized (Wilde, 115). The French contribution is Anne de Joyeuse, a French Duke and the favorite of Henry III, by whom he was showered with precious gifts like pearls and jewelry (Wilde, 198), Piers Gaveston represents the love-object of the British king, Edward II. (Wilde, 202), and the Italian Giovanna II., the queen of Naples, was feared for her excessive sexual life, particularly for her habit to gather males and females of all ages around her after the lights turned off in the Italian metropolis (Wilde, 213). Last but not least, Wilde also introduces Perotto, the favorite of Pope Alexander VI., Hylas, the darling of Herakles in Greek mythology, and Ganymede, the favorite of nobody less than Zeus himself (Wilde, 217). During Renaissance, it was this gorgeous Greek boy, Ganymede, who became the icon figure in West-European literature and art. That he was definitely more than an artistic symbol of young male beauty shows the high number of artists who were charged with sodomy carried out with boys who were almost always employed as their personal assistants, at the end of the 17th century (Geraci, and Mader, 1990: 965-966).

5.2.7. Flower Symbolism and the Quality of Colors

One of the most powerful signifiers of latent homosexuality in Wilde's private life, as well as in his literary world, were flowers. While he approved to the traditional consideration that flowers were the métier of women in his earlier dramatic works, he obviously changed his approach to the natural objects in his later novel, probably based on the knowledge of flower symbolism that had its origin in the classical Greek antiquity. In Wilde's play, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, it is the young, still unspoiled heroine who arranges the flowers, a bundle of marvelous red roses, in a vase in the morning room, and she cannot shake hands with her lusting visitor, Lord Darlington, because as she states: "No, I can't shake hands with you, Lord Darlington! My hands are all wet. I have just arranged these roses. Aren't they lovely?" (Wilde, 2008: 7)

Completely different is Wilde's representation of flowers in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. On the one hand, it is no longer a woman who is associated with the field of flowers, on the other hand, flowers are not represented as means to create a distance between two persons, but exactly the opposite is encouraged. Dorian's passionate approach to flowers, his diving into lilac-blossoms, provokes the overcoming of a former distance which leads to the first physical contact between males - Sir Henry puts his hands upon his shoulders (Wilde, 35).

In classical antiquity the subject of picking flowers had a deep social meaning, it was associated with the enjoyment of life's temporary pleasures, which have to be consummated before they fade away. Particularly, in the Greek pederasty system the 'carpe diem' idea was understood as motivation for enjoying the *'anthos'*, the blooming of the adolescent boy, early and in an intensive way, because its time of pleasure was limited.

Generally, the idea that the different sorts and appearances of flowers may serve as secret code for love messages is most likely to date back to the 18th century, when a specific flower symbolism-system developed in Turkish harems (Knightly, 1986: 2-6). In Victorian Britain, it was Kate Greenaway who provided a well-attended work on flower symbolism, her marvelously little book *The Language of Flowers*, published in 1884, which includes an abundantly illustrated list of over 200 plants and their figurative equivalents in alphabetical order, as well as a selection of flower related verses. The meaning of the single flowers is translated in a short and precise way; she does not enter into particulars such as homosexual meaning, but provides a general overview according to the state affairs of her time

(Greenaway, 1884). In the same year, Hichens' popularized in his novel *The Green Carnation* that flowers were the perfect means to function as the distinction markers of the Victorian aesthete, who was shortly afterwards, during the Wilde trials, translated as male homosexual (See: 4.1.3.).

Both works, although completely different in genre and appearance, had high influencing qualities. In the private sphere, Hichens' novel provoked a great interest in tiny nosegays; particularly Wilde's buttonhole suddenly became a matter of immense attention. The flaccid flower Wilde used to wear in his lapel was a carnation variety first bred in France in 1857, named 'Malmaison' after a rose grown in Empress Josephine's garden. For what reason Wilde changed the natural color of the flower, white with shades of pink, is unknown, the fact is that he dyed the floppy thing in his very specific fashion green, and it became the brand of the poet, a marker of the aesthetic movement, and whether Wilde wanted or not, a symbol of his homosexuality which finally poisoned his reputation (Harris, 1916).

Greenaway's list, on the other hand, reflects on the fictitious sphere of the author, and provokes an interpretation of Wilde's novel that is entirely based on the idea that the author chose such a high density of flower symbolism in his work to give the skilled reader the possibility to decode his representation of latent homosexuality. One of the most impressive, and probably highly encoded, moments is the garden scene, when Dorian drinks the perfume of *'lilac'* blossoms, a flower that symbolizes in the white variation *'youthful innocence'* while in purple it is associated with *'first emotions of love'*. From the development of the story it can be assumed that it is exactly this picture, the awaking of male-to-male-love, the author intends to transmit to the reader (Wilde, 35). In the opening scene of the novel, the lilac is 'outside' the place where Sir Henry and Basil are, but the heavy scent of the flower is already sneaking into the open door, like a marvelous promise of future pleasures. Basil's studio is filled with the rich odour of *'roses'*, an epitome of a *'love symbol'*, however, this love is not reserved for his guest, but for the imaginary Dorian whose picture defines the centre of the room. Sir Henry just catches a gleam of the *'laburnum'*, of that flower which Greenaway associates with a *'forsaken, pensive beauty'*. This may be a reference to a process of renewal; formerly it was probably Sir Henry's youth and beauty that inspired Basil in his work, but he is forsaken at the moment the artist discovers a new muse. In the novel Dorian represents the new muse, which may be a reflection of Wilde's private life, where Sir Alfred Douglas began to fill the author's rooms. Information about the quality of the relation between the two older men may provide the *'woodbine'*, whose dusty gilt horns are circled with monotonously by

struggling bees; it is the symbol for *'fraternal love'* (Wilde, 7-8). Basil later confirms this interpretation when he defines himself as a "sort of brother" (Wilde, 19).

The association of *'pansies'* and *'daisies'* with male homosexuals is documented in America since the very early 20th century. On the one hand, *'pansying up'* was a metaphor for dressing in a hyper-elegant way by focusing on the latest fashion, on the other hand, it was the general appearance of an effeminate young male that might have provided him with the attribute *'pansified'*. Rather different was the symbolism of the daisy, in particular, a daisy chain which represented a definition that was generally used to describe "the act of several persons having sexual intercourse with each other simultaneously" (Heap, 2009: ch. 6). Although such kind of sexual activity was not necessarily limited to homosexuals, the common reference was to an orgy of male homosexuals.

In Greenaway's list such pertinent and detailed information is certainly missing. She differentiates the various kinds of daisies, and associates them with less captious conceptions: the *'white daisy'* stays for *'innocence'*, the pink variety for *'beauty'*, wild daisies inform that somebody *'will think about it'*, and the worthy garden daisy may be translated as *'I share your sentiments'*. In Wilde's novel Sir Henry plucks a pink-petalled daisy from Basil's grass, gazes instantly at the little golden-white-feathered disk, and finally pulls the daisy to bits with his long, nervous fingers (Wilde, 13-15). This scene may be interpreted as an act of malicious destruction, and reveals much of Sir Henry's true character. He unveils himself as the archetype of a hedonist who recklessly seizes upon him whatever attracts his attention, no matter whether a closed fraternal friend is deeply hurt by his action. Sir Henry 'plucks out' Dorian, the innocent, beautiful daisy, from Basil's garden because he, the mature Narcissus, certainly shares the artist's aesthetic sentiments. His primary intention is to create a piece of art himself, and Dorian is his object of desire who allows him his artistic work that is entirely based on the notions of aestheticism and hedonism. How passionate his feelings are towards the latter explains his description of the new philosophy of life to Dorian, which is again partly embedded in flower symbolism:

> I thought how tragic it would be if you were wasted. For there is such little time that your youth will last – such a little time. The common hill-flowers wither, but they blossom again. The laburnum will be as yellow next June as it is now. In a month there will be purple stars on the clematis, and year after year the green night of its leaves will hold its purple stars. (Wilde, 38)

The initial sentences of the quotation can be considered as a reflection on the classical antique 'carpe diem' idea of not wasting the fruits of the moment, because any pleasure is

limited, inclusively the pleasure of beauty and the youth. In the following, Wilde again transmits his message via the symbolism of flowers which can be decoded based on Greenaway's work as a valuation of the normal, the trivial, the unimportant. The "common hill-flowers" that come into being without cultivation in great numbers, which may be interpreted as *'ordinary people'* who are subjected to the circle of life, who die and are born again, are of little value; and this fate they share with the "laburnum", the beautiful but brooding people who are predestined to be forsaken, as well as with the "clematis", the *'mental beauties'*, who may be wise thinkers and philosophers, but are caught in sameness and normality.

The general question, why floral metaphors became that popular in the 19th century may lie in the very specific features of flowers, in particular, in the botanical phenomenon that a variety of flowers have both male and female organs of reproduction, which was found by scientist on the subject in the course of the century, and who were responsible for the creation of the term *'bisexuality'*. Such bisexual variations, among them roses and lilies, were considered the perfect form of flower creation. Moreover, scientists discovered that there were also flowers that were prepared to undergo a process of 'sex-switching', which expresses sexual difference at different stages of growth. The *'Arisaema triphyllum'* or *'Jack-in-the-Pulpit'* is a kind of lily that covers a multitude of sexual conditions in its lifetime; from a nonsexual juvenile stage the flower develops into a young male plant, later it has a mix of both male and female flowers, and finally ends in an entirely female stadium (Ewing, and Klein, 1982: 47-50).

Whether those remarkable scientific achievements had a direct impact on Wilde's perception of flowers, or if he solely reflected on the wide-spread and well-known 'Greenaway flower- symbolism', or any other heterosexual or homosexual encyclopedia on flower symbolism, cannot be defined. Remarkable, however, is that frequently colors are chosen to support a particular nuance in meaning, which may be essential for the interpretation of the content of the novel. For example, the flamboyant *'parrot tulip'* is an exotic flower that was discovered in Turkey, in the 17th century, and it is very distinctive from the common one-colored garden-varieties (Holland Bulb Farms Online, 2012). Appearing in a palette of red and orange nuances the flower is associated, according to Greenaway, with the unveiled *'declaration of love'*.

Wilde uses this particular flower in an arrangement of significant objects in the library of Lord Henry's Mayfair house, where Dorian is reclining in a luxury arm-chair, waiting for

his friend. On a satinwood table thrones a statuette by Clodion, a French sculptor who was famous for his erotic plastic art, beside a copy of *Les Cent Nouvelles*, an older French collection of frivolous, risqué little stories, above a mantelshelf equipped with large blue china jars and parrot tulips, while the *'apricot'*-colored light of a summer day streams into the window. The flowers in connection with the other objects and the color symbolism create a hotbed for a homosexual interpretation of the scenery (Wilde, 69).

Here meets the exotic, Dorian, the masculine *'blue'* world of Sir Henry, however, this surface-masculinity is interrupted by risqué little objects that unveil the closet-character of the place. Finally, the orange light emphasizes the effeminate character of the whole scene. The typical library of the archetypical Victorian man definitely looked different than Lord Henry's library, as countless pictures and descriptions of that time depict, for example Wilde's own description of Lord Darlington's library, in his play *Lady Windermere's Fan*. Darlington represents the heterosexual Victorian dandy whose sexual orientation is also reflected in the furniture and equipment of his library, which characteristically contains a large sofa, a fireplace, writing materials on the desk, as well as a table with a cigar- and cigarette box and a Tantalus frame, a decorative case for cut-glass decanters that was very fashionable from the mid-19th century until the Edwardian period in Britain. Besides, it can be assumed that women have no entrance to Sir Henry's realm, because they might be terribly annoyed by the exposed objects, whereas Darlington's place appears as a completely neutral area that obviously does not bear any sexual secret.

The use of color symbolism is certainly not the monopoly of the homosexual community, however, particularly in this area it may have an extraordinary dimension due to the fact that it is also a perfect means to veil information that is not for the public eye, but an inner circle only. Colors as such have always conveyed meaning in three different ways: natural associations, aesthetic associations and psychological symbolism. Which symbolism was associated with a specific color arises from cultural, social and other contexts of a particular era, which means that color symbolism is not a universal concept, but entirely context related and flexible, and it develops out of a complex assortment of sources, which can be among many others the field of sexual preference.

In ancient Rome, for example, *'green, red and violet'* indicated homosexual affiliations, as the Roman poet Martial states: "(…) who thinks that men in scarlet are not men at all, and styles violet mantles the vesture of women; although he praises native colors and

always affects somber hues, grass-green are his morals" (Martial, 1897: I /96). The poet informs in his lines about the common habit of selecting colors among the homosexual community in ancient Rome, while scarlet and violet were considered the traditional colors of effeminacy, the homosexual palette had obviously been completed by green during the last time. Later in the epigram, he also explains from where his knowledge about color symbolism deprived from, it was revealed to him when he joined the bath with other men.

Hundreds of years later Wilde popularized, and scandalized the color again when he introduced a green carnation as buttonhole (Stetz, 2000: 90-107). In his novel, Wilde apparently chooses the original Roman effeminate colors, a wide range from purple to red, to decode homosexual meaning. A key-scene may be considered the description of a pollination process, which is very likely to mirror a penetration process, and the pleasure that results from it: "After a time the bee flew away. He saw it creeping into the stained trumpet of a Tyrian [purple] convolvulus. The flower seemed to quiver, and then swayed gently to and fro" (Wilde, 39).

The representation of latent homosexuality in this scene can be based on various indicators; firstly, *'Tyrian purple'*, which was probably invented by ancient Phoenicians in the town of Tyre, appeared in a variety of nuances, the most famous among them was the *'Hyacinth purple'* (SaudiAramcoWorld, 1960: 11/7) , which allows the association with the mythological figure Hyacinth, a marvelous boy of great beauty who was loved by two older men, the Gods Apollo and Zephyrus. The fact that Hyacinth preferred Apollo caused great jealousy in the disdained Zephyrus, and encouraged him to blow Apollo's discus off course, in order to kill the boy. However, Apollo did not allow Hades to claim the boy, but he turned him into a flower carrying his name in a process of metamorphosis. Later the flower of the mythological Hyacinth was also associated with the iris. On a Dorian red-figure vase, an exposition in the Acropolis museum in Athens, Hyacinth and the north-wind God Zephyrus are pictured in an apparently sexual intercourse. Also Dorian is admired, though probably for different reasons, by two older men, Basil and Sir Henry, and he decides for the aristocrat who acts very similar to Apollo, he allows him to play, even across the genders, but he always claims him for himself.

Another aspect of the scene is that bees are general symbols that are socio-historically associated with sexual activity in connection with the representation of flowers. The phrase *'the birds and the bees'*, for instance, is an idiomatic expression not only in the English language which was commonly used until the early 20th century to explain sexual intercourse

to children. By using metaphors deriving from nature, parents and other tutors could avoid euphemism, and decode their information. The familiar picture of bees depositing pollen into flowers perfectly functioned as explanation for male fertilization. Considering the fact that a variety of flowers dispose of two genders, it appears logical that the process may also be used to decode homosexual activity. Generally, using nature metaphors to explain human features can already be found in late Renaissance, particularly in 1640, when Thomas Carew used references to nature in his work *The Spring* in order to explain female sensuality (Carew, 1993).

Thirdly, "swaying gently to and fro" and "quivering" are verbal expressions that adults are certainly familiar with, and may instinctively associate with bodily activity during a sexual act, no matter whether the participants are males, females or a combination of both. While the first expression mirrors the up-and-down movement of two bodies in sexual intercourse, the second term may be associated with an emotional outbreak that makes a body tremble. Combining all three perspectives, the interpretation that the scene has a deep homosexual meaning, which is encoded in a variety of symbolisms, appears as logical consequence, and probably also meets the purpose of the author.

'Red' as sexual marker also appears in the scene when Basil brands Dorian's picture at the end of their last session:

> After about a quarter of an hour Hallward stopped painting, looked for a long time at Dorian Gray, and then for a long time at the picture, biting the end of his huge brushes, and frowning. 'It is quite finished', he cried at last, and stooping down he wrote his name in long vermilion letters on the left-hand corner of the canvas. (Wilde, 40)

The red nuance *'vermilion'*, a very dark red-variation, is commonly used to represent heart affairs like love and passion, based on its association with fire and blood, and thus the color may be considered Wilde's perfect choice to express the quality of Basil's feelings towards Dorian. Less obvious, however, is whether there is a deeper meaning behind signing a portrait on the left-hand corner in red, similar to the 'pocket-handkerchief-code' in the homosexual community during the mid- 20th century. In the latter, the color of the handkerchief as well as its particular position in the pocket of a pair of trousers explicitly defined the preferences of the homosexual individual. For example, a red handkerchief in the right front pocket symbolized that the person was interested in fellatio, and that he wanted to be the passive part in the sexual intercourse, whereas the alternative in the left pocket transmitted the information that the carrier preferred the active part in the sexual relationship (Townsend, 1983: 26).

A matter of ambiguity turns out the color *'yellow'*, which may be associated with gaiety, playfulness, stimulation and youth, but on the other hand, in a homosexual environment it can also be an indicator for the quality of *'anything, anywhere, anytime, but not necessarily with anybody'*. Another association with the color yellow appeared during the 1890s in London, where it was a common reference to a periodical that was considered to be the synonym for Victorian aestheticism and decadence, *The Yellow Book*. As a matter of fact, Wilde had a close relation to the periodical, although not always voluntarily, and although he never published in the quarterly, but publicly announced that for him the *Yellow Book* was "not yellow at all". Except of Beardsley's revolutionary drawings and decorations, the author was not expressed by the new media, and missed a staggering and repellent content. (Weintraub, 1964: xvi). The French expatriate poet Richard Le Gallienne basically supported Wilde's opinion, and stated ironically:

> (…) the public is an instinctive creature, not half so stupid as is usually taken for granted. It evidently scented something queer and rather alarming about the strange new quarterly, and thus it almost immediately regarded it as symbol of new movements which is only partially represented. (Le Gallienne,1925: 132-133)

Nevertheless, *The Yellow Book* became a serious issue during Wilde's trials in 1895 when the media mistakenly reported that the yellow book the author had carried to court was an edition of the periodical. As later turned out, it had been a French novel. Furthermore, Wilde was linked to the periodical because Beardsley had illustrated his heavily disputed work *Salome* in one edition, and the prosecutors in the trial suspected that there was a direct reference to it in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The consequence was that after the trials the quarterly was stigmatized as homosexual literature, the symbolism of the color yellow was confirmed, and Beardsley was dismissed as the art editor of the media.

In Wilde's novel a yellow book plays a major role too; it is an edition that Sir Henry sends to Dorian as amusement after the tragic suicide of his first cross-gender relationship, Sybil Vane, and it is, as it later turns out, of highly corrupting influence on the young man. Critics later claimed that the yellow book was an edition of Huysman's famous work on Parisian decadence, *A rebours*, which is again an interesting aspect as the English translation of the title is *'from behind'*, and the detailed information Wilde provides about the book in the novel approve this interpretation:

> His eye fell on the yellow book that Lord Henry had sent him. What was it, he wondered (…) After a few minutes he became absorbed. It was the strangest book that he had ever read. It seemed to him that in exquisite raiment, and to the delicate sound of flutes, the sins of the world were passing in dumb show before him (…) It was a novel without a plot and with only one character, being, indeed, simply a psychological study of a certain young Parisian. (Wilde, 182-183).

Characteristic for the era, particularly for the French school of Symbolism, was that generally such kinds of books were wrapped in yellow paper to make potential readers aware of their lascivious content (Weintraub, 1964: 99). Whether Wilde's novel was the direct source for the title of the periodical, or it just happened accidentally, or its creation was based on other conceptions such as color symbolism, cannot be defined.

The color yellow may also be an encoded reference to latent homosexuality when Dorian meets Adrian Singleton, a young man with smooth yellow hair, in an old shabby opium house in one of the worst slum areas near the east end docks of London, Blue Gate Fields, where the wretched creature explains the reason for his misery:

> (Dorian) You here, Adrian, muttered Dorian. (Adrian) Where else should I be, he answered, listlessly. None of the chaps will speak to me now. (Dorian) I thought you had left England. (Adrian) Darlington is not going to do anything. My brother paid the bill at last. George does not speak to me either…I don't care, he added with a sigh. As long as one has this stuff, one doesn't want friends. I think I have had too many friends. (Wilde, 276)

The opium house sequence is probably one of the most impressive and imaginative scenes in Wilde's novel, because it shows the negative consequences a young man may suffer from in hypocritical London in the 19th century, if he cannot escape Dorian's friendship or influence. From the conversation between the two men it becomes obvious that Adrian must have acted in a way that he is shunned by society, they do not speak to him. That also his brother refuses any contact to him indicates that he must have brought shame upon his family; however, he is not imprisoned, which implies that his crime has been of private, but not of public nature.

Parallels between Dorian and Adrian are also apparent in the similar sound of their names, which may be a reference to another similarity, which again may be encoded in the representation of Darlington, who is a character that already appeared in Wilde's drama, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, several years before the novel was published. In the drama Darlington represents a cynical well-off aristocrat dandy, a character that is almost identical to Sir Henry from his appearance, status and reputation; however, in Wilde's earlier drama Darlington did

not show any homosexual tendencies which may either indicate that he was not yet aware of his sexual openness to other sexual practices, or that he was consciously hiding himself in the closet. The short reference to the figure in the conservation may indicate that the relationship between Adrian and Darlington was very similar to the relationship between Dorian and Sir Henry. However, there must also be a direct connection between Dorian and Adrian otherwise the first would not struggle concerning his responsibility for the terrible fate of the other. The answer gives Basil before he becomes himself a victim of Dorian's evil character:

> Why is your friendship so fatal to young men? There was that wretched boy in the Guards who committed suicide. You were his great friend. There was Sir Henry Ashton, who had to leave England, with a tarnished name. You and him were inseparable. What about Adrian Singleton, and his dreadful end? What about Lord Kent's only son, and his career? I met his father yesterday in St. Jame's Street. He seemed broken with shame and sorrow. (Wilde, 224)

Dorian brings shame and fear upon families, young men commit suicide, or they must leave the island and change their names, Dorian destroys careers, and he breaks a father's heart. Which other interpretation of Dorian's behavior would be logical than that he corrupts the young sons of good Victorian families in the way that he seduces them physically and/or mentally. Adrian Singleton, for example, wrote his friend's name across a bill, and at the same moment destroyed his protection of the closet. Dorian does not feel responsible for the young man's move, however, with his defense he points out the essential detail in the case: it was a friend's name he placed on the bill. If the friend had been the participant in a heterosexual relationship, the consequences of young Singleton's action were not serious enough to end his life in such a tragic way. If it only was money, it would have been a matter of arrangement between two heterosexual friends how to pay back the sum, probably with the help of Singleton's brother, George, who was apparently well-off, and in the position to pay his brother's bill, as the young man's report at the opium house depicts. From him also derives the information that there was involved a third person, Darlington, who "did nothing" (Wilde, 277), which indicates a much more serious background in the bill-affair. The most logical is that the term *'friend'* was mistaken on purpose, and should be replaced by the term *'lover'*; only then the tragic end of Singleton may be explained in a meaningful way. By forcing another homosexual male out of the closet, and by that disclose his forbidden sexual preference to the hypocritical Victorian society, Singleton has become responsible for that man's fate. In front of this background, a young man like Singleton may develop such

intensive feelings of guilt that he feels forced to drown his emotions in opium, even when it was not him but Dorian who initiated the dramatic move.

Due to Dorian's malevolent character there may be established a parallel between him and the great seducer in Goethe's *Faust*, Mephistopheles. The only difference between the classical villain and Dorian is that the clientele's desire of the latter is not universal knowledge but sexual fulfillment across the genders, and it is not the kind of male-female relationship that makes their fate a matter of life and death, but their sexual orientation which is not accepted by the society, homosexuality. Dorian is an unscrupulous hedonist who uses the people around him for his convenience, and when they dare to refuse doing what he wants them, he has a powerful weapon: he knows their secret. Alan Campell is obviously only one of Dorian's many puppets on the string, who depends on his discretion if he wants to survive in society, probably also in his family, and remain in the closet. Exactly on this assumption Dorian's evil motivation is based:

> I am sorry for you, Alan, he murmured, but you leave me no alternative. I have a letter written already. Here it is. You see the address. If you don't help me, I must send it. If you don't help me, I will send it. You know what the result will be. (Wilde, 252)

Considering all the semantics, symbols and camp-codes in Wilde's novel, and assuming that the personal statements of the author himself concerning the homosexual content in his novel are based on truth, there can be no doubt about the secrecy that runs like a red thread through the dramatic lives of Dorian and his co-characters, they are all members of the homosexual community. Actually, it is exactly this particular facet of secrecy that indicates the representation of latent homosexuality in the novel, because only the indecent and the forbidden depend on discretion and separation, those who are agitating outside of the society are forced to remain in the closet; the normal and usual can be practiced publicly without having to expect negative consequences. The congenial partners of secrecy are sorrows, shame and fear, all those emotions that are present throughout Wilde's novel; they are either the result of secrecy, or the initiation to secrecy. In any case, secrecy is the essential factor to protect the individual who is agitating outside the normality which is constructed as a social concept by the surrounding majority occupying a power position. To disclose a secret has an effect, in the literary world as well as in the public sphere, it may decide over life and death, imprisonment or freedom, and it was Wilde himself who suffered most under the difference.

5.3. Henry James – *The Turn of the Screw*

After the Oscar Wilde trial secrecy obtained another dimension among homosexuals, and authors like Henry James, and many others felt forced to develop a highly intelligent code system for the transmission of delicate messages in their works, particularly those messages which were concerned with levels of homosexuality. As a result the literary works of more or less declared homosexual authors, publishing in Britain at the end of the 19th century, are much more difficult to decode immediately 'after Wilde' than most of the preceding ones, thus, it is essential to concentrate on psychological rather than apparently concrete aspects.

James' novel, *The Turn of the Screw,* neither contains a fairly approximate selection of symbolisms or semiotics like it is provided in Wilde's work *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, nor are the provided linguistic features free of ambiguity to clearly trace latent homosexuality. In order to translate the novel proper knowledge in camp language and double-coding is demanded, and background knowledge in child-psychology is necessary to decode an eventual homosexual content. In particular, as almost all the direct markers are missing, it has to be analyzed whether the possession of the two pre-pubertal orphans, Miles and Flora, and their untypical, mysterious relationships to their ghostly tutors, the governess, Mrs. Jessel, and the valet, Peter Quint, can be associated with incidents of pedophilia, based on the Bleibtreu-Ehrenberg concept (See: 1.1.).

5.3.1. Sexual Abuse and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

To understand the psychological aspect in the novel, it is necessary to examine the achievements of modern psychology in the field of sexual abuse with children, which is commonly closely connected to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a severe anxiety disorder which may develop as result of an event that involves a child's sexual integrity, overwhelming its ability to cope.

The effects can include a variety of psychical symptoms, mainly extraordinary *'arousal'*, a psychological change in the reticular activating system in the brain stem, the automatic nervous system, and the endocrine system, which causes children to become extremely sensitive and responsive to incoming signals in receiving neural areas. As result a child's consciousness, attention and information processing are strongly regulated by emotion

driven actions, which again may be the result of a child's trauma, for example, sexual abuse (Satcher, 1999: chs. 2-4).

According to Eyseneck, individuals suffering from arousal, and in the wider sense from PTSD, may develop into two directions: they may become extroverts or introverts. Both psychological concepts are defined by their different responses to stimulation from outside (Eyseneck, 1982: 4-9). The child-protagonists in James' novel, Miles and Flora, boast a high level of introvertism, which becomes obvious through their behavior throughout the story. Typical for abused children, they try to steer clear from the companionship of adults whenever possible, and they prefer quiet areas like their private rooms, which provide minimal contact necessities, and where they can share their traumatic experiences in tranquility. In public, when they are together with their new governess, they avoid the expression of intense arousal, and pretend not to see mysterious figures, but try to explain strange events in a logical and simple way, although they naturally are over-stimulated; in other words, what the governess defines as 'lies' are in fact the typical mechanisms of abused children, who have developed a kind of psychological survival-strategy (Rothschild, 2000).

When this strategy is massively disturbed by an adult 'intruder', it can cause several levels of severe bodily changes. According to the *'James Lange Theory of Emotions'* (Cannon, 1927: 106-124), such events cause the nervous system to induce physiological arousal in a way that muscular tension, perspiration, tears and heart rate increase may be the effect; the latter may even provoke death from heart attack. Mile's little heart stops beating when the pressure from outside increases to a dimension he can no longer cope with.

Schachter and Singer support in their *'Two Factor Theory of Emotion'* (Schachter, and Singer, 1962: 379-399) the Lange-theory, and suggest that an emotional state is the product of physiological arousal, and the cognitive appropriate state of arousal which is responsible for the quality of the physical response, which means, cognition determines whether a child-victim depicts fear, shame or any other emotional concept after traumatic incidents like sexual abuse. When Miles feels caught, and pushed to the wall with his back by the insisting governess, he is exposed to a similar situation as if he was chased by a serial killer. His physiological state reflects his desperate condition, his heart is racing. At the same moment, cognition reasons and labels the physiological reflection as 'fear', which has the effect that Miles immediately is confronted with the emotion of fear.

In 1988, Ochberg laid the foundation to the contemporary perception of victimization symptoms after sexual abuse in children, and he argues that, on the one hand, they can have a

variety of different shapes, or combinations of different patterns of behavior, on the other hand, they definitely are a distinct sub-category of posttraumatic stress disorder. The psychical effects on the abused child are dramatic. Due to the fact that the abuser is mostly part of its closest circle, the family or friends of the family, the child immediately experiences the loss of trust, fears, guilty and shame conscience, helplessness, and doubts about one's own perception of the situation. James' little protagonists are orphans who have been sent off to a country house by their only relative, an unmarried uncle who is obviously more concerned with his own business than with raising his brother's children. The lack of any relative may be an important reason why the children have developed a very close relationship to their tutors, a cross-gender couple that is predestined to function as substitute parents for the children. If the relationship of the adults and the children developed into a sexual direction, the children will have experienced exactly those negative feelings Ochberg points out in his study, and they will have reacted to certain incidences in an individual way. According to Ochberg, the first solution in such a critical situation is the total withdrawal into one's own self, and into speechlessness. Particularly young children, and Miles and Flora are both about ten years old, often do not understand what has happened to them, thus it is difficult for them to define, or even articulate the incidences.

The central issue, however, is the very specific state of dependence between the victim and the perpetrator; the child is trapped in a loyalty conflict, because it likes the perpetrator, but at the same time it is afraid of him/her. Almost always the perpetrator manages to persuade the victim of his/her own fault and contribution in the sexual action. Typically, the victim's confusion by sexual abuse and the interweavement of the roles 'fatherly authority figure' and 'sexual partner' is often compensated by the entire disavowal of the fact that sexual abuse has taken place at all, which means, the child is denied any possibility to reflect on the central aspects of this emotionally intensive and confusing experience in a cognitive and social way, moreover, it is forced to make a secret out of its confusion, as well as of the whole incident as such (Ochberg, 1988: ch. 1).

5.3.2. Pedophile Elements and Homosexuality

All these findings exactly reflect the situation of the child-protagonists in James' novel: the children are introverted, and the siblings have a conspicuously closed relationship,

which becomes obvious, for example, by the way they support each other when they are questioned by the governess:

> 'Oh, I arranged that with Flora'. His answers rang out with a readiness! 'She was to get up and look out.' 'Which is what she did do'. It was I who fell into the trap again! 'So she disturbed you, and, to see what she was looking at, you also looked – you saw.' 'While you', I concurred, 'caught your death in the night air!' (…) 'How otherwise should I have been bad enough? he asked. (James, 1994: 68)

Additionally, both Miles and Flora, express lucid symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, in particular arousal, as Miles' sudden death depicts, and they have apparently developed a very specific strategy behind which they are able to hide their confusion and fears, and any other emotions in connection with the former incidences on "Bly". The most important factor, however, is that via the children's behavior latent homosexuality, in this case the pathological form of the sexual preference, can be traced in the work of art.

To understand the social level of homosexuality in James' novel, it is essential to become aware of the perception of pedophilia during Victorian times, a high time of child-bed mortality and orphanage. Sexual relationships to children were commonly not sanctioned by Victorian society, but met with intolerance and cultural disgust. The idea of the generalized educational function was not accepted, instead the society claimed that the unbalanced relationship would be initiated by the participant who occupies a power position, and it would substitute sexual pleasure, particularly, when the sexual connection to the boy is the only practiced form of sexual contact (Dynes, 1990: 964).

James' ghostly protagonists, Jessel and Quint, represent another category; they also practice cross-gender sexuality, and consummate adult male-female sex. This fact may reflect on the sexual relationship to the children, and probably reduce the sexual contact to voyeuristic aspects, which might imply that the adults found sexual satisfaction when the children were watching their sexual activity. A reference to this assumption might be indicated by the vice-versa-situation after their death, when they start to watch the children from a distance, or through a window, and it would explain the passivity of the children who would, in that case, be simply confronted with a familiar situation – watch and being watched:

> His face was close to the glass (…) He remained but a few seconds – long enough to convince me, he also saw and recognized (…) His stare into my face was , through the glass and across the room, was as deep and hard as then, but it quitted me for a moment. (James, 32)

Within the description of the voyeuristic scene of watching through a window, James places a camp-pair that is frequently used in order to decode homosexual activity, "deep" and "hard". However, the code has gradually developed from a formerly homosexual symbol into a universal phrase, because metaphors like *'hard times need deep love'*, and a range of similar alternations are commonly used to encode the excited condition of a male penis, and the information that the individual is interested in sexual activity. The gender of the addressee depends on the sexual preference of the message-sender, which is not necessarily limited to homosexuality; nevertheless, it indicates once more that sexuality is the underlying factor in James' work.

The essential information about the relationship between the former tutors and the children is finally provided by Mrs. Grose, the housekeeper at "Bly", and an eye-witness of the former incidences, which emphasizes the reliability of her information, as well as the assumption that the relationship of the tutors to their protégés, in particular the relationship between Quint and Miles, was of pedophile quality:

> 'And you tell me they were "great friends" ?' 'It was Quint's own fancy. To play with him, I mean to spoil him. She passes a moment; then she added: 'Quint was much too free!' (James, 40)

The hyphens used to indicate that the governess changes the intonation in her statement are, at the same time, also an indication for the governess' doubts of the common a-sexual meaning of the term 'friends' in this context, although these doubts are not based on visible facts, but deprive from her feelings. Instinctively she seems to realize that the former boy-man-relationship was of a very specific character. Mrs. Gose's answer reflects the Victorian attitude towards pedophile elements in a same-sex relationship. She explains the situation she has witnessed with "Victorian words", when she states that an adult had spoilt a child. The pause she makes during the word flow may be filled with memories of those past days, which finally lead to her conclusion that Quint behaved too freely, and "that he was definitely bad" (James, 40).

However, while Mrs. Gose was obviously aware of Quint's evil qualities, the master far away in London's Harley Street, was seemingly not interested in the children's lives, he very rarely visited them, but employed plenty of personnel who should care for the children instead. Thus he did not, or he did not want to recognize, the tragedy that took place at his summer residence. This behavior is a familiar concept, because it reflects the hedonistic character of a dandy like Dorian Gray, which allows the interpretation of a parallel between

both novels. In James' novel, the relative is described in a way that all the attributes mentioned could easily be adapted to Dorian as well:

> a gentleman, a bachelor in the prime of life (…) handsome and bold and pleasant, off-hand and gay and kind (…) rich, fearfully extravagant, in a glow of high fashion, of good looks, of expensive habits, of charming ways with women. (James, 11)

Who is the more evil of them, the egoistic, unscrupulous murderer 'by hand', Dorian, or the egoistic relative who never wants to be troubled by the children's matters, nor wants to be confronted with questions or complaints in connection with his little relatives (James, 13), and by that provokes the death of his little nephew, cannot be clearly defined. However, what is definable are the obvious parallels between them: both express dandyish behavior, they are good-looking, extravagant, fashionable, and they are charming with women, although they always keep them in an emotional distance. For Dorian, Sibyl Vane is an object of sensual desire, for some time, her death does not fill him with sadness, but it is simply another experience in his life; for the relative the "anxious girl out of a Hampshire vicarage" (James, 11), an apparently unspoiled innocent young woman, becomes an object too. He needs a governess for his brother's children, nothing neither more nor less; there is no further interest in this person, she is an object of pragmatic desire that provides the relative the freedom of not having to care for the children himself.

Assuming that Dorian Gray is a homosexual, the remarkable parallels between him and the children's uncle may indicate that the latter is also a homosexual, which would provide one possible explanation why he gave his little nephew into the hands of a pedophile man, and why he trusted him that much that he did not control his actions over time.

5.3.3. The Venice Project

Another remarkable indicator for the relative's homosexuality is the double encoded information that the governess was employed in June, when she also had her first sight of Quint, and that the story reached its peak after summer, which can be associated with the month of September. These counter dates may be of no importance for the unskilled reader, however, they were very characteristic in the gay-scene at the end of the 19th century, because they defined the travel times of homosexuals to Venice, the city that was associated with homosexuality for centuries.

Founded in the middle of the fifth century, Venice gained particular attention on the part of historians for its evidence of older patterns of homosexual behavior during the Renaissance, a fact that was not based on a special quality of homosexual behavior in the lagoon city, but on its particular political situation. As the town's history is defined by centuries of political stability, and a lack of invasion, town authorities were permitted to accumulate one of the most extensive archives in the Western hemisphere. From these archives it becomes obvious that the city has always had a tousled and peculiar political structure, and a very specific approach to homosexuality from the fifteenth century onwards, as trial records and other documents collected in the archives depict.

Due to the fact that Venice had never been part of the Holy Roman Empire, it was free to neither accept the legislation of the mainland, nor a universal code of laws within the town. Pragmatically, it often occurred that two different courts were called in, which had the effect that cases were usually decided individually. For the Venetian sodomy legislation this meant that there did not exist a single law code, but a multitude of degrees on the subject.

Until the 15th century, a very specific "institution" was founded by the Venetian city authorities, the *'Signori die Notte'*, the *'Lords of the Night'*, who were responsible for the controlling of the homosexual scene in town, which worked perfectly until an éclat of incredible dimension shocked the city in its grounds, and emphasized the flexibility of the Venetian legislative when the social structure of the city was concerned. In a 'cleansing campaign' the patrolling officers arrested 35 sodomites, of whom, as it later turned out, 14 belonged to the noble families of the cities. Immediately, the 'Council of Ten', an association responsible for the security of the city, questioned the authority of the Lords of the Night, and blocked the proceedings. From that time on almost all cases of sodomy were brought before the *'Consiglio dei Dieci'*, who used to deal with the subject in a rather liberal way.

During the 17th and 18th century a libertine attitude towards homosexuality continued, and allotted Venice with such famous literary works as the buoyant erotic poems of Giorgio Baffo, written in Venetian dialect, which treat homosexual relations with the same rampant delight as heterosexual ones, and the memoirs of the paragon of Italian lasciviousness, sexual activity, and openness to any sexual direction, Giacomo Casanova (Labalme, 1984: 217-254).

With the Austrian conquest, also Venice received the penal code of Lombardy-Venetia, and in the further process of occupation, the Austro-Hungarian law code, both of them criminalized sodomy, however, those codes were abrogated after the annexation of Venice to the Kingdom of Italy, in 1866. Since then, the Venetian archives are 'witness' of

the existence of a flourishing homosexual sub-culture in the Adriatic city, provided with public meeting places, and defined by increasing reciprocal knowledge among the participants. At the end of the 19th century, the most practiced pattern of relationships, pointed out in trial records, were pederast relations, and for the first time money played a significant role in effecting the connections.

The end of the Republic of Venice can also be associated with a new development in early sex-tourism from north to south. In particular, the city became an obligatory stop on the grand tour of more or less declared homosexuals of northern Europe and the United States, among them Oscar Wilde, who later reflected on the journey in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*:

> He [Dorian] glanced at his own white taper fingers, shuddering slightly in spite of himself, and passed on, till he came to those lovely stanzas upon Venice: - 'Sur une gamme chromatique, Le sein de perles ruisselant, La Vénus de l'adriatique, Sort de l'eau son corps rose et blanc'. (Wilde, 1995: 242)

Also John Addington Symonds refers in his memoirs on a zealous affair with a young Venetian gondolier, Thomas Mann, chooses Venice as the scene of action for his marvelous novel *Death in Venice*, in which he describes the homosexual passion of a middle-aged man to a young Polish boy, and last but not least, Henry James, the creator of the novels *The Turn of the Screw*, and *Daisy Miller* mentions in his works, more or less encoded, the 'Adriatic Venus'. Although the novel *Daisy Miller* is an entirely heterosexual story telling the experiences of a young American woman, whose charming naivety and urging for personal diversity is too antagonistic to the irresolute heart of her male counterpart, which results in a dramatic show down in Italy, James probably unveils his sexual interest in pederasty, or even in pedophilia, most obviously in this work when he introduces a young boy in an Italian setting:

> Presently a small boy came walking along the path – an urchin of nine or ten. The child was diminutive for his years, had an aged expression of countenance, a pale complexion, and sharp little features. He was dressed in knickerbockers with red stockings, which displayed his poor little spindleshanks; he also wore a brilliant red cravat. (…) In front of Winterbourne he paused, looking at him with a pair of bright, penetrating little eyes. (James, 1995: 9)

Translated into camp-language, and considering the quality of color symbolism (See: 6.2.7) James presents with this sequence a highly homosexual content, which could certainly

be easily interpreted by an insider, a homosexual reader. Particularly, the red tie was a well-known symbol in the homosexual community, in the late 19th and early 20th century, and signaled the same sex interest of the wearer. The homosexual American painter, Paul Cadmus, who was famous for his paintings and drawings of nude male figures, used to provide his male figures with red ties when he presented them dressed (Kirstein, 1992). As the boy who James presents in his novel *Daisy Miller* is only nine or ten years old, it can be assumed that it is not him who signals same sex interest, but his creator who makes use of color symbolism and camp-language, in particular, that it is him who is interested in penetrating young boys with little eyes, in an Italian atmosphere.

The color red as indicator for the representation of latent homosexuality is also the only color-symbolism James uses in his novel *The Turn of the Screw*. The adult male seducer, Peter Quint, is introduced by Mrs. Grose as a strange, awful person, tall, active and erect in appearance, and "he has red hair, very red, close-curling, and a pale face, long in shape, with straight, good features and little, rather queer whiskers that are as red as his hair" (James, 36).

A significant connection to the Italian town of Venice is not obvious at first glance in the novel *The Turn of the Screw*, but the skilled reader has to pierce two levels of codes to carry out a successful decoding process; on the one hand, he must know that Venice was the favored spot of international homosexual tourism at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, on the other hand, he must be familiar with the terms *'giugnori'* and *'settembrini'*, which were used to name *'those who arrive in June/September'*, for a very specific reason. Combining both aspects of information, it becomes obvious that the time frame of James' novel, June to September, is too specific to happen accidentally, and probably was a very clever move of the author to encode the representation of latent homosexuality.

That James was familiar with the specific status and image of Venice depicts his earlier novel, *Roderick Hudson*, published in 1875. In this work the author portrays the passionate male friendship between Rowland Mallet and his protégé Roderick, which blooms in the sexually charged atmosphere of Venice.

5.3.4. Miles and his Tutor Peter Quint

Information about the representation of latent homosexuality is also provided through the relationship of Miles and his tutor, Peter Quint, in particular, through the remarkable changes of the boy's character in the course of time. The closeness of the alliance between Quint and his protégé must have been of such extraordinary quality that even simple-minded characters like the housekeeper, Mrs. Grose, were irritated about its intensity. She points out that Miles had been an "imperturbable little prodigy of delightful, loveable goodness" (James, 52), however, there was a remarkable change to the negative in his personality, after Quint and the boy had been perpetually together, for a period of several months, and the man had declared himself the boy's tutor. Miles began to lie about the hours he spent with Quint, as well as about the relationship between Quint and Mrs. Jessel, which indicates that he did not only try to cover his own relationship to the man, but he also wanted to conceal the relationship of the adults. In both cases, it can be assumed that the total disavowal of facts is based on psychical pressure on the boy from outside, either through direct order, or through social constraints which the boy is already aware of. Otherwise, there would be no logical explanation why the child should deny a relationship to an adult person, if it was not defined by the forbidden, the unnatural, which forces him to hide it behind a wall of silence and secrecy. In the homosexual community it is a common practice to remain in the closet in order to avoid negative effects from outside. Miles instinctively, or forced by Quint, seems to mirror adult behavior, which is a logical consequence of the fact that he is forced to act in an adult world.

An inferior victim's solidarity with his seducer is one of those paradoxical appreciations psychologists commonly define as the *'Stockholm syndrome'*, a pathological transference that is based on positive feelings toward the victimizer ranging from compassion to romantic love, including attachment but not necessarily identification. The feelings are usually experienced as ironic but profound gratitude for the gift of life from one who has demonstrated the will to kill (Ochberg, 1988: ch. 1). As his uncle refuses to follow his guardianship duties as only relative of the children, Miles is completely at the mercy of his tutor, and he as the inferior participant in the relationship has not the power to stand up against the adult, thus the only possible solution for the traumatized boy is remaining in the closet, surrounded by silence and secrecy, which again is a typical victimization symptom of children who suffer from sexual abuse, carried out by a pedophile homosexual.

Rather similar is Mile's approach to the gross-gender relationship between Quint and Jessel, which he also disavows. One explanation may be that this relationship is also of forbidden quality, and the child is, voluntarily or forced, engaged into the sexual actions to a certain degree, either as passive voyeur, or as active participant. Remarkable is the fact that the adults, Quint and Jessel, obviously manage to create a kind of 'world in the world' for themselves and the children, locking out the other personnel at "Bly". Mrs. Grose states that the time the adults spent separately from each other, they spent with their protégés, the male with the male, and the female with the female (James, 52-54), which means that the children are spending their whole life in the summerhouse in the company of their tutors, either in a group of four, or as same-sex couples.

This isolation from the rest of the world certainly has an effect on the children's behavior, which becomes apparent when the new governess compares the relationship of the siblings to her own experience with brothers. The young woman definitely recognizes the difference between the qualities of both examples. And although she understands even the slavish idolation with which little girls sometimes meet little boys from her own experience, she also notices that Miles' and Fiona's relationship is behind any model of sister love; they never quarrel or complain, and they have developed a particular code of occupying a person, which allows the other to slip away without being recognized by the environment. However, "what surpassed everything was that there was a little boy in the world who could have for the inferior age, sex and intelligence so fine a consideration", claims the governess (James, 57). With other words, Miles' behavior is not at all appropriate to his age, which is again a typical victimization symptom for a sexually abused child. The boy's behavior, which surprises and confuses the governess so much, is simply adapted to the adult world where Miles used to operate for a long time. An example for the influence from outside may be Miles' attitude toward same sex companionship. Although explicit statements on same-sex preferences are rare throughout the novel, in the school discussion with the new governess the boy, surprisingly direct, exclaims: "I want my own sort!" (James, 79), which is to the point in such an explicit way that even the unskilled reader will understand that Miles prefers the company of boys instead that one of girls, which is typical for a boy of his age.

However, James' presentation of the boy's desire might also be the very clever move of unveiling the most important secret in such a trivial way that immediately the 'natural' is assumed, instead of giving room to the 'different and specific'. The deeper meaning behind the boy's statement is certainly a matter of speculation, and may be interpreted in various

ways. Either Miles' preference of his "own sort" is an innocent reflection on male fellow-students as playful companions in a boy's life, or his desire also implies sexual activity with his own sex. An indication for the second variety may be the fact that Miles has been dismissed from school for impropriate behavior, which is not explained in detail, but would make sense if it was extended to 'impropriate sexual behavior'. If Miles was dismissed for sexual reasons, he was not aware of his failures, as his statement depicts:

> Either you clear up with my guardian the mystery of this interruption of my studies, or you cease to expect me to lead with you a life that's unnatural for a boy. (James, 81)

Mile's complaints unveil two aspects; firstly, if his exclusion from school was based on the sexual intercourse with a classmate, he must have learned homosexual activity by somebody older than him, because it does not reflect the typical behavior of a ten-year-old boy; secondly, in this statement it becomes apparent for the first time in the course of the novel that the boy's actions, and his view of life are driven by a third person. The logical choice is Quint, that person with whom Miles spent the most time of his previous life, after his parents had died in an accident. It must have been Quint who was powerful enough to manipulate the child's little soul, and who told him that same-sex relationships were a common practice, not anything forbidden, but an appropriate activity with fellow-students. Additionally, he must have persuaded Miles that it was unnatural for a boy to spend his life among women, which reflects a rather misogynistic view of life, and expresses once more an idea that was obviously not born by a little boy but is a matter of imitation from below.

However, although Miles naturally cannot be aware of the importance and consequences of his actions, due to his age-related lack of any experience in the field of sexuality, he is obviously troubled with the memory of them, as it turns out in a conversation between him and the new governess, who tries hard to help the little boy by explaining him the advantages of a process of catharsis:

> Dear little Miles – oh, I brought it out now even if I should go too far – 'I just want you to help me to save you (…) The boy gave a loud, high shriek, which, lost in the rest of the shock of sound, might have seemed, instinctly, though I was so close to him, a not either of jubilation or terror. (James, 91)

The young woman does not succeed, which may be based on her inexperience in sexual abuse of children, or in the fact that Miles' misery has already reached a level of arousal from which a healing process is not possible any more. What really broke his little heart stays a secret. James does not unveil whether it was shame, a deep embarrassment which

is often characterized as humiliation or mortification, or self-blame which provoked exaggerated feelings of responsibility for the traumatic event, and which replaced obvious evidence of innocence by guilt and remorse, or subjugation, which made him feel belittled, dehumanized and powerless as direct result of his trauma. In any case, Miles' behavior reflects victimization symptoms after sexual abuse, as the context depicts, resulting from a same-sex relationship, which can be used as indicator for the representation of latent homosexuality in James' novel.

5.3.5. Flora and her Governess Mrs. Jessel

The behavior and the development of Miles' little sister, Flora, are rather similar to his own fate. She is too caught in a net of lies and denials from which she is not able to escape. The only difference to her brother's destiny is that her seducer is a woman, which again reflects a same-sex relationship. Also Flora insistently disavows the appearance of her former teacher's ghost, and that she watches her silently from a distance, although her behavior indicates another truth, as a statement of the new governess depicts:

> She stood there at the window in so much of her candour and so little of her nightgown, with her pink bare feet and the golden glow of her curls (…) She herself explained, for that matter, with the loveliest, eagerest simplicity. She had known suddenly, as she lay there, that I was out of the room, and had jumped up to see what had become of me. (James, 60)

Flora's explanation of the nightly incident is weak in trustworthiness, but could be an explanation for her strange activity late at night, if there was not the following conversation between the little girl and the new governess on the same subject:

> Governess: You thought I might be walking in the grounds?
> Flora: Well, you know, I thought someone was.
> (Governess: She never blanched as she smiled out that at me)
> Governess: And did you see anyone?
> Flora: Ah no! (James, 61)

Although Flora's behavior might be explained as typical childish inconsequence, it is much more logical that she consciously lies to her contemporary governess in order to hide the real purpose of her nightly wandering, as more as she has also pulled the curtains over her sleeping place to pretend that she is still there. The alibi for her suspicious action is once more provided by her brother, who claims that Flora's decision to look out of the window late at night has been an arrangement with him, quasi part of a game they have decided to play,

which is much likely to be again a reference to the typical solidarity between children who suffer from the same trauma, sexual abuse in same-sex relationships.

By introducing the seducers of the children, Quint and Jessel, as ghostly figures, James creates a kind of 'double-coded' situation. On the one hand, the homosexual background in the behavior of the children can only be decoded via their psychical state, in moments of a high level of arousal also via their physical state; on the other hand, due to the fact that the seducers derive from a mythological sphere, and only appear as visions which are seemingly not perceived by all persons at "Bly", as Mrs. Grose's example depicts, a further distance to a possible reality is created. Nevertheless, the point is that also double-encoded information and messages can be decoded with the appropriate tools. In James' novel, it is psychology, in particular, victimization symptoms as direct consequences of posttraumatic stress disorder, which unveil the representation of latent homosexuality.

6. THE DEFINED GAY NOVEL AND ITS PUBLICATION IN THE EARLY 20th CENTURY

The *'gay novel'* as such, and in the wider sense the perceptible representation of latent homosexuality in a literary work, is mainly defined by the introduction of clearly pronounced outing-processes, which Coleman identifies as "the five stages of same-sex sexual identity development" (Coleman, 1981/82: 31-43). The focus of Coleman's model is not on the etiology of same-sex interests and feelings, but deals with the psychical and physical changes in an individual who becomes aware of these interests. Thus, the application of Coleman's model to literary works may help identify a more or less veiled homosexual content within these works by providing an access to the protagonists' thoughts and behaviors related to their awareness of same sex-interests, and it will open gay novels to queer interpretations.

Coleman argues that sexual outing can be a laborious, agonizing process, thus, not every individual is prepared to advance through all five stages, but there may be individuals who become locked in the two initial stages, *'pre-coming out'* and *'coming out'*, and never experience the three proceeding stages, *'exploration'*, *'first relationship'* and *'integration'*. Authors of literary fiction can use Coleman's model in a way that they introduce only those stages of coming out which may be associated with the level of homosexuality they are prepared to unveil to the audience. For example, only in defined gay novels like Forster's *Maurice* or Prime-Stevenson's *Imre: A Memorandum*, the authors will candidly represent

latent homosexuality by introducing a clearly defined stage four, first homosexual relationship. To identify in which way the representation of latent homosexuality functions in 'defined gay novels', it may be considered useful to compare them with their literary counterparts, 'veiled gay novels'.

6.1. Homosexual Identity Development in Veiled Gay Novels

Wilde introduces in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* with his tragic hero, Dorian, the paragon of a homosexual who becomes locked in the *'pre-coming out stage'*, which is defined by the individual's preconscious awareness of same-sex identity, the coming-out to oneself and the acknowledgement of one's own homosexual interests, because he fails to complete this developmental task. Instead, he develops a defense mechanism in order to hide his identity from others, mainly because he fears that leaving his voluntarily chosen closet may result in negative consequences for him as a person. However, his effort is not crowned by success, as his creator, Wilde, states himself: "Dorian tries to kill conscience and in doing so kills himself" (Wilde, 2007: xxii).

Similar to Dorian, also Lord Henry conceals his homosexual desires, and remains in Coleman's first stage, however, by investing much less endeavor at repressing his homosexuality, as his physically close approach to Dorian shows, when "he puts his hand upon his shoulder" (Wilde, 35). The difference between him and Dorian is the way in which they deal with the conflict of their sexual proclivity; while the one successfully solves his problem by committing suicide, the other hides his sexual identity from his environment by agreeing to an unhappy marriage, and being satisfied with talking ironically about their situation, as Lord Henry does: "Men marry because they are tired; women, because they are curious: both are disappointed" (Wilde, 73).

Basil represents the second stage of Coleman's model, the *'coming out stage'*, although he still identifies and acknowledges his homosexual feelings for Dorian in a vague and ambiguous way. The significance of his progress is that he satisfies the next development task of the coming out stage of telling others about his identity, in particular, he informs Sir Henry about his feelings towards Dorian. Basil's problem is that he then becomes caught in the second stage and does not develop, because he, firstly, does not continue to unveil his sexual preference publicly, but refuses to exhibit the portrait he has created of the male he obviously adores, in order to conceal his true feelings for Dorian. Secondly, the fact that Dorian rejects

the painter's attempts at reconciliation also makes it impossible for the latter to progress through the three remaining stages of the coming-out process.

An author's decision to introduce the characters in his literary work as individuals who are caught in the first or second stage of Coleman's out-coming model crucially effects the queer interpretation of the work; the identification of the representation of latent homosexuality is not possible via the thoughts and the behavior of the protagonists, but depends on other features provided in the works, such as symbolisms, semiotics or camp-language markers to receive satisfactory results. When children are involved into homosexual activity, it may even be necessary to focus on psychological aspects in the development of the immature protagonist, like the example of James' novel *The Turn of the Screw* depicts.

Generally, however, it must be admitted that the cultural values on which a particular novel is based are certainly significant concerning the characters' use of defense mechanisms, and it may define why a character uses a specific defense mechanism. For example, Wilde's novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, was published in Victorian England, in 1894, and thus the characters, as well as the author himself, were impacted by the conservative cultural values of the time, which guaranteed that homosexual openness in print was un-publishable. The consequence was that the characters in Victorian novels were denied the opportunity to publicly pass through the pre-coming out stage without having to expect a life of misery in the drawer of an author's desk.

6.2. E.M. Forster – *Maurice*

The cultural situation and the approach towards homosexuality were not much more liberal when the British novelist E. M. Forster created his novel *Maurice*, in 1913. Thus, the obvious homosexual novel was not published during his life-time, but circled among his closest friends, and finally found its way to the public very late, in 1971. The epilogue, which was an essential element of the original manuscript, and which described the post-novel fate of the protagonists, Maurice and Alec, had already been discarded by the author himself shortly after he had finished his work, due to the fact that such an attachment was not well-accepted by the specific audience to whom Forster showed his work. However, the original epilogue is still available in the Abinger edition of the novel (Miracky, 2003: 5).

6.2.1. Double Structure and Revolutionary Language

The most remarkable features of Forster's work are, firstly, that the author does not only represent latent homosexuality in his novel, but he even elaborates the remarkable difference between the platonic version of a homosexual relationship and a male-male relationship that is also defined by the consummation of bodily love. Forster uses for the realization of his new concept a double structure which divides the novel into two parallel sections. The action of each section mirrors the other, but there are significant differences. While the first half of the novel, part one and two, which describes the Platonized relationship between Maurice and Clive, apparently traces a false version of homosexuality which is only seemingly a 'superior' form of same-sex love, but is in fact based on fears and limitations, the second half of the novel, part three and four, really unveils Maurice's salvation. His relationship with Clive was only a necessary preliminary to the fuller relationship he ultimately achieves with Alec. Maurice finds fulfillment in the devotion to a homosexual partner who does not reject physical love, which finally encourages him to surmount class barriers and social conventions; "he even comes to embrace the political consequence of homosexuality, and to adopt the radical perspective on society conferred by the outlaw status of the homosexual in 1913" (Summers, 1992: 17-21).

Secondly, Forster does not provide his audience with aspects of ambiguity when he pronounces the relationship between two males, but he describes the physical action between them with such lucid words that there are no doubts about the homosexual identity of his figures, and in the wider sense, the representation of latent homosexuality in his novel:

> Now Durham stretched up to him, stroked his hair. They clasped one another. They were lying breast against breast soon, head was on shoulder, but just as their cheeks met someone called "Hall" from the court, and he answered: he always had answered when people called. Both started violently, and Durham sprang to the mantelpiece where he leant his head on his arm. (Forster, 1971: 57)

The most remarkable aspect in this sequence is not the fact that Forster clearly describes the bodily contact between two males, but that he even goes beyond the obvious activity, and points out the increasingly illegitimate nature of their homosexual relationship, which was simply forbidden by the law at that time. The simple action of simultaneously jumping from the bed and mutually disengaging depicts that they are aware of the forbidden character of their relationship, and they instinctively feel the need for secrecy and stratagem.

Step by step, Forster works out the quality of the male-male friendship, and articulates the level of the out-coming of the two Cambridge students, until Clive finally confesses: "I love you" (Forster, 59). The confession in connection with the physical contact of the two males should leave no doubt about the homosexual character of their relationship. Additionally, Clive writes Maurice a note before the latter confesses his love, in which he explicitly states: "I shall be obliged if you will not mention my criminal morbidity to anyone" (Forster, 59). Again Forster 'linguistically' points out the quality of the male-male friendship, and expresses through the fears of the confessor what men with desires like Clive had to expect from society, those ones who considered their desire as "criminal morbidity", in order to avoid saying 'homosexuality'. Clive's salvation is Maurice's realization of the similarity of their sexual desire, which Forster relentlessly brings to the point: "He loved men and always had loved them. He longed to embrace them and mingle his being with theirs" (Forster, 61).

Considering the time when Forster wrote his novel, it may almost be called a 'linguistic revolution' the author dared to present the public, when he clearly pronounced the term *'homosexuality'* twice in his work to describe Maurice's sexual orientation, in both cases in statements of the psychiatrist and hypnotizer, Dr. Lasker Jones. Whenever else the narrative requires that Maurice's sexual proclivity is expressed linguistically, terminology from other discourses about sexuality is used, or it is paraphrased by the speaker. An interesting example for the paraphrasing method provides the protagonist himself, when he describes his sexual identity to the conservative Dr. Barry; he defines himself as "an unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort" (Forster, 159).

6.2.2. Outing - Concealing and Developing Characters

Such an explicit self-identification is certainly not the 'universal standard' in Forster's work, and does certainly not apply to all homosexual characters in the novel. As a matter of fact, it cannot be denied that characters like Dorian, Sir Henry or Basil, who never reach the advanced levels of higher development because they do not accept their homosexuality, are also represented in 'defined gay novels' like Forster's *Maurice*. However, they may not be associated with a certain kind of obfuscation, introduced in order to impede the identification of latent homosexuality in the literary work, but they function as visible counterparts to those homosexuals who do not refuse to pass through all the five out-coming stages of Coleman's

model. Actually, the *'concealers'* indirectly emphasize the individual experimenting of the *'developers'* with their new sexual identity in that way that their exploration of homosexuality, the first homosexual relationship, and in the best case, the integration of the homosexual individual in the environment of his own kind may reach another dimension of importance and value.

For the question whether a literary work contains the representation of latent homosexuality, developing homosexuals like Maurice and his lover Alec Scudder provide the clearly identifiable proof that the work under examination has a homosexual content, while characters such as Maurice's fellow student, Clive Durham, who remains in a platonic attachment with Maurice for more than two years, are typical 'first stage occupiers', hidden homosexuals who are often running for political positions, and deriving from a class that is considered to hold the future of England. Their appearance in literary works is usually surrounded by vagueness and ambiguity which makes queer interpretation difficult.

Although Clive is the one who initiates Maurice's same-sex sexual identity development, he later tries to change the developing friend into a hypocrite by encouraging him to assume an exterior which completely contradicts his inner self. Like Lord Henry Wotton, Clive represses his latent homosexuality, and marries a woman, even though Forster makes no secret of the quality of this marriage, which is obviously predestined to end up in a joyless union that is defined by conventions and constrictions. Together with his wife, Ann, the concealing Clive makes an empty living at "Penge", where "they united in a world that bore no reference to the daily, and this secrecy drew after it much else of their lives. So much could never be mentioned. He never saw her naked, nor she him" (Forster, 159). The materialistic character of their relationship is emphasized by the fact that they immediately after having telephoned and invited Maurice to their wedding, they discuss the investment of part of Anne's money. The desolate state of the house where they live, "Penge" cannot keep the rain out, mirrors the corrupt values of its inhabitants.

By presenting the concealing male protagonist, Clive, in such a negative and hopeless way, Forster seems to define his approach to men who repress their natural sexual orientation. However, he also points out the danger of an out-coming, and the public practice of homosexual activity in a hostile environment like the Victorian Times by describing the tragic fate of Risley, another of Maurice's fellow students at Cambridge, a homosexual who has already gone through all the stages of out-coming, and who is modeled on Lytton Strachey, a fellow student of the author himself during his Cambridge time (Bradshaw, 2007). Risley is

'caught in action' by the police, because he was probably denunciated by somebody, and he is sentenced to imprisonment by the law authorities of his time, which remarkably mirrors Oscar Wilde's fate.

6.2.3. Forster on Wilde's Tracks

The parallels between Forster's characters and Wilde can be recognized throughout the novel *Maurice*. Apart from the fact that Maurice associates himself with the famous British author, particularly with his sexual proclivity, and that Forster introduces the character Risley, who depicts remarkable parallels with Wilde, there are a lot of references within the novel that point out Forster's interest in his writer colleague, and influence his representation of latent homosexuality. Summers even argues:

> Wilde's insistence in *De Profundis* on the transcendent value of self-realization and on the redemptive potentiality of suffering shapes the development of Forster's protagonists. Moreover, Wilde's rejection of society and his expectation of solace in nature help explicate the retreat into the greenwood at the end of Maurice. (Summers, 1992: 17-21)

The rejection of society definitely is also an issue in Forster's work, because Maurice and Alec choose the greenwood as visible retreat from a society that is defined by injustices and reprisals against homosexuals. However, they do not flee in fears but claim their birthright of living in the country of their fathers, although they are aware of the fact that the negative attitudes towards them are the result of their homosexuality, they are prepared to carry the burden of the consequences of their sexual orientation themselves, because "man has been created to feel pain and loneliness without help from heaven" (Forster, 278). According to Forster, it is the consumption of sexual love that empowers Maurice and Alec to face all difficulties in the world, showing that "when two are gathered together majorities shall not triumph" (Forster, 279).

Forster's representation of homosexuality in *Maurice* is, in contrast to Wilde's bitter pessimism depicted in *De Profundis*, obviously that full of optimistic belief in the value of personal relations that he exaggerates the idealization of his protagonists' homosexual relationship. The greenwood idyll is presented in a romantic way that appears simply not appropriate for a gay novel playing in England, in the early 20th century, but may be more associated with the Robin Hood legend, who seeks shelter in Sherwood Forest to escape his enemies. The weakness of Forster's representation of homosexuality is, on the one hand, that

he tries to whitewash the fact that Maurice's move must be associated with completely abandoning his family, friends and career to build a life for himself and Alec in the primeval woods of England, where they swear each other never again to separate; on the other hand, by providing his novel with such an illusory happy ending he robs his characters the opportunity of reaching the final stage of the developing process, 'individuation'. Instead of making head against their hostile heterosexual environment, they are forced by their creator to disappear, and again hide in the darkness. Wilde's fate clearly depicts that Forster's perception of homosexual reality is far too romantic and imaginary, and has little in common with the actual situation of homosexuals at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century. An exception may have been the homosexual British author, Edward Carpenter, who fell in love with a proletarian worker from Sheffield, George Merrill, with whom he ran a farm, and had a life-long homosexual relationship. Forster's novel *Maurice* is said to have been modeled on the successful life of the couple (Dynes, 1990: 419).

6.2.4. Prince and Pauper Syndrome

Leaving apart the idealization of a retreat into nature by ignoring all the social consequences for the upper-class Englishman, Maurice, Forster's novel is characteristic of another aspect in the homosexual world, the eroticization of the working class, which was not only a phenomenon in the United Kingdom, but had its advocates also across the big ocean, in the United States, and in France, for example. Sexual intercourse across the classes, which Timothy d'Arch Smith termed *'Prince and Pauper Syndrome'*, after Mark Twains first historical novel *The Prince and the Pauper*, was a common practice among the homosexual British upper-class for generations. The psychological roots of the aristocracy's attraction to the working class have not been systematically examined; however, sociologists see a variety of reasons for the homosexual cross-class relationships. One explanation of the up-down tendency may be based on the upper class intellectuals' loss of their masculine vitality, in particular, on the degeneration of their physical power in relation with sexual activity, which they tried to compensate through sexual relationships with robust and earthy lower class males. Furthermore, behind that choice there was also a logical economic reason, there were simply much more underclass males available than sons from the higher classes. Addington Symonds summarizes his ideas of homosexual cross-class relationships, in 1893:

> The blending of social strata in masculine love seems to me one of its most pronounced, and socially hopeful, features. Where it appears, it abolishes class distinctions, and opens by a simple operation the cataract-blinded eyes to their futilities. (Donaldson, 1990: 1405-1406).

Also the French leftist writer Daniel Guerin was famous for innumerable one-night stands with blue-collar workers; he defined his sexual preference for the socially inferior class as a kind of collective revolutionary solidarity, an idea that he shared with Walt Whitman, who associated the unequal relationships with praise of democracy.

Dragged by Douglas junior, Wilde explored the Victorian underground of gay prostitution, and had series of sexual adventures with young, working class male prostitutes, which always were played through in similar rituals: Wilde met a boy, he offered him gifts, they shared a private dinner, and finally they retreated into a hotel room where they followed their sexual passion. The difference between the working class toy boys and his pederastic relations with Ross and Douglas, for example, was that Wilde idealized the latter, and shared with them the principles of his aesthetic circle, while the uneducated others were excluded from his literary life, and solely functioned as sex-objects. In *De Profundis* Wilde writes to Douglas that "It was like feasting with panthers; the danger was half the excitement "(…) I did not know that when they were to strike at me it was to be at another's piping and at another's pay" (Holland, and Hart-Davis, 2000).

In 1938, Forster himself stated clearly, even though rather late, what his sexual preference was: "I want to love a strong man of the lower classes, and be loved and even hurt by him" (Donaldson, 1990: 1405-1406). This statement could easily be the core sentence of Forster's impressionable protagonist Maurice, after his out-coming has taken place. Maurice develops from an unhappy relationship which is defined by the domination of the high-minded but insubstantial Platonism of his fellow-student, Clive, into a sexual relationship with a working class boy, the gamekeeper at Clive's residence, Alec Scudder, which is full of passion and eroticism, and which entirely meets his physical homosexual desires. However, neither the attraction of the opposite, nor the tension of distance, which is resolved when they have sex, seem to be the essential aspects in the homosexual relationship Forster represents in his novel. It is more likely that Maurice enjoys the temporary reversal of a usual power relationship, and that he gives his working-class lover the upper hand in the bedroom, because he is aware of the fact that the general control over the relationship will always be in the hand of that participant who has the financial power. Maurice seems to enjoy the coarse machismo of the aggressive, obviously non-law-abiding working-class male; maybe the perceived

danger of allowing the inferior to conquer the superior even heightens his sexual excitation. Whatever it is, the phenomenon of the *'Prince and Pauper Syndrome'* seems to also work perfectly in Foster's literary fiction, for the moment at least. In order to provide a forecast for the stability of the represented homosexual relationship between Maurice and Alec, it would make sense to answer the questions as to how many of such cross-class connections have ever led to long-lasting relationships, and whether in the long run non-sexual affinities and differences may prove more powerful than the sexual stimulus of an interclass encounter. The epilogue which was only available in Forster's first version of his novel would have brought light into the dark (See: 7.2.).

6.3. Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson – *Imre: A Memorandum*

One of the most recognized pioneers in American gay novel writing in the early 20th century certainly is the American expatriate author, Prime-Stevenson, who published his gay novel, *Imre: A Memorandum,* under the pseudonym 'Xavier Mayne' in a limited self-financed edition imprint of 500 copies in Naples, Italy, in 1906. The little known novel which is structured as a memorandum of one protagonist that is sent to the author of the novel, and which the author himself defines as "a little psychological romance" (Austen, 1977: 9), is today considered as the first explicit American novel that deals openly and sympathetically with the representation of male homosexuality, and which ends happily for the lovers.

About thirty years before Prime-Stevenson's novel was published, Bayard Taylor had already published his novel, *Joseph and his Friends: a Story of Pennsylvania*, but he did not provide it with a 'happy end' for the protagonist. The story focuses on the development of a young man, Joseph, who marries a wealthy woman just at the moment when he discovers the homosexual love for his new friend, Philip. Torn between the relationship with his manipulative wife, and the increasing feelings for his friend, Joseph neither finds sexual satisfaction nor salvation in the hostile environment that surrounds him (Taylor, 1870).

Prime-Stevenson's representation of latent homosexuality in his novel depicts remarkable parallels with Forster's later work *Maurice*. In both novels the outing-process of one of the protagonists is the central issue in the story. In *Imre: A Memorandum* the British aristocrat Oswald, who is "past thirty", meets the twenty-five-year-old Hungarian soldier Imre, a descendant from an old and proud but impoverished Transylvanian family, while he is

spending a leisurely summer of language studying in Budapest. Over the course of several months the two men are linked by a friendship which is defined by a variety of revelations and disclosures, all of them carried out in a very sensitive and subtle way. Oswald and Imre spend much time together, mostly in passionate dialogues. After an intense discussion on friendship, Oswald confesses Imre, within the story of his life, his love, and comparable to *Maurice*, the beloved man rebuffs the out-coming of his friend. Enthusiastically, Imre pledges undying friendship, however, he insists on Oswald's willingness to never again speak about his passion, until the other breaks his silence. After having been separated for some time, they meet again, and Imre's communications become increasingly affectionate until they finally reunite in a hotel room, where Imre puts his arm around Oswald's shoulder. For the first time, both men feel the physical contact to the other; however, their reaction on the unfamiliar situation is different. Although the situation is of high sexual content, Prime-Stevenson does not subdue the men's dignity to their carnal lust. Even the fact that Oswald is sexually so much aroused that he has a visible erection does not bear any aspect of obscenity and painfulness. The author describes the struggling of his protagonist in such a trivial, but charming way that he appears deeply human and vulnerable, which makes him incredibly sympathetic when he excitedly states: "(…) I persisted in shame and despair to keep down the hateful physical passion which was making nothing of all my psychic loyalty" (Prime-Stevenson, 2003: 187).

Shocked by his sensual weakness, Oswald falls away from Imre and sees their friendship lost forever, drown in a sea of disgust. However, like Maurice, who finally declares his feelings for Clive also Imre voluntarily breaks his own constraints on silence, and confesses his love for Oswald. The dramatic peak of the novel is reached when Imre finds the most lucid words describing his approach towards same-sex relationships: "Look into thyself, Oswald. It is all there. I am an Uranian, as thou art. From my birth I have been one. Wholly, wholly homosexual, Oswald!" (Prime-Stevenson, 188). What an Uranian is reveils Prime-Stevenson best himself in his in 1908 published non-fictional work *The Intersexes: A History of Similisexualism as a Problem in Social Life*:

> Happiest of all, surely, are those Uranians, ever numerous, who have no wish nor need to fly society – or themselves. Knowing what they are, understanding the natural, the moral strength of their position as homosexuals; sure of right on their side, even if it be never accorded to them in the lands where they must live; fortunate in either due self-control or private freedom – day by day, they go on through their lives, self-respecting and respected, in relative peace. (Prime-Stevenson, 1908: 515).

Actually, Prime-Stevenson describes in his definition of *'Uranianism'* the idealized version of a homosexual, an individual who has already gone through all five stages of Coleman's outing model, and is now successfully and legitimately integrated as declared homosexual in the heterosexual environment (See: 3.2.1.). Together with his distinct emphasis on the aesthetic dimension of male love, especially for the more masculine type of an Uranian who possesses a "super-sending [sic!] sense of the beauty of the male physique and male character (…) a temperament of the Ancient Greeks (…) at once rugged and yet aesthetically sensitive as in no other race" (Prime-Stevenson, 1908: 516), Prime-Stevenson is at great distance to Forster's representation of latent homosexuality. For him homosexuals must neither culturally nor socially be forced to leave their society, in order to find a peaceful retreat out in nature. The homosexual has rights which he must be allowed to claim within the society to which he belongs, and he deserves the respect also from the heterosexual world, as much as he as homosexual has to respect the heterosexual sphere.

Under such positive circumstances, it is not surprising that Prime-Stevenson provides his little romance with a 'happy ending', and his representation of latent homosexuality with an aesthetic 'fade out'. Oswald and Imre, who usually spend much time together 'outside, choose nature as a kind of temple for sealing their relationship. Out in the moonlight they again find themselves in an intimate dialogue, before they return to their hotel room where Imre again hugs his partner, and prepares the way for the first sexual contact with his words: "Come then, O friend! O brother, to our rest! Thy heart on mine, thy soul with mine! For us two it is surely is ….Rest!" (Prime-Stevenson, 192). Although it is not explicitly told that Oswald and Imre will now have their first homosexual activity in bed, it can be assumed as the logical consequence of their development and their outing-processes.

6.3.1. Homosexual Friendship in a Military Context

In contrast to Forster's novel, it is difficult to define of which quality the cross-cultural relationship between Oswald and Imre really is, and how promising its future perspectives are. Due to the fact that there are not any comparable cross-cultural homosexual romances available from the time the novel derives, and Prime-Stevenson leaves the audience in doubts, it can only be examined in which way 'friendship' as wider social concept was usually approached in a military context.

Generally, the discussion around 'friendship' as indicator for a particular preference in sexual relationships has raised the question whether same-sex conduct is exclusively defined in terms of behavior, same-sex acts, or if there is also the possibility of having a homosexual identity or character, regardless of the existence or frequency of sexual acts. The distinction between *'friendship'* and *'love'* that denies the erotic component of the former, and legitimizes eroticism solely between men and women redrew the boundary between them in a manner which the defenders of homosexuality have always tended not to contest directly, but rather to modify by placing their own markers (Miller, 1980: 10).

The 'Byronic' perception of male friendship was similar to Miller's approach to the social concept, which depicts that the abstract term *'friendship'* had functioned as encoded meaning carrier for almost one hundred years. Already at Byron's time, the term, in combination with the use of military frameworks, provided convenient protection from legal prosecution, and any other negative consequences that might have resulted from the representation of homosexual attachment in British literature. Byron's successful method was to create a fictitious parallel-world where same sex passions could be expressed under the cover of a battle situation, where male friendship was considered a concept of high ethic value. Moreover, the decoded homosexual attraction could be blunted for non-homosexual readers by the fact that the beloved 'friend' might have died while he was fulfilling his duty, which again was considered the primary aspect in the military business at Byron's time (See: 6.2.6.).

The problem with Prime-Stevenson's novel is that *Imre: A Memorandum* is not a typical military novel, due to the fact that only one participant in the homosexual relationship is a soldier. This means that the professional context of the novel is in both cases limited to one person, which again implicates that the cross-cultural and cross-professional quality of the romance is very likely to have an effect on the development of the homosexual relationship. Forster does not reflect on these specific circumstances, but provides with his work a cross-cultural homosexual romance depicting a romanticized understanding of otherness, in this particular case, of Hungarianness, which apparently serves as a metaphoric point of reference for the author's perception of homosexual identities.

6.3.2. Translation as Metaphoric Act

Based on the idea that any kind of translation facilitates the making of meaning within and across languages, Prime-Stevenson suggests in his study on homosexuality, *The Intersexes*, which followed his novel, *Imre: A Memorandum*, two years after its publication, that understanding the representation of homosexuality should imply acts of translation:

> Perhaps the clearest description [of the representation of homosexuality] comes when we tell the reader to take any and every phase of admiration, of attraction and sexual love, which a normal, amorous man feels for a woman, and who translates that into uranistic [homosexual] passion (…) There are the same struggles, hopes, fears, self-sacrifices, workings for good or ill on the nature of the lover: the same joys, jealousies, despairs: ant too often the same tragedies (…) all are to be 'translated' from their normal relations in distinctly masculine natures. (Prime-Stevenson, 1908: 85)

This would mean that translation cannot only be considered as a means to trace the representation of latent homosexuality in a literary work, but it is parallel to this a necessary methodology for recognizing homosexuals as fully human. In *Imre: A Memorandum* Prime-Stevenson has already used literary translation as means of expressing homosexual awareness and acceptance, which certainly makes it easier for him to proof his assumptions in his later work *The Intersexes* (Breen, 2012: 2-9).

The importance of translation in *Imre: A Memorandum* becomes obvious from the beginning until to the end of the novel, which is entirely linguistically mediated and musically themed. Oswald and Imre derive from different nationalities and different social spheres, thus they have to find a language which makes it possible for them to communicate. In 'veiled gay novels' camp-language is an appropriate means for providing the members of the homosexual community with a tool that allows them to decode the sexual proclivity of other homosexuals.

In 'defined gay novels', such as *Imre: A Memorandum*, the approach to language may be more liberal, and the necessity of concealing homosexual messages may be less pronounced. Nevertheless, when the communication between two homosexuals has to cross national borders, a kind of 'bridge-language' has to be found to transmit information. For example, Oswald and Imre temporarily speak to each other in German or French because, as Oswald points out, they are "two men of absolutely diverse race, unlike objects in life and wide removed environments, who could not even understand each other's mother-tongues" (Prime-Stevenson, 72).

By comparing the cross-national communication of two homosexual characters, which may also be defined as the *'third sex'* (See: 3.2.1.), with a metaphorical act of exoticized

representation of British and Hungarian identity, the *'third language'* Prime-Stevenson introduces may be associated with a very intelligent method of defining the sexual status of the protagonists, Oswald and Imre.

At the end of the novel it is again a language, in combination with music that signifies the status of the relationship into which the former 'asexual' friendship of the two so different males has developed, and by that the representation of latent homosexuality within a literary work. Oswald metaphorically assimilates with the Hungarian identity, which may be associated with the 'merging' of both men's sexual desires, when he impassionedly acclaims to the swelling music of a "cigány orchestra" that "hussar legény vagyok!" (Prime-Stevenson, 126). The latter phrase may be translates as *'I am a lad of the hussars'* (Breen, 2012: 2-9), by which he indicates his 'new' identity via the Hungarian language. However, Prime-Stevenson's message has to be translated by the audience not only linguistically, but also semantically to get to the bottom of the meaning. This means, in the wider sense, within the whole novel translation does not only function as means to understand each other 'linguistically', but it is also discursively producing the homosexual subject as such.

Generally, it must be admitted that translation as indicator for the representation of latent homosexuality may turn out to be an ambiguous double-coded issue, as Oswald's statement in German, "Es gibt ein Zug, ein wunderliches Zug" (Prime-Stevenson, 81), depicts. The sequence is translated as *'there is an attraction, a strange attraction'* (Breen, 2012: 2-9), which could semantically be considered to be a reflection on the representation of latent homosexuality provided in a grammatically incorrect form. However, Oswald's English translation of the Grillparzer verse (Grillparzer, 1986: 307) at the begin of the sequence, and the ungrammatical German recollection of the verse later in the chapter may even go far beyond the 'visible grammatical failure', and may reveal the performative quality of translation in a homosexual context. Playing with grammatical gender, like in the German translation the masculine article is wrongly replaced by the neutral representative of this class, may be a particular technique of pointing out the variability of sexual gender, and in the wider sense the variability of sexual preferences.

Such a production of aesthetic meaning outside the limitation of grammar and simple linguistic translation may also be recognized in the final section of the novel, in particular, when Oswald refers to his own experience with homosexuality in the course of his life. Through the elaboration of his lonesome homosexual past, he twice quotes Platen's poetry,

Ghazal IV, the second time without providing the reader with a translation of the German sequence. Imre, who temporarily uses German as 'third language' to communicate with the British aristocrat, will understand the meaning of the couplet "Oh, weh Dir, der die Welt verachtet, allein zu sein. Und dessen ganze Seele schmachtet, allein zu sein!" (Platen, 1999: 145), but the lack of translation may influence the fictional connection between the narrator and the English speaking audience. It can be assumed that Prime-Stevenson did not use this technique accidentally, but in order to provide the audience with a particular aesthetic meaning and an encoded message. Actually, isolating the reader from the story by neither offering a translation within the text, nor an appropriate footnote is an effective means of mirroring Oswald's own experience with homosexual isolation. In other words, when the readers experience the irritating feelings of being 'outsiders' themselves, it is more likely that they will understand the painful loneliness and segregation of the homosexual individual – and most of all, they will recognize the representation of latent homosexuality within a literary work.

7. CONCLUSION

In the homosexual community, like in any other community, visual signs, images and symbols carry a particular meaning which has to be decoded and interpreted by the single members of this community. In order to be able to translate the signifiers, it is essential to have access to two systems of representation: a conceptual map which, for example, correlates the green carnation buttonhole with the social concept of latent homosexuality, as well as a language system that functions as encoding mechanism for homosexual messages in a way that only the members of the community, 'the insiders', achieve the ability to decode the provided information without being forced to reveal their sexual identity involuntarily. Camp language is such a tool that allows the production of meaning in a particular process of representation.

The specific quality of camp language and other homosexual signifiers is that they do not only refer to objects, people and events, which are commonly associated with the real world, but they also refer to the field of imagination and abstract ideas which are not in any obvious sense part of our natural material world. In other words, there is no simple relationship of reflection, imitation or one-to-one correspondence between the homosexual

signifiers and the real world. Camp language, for example, does not work like a mirror, but provides an imaginary platform where meaning is produced by the practice of representation.

Based on this assumption, it becomes obvious that, on the one hand, the representation of a certain identity can only function via a signifying system such as language, or any other system that deploys signs and symbols. On the other hand, it clearly depicts that neither objects, nor people or events in the world imply any fixed, final or true meaning. It is always the human being him/herself, or a group of individuals in society, within the various cultures, who create meaning through signifying processes. Those meanings are neither universal, nor static, but may change or vary from one culture or period to another. For example, there is no guarantee that the homosexual semantics and symbols of a sub-culture within a culture will have an equivalent meaning in another, due to the fact that cultures generally contrast remarkably from one another in their code systems. The consequence is that also identities, no matter whether they derive from the heterosexual or homosexual world, must always be considered as social constructions, which cannot exist outside of a particular representation and acculturalization system.

Literary fiction, particularly gay novel writing, can only function based on the universal assumptions of representation and identification codes within the homosexual community. Additionally, historical contexts, as well as the perception of homosexuality within a particular time, are essential features for the outing-level an author is willing to express in his work. In other words, the representation of latent homosexuality in gay novel writing is closely linked to the cultural and social perception of homosexuality within a particular community, and within a particular time. As such, the representation of latent homosexuality in literary fiction is submitted to permanent changes and new orientations within certain societies and cultures. Even the kinds of homosexuality that are practiced within these cultures are not static concepts, but may change within the course of time, for example, pederast systems may be replaced by adult-adult homosexuality due to a variety of possible reason. The ‘literary’ reactions to such changes are certainly reflected in the style and techniques of the gay novels.

Historically, the representation of latent homosexuality in literary fiction has a long tradition. However, there has to be made a distinction between the literary genre ‘gay novel’ as such, which is in its unveiled form an invention of the early 20th century, and the representation of latent homosexuality within novels that are defined by a major heterosexual

context, whereas homosexual characters solely act as marginal figures, who are often met with humor and mockery by the heterosexual characters in the literary work.

One of the first novels that dealt with homosexuality was the romance *The Adventures of Leucippus and Clithophon*, published by the Greek author Achilles Tatius in the 2nd century B.C. This early form of literature does not yet depict the typical features of the genre 'novel', but represents an earlier form of the traditional Greek novel, which found very late entrance into the literature of classical antiquity. The homosexual aspect in the romance is not veiled, but embedded inferiorly in the majority of heterosexual episodes, which reflects the status of homosexuality in ancient Greek culture.

A landmark in gay novel writing is considered Petronius Arbiter's *Satyricon*, which was published in Latin around 100 A. C. In this early 'picaresque novel' Petronius reflects on the adventures of Encolpion and his boyfriend Giton in southern Italy. How far the author dared to go in the representation of latent homosexuality in his work will never be discovered as only about a tenth of the original work has been preserved over time.

From the Middle Ages to the French Revolution the European authors were seemingly not interested in gay novel writing, or they were simply suppressed in their literary and personal freedom by political or religious forces. The only preserved work from that period is the medieval story *Amis and Amile*, a legend that deals with the devoted 'friendship' of David and Jonathan.

During Renaissance, which was characteristic for a common orientation towards ancient models not only in literature, a new figure was introduced in novel writing, the 'Aretino'. His preferred place of action was Venice, the Adriatic town which later turned out to be the Mecca for European and American homosexuals, due to its very specific political constitution, and its unusually liberal approach towards homosexuality. One of Aretino's kind, the *'L'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola'*, which may be translated as *'Alcibiade the schoolboy'*, represented the object of pederastic desire in seventeenth century Italy. In the form of a conversation between the boy and his lustful teacher the advantages of the sexual constellation 'adult man-child' are expressed (Dall'Orto, 1983: 224-232).

Also Henry James refers in his novel *The Turn of the Screw* to the unequal relationship between a pre-pubertal boy and his powerful tutor, although in his novel the representation of latent homosexuality is entirely veiled, and has to be decoded via the physical and psychological condition of the immature protagonist. The parallel of both novels is hidden in

the double-coded representation of Venice, which once encoded, makes the deeper meaning of the novel obvious.

Homosexual passages are also contained in John Cleland's revolutionary work *Fanny Hill*, a scandalous milestone of sexual literature, which was published in 1748, and in Tobias Smollett's novel *Roderick Random* of the same year, which is defined by an unusual negative description of the homosexual figures within the text. The pansexual works of the Marquis the Sade are the only preserved 'witnesses' of homosexual Enlightenment until the 19th century. They brought a new interest in erotic novels, which typically circled secretly among a well-off readership.

Characteristic of that time, which is commonly defined as *'Victorian Era'* after its empress Queen Victoria, is the purchase method of literature with delicate content that was considered to outrage Victorian morality. Actually, it was neither a homosexual author, nor a gay novel that introduced the very new invention of 'paper-bag-shopping', but Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* which made potential readers rush into those book shops which were more hidden, and mostly located in small side-streets, where they secretly bought what they later carried away wrapped in plain brown paper, so that also the rest of London's society could 'decode' the purchased issues.

The difference to novels representing latent homosexuality was that they were not even published if they apparently contained homosexual aspects, but had to be issued privately at the author's expense. The result was that during Victorian times British authors like Oscar Wilde more or less successfully encoded the homosexual content in their works, and by that imitated French authors like Honoré de Balzac, who introduced in his novel *La Comedie humaine* the homosexual figure Vautrin, whose homosexuality was cleverly interwoven in the story of the novel. The specific feature of Balzac's novel was that he managed to say everything by saying nothing, which implies perfect skills in the use of semiotics and symbols, as well as a particular language to decode homosexual content in a way that it can only be encoded by a selected clientele. Wilde also practiced this method in combination with a system of ambiguity in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The problem was that his personal context, and the fact that some of his semiotics and symbols were seemingly so obvious that even his prosecutors could decode them, or at least believed that they could, finally made his novel the paper on which the judges wrote Wilde's verdict which brought him into prison, and destroyed his career and health.

At the end of the 19th century, which is often described as 'the time after Wilde', gay novel writers were confronted with a variety of different approaches towards the issue of homosexuality in literature, always depending on the author's geographical scene of action. The palette reached from an entirely liberal approach towards sexual diversity in France to homophobic panic in Britain after Wilde had been sentenced to two years imprisonment for gross-gender sexuality.

The homosexual German bohemia began the 20th century probably with one of the most powerful and artistic gay novel in the history of gay novel writing, Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*, published in 1912. Once more, the representation of latent homosexuality is connected to Italy, where Mann's tragic hero, an aging writer who clearly shows parallels to his creator, passionately falls in love with a beautiful Polish boy. And once more it is a Venetian landscape where the showdown takes place. What Henry James never dared to express in his work, the total devotion to pederasty, is unmistakably but in a highly aesthetic way described by the German author, who takes his time to dissect a homosexual man's feelings in an almost shockingly unveiled way. The consequence of Mann's bitter honesty is that probably not only the homosexual, but also the heterosexual reader metaphorically holds the hand of the tragic hero when he dies lonely in the glance of the fading evening sun.

Britain, at the same time, was far away from the acceptance of homosexual aestheticism as a specific sub-genre in novel writing. Henry Spencer Ashbee brings it to the point when he announces: "The English nation possesses an ultra-squeamishness and hyper-prudery peculiar to itself, sufficient alone to deter any author of position and talent from taking in hand so tabooed a subject" (Ashbee, 1990: 904). Wilde is the historical proof of Ashbee's theory, and as a matter of fact, it was after his trial that the British hyper-hypocrisy applied particularly to the representation of homosexual aspects in literature. The logical result of the socio-cultural context was that valuable gay novels were banned to be shut away in locked drawers for many decades, as Forster's example shows. Already written in 1913, the work was only exposed to a selected circle, to the others hiding in the closet, and it took almost sixty years until it found its way into the public. *Maurice* would have been a great chance for those 'in charge' to rethink Britain's gay policy, and to legitimize the representation of latent homosexuality in literary works, because the novel perfectly describes the difficulties in connection with the outcoming-stages a homosexual is forced to pass through until he is integrated into society.

Across the ocean, the gay novel appears as a late sub-genre in American novel writing at the very end of the 19th century, although some scholars on the subject claim that aspects of latent homosexuality were already contained in famous American literary works such as Melville's *Moby Dick*, and Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn*, a theory that is not undisputed among literary critics. The first published novel that explicitly contains homosexuality as central theme is Alfred J. Cohen's very pessimistic work *A Marriage Below Zero*, published in 1899. In this novel the author points out the negative effects of making homosexuality a secret, particularly in connection with cross-gender marriages, which may turn out a tragedy not only for the marrying man who has to conceal his homosexuality for his entire life, and on the other hand, for the betrayed woman, who is forced into a marriage with a man who is neither physically nor psychically in the position to really love her. Marriage due to social forces is a frequently used motive in both kinds of gay novels, as Sir Henry Wotton's example in Wilde's veiled novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and Clive Durham's icy and calculated marriage in Forster's defined gay novel, *Maurice*, depict. For the pessimistic Cohen only suicide can be considered to be the last consequence in the sexual and social dilemma.

Completely antagonistic to Cohen's negative world view is Edward Prime-Stevenson's approach to homosexual fulfillment in his cross-cultural gay novel *Imre: A Memorandum*. Published in 1906 under the pseudonym 'Xavier Mayne', the hidden identity of the author indicates the still existing fear of social consequences among homosexual writers. Safe under the cloak of anonymity Prime-Stevenson draws the first positive picture of a same-sex relationship in American gay novel history. His protagonists, who are initially struggling with self-doubts, shame and fears due to the socio-cultural hostility of their environment, finally bravely pass through all the outcoming-stages, and find lasting love and fulfillment in their homosexual relationship.

The historical development of the literary sub-genre *'gay novel'* corroborates the theoretical assumptions of the representation of latent homosexuality in literary texts, as well as the perception of identity within the homosexual community. The selected, examined British and American novels reflect the political, religious, juridical, social and cultural situation in the countries of their origin in that way that they veil, respectively unveil, the representation of latent homosexuality to a degree which may be considered to be appropriate to the various contexts. Literary contraventions are usually sentenced by public or legal

means, and have a negative effect on the authors' private sphere, their legal status, and their financial circumstances.

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Abstract

Through the identification and analysis of particular homosexual signifiers, and/or signifying systems available in literary texts it is examined to what extent the representation of latent homosexuality can be traced in Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, as well as in an additional selection of British and American novels. The focus is, on the one hand, on the analysis of the social, cultural and scientific perception of the social construct 'homosexuality' in the course of time, in particular, which meaning and which identities were associated with homosexuality at the time the examined pieces of work were written and published in the countries of their origin; on the other hand, it is examined in which way semiotics, symbols and other encoded information can be decoded and interpreted in reference to latent homosexuality in literary texts, in American and Great Britain, during the late 19th and the early 20th century.

In order to be able to translate the signifiers, it is necessary to have access to two systems of representation: a conceptual map which correlates a symbol with the social concept of latent homosexuality, as well as a language system that functions as encoding mechanism for homosexual messages in a way that only the members of the community achieve the ability to decode the provided information without being forced to reveal their sexual identity.

Camp language turns out to be the perfect means to produce meaning in a particular process of representation. The specific quality of camp language and other homosexual signifiers is that they do not only refer to objects, people and events, which are commonly associated with the real world, but they also refer to the field of imagination and abstract ideas which are not in any obvious sense part of our natural material world. There is no simple relationship of reflection, imitation or one-to-one correspondence between the homosexual signifiers in the real world.

Based on these assumptions, it becomes obvious that the representation of identity can only function via a signifying system such as language, or any other system that deploys signs and symbols. Furthermore, it clearly depicts that neither people, nor objects or events in the world imply any fixed, final and true meaning. It is always the human being, or a group of individuals in society, within the various cultures, who create meaning through signifying processes. Those meanings are neither universal, nor static, but may change or vary from one culture period to another.

Literary fiction, particularly gay novel writing, can only function based on the universal assumptions of representation and identification codes within the homosexual community. Additionally, historical contexts, as well as the perception of homosexuality within a particular time, are essential features of the outing-level an author is willing to express in his work. In other words, the representation of latent homosexuality in gay novel writing is closely linked to the cultural and social perception of homosexuality within a particular community, and within a particular time. As such, the representation of latent homosexuality in literary fiction is submitted to permanent changes and new orientations within particular societies and cultures. Even the kinds of homosexuality that are practiced within these cultures are not static concepts, but may change within the course of time. The 'literary' reactions to such changes are commonly reflected in the style and techniques of the gay novels.

The examined selection of British and American novels reflect the political, religious, juridical, social and cultural situation in the countries of their origin in that way that they veil, respectively unveil, the representation of latent homosexuality to a degree that may be considered appropriate to the various contexts.

Übersicht

Durch die Identifizierung und Analyse von auf Homosexualität basierenden Kodes und/oder Kodierungssystemen in literarischen Texten wird untersucht, inwieweit die Repräsentation von latenter Homosexualität in Oscar Wildes Roman *Das Bildnis des Dorian Gray*, sowie in einer zusätzlichen Auswahl an Britischen und Amerikanischen Romanen, nachgewiesen werden kann. Der Fokus liegt einerseits darauf, wie das soziale Konstrukt ‚Homosexualität' in sozio-kultureller und wissenschaftlicher Hinsicht im Laufe der Zeit wahrgenommen wurde, insbesondere welche Bedeutungen und welche Identitäten mit Homosexualität assoziiert wurden, als die untersuchten literarischen Werke geschrieben und veröffentlicht wurden. Andererseits wird untersucht, auf welche Weise semiotische Zeichen, Symbole oder kodierte Informationen in britischen und amerikanischen literarischen Texten des späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts im Bezug auf latente Homosexualität dekodiert und interpretiert werden können.

Um solche ‚homosexuellen' Zeichen übersetzen zu können, müssen zwei ganz spezielle Repräsentations-Systemen herangezogen werden: eine konzeptuelle Vorlage, die ein bestimmtes Symbol mit dem sozialen Konzept ‚Homosexualität' in Verbindung bringt, sowie einem Sprachsystem, das über einen Kodierungsmechanismus verfügt, der homosexuelle Nachrichten so verschlüsselt, dass sie nur von Mitgliedern der Kommune der Homosexuellen dekodiert werden können, ohne dass diese dazu ihre sexuelle Identität preisgeben müssen.

Die ‚Camp'-Sprache hat sich als perfektes Mittel erwiesen, um in Repräsentationsprozessen sinnvolle Bedeutungen zu produzieren. Die besondere Qualität dieser Sprache und auch anderer homosexueller Identifikationssymbole ist, dass sie nicht nur auf Objekte, Personen und Gegebenheiten hinweisen, die grundsätzlich mit der realen Welt in Verbindung gebracht werden, sondern dass sie auch dem Feld der Imagination und abstrakten Ideen zugeordnet werden können, welche nicht offensichtlich Teile unserer natürlichen materiellen Welt sind. Es gibt keine klare Beziehung, Reflektion, Imitation oder Eins-zu-eins Korrespondenz zwischen homosexuellen Signifikanten und der realen Welt.

Basierend auf dieser Voraussetzung wird es offensichtlich, dass die Repräsentation von Identitäten nur über ein Kennzeichnungssystem erfolgen kann, das mit Zeichen und Symbolen operiert. Sprache ist ein solches. Des Weiteren wird deutlich, dass weder Menschen, noch Objekte oder Ereignisse mit dem Prädikat ‚Endgültigkeit' in Verbindung gebracht werden können. Es ist immer der individuelle Mensch selbst oder eine Gruppe von Menschen innerhalb einer Gesellschaft und einer Kultur, die Bedeutungen schaffen indem sie

Kennzeichnungsprozesse festlegen, welche weder universell noch statisch sind, sonder einer Veränderlichkeit unterworfen sind, die innerhalb von kulturellen Perioden zum Tragen kommt.

Fiktionale Literatur, insbesondere Romane mit homosexuellem Hintergrund, können innerhalb der homosexuellen Kommune nur basierend auf den universellen Voraussetzungen hinsichtlich Repräsentation und Identifikation funktionieren. Ein wichtiger Aspekt dabei ist der historische Kontext sowie die Wahrnehmung von Homosexualität zu einer bestimmten Zeit. Letztere ist der essentielle Faktor in der Frage, inwieweit ein Autor bereit ist, latente Homosexualität in seinem Werk öffentlich auszudrücken. Mit anderen Worten, die Repräsentation von latenter Homosexualität in Gay-Romanen ist eng verbunden mit der sozio-kulturellen Wahrnehmung von Homosexualität innerhalb einer bestimmten Gesellschaft zu einer bestimmten Zeit. Dies bestätigt einmal mehr die Annahme, dass die Repräsentation von Homosexualität in fiktionaler Literatur permanenten Veränderungen und Neuorientierungen unterworfen ist. Sogar die Arten der praktizierten Homosexualität innerhalb bestimmter Kulturen sind keine statischen Konzepte, sondern können sich im Laufe der Zeit verändern. Die ‚literarische' Reaktion auf derartige Veränderungen drückt sich üblicherweise im Stil und in der Technik von Romanen mit homosexuellem Hintergrund aus.

Die untersuchten britischen und amerikanischen Romane reflektieren deutlich die politische, religiöse, gesetzliche, soziale und kulturelle Situation in ihren Entstehungsländern in der Weise, dass sie die Repräsentation von latenter Homosexualität verschleiern, respektive nicht verschleiern, immer bezugnehmend darauf, was als ‚passend' angesehen wird innerhalb der Gesellschaft, für die ein literarisches Werk gedacht ist.

Curriculum Vitae

zur Person

Name:	Romana Kohl
Geburtsdatum:	25. 1. 1959
Geburtsort:	Mistelbach / NÖ.
Staatsbürgerschaft:	Österreich
Familienstand:	verheiratet, 2 Kinder

Ausbildung

03/2008 - 01/2013	Diplomstudium der Anglistik und Amerikanistik
10/2007 - 03/2008	Besuch einzelner Lehrveranstaltungen
03/2008	Studienberechtigungsprüfung