CHAPTER FOUR
FROM INNOCENCE TO EXPERIENCE

Baldwin’s novel Another Country deals with the search for meaning and a potential for identity is sought beyond the confines of homosexuality. He looks for rare experiences connected with race, music, writing, heterosexuality and death. In the words of Tolstoy, “The task for art to accomplish is to make the feeling of brotherhood and love of one’s neighbour, . . . The customary feeling and the instinct of all men”(MF 26). The hearts of all the characters in his novel are exposed, revealing the process through which art educates them. Baldwin makes the plot and characterisation really complex in Another Country. The novel is divided into three books: “Easy Rider”, “Any Day Now” and “Toward Bethlehem”. The third book, the book of resolutions, much shorter than the other two, reflects Baldwin’s observations.

The characters and their relationships are symbolic of Black and White, male and female, married and unmarried, homosexual, bisexual and heterosexual. Baldwin tries to reveal the differences between failure and death, love and happiness and struggle between positive and negative which are deeply imbedded in human life.
The novel chronicles the life of a black jazz-drummer, named Rufus Scott. His story begins at Time Square, New York city, past midnight, in the late fall. He has been sitting in a movie theatre from two o’ clock. He is broken and has not eaten for days. In the characteristic Baldwin style, here, in the third person point of view, we move back and forth in the first Chapter and the story is narrated in flashback.

When we take his memories in the chronological order, we find Rufus as an introduction to a kind of negative touchstone for the rest of the characters in the novel. Rufus grew up in Harlem as a talented youth, the idol of his younger sister, Ida. His parents pinned their hope on him. In New York Rufus achieves some fame as a drummer. He befriends Vivaldo Moore, a struggling writer of Brooklyn, with Italian background and Cass and Richard Silenski. Cass is an ex New-England “debutante” and Richard Silenski is a Polish immigrant’s son. He is an English teacher and writer. Eric Jones, a red-headed actor from a well-to-do Alabama family brings a triple reaction on Rufus with his whiteness, Southernness and homosexuality. Rufus’ love-hate needs are on Eric. Later Rufus vents his frustrated, tortured destructive drive on Leona, a poor Southern
white woman who has been forced to leave her child behind in the South. Rufus' enactment of love and hate, tenderness and beatings on the body of Leona leads eventually to her institutionalisation and his degeneration into the state in which we find him at the opening of the novel.

It is largely the hostile intrusion of "the big world" on Rufus that destroys his love relationships. He has trouble with a landlord, with neighbour, with all the adolescents in the village, with his family and with the ever-menacing police. Rufus resents them all. In total despair-no job, money, home-Rufus finds left with his friend Vivaldo, and eats and drinks with him. He stays with Cass, and Richard in a bar back-room. When Cass and Richard leave and Vivaldo is joined by an old girl friend, Jane. Rufus leaves to go to the bath room, instead, he heads towards uptown and eventually to the George Washington bridge. He jumps- "as did Baldwin's young friend"- on whom Rufus Scott's character is sketched.

He was black and the water was black . . . The wind tore at him, at his head and shoulders, while something in him screamed, Why? Why? He thought of Eric.... I can't make it his way. 'He thought of Ida. He whispered. I'm sorry
Leona, and then the wind took him, he felt himself going over, head down, the wind, the stars, the lights, the water all rolled together, all right ... all right, you mother fucking God Almighty bastard. I'm coming to you. (AC 87-88)

In the ensuing chapter we are given to understand more about Cass, Richard and Vivaldo. The chapter opens the following Sunday morning, amid Sunday papers and Coffee cups in the living room of Cass in “a Puerto-Rican” neighbourhood in West side Manhattan. Ida Scott has come there, worried about her brother and Vivaldo has come to read the novel that Richard has just sold. The Silenski’s marriage looks idyllic-to sons, Richard, on the verge of success and fame. Vivaldo shows a keen interest in Ida. On Wednesday, the day before Thanks Giving, Rufus’ body has been found. Richard and Cass react to the suicide in a way in which we begin to see a crack, and uncertainty in the idyllic marriage, a menace to safety. At Rufus’ funeral, Vivaldo and Cass are the only whites. For Cass, there is a suggestion of danger, of depth and of worlds that she is not familiar with. Now she recognises in Richard’s book the extent of his talent and courage - It had been written because he was afraid of things dark, strange, dangerous, difficult and deep. Rufus’ funeral takes Vivaldo back to his own origins.
You'd to be a man where I come from and you had to prove it, prove it all the time... well, my dad is still there, sort of helping to keep the liquor industry going. Most of the kids that I knew are dead or in jail or on junk (AC 111).

One of his boyhood proofs of manhood was beating up a 'queer' from Greenwich Village.

There were seven of us and, we made him go down on all of us and we beat the piss out of him and took all his money and took his clothes and left him lying on the cement floor, and you know it was winter. (AC 112)

Cass realises that Vivaldo's recollections, in no sense, freed him from the things he recalled. She mentally articulates a key to Rufus' failure and the struggles of others.

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. (AC 112)
The chapter titled "Easy Rider" begins several months later, in March of the following year. Vivaldo is struggling with the characters of his own novel and they refuse to surrender their privacy. They are waiting for him to find the key, press the nerve and tell the truth. He realises their similarity to himself and wonders "whether or not he had ever, really, been present at his life" or whether he, like the others and passed his life" in a kind of limbo of denied and unexamined pain". He reviews his relationship with women, with men, and blacks, and recalls his first meeting of Ida and his only meeting of Ida’s mother.

Ida, whom Vivaldo is taking to lunch and a literary party at the Silenskis’, reviews a different kind of life. She was always waiting for the veiled insult or the lewd suggestion. And she had good reason for it, she was not being fantastical or perverse. It was the way the world treated girls with bad reputations and every coloured girl. The Silenskis are “climbing that well-known ladder”, “with increasing unhappiness”. They have moved to a gray”, anonymous building” with “functionless pillars” and “an immense plain of imitation marble and leather”. Ida calls Mr.Richards a famous husband.
He's not even famous yet, "says cass, "and, already I can't stand it. Some how, it just seems to reduce itself to having drinks and dinners with lots of people you certainly wouldn't be taking to if they were n't ... in the profession.

(AC 149)

Cass points out to Vivaldo and Ida that their acting friend, Eric Jone, is coming back from France to star in a Broadway production.

Everything goes on well with Ida and Vivaldo to this day. Their enjoyment of each other is broken, only and briefly, on account of Vivaldo's jealousy of Ida's attention to a T.V. Producer, Mr. Ellis. They leave the Silenskis' party, however, go to Vivaldo's apartment, and make love for the first time. The part "Easy Rider" ends appropriately on a Spring afternoon, with Ida making coffee and singing.

If you can't give me a dollar,

Give me a lousy dime—

Just want to feed

This hungry man of mine. (AC 179)
The Book Two titled "Any Day Now" opens in a kind of Eden, not in New York City. "Eric sat naked in his rented garden. Flies buzzed and boomed in the brilliant heat, and a yellow bee circled his head. . . . Yves' tiny black-and-white kitten stalked the garden as though it were Africa. . . . The house and garden overlooked the sea." (AC 183). Down below in the Mediterranean, Eric's lover, Yves, is swimming. It is the day before their leaving this house to return to Paris, from whence Eric will go to New York, to be joined there later by Yves. The first part of this book gives the reader a full history of Yves, of Eric's youth and early homosexual experiences in Alabama, and of their meeting and their growing love. Significantly, Yves and Eric first become lovers after three months of seeing each other every day, in the town of charters, under the shadow of the great Cathedral towers. Eric during these months purified, as well as he could, his house, and opened his doors; established a precarious order in the heart of chaos, removing that "army of lovely men who had used him . . . (as) the receptacle of an anguish which he could scarcely believe was in the world (AC 210-211). He has thereby won Yves' trust for his homosexual companionship.
In a room above a stream, their physically coming together cast them into the sea of forgetfulness. They feel that all the sordid beds and squalid grappling had led them there. "Eric felt beneath his fingers Yves' slowly stirring, stiffening sex. This sex dominated the long landscape of his life as the "cathedral towers dominated the plains." (AC 222-223)

The key to Eric's importance in the novel lies in his exclusion from the standards of the world and the subsequent need for him to develop his own code of honour.

He knew that he had no honor which the world could recognise. His life, passions, trials, loves, were at worst, filth and, at best disease in the eyes of the world, and crimes in the eyes of his country men . . . . There were no standards for him because he could not accept the definitions, the hideously mechanical jargon of the age. There was no one around him worth his envy, he did not believe in the vast, gray sleep which was called security, did not believe in the cures, panaceas, and slogans which afflicted the world he knew; and this meant that he had to create his standards and make up his definitions as he went along.(AC 212-213)
Yves and Eric make love the previous night above the sea. Yves called Eric's name and no one had ever called this name before. Eric, Eric. The sound of his breath filled Eric, heavier than the far-off pounding of the sea. Eight days later in New York Eric wonders why he is leaving for his place. 'Why am I going home?' he asked himself. However he was aware of it. It was time. In order not to lose all that he had gained, he had to move forward and take a risk. Shortly afterwards he sees the menace in the lives of his friends. He visits Cass and Richard. Their sons are beaten up in the central bank by black kids and the Silenskis fight in front of Eric. Richard releases his long resentment of Cass' reaction to his "success", and exhibits his fear of castration.

Eric goes to the bar where Ida has her singing debut which has become a success. "My God", mutters Vivaldo, "she's been working", implying "that he had not been and held an unconscious resentment." When Ellis appears, Eric senses, "something very ugly in the air." Ida has been in contact with Ellis without Vivaldo's knowledge. As the four walk to another bar for a drink and a "business deal" between Ida and Ellis, Eric is menaced also by the encounter of police, by the gaymen they meet, by everything in the New York surroundings.
Cass talks to Vivaldo about her marriage, goes off to sit in a movie alone, and then calls Eric and goes to his apartment. To Vivaldo’s offer of company, she replies “No Vivaldo, thank you, I don’t want to be protected any more.” As she and Eric venture into an affair with no future, Eric says “Something is happening between us which I don’t really understand, but I’m willing to trust it. I have the feeling somehow, that I must trust it.” Eric introduces Cass to an unsafe treacherous but real “vision of the world” through his past experiences.

Meanwhile Vivaldo is troubled with his doubts about the battles with Ida. He blindly believes in her love without knowing the affair between Ellis and Ida. He begins to search for her as he is not either at home or at work. Vivaldo believes that she is undoubtedly with Ellis. Vivaldo wanders through the streets looking into bars and clubs in search of Ida. Finally he ends up at an all-night pot-party. Baldwin gives an accurate description of the party as it was sensational in those days and has come to be a commonplace thing. Vivaldo’s search for Ida is not merely a male running after a female, but a kind of soul searching, an introvert activity, in which we see echoes of Grime’s Bible
passage in *Go Tell It on the Mountain* and of Eric's three month preparation for Yves' love.

The part "Any Day Now" takes the complications to a climax. Ida's and Vivaldo's conflicts are exaggerated by the New York Summer heat. Ida accuses, "How can you love someone you don't know anything about? You don't know where I've been. You don't know what life is like for me . . . . Nobody is willing to pay the dues. (AC 233)

Cass' and Eric's love affair continues and Eric's theatrical success mounts finally for a movie role with a screen test for the lead in Dostoyevski's *The Possessed*. Eric's acting talent is clearly connected with sexuality. On the climatic night, Vivaldo and Eric move to have a soul searching conversation. Meanwhile Ida and Cass, on the pretext of going home, go to Harlem to meet Ellis.

The final book of the novel is called "Toward Bethlahem" The beauty of the first chapter of the final book is placed in a total, physical and spiritual love experience between Eric and Vivaldo. It is Vivaldo's first sexual encounter with a male in many years, and his very first sexual encounter with a friend. Vivaldo
attains a real spiritual cleaning in this affair and goes back to Ida to listen to her confession and trust her in a new way. Surprisingly enough Vivaldo's cleansing experience has given back his power to write about the past of Ida. She has been relieved of her entirely isolated negative view of the world. In the case of Cass, she is left in the midst of a struggle, with no clear outcome. She explains Richard's anger to Eric. She fears that she may lose her children because of her relationship with Vivaldo.

The ultimate beauty is reserved for the final three page chapter of Another Country. Yves flies into New York from Paris. Eric is there to meet him:

... all (Yves's) fear left him, he was certain, now that everything would be alright. . . . Then even his luggage belonged to him again, and he strode through the barriers, more high-hearted than he had ever been as a child, into that city which the people from heaven had made their home. (AC 283)

The central characters in Another Country are undoubtedly Rufus Scott and Eric Jones. It will be highly rewarding to explore their similarities as Baldwin has shown. Rufus dominates the first part of the book and Eric
dominates the second and last part. Rufus' memories lead us to Eric and Eric's memories enable us to understand Rufus. Rufus is black, Northern and Urban. Eric is white and he belongs to Southern part and small town. Whereas Rufus is a talented and personable musician, Eric is an actor. While Rufus' life ends in suicide Eric's life ends in love and success. These superficial facts may make one assume Rufus' failure to be a function of his race and Erics' success to be a function of his. But Baldwin seems to suggest with these two characters that while pain and suffering are inevitable, acceptance of pain is a necessity.

The key difference between Rufus’ failure and Eric’s success seems to lie in that otherworldly, other-country experience that Eric achieves only by leaving the United States and living in France. Yves is free from the racial and sexual hang-ups peculiar to American men. The love experience with YVES, blessed as it is by purification and cathedral shadowing, enables Eric to come back to New York and bring with him some of that androgynous love that he gives to Cass and Vivaldo.

I have claimed that art is essentially and Primarily moral-that is, life giving - moral in its process of creation and moral in what it says. If people all over Europe killed
themselves after reading Goethe’s “Sorrows of Young Werther’ then either Goethe’s book was false art or his readers misunderstood. Only in lament does the artist cry out, ‘Birds build but not I build,’ and the laments point to how things ought to be: art builds; it never stands pat; it destroys only evil. If one destroys good, mistaking it for evil, then the art is false, an error; it requires denunciation (MF 15)

We can clearly see the idea of John Gardener in the development of Baldwin’s art in Another Country. The evil practice of indulging in homosexuality is viewed as a sin. It is steeped and developed in other novels also. The novelist is vividly exposing these follies and foibles of the society. Baldwin is clearly anatomizing man’s weakness and how he is succumbing to the temptations. The artist is holding up the mirror to the readers and the society.

For a careful reader it becomes evident that homosexuality is only a passing phase. That Eric suffers because of his homosexuality is made excruciatingly clear in Another Country. But the shame and misery and fear he undergoes are his means to heroism because he does come out with the other side. His flesh is redeemed. He is heard and seen as his acting is empowered by his suffering. Rufus, on the other hand, suffers from shame and fear and misery
and is not heard, is not understood. His drumming art is more difficult to translate than Eric's.

The impact of sin is revealed in a blunt language. At one point in Giovanni's Room David bemoans to Giovanni about the fact that “people have very dirty words for-for this situation.” Giovanni replies in words we can take as Baldwin’s explanation for his using language as he does

If dirty words frighten you, . . . I really do not know how you have managed to live so long People are full of dirty words. The only time they do not use them, most people I mean, is when they are describing something dirty

(GR 118-119)

Stanley Macebuh in his Critical Study of James Baldwin rightly says that “Another Country is a much more ambitious novel than either Go Tell It on the Mountain or Giovanni's Room.

It sought to encompass and to more fully examine the roots of America’s social malice. Love was presented as a matter of individual relationship in the early novels. It beame, in this novel, a much more serious social issue. Its ramifications on the canvas of American life were no longer merely insinuated, but dramatized within the context of
interracial relationships. Furthermore, it was not without significance that for the first time Baldwin was in this novel beginning to move away from vision of man as Homo theologicus, that his characters were becoming increasingly unaware of the existence of the vengeful God of the earlier novels. There is an indication that his religious imagination has not completely been sapped by the present day realities. There is indeed reason to believe that part of the weakness of this novel derives from the probability that his delivery from theological terror was ambiguous. What the conceptual departure did mean in practical terms was that Baldwin had deliberately taken upon himself a vastly larger scope of materials as the subject matter of his creative concerns - a feat he had never before attempted - and in view of the ambiguousness of his liberation from the cosmology of terror, it was not altogether surprising that he should ultimately have failed to provide a sufficiently integrated vision in Another Country. (Macebuh 87)

Stanley Macebuh calls Ida Scott the personification of Baldwin's rage. This personified rage in conjunction with Rufus' life and suicide, provides Baldwin with a useful instrument for achieving the self-confrontation of other characters in the novel. The function of anger in Another Country is a curious one. Even if we accept Baldwin's use of anger as a vehicle of meaning the two most angry characters in the novel, Rufus and Ida, are in fact least sympathetic.
Rufus commits suicide because he is consumed by fury and self-pity. Towards the end of the novel Ida herself degenerates into a shining self-conscious adolescent unduly intent on explaining away the moral compromises that she is compelled to make in order to survive.

One of the intriguing indications of Baldwin's ambition in *Another Country* is the fact that Rufus, who is essentially the hero of this novel, dies quite early in the action; yet it is this very fact of his physical disappearance from the scene that provides for the novel the single most important organising principle that holds all the other episodes together with the possible exception of Richard Silenski. He is unable to learn anything from his experience. All the other major characters, Vivaldo, Eric, Cass and Ida, are affected by Rufus' life and death. Vivaldo, achieves a certain limited resolution of his confusions through his sense of betrayal of this black-Christ; Eric's final reconciliation with his bisexuality is achieved through recognition of the vital significance of his brief but crucial affair with Rufus. This is an affair that is later extended into his life with Yves; Cass Silenski finds whatever maturity she gains through her confrontation with Eric and Ida. They are profoundly influenced by Rufus, and
Ida. In this novel is depicted as a nemesis. She inherits from her brother's death both her anger and whatever insight she finally achieves into the true nature of her dispossession. In precise terms, Rufus is more of an influence than a character, an ethereal emanation rather than a concretely delineated personality. It is true that we are given an actual description of the beginnings of his relationship with Leona, that once for a while, we are offered snatches of his embittered conversations with Vivaldo. But beyond this, much of what we are given is vague history of the deterministic sort. Baldwin appears to have assumed that merely to assert that Rufus is 'one of the fallen men was an effective substitute for actual presentation of detail.

There is a moving passage in the novel about Rufus' suffering from an alienation in the midst of human indifference. Rufus' agonizing experiences are similar to that of his fellow-travellers in despair, and about the impersonal and vicious city in which he lives and dies. We find that Rufus' tragedy is the direct result of racial prejudice and his life a dramatic presentation of that stultification that springs from social malice. But Baldwin suggests that the racial problem is not the only cause of Rufus' tragedy. Rufus' loneliness is shared by
millions of people. Rufus appears to be the peculiar victim of a callous world. But one can pose a question whether Rufus' tragedy is that of a weak-minded young man who falls a victim to his own lack of vital focus.

The novel Another Country assumes significance as Baldwin dramatizes the moral effects of racism and shows the existential predicament of a single individual. Here lies the strength of the novel as Rufus predicament can be that of a citizen of the 20th century living in a soulless city. Another aspect of Rufus' tragedy is his rage. That Rufus is angry is clear but there is nothing that he could do to alleviate his anger. But Baldwin is certainly not suggesting that all angry black young men should commit suicide. One of the fundamental intentions of the novel might be to dramatize the racial problem.

Rufus has a fascinating and graphic effect on the other characters in the novel. As suggested by Stanley Macebuh, Rufus may be construed as a Christ-like figure, an unrecognized and uncelebrated prophet of the new religion. But he does not teach any new doctrine, neither does he consciously surround himself with any disciples. He departs from the world with a curse on his lips, and the only bequest he leaves behind is the memory of his pain and suffering. It
is doubtless part of Baldwin’s ironic comment on this world that in his lifetime Rufus does not appear to be a significant being, does not appear to mean anything to anybody. Whereas in his death, he exercises a degree of influence on the lives of those who knew him that is altogether out of proportion to the seriousness or concern with which they take him.

One of the important issues of the novel is that of betrayal. Other characters in the novel like Vivaldo, Cass and Ida believe that they betrayed Rufus. Vivaldo is experiencing the pangs of betrayal and wants to do something in repentance. Hence he falls in love with Rufus' sister Ida. Vivaldo is a well-intentioned young man, kind, considerate and determined to be friendly with Rufus. But in the story it appears that Vivaldo is inhibited because of Rufus' colour. After Rufus' death we find Vivaldo in remorse:

I knew I failed him but I loved him too, and nobody, there wanted to know that. I kept thinking. They're coloured and I'm white but the same things have happened, really the same things, and how can I make them know that? (AC 89)

Being the son of impoverished Italian immigrants, Vivaldo has had to live through almost as much suffering as Rufus. But Vivaldo is white and Rufus
black. In a racist culture, this is the most poignant reality. Vivaldo's failure to perceive the complex anatomy of Rufus' pain, leads to his betrayal of Rufus. Certainly Vivaldo is not capricious, rather he feels happy that he has done everything to alleviate the sufferings of Rufus on the day of his death. Vivaldo feels that he has done everything for a friend in need. He has fed him, bought him drinks and even offered a woman to be taken home. After Rufus' tragedy the remorse that Vivaldo feels, is in proportion to his exuberance on the day of Rufus' death.

In this novel action is linked to thought in a much deeper level than the other novels of Baldwin. Vivaldo's failure to rescue Rufus risks him and leads to the kind of repentance in which acceptance of Ida becomes possible. The new country that Baldwin visualises is not a world of distinctive phenomena but a country of mind. There is in it no Utopian absence of suffering and despair. It is a cold, sombre region to extend the pain of this new world is, introverted, unshaped and focused on the self. What distinguishes this new world from the one Baldwin renounces, is not therefore a surfeit of happiness, but a profound recognition and acceptance of the tragedy of life.
If Vivaldo, Cass and Ida achieve their different levels of maturity within the dramatic movement of the novel, within its time span. Eric is the one figure whose fixed and immovable compassion appears to precede the story itself. In many ways as Rufus’ alter ego, he reminds one of what the former might have become had he lived. Where Rufus is the Christ like figure whose martyrdom is necessary for the birth of the new religion, Eric is the Paulin apostle through whom the gospel is disseminated. That he extricates his sense of inner peace from his life with Rufus is made quite explicit in the story. It is through the risk, the danger and the complicated passions of this relationship that he achieves that perspective that later bears him through the desperate ambiguities of life. Just as Rufus’ benign influence is oddly paradoxical, so also does Eric affect the lives of those he intimately meets without apparently trying. Even Id in her days of anger finds it not a little difficult to dislike him. His homosexuality is a cross that he has to bear through life, rather than deny it as Vivaldo tries, and fails to do. He learns, by the time he returns to New York, to accept it, and it is precisely because of his ability to come to terms with himself, that he becomes so powerful an influence on his friends. For Vivaldo Eric is the teacher who reveals the truth that to love a fellow man need not be an act of shameful
degradation; for Cass Silenski, he is the compassionate friend with whom adultery becomes less a sin than a veritable journey of self-discovery. Even Ida, the embattled fury of the novel, watches her passionate contempt dissolve as she finds and she has little choice but to be friendly with Eric.

Eric inherits the country founded upon the tragedy of Rufus' life and death. Vivaldo, Eric, Cass and Ida come to the realisation through the death of Rufus that to be truly alive is to be prepared to risk everything. That to love is to be willing to give entirely of oneself. Through painful confrontation with self, they have achieved a spiritual regeneration that could conceivably attain the state of grace. Stanley Macebuh writes,

... but the quite fundamental charge must still be made that their spiritual rebirth, appears ultimately to be little more than a gesture of transcendence, significant in and of itself, but hardly sufficiently weighty to justify the supposition that they therefore belong to a different 'country'.(97)

The real world of Baldwin's novel, the world of which New York is a microcosm, is presented, with sufficient and imaginative intensity. Baldwin is often at his best when describing the squalor of Harlem, the desperate and
suicidal conviviality of the village, and his evocation of the impersonality of the city at night is a moving one. Furthermore, very few can read Another Country and fail to be affected by the oppressive intensity of the fury of this novel by Ida’s anger, or by the homicidal passions of Vivaldo’s gigantic adversary in the red districts of Harlem.

Baldwin postulates that his tortured saints, like Ida and Rufus have a clear choice to transfer themselves both spiritually and physically from our squalid world. Consequently, despite their apparent inner certainty of purpose, they move around in an alienated and merely hypothetically new country. This country is of the mind in which nothing seemed to matter more than the individual’s ability to convince himself that his own sufferings would ensure with fulfilment.

In this novel Baldwin appears to have recognised a more effective choice, namely, the concretization of the unacceptable world and the invocation of a new world largely by implication. We are faced with what goes quite beyond questions of ideology or political wisdom. It has ultimately to do with the artistic control over the material he voluntarily selects for his works. If Baldwin’s saints
exist in a vacuum, the reservation needs to be made that this is not for want of a clearly delineated geography a racial malevolence and moral squalor in the real world. Rufus is a pathetically poor guide to the socio-political foundations of the evil in the world of Baldwin's denunciations. One can hardly leave the novel unaffected by Ida's furious quest for vengeance or by the mere anthropomorphic wickedness of city itself. It seems legitimate to suggest that Ida's anger does have its roots in a visible fictional reality. The other country of Baldwin's imagination is in short a nebulous amorphous world that seems to exist only in the minds of characters and is largely invisible to us. The invocation of this nebulous world was, moreover, not unlike the celestial dreams of that church which Baldwin had broken away from so many years before Another Country was published. This similarity is in itself sufficient indication that he has not entirely divorced his vision from the religious imagination of his earlier novels.

Though Robert Bone calls Another Country a failure on the grand scale, he devotes quite some pages for the discussion on the thematic possibilities of the novel. What Baldwin calls, a moral cowardice is the refusal to confront the 'dark' side of human experience. The white American, at once over-protected
and repressed, exhibits an infuriating tendency to deny the reality of pain and suffering, violence and evil, sex and death.

The American Negro, exposed to the ravages of reality by his status as a slave, has never enjoyed the luxury of innocence. On the contrary, his dark skin has come to be associated, at some buried level of the white psyche, with those forbidden impulses and hidden terrors which the white man is afraid to face. The unremitting daily warfare of American race relations must be understood in these symbolic terms. By projecting the "blackness" of his own being upon the dark skin of his Negro victim, the white man hopes to exercise the chaotic forces which threaten to destroy him from within.

The psychic cost is of course enormous. The white man loses the experience of "blackness" sacrificing both its beauty and its terror to the illusion of security. In the end, he loses his identity. For a man who cannot acknowledge the dark impulses of his own soul cannot have the vaguest notion of who he is. A stranger to himself and others, the most salient feature of his personality, will be a fateful bewilderment.
There are psychic casualties on the Negro side as well. No human personality can escape the effects of prolonged emotional rejection. The victim of this cruelty will defend himself with hatred and with dreams of vengeance, and will lose, perhaps forever, his normal capacity for love. Strictly speaking, this set of defences, and the threat of self-destruction which they pose, constitutes the Negro problem.

It is up to the whites to break this vicious circle of rejection and hatred. They can do so only by facing the void, by confronting chaos, by making the necessary journey to "another country". What the white folks need is a closer acquaintance with the blues. Then perhaps they will be ready, to join the human race. But only if the bloodless learn to bleed it will be possible for the Negro to lay down his burden of hatred and revenge.

Baldwin's descriptions of New York, contain striking images of malice, scenes and gestures which expose the moral texture of contemporary urban life. The surface of his prose reflects the act of modernism, the sense of loneliness of the city. Harnessed commuters and jostled pedestrians seem to yearn for closer ties. Denizens of a village bar clutch their drinks with a gesture of buried
sense of despair. The whir of cash registers and blatant glare of neon signs proclaim the harsh ascendancy of the spirit of materialism. The tense subway crowds and the police, symbolic a sense of latent violence. The furtive scribbling on lavatory walls provide a chilling commentary, in their mixture of raw lust and ethnic hate on the scope and depth of a civilisation.

Robert Bone maintains that Baldwin endows sexuality with mythic significance.

Eric sat naked in his rented garden. Flies buzzed and boomed in the brilliant heat, and a yellow bee circled his head. Eric remained very still, then reached for the cigarettes beside him and lit one, hoping that the smoke would drive the bee away. Yes tiny black and white kitten stalked the garden as though it were Africa, crouching beneath the mimosas like a panther and leaping into the air (AC 183).

Here he depicts, in this Mediterranean garden what appears to be a homosexual Eden. There is an attempt to fuse two levels of experiences. Baldwin brings into metaphorical relation the idea of homosexuality and the idea of Africa. Each represents to the “majority” imagination a kind of primal chaos. Yet each contains the possibility of liberation. For, to be Negro, or to be
homosexual, is to be in constant touch with that sensual reality which the white world is at such pains to deny. We can now account for Eric's pivotal position in the novel. Through his commitment to Yves he introduces an element of order into the chaos of his personal life. This precarious victory, wrested in anguish from the heart of darkness, is the real subject of another country. Images of chaos proliferate throughout the novel. Rufus leaps into chaos when he buries himself in the deep black water of the Hudson River. Cass encounters chaos in the strange, pulsating life of Harlem, or in an abstract expressionist canvas at the Museum of Modern Art. To Vivaldo, chaos means a marijuana party in a village pad; to Eric, the male demimonde which threatens to engulf him. Eric is the first of Rufus' friends to face his demons and achieve a sense of relief. He in turn emancipates the rest.

From the vantage point, one can envision the novel that Baldwin is trying to write with the breakdown of traditional standards even if sexual normality or homosexuality becomes a metaphor of the modern condition. Baldwin says of Eric, "There were no standards for him except those he could make for himself (AC 212). Forced to create his own values as he goes along, Eric is to serve
"as a footnote to the twentieth century torment". The homosexual becomes emblematic of existential man. But Baldwin’s literary aims are deflected by his sexual mystique. Eric returns to America as the high priest, of a new sexual Order. Cass commits adultery with Eric, and is thereby reconciled to her faltering marriage. Vivaldo’s sexual experience with Eric prepares him for Ida’s confession. The novel ends as Yves joins Eric in New York, heralding and a new era of sexual and racial freedom.

The difficulty lies in accepting Eric as a touch-stone of reality. Rufus is portrayed as a victim of the white society which cannot face unpleasant truths. The redemptive role is then assigned to Eric; But few will concede a sense of reality, at least in the sexual realm to one who regards heterosexual love as “a kind of superior callisthenics” (AC 336). To most, homosexuality will seem rather an invasion than an affirmation of human truth. Ostensibly the novel summons us to reality. Actually it substitutes forth illusions of the white supremacy over those of homosexual love.

We understand that Baldwin, in his portrait of Eric, has desired above all to be faithful to his own experience as a writer. He will neither falsify nor go
beyond it. Central to that experience is a rebellion against the prevailing sexual, as well as racial mores. But on either plane of experience, Baldwin faces an emotional dilemma. Like Satan and the fallen angels, it is equally painful to persist in his rebellion and to give it up. Total defiance is unthinkable; total reconciliation only less so. These are the poles of Baldwin's psychic life and the novel seems to vacillate between them.

The drama of reconciliation is enacted by Ida and Vivaldo. Through their symbolic marriage, Ida is reconciled to whites: Vivaldo to women. This gesture, however, is a mere concession to majority opinion. What Baldwin really feels is dramatized through Rufus and Eric. Rufus can neither be fully reconciled to, nor fully deficient of, white society; he is incapable of total hate. Pushed to the limits of endurance, he commits suicide. Similarly, Eric can neither be fully reconciled to women, nor can be surrender to the male demimonde. So he stays on the outskirts of Hell. In the case of Rufus the suicidal implications are overt. With Eric, as we shall see, Baldwin tries to persuade us that Hell is really Heaven.
Another Country was conceived as a joint assault on racial and sexual intolerance. Apparently prejudiced and encountered in either context will evoke a similar response. The arrogance of the majority has a counterpart in exaggerated claims by the minority. Baldwin's portrait of Ida, for example, leans heavily on the exotic, on that stereotype of primitive tribal Negroes are depicted as more alive, more colourful, more spontaneous, better dancers and above all better lovers than the whites depicted as city dwelling zombies.

Louis H. Pratt compares Giovannis' Room with Another Country and says that Baldwin's probe into the complex question of sexuality is developed more fully in Another country. Here, love, the virtue of ultimate significance, takes no regard of provincial mores, ethnic backgrounds or national origins, and refuses confinement to the narrow limitations symbolised by the conventional tones of the heterosexuality and homosexuality. These barriers to communication are broken down. And expressions of love in the novel run the full gamut of possibility according to the needs of the individuals.

Louis H. Pratt further makes an analysis by bringing in people belonging to both races and their divergent attitudes towards various issues. His idea of
unification is given at ten different levels. They are: 1. White male, Black male 2. White female bisexual 3. Irish Italian male, black female 4. White female, white male bisexual 5. white male, white male bisexual 6. white male, white female 7. black male, white female 8. American male, French male 9. Northern female, Southern male 10. Northern male, Southern female and Vivaldo seems to function as pivots for these relationships since Eric is active in four of the patterns, while Vivaldo is involved in three.

Baldwin candidly depicts sex and this affects the Puritan sensibilities of the reader. But Baldwin uses this as a vehicle through which he explores the failure of love in our society. In the beginning of the novel, Rufus vividly recalls the last time he played in a New Harlem night club. A young saxophone player had captured the spotlight. Rufus watches the boy as he takes command of the instrument. He hears the youth as he screamed a frantic question which seemed to pierce every nerve and stimulate the very fibre of his being: “Do you love me? Do you love me? And again, Do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me?” (AC 13) Rufus is able to identify with the mood of desperation because he, too, longs to ask this question, to cry aloud a supplication that some
will understand his crucial need to receive love and save him from destruction. It is this same question, this same cry of anguish and pain from which all of Baldwin's characters are seeking relief.

Baldwin's major characters are suffering from a most profound isolation and estrangement from the past. Cass chose to marry the son of a Polish carpenter and has been condemned to live in social exile from her aristocratic New England family. Richard has exchanged his Polish ancestry for the dubious fame and recognition which he achieves as a writer. Rufus is estranged from his family because of his licentious life style and his white mistress, Leona. Ida earns the contempt of her parents because she is involved with a white partner. Vivaldo's isolation from his alcoholic father and his relationship with Ida make him the black sheep of the family. Eric has been banished for his youthful, illicit intimacies with his black Alabama friend Leroy - Yves has long since despises his mother for the reason that she enjoyed bargaining her favours with German soldiers. The cross of alienation becomes too heavy for these people to bear and they cry out in agony as they search for the redeeming power of love.
James Baldwin makes us aware from the beginning of the novel the ominous forces which conspire to oppress and kill. Rufus tries to avoid the murderous and crushing weight of New York, which has become symbolic of the cunning, cruel and merciless white oriented society. He struggles amidst feelings of frustration and hostility, waging what he senses to be a losing battle with the establishment for survival. Ironically, Rufus' call is answered by a Southern white girl, Leona, who too, is in search of love. She has known pain and suffering and has escaped these ordeals to make new life in the North. Leona offers her love unselfishly as a means of extricating Rufus from the prison of his hatred, but he cannot reciprocate that love. Hatred, fear, anguish and frustration have been etched indelibly upon his mind, and he can only use Leona, as he has been ill, used by a white society. But Leona is a symbol of white society and Rufus hates her. Rufus is unable to reciprocate her love and feels that she is a mistress only for the gratification of sex. Rufus is unable to look beyond the barriers of many centuries and tells Vivaldo that he expects Leona to love him. Nevertheless, Leona is persistent in her attempt to overcome the colour prejudice and love him really, “I love him” she said
helplessly, "I love him. I can't help it. No matter what he does to me. He's just lost and he beats me because he can't find nothing else to hit" (AC 59).

Vivaldo could have served as the instrument of Rufus' salvation. But he could not face the suffering of Rufus as it made him aware of his boyhood experiences which have striking similarities with those of Rufus. Consequently Vivaldo is able to understand Rufus' problems only after Rufus' suicide. Vivaldo, who too is to cope with his problems finds an outlet in meddling with the fates of the characters of his unpublished novel. When Vivaldo comes to know of the connection of Ida with the television producer, he is in a position to save Ida. He offers his love so that Ida can maintain her dignity.

Like Vivaldo, Richard Silenski also seeks to escape his heritage in pursuit of the American Dream. Having entered the professional world, Richard dreams not of self fulfilment, but of self achievement. His visions become delusions of social power and prestige, rather than hopes for inner satisfaction and place. Each aspiration becomes the means of scaling the mountain and joining the mainstream of society. The long struggle has earned for him many bridges of conformity: a posh apartment, a wife of aristocratic ancestry, two fine boys and
publication of his first novel. He is so obsessed with these trappings of success that he becomes oblivious to Cass' urgent need to be loved. And while Cass enjoys these things she is unable to suppress her yearnings for self-fulfilment. She turns away from Richard and accepts Eric as her lover in the hope that perhaps each could teach the other, concerning love, what neither knew. Cass' great yearning is to be a woman, and she had been denied the realization of that hope. Cass entertains no delusions about the permanence of her relationship with Eric. From the very beginning he has told her of his affair with Yves, and she is aware of the 'transient bed' upon which she offered herself to him". She knew that Eric's lover would reclaim him and that Richard, eventually, would discover her infidelity.

Baldwin makes a perceptive though subtle observation on the perverted values of our society in contrasting the fates of Richard Silenski and Rufus Scott. Both men are members of minority group. Both have experienced the demoralizing effects of racial prejudice. Both are aspiring artists. Each man is required by society to compromise his values- - a compromise which results in fame for Richard and death for Rufus. The perennial racist argument, applied to
this situation is that, Rufus could have saved himself. Ambition has no regard for race. Yet it would seem that this is a gross over simplification of the problem as Baldwin explains in the following lines.

"It is perfectly true that the idea of rising expectations is part of the American experience. You leave the famine-ridden farm in Ireland, you come to America, you fit into the American scene, you rise, you become part of a new social structure. But that is only the European immigrants experience. It is not the Black experience..... the black experience is entirely different. You find your self in a slum and you realise at a certain point that no amount of labour, no amount of hard work, no amount of soap is going to get you out of that slum". (AC 390)

This is the dilemma faced by Rufus Scott, black American from Ghetto of Harlem. He becomes symbolic of the countless other black youth, lacking the hope of rising expectations. They succumb to the forces perpetuated by the white social order. Their survival depends upon the black man's recognition that the standards by which the country lives are not for him. Shortly before his death, Rufus begins to listen to the whistle of the river boats and he thinks, "wouldn't it be nice to get on a boat again and go some place away from all
these nowhere people, where man could be treated like a man”. Rufus longs for another country where his dream of love can reach fulfillment. But neither he nor any of other major characters are ever able to enter the country.

In the final scenes of the novel, the movement of the characters from innocence to experience becomes evident. Vivaldo, having failed both Ida and Rufus, gains the courage to involve himself in the lives of others. As a result he is able to put aside his fantasies about Ida’s life, accept her confession of infidelity, and honour the tender feelings for her. Cass discovers that the image of Richard which she has fashioned is a false one. She begins to realise, finally, that she has loved her husband as a child, and that her true personality has been sublimated to Richard’s needs. Eric matures to the extent that he begins to understand that frustration and anguish are vital components of human nature. It is this awareness that gives him the strength to rise and achieve a final acceptance of his bisexuality. All of these characters are moving “towards Bethlehem” as the title of Book Three suggests. Having rejected traditional barriers of family, race, country, religion and sex, they are progressing towards
a discovery of their own “moral centres” which, ultimately hold the promise of a new and total understanding of themselves.

**Another Country** is designed as a Modern Inferno. Lovers throw themselves at each other at lust and violence. Rufus torments Leona. Leona, merely by being white, torments him. Ida cheats on Vivaldo and breaks his heart. Richard and Cass despise each other because of the falsity of their life. Ellis, the television executive, who is going to launch Ida’s career, treats Ida like a whore. Everyone betrays every one else. Cass has an affair with Eric, Eric with Vivaldo; Vivaldo with Ida; Ida with Ellis.

James Baldwin sees the white characters as the prime, though not the sole movers in all this evil. It is the white characters who have become unable or unwilling to probe the dark side of the human nature, the side which contains one’s basic animalism and humanity as well. If explored, it might release these people from their self-made confinement. This confinement has made the white, brutal and ruthless, whereas the black characters have been brutalised by the whites. The black characters also suffer, but they understand the source of their suffering, because they are in the dark side of this experience. The idea is that
blacks and whites must go to create another country, in order to revamp or revitalise the one they have. The pervasive condition of *Another Country* is chaos, a chaos in which various freedoms oppose various restraints in search of a new order. In notes of a Native Son Baldwin says “the only real concern of the artist is to recreate out of the disorder of life, that order, which is art”. Instead of making order out of chaos these artists accomplish the opposite.

Baldwin does not underestimate the power of love, mysterious as its operations seem to be; but it is the power of hate that one really feels, when we read the novel. In his collection of essays titled *Nobody Knows My Name*. Baldwin says that Negroes hate white people and, that hatred exists in the opening section about Rufus and again in the final account of Ida’s confrontation of Vivaldo. Perhaps all Negroes do not feel as Rufus and Ida, as Baldwin himself does. Baldwin seen that the Negroes ought to exhibit their hatred.

Baldwin’s hatred is not limited to the resentment that Negroes so legitimately feel towards the white people who have abused and exploited and scorned and despised them, through the centuries. He has painted a Dantesque picture of New York— the heat, the starch, the gross inhumanity. And he sees
New York as the symbol of contemporary American civilization. It is significant that most of his characters are treated as outcasts because they are Negroes. Eric, because he is a homosexual, Cass, because of her husband's false values, and Vivaldo, because of his failure in self-fulfilment, except by way of alternation. The only characters who are willing to exist within the framework of contemporary society are, Richard Silenski, who welcomes a cheap success, and a cynical and empty impresario named Ellis.

Another Country is indeed a monument to the inarticulate desires of its characters. It conveys the frantic nature of their search for answers, and the inadequacy of the questions which they ask of themselves, of each other and of life. As in Baldwin's earlier work, however, opposed to this despair, is a muted hope.

This scene is reminiscent of the aftermath of John Grimes' religious experience in Go Tell It on the Mountain, when he becomes aware of Harlem as "exhausted and clean and new". But Vivaldo's feeling is achieved only with Eric, not with Ida or Jane. The equation of homosexuality with innocence and purity is also evident in the relationships between Eric and Yves, and Eric and
Rufus, it is approached in the Vivaldo-Rufus relationship, which is latently homosexual. In the heterosexual relationships in Another Country, this feeling is approached only in the affair between Eric and Cass, which they enter into with the understanding that it will be a temporary matter of convenience.

It may be correct to say that Baldwin was very much aware of the meaninglessness of the many of the sexual encounters described in Another Country which intends to be a vision of the modern waste land. Another Country is a movement to the inarticulate desires of his characters. It conveys the frantic nature of their search for answers and the inadequacy of the questions which they ask of themselves, of each other and of life. But many critics have tried to read Another Country like Giovanni's Room as a plea for homosexuality. Though many of the homosexual relationships in Baldwin's work have a certain purity and innocence, he has never maintained that these qualities are a viable basis for mature relationships. Knowing or discovering why they are and what they are, Baldwin's men deliberately choose to love each other. It is the love rather than the sex which is considered important; the sex is simply the declaration and the proof of that love and an acceptance of its vulnerability. The
homosexual relationships in Baldwin's fiction are highly transitory, they lead only to moments of illumination such as the one experienced by Vivaldo and Eric. The heterosexual relationships are more painful, but deeper.

Baldwin's opinion is that the problem of the novel lies in individual responsibility. The injustices committed by groups against other groups and individuals against other individuals come about because individuals do not know themselves; they cannot be honest to themselves or to others. They do not possess the capacity to love. The idea of love is central to Baldwin's thinking and lies at the heart of his system of values. Another Country can be analysed in terms of what it says about love given the relations that Baldwin sees between love and the rest of life. Baldwin talks about the politics involved when love is seen as more basic to societal life than factors having to do with dynamics of complex, industrial society.

The key to understanding Another Country lies in the antithetical relation, in which Rufus and Eric stand. Rufus is incapable of sustaining relations of any kind with other people because he neither understands nor accepts himself. His desperate plight is precipitated when his desire for self -
destruction is projected outward onto Leona, his mistress, whom he drives into insanity before himself committing suicide. Prior to his suicide he has exiled himself from family and friends, and we see him at the nadir of his life-hungry, filthy, homeless and alone. Seeing no possibility of changing the essential quality of his life, he climbs atop the George Washington Bridge and piteously addressing God, "Ain't I your baby, too?" leaps to his death.

The novel's theme of love is given with the assumption that the chief problem among the characters in the novel (and in the world) is the incapacity to love. Generated by whatever psychic condition as it may be, it keeps them out of touch with their basic selves. Another Country contains more social protest than any of Baldwin's novels. Rufus and Leona constantly encounter racist reaction to their being on the street together and living together. So do Ida and Vivaldo. On many occasions shows that policemen are ready to enforce the uncodified laws regarding proper relations between the black and white sexes. Hence there is a real and actual social dimension to racial relations depicted in the book. We see even that the interaction between Rufus and Leona is determined by social attitudes.
An evaluation of Another Country lies in its successful presentation of life in a wider canvas than his earlier novels Go Tell It on the Mountain and Giovanni's Room. Another Country is a testimony to the growing consciousness of Baldwin as an artist. It is in fact a stage in his spiritual journey, from Harlem to the Greenwich village. It has already been noted that Baldwin in his earlier novels used sex as a metaphor and he used sex in such a way that many writers of his period were not able to do. Coupled with his sensuality is Baldwin's experience of Christianity that gives a mystic dimension to Another Country. The rejection of the Christian God, and the search for the omnipotent who will care for all his children, white or black, gives a touching and pathetic twist to the episodes of Another Country. When Rufus Scott cries in anguish “Ain't” your Baby, too? “ the pathos of this single question is well-matched with the anguish of Rufus Scott's remark. ‘All right, you mother fucking God Almighty bastard. I'm coming to you” (AC 88).

The racial relations give, a true to life semblance to the novel and as we are aware of the monstrosity of the problem of whit aggression against black we are not surprised at Rufus' death or Eda's anguish.
James Baldwin being a Negro himself portrays all these characters in their fully developed dimensions and the novel cries out to everything individual. Rufus Scott's pathetic speech before he commits suicide is an anguish felt not only in American with black and white problem but also throughout the world where the oppressor and the oppressed exist even today.