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Interracial Discord in James Baldwin's *Another Country*

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Abstract

The present research tries to explore interracial discord in James Baldwin's *Another Country*. Baldwin presents the racial discord as the major problem of black people in Harlem City. The major black characters undergo through various painful experiences in their daily lives and get humiliated despite their ceaseless efforts to build relationships based on love and mutuality rather than hatred and mockery. Due to the racial hegemony and its consequences, they cannot escape from the iniquities of the racist society. The blacks represented by Rufus Scott, Ida and Yves are often frustrated and discorded even if they try to co-exist with the whites like Vivaldo, Leona, Richard and Eric. The blacks are repeatedly made aware of their skin and the social status despite their sincere efforts to establish a mutual bond, a brotherhood and a relation based on sympathy and empathy. As a result of the white's racist and segregational attitudes they suffer both physically and mentally. Unable to digest the racial hatred and bear the nervous breakdown Rufus commits suicide, his sister Ida suffers from anxiety, Cass and Yves suffer from loneliness. Rufus' suicide is a racial murder, caused by racial hatred, rather than a voluntary choice.

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I. Interracial Ethos in James Baldwin's Prose Fiction

James Baldwin, a great visionary Afro-American novelist, essayist and short story writer, has contributed a great deal for the growth of American literature. He has been able to give a public issue all its deeper moral, historical and personal significance. He appears as the writer most plagued with a vision, his vision being the great urgency and revolutionary implications of the race issue. It is a vision, despite the seeming narrowness, is connected with every aspect of American life and belief. An experience can be told and forgotten. But a vision, such as Baldwin's, mercilessly grows and deepens which has affected, in some way, almost everything he has written. Kay Boyle, a friend and fellow writer of James Baldwin says, "In fact James Baldwin long ago made his own introduction when he said that at the root of the American negro problem is the necessity of the American white man to find a way of living with the negro in order to be able to live with himself "(155).

James Baldwin was born in Harlem, New York City, Aug. 2, 1924 and died on Nov. 30, 1987. He offered a vital literary voice during the era of Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and '60s. At the age of 14, Baldwin became a preacher at the small Fireside Pentecostal Church in Harlem. After he graduated from high school, he moved to Greenwich Village. In the early 1940s, he transferred his faith from religion to literature. He met Richard Wright, who encouraged him to be a writer and helped him win a Eugene Saxton Fellowship. Soon afterward Baldwin moved to France to escape the stilling racial oppression he found in the United States. Although France was his more or less permanent residence until his death from cancer, Baldwin regarded himself as a 'commuter' rather than an 'expatriate'.

Baldwin was not merely writing and speaking about what it meant to be a negro, but more about what it means to be a man. His insights into the issues of black identity are

inextricable part of his larger vision of an American society where black and white individuals will share the responsibility of seeking to accept and understand a past that continues to vitiate the present instead of letting it more closely to its cherished goals. He says, "Whatever white people do not know about Negroes reveals precisely and inexorably, what they do not know about themselves"(*The Fire* 43). Baldwin himself has stated that the artist's struggle for integrity must be considered as a kind of metaphor for the struggle which is universal and daily in the lives of all human beings on the face of the globe to become and remain human beings, "The largeness of purpose and gentleness of intention which Baldwin voices have brought a new climate, a new element, a new season, to our country in our time" (Boyle 156). The season, the Climate, the clement which are James Baldwin, they are now in the foreground of American's awareness.

Baldwin began his career by publishing novels and short stories. Initially, he did not get any success and started reviewing books about the negro problems. By the time he was twenty-four he had decided to stop reviewing books and went to France. For him, the world was nothing less than a conspiracy against the cultivation of the talent. He admitted that "the most difficult thing in my life has been the fact that I was born a negro and was forced, therefore, to effect some kind of truce" (*Notes* 5).

In the famous essay collection *Notes of a Native Son* (1955) his personal reflections on black-white relationship in America and abroad are primarily dealt with. He especially focuses on the special dilemma of the northern black intellectual, inheritor of no culture: western or African. He has focused on the Negro experience more effectively than any black writer since W. E. B Du Bois.

He wrote his first novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953), which is a partially autobiographical account of his youth. It concerns with the formation of a boy's character, a sensitive negro boy who has to find his way toward some liberating sense of his own

human possibilities in the repressive atmosphere of a primitive religion of Jesus and Satan which is fervently celebrated in his Harlem Storefront Church and fiercely administered in his family.

Baldwin's all works emphasize the race, sex, religion through the sense of individualism and the continuous existence. His novels reflect a great tension with the feeling of fear and insecurity and their struggles against it.

In his second novel *Giovanni's Room* (1956) Baldwin seems deliberately to have put aside the problem of race and turned to his other principal theme, homosexuality. The story is narrated in flashback by David, a white American student who has an affair in Paris with a young Italian bartender. David has deserted Giovanni in favour of his American fiancée and respectability, and Giovanni, in desperation, has murdered his former patron. Now, on the eve of Giovanni's execution, David spends the night in ruthless self-examination. It is, as reviewers have remarked, a frank and a brave book, skillfully narrated and subtle in its perceptions, though it does not escape melodrama or self-pity.

In his third novel *Another Country* (1962), Baldwin gives a greater attention to the city itself as both the arena and the cause of personal problems. The New York setting of this novel depicts the hatred, corruption and moral disarray and dooms of the characters who inhabit its inhuman confines. The most obvious victim is Rufus Scott, disconsolate black Jazz musician who commits suicide at the end of the novel. Baldwin also tries to transcend the hostility of urban life in the novel. It tells the story of a Jazz musician who is deeply hurt by racism and then unable to trust anyone and so unable to give or accept love. It explores the interracial heterosexual love in which the major characters are bitterly hated by the people of their society.

Another country centers on the interracial and homosexual love, situating both the traumatic failures and utopian possibilities of those relationships as the basic condition of metropolitan modernity, Baldwin's view of both race and sexuality insights on the centrality of psychic life and on its wider social and political effects. This emphasis made him a controversial figure for some African American critics. But his original insight into the psychic effects of racism and imperialism remains one of Baldwin's strongest contributions to their theorization.

Baldwin combines intricate renderings of society and consciousness with pungent visceral imagery; at his best, Baldwin presents a character through his senses and in his society, be it Harlem in the '30s, or post-war demimonde Paris or Greenwich Village and the Upper West side of the '50s. His great strength as an essayist is the dialectic contained in his style, which serves at the same time as a supple means of expression of the movement of his thought, and as an effective rhetoric, drawing the reader into new territories. The formal qualities of the novels and essays he had written, their shapes and means of movement, the repertoire of language and its cadences, were derived from white culture. They represented the language of the oppressor. According to Baldwin, the language and forms used by the committed literary artist must spring from the experience and culture of the subjugated. In his own case, he would look to jazz and the blues.

Another Country is set in different places and scenarios. It unfolds not only in apartments, pads, hotel rooms, bars and restaurants but also on rooftops, balconies, the George Washington bridge, an airplane in New York; the black and white characters' efforts in the murderous and hostile city, New York. It explores both intraracial and interracial love relations of the major characters such as Ida, Vivaldo, Richard, Cass, Eric, and Yves who bitterly hate and discard each other and fall in a tragic situation. The daily reality of their lives is conditioned by constant reminders of hatred and violence- graffiti,

barrooms brawls, schoolboy, gang fights, racial enmity, casual sex, and prostitution.

Baldwin's relentless portrayal of the horrors of New York confers a savage irony on the final words of the novel.

The plot of the novel is much more complex involving the interrelated lives of eight major characters. Rufus Scott a black Jazz musician falls on evil days and commits suicide but his memory persists in the minds of his friends. Most of them consider themselves to be in some degree responsible for his death. Much to Rufus immediate despair derives from his tormented affair with Leona, a good hearted poor white refugee from the south whom he drives to a nervous breakdown. Rufus best friend Vivaldo Moore, an Irish Wop from Brooklyn, who lives in Greenwich village and struggles to write a novel, falls in love with Rufus' sister Ida, a beautiful but embittered girl mourning her brother but determined to survive in the urban jungle by any means necessary. Richard and Cass Silenski, the only married couple in the circle of Rufus friends, is another oddly matched pair. In contrast with Vivaldo's struggles to create a meaningful work of fiction, Richard, his former teacher, publishes a commercially successful but artistically worthless murder mystery. This literary prostitution costs him the respect of his wife, Cass. She, then, develops an affair with Eric Jones, an Alabama-born bisexual actor who has left his younger lover, Yves in France in order to resume his career in the United States.

These characters and relationships, all of them treated at some length, are necessary for the scope and diversity Baldwin is seeking. They present a formidable challenge to his literary power as he moves from one to another. Although *Another Country* does sprawl somewhat with the two earlier novels, the *another country* shows considerable dexterity in rendering the individual stories so that they illuminate each other and develop a central theme. *Another Country* involves the superiority of one group, ethnicity or its cultural practices over the other because the entitled inferior group lacks the set of criteria as

prescribed by the privileged group. American history is, in fact, the history of slavery and race relations. Blacks in the United States have been affected by racial oppression throughout history, and it still influences their daily lives.

The novel *Another Country* (1962) has received the views of so many critics that it has become quite impossible to incorporate all of them. Since its first publication, many critics have analyzed it from various thematic perspectives. Baldwin wrote the novel under the themes of race, sex and religion. Thus many critics have regarded it as the racial, sexual and cultural point of view, which trace the problems of the blacks and whites. In the novel, the major characters reveal their distorted situation affecting the love affairs in the racial society. In this regard, the critic Robert F. Sayre focuses that "love and death are the real subjects of *Another Country*, [...] but in the profound ways that they are also the subjects of a poem like *The Waste Land* " (167). He compares the 'waste land' of the poem *The Waste Land* with the New York City. For him it was "city without oases, run entirely [...] for money; and its citizens seems to have lost entirely any sense of their right to renew themselves" (*Another Country* 316). The greatest sources of renewal Baldwin reminds us, are love and death, but the people in *Another Country* run away from them.

According to Karl Frederick, the novel depicts the liberating sense of the characters through the homosexual and heterosexual relationship. He says, "Baldwin sees homosexuality as liberation is a more serious miscalculation: it is a style of life, no different from any other in which love is sought, gained and rejected" (337). He opines that homosexual is a misconception to liberate the soul affected by the racist society.

Andrew Shin in "Beneath the Black Aesthetic" says that this text has attempted, "To evoke the bohemian world through a sequence of riffs and montages [...]. The late-night world of Jazz clubs, endless talk and sexuality-this is the milieu that Baldwin

depicts, but he debunks the popular representation of bohemian élan..." (104). Thus, for Shin, the celebration of Jazz and Blues, endless gossips, probative sexual ventures and drug culture, Baldwin depicted in *Another Country*, act as forms of oppositional cultural power-an integral elements of the Civil Rights Movement, as well as, the sources of forms of indigenous black expression.

Nathan A. Scott, Jr. has appreciated Baldwin for his role as a Barrister for the black multitudes at the bar of the American conscience, the novel *Another Country* "wants to summon us into the uncolonized world of 'another country', of *agape and philia*- but which is yet filled with the passions of hatred and contempt..." (300). He wants to say that the sense of hatred and contempt for other is a universal phenomenon which is very much pervasive in our society. And this novel has pertinently described it "than perhaps any other memorable American novel of our time" (300). Eldridge Cleaver, a prominent black critic, focuses for suggesting interracial homosexuality in *Another Country* as a "racial death-wish" typical of the black bourgeoisie (103), who have rejected their blackness, their African heritage; "The cross they have to bear is that already bending over and touching their toes for White men, the fruit of their miscegenation are not the little half-white offspring of their dreams..."(102). His discern is not only with homosexual desire, but also with submission to white man. For Cleaver, to be both homosexual and black is to express a hatred for blackness through the death wish. In this construction, to lie black is to be feminized and to be homosexual is to be castrated.

In *American Literature Since 1900*, Arnold Goldman comments that "*Another Country* is a novel whose theme is panoramic-nothing less than the soul of America expressed through an anatomy of love relationship [...]. The pairs of relationships run to both the interracial and the homosexual, in one case combined" (306). In this regard, 'love' is only means to bind the people together of different race, colour, creed and

culture. And it is, as Goldman notes, implicit in the novel through the intraracial love relationship among the major characters who are discarded by the people in their society.

Kelvin Ohio's "Sexuality, Race and Thwarted Revelation" focuses on the thwarted revelation of secrets whose content is nowhere specified. He says:

Another Country speaks repeatedly of "revelation" and of the revelation of secrets, but the Content of the secrets revealed is no where specified: the secret seems to occupy a purely structural place in the novel, one which gives the characters, like the novel Itself, their coherence, and marks their unutterable sadness. (26)

It shows that for Ohi, revelation appears only in the guise of its failure. That tile characters taken to be revealing themselves to themselves and to others can in fact reveal only tile fact of having an incommunicable secret attest to a traumatic opacity, as incommensurable; it is inconsolable and as incomprehensible as it is essential, at the center of their experience. Peter B. High comments that in *Another Country*, however, "Baldwin begins to describe the moral confusion and race hatred of American cities" (217). Thus, he highlights the relationships of love and hate between the characters who are involved in intraracial sexuality.

As above mentioned, James Baldwin's *Another Country*, it is regarded in various perspectives by different critics. Their views are insufficient and incomplete to explore the interracial discord which has not yet been studied as the major aspect of black and white Americans' to have their disharmonious life in the society, Harlem city. Thus, this research focuses on the racial disintegration among the blacks and whites to explore the theme of interracial discord in the novel.

Critics of *Another Country* have been eager to see in the novel as the promise of a transparent sexual utopia grounded in a healing unveiling of a serenely accepted identity.

Whether in terms of homophobic or racist, or anti-homophobic or anti-racist, critics have dwelt on transcendence, defined as a coming to terms with one's identity. This transcendence relies on the transparency of revelation in the text and the assertion of this transparency's liberatory potential, regardless of whether or not such liberation is a term of approbation. Such a reading allows 'race' and sexuality to disappear from critical view; more precisely, it allows critics to cast them as mere obstructions littering the path of a surpassing transcendence, usually cast in terms of art. Thus, to some critics, Baldwin (or, alternatively, his characters) comes to terms with his identity, and this self-acceptance and self-knowledge lead him (or his characters) to a fuller and more mature development as an artist; the achieved transcendence and clarity then shed the obstructing specificities of sexuality and 'race' in the blinding splendor of a universalized artistic insight. To others, Baldwin does not achieve such clarification because he is waylaid by the obstructions: his racial or sexual obsessions or politicized dogmatism smother his true artistic self. Thus, for many concerned with 'race', Baldwin's focus on sexuality, like 'race' in certain accounts, appears as an obstruction to be overcome, a blockage in the path to artistic transcendence, even if this transcendence includes a fuller understanding of 'race' and racial identity.

The approach in the thesis will be based on the assumption that the internalization of the racial issue in the culture both of white and blacks is the main problem in the novel, and leads finally to an atmosphere of hostility and suppression that creates the disharmonious relationships between blacks and whites where the blacks are destined to suffer.

II. Racism, Hegemony and Interracial Discord

Race refers to a human group that defines itself or is defined by others as culturally different by virtue of innate and immutable physical characteristics. Thus, under racism race is defined socially as well as on the basis of physical characteristics. Such physical characteristics have no inherent significance, but such value is socially attributed to them in a given society. If a group in a given society is defined in terms of its color, hair, appearance, body structure, size of skull and so on, then such an attitude is called 'racist'. And if a group is socially defined in terms of sharing a common language, a common set of religious beliefs, or some other cultural characteristics-without physical considerations-then it is called ethnic group. Since such criteria are relative rather than pure, same person or group may be differently defined in different societies. Thus a black North American may be a 'Negro' in his own country but becomes a 'Yankee' in Mexico. The first label is racial the other is ethnic or cultural.

In practice, the distinction between 'race' and 'ethnic group' is not always clear-cut, and many groups are socially defined in terms of both physical and cultural attributes. In such equivocal case, it is necessary to try to determine which criterion is paramount. In Nazi Germany, Jews were primarily regarded as a race, whereas in the Middle East they are more an ethnic group. In any case, the phenomena of prejudice and discrimination that are commonly linked with differences between human groups are not markedly different whether one deals with a race or with an ethnic group. The one essential distinction is that culturally based groups generally tend to be more open and flexible in composition than physically based ones. One can convert to another faith or learn another language; "Race has been a cause of more than misunderstanding and human suffering than anything else that can be associated with a single word in a language" (Brace 116). In fact 'race' is a

social construct derived mainly from perceptions conditioned by the events of recorded history and it has no basic biological reality.

Racism in America is the most complex and dynamic issue. Reflecting the factors of American race prejudice George W. Ellis says:

In the United States race prejudice is predicted upon the belief that the colored race is naturally inferior to the white race, physically, intellectually, religiously, socially and morally. As a matter of fact it is actually based upon the advantages, temporary and imaginary, which the white groups believe they derive from this superior attitude to the colored groups economically, politically and socially. A historical study of these beliefs discloses that two powerful factors have contributed above others to the abnormal American situation and that in their broadest sense they are ethnological and sociological. (11)

Thus in America the practice of racism that is predicted on the belief that one is superior to another is much deeper.

The contemporary form of racism is defined in terms of culture and identity which is shaped by the discourses like nationalism or patriotism, Xenophobia, gender differences etc. The social and political upheaval of the '60s and '70s paved way to the postmodern liberal and multicultural society. The traditional mode of racism has been replaced by 'New-racism'. New racism sees the race not as biological issue or heredity but as cultural product. At the surface level it doesn't believe in the superiority of one race or a group of people over the other but only concerns harmfulness of abolishing frontiers. But its main ethos is to segregate the other than the people of one's own race. As Gilroy says, "The new racism is primarily concerned with mechanism of exclusion or inclusion"

(205). The placing or categorization of the people under certain group is all false notions because race is a socially constructed concept rather than inherently meaningful.

The study and practice of racism is not a new phenomenon. It was also prevalent in the classical Greek and ancient Hebrew societies. They distinguished themselves with 'others' on the basis of appearances, customs, traditions, language, attitudes, religion and so on. During the 5th century B.C. the Greek writer Hypocrites tried to establish the superiority of the people of his own race arguing that "barren soils of Greece had forced the Greeks to become tougher and more independent" (Appiah 275). Likewise, in the Hellenic world, the black 'Ethiopians' and blonde 'Scythians' were regarded inferior to the Greeks. But, in the writing the Sophists and Homer racial characteristics were defined on the basis of an individual quality of a person instead of colour.

The discovery of New World i.e. America by Christopher Columbus brought lots of changes in the perception of the people of the new land, "This accident of the history of the perception of human differences produced the race concept as it is now generally held" (Brace 116). Thus, the race took a new perception out of the artificial circumstances as created by colonization. During the Elizabethan period, Negro was defined as "black, ugly, cruel, sexual, rampant and barely human" (Salgado xiii). Likewise, during the Victorian era many racialists were of the opinion that human beings can be divided into several 'races' on the basis of biological, moral and intellectual characteristics. As Appiah states:

We could divide human beings into smaller number of groups, called 'races', in such a way that all the member of these races shared certain fundamental, biologically heritable, moral and intellectual characteristics with each other that they did not share with members of any other race. (276)

Such notion of race developed during post-enlightenment period and reached its high point during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when it "embodied a package of fixed physical and mental traits" (Bulmer and Solomos 8).

Racism is generally known as the predication of decisions and policies on considerations of race for the purpose of subordinating a racial group and maintaining control over it. According to Brace, "Race has been a cause of more misunderstanding and human suffering than anything else that can be associated with a single word in language" (116). It is in fact a prejudice conditioned by perceptions. In America racism could be seen operating in two levels- individual and institutional. When a black family moves to a white neighborhood and it is stoned, beaten, humiliated, then the Family becomes the victim of individual racism. But when hundreds of babies die each year because of lack of proper food, shelter and medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed and maimed physically, emotionally and intellectually because of conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, they are the victims of the institutional racism. Institutional racism keeps black people locked in dilapidated slum tenements, subject to the daily victims of exploitative slumlords, merchants and discriminatory real estate agents. Moreover, institutional racism relies on the active and pervasive operation of anti-black attitudes and practices. A National Council of Churches' work group has summarized this institutionalized racism:

Both consciously and unconsciously, racism is the legal, cultural, religious, educational, economic, political, environmental and military institutions of societies. Racism is more than just a personal attitude; it is the institutionalized form of that attitude. (qtd.in Feagin 3)

Racism is not a stable ideological form consisting of the same assumptions for a long period. It accepts the new scholarly ideas emerging in the society. Rather rejecting all the

epithets of singularity, it prefers different shapes and different political relations. In Gilroy's words "Racist ideologies and practices have distinct meanings bounded by historical circumstances and determined in struggle" (248). The racist ideology attacks itself to other forms of ideologies existing in the society and as a result, racism arises with its distinctive characteristics and shapes. The notions like negro race is inferior that lacks social organization and social action; social fellow feeling, originality of thought and artistic qualities and shows no tendency toward higher development; the negro race is powerful in physique, strong and normal in intellect and has not achieved a higher social and intellectual civilization, reflect the racist attitude.

The principles of Race Orthodoxy, says George W. Ellis, in Prof. Thomas Pearce Bailey's words, like "the white race must dominate; the negro is inferior and will remain so, this is a white man's country; no social equality; no political equality; let there be such industrial education of the negro as will best fit to serve the white man; let the man count for more than the highest negro" (*Racism* 16) are the essentials of racial creed and action.

Racist assumptions of white superiority have been so deeply engrained into the fiber of the society that they infuse the entire functioning of the national subconscious. Thus, racism is ubiquitous and informs every level of discourse in American society. Racism always is complex and dynamic and it presents the acid test to the culture of the white race in the American context.

In America, the practice of racism is predicted on the belief that one is superior to another and is functioning at a level much deeper. Though the society is itself plural, the binary projection of whiteness and blackness is much more intense. Afro-Americans are understood 'racially others' more strongly than the Native Americans and the Asian Americans though the latter, too, are culturally different than Anglo-Americans. Black community, like other communities, is defined by its sharing of common space, experiences,

views and the value systems, social institutions and self-consciousness. Its common space however, is a bounded area of living- a ghetto- which not only closes blacks within the community, but simultaneously shuts them out from the access to various opportunities available in the larger society.

The racist attitude of otherness is working at the heart of the whole process of development of Afro-American culture in the United States from the 17th century to the present. The history of black American experiences examines both the achievements and the sufferings of negroes, as they have endured slavery, racism, economic oppression, violence and the continual denial of equality and justice in the several centuries of their encounter with white society. Racist prejudice is expressed in the form of graffiti intimidation or abuse, discrimination of offering jobs, letting, flats and admission to clubs.

Racism in the USA exists in both the overt and covert forms. Overt racism is what most people are familiar with since it is easily detectable and takes the form of direct behavioral or verbal racially discriminatory acts. Covert racism is more subtle, yet occurs more than overt racism and is more easily hidden, denied, or discounted. If a white coloured American brutally kills a Negro, it is overt individual racism; and if an employer decides not to admit a Negro employee because s/he believes that the employees might drive away business, but tells the person that there are no more openings available is an example of covert individual racism. Similarly if a country club that has clearly written rules which exclude any non-white members, it is an example of overt institutional racism and if an academic curriculum that only emphasizes European-American history and does not accept the history of black ethnic/cultural groups, it is an example of covert institutional racism

A negro in the American society exists- a non-existence that he has a series of shadows. This is why his history, his progress and his relationship to all other Americans, has been kept in the social arena. He is a social and not a personal or a human problem; to think of him is to think of statistics, Slums, rapes, injustices, remote violence. It is to be confronted with an endless cataloguing of losses, gains, skirmishes. W.E.B. Du Bois prophetically observed, the problem of the 20th century Americans is the problem of the colour line- the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and in the islands of the sea. As he writes:

... the Negro of a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, -a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused attempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, -an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unrecoiled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being turn asunder. (5)

This problem of 'color line', as Du Bois writes is not only the main problem of twentieth century but the twenty first century America is also likely to face the same problem.

Afro-Americans hegemonized and stereotypically portrayed in the dominant discourse of the whites. Hegemony is "spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production" (Gramsci 12). The hegemonic exercise of power appears as the

dominance of certain class of people (who are dominant but few in number) over the targeted group (who are passive but large in number) without making the latter aware that the former mean to do any injustice. In this condition, power seems to be nowhere but looms everywhere.

Hegemony at the level of class determines the continuation and consolidation of the existing power maintenance and at the level of nation proves dominance of one nation over another. The exercise of hegemonic power seems to be either the preliminary ground to impose and exercise the power to the desired end, and if not, physical or direct use of force is always the ultimate end. At another level, it seems to be the result of the physical threat thus giving the finality to the existing power relation: with a situational device that the powerful is always strong and the powerless is always deficient. As defined in *Key concept on Post-Colonial Studies*:

Fundamentally, hegemony is the power of the ruling class to convince other classes that their intentions are the interests of all. Domination is thus exerted not by force, nor even necessarily by active persuasion, but by a more subtle and inclusive power over the economy and over state apparatuses such as education and the media, by which the ruling class's interest is presented as the common interest and thus comes to be taken for granted. (Ashcroft 116)

The combination of 'force and consent' played crucial role in determining the status of Afro-Americans. Whites' hegemonic power over blacks was exercised through a network of presuppositions that blacks deserve to be ruled. As science became a justifying tool to dominate the blacks to co-exist with the growing scientific use, hegemony set some principles that could co-work with the mental structure of blacks and whites.

Racism in America has been associated with mimicry: the blacks are forced to imitate the culture and the life style of the whites. Such a policy bitterly reminds us the colonial regime and its divide and rule ethics in the colonies. Such racist attitude of the whites not only shows the sense of superiority among the whites, but also divided the Afro-Americans into light-skinned and dark-skinned blacks so blacks will start competing and fighting among themselves, thus, giving license to the existing power relation and whites segregational politics. This is the kind of mimicry that James Baldwin is intending to depict in his novel *Another Country*. He writes: "They encountered the big world when they went out into the Sunday streets. It stared unsympathetically out at them from the eyes of the passing people; and Rufus realized that he had not thought at all about this world and its power to hate and destroy" (27). Blacks like Rufus in the novel, want to create their own world, instead of living with the white way Rufus condition represents the sense of dislocation and alienation the blacks are feeling in the racist society.

The whites' modality that a black man is the link between monkey and man is neither religiously applicable nor scientifically accurate. But they are forced to accept this scientifically proved theory that the black man is inherently inferior to the white, or that he comes from a different stock. The fact also looms over the 'objective position' of a black man. A white man addressing to a black behaves like an adult with a child and starts smirking, whispering, patronizing, cozening. This alienates the black man and always keeps him a dupe for he confronts the same behavior almost everywhere: by physician, policemen, employers or teachers.

Such unnatural and inhuman treatment of the Afro-Americans leads them to anxiety and suicide and at the same makes a black man feel being classified, imprisoned, primitivised, decivilised, and for that his natural behavior develops with an extreme apathy towards the whites.

The black man is supposed to be a good nigger and compelled to talk pidgin which is to fasten to the effigy of him, to snare him, to imprison him to an *appearance* for which he is not responsible. In the United States racism has always been given a political dimension so that it would be easy to rule over the oppressed groups. W.H. Tucker in his article "The Science and Politics of Racial Research" argues, "The truth is that though waged with scientific weapons, the goal in this has always been political, indeed the debate has no strictly scientific purpose or value" (380). Thus, making science as authority has propounded and perpetuates the existing racial prejudices; scientists modified the subject matter to suit their personal agenda. Therefore the study of racism in 20th century is the study of political racism because genetic differences between the blacks and whites are studied under the scientific criteria giving the political colour. Tucker says, "The question of genetic differences between races has arisen not out of purely scientific curiosity or the desire to find some important scientific truth or to solve some significant scientific problem but only because of the belief, explicit or unstated that the answer has political consequences" (382).

Scientists have tried to establish superiority of whites over the blacks declaring that blacks have smaller size and shape of skull than the whites. Likewise conducting several IQ tests they tried to justify the inferiority of black race on the basis of the objective data. The association of blacks with the apes for longer arm and smaller skull size and shape is nothing more than white's trick to justify the practices of slavery. It is the strategy to rule over the blacks by silencing their voice. They taught the world that true negro was less human because he possesses "an oval skull, flat forehead, snout-like jaws, swollen lips, broad, flat nose, crammed hair, calf less legs, highly elongated heels, and flat feet" (Ellis 13). Thus, exaggerating the deformities as set by the white standard,

they tried to give permanence and stability to the false doctrine of natural negro inferiority.

Whites have used the strategy "Use a Nigger to Catch a Nigger" (Ellison 549). In order to rule the mass black they choose a group of Negro from the community in order to mediate between themselves and the blacks. At the same time giving greater significance to the colour of skin they created sharp division and conflict between light-skinned blacks and dark-skinned blacks. But being blind to the implied reality, blacks started to compete within their group and, thus, following the same path of whites they perpetuated the chain of oppression. This very notion of mimicry can be seen in the characters of Baldwin's novels especially in *Go Tell it on the Mountain*. One of Baldwin's black characters Gabriel Grimes can be seen fully motivated and inspired by the racist mentality which gives priority to the lust for power in order to rule over the weaker members of the community.

The problem with the black individual is that he suffers from the inferiority complex, alienation and dislocation in the midst of dominant white cultural norms. Therefore in order to get rid of mental agony he tries to adopt the mainstream cultural norms and values but in this process he gets splited between two modes of cultural values: African heritage and the European tradition. He can't get proper adjustment in either side. His journey "backward toward his unknown roots" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 221) can't provide him solace because his original culture have been creolized due to white interference; nor his attempt to assimilate himself with white cultural norms is possible because on the one hand his inner conscience forbids him and on the other he is categorized as 'the other' by the whites. The ultimate end is that the black's position turns out to be that of a mimic man.

Blacks in a racist society are categorized, defined, and dehumanized but their desire for being 'white' is the product of their wish to attain social recognition and nothing more than that. Because of that he develops the wish for the white skin, "I marry white culture, white beauty, and white whiteness. When my restless hands caress that white breast they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine" (Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* 63). It is the helpless condition for the blacks where they can't 'cry' because their voice is silenced by the 'white's whiteness' they desperately long for.

James Baldwin, a contemporary black writer explores the idea of black consciousness through the contemporary racial view point. Baldwin, in the novel, talks about the political, cultural, religious, academic and other issues to show how the blacks are mistreated and often marginalized in the society even though the blacks always try to have a mutual bond of love and understanding with the whites. The whites mistreat the blacks and deteriorate blacks' condition of forcing them to the interracial discord and hostility. Baldwin expresses the white domination through the images like jails, chains, caged birds and sewer which are justified by the whites for the hundreds of years. He focuses on the contemporary idea of celebrating the beauty of blackness and to create the blacks own vision in the history of American literature. Baldwin, in the novel, presents a pathetic condition of the major characters Rufus Scott, his sister Ida, Cass and Yves who are inflicted by the whites like Vivaldo, Leona, Richard and Eric including white institutional forces in the American racist society. Rufus is forced to commit suicide, Ida develops neurosis, Cass is stranded and Yves feels loneliness and betrayed.

Discord in American society is the result of racism and "Race is the most explosive issue in American life precisely because it forces us to confront the tragic fact of poverty and paranoia, despair and distrust" (West 155-56). Thus, discord refers to the disharmonious relationship or conflict or harshness between or among the people from different class, race,

ethnicity, gender and so on. The world is thought to be fair and harmonious but the ideologies lead the people towards conflict, violence and discord. The problems of racial discord, thus, in America, in general, is not triggered by nothing else more than the clash of ideologies.

The dichotomy between of the blacks and the whites creates a discord, though both the races intend to establish harmonious relationship, because when a person "exhibits 'race' prejudice because it affords him a means of easing certain tensions within himself, because his tensions are reduced when he is most freely able to discharge those tensions" (West 999). Racism will not be eradicated till the people cease to believe in the natural inferiority of others. It is still possible to hate others in terms of race prejudice even if it is accepted that they are more or less equal as human beings.

III. Racism, Afro-Americans and Interracial Discord in *Another Country*

The major cause of having discord between and among the black people is the result of racism. Racism is the issue that creates discrimination in the name of skin, color, ethnic background and socioeconomic status. History has been witnessing the discrimination between two different human groups. Classical Greeks used to discriminate 'other' than themselves in the name of perfect human being as if 'low-born' didn't have rights to be rulers because they were born slaves. The Bible interpreted by the whites denoted the difference between the white skin and the black skin giving Jesus the white color, and renaissance spirit of discovery of the unknown-to-Europeans-terrains succeeding colonialism and made racism more vibrant for whites had to force the black to indulge in farming in South America and North America. From the 16th century to the 20th century, whites maintained their superiority sometimes in the name of white God, sometimes in the name of whiteness and blackness and sometimes in the name of science and guns.

In the novel, Baldwin has raised the issue of interracial discord through the expressions of the major characters from both black and whites. Baldwin writes: "A nigger, [...] lives his whole life, lives and dies according to a beat. Shit, he humps to that beat and the body he throws up in there, well, he jumps to it and comes out nine months later like a goddamn tambourine" (6). This expression gives the vision of the frustrated, disappointed and tortured mind and expatriated life of the blacks created by the whites in the racist society. Thus, characters like Rufus Scott, Leona, Vivaldo, Ida, Cass and Richard, Eric and Yves seem to have been exploited in the racist society during the course of their love affairs and their daily practices.

James Baldwin has explored the theme of interracial discord through his vision of implication of moral, historical and personal significance. For this reason, he has

presented the race issue as the counter racist aggressions. In the novel racial issue has been implemented internally and externally because racism in the 20th century postmodern view is the area of multiculturalism. Racism causes violent treatments created by the whites over the blacks could not satisfy their thirst for existence. James Baldwin has explored this sense of hatred and violation in the American racist society in this work of art *Another Country*. The novel concerns both white and black characters who are struggling for their existence in the repressive atmosphere of Harlem city.

The death wish of Rufus has been created by the racial matter. Rufus' death wish to commit suicide is caused by racial thinking. His failure to love Leona and to be loved is broken by the tropes of racial and sexual desire. The characters in *Another Country* couldn't escape from the feeling of superiority and inferiority and finally they have been victimized. The race prejudice has forced Rufus into a life of frustration and despair because "he has realized about this world and its power to hate and destroy" (27). Another character Richard has similar feeling of race and says: "I couldn't help feeling, any way that one of the reasons all of you made such kind of fuss-over him was partly just because he was coloured. Which is a hell of reason to love anybody" (107). The novel invites the centripetal preoccupation with Rufus, his life and importantly death by mapping all the sexual desire that is disturbed by his racial experiences.

Rufus' committing suicide shows the situation created by racial discrimination. It suggests that there is no black utopia, no place where he can escape the iniquities of racism. Rufus' feeling of exile shows the superior power of the whites and the hostile environment in which Blacks have to live. He has realized himself as a physical displacement and disparity in New York, "It was a city without oasis, run entirely; in so far, at least, as human perception could tell, for money and its citizens seemed to have lost any sense of their right to renew themselves. Whoever in New York, clung to this right, lived in New York in exile"(267). The

internal and external perception of exilic condition has made the blacks alienated and frustrated in their lives.

Rufus Scott a poor, uneducated, unhappy jazz musician has been oppressed and controlled by whites throughout his life. The society where he grew up was the racist society- the society of white and blacks apparently. But they were physically separated and Baldwin writes, "Rufus was aware of every inch of Rufus. He was flesh: flesh, bone, muscle, fluid, orifices, hair and skin. His body was controlled by laws he did not understand. Nor did he understand what force within this body had driven him into such a desolate place" (54). This shows Rufus' constant search for love and affection and American identity which is perpetually denied by the white racist society. Thus, it is clear that the oppressive white society made him live the miserable life, he lived. By not letting him to become some body, but social misfit, they led him to frustration and despair and of course, violence which is depicted in the text. On the subway Rufus considers "many white people and many black people, chained together in time and in space, and by history, and all of them in a hurry. In a hurry to get away from each other, he thought, but we ain't never going to make it. We been fucked for fear" (86). Rufus, on his self-exile from the hostile environment of New York city, realized that he wants to go somewhere "where a man could be treated like a man" (68). Thus Rufus' entire life is filled by a sense of failure inadequacy and frustration which is a result of racial prejudices of the whites.

The blacks were discriminated and exploited. The schools, hospitals, restaurants, churches etc. were separated. Thus the Afro-Americans' life was thwarted due to the racial consequences which was systemically institutionalized by the white society. Baldwin points the similar situation in the life of Rufus created by the police force. "The policemen passed him, giving a look. Rufus turned, pulling the collar of his leather jacket while the nibbled delightedly at him through his summer slacks and started north on Seventh Avenue" (1). "He

thought of white policemen and the money they made on flesh, the money whole world made" (7). He also is discriminated by "the taxi driver, who was white, seemed to have no hesitation in stopping for them, nor, once having stopped, did he seem to have any regrets" (11). Thus, he finds nowhere to keep him safe from discrimination. The black children in a similar way are tortured by the whites: "The kids got into a fight in the park" (260). Because of their colour and poverty, they are confined in the Black Belt of New York city. This situation forces them to the hostility, fear and despair. Thus Rufus' oppression, anger, frustration and violence are the only reality of life.

The love affair of Rufus with Leona, a white girl ends in a tragic situation due to the race problem. Rufus and Leona get together. Vivaldo comes over the night after Rufus and Leona have consummated their relationship with sex and Rufus immediately finds himself thinking about what Vivaldo is thinking about him sexually:

He stole a look at Vivaldo, who was sipping his beer and watching Leona with an impenetrable smile [...]. Perhaps Vivaldo was contemptuous of her because she was so plain- which meant that Vivaldo was contemptuous of *him*. Or perhaps he was flirting with her because she seemed so simple and available: the proof of her availability being her presence in Rufus' house. (26)

Rufus seems exchangeable with Leona and therefore a possible object of desire for Vivaldo. The parallel construction in the sentence, contemptuous of him "and contemptuous of her mark Rufus family inability to differentiate between Vivaldo's probable desire for Leona and or himself. Rufus is worrying about the boundaries of Vivaldo's desire for Leona is mediated by a racist assumption that she is available because she is with a black man is his indirect way of wondering if Vivaldo considers him a black man, a worthy sexual partner. But Vivaldo had a dominating character and Baldwin says:

No one dared to look at Vivaldo, out with any girl whatever, the way looked at Rufus now: nor would they ever look at the girl the way they looked at Leona. The lowest whore in Manhattan would be protected as long as she had Vivaldo on her arm. This was because Vivaldo was white. (30-31)

Rufus was afraid of Vivaldo which shares the race problem "Rufus looked into Vivaldo's face and became frightened" (34).

Due to the racial prejudice, Vivaldo breaks the love affair between Rufus and Leona. Vivaldo said, "You know, what you're doing to Leona- that's not right. Even if she were doing what you say she's doing- it's not right. If all you can do is beat her, well, then, you ought to leave her"(67). Thus, Vivaldo blames Rufus for his love affair with Leona (67). Rufus feels a great tension when Vivaldo blames him.

Rufus' feelings for Leona are not far from this love-hate dilemma are expressed in which his love for a white woman Leona drives him to the death through a reference to lynching. His intention off 'the race' and the 'hanging tree' are bold allusions to one of the injustices black man suffered under slavery. The love he expresses for Leona is negated by the history of American racism. The love-hate dichotomy characterizes Leona and Rufus relationship as well. In the conversation, Rufus expresses intense hatred for white people, "How I hate them all those white sons of bitches out there. They're trying to kill me, you think I don't know?" They got the world on a string, man, the miserable white cock suckers, and tying that string around my neck, they killing me"(67). The rope (or string), which characterizes whiteness is associated with death for Rufus. Baldwin uses him in metaphor of lynching to capture the intensity of Rufus' feelings about racism. Vivaldo tells Rufus that "not everybody's like that" (68) and that "Leona loves you" (68), to which Rufus says, "She loves the colored folks so *much*" [. . .] "sometimes I just can't stand it. You know all that chick knows about me? The only

thing she knows?" He put his hand on his sex, brutally, as though he would tear it out, and seemed pleased to see Vivaldo wince" (68). The link here between lynching and the violence enacted by Rufus to his Penis is a painful reminder of the history of racial and sexual oppression represented by lynching. Lynching is a racial crime, perpetuated on Afro-American bodies and frequently included mutilation and post-mortem violation of the body. Lynching is that the act itself speaks not to black threat, but to growing nationalist anxieties about whiteness and the perpetuation of it. In this way, Rufus forcefully reminds Vivaldo of precisely what it is that separates him from Leona and Vivaldo: racism, and specifically, the history of violence it embodies and the continued threat of it. His mention of 'string' is a bold allusion to one of the injustices Afro-Americans suffered under slavery and Jim Crow. The love he expresses for her is the result of his self-hatred. His love for her is negated by the history of, and his experience with, American racism.

Rufus is suppressed by the hostile environment of the racist society. The more he becomes victim of the hostile environment, the more he dives into the state of depression. The racial tension between Rufus and Vivaldo is more explicit right after Rufus and Leona. His relation with Leona has created a racial discord in his life a sense of double scapegoating that decisively exercises this relationship from the Utopian drama that will be played out in the novel's remaining pages. In this sense Rufus remembers:

He remembered, suddenly, his days in boot camp in the South and felt again the shoe of a white officer against his mouth. He was in his white uniform, on the ground, against the red, dusty clay. Some of his coloured buddies were holding him, were shouting in his ear, helping him to rise. The white officer, with a course, had

vanished, had gone forever beyond the reach of vengeance. His face was full of clay and tears and blood; he spat red blood into the red dust. (12-13)

Leona's sexual availability as a woman enable her to stand in for and ground Rufus's relationship with Vivaldo, the white man with whom Rufus is involved in an unspoken game of racial and sexual competition, while her unique position as a southern woman enables Rufus to turn her into a surrogate for the white men against whom he cannot effectively express his resentment.

Early in the novel, Vivaldo stares at Rufus "and feels terrible things stir inside him" (69), tempting us to read Vivaldo's secret as gay desire. In this scene, Rufus tortures him with aligned specificities of their relation in an almost violent aggressivity of unveiling: He details sexual acts with women and the unspoken particularities of the relations of 'race' circulating in his friendship with Vivaldo. The hatred, or 'murder', that then appears in the scene testifies to a history of 'race' as a block between them, to the competitiveness of their relations with women, and to their unspoken sexual attraction to each other. Although Vivaldo has sex with Eric and seems unable to separate it from his desire for Rufus, he discusses his buried homoerotic desires (notably in the cab with Cass and on the roof with Harold) and he confesses that panic about homosexual desire prevented him from holding Rufus when Rufus most needed it, the inner secret that makes Vivaldo look most like a gay character is not, finally, revealed as a gay secret.

Recalling the discussion on Rufus's bed about sex with women, Vivaldo later conceives of this secret as something beyond categories of 'race' or gender (even as its framing suggests that it is constituted through these categories), a locus of seeing that cannot be seen, alien to him even as it forms his innermost being. While the framing of this scene (and its reference to the earlier discussion with Rufus) suggests that homosexual desire and

racial difference are constitutive of Vivaldo's disorienting secret, neither 'race' nor sexuality is revealed. Unveiled through desire is, rather, a sense of unspeakable, unlocatable trauma, looking at a woman in a bar, Vivaldo thinks of how Rufus would have desired her, feeling his own desire run cold and then oddly come flooding back:

Aha, he heard Rufus snicker; you don't be careful, motherfucker, you going to get a black hard on. He heard again the laughter which had followed him down the block. And something in him was breaking; he was, briefly and horribly, in a region where there were no definitions of any kind, neither of color, nor of male and female. There was only the leap and the rending and the terror and the surrender. And the terror: which all seemed to begin and end and begin again - forever - in a cavern behind the eye. And whatever stalked there saw, and spread the news of what it saw throughout the entire kingdom of whomever, though the eye itself might perish. What order could prevail against so grim a privacy? And yet, without order, of what value was the mystery? (301-02)

This 'grim privacy' is forbidden even to the corporeality it occupies; an alien inhabitation of 'oneself,' it seems to evacuate the very self it continues to occupy even after that self has ceased to be sentient.

Vivaldo and Leona, though they seem close friends to Rufus, have a sense of discrimination to confront over the life of Rufus. "They both loved Rufus. And they were both white. Now that it stared them so hideously in the face, each could see how disparately the other had been trying to avoid this confrontation" (60). This renders the racial effect on Rufus though his friends Vivaldo and Leona seem close to love him.

Rufus has been exorbidated through the vision of homosexual and heterosexual relationships with the whites in the racist society where he meets nothing more than racial

perception. In this desire that crosses boundaries of 'gender' and 'race' even as it is constituted by Leona and Vivaldo. The sexual desire of both Rufus and Vivaldo are mixed together which neither makes them friendly nor can fulfill their desire due to racial prejudices. It delineates a central alien but constitutive void as the secret and traumatic locus of desire, sight and subjectivity. "Rufus and Vivaldo looked at each other a moment. Then Vivaldo grinned." How about it, Rufus. You going to get your ass up out of that bed?" (25). It connects the paradoxical sexual interaction between Vivaldo and Rufus. On the other hand, the sexual relation with the Leona is deteriorated through the gender and racial point when Rufus knows the paradoxical nature of Leona. "Rufus watched the eyes of the man as the man looked at Leona; and then both the man and the woman looked swiftly from Vivaldo to Rufus as though to decide which of the two was her lover" (28). The paradoxical choreography of a gaze that sees without anyone to do the seeing or anyone to see is thus tied to a sight and a desire which generates and is generated by categories of 'race' and 'gender' even as the desire and perception take shape through the surpassing of these categories. Rufus' desire is shaped through reference to differences of 'race' and 'gender'. This desire of Rufus, however, leads him to 'something' beyond them. It also shows that this 'something' the self discovers through the veil of difference is the subject as the void, sightless seeing, exorbitated eyes that is completely alien to him and yet is him, a grim privacy he can neither escape nor penetrate. It is difficult to read the blockage of 'race' and sexuality as an obstruction to this daunting realization that creates frustration, alienation and discord in the life of Rufus.

In *Another Country*, the experience of desire often opens up such a void. Vividly and Ida's relationship, for example, as Vivaldo discovers contemplating Ida's face after sex, is similarly constituted and haunted by a traumatic secret:

He leaned up a little and watched her face. Her face would now be, forever,

more mysterious and impenetrable than the face of any stranger. Strangers' faces hold no secrets because the imagination does not invest them with any. But the face of a lover is an unknown precisely because it is invested with so much of oneself. It is a mystery, containing, like all mysteries, the possibility of torment. (171-72)

Outlining a thoroughly narcissistic theory of the epistemology of desire, this passage, coming at the beginning of Vivaldo's relationship with Ida, suggests that people become more mysterious when invested with desire, that desire creates such mystery by projecting onto another one's own opacity to oneself. Furthermore, there is a dichotomous love relationship between them when Ida says "I never said he was a saint. But I'm black, too, and I know how white people treat black boys and girls. They think you're something for them to wipe their pricks on" (324). Ida hates and tries to torture Vivaldo and Vivaldo says to Ida: "You stop that. You stop trying to kill me. It's not my fault I'm white. It's not my fault you're black [...]". "Please, don't try to kill me." And then, "Don't you love me? Do you love me, Ida?" And he turned his head and looked at her." (324).

Vivaldo's character is similarly constructed around a series of unspeakable secrets which are particularly important in the novel's depiction of his relation to Ida, his writer's block, and some 'unspeakable' and unaccountable factors of his sexuality that molds his relation with Rufus. "He felt that if he were a real writer," we are told, "he would simply go home and work and throw everything else out of his mind as Balzac had done and Proust: and Joyce and James and Faulkner. But perhaps they had never held in their minds the nameless things he held in his" (300). Vivaldo's secret thus prevents an idealized relation of transparency to his writing, a nameless blockage that, interfering with his writing in some substantial way, is nonetheless never specified. "There was certainly something he did not want to think about,"

He did not want to think about where Ida was, or what she was doing now. Not now, later for you, baby. He did not want to go home and lay awake, waiting, or walk up and down, staring at his typewriter and staring at the walls. Later for all that, later. And beneath all this was the void where anguish lived and question scrouched, which referred only to vividly and to no one else on earth. Down there, down there, lived the raw, unformed substance for the creation of Vivaldo, and only he, Vivaldo, alone, could master it. (305-06)

The unformed substance that Vivaldo has to face is simultaneously that which will enable turn to write (his creation) and to come to terms with himself (as a creation, created by the void). Initially, we are given a positive content for what he wants to avoid thinking about - where Ida was and what she was doing - but, moving toward its repeated stuttering of Vivaldo's proper name, the passage gradually evacuates from the torturous secret all positive content and all reference to the outside world: The void whose contents remain unspecified "referred only to Vivaldo and to no one else on earth" (306).

It further suggests that there is more racial tension, when the novel asserts that "There was speedily accumulating, then, between Ida and Vivaldo, great areas of the unspoken, vast minefields which neither dared to cross [. . .]. Ida and Vivaldo buried their disputes in silence. It seemed better than finding themselves hoarse, embittered, gasping, arid more than ever alone" (320), than the positive "content" of their secrets - Ida's affair with Ellis and Vivaldo's unresolved same-sex desire, for example - more even than the ineluctable facility of the gulf of their racial difference. As Vivaldo's reading of Ida's face suggests, these barriers of difference are created through and 'represent' each character's difference from him or herself, even as they simultaneously serve as the obfuscating and constitutive misrecognitions of such self-difference. In this matter Ellis, as a black woman expresses her experiences over whites, "I swear, there's nothing like a Southern white person, especially a

Southern woman, when she gets her hooks into a Negro man." She blew a great cloud of smoke above his head. "And now she's still living, the filthy white slut, and Rufus is dead" (265). She asserts that Rufus is denied and committed suicide by the internalized race issue of white woman, Leona. The fact that Rufus feels not only 'filthy' and 'foolish' but specifically 'filthy', 'foolish', and 'black' represents one of the most telling moments in the novel. By recognizing both the physical specificity of his blackness and its social implications, Rufus must at last face his repressed awareness of the fact that Vivaldo, his best friend, is a white man with all of the advantages that this entails, and that he, Rufus, is not. Baldwin's strangest achievement in *Another Country* is that he creates a world in which, when Rufus says of the brutalized Leona, "she's the only chick in the world for me" (54), it makes perfect sense.

Vivaldo figures the block between them as a hidden sanctuary in Ida to which he is forbidden access, and the novel most often discusses Ida's 'secret' through her singing. 'What in the world did these songs mean to her?' he wonders on the roof with Harold:

For he knew that she often sang them in order to flaunt before him privacies which he could never hope to penetrate and to convey accusations which he could never hope to decipher, much less deny. And yet, if he could enter this secret place, he would, by that act, be released forever from the power of her accusations. His presence in this strangest and grimmest of sanctuaries would prove his right to be there; in the same way that the prince, having outwitted all the dangers and slaughtered the lion, is ushered into the presence of his bride, the princess. (313)

Another Country speaks repeatedly of 'revelation' and of the revelation of secrets, but the content of the secrets revealed is nowhere specified; the secret seems to occupy a purely structural place in the novel, one which gives the characters, like the novel itself, their coherence, and marks their unutterable sadness. Thus, readings privileging a revelation that

opens up a self-accepting sexual utopia finally achieved when Yves disembarks in New York are vexed - for example, by the sense of buried trauma that haunts Baldwin's description of the city as Eric arrives there:

New York seemed very strange indeed. It might, almost, for the strange barbarity of manner and custom, for the sense of danger and horror barely sleeping beneath the rough, gregarious surface, have been some impenetrably exotic city of the East. So superbly was it present that it seemed to have nothing to do with the passage of time: time might have dismissed it as thoroughly as it had dismissed Carthage and Pompeii. It seemed to have no sense whatever of the exigencies of human life; it was so familiar and so public that it became, at last, the most despairingly private of cities. One was continually being jostled, yet longed, at the same time, for the sense of others, for a human touch; and if one was never - it was the general complaint - left alone in New York, one had, still, to fight very hard in order not to perish of loneliness. (230)

He further says about the hostile environment of New York City as, "This note of despair, of buried despair, was insistently, constantly struck [. . .]. [Eric] could not escape the feeling that a kind of plague was raging, though it was officially and publicly and privately denied" (230-31). The gay couple between Eric and Yves has created a discord situation though they try to fulfill their sexual desire. Baldwin points "Their very walk, a kind of anti-erotic, knee-action lope, was a parody of locomotion and of manhood [. . .], brutality and indifference, and terrified of human affection. In some strange way they did not seem to feel that they were worthy of it" (231).

This is perhaps one of the queerest moments in *Another Country*, not because all queers are sad, but because of the contradictory play of signification that the passage creates

around New York City. The passage is built around a series of collapsing oppositions, 'Familiar' and 'public'; New York becomes 'the most despairingly private of cities', and, never 'left alone', one feels a torturous sense of 'loneliness'. This collapse of oppositions paradoxically represents the 'impenetrable', and New York becomes an 'objective correlative' for both Eric and the other characters in the novel, represented here as the fissure between the promise of the city's open surface and that promise's betrayal. This fissure marks a discord in representation, a gap between 'inner' and 'outer' that paradoxically represents the character's 'inner' being (in an objective correlative) by failing properly to represent.

More than the revelation of loneliness, the description's poignancy derives from a promised revelation (figured by New York's outer sociability) and the revelation's failure (figured by the gap between the 'inner' loneliness and its 'outer' manifestation). The contradiction, in other words, between the seeming gregariousness of the city and its inner loneliness forms and conditions the 'buried despair' that appears in the form of this contradiction. Just as the very 'presentness' of the city leaves it as outside of time as any city that has been reduced to ash, whether by Scipio's soldiers or by an erupting Vesuvius, the city's promise that it is 'there', open and public, as the epitome of social interaction and contact, creates its own contradiction, which expresses and creates the buried despair it simultaneously hides and reveals. This despair, moreover, is not given a positive content. The passage moves toward a plague that is 'officially and publicly and privately denied', suggesting that the denial of despair is crucially a part of the despair itself. The passage circulates around a sense of loss whose main 'content' is its inability to speak its content, its inability to express what has been lost or even to speak itself as loss. Contemplating a secret that Vivaldo does not express, Cass thinks:

Perhaps such secrets, the secrets of everyone, were only expressed when the person laboriously dragged them into the light of the world, imposed them on

the world, and made them a part of the world's experience. Without this effort, the secret place was merely a dungeon in which the person perished; without this effort, indeed, the entire world would be an uninhabitable darkness; and she saw, with a dreadful reluctance, why this effort was so rare. (112)

The passage suggests that, with courage, one can face and examine one's hidden secrets.

However, linguistic resonances suggest that these secrets can remain impenetrable even to the person who houses them, "Something was going on in her mind, something she could not name or stop; but it was almost as though she were her mind's prisoner, as though the jaws of her mind had closed on her" (125). The figuration here disorients the earlier topography of the secret's 'dungeon' and the imprisoning of a secret in the 'dungeon' of the mind appears simultaneously as the blockage, and as the condition, of self consciousness. As Cass becomes separated from her own husband, it becomes difficult to locate the secret. Cass wants a man with whom she could feel happy and comfortable from her racist husband, Richard, "I'm tired of my husband. I'm looking for a new man. But I come to the wrong store" (74). The secret, her quest for a new man, thus traps her, defining and disorienting the distinction between her 'inner' self and her 'outer' surroundings which shows the interracial discord.

Cass' affair with Eric and its ending shows her redemption through love (and her accepting of 'responsibility' for her marriage through self-scrutiny) and it depicts the sacrifice of Cass to an oppressive gender system. Redemption and sacrifice, however, are hard to sustain in the novel because of the racial attitudes of the whites, and the victimization of blacks underlying these readings is suspended in a larger resistance to the meaning that is difficult in terms of sacrifice or redemption: "This, and something indefinably sorrowful in the line of her mouth and jaw, as she stood silently at the bar, looking down, made Eric feel that Cass was beginning to fade, to become brittle. Something icy had touched her" (233). It shows the betrayed life of Cass due to racial hostility. When Cass meets Eric in the museum,

for example, she seems to become a corpse she has always been, and the passage's stark terms resist redemptive recuperation. The paintings they view are troped as tombstones when Eric left Yves in Paris and comes to New York to meet Cass. Baldwin writes:

He felt as far removed from Cass now, in her terrible hour, as he was physically removed from Yves. Space howled between them like a flood. And whereas, with every moment now, Yves was coming closer, defeating all that water, and, as he approached, becoming more unreal, Cass was being driven farther away, was already in the unconquerable distance where she would be wrapped about by reality, unalterable forever, as a corpse is wrapped in a shroud. (404-5)

In this rather paradoxical unveiling, Eric realizes that his desire for Cass is dead. The revelation, however, is vexed by the difficulty of aligning oppositions in the passage. On the one hand, Eric's 'true' desire for sex with Cass and Yves seems selfish, childish and narcissistic, a man dependent on sensations without regarding the consequences. His homosexual affairs with Rufus and Vivaldo and heterosexual affair with Cass shows his perpetual deflation which causes blacks' life towards the situation of discord. He only becomes a counterpart of the black world. Cass becomes 'unalterable forever' and infinitely removed from Eric as she is 'wrapped about by reality'. Moreover, the unveiling is unsettled not only by the recursive intertwining of revelation with what is revealed, but also by ambiguities created by the crossing of literal and figural registers in the passage. The metaphor of space - which indicates, for Eric, a growing emotional 'distance' from Cass - is thus unsettled by the proximity of its lateralization in the fast approaching Yves that reveals their dichotomy relationship. For Cass, then, the only realization arrived at here is perhaps one of sorrow: "I am beginning to think", "that growing just means learning more about anguish. That poison becomes your diet- you drink little of it every day. Once you've

seen it, you can't stop seeing it-that's the trouble. And it can, it can ... drive you mad" (405).

Thus, Eric's love affair with both Cass and Yves has turned their lives into a discord situation due to his racist ideologies. He only wants to exploit them sexually without regarding their lives and existence. Even as the affair begins, the narrative suggests that she is not so much redeemed as she returned to what she always was:

Like children, with that very same joy and trembling, they undressed and uncovered and gazed on each other; and she felt herself carried back to an unremembered, unimaginable time and state when she had not been Cass, as she was now, but the plain, mild, arrogant, waiting *Clarissa*, when she had riot been weary, when love was on the road but not yet at the gates [. . .]. She watched his naked body as he crossed the room to turn off the lamp, and thought of the bodies of her children, Paul and Michael [. . .]. They were oddly equal: perhaps each could teach the other, concerning love, what neither now knew. And they were equal in that both were afraid of what unanswerable and unimaginable riddles might be uncovered in so merciless a light. (291)

The beginning of the paragraph promises revelation and liberation (here as a return to innocence), only to show this promise's betrayal to the paragraph's close. This suggests that what Eric and Cass might teach each other is the merciless existence of 'unanswerable and unimaginable riddles', riddles that could not be answered even if they could be posed. From the perspective of the end of the paragraph, it becomes clear that its mercilessness was already there at the beginning. The 'unimaginable riddles' thus inflict the 'unremembered and unimaginable time and state' to which Cass is carried back, not only putting pressure on the know-ability of that 'very same joy' - unveiling a familiar past that is, paradoxically,

'unremembered' - but also retrospectively rewriting the innocence that Eric and Cass, 'like children', unweary, experience as their affair begins.

Eric and Yves are engaged in homosexual love while they were in France. When they returned to the racist New York City their relationship ends in coldness and disparity.

Baldwin writes about the disparity of Eric and Yves:

This note of despair, of buried despair, was insistently, constantly struck. It stalked all the New York avenues, roamed all the New York streets; was as present in Sutton Place, where director of Eric's play lived and the great often gathered, as it was in Greenwich Village, where he had rented an apartment and been appalled to see what time had done to people he had once known well [...]. (230-31)

In this way, during the course of love affairs and daily practices, Rufus sees no place for him to stay. He is suppressed and hated everywhere in the city. He sees everything white and for the sake of white. He finds himself in calm and trap:

There was silence. He remembered the walls of the hospital: white; and the uniforms and the faces of the doctors and nurses, white on white. And the face of Leona's brother, white, with the blood beneath it rushing thickly, bitterly, to the skin's surface, summoned by his mortal enemy. Had they been down home, his blood and the blood of his enemy would have rushed out to mingle together over the uncaring earth under the uncaring earth, under the uncaring sky. (78)

Rufus has bitter experience in his life in the racist society. He is tired of searching his and overall blacks identity within the white superiority. But ultimately had nothing rather than harassment, domination, exploitation and discord. Baldwin says: "Rufus wanted to say, Don't let me stop you, man, but he said nothing. He felt black, filthy, foolish. He wished he

were miles away, or dead. He kept thinking of Leona; it came in waves, like the pain of toothache or a festering wound" (78). Thus, Rufus is terribly hurt in the affairs of whites, Leona and Vivaldo, by individual and institutional racial values that lead him to commit suicide. Baldwin writes:

He stood at the center of the bridge and it was freezing cold. He raised his eyes to heaven. He thought, You bastard, you mothersucking bastard. Ain't I your baby, too? He began to cry. Something in Rufus which could not break shook him like a rag doll and splashed salt water all over his face and filled his throat and his nostrils with anguish. He knew the pain would never stop. He could never to down into the city again. He dropped down at the water. It was cold and the water would be cold. (87)

Another Country registers Rufus' traumatic self in a sad mood. We would place the stress at the end of the novel not on the utopian vision of life in New York, "that city where the people from heaven had made their home" (436); but in Yves's thought as the plane lands: "It had not occurred to him, until this moment, that he could possibly have left behind him anything which he might, one day, long for and need, with all his heart" (435). Baldwin's text quite movingly makes trauma speak without losing this speech's traumatic exorbitance. By refusing the revelation of transcendence through self-consciousness, it figures and avoids complicity in the phantasm of coherent manliness that creates - but cannot contain - the trauma itself. Thus despite the difficulties of meaning, this novel reveals the interracial discord caused by the racial prejudices practiced by whites upon the blacks.

IV. Conclusion

When blacks see the way to end their racial discriminations through the love affairs and their social practices with whites, they are enforced to live in the hostile circumstances of danger, murder, sexual crime, insecurity which are characterized by interracial discord.

The racist mind of the white Americans was inflicted strongly over the millions of blacks since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries onwards. The colonialism heavily practiced in America and Europe shaped their hegemony and superiority over the blacks and other people. The whites tried to dominate the blacks both in the colonial and postcolonial period. During the colonial phase white superiority was established on the basis of economic and coercive force but during the post-colonial phase white superiority was maintained through religion, culture, education etc. In the name of religion whites treated the blacks as the marginalized group. Bible described Jesus Christ as white and thus blacks were marginalized by interpreting their skin colour as a product of sin. Therefore, in order to get salvation black should serve the whites because whites are near to God because like Christ they possess white skin. Thus the practice of slavery was given a new twist.

Racial discrimination in America has been institutionally internalized giving it a cultural shape. Afro-Americans were introduced as meager, a labourer with poor economic background, as a marginalized ethnic group in the fast growing America. The ego of race superiority, differences of power because of race, nobility based on colour, and furthermore the feeling of inferiority by the blacks has given it a shape of racial culture. Every black born in America, is provided with the identity as slave, negroes, cruel, sexual, barren human by which his/her ancestors have been identified.

As racism has become dominant in the United States of America, a new black society was blended through the interaction of blacks and whites. Though the American

society is multi-racial and consequently multi-cultural, the habit of projecting hierarchy of white supremacy and black inferiority is rampant. The continual efforts made by the blacks to erase the prejudices are overlooked and they are labeled as reactionaries against the white's hegemonic racial attitudes. They are given the identity as negroes, humiliating the whole of their community.

James Baldwin's opinion is that the concept of race must be practiced healthily because it is the source of cultural development but if it is wrongly conceived it will invite psychological problems. In *Notes of a Native Son*, Baldwin described his own obsession with 'race' as, " I have not written about being a negro at such length because I expect that to be my only subject, but only because it was the gate I had to unlock before I could hope to write about anything else" (8). Baldwin focuses on the negro problem due to the appalling condition or the dehumanization of negroes in racist American society. Negro is not biologically or mentally inferior in truth, but the problem inherent in the truth in America today is the issue of racism. In spite of the prosperity of the nation, black people remained stagnant.

The love affairs of the blacks with the whites in a racist society have created the situation of discord in the lives of the blacks. In Baldwin's *Another Country*, Rufus Scott, his sister Ida, Cass and Yves struggle continuously for their existence in such a racist society. However they cannot achieve anything more than discord, anxiety and frustration. The life of Blacks in a racially divided society is characterized by deformity and discord which is the product of oppression and marginalization in terms of gender, ethnic minority identity, and economic circumstances as the consequences of racism.

Cultural disintegration and psychological split is rampant in black's life due to the terrible effect of racism. Whites do not see blacks as fellow human being rather they are inclined to oppress them as Leona, Vivaldo, Eric do to Rufus. Because of the whites'

oppression blacks are not able to cultivate the homosexual and heterosexual love with whites as Rufus' love with Leona, Ida's to Vivaldo and Rufus' homosexual relation with Vivaldo. Instead of love, a sense of hatred is born against the whites but the problem is that they cannot direct their anger to the whites.

By observing the characters of black and white and their relations, one can find adverse relationships among them. Blacks try to seek their individual as well as social identity through peace, love and mutuality. The social and cultural norms and values internalized by the whites create a discord in blacks lives in the novel.

Rufus Scott realizes the subjugation and exploitation of the white racist society and its "power to hate and destroy" the African American. Due to the effect of racial segregation, he is frustrated and finally commits suicide. Due to the hostile racist environment, Rufus commits suicide, his sister Ida feels shocked and betrayed, Yves has been exploited sexually. So the lethal social climate is the main cause of Rufus' suffering and, of course, his eventual death. Even the white characters in the novel, specifically, Vivaldo, speculate that Rufus' death is caused by theirs and society's short-comings.

So, the novel invites its reader's centripetal preoccupation with Rufus, his life, and, more importantly, his death by mapping all the racial tension that follows through his character. Baldwin, artistically, portrays Rufus' hatred and discomfort towards whites, the naivety of the white society, i.e., the white's ignorance of Afro-Americans, and Rufus' mental agony. He certainly shows that racial segregation and oppression will only foster race consciousness that ultimately enforces social distances between Afro-Americans and whites. Rufus' death in the novel suggests that there is no black utopia yet found, no place where they can escape the racial injustice. Rufus' wish for 'another country', a place where relationships are not fractured by racial difference remains an imaginary and mythic one.

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