LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (LLIDS)

ISSN 2457-0044

www.ellids.com

# Locating Innocence in Sexual Difference: Problematized Masculinity in Hemingway and Baldwin

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http://ellids.com/archives/2023/05/5.3-Toumi.pdf

**Abstract** | This paper examines the theme of gender in Ernest Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden* and James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*. Both expatriate artists interrogate in their novels an American gendered identity tied to innocence and trauma in historical junctures. For these influential members of the New/Lost Generation, sexuality is less a biological fact than a social construction and a performativity. In their counter-narratives, both iconoclastic American writers dramatize traumatized and problematized masculinity which clings to a false sense of security. They depict the male protagonists as troubled patriarchal subjectivity-formations struggling to rehabilitate the innocence and happiness of an Eden-like social space against the "sea change" of history and the dazzling light of personal experience. As transatlantic modernist icons whose literary sensibility is framed by the experience of the Great War and its aftermath, Hemingway and Baldwin are witnesses to a historical era characterized by a social order in flux in which hegemonic patriarchy is in crisis against the backdrop of emerging new identities. In exilic space, they put under review the standards defining gendered identity by positing the loss of innocence connected to sexuality and the embrace of sexual difference as a condition for endurance and the maintenance of a civilized and sustainable democratic social arrangement.

**Keywords** | Ernest Hemingway, James Baldwin, Sexuality, Patriarchy, Masculinity, Innocence, Gender Fluidity, Identity, Subjectivity

Gender is an important aspect of personal and collective identity that both Ernest Hemingway and James Baldwin reconstruct as individuals and as writers. In their modernist quest for meaning, both American writers construe sexuality as a social construction and trace the genealogy of normalized heterosexual patriarchy to the capitalist "division of labor."[1] For Baldwin, as well as for Hemingway, the historicization and contextualization of gendered identity in modern society expose it as ideological function, not truth. The First World War and its aftermath have had a particularly great impact on the reformation of their gendered consciousness in a changing social landscape.[2] Men's traumatic experience in the war and women's rise in the social scale have entailed a radical redefinition of traditional conceptions of femininity, masculinity, and manhood in a context characterized by the blurring of gender roles and the ambiguity of sexual identity in the public sphere.[3]

Hemingway and Baldwin have made use of expatriation as a means to review personal identity. The Parisian expatriate space, with its comparatively removed and relaxed social atmosphere, enabled both budding artists to interrogate American gendered identity. This engagement was not simply a matter of enacting the forbidden in American society in alien territory, but about an artistic effort in exilic space to come to terms with gendered fluidity by problematizing masculinity and by locating innocence in sexual difference. The authors put their white male protagonists in the European setting to tap the source of American culture—self-defined by its exclusion of sexual difference—by testing the limits of their understanding of gender and by juxtaposing innocence about sexuality, tied to social upbringing, with actually lived experience. Such a strategic employment of self-exile may serve as a metaphor for the movement from innocence to experience and as a paradigm for the reconstruction of personal identity in the context of modern alienation.

Baldwin reminds us that he is the descendant of a preacher and knows perfectly well that the original Eden tree in the Bible is a sight of existential ambiguity. "It is 'the

[1]As Baldwin argues, this was the case in ancient times. Men protect their kin as warriors, while women retain their nurturing function. However, such a division of labor—and human relations in general—has been unprecedentedly and vastly "commercialized" in the modern era. Such levels of commercialization of gendered roles, the American activist-author explains, are new ways of domestication and control in contemporary patriarchal society ("Freaks" 815–816).

[2]Hemingway's fiction is not about nostalgia for a pastoral innocence which rejects the momentum of history and change by clinging to the values and identities of the pre-war social order. For Hemingway, the First Great War and its colossal impact serve as a metaphor for modernity (Holcomb and Scruggs 9). In fact, the influential member of the Lost Generation claims the war and its violence as his "heritage" (*Selected Letters* 808).

[3]See, Martin 47–50.

tree of the knowledge of good and evil.' What is meant by the masculine sensibility is the ability to eat the fruit of that tree, and live. What is meant by the 'human condition' is that, indeed, one has no choice: eat, or die" ("As Much Truth" 39).[4] For the African American author, gendered identity is as ambiguous as the tree in the Eden narrative. As he puts it in an interview, "nobody, no man and no woman, is precisely what they think they are, love is where you find it" ("Civil Rights"). Similarly, behind the almost unassailable machismo popular image of Hemingway lurks the man and artist in androgynous spaces. Hemingway tells his androgynous son Gregory that they both "come from a very strange tribe," implying that both father and son are strangers to the cult of American white male masculinity and innocence (qtd. in J. Hemingway 426). In *The Garden of Eden*, the author debunks this macho myth that critics[5] associate with his name.[6] "How can we be us and have the things we have and do what we do and you be this that's in the clippings?" David's wife, Catherine, wonders in the novel (24).[7]

This article examines the themes of sexuality and gender in Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden* and Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*.[8] Through the technique of close reading, the paper explores how both self-exiled artists interrogate in the novels an American innocence tied to sexuality. By managing the representations of prototypical American characters that adhere to socially-constructed masculine self-images, they produce a crisis-packed situation in their counter-narratives in which the dramatic denouement is only logically resolvable if their fictional protagonists lose innocence by accepting (sexual) difference. Hemingway and Baldwin redefine in *Garden* and *Giovanni* standards governing fixed notions about sexuality and gender. While the masculine sensibility in mainstream modern society posits heterosexual relations as the standard for normality, both artists' narrative strategy consists in dramatizing in the novel free-floating forms of desire which defy standards of sexual normativity. In this context, they define "innocence" as the incapacity or unwillingness to recognize the complexity and the ambiguity of gendered identity in a changing post-First World War social landscape. Their protagonists cannot make the movement from innocence/immaturity to experience/growth because they fail to come to terms with gendered fluidity outside patriarchal identity. Baldwin is ironical of the "attempt of the American to at once preserve his innocence and arrive at man's estate" ("Preservation of Innocence" 597). Sharing Baldwin's redefinition of manhood, Hemingway tells his son Gregory that "it is very difficult to be a man" (qtd. in "Ernest Hemingway: Wrestling with Life").

[4]As a teenager, Baldwin himself became a minister preaching sermons before he left the church for good. He later shifted into an uncompromising anti-Christian position.

[5]Hemingway complains on one occasion that "all these guys [critics] have theories and try to fit you into the theory" (*Selected Letters* 887). Similarly, Baldwin's experience with critics and criticism taught him, as he put it in a conversation with Nikki Giovanni, that "a real critic is very rare" *(A Dialogue* 83).

[6]Hemingway finds certain variants of this macho image very offensive. He says in one of his letters that "he-man is rude to say" (*Selected Letters* 818).

[7]*The Garden of Eden* takes place in France in the early years of the 1920s when Hemingway was living in Paris as a young expatriate writer. Aspects of the life and career of the main protagonist of the novel, David Bourne, reflect those of the writer. We learn from the beginning of the narrative that David is a budding American writer who lives and works as an expatriate in Paris.

[8]Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden* and Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* are abbreviated in citations as *GOE* and *GR* and are hereafter referred to as *Garden* and *Giovanni* in the text, respectively.

This reading shows how Hemingway and Baldwin probe the origins of culture by tracing such subjectivity-formation to social upbringing and its hegemonic heirlooms. It concludes by noting that the rhetoric of "tolerance" is inadequate in sustaining plurality and maintaining peace in modern democratic society, and posits the acceptance of the ambiguity of gendered identity and the embracing of sexual otherness as the ideal model for managing social space. The starting point for such social transformation is the individual and its potentiality to affect a major change of heart through lived experience, both Baldwin and Hemingway suggest in *Giovanni* and *Garden*.[9]

The main story of *The Garden of Eden*[10] is about the personal experience of David Bourne, a young writer, and his comparatively well-off wife, Catherine Hill, a homemaker. They have just got married when the narrative kicks off and are enjoying a honeymoon in the paradisiacal French Riviera. They enjoy their time to the fullest, eating, drinking, swimming, and making love. In their pursuit of happiness and construction of paradise in pastoral southern France, they venture to 'enhance' heterosexual desire through forms of erotica and exotica, Catherine taking the lead. She is obsessed with tanning her body and bleaching her hair, urging her husband to follow her lead. While David's carnal desire is stimulated by Catherine's erotics and exotics, he does not take her exploits seriously and already harbors some unexpressed apprehensions about the whole show. Only a few pages into the narrative Catherine warns her husband that she is of "the destructive type" and has subversive intentions with regard to some implied transgressive form of sexuality:

> "I have these flashes of intuition," he said. "I'm the inventive type."
> "I'm the destructive type," she said. "And I'm going to destroy you. They'll put a plaque up on the wall of the building outside the room. I'm going to wake up in the night and do something to you that you've never even heard of or imagined. I was going to last night but I was too sleepy."
> "You're too sleepy to be dangerous."
> "Don't lull yourself into any false security. Oh darling let's have it hurry up and be lunch time." (5–6)

This "dangerous" form of sexuality turns out to be gender reversal and androgyny, which the husband feels is threatening his constructed masculine image and a 'normal' and controllable heterosexual relationship. Anxiety builds in David about the "security" of his masculinity and sense of constructed manhood as Catherine leads him into the deep and troubling waters of subversive sexual experimentations. Catherine engages in the endeavor to "change" her gender. She wears "a true boy's haircut" (15), calls herself "Peter," names David "Catherine" and claims him as girlfriend, trying all the while to *initiate* him into the world of gender fluidity (17). David feels quite ambivalent about her

[9]A "nation" is made up of its individuals and their "achievement," and the "quality" of the community is by definition determined by the quality of its members (Baldwin, "The White Problem" 91).

[10]*The Garden of Eden* was heavily edited and posthumously published in 1986. This is the title Hemingway himself gives the novel, as its editor Charles Scribner, Jr. tells us in his sketchy preface to the text (*GOE* vii). The author first began writing it in 1946 and worked on the original manuscript intermittently for about fifteen years (Oliver 169). The main action of the story takes place in France in a post-First World War period. Embedded in the main story is David's African narrative which chronicles his childhood experiences with his dad in pre-war pastoral Africa.

plans of sexual experimentations. The situation is further complicated by the introduction of the gorgeous character of Marita into the couple's private life, a plot development which is meant initially to maximize the eroticization of their sexual liaison. The threesome now engages occasionally in various sexual forms, including group sex, lesbianism, and androgyny.

David is overwhelmed by panic. He feels that his masculine world is cracking and reacts by taking refuge in the certain and comforting terrain of romantic and romanticized fiction. He reads W. H. Hudson's *Away and Long Ago*. His reaction to post-war changing social realities is reminiscent of Hemingway's characterization of the Jewish persona, Robert Cohn, in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). Like *Garden*'s David, Robert reads and revisits Hudson to flee from post-war actualities into a vanishing pastoral world (*Sun Also Rises* 11). Hudson's pastoral narratives make both protagonists "feel rich" (*GOE* 94–95) and undivided in a historical context characterized by loss, fragmentation, and alienation. Robert, like David, is in love with a post-war 'modern' woman, Brett Ashley, whose "hair was brushed back like a boy's" (*Sun Also Rises* 21) and whose promiscuity is devastating to his knightly love. Unlike Robert, David knows, although his innocence persists, that he cannot 'stop' his wife's "different […] time" (*GOE* 231). Both men's pastoral dream of a domesticated woman, whose gender role is fixed and well-defined within traditional masculine representations and significations, is shattered by the rising new identities post First World War. In *Sun Also Rises*, Robert, like the Spanish bull-fighter Pedro Romero, does not see Brett beyond his masculine romance. Her "true love" has passed away in the war (35) and she is now the traumatized, hedonistic, and promiscuous 'new woman' of the century who can even be the uncontrollable *femme fatale*. She is the sort of woman who can put 'innocent' men through inferno (25). Jake Barnes, the emasculated narrator-protagonist in the novel, and Brett Ashley find it "funny" that Pedro wants to make Brett look "more womanly" and marry her (202). Robert's romantic attachment to Brett breaks his heart and reduces him to a pathetic figure by the end of the novel, "crying" like a child (161). In *Garden*, Catherine mocks David's paternalism, telling him, "I am of age and because I'm married to you doesn't make me your slave or your chattel" (225), and challenges his claims to traditional masculinity by urging him to see the hybridity of gendered identity. "I am you and her […] I'm everybody," she tells him (196). Even Marita, who is willing to perform heterosexual identity and accept subalternity within the system of patriarchy to fulfil her dreams of domesticity and 'have' David (she "loved and respected" his masculine world (193)), tells him that she can be "just the way" he is (185), that is, an androgynous individual.

Everything has changed since the time of the Great War, including "the weather," and "what was not changed was changing fast." David, "as a man of the world, probably saw it in the same way" (*GOE* 94). And yet, despite being a travelling writer, he struggles to maintain some semblance of pastoral innocence. Hemingway is using the "weather" and its fluctuations here as a metaphor for modernity. Marita says that Catherine is "panicked" by "her different time" (231). The truth is that while Cohn and David are alarmed by the "time," at least Catherine and Brett confront it despite their confusion and stress. Survival in this fast-changing world, Hemingway says in *Garden*, necessitates a

reconstruction of personal identity outside the values of a dying patriarchal world order. It is a time of social unrest and uncertainty, but total change is sure to come.

David is increasingly tormented by guilt and is deeply disturbed by a gnawing sense of alienation. He is alienated from his self-image in the mirror (*GOE* 168) and uses the booze to take away his "remorse" (69). He feels stuck in the mud of his new immediate experiences with Catherine and is of the opinion that "writing is the only progress you make" (166). He feels he can impose order on his existence by removing himself from reality through writing. It enables him to inhabit the masculine world of his father, a space in which his wife has no place (146). He is haunted by his childhood memories of Safaris to pastoral Africa with a father who represents the heroic code of grace under pressure for him. Against his wife's wishes, he does not feel like writing about their honeymoon exploits. He abandons writing Catherine's "project" of transgressive sexuality and is very careful not "to get the work mixed up" (the honeymoon narrative with the African journal) (188; 190). Catherine's subversive feminist voice responds by telling him to assume his responsibility as a man and as a writer by engaging with the time's gendered "narrative" instead of regressing to the stasis of the patriarchal values and its chivalric ideals. "Someone has to show you that the stories are just your way of escaping your duty," she tells him (190). Insensible to his wife's insistent demands, David carries on his narrative "project" of writing fragmented recollections of his bygone adolescent adventures with his dad in the black continent. Hemingway crafts two antagonistic narratives with two juxtaposing time frames in the novel—one is Catherine's in the present and the other is David's in the past—each one pushing in opposite directions, increasingly creating distances between the couple. As Baldwin puts it in his essay on The Lost Generation, significantly titled "As Much Truth As One Can Bear," *The Garden of Eden* exemplifies the "two strains in American fiction—nostalgia for the loss of innocence as opposed to an ironical apprehension of what such a nostalgia means" (38).

In *Garden*, Hemingway crafts a pathetic white male protagonist who has become troubled not only by a growing sense of insecurity about his masculinity encountering modern transgressive sexuality, but also by the horrors as well as the delights of the ambiguity of sexual identity. At moments of painful self-examination, David would acknowledge the joy his potential homosexuality gives him. He would confront his own 'illicit sexuality' outside religious jargon such as "sin" (21) and "temptation": "'All right. You like it,' he said. 'Now go through with the rest of it whatever it is and don't ever say anyone tempted you or that anyone bitched you'" (84). Steeped into the culture of his time, David resorts to the various Christian, patriarchal, and medical discourses available to him to explain and contain Catherine's subversive feminist discourse and practice. He delineates her new gendered identity as "perversion" and as mental disorder (120). He suggests that they visit the "Geneva" psychoanalytic circle for consultation and treatment, but she declines his offer for fear of incarceration in a medical institution (158). David makes use of knowledges and discourses which have the air of scientificity or sanctity to validate his patriarchal politics of containment and general discursive system of "exclusion."[11] David reproduces Catherine's identity through the simple act of *naming*.

[11]In "The Order of Discourse," Michel Foucault discuses "the procedures" by which "the production of discourse" is governed by a system of "exclusion" based on "prohibition," "division," and "will to truth."

He calls her "crazy," "devil," and describes her sexuality in terms of "sin," and "perversion" (44; 45; 21; 120). He attempts to incarcerate her in a psychiatric clinic, and finally abandons her by the end of the story. This mechanism of "radical realism" is a form of power that creates the object and its corresponding reality in an oppressive social milieu in which a potential fightback is effectively checked (Said 72). In *Garden*, Hemingway calls for the need to update our language to describe sexuality in modernity beyond patriarchal and paternalistic discursive formations, power relations, and pastoral innocence.

Hemingway is fully aware that sexuality and gender are social constructions tied to innocence and the exercise of power, and shows us in the novel a character tormented by a guilt that is traceable to social upbringing. He writes symbolically that David "welcomed his father's presence in the bar until he glanced in the mirror and saw he was alone" (*GOE* 148).[12] The "mirror" metaphorically becomes for the protagonist a confounding sight of conflictual self-images and identities that he fails to reconcile. He retreats into his coherent and undivided "inner core" (183) by miraculously and childishly rehabilitating, though ambivalently, the masculine world of his father and his Africa, and by embracing Marita's subordination, offers of domesticity, and normalized heterosexual love. Marita "*retrieved*" the manuscript of one of David's African stories that his jealous wife had attempted to tear apart, and the remainder of his journals starts "*returning* to him intact" (157; 247; emphasis added). David also finds a way to 'correct' the writing of Catherine's transgressive sexual/feminist "narrative" by introducing in it his relationship with Marita and making it triumph. He forcibly attempts to bring about the romantic impact of the happy ending both in fiction and in real life that the masculine sensibility desires. Baldwin explains such attitude as "the American way of looking on the world, as a place to be corrected, and in which innocence is inexplicably lost" ("As Much Truth" 36). The anxiety of this pastoral ideal is relatively assuaged by preserving innocence about mysteriously lost identity; it ambivalently holds on the impossible fantasy that the former self can be reclaimed after the impact of encountering difference and loss. Marita in *Garden* innocently wonders how the pastoral tranquility of David's Eden-like African narrative is profoundly shaken by violence: "It was strange and how do you say *pastorale*. Then it became terrible in a way I could not explain" (156; *italics* in original). Catherine, called "devil" by her husband, almost inexplicably disappears in nature by the end of the novel as though she were a vanishing howling Satan that has just been cursed by a pious and God-fearing human. Here, the language being used and the plotting is almost fairy-tale like and as juvenile as the "child's notebook" David uses to write his fiction (158), which is Hemingway's way of accentuating the innocence and the sense of unreality of his protagonist's reaction to experience. Like Robert Cohn, David

In Western society, the French philosopher argues, "sexuality and politics" are the sights where discursive power is most visible and effective (52–55).

[12]Hemingway's fiction, like Baldwin's, is autobiographical. He tells his interviewer George Plimpton in 1958 that a writer may recuperate in fiction fragments of "forgotten racial or family experience" ("Interview with E. Hemingway" 30). Ernest's relationship with his dad, Clarence, is powerfully dramatized in his fiction. Both in real life and in fiction, this relationship is characterized by a profound ambivalence, especially as it relates to what James Baldwin calls in his essay on the Lost Generation as the American innocence-connected "masculine sensibility" ("As Much Truth" 38). In *Garden,* the author looks back at that tenuous relationship and zooms in on this aspect of "family experience" to see it with the detached critical distance of a writer's eye.

Bourne is shown ironically to be "a case of arrested development" (*Sun Also Rises* 39). They are dreamers of sacred and pastoral lands in post-war modern times. In the context of her analysis of some of Hemingway's fiction, Morrison reminds us in *Playing in the Dark* that the point of view of a writer and a fictional protagonist must not be conflated (86). Hemingway is an artist who always distances himself from the literary material he consciously creates, and is concerned with chronicling, however imperfectly, "what happened," as prominent Lost Generation author Malcolm Cowley puts it in his 1937 review of Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not* (180).

Like Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden*, Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*[13] takes place in France in a post-war era. In this setting and context, the protagonist, also named David, undergoes a crisis at the level of his (gendered) identity, like *Garden*'s David. Baldwin kicks off his narrative with the character 'confronting' his self-image in the window glass of a house in the French Riviera, brooding over his 'heart of darkness' as a guilty descendant and enactor of bloody Arian identity:

> I stand at the window of this great house in the south of France as night falls, the night which is leading me to the most terrible morning of my life. I have a drink in my hand, there is a bottle at my elbow. I watch my reflection in the darkening gleam of the window pane. My reflection is tall, perhaps rather like an arrow, my blond hair gleams. My face is like a face you have seen many times. My ancestors conquered a continent, pushing across death-laden plains, until they came to an ocean which faced away from Europe into a darker past. (*GR* 221)

What triggers off this interrogation of personal and collective identity in David, "*monsieur l'americain*" (*GR* 263), is his disquieting and traumatic 'encounter' in Paris with a poor young man of Italian origins named Giovanni. Being a quintessential American steeped in white male notions of manhood and caught in his narcissistic and aggressive self-image of socially constructed masculinity, his 'homosexual' love for Giovanni initiates his dilemma about (gendered) identity. His ultimate panic-stricken and guilt-ridden cowardly betrayal of Giovanni, and his unwillingness and incapability to lose innocence traps him in loneliness, excruciating pain, moral bankruptcy, and existential inertia.

David's voyage to Paris is less an expatriate's journey of self-discovery and growth than escape and stagnation. "If I had had any intimation that the self I was going to find would turn out to be only the same self from which I had spent so much time in flight, I would have stayed at home," he says in his meditations (*GR* 236). He is not likely to act, but only "will be stiller" (221). David ultimately comes to the knowledge in exilic space that he would never be able to run away from the ambiguity of his (sexual) identity by changing places or through mastery of "self-deception" (235). It is only by completely, and without laments, losing innocence and accepting his ambiguous identity, Baldwin suggests in the novel, that David could come to terms with himself and others, and achieve authenticity of being. Man's existential condition is already tragic, Baldwin's reasoning goes, and to survive it one has to "say Yes to life" (222) by surrendering to the power of love. Love is "the only human possibility" in a world characterized by loss and

[13]Published in 1956. The main action of the narrative takes place in France in a post-Second Great War era. A series of flashbacks in the novel move the story back in time to the inter-war period.

pain, as the African-American writer puts it in an interview ("Civil Rights"). He continues by explaining that humanity is linked by a common destiny, and that the acceptance of the shared experience of pain and loss through the power of human compassion is wisdom speaking ("Civil Rights"). In such a philosophical vision, "joy" is posited as a concrete and attainable alternative to "happiness." "Joy" is the term frequently used by Baldwin in *Giovanni*, not "happiness." In such a worldview, Man's existence is tragic because he has lost the original happiness and innocence of the Garden:

> [N]obody stays in the garden of Eden […] life only offers the choice of remembering the garden or forgetting it. Either, or: it takes strength to remember, it takes another kind of strength to forget, it takes a hero to do both. People who remember court madness through pain, the pain of the perpetually recurring death of their innocence; people who forget court another kind of madness, the madness of the denial of pain and the hatred of innocence; and the world is most divided between madmen who remember and madmen who forget. Heroes are rare. (*GR* 239)

Man's tragedy lies in the fact that the Eden-like existential condition of "innocence" and "happiness" is short-lived. As Baldwin puts it in *Giovanni*, "Perhaps everybody has a garden of Eden, I don't know; but they have scarcely seen their garden before they see the flaming sword" (239). In order to enjoy existence, one has to accept such fundamental facts of life as loss, pain, and death. This blues-like attitude towards life is what makes the difference between the child and the man, "innocence" and "wisdom" ("As Much Truth" 37). Describing the theme of *Garden*, Hemingway says that the novel is about the "happiness of the Garden that a man must lose" (qtd. in Oliver 169). The whole existential question for Hemingway is about "how to live in it" (*Sun Also Rises* 124) through survivalist strategies (e.g., "not discuss casualties," *GOE* 227) and by en*joy*ing the basic pleasures of life to counter modern alienation.[14]

The joy that David first experiences as a teenager with his younger best friend Joey is his first encounter with his 'dark' sexuality and ambiguous gendered identity. The experience is short-lived, however, because the spontaneity of the homosexual act, which Baldwin defamiliarizes as a 'natural' act of "love" (225), is almost immediately transformed for the protagonist into a guilt-ridden, panic-stricken immoral and emasculating act (226). Like Hemingway's David, it is none other than the psychic 'presence' of the father-figure that causes the reflex, the shame, and the horror. Both *Garden*'s and *Giovanni*'s white male protagonists find it extremely difficult, in fact almost impossible, to 'kill' the interiorized father-figure and the patriarchal/masculine identity he represents. It is such subjectivity-formation in the patriarchal society, at the center of which looms large the father-figure, "the bulldog," the psychic monster, that produces characters like Hemingway's and Baldwin's egos, tormented by guilt and torn psychologically apart by a conflict between desire and a suppressing and crippling superego: "There is something fantastic in the spectacle I now present to myself of having run so far, so hard, across the ocean even, only to find myself brought up short once more before the bulldog in my own backyard—the yard, in the meantime, having grown

[14]See also, Baldwin's "The Uses of the Blues."

smaller and the bulldog bigger" (*GR* 223).[15] David's half-conscious mistreatment of his best friend is traceable to his father's repulsive, aggressive, and alienating rites of initiation of the son into masculinity and manhood: "I did not want to be his buddy […] what passed between us as masculine candor exhausted and appalled me" (232).

The patriarchal/masculine social order that the father-figure represents operates on various levels to ensure the smooth functioning of its individuals within its hegemonic regime. This system galvanizes its "ideological apparatuses" (the family unit, the church, the school) to guarantee that its subjects "work by themselves," its coercive institutions and disciplinary power always being in the background in case culture fails to do the job bloodlessly (Althusser 145; 181). In this context, the characters in *Garden* and *Giovanni* find themselves overwhelmed by the psychic workings of the interiorized masculine stereotype and its most effective psychological mechanisms, namely repression and guilt. In this way, the patriarchal system monitors its subjects "panoptically."[16] David's sexual encounter as a teenager with the boy, Joey, deeply upsets his tranquility, and its impact "was to make me secretive and cruel. I could not discuss what had happened to me with anyone, I could not even admit it to myself; and, while I never thought about it, it remained, nevertheless, at the bottom of my mind, as still and as awful as a decomposing corpse. And it changed, it thickened, it soured the atmosphere of my mind" (232).

Both Hemingway's and Baldwin's protagonists are crippled by the prospect of being subject to disciplinary power and its certain immediate backlash in case its cultural 'defenses' are violated. In both novels, the fears of the protagonists are relatively appeased by the element of secrecy. They are anxious, and even horrified, not to upset the visible daily accepted modes of behavior. For instance, while David Bourne and his wife's 'illicit sexuality' is acted out behind closed doors, aspects of their "pioneering" (*GOE* 167) and partly visible libertarian gendered performances in the narrative are carefully kept from coming into confrontation with traditional society:

> [T]he local priest disapproved. But the girl went to mass on Sunday wearing a skirt and a long-sleeved cashmere sweater with her hair covered with a scarf and the young man stood in the back of the church with the men. They gave twenty francs which was more than a dollar then and since the priest took up the collection himself their attitude toward the church was known and the wearing of shorts in the village was regarded as an eccentricity by foreigners rather than an attempt against the morality of the ports of the Camargue. The priest did not speak to them when they wore shorts but he did not denounce them and when they wore trousers in the evening the three of them bowed to each other. (6)

As another instance, David warns his wife at one scene in the novel that "you can't swim in Spain the way we do here" because they would "get arrested" (30). Similarly, *Giovanni*'s David remembers one of his fleeting affairs with a guy in the times of the

[15]The "bulldog" could refer to Baldwin's step-father who represents for the step-son an aggressive form of patriarchal social order which is based on the domestication of women and children. Baldwin's traumatic experience with his step-father is especially powerfully dramatized in his *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953).

[16]This involves "the tension between the synchronic panoptical vision of domination—the demand for identity, stasis—and the counter pressure of history" (Bhabha 86). See also, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (240).

army and the war, and recalls the horror he feels when the "fairy" is 'discovered' and harshly penalized: "The panic his punishment caused in me was as close as I ever came to facing in myself the terrors I sometimes saw clouding another man's eyes" (236). In such a panoptical setting, Hemingway's and Baldwin's characters feel vulnerable and powerless to 'act' in accordance with their genuine emotions and individual free will in private as well as in public. Secrecy and hypocrisy function here ideologically as a base for the exercise of power. Society may not punish its subjects for forms of closeted illicitness but for the most part for disclosing 'perversion' in defiance of the symbolic, and actual, dominance of authority. This means that individuals cannot challenge authority in the open in organized social movements, that their fear implicitly recognizes their subalternity, and that power has always had the upper hand. So the question may not only be of normality or rights but also of hegemony and the recognition of authority.

The metaphor of "the sea change" is used by both Hemingway and Baldwin to refer to a transformation in masculine identity and self-image. Giovanni's room, situated in the marginalized outskirts of Paris, and which is shared by David, is a site at once of psychic and social conflict in which identity is being reconstructed. In this room, *Giovanni*'s David undergoes "a sea change" similar to the one undergone by *Garden*'s David:

> I scarcely know how to describe that room. It became, in a way, every room I had ever been in and every room I find myself in hereafter will remind me of Giovanni's room. I did not really stay there very long—we met before the spring began and I left there during the summer—but it still seems to me that I spent a lifetime there. Life in that room seemed to be occurring underwater, as I say, and it is certain that I underwent a sea change there. (289)

Baldwin probably is making here an allusion to Hemingway's short story titled "The Sea Change," first published in 1933. This neglected piece of fiction is rarely discussed by Hemingway scholars to point to its author's possible gender politics and his revision of American identity in a post-First World War era. This very short narrative is developed predominantly by means of conversation, which is partly Hemingway's way of saying that dialogue and self-examination could be the beginning of a coming to terms with oneself and others in social space. Papa's startling short story dramatizes the dilemma of traditional masculinity in modernity. The girl in the story tells her man that she is in love with a woman, and that she would leave him at least for a while for her new sexual life and love. The man reacts in his macho fashion, telling her hopelessly that he would have killed her new lover "if it was a man" (376). The girl's lesbianism renders all the man's masculine action and reaction desperately ineffective. The man, called Phil in the story, also describes her "change" as "perversion," but the "girl" argues that "we're made up of all sorts of things," reminding him that he always knows it and that he has "used it well enough" (377), pointing in all this to their actually lived and desired sexual ambiguity. Phil, with all the excruciating pain of losing innocence,[17] unlike the American male protagonists of *Garden* and *Giovanni* who desperately and innocently cling to their masculine narcissistic image in the mirror, recognizes the "change" and begins to accept

[17]As Baldwin argues, "It is this inexpressible pain which lends such force to some of the early Hemingway stories" ("As Much Truth" 36).

it, saying that he is now "a different man" (378–379). As great preservers of American innocence, they could not see "home" as "a sea change," "not a place but simply an irrevocable condition" (*GR* 294). Both protagonists are partly like their countrymen they have left at home—tourists-like Americans they have the opportunity to 'watch' much more closely in expatriate space, who "seem incapable of age" and suffer the pain of "the disconnected" against the rising "power of inventors" of modern identity (*GR* 293). David Bourne thinks that he is "the inventive type" (*GOE* 5), while he is actually "the disconnected" writer whose mandate has expired. He forcibly disconnects his writing from the lived experience and places it in a pastoral/patriarchal setting removed from reality and history in his improbable attempt to preserve innocence. It is the iconoclastic voice and practice of Catherine which has the power to "invent" identity in modern society: "I feel as though I'd invented you," she tells her husband and Marita (*GOE* 191).

In the dialectic of social change, the threat posed by the disruption of social order, by otherness—sexual, racial, and classed—is reacted to by hegemonic groups with panic and by clinging to the "safety" of their long-standing, socially-constructed, and power-validated identity. Guillaume, the degenerate homosexual bar-owner, whom Giovanni has worked for and ultimately murders out of despair and hopelessness, becomes "dangerous" and disgusting when he recalls that he comes from "one of the best and oldest families in France" and that "his name is going to die with him" (*GR* 306), partly because of what he still thinks of as his sterile homosexuality. In his dilemma, he feels that his instinct of self-preservation and ancestral power are threatened by (sexual) difference and the disruption of the social and historical continuum, and then gets frightened and becomes violent.

The ideas of safety and sterility associated with masculinity and homosexuality are subject to rigorous analysis by Baldwin in his redefinition of the standards defining American gendered identity. The ostracization of homosexuals based on the standards of nature and infecundity as a justificatory mode of representation is disclosed in the point of view of the queer writer as an inadequacy. He points out that the single and the infirm can also be described as unnatural and infecund, judging by those standards of patriarchy applied to the case of the "homosexual." He explains that what is called "homosexuality" in modern times has never jeopardized the reproduction of the human kind and that this component of sexuality is as old as the human race. He concludes that there are thus ulterior motives for scapegoating sexual difference other than the ones presented as apparent reason ("Freaks" 595). In "The Man Child" (1965), Baldwin interrupts a fiercely competitive patriarchal system's obsession with safety and continuity by showing how its innocence, violence, and greed are the seeds of its own destruction. Knowing that his friend's wife is barren now and being uncontrollably tormented by guilt and jealousy, Jamie strangles to death in the farm barn his old pal's only child, Eric, "the prince, the son and heir" (808). In *Giovanni's Room*, Giovanni has once lived an Eden-like life in pastoral Italy before he moves to Paris and tragedy. He has once dwelled in the "Garden" of "maidens" (*GR* 239) before he turns to men. He spits on the cross, and leaves his heart-broken "girl" behind in Italy after their baby is born dead (335). By confronting his characters with *nada* and barrenness in such a context, Baldwin interrupts patriarchy's pastoral innocence and dreams of security. Humility, love, and compassion are the

ultimate spaces of refuge in such a world where all safety is an illusion, says the African-American writer through such literary representations.

Like Guillaume, both *Garden*'s and *Giovanni*'s Davids are obsessed with self-preservation and safety. They are incapable of *true* love; their sexual liaisons are no more than "masturbation" (*GR* 223). These traumatized masculinities are vicious because if "you can't love a woman [and] you can't love a man, you are dangerous" (Baldwin, "Civil Rights"). In one of his confessional moments, *Giovanni*'s David admits that he is "too various to be trusted" (*GR* 123), and *Garden*'s David says after his ruthlessly selfish machismo, "You have to last yourself" (*GOE* 108). Both protagonists are destroyers of Man and their "innocence is the crime" (West). That innocence is a source of evil is the wisdom Hemingway arrives at by the end of his expatriate experience in Paris: "All things truly wicked start from an innocence," he writes towards the end of his Parisian memoir (*A Moveable Feast* 181). To "last" does not mean the existence of the fittest according to the rules of the jungle. Quoting Hemingway in his memoir of expatriation to Paris, *Notes of a Native Son*, Baldwin writes: "I consider that I have many responsibilities, but none greater than this: to last, as Hemingway says, and get my work done. I want to be an honest man and a good writer" (9).[18] Endurance entails integrity and an ethically-based loss of innocence. As Baldwin writes, "People who shut their eyes to reality simply invite their own destruction, and anyone who insists on remaining in a state of innocence long after that innocence is dead turns himself into a monster" (*Notes of a Native Son* 129).

Love, joy, and peace in modern society are unattainable in both Hemingway's and Baldwin's cultural approach until difference and the loss of innocence of the unitary/coherent Garden is accepted with passion and compassion. One of the fundamental concerns for both writers is how to make social space an accommodating place for *all* with responsibility and integrity. Since difference—racial and sexual—is a social and historical reality as well as a truth of the individual's incoherent self, the standards defining the social order must be reviewed. The inability, unwillingness, or failure to revise personal and collective identity along those lines does not end the story with the happy ending, with 'security' reestablished as *Garden*'s David struggles to do by the end of his improbable Eden-like narrative of innocence. In Hemingway and Baldwin, security and safety are alien to the lived world outside the Garden, and the dictum of "play it safe," as the black artist writes in *Giovanni* (267), is as risky as all the evil in the world.[19]

If dominant patriarchy and masculinity, in its chauvinistic or paternalistic forms, is concerned with security and the exercise of forms of power, as Hemingway and Baldwin dramatize in fictional works such as *The Sun Also Rises*, *The Garden of Eden*, "The Sea Change," and *Giovanni's Room*, then the hegemonic system is in trouble because these forms of dominance are more and more contested and revealed as a structure of power by rising marginality and subalternity. Women and 'homosexuals'

[18]Cornel West's version of the quotation reads: "all I want to be is an honest man, and who like Hemingway endures in my work" (West).

[19]In his speech titled "The Artist's Struggle for Integrity," Baldwin says that "art is here to prove, and to help one bear the fact that all safety is an illusion. In this sense, all artists are divorced from and even necessarily opposed to any system whatever" (51).

people the world, like they do Hemingway's and Baldwin's fiction. They become more and more outspoken and belligerent, and demand, by their very presence, counter-narratives and material assets, a 'place' in the social space as equals. As both expatriate artists dramatize in *Garden* and *Giovanni*, the new and the old coexist in culture, but the new is advancing faster. In *Garden*, Catherine's car is symbolically represented as being faster than Marita's, which needs a lot of repair according to David who entertains the idea of a car having enough space for the three of them (*GOE* 136). Diversity and difference are areas that must be negotiated to reconstruct a democratic experiment sustained by law and compassion, Hemingway communicates through such an allegorical narrative representation. Here, Catherine and Marita are symbolically represented as the two conflicting halves of David's gendered identity that he fails to reconcile. He tells Catherine tongue-in-cheek that he can resolve the problem of the threesome if he were a Muslim living in the Orient: "We could in Africa if I was registered Mohammedan. You are allowed three wives" (144). She rejoinders by suggesting that "it would be much nicer if we were all married […] then no one could criticize us" (144). Hemingway's new world order is never born in the narrative. He "may yearn for the total transformation of Man and Society, but speaks most effectively from the uncertain interstices of historical change" (Bhabha 40). In *Garden*, Hemingway dramatizes an identity in transit. Indeed such an effort in reviewing identity in the context of modern alienation and historical change via the expatriate's unique perspective is what both Hemingway and Baldwin are up to in their modernist and modernizing literary gestures. Both artists are organic intellectuals who pioneer the conversion about the ideal models for organizing the social space in modern democratic society in order to contribute to bringing about social change.[20]

Baldwin writes eloquently in *Giovanni's Room* of the scandalous murder of French citizen Guillaume by 'alien' Giovanni, an incident that brings forth once again the yet unsettled pivotal issues of difference and migration in modern Western society (343–344). Whether it is a black man or a homosexual, this scenario consists in reducing the problem of the marginalization of the other in such a society to a 'national security' matter whenever it pops up on the surface. It will be repeated ad infinitum since the root causes of the social crisis are still unaddressed.[21] This is a quasi-republic and a torn social fabric that uses its institutions and discursive strategies to give the air of a national consensus threatened by the 'stranger' in order to avoid dealing with the crisis in a radical and honest way, and preserve instead a semblance of innocence. Now that homosexuality is considered less and less of a "crime" and queer marginality is gaining more ground in the social space in terms of material and discursive resources, the "nation" devises new ways of control in which forms of segregation are mitigated by the discourses of tolerance. In such a discursive practice, difference is represented as "*les goûts particuliers*," a new/old language that exhibits a crisis-packed social situation in which otherness can neither be embraced nor ignored.[22]

[20]For a discussion of the idea of expatriation and organic intellectualism in Hemingway and Baldwin, see Toumi 5–26.

[21]The role of the artist, Baldwin writes, is "to tap the source" (*Notes of a Native Son* 7).

[22]As Baldwin puts it in his speech titled "On Language, Race, and the Black Writer," "We cannot be exiled and we cannot be accommodated. Something's got to give" (141). In the dynamic of the social conflict, "the state of emergency is also always a state of *emergence*" (Bhabha 41).

For Baldwin and Hemingway, the management of the social space in terms of the discourses of tokenism or tolerance is more or less a way of keeping the marginalized other in its place. As the African-American writer and activist explains in *The Fire Next Time* in 1963, the explosive social situation in America "[has] been dealt with […] out of necessity—and in political terms, anyway, necessity means concessions made in order to stay on top" (336). Similarly, "tolerance is racist" because it implies a monopoly on the value of "truth" ("Poet and Thinker Adonis"). In his revision of personal identity, Hemingway comes to the realization that "tolerance" is not enough to sustain a democratic experiment. In *The Sun Also Rises*, Jake Barnes endeavors "to be tolerant" towards homosexuals as merely an exercise in self-restraint to prove to be civilized (20). In later works such as "The Sea Change" and *The Garden of Eden*, Hemingway replaces the notion of "tolerance" with the idea of "ambiguity" in reconstructing personal and collective identity in the context of an American society which is still struggling to come to terms with difference in private as well as public life. In Hemingway's and Baldwin's ambitious social project, "tolerance" must be sustained by love and intellectual humility. This is a huge cultural project in which social upbringing and education play a vital part, as both Hemingway and Baldwin suggest in *Garden* and *Giovanni*.[23]

The feverish struggle to preserve innocence in this climate of social ferment is depicted by both Hemingway and Baldwin in *Garden* and *Giovanni* as an act of violence and a struggle to maintain the changing social order: "There had been too much *emotion*, too much *damage*, too much of everything and his *changing of allegiance*, no matter how sound it had seemed, no matter how it *simplified* things for him, was a grave and *violent* thing" (*GOE* 238; emphasis added). The protagonists' attempts to preserve innocence by engulfing themselves in a trance-like state of disavowal[24] by the end of the narratives are panic-stricken "violent resolutions" (Baldwin, "Preservation of Innocence" 599). They violently divide the self into warring entities (man vs woman/masculinity vs femininity/gay vs straight) and arrange the social space around notions of polarization which prevents achieving individual identity and community.

[23]Hemingway often refers to "the problem of our upbringing" (*Selected Letters* 8). It must be noted here that a detailed discussion of the ideas of "tolerance" and "education" in relation to the novels is beyond the scope of the present work.

[24]Referring to America's unwillingness (even under Obama) to 'see' its atrocities at home and abroad, Cornel West describes the country as an "empire living in denial" (West).

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