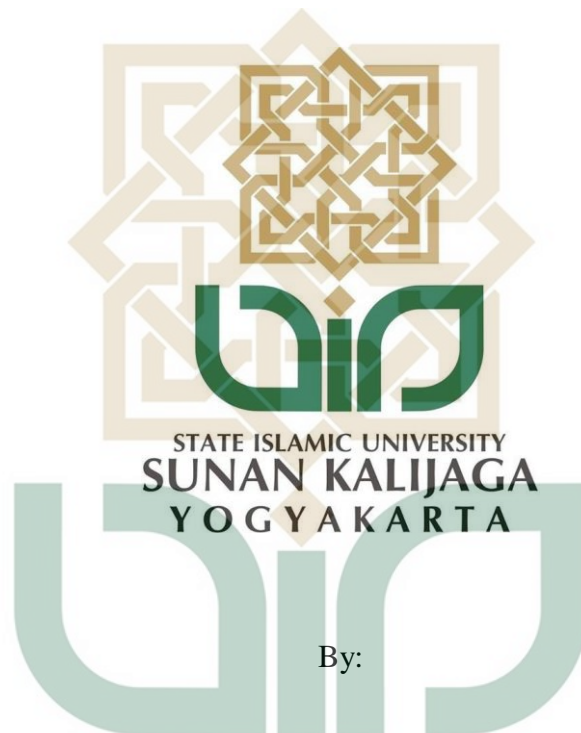


**QUEER PERSPECTIVE IN SALEEM HADDAD'S *GUAPA***

A Graduating Paper

Submitting in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining the

Bachelor Degree in English Literature



By:

Almira Luna Humaira

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
16150020  
SUNAN KALIJAGA  
YOGYAKARTA

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

**FACULTY OF ADAB AND CULTURAL SCIENCES**

**SUNAN KALIJAGA STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY**

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## A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduating paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other researcher's opinion or findings included in the graduating paper are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020

The Researcher,



Almira Luna Humaira

Student No.: 16150020

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
SUNAN KALIJAGA  
YOGYAKARTA

## APPROVAL



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA  
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA  
Jl. Marsda Adisucipto Telp. (0274) 513949 Fax. (0274) 552883 Yogyakarta 55281

### PENGESAHAN TUGAS AKHIR

Nomor : B-292/Un.02/DA/PP.00.9/02/2021

Tugas Akhir dengan judul : HOMOSEXUALITY IN MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRY AS SEEN IN SALEEM HADDADIS GUAPA

yang dipersiapkan dan disusun oleh:

Nama : ALMIRA LUNA HUMAIRA  
Nomor Induk Mahasiswa : 16150020  
Telah diujikan pada : Jumat, 02 Oktober 2020  
Nilai ujian Tugas Akhir : A

dinyatakan telah diterima oleh Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

#### TIM UJIAN TUGAS AKHIR



Ketua Sidang  
Ulyati Retno Sari, S.S. M.Hum.  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 60064f903e439



Penguji I  
Dr. Daniah Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 5fe421abbb9b



Penguji II  
Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, SS., MA  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 5ff4398b23fa9



Yogyakarta, 02 Oktober 2020  
UIN Sunan Kalijaga  
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya  
Dr. Muhammad Wildan, M.A.  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 60064f1489426



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA  
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA  
Jl. Laksda Adisucipto Yogyakarta 55281 Telp./Fax. (0274) 513949  
Web: <http://adab.uin-suka.ac.id> Email: [adab@uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:adab@uin-suka.ac.id)

## NOTA DINAS

Hal: Skripsi  
a.n. Almira Luna Humaira

Yth.  
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya  
UIN Sunan Kalijaga  
di Yogyakarta

*Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.*

Setelah memeriksa, meneliti, dan memberikan arahan untuk perbaikan atas skripsi saudara:

Nama : Almira Luna Humaira  
NIM : 16150020  
Prodi : Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Adab dan Ilmu Budaya  
Judul :

### **Queer Perspective as seen in Saleem Haddad's *Guapa***

saya menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqosah untuk memenuhi salah satu syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

Atas perhatian yang disampaikan, saya ucapkan terima kasih.  
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Yogyakarta, 6 Januari 2020  
Pembimbing

Ulyati Retno Sari, S.S., M.Hum.  
NIP. 19771115 200501 2 002

## QUEER PERSPECTIVE IN SALEEM HADDAD'S *GUAPA*

By: Almira Luna Humaira (16150020)

### ABSTRACT

In Saleem Haddad's *Guapa* the issue of homosexuality is portrayed in the story. Rasa as the main character who is a gay Muslim man struggles to negotiate the fact that he is a gay man living in a Middle Eastern country with Islamic background. He tries to live his life as a gay man and deals with the fact that it is unacceptable in the community. Thus, the researcher intends to analyze the portrayal of homosexuality in the novel and how it is portrayed in such a way using queer theory by Foucault to understand how homosexuality is portrayed and constructed. To analyze the data, the researcher uses the descriptive qualitative method in this research. The method emphasizes the description and explanation of the data. The researcher also conducts library research in this study. Based on the analysis, it is found that homosexuality is a constructed identity. Homosexuality relates to the placed discourse in the society, thus deconstruction of the discourse is needed to erase the prejudice in the community.

**Keywords:** *Guapa, Middle Eastern, Homosexuality, Queer Theory.*



**PERSPEKTIF QUEER DALAM NOVEL GUAPA  
OLEH SALEEM HADDAD**

Oleh: Almira Luna Humaira (16150020)

**ABSTRAK**

,Dalam novel Guapa oleh Saleem Haddad, masalah homoseksualitas digambarkan dalam cerita. Rasa sebagai tokoh utama yang merupakan seorang pria Muslim berjuang untuk menegosiasikan fakta bahwa dirinya adalah seorang gay yang tinggal di sebuah negara Timur Tengah dengan latar belakang Islam. Dia mencoba menjalani hidupnya sebagai seorang pria gay dan merupakan fakta bahwa itu tidak dapat diterima di komunitasnya. Oleh karena itu, peneliti menganalisis penggambaran homoseksualitas dalam novel dan bagaimana hal itu digambarkan dengan teori Queer oleh Foucault untuk memahami bagaimana homoseksualitas digambarkan dan dikonstruksi. Untuk menganalisis data, dalam penelitian ini peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Metode tersebut menekankan pada deskripsi dan penjelasan data. Peneliti juga melakukan studi pustaka dalam penelitian ini. Berdasarkan analisis, ditemukan bahwa homoseksualitas merupakan identitas yang terkonstruksi. Homoseksualitas terkait dengan wacana yang ditempatkan di masyarakat, sehingga diperlukan dekonstruksi wacana untuk menghapus prasangka di masyarakat.

**Kata kunci:** *Guapa, Timur Tengah, Homoseksualitas, Teori Queer.*

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YOGYAKARTA



## MOTTO

“Love is a universal solution to all human problems. It heals wounds, mends broken hearts, unites enemies and encourages growth. Love is all we need everyday and everywhere.”

– *Shariq Nabi Mir, Indian Writer*

“My dream isn’t to become the best. It’s to become who I’m not ashamed to be.”

– *Key, Member of Shinee, Korean Boy Group*

“Live your life. It’s your anyway. Don’t try too hard. It’s okay to lose.”

– *Bangtan Sonyeondan (BTS), Korean Boy Group*

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YOGYAKARTA

## DEDICATION

This graduating paper I dedicate to:

Me, myself, and I

The honorable my parents

My beloved family and friends

English Department of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University



STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
SUNAN KALIJAGA  
YOGYAKARTA



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To close this page, the researcher realizes that this paper is far from the word 'perfect'. It is because the researcher as a human being is full of imperfections and needs a lot of improvement. Thus, the researcher humbly asks all the readers for any suggestions, and critics to improve further study.

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.*

Yogyakarta, October 4<sup>th</sup> 2020

Almira Luna Humaira

(16150020)

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

Sexual orientation is an inherent or immutable enduring pattern of romantic, emotional or sexual attraction to men, women, or both sexes (Human Rights Campaign, 2014). While sexual orientation can be understood as an attraction of all sexes regardless of the pairing, there are still issues regarding same-sex sexual orientation. One of them is the issue of homosexuality. This issue is depicted in Saleem Haddad's *Guapa*.

*Guapa* novel by Saleem Haddad tells the story of Rasa, a 27 years old gay Muslim man who grew up in the unnamed Middle East country. Rasa spends his days working as a journalist at a western company. He has a boyfriend named Taymour. He lives in an apartment with his grandmother called Teta. One night, Teta catches Rasa and his boyfriend in bed together doing an inappropriate activity. Teta infused Rasa with a sense of *hib*, of shame, and he spent much of his life with that idea of his mind. The story then continues in the stream of flashbacks to shows Rasa's identity as a gay Muslim man.

As a gay Muslim man with an ethnical background of unnamed Middle Eastern country where being gay is condemned, Rasa brings out the representation of gay people in the country. It is well known that the issue of homosexuality has long remained a problem in society. Whereas in some areas homosexuality is

acceptable, in the Middle Eastern region which acts as the background of the story homosexuality is deemed as an unacceptable and sinful act where those who practice it will eventually go to hell. Asa, who is aware that he is gay, realizes the danger and prejudice he will face because he is gay. In the novel, it is shown how Rasa tries to negotiate that he is a gay Muslim man in Middle Eastern country and how he tries to change the discourse of homosexuality which circulates in the community.

Among the issues stated in literary works, the researcher wants to bring up the issue of how homosexuality is presented in the novel. As the author, Haddad's view towards homosexual issue is portrayed in his works. Haddad stated on his website ([www.saleemhaddad.com](http://www.saleemhaddad.com)) that the inspiration for writing *Guapa* comes from his experiences in his life, not as a gay man but as someone with Muslim identity faces the rapid changes that happen in life. Haddad also wants to show how human rights and a chance of proving themselves apply to anyone, even gay people in Middle Eastern countries as the marginalized. He wants to tell his reader to be brave and do not be afraid of showing themselves.

Haddad's position among the issue is placed clearly in his writing. This is why the researcher wants to analyze the portrayal of homosexuality in Haddad's *Guapa* using queer perspective. As stated by Foucault, queer perspective is the reconstruction of how sexuality is not the norm of nature, it is constructed through history, society, and culture. It transcends time. The past, social, and cultural of someone influence of forming one's sexual orientation as homosexual, while the



biological side of someone is not an impulse or influence on the homosexual side (Spargo, 1999:12).

In *Guapa*, the gay main character's construction can be seen from the dialogue and actions he takes. His action and dialogue which the author portrays show the position of homosexuality as presented in the novel. As the portrayal of gay Muslim man in Middle Eastern countries with strong religious belief, the author has the freedom to portray homosexuality in his writing. Queer perspective is practiced to prove how homosexuality is practiced in literary works with the setting of gay people as the minority in society. Thus, based on the problem statements above, the researcher will use queer theory by Foucault to analyze this research. The researcher intends to study the portrayal of homosexuality as depicted in Haddad's *Guapa* using queer theory.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The main problem in this research is the contradiction between homosexuality, Middle Eastern, and Islam. Based on the issue and the background of the study explained in this research, the researcher discusses the following questions:

1. How is the portrayal of homosexuality presented in *Guapa* novel?
2. Why it is portrayed in such a way?

### **1.3 Objectives of Study**

Based on the phenomena found in *Guapa*, the background, and the problem statements, the purpose of this research are:

1. To find out how is the portrayal of homosexuality is presented in the novel.
2. To reveal how homosexual portrayals can be explained clearly.

### **1.4 Significance of Study**

First, the researcher hopes that this research can contribute to literary research explaining about the portrayal of homosexuality in literary works using queer theory by Foucault. Second, this research aims to shows people how homosexuality is being presented in a country that strongly opposes the act of homosexuality. Third, it is hoped that this research also demonstrates how the portrayal of homosexuality is explained by queer theory.

### **1.5 Literature Review**

The researcher takes some paper which are related to the topic and the theory. The first research is a thesis untitled “Homosexuality as Seen in Grand Theft Auto IV” written by Yuniarti (2014), submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for gaining the bachelor degree in English Department, State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga. This paper identifies how homosexuality is presented through Tony Prince's character and how Tony sees himself as a homosexual. The researcher uses the qualitative research method with library research and queer

theory by Foucault. The outcome of the analysis is that the character is an openly gay person in *Grand Theft Auto IV*. People's negative words around him do not influence the character.

The second research is a thesis entitled “Debunking The Social Construction of Sexual Identity in Jodi Picoult’s *Sing You Home*” written by Tehty Cahyati Pesoa (2015). The researcher uses queer theory and library research to collect primary and secondary data from related books and websites. This research aims to determine the characteristics of character and the social setting, the charge against the homosexual, and finally the overturn of the social construction of sexual identity. The results of the study indicate three points. First, different sexual identities are demonstrated by characters' features and not a set one, but more fluid. The social circumstance represents the religious community's philosophy, which adheres to the conventional heterosexual norm. Second, the major implications of the social construction of sexual identities are the bigotry and biases addressed to homosexuals. Third, by demonstrating the positive qualities of lesbian characters, the accusation toward homosexuals is rejected.

The researcher also found a thesis entitled “Lesbianism as Portrayed in Jewelle Gomez’s Short Story ‘Don’t Explain’” written by Sekar Yolanda Azza (2016), a student of English Department, Faculty of Adab and Cultural Science, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University. This thesis discusses the portrayals of lesbian characters and why the portrayals are in such a way. The researcher uses queer theory and post-structuralism as a paradigm. The method of analyzing the short story is descriptive qualitative method with library research. As a result of

the report, the researcher discovered that Letty, Delia, and Terry can be seen as representing lesbianism. They hide their feelings of love and their friendship with love. Since their process of falling in love and forgetting their broken heart is the same as other human beings, the researcher could not find the portrayal regarding sexual activities between lesbians.

The fourth study is a journal untitled “Gene Forrester’s Sexual Identity Development in John Knowles’s ‘A Separate Peace’” written by Fajar Febriyanti (2018). The researcher wants to know factors that can help Gene Forrester to develop his sexual identity. In this paper, the researchers applied queer theory. This research's main data is taken from John Knowles' novel in the form of conversations, questions, direct and indirect speech that reflect the problems of the research. This research reveals the creation mechanism of Gene Forrester's sexual identity begins from his fear of himself. He can not be confident in the public because he is gay until he becomes confident and acknowledges his sexual identity.

This research and those researches above have the same similarity in topic and theory. However, the thing that distinguishes this research from others is the object. In this research, the object has an Islamic background and setting. Moreover, queer theory that used in this research focuses on how queer is constructed in *Guapa* novel. To conclude, this research will be discussed in the context of homosexuality in *Guapa* novel using queer theory.

## 1.6 Theoretical Approach

The 'Queer' vocabulary can be understood as something bad, distorted, and not true. The term queer then renews itself as the term which underlies support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT), moreover it supports the deconstruction of sexuality. Queer theory is a view which understands that there is no natural sexual orientation, thus no sexual orientation is distorted. Queer theory is a discourse placement theory of sexuality.

Since 1990, Queer theory has been a compilation of statements about the field of critical LGBT science. Queer theory is in one package with gender, sexuality, and sex studies. The study of gender, sexuality and sex is a package with Queer theory. Spargo in Foucault and Queer theory claims that queer theory is not a philosophical or methodological construct that is special or systemic, but a set of intellectual interaction with the relationships between sex, gender, and sexual desire. (1999:9).

“A vital feature of Foucault’s argument is that sexuality is not a natural feature or the fact of human’s life but a constructed category of experience which has historical, social and cultural, rather than biological origins” (Spargo, 2000:12). The past, social, and culture form the discourse which follows sexuality, while the biological is not.

Foucault's queer theory examines the multiple formations of different sexual identities, past and present (2000: 43). The queer theory further reveals that homosexuality is a cultural product and that sexuality is a cultural product that can

not be considered a clear extension of the biological process (2000: 44-45). This statement means that homosexuality cannot be simply understood as a kind of sexual deviation in a biological process where it is clear that the discourse which follows homosexuality is a cultural product.

Some of the gays are created by society or “cultural product”. Foucault states that “this sense is as a social construct”. Besides, sexuality and gender are often viewed as social by queer theory; constructions that form the way sexual orientation and gender identity are displayed in public..

Moreover, the writer chooses queer theory to analyze the problems of research because the researcher believes that this theory can answer research questions about how homosexuality is portrayed in *Guapa* novel and why it is portrayed in such a way. This theory is then linked with the data that is analyzed in chapter three.

## **1.7 Methods of Research**

This part explains the type of research, data source, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

### **1.7.1 Type of Research**

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research method that is describing homosexuality in Middle Eastern Country As Seen in *Guapa* Novel. Qualitative research seeks to explain the processes that research subjects experience, such as actions, cognition, motivation, response, etc. Holistic, and



through descriptions in the form of words and language, natural in a particular context and using various natural methods. (Moleong, 2007: 6).

Relating to that, the researcher of this study aims to present the portrayal of homosexuality in the *Guapa* novel and the intersection between Homosexuality, Islam and Middle Eastern country, also making interpretations of the data collected from the novel using the Queer theory by Foucault.

### **1.7.2 Data Sources**

The data sources were split into two parts, primary data and supporting data. The primary data in this research is a novel entitled *Guapa* by Saleem Haddad. The novel deals with the story of homosexuality of gay muslim men. All the words, phrases, paragraphs, and discourse related to homosexuality are the research data. This analysis's supporting data is taken from -related representative books, magazines, posts, and the internet.

### **1.7.3 Data Collection Technique**

In this research, there are several steps to collect the data in the *Guapa* novel. Data preparation is the first step. To gather the results, the researcher has to read and understand the book. The researcher classifies the main data into several variables based on queer theory by Foucault. The next step is analyzing the story by interpreting how the portrayal of homosexuality in the novel. The last step is to conclude the analysis.

#### **1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique**

The first step of analyzing the data is finding the data related to the portrayal of homosexuality. The second step is sorting data collected from the novel into several variables based on queer theory by Foucault which are homosexuality as hidden identity, homosexuality as an act of individual freedom, homosexuality as natural sexual drive, and homosexuality within religious dominated society. The last step is concluding the analysis to sum up and answer the research question.

#### **1.8 Paper Organization**

This research is divided into four chapters. The first chapter consists of background of study, research questions, objective of study, significance of study, literature review, theoretical approach, methods of research, and paper organization. The second chapter explains about the intrinsic elements in *Guapa* novel. The third chapter discusses about the portrayal of homosexual characters in *Guapa* and also the intersection between homosexuality, Islam, and Middle Eastern country. The last one is conclusion and suggestion of the research.

## CHAPTER IV CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

### A. Conclusions

Based on the analysis of how homosexuality is portrayed in *Guapa* and how it is portrayed by Saleem Haddad using queer theory by Foucault, it can be concluded that homosexuality is a discourse which is placed and shaped in the community where power or dominant forces shaped and control the discourse. Interlinked with queer theory by Foucault it is said that sexuality is a constructed category with the following discourse.

In the novel, there are variables which portray the homosexual issue in line with the analysis of queer theory for sexual representation by Foucault which are homosexuality as a hidden identity, homosexuality as an act of individual freedom, homosexuality as a natural sexual drive, and homosexuality within religious dominated society. These variables although differ in the analysis they are constructed with one problem which is constructed discourse.

In homosexual as hidden identity portrays how homosexual with the following discourse makes someone has to hide their identity as one. Homosexuality as an act of individual freedom portrays how one is trying to deconstruct the discourse of homosexuality that has been going on for so long. Homosexuality as natural sexual drive portrays how sexual desire is uncontrolled while the discourse that follows is controlled. Homosexuality within religious

dominated society portrays how dominant power can control how discourse is placed and regulates.

To sum up the portrayal of homosexuality and how it is portrayed is how sexuality and the discourse that follows is a product by society. It is a product that transcends time, culture, and history. Sexuality is not something discovered, it is something that must be regulated. One cannot perceive sexuality and believe all the prejudice that follows. The portrayal of homosexuality in the novel also shows how the marginalized try to deconstruct the prejudice and view unwillingly placed upon them. The act of deconstructing the discourse that has been long believed proves how sexuality is just a product of culture and history. In Foucault words sexuality is a constructed category rather than discovered category (Spargo, 2000:17).

## **B. Suggestions**

*Guapa* tells about the struggle of finding liberation as an individual and homosexual in a homophobic environment. This is the reason why the researcher applies queer theory to shows how sexuality is constructed. There are quite a lot of issues in the novel that the researcher suggests to be analyzed by other researchers such as the discourse behind the cultural setting of the novel. The researcher also recommends the next researcher to analyze this novel with critical discourse analysis about power relation.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Name : Almira Luna Humaira  
Birth place & date : Yogyakarta, 4 August 1997  
Address : Japlaksari, Purwomartani, Kalasan, Sleman,  
Special Region of Yogyakarta  
Gender : Female  
Email : almira.lunaaa@gmail.com  
Contact : 081578695061  
Blogger : kittoeiai.blogspot.com



### Educational Background

No	Education	Year
1.	Purwomartani Elementary School, Kalasan, Sleman Yogyakarta	2010
2.	3 Kalasan State Junior High School, Kalasan, Sleman Yogyakarta	2013
3.	5 Yogyakarta State High School, Kotagede, Yogyakarta	2016
4.	Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta	2021

### Organization and Experiences

No	Organization and Experiences	Year
1.	Member of Student Association of English	2016
2.	Member of Disability Service Center	2017
3.	Owner of Aichan.ID	2017
4.	Teacher of Paud Griya Nanda	2018
5.	Secretary of Pandora Theater Chapter 2016	2018
6.	Member of ECC English Department	2019
7.	Owner of Tania Makeup	2020