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## Fulfillment of homosexual desires as a radical action in bethan roberts' novel my policeman: Slavoj Žižek's perspective

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to reveal the subjectivity of the character Tom in the novel *My Policeman* in fighting symbolic norms to fulfill his desires as a homosexual. Based on these objectives, interesting researchers In conducting this research researchers used the novel *My Policeman*, in the analysis will focus on the main character, namely Tom who is a homosexual. The purpose of this research is to reveal the subjectivity of the character Tom in the novel *My Policeman* in fighting the symbolic order to fulfill his desires as a homosexual. In explaining the subjectivity of the characters, the subject theory proposed by Slavoj Žižek is used. The method used in conducting this research is a qualitative descriptive method. The results of the study show that Tom's actions to follow his desire to enter into same-sex relationships make him classified as homosexual and ignore the sanctions he will receive, as a form of cynical subject. Tom fights against the symbolic dimension as a form of radical action by having same-sex relationships or being a homosexual. The radical action taken by Tom is a form of fulfilling the desire that is in him to achieve freedom. The freedom that kept him together with Patrick was due to a different kind of sexual urge that arose within Tom. Tom fights against the symbolic dimension as a form of radical action by having same-sex relationships or being a homosexual. The radical action taken by Tom is a form of fulfilling the desire that is in him to achieve freedom. The freedom that kept him together with Patrick was due to a different kind of sexual urge that arose within Tom. Tom fights against the symbolic dimension as a form of radical action by having same-sex relationships or being a homosexual. The radical action taken by Tom is a form of fulfilling the desire that is in him to achieve freedom. The freedom that kept him together with Patrick was due to a different kind of sexual urge that arose within Tom.

**Keyword:** Slavoj Žižek, Subjectivity, *My Policeman*

### 1. Introduction

Sexual deviance is currently a topic of discussion that is widely discussed by society in Indonesia and other countries. LGBT is an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. The term LGBT has existed since the 1990s, which intends to replace the phrase "gay community" (Yudianto, 2016). This LGBT phenomenon raises various pros and cons in Indonesian society. Those who agree with this phenomenon see it from a human standpoint, no longer as a behavior of mental disorder, while those who do not agree with this phenomenon because they see the LGBT phenomenon as deviant behavior, even causing damage to the human social order (Yudianto, 2016). In contrast to the LGBT phenomenon in the Western world, LGBT is no more an extended taboo (Soetjiningsih, 2004). One of the Western countries that currently provides freedom regarding individual sexual orientation is the United Kingdom.

Before getting freedom regarding sexual orientation, as is currently happening, the British state freed its people's choice to choose their sexual orientation. In England, at first, it was very critical of sexual deviations or homosexual acts by severely punishing the perpetrators of sexual deviations. In fact, in the 1500s, England once imposed the death penalty on perpetrators of sexual deviance. However, over the years, these rules have continued to change until the emergence of laws regarding sexual offenses with imprisonment as sanctions, revealed by Dryden (2018) of the sound archive and Humanities Reference Specialist in the British Library. Not only imprisonment, but perpetrators of sexual deviation will also receive social sanctions from society because they still think that perpetrators of sexual deviation are considered disgusting and do not deserve respect like society in general.

Based on these social cases, issues in society are triggered by several sensitive matters, causing problems for some people who feel they are victims of social problems. Various movements are now emerging to defend against problems that harm certain parties. Many arrests of perpetrators of sexual deviation cases finally gave ideas to writers in England to describe these cases in the form of literary works. Astrianti & Jayanti (2018) state that literary works are a place for writers to express their ideas and imagination in writing. One of the literary works that raise the issue of LGBT namely *Policeman Novels*, the third book by British author Bethan Roberts. This novel was first published in England in 2012. Then, not long ago, this novel was adapted into a film directed by Michael Grandage and finally officially premiered on September 11, 2022.

This novel tells about a love triangle between a policeman (Tom), a museum curator (Patrick), and a teacher (Marion). The three of them are trapped in a relationship that is not supposed to be. Patrick, who is a museum curator, realizes that he has different sexual interests, just like Tom, who feels this way, so the friendship between Tom and Patrick is more than just friendship between men. However, on the other hand, there is Marion, who is interested in Tom; they finally get married because it is a requirement for Tom to get promoted in the police force. The relationship between Tom and Patrick continues even though Tom is married, but England in the 1950s, according to this story setting, has not legalized same-sex relationships, so if they are found to have same-sex relationships, as was done by Tom and Patrick, both of them will be subject to criminal sanctions. However, these rules did not make the two of them separate until one day, Patrick was arrested on charges of committing indecent acts to boys, which ultimately made the two of them unable to be together and had to separate.

The movement carried out by Tom took him out of existing policies in that country and, of course, the policies for police officers in his country, namely in England. Homosexual is a form of deviant behavior that is considered not a disease in the subject but a form of inappropriate behavior. Tom, who already knows very well about the norms regarding homosexuals, does not make him immediately stop his relationship with Patrick. In fact, at that time in England, acts of homosexual offenses were considered illegal, whether there were witnesses or not when the violation occurred; if there was a complaint against the authorities, then the perpetrator could be prosecuted. According to Dryden (2018), a sound archive and humanities reference specialist at the British Library, a letter between two men showing their affection will result in a lawsuit being filed. Therefore, the relationship between Tom and Patrick makes both of them imagine the rules made by the state and the sanctions they receive if they are caught for their homosexual acts.

Homosexuality was considered a form of action that deviated from the norms that had been established in England in that year, the government's policy of providing moderately severe punishments for perpetrators of homosexual acts. At that time, homosexuality was a form of crime whose actions needed to be accounted for by the laws that had been made. As Waites & Kollman (2011) state, the Home Office set up the Wolfenden Committee in 1954 to review 'homosexual offenses' alongside prostitution after a number of high-profile court cases exposed the harsh nature of existing laws against sex between men and uneven application.

Tom's character has a character related to the subject theory put forward by Žižek. In this study, the researcher will use Slavoj Žižek's theory of subjectivity to analyze the novel *My Policeman* by Bethan Roberts, which tells about the movement of the main character, namely Tom, against the symbolic norms of the British government to follow his inner impulse by becoming a homosexual.

The main idea of Žižek's thought is the psychological influence of society on sociocultural problems, including literature in it (Salam, 2017). Some of the concepts presented by Žižek, cynicism is a kind of negation of, a misguided negation or false to ideology because they hide the mask of their ideology or, in simpler terms (Setiawan, 2018, pp 37). The cynical subject

refers to the subject who takes action but already knows the truth but still does the action. Subjects like this usually have great passion, which clouds their knowledge. Then, radical action, namely oppositely taking action from the symbolic one, it can also be said that radical action as a subject (supposedly) is momentum, not a process because it involves plans, intentions, goals, intentionality, and so on (Setiawan, 2018). There is also a moment of emptiness, said by Setiawan (2015) that this emptiness is an *ex nihilo* state of the subject, there is no ideology behind it and nothing symbolic in it. Thus, the moment of emptiness is a form of the subject's disgust so that he no longer wants to be bound by any symbolism.

Based on this explanation, the researcher draws the formulation of the problem, namely, how is the subjectivity of the character Tom as a homosexual in the novel *My Policeman* by Bethan Roberts? The purpose of this study is to reveal the subjectivity of the character Tom in the novel *My Policeman* in fighting symbolic norms to fulfill his desires as a homosexual.

In conducting this research, the researcher found several previous studies that had conducted research with similar discussion topics. Among them are the first Priyanggono & Yuwana (2022) entitled *Subjectivity of the Main Characters in the Get Out Film by Jordan Peele: Study of Slavoj's Subject Theory Žižek*. This study aims to describe and discover the radical action on subjectivity in the main character. The results of Chris's research as the main character succeeded in tearing down the symbolism from him. He did not think about who was black and who was white. Chris's radical action was disgust at the Armitage family's fakeness towards him. So that what Chris does is included in the authentic action of a moment that signifies an empty self without any symbolic construction, morality, or intent, without any plan influencing it.

Second, Akmal (2017) conducted research in his thesis entitled *Pramudya Ananta Toer's Subjectivity in Slavoj Žižek's Historical Psychoanalytic Study Hunt Novel*. This research aims to build distance and break away from symbolic traps. The results of this study indicate that Pram's subjectivity when carrying the novel *Hunt* shows characteristics that can be said to be radical toward some of the dominant symbolic dimensions in his framework. These emancipative radical actions led to symbolic changes around Pram and simultaneously attracted Pram's subjectivity back to the symbolic.

Third, Wibowo et al. (2021) entitled *Sex as a Radical Action in Ayu Utami's Saman Novel*. In this research, produce the results of this study indicate that the characters in *Saman*'s novel, namely Laila and Wisanggeni, have sexual desires that are free from symbolic domination, so they take radical actions. Through this sexual activity driven by pure desire, the two characters enter a moment of emptiness. This process causes the characters Laila and Wisanggeni to become radical subjects who have left the symbolic world. Therefore, the existence of a radical subject in a novel can be regarded as a crack in the ontologically consistent symbolic world of sexuality.

The previous research above was used as a reference for the author in conducting this research, but there were still some differences between the research conducted and the previous research, which lies in the object used; the two studies above did not use the same research object as that carried out by the researcher. Then, in this study, the main focus is on one character in the novel *My Policeman*, Tom, and does not focus on other characters.

The theory put forward by Slavoj Žižek is called historical psychoanalysis. It is called historical psychoanalysis because Žižek combines Lacan's ideas to achieve historical ideals (Akmal, 2015). Besides Lacan and Marx, Žižek also has a rationale for the subject regarding Hegel's definition of dialectics and social subject, finally from these three Hegel-Lacan-Marx underlies the birth of the Žižekian subject (Zamzuri, 2018). In the process of achieving Marx's historical ideals, Žižek fits the concept of psychoanalysis. Lacan promotes three orders in the psychological development of the subject; he considers that every individual or ego must pass

through three spaces or arrangements of psychological development that construct his unconscious nature (Setiawan, 2020, p. 65). The triadic order is the Imaginary, the symbolic,

In the "imaginary" phase, the subject is still an individual or ego who is not yet a subject because no symbols are considered to represent him (Zamzuri, 2018, p. 16). "The imaginary" is often referred to as the "mirror stage" when the ego is undergoing a process of development (Setiawan, 2020, p. 73). The mirror stage is where the ego begins to recognize by looking at himself or in a mirror and comparing himself with others different from himself; this is then included in the imaginative, referred to as "the imaginary." This phase describes the subject's self, who still has not found his true self, or the subject has not been able to become a subject because he is still in a link that is not his own (symbolic, etc.). In the symbolic stage,

The process of becoming a subject exists in the symbolic order when the self begins to negotiate with language so that its imaginary identification is subdued by symbolic identification (Priyonggono & Yuwana, 2022, p. 90). The symbolic order shows that the subject is bound by language, which divides the subject, empty and lacking because the symbolism existed before the subject. Finally, this is what makes the subject subdued by the symbolism. This causes the subject to want to fulfill his desires (the other) by going to the real (the real). The desire of the subject who always wants to achieve fulfillment makes the subject fail; this causes the subject to be in a shortage that will never be full (Setiawan, 2018).

"The real" is the phase where the subject's ego is in a perfect position, there is no urge within the subject to be fulfilled, or it can be said that in this phase, the subject does not feel deficient in himself. Then "the real" is interpreted as an order/space/world/region that is not or has not been spoken or symbolized (Žižek, 2008, p. 182), as stated by Lacan that what is real is not a noun, not something, not an object, nor is it really cannot be associated as a material or physical object in the world that we understand, nor as a body and reality itself (Setiawan, 2020, p. 65). Thus, the real cannot be easily expressed because the real is within the subject.

Disclosed by (Priyonggono & Yuwana, 2022 p. 90). Based on these three trinities, the subject is defined as a subject who tries to release from the symbolic to the real (the real).

Symbolic cynicism is a form of the subject's awareness of the actual reality, but the subject still does it even though he already knows the truth. In 'Cynicism,' the subject desires to cover up what he knows by continuing to do the action he wants. The presence of 'cynicism' is considered to resemble bad qualities (such as radical action), but in reality 'cynicism' is like morality itself which is present in the domain of immorality so that it looks subversive, anti, and resistant and always lives in pretense (Žižek, 2002, p. 71). Thus, it can be understood that a cynical subject is a subject who already knows reality and knows his actions are not the right actions,

Ideological fantasy is a subject condition with a cynical awareness (Priyonggono & Yuwana, 2022, p. 91). The subject knows but still believes in this ideology as a way out of reality. They have a pretend attitude towards certain things that will provide welfare because ideology will provide a symbolic construction of reality. Fantasy, according to Robert (2010: 148), determines, presents, and shapes my desires. Fantasy makes the subject keep doing the action he wants because fantasy will strengthen the subject's desire to fulfill his desire. Ideological fantasy seems to the subject's actions by pushing him through the 'cynicism' that arises in the subject, making the subject continue to act according to his desires.

The moment of emptiness is when someone already feels that they do not want to be bound by something that binds them. Eventually, the moment of emptiness will automatically come in the form of the subject's disgust for fakes, not by the objective reality or the subject's rebellion against fakes towards actions carried out without any ideology. One of the ways to get out of the symbolic is to be in a moment of emptiness that suddenly triggers actions beyond reason, beyond empirical, and even beyond symbolic observation as the pivotal point that starts a real subject explosion (Setiawan, 2018, p. 83).

A radical action is a form of subject response to get out of the symbolic, which always goes through a negative way which is said to Žižek as a radical action (Akmal, 2015, p. 15). Radical actions tend to be carried out by the subject as a form of rebellion against the symbolic ideology that ensnares the subject, which is finally countered by actions called radical actions taken to gain freedom for the subject. Radical actions are even called 'acts of selflessness' because the self is a form of limitation, construction, and hegemonic culture (Arifin, 2016, p. 50). Subjects trapped in the symbolic dimension are not free to perform the actions they want that arise naturally within the subject—finally making the subject take action beyond the symbolic, which makes it a radical subject. Taking radical action (becoming a radical subject) is the end of the negotiation between self-awareness about the existence of an actual dimension and a symbolic dimension (Wibowo et al., 2021, p. 14).

## 2. Method

This research is included in the qualitative descriptive research. The qualitative descriptive method solves problems by describing the object's state by the facts (Sugiyono, 2013). The data generated in a qualitative descriptive study is in the form of non-numeric or the form of a set of words, so the descriptive-qualitative method in this study is used to describe the subjectivity of the main character regarding his movements in dealing with the symbolic dimensions that have been formed in the novel *My Policeman* by Bethan Roberts.

The next step is collecting primary data as material for conducting research. The primary data in this study is the text of the novel *My Policeman* by Bethan Roberts, published in 2012. Meanwhile, the secondary data in this study are in the form of references such as books, articles, and journals related to research, after determining the object to be used and collecting data which is done through reading repeatedly, understanding in detail according to the subject's actions according to Žižek. The next step is to analyze the data using Slavoj Žižek's subjectivity theory.

Data analysis was carried out in the form of textual analysis in the novel *My Policeman* by looking at and observing the relationship between the text by the movement of Tom's character, looking at the symbolic dimensions, cynicism, and radical actions. Textual analysis to determine the subjectivity of Tom's character in dealing with the symbolism in *My Policeman's* novel, the technique used is listening by linking full attention to words and sentences and paragraphs related to the subject.

## 3. Results and Discussion

Based on the problems raised in this study, the main focus of this research is the main character in Bethan Roberts' novel *My Policeman*, Tom. Tom's subject will be revealed in the symbolic dimensions that ensnare him, the cynicism experienced by Tom's character, and Tom who takes actions beyond the symbolic, which are indicated as radical actions. This is as explained in the discussion below.

### Symbolic Dimension

In the 20th century, according to the setting of the novel, which was around 1957 in England, at that time, same-sex relations were considered strictly forbidden; the stigma of society considered that same-sex relations were considered a very taboo relationship, even considered was disgusted by society at that time if someone had a same-sex relationship, whether gay or lesbian. Same-sex relationships at that time in England were considered a disgrace and a form of social deviation directly related to the laws implemented in that country. So, perpetrators of same-sex relations are subject to ostracism from the surrounding community and legal sanctions related to the state, which will later be criminalized, which means having direct relations with the apparatus. The form of these existing norms eventually becomes a form of symbolic dimensions regarding same-sex relationships, which are considered very indecent in society. This corresponds to the subject of *Homosexual* in the novel *My Policeman*, as in the quote below:

**Data 1:**

“He is not wearing his uniform, for which I am grateful. It is risky enough, having a lone male call at my door after six o'clock in the evening.” (Roberts, 2012, p. 125). The police are officers who work in state government agencies or commonly referred to as state apparatus, who work directly for the country where they serve. As a police officer, he must act by the existing norms that must be obeyed; because his job is to uphold state law, the police cannot act outside state law. This research is described here about characters who act outside their symbolic order. He was a policeman who acted outside his symbolic order based on the profession and social norms of society in England at that time. A policeman named Tom has same-sex attraction, namely, liking men, which is not what he should be doing. Based on the quote above, it is said that it is pretty risky when Tom wears his uniform and goes out at night from the house of a man who lives alone. This indicates that at that time, fellow men in the same place would build a negative stigma for the community or individuals around them. Whether or not there is a relationship between the two men will still be considered taboo by those around him. This symbolic dimension is then formed in social society in England, which considers same-sex relationships disgusting and will impact these individuals; they can even be said to be minorities, as illustrated in the quote below. This indicates that at that time, fellow men in the same place would build a negative stigma for the community or individuals around them. Whether or not there is a relationship between the two men will still be considered taboo by those around him. This symbolic dimension is then formed in social society in England, which considers same-sex relationships disgusting and will impact these individuals; they can even be said to be minorities, as illustrated in the quote below. This indicates that at that time, fellow men in the same place would build a negative stigma for the community or individuals around them. Whether or not there is a relationship between the two men will still be considered taboo by those around him. This symbolic dimension is then formed in social society in England, which considers same-sex relationships disgusting and will impact these individuals; they can even be said to be minorities, as illustrated in the quote below.

**Data 2:**

“He may already have begun to tell himself that he is a minority.” (Roberts, 2012, p. 147). In the symbolic order in England in 1957-1958, according to the setting described in the novel *My Policeman*, it is known that perpetrators of sexual deviations, such as homosexuals, are a minority in that country. Society and the state's rejection of homosexual offenders make them shunned by the surrounding community. Strict legal rules and norms make homosexuals invisible in society. They usually cover up their identity as homosexuals. Their behavior as homosexuals makes them realize that they are a minority in society in general. So, if someone commits sexual deviance by becoming a homosexual, they already know the consequences, even the sanctions they will get. Therefore, as in the quote above, not many of these minorities dare to show who they are because their behavior and actions violate the symbolic order in which they live. Homosexuality which has been labeled as an indecent form or behavior, is undoubtedly considered wrong and should not be done, as illustrated in the dialogue excerpt below.

**Data 3:**

“But it is his fault!” I said, close to tears now. Julia gave a soft laugh. “Perhaps he should not have married you. . .” “No,” I said. “Of course, he should. I am glad he married me. It is what he wanted. What we both wanted. And he could change,” I spluttered, “couldn't he? With me by his side. He could get—help, couldn't he? And I can help him. . .” (Roberts, 2012, p. 240)

Homosexuality is a sensitive subject of debate. It is not uncommon for homosexuals to be discriminated against by their environment when their sexual identity has been exposed and known by many people. Everyone at that time certainly thought that homosexuality was wrong. From any point of view, homosexuals are the most guilty of what they have done. As in the quote above, Marion, Tom's wife, thinks that what her husband did was wrong. Marion's thoughts at that time had been constructed by various symbolic rules that were around their lives which considered homosexuality as a big mistake, and someone who was trapped in that desire had to be cured. Based on the quote from Marion's point of view, it also reveals the way society thinks about homosexuality. Society generally only considers ordinary people who are heterosexual and have normal relationships between men and women, not homosexuals who lead to same-sex relationships. Then, when the police or state officials find out that someone is a homosexual actor, they will act by the existing criminal law; this is done by the symbolic order of the deviant act, as shown in the quote below. Society generally only considers ordinary people who are heterosexual and have normal relationships between men and women, not homosexuals who lead to same-sex relationships. Then, when the police or state officials find out someone is a homosexual actor, they will act by the existing criminal law; this is done by the symbolic order of the deviant act, as shown in the quote below. Society generally only considers ordinary people who are heterosexual and have normal relationships between men and women, not homosexuals who lead to same-sex relationships. Then, when the police or state officials find out that someone is a homosexual actor, they will act by the existing criminal law; this is done by the symbolic order of the deviant act, as shown in the quote below.

**Data 4:**

“Patrick Francis Hazlewood?” I nodded. “I have a warrant here for your arrest on suspicion of committing acts of gross indecency with Laurence Cedric Coleman.” (Roberts, 2012, p. 250)

As explained in the discussion above regarding the symbolic dimension of homosexual or same-sex relations in England based on the novel *My Policeman* by Bethan Roberts, the above quote clearly illustrates how state officials enforce the legal regulations regarding sexual deviation in an individual. The quote above describes Patrick's character, who was arrested by the police on charges of committing an indecent act towards another man. This clearly shows how the symbolic dimensions/orders have much power over one's life. The novel *My Policeman* has described in detail that homosexuality or all forms of same-sex relations here are strictly prohibited. Various sanctions have been applied, and the authorities did not stop investigating this sexual deviation. The form of this symbolic dimension then becomes the norm that develops in people's lives. Violation of the symbolic form will lead the subject to radical action because it attempts to take action that is inappropriate or outside of the symbolic order of an individual. The symbolic dimension also requires the subject to behave and behave like in general human life; the character Tom in this novel, who works as a police



officer, also gets symbolic rules from where he works; this is contained in the following quote. Violation of the symbolic form will lead the subject to radical action because it attempts to take action that is inappropriate or outside of the symbolic order of an individual. The symbolic dimension also requires the subject to behave and behave like in general human life; the character Tom in this novel, who works as a police officer, also gets symbolic rules from where he works; this is contained in the following quote. Violation of the symbolic form will lead the subject to radical action because it attempts to take action that is inappropriate or outside of the symbolic order of an individual. The symbolic dimension also requires the subject to behave and behave like in general human life; the character Tom in this novel, who works as a police officer, also gets symbolic rules from where he works; this is contained in the following quote.

**Data 5:**

"I am planning to marry," said my policeman. "The other day, I was called in to see the guy. Moreover, d'you know what he asked me? He asked, " When will you make some girl a respectable policeman's wife?"

"The impudence!" It is not the first time he has mentioned it. . . Some bachelors, he says, some bachelors have found it hard to rise through the ranks in this division." (Roberts, 2012: 157)

In the snippet of Tom's character dialogue above, it can be seen that he explained his job to Patrick, that he had to get married to make it easier for him to raise his rank in the police force. If he is married, rising to a higher rank will be easier. This then formed a symbolic dimension in an institution at that time. It was previously said that marriage was made a mandatory condition to be fulfilled so that a person could get the highest rank in the police agency, as explained in the quote. This will make someone finally get married, especially workers who work as police in that country, who will assume that marriage is an obligation for men so that they can quickly get promoted. However, this finally constructs a symbolic order that makes the thought that men should marry and have a wife beside them. Marriage is made as something that must be done to get a better life with a partner and future career, as described in the dialogue excerpt above in the novel *My Policeman*. This eventually led to a symbolic dimension in the police agency in England at that time regarding marriage which was used as a benchmark to raise someone's position, which meant that marriage was mandatory for every individual in the police agency in England. Marriage is made as something that must be done to get a better life with a partner and future career, as described in the dialogue excerpt above in the novel *My Policeman*. This eventually led to a symbolic dimension in the police agency in England at that time regarding marriage which was used as a benchmark to raise someone's position, which meant that marriage was mandatory for every individual in the police agency in England. Marriage is made as something that must be done to get a better life with a partner and future career, as described in the dialogue excerpt above in the novel *My Policeman*. This eventually led to a symbolic dimension in the police agency in England at that time regarding marriage which was used as a benchmark to raise someone's position, which meant that marriage was mandatory for every individual in the police agency in England.

**Cynical Subject**

"cynicism" appears to represent the subject who knows the actual reality. *Cynical action* is an action related to something done by the subject, which is contrary to what it should be or with "the symbolic," but the subject already knows that the action should not be done or ignores the symbolic and continues to do it.

This is related to the language of Tom's character regarding the negative actions he experiences when Tom begins to realize that there is a desire for a different sexual attraction within him, which begins to feel attraction to the same sex, namely to other men. However, he ignores the awareness that arises in him regarding his actions, that he knows the actions are not what he should be doing. However, their desire for him is more significant than his awareness, leading him to take radical action.

**Data 6:**

“He pulled away from my grip. “I came here to tell you I cannot come again.” Finally, I said, with what I hoped was a note of mirth in my voice: “Did you have to come here to tell me that? Couldn't you have popped a note through my door?” He lashed out an arm. Instinctively I ducked, but no blow came. I was almost disappointed. I am ashamed to admit I had wanted his hands on me, whatever it took. Instead of meeting my cheek, his fist went to his temple, and he ground his flesh with his knuckles. Then he made a strange sound—something between a gargle and a friend. His face was created into a terrible red mask, and his eyes and mouth clenched (Roberts, 2012, p. 155).

From the start, Tom and Patrick's meeting gave a different atmosphere, like male friendship in general; the relationship between the two was more towards a forbidden relationship which should not have been done according to what was symbolic in their current situation. Tom began to realize that his actions with Patrick were not what they should have done; even Tom realized they were wrong and could even be called criminal actions. As in the quote above, Tom tries to avoid Patrick so he can end all of their actions, but Tom is easily carried back into the sexual desires that exist within him. Tom seems unable to overcome his desire to return to the right course of action; she drifts even deeper into her passion for Patrick and continues to act in symbolic defiance. Tom was already aware of his wrong actions, it can be seen in the dialogue excerpt above that Tom did not want to see Patrick again, but everything did not go according to plan because he was still in the grip of his sexual desire with Patrick and continued to have a same-sex relationship—Forbidden, which is wrong and they should not do. Tom's radical actions lead him to find freedom, taking him to a new symbolic world. Tom fights against the symbolism so he can get freedom. It can be seen in the dialogue excerpt above that Tom does not want to meet Patrick again. However, everything does not go according to plan because he remains in the grip of his sexual desire with Patrick and continues to have a forbidden same-sex relationship which is wrong, and they should not do it. Tom's radical actions lead him to find freedom, taking him to a new symbolic world. Tom fights against the symbolism so he can get freedom. It can be seen in the dialogue excerpt above that Tom does not want to meet Patrick again. However, everything does not go according to plan because he remains in the grip of his sexual desire with Patrick and continues to have a forbidden same-sex relationship which is wrong, and they should not do it. Tom's radical actions lead him to find freedom, taking him to a new symbolic world. Tom fights against the symbolism so he can get freedom. Tom's radical actions lead him to find freedom, taking him to a new symbolic world. Tom fights against the symbolism so he can get freedom. Tom's radical actions lead him to find freedom, taking him to a new symbolic world. Tom fights against the symbolism so he can get freedom.

**Data 7:**

“Do I have to tell you everything immediately? Is that what you expect?”  
“No, but—we are married . . .” I mumbled.

“What about freedom, Marion? What about that? I thought we had, you know, an understanding. I thought we had a—well, a modern marriage. You have got the freedom to work, haven't you? I should have the freedom to see whomever I like. I thought we were different from our parents.” He stood up. “I was going to tell you tonight. Patrick only asked me yesterday. He has to go to Venice for his work. Some conference or other. Just a few days. Moreover, he would like some company.” (Roberts, 2012: 218)

Tom, who is still trying to cover up his illicit relationship with Patrick, finally makes himself do something he should not. The quote above is a dialogue between Tom and his wife, Marion. Marion takes issue with Tom's plans to go with Patrick to Venice, citing work matters with Patrick. Tom lies to Marion to keep all his secrets safe, and his marriage with Marion will continue to work well. However, on the other hand, Tom knows what he did was wrong and should not have done that to his wife. This is shown by the dialogue above; when Marion first finds out about her husband's plan to leave with Patrick, she finds out from Patrick. Tom did not tell Marion about his travel plans because he had doubts about leaving Marion and going with Patrick, but on the other hand, he also wanted to go with Patrick; he finally postponed discussing this with his wife, Marion. Based on this, Tom realized that his actions were wrong and would be detrimental. However, he still did it because his desire for Patrick was more significant than his awareness of his guilt towards Marion for what he did.

#### Data 8:

He sighed. “We have to go back.” “Why?” He looked to the ceiling. “You know why.” “Tell me. I seem to have forgotten. Other people do this. Other people live in Europe together. They leave, and they have happy lives. .” “You have an excellent job in England. So do I. I cannot speak Italian. We both have friends, family. . . We cannot live here.” He sounded so calm, so conclusive. My comfort, still, is that he did not mention her. He never said Because I am a married man (Roberts, 2012, p. 265).

Tom and Patrick travel together to Venice, giving them both the freedom they do not get in their own country. This is one of Patrick's reasons for asking Tom to stay in Venice. However, Tom refuses Patrick's invitation because he feels they should return to where they live. After all, they still have jobs and families. Based on these quotes, Tom realized about his life in England that he had someone who remained with him, namely his family and his wife, Marion. Tom's act of violating the symbolic by continuing his illicit relationship with Patrick and even traveling to an area where the two of them are free to do anything in public makes him a cynical subject. Being a subject or a cynical action because, as previously explained, Tom knows exactly where he went wrong and how he fights against his symbolic dimension as a subject where he lives and works. Tom actions already know that they will harm himself, but the cynical subjects will still take these actions even though they know the consequences they will get for what they do.

#### Radical Action

The action taken is contrary to the symbolic order, which is referred to as a radical action in the end. The subject acts opposite to the symbolic one. This action can be without ideology, symbol, or plans that influence it in carrying out these actions.

Tom, a policeman, should act by "the symbolic" in his daily life and in the institution where he works. Tom tries to follow the existing symbolic dimension, but the desire within him has a more excellent drive than his obedience to the symbolic; Tom can not resist his desire to stop his forbidden relationship with Patrick. Tom knew very well that his actions violated the existing symbols; Tom's actions, which had an interest in Patrick, ultimately caused him to be

called a Homosexual. Based on this, Tom's movement against "the symbolic" by taking actions that do not follow the norms that apply regarding the forbidden relationship between him and Patrick.

**Data 9:**

“And then his fingertips grazed my neck. Still, I did not look at him. I let my eyes glaze over, and the room's reflection in the window warped into a soft mass of light and dark. The whole room warped into the feeling of my policeman's fingers in my hair. He was holding the back of my neck now, cradling it, and I wanted to let my head rest there in his large, capable hand. His touch was firm, surprisingly sure, but when I finally turned to look at him, his face was pale, his breathing quick (Roberts, 2012, p. 145).

“His breath quickened as I worked my way down, and his hand caught my own as I reached the final button. Gently he guided two of my fingers into his open mouth. His lips are so hot on that cold day. He sucked and sucked, making me gasp. He is greedy for me; I know it. Just as greedy as I am for him. Then he took my fingers from his lips and, pressing them against his groin, asked, "Can you share?" (Roberts, 2012, p. 170).

The symbolic dimension of British society's life at that time strongly opposed same-sex relationships or could be called homosexuals. Perpetrators will experience sanctions both legally and socially. Here, Tom understands all that is symbolic. However, he cannot control his inner desire, which starts to be interested in a different relationship when he begins to meet Patrick, a museum curator. It can be seen in the quote above, which describes the creation of an intimate atmosphere between the two of them. However, the main point became Tom, who first started his movement on Patrick. Tom was not someone who did not understand the symbolic norms in life where he was at that time, but his great desire for Patrick was able to overcome the symbolic one; it got to the point where they got into intimate situations that Tom and Patrick should not have. Tom, who is married to Marion, has more sexual attraction to Patrick, as shown in the quote above about the intimacy between him and Patrick, which is different from when he is with his wife, Marion.

**Data 10:**

“Mrs. Burgess, I do not want to embarrass you, but I must put it to you that Patrick Hazlewood was having an indecent relationship with your husband.” (Roberts, 2012, p. 263)

Tom, who had a passion for the opposite sex in England around 1958, was uncommon in the surrounding community. It is considered something that should not happen because one should not have a sexual attraction like that. It is usual for Tom only to have an interest in women, but what makes it different is that Tom also has sexual attraction to the same sex (men). Those perpetrators of sexual deviance will be considered to have abnormalities and must go through a healing stage within themselves. When the perpetrators receive legal sanctions, they will be given services that will help them recover because this is highly regarded as an act that deviates from existing rules or norms. The quote above shows that when the court exposed the relationship between Tom and Patrick to Tom's wife, Marion, it can be seen that. Tom's strong sexual desire, supported by Patrick's sexual desire, who had a homosexual background long before he met Tom, made them continue their illicit relationship. Tom did not wholly forget who he was and what he did; he did not even forget Marion. However, he put aside all that is symbolic of fulfilling and satisfying the great Desire within him. Tom's strong sexual desire, supported by Patrick's sexual desire, who had a homosexual background long before he met Tom, made them

continue their illicit relationship. Tom did not wholly forget who he was and what he did; he did not even forget Marion. However, he put aside all that is symbolic of fulfilling and satisfying the great Desire within him. Tom's strong sexual desire, supported by Patrick's sexual desire, who had a homosexual background long before he met Tom, made them continue their illicit relationship. Tom did not wholly forget who he was and what he did. He did not even forget Marion, either. However, he put aside all that is symbolic of fulfilling and satisfying the great Desire within him.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the data, Tom's subjectivity as the main character begins by following a symbolic order in his social and work environments. Tom, who has different sexual interests, becomes entangled in the symbolism because the prohibition of same-sex relations in England at that time made Tom unable to fight the symbolism. Moreover, he is a police officer who is a state apparatus; it becomes emphasized again that he must comply with the country's regulations. However, after he meets Patrick, Tom can no longer stay in the symbolic trap. Tom is still, at first, a cynical subject in the existing symbolic order.

However, Tom's desire was too great for Patrick, leading him to fight the symbolic one; he finally had a relationship with Patrick as a couple, even having same-sex sexual relations, which were considered very indecent. However, both of them maintain the relationship to avoid appearing in public. Because the symbolic dimension in the UK prohibits this and will provide sanctions for perpetrators of homosexual acts, sanctions for perpetrators will get prison sentences and social sanctions from society. The radical action taken by Tom is a form of fulfilling their desire for him to achieve freedom. The freedom that allows him to fulfill his great desire, the desire to stay with Patrick because of the different sexual urges that arise in Tom.

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