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Editorial

La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* (RILLiCC) est une revue à comité de lecture en phase d'indexation recommandée par le Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES). Elle est la revue du Laboratoire de Recherche en Langues, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation Anglophones (LaReLLiCCA) dont elle publie les résultats des recherches en lien avec la recherche et la pédagogie sur des orientations innovantes et stimulantes à la vie et vision améliorées de l'académie et de la société. La revue accepte les textes qui cadrent avec des enjeux épistémologiques et des problématiques actuels pour être au rendez-vous de la contribution à la résolution des problèmes contemporains.

RILLiCC met en éveil son lectorat par rapport aux défis académiques et sociaux qui se posent en Afrique et dans le monde en matière de science littéraire et des crises éthiques. Il est établi que les difficultés du vivre-ensemble sont fondées sur le radicalisme et l'extrémisme violents. En effet, ces crises et manifestations ne sont que des effets des causes cachées dans l'imaginaire qu'il faut (re)modeler au grand bonheur collectif. Comme il convient de le noter ici, un grand défi se pose aux chercheurs qui se doivent aujourd'hui d'être conscients que la science littéraire n'est pas rétribuée à sa juste valeur quand elle se voit habillée sous leurs yeux du mythe d'Albatros ou d'un cymbale sonore. L'idée qui se cache malheureusement derrière cette mythologie est que la littérature ne semble pas contribuer efficacement à la résolution des problèmes de société comme les sciences exactes. Dire que la recherche a une valeur est une chose, le prouver en est une autre. La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* à travers les activités du LaReLLiCCA entend faire bénéficier à son lectorat et à sa société cible, les retombées d'une recherche appliquée.

Le comité spécialisé « Lettres et Sciences Humaines » du Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES) recommande l'utilisation harmonisée des styles de rédaction et la présente revue s'inscrit dans cette logique directrice en adoptant le style APA.

L'orientation éditoriale de cette revue inscrit les résultats pragmatiques et novateurs des recherches sur fond social de médiation, d'inclusion et de réciprocité qui permettent de maîtriser les racines du mal et réaliser les objectifs du développement durable déclencheurs de paix partagée.

Lomé, le 20 octobre 2020.

Le directeur de publication,

Professeur Ataféï PEWISSI,

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Ligne éditoriale

Volume : La taille du manuscrit est comprise entre 4500 et 6000 mots.
Format: papier A4, **Police:** Times New Roman, **Taille:** 11,5, **Interligne** 1,15.

Ordre logique du texte

Un article doit être un tout cohérent. Les différents éléments de la structure doivent faire un tout cohérent avec le titre. Ainsi, tout texte soumis pour publication doit comporter:

- un titre en caractère d'imprimerie ; il doit être expressif et d'actualité, et ne doit pas excéder 24 mots ;
- un résumé en anglais-français, anglais-allemand, ou anglais-espagnol selon la langue utilisée pour rédiger l'article. Se limiter exclusivement à objectif/problématique, cadre théorique et méthodologique, et résultats. Aucun de ces résumés ne devra dépasser 150 mots ;
- des mots clés en français, en anglais, en allemand et en espagnol : entre 5 et 7 mots clés ;
- une introduction (un aperçu historique sur le sujet ou revue de la littérature en bref, une problématique, un cadre théorique et méthodologique, et une structure du travail) en 600 mots au maximum ;
- un développement dont les différents axes sont titrés. Il n'est autorisé que trois niveaux de titres. Pour le titrage, il est vivement recommandé d'utiliser les chiffres arabes ; les titres alphabétiques et alphanumériques ne sont pas acceptés ;
- une conclusion (rappel de la problématique, résumé très bref du travail réalisé, résultats obtenus, implémentation) en 400 mots au maximum ;
- liste des références : par ordre alphabétique des noms de familles des auteurs cités.

Références

Il n'est fait mention dans la liste de références que des sources effectivement utilisées (citées, paraphrasées, résumées) dans le texte de l'auteur. Pour leur présentation, la norme American Psychological Association (APA) ou références intégrées est exigée de tous les auteurs qui veulent faire publier leur texte dans la revue. Il est fait exigence aux auteurs de n'utiliser que la seule norme dans leur texte. Pour en savoir

plus, consultez ces normes sur Internet.

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Le comité de rédaction exige APA (Auteur, année : page). L'utilisation des notes de bas de pages n'intervient qu'à des fins d'explication complémentaire. La présentation des références en style métissé est formellement interdite.

La gestion des citations :

Longues citations : Les citations de plus de quarante (40) mots sont considérées comme longues ; elles doivent être mises en retrait dans le texte en interligne simple.

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Résumé :

- ✓ Pour Pewissi (2017), le Womanisme transcende les cloisons du genre.
- ✓ Ourso (2013:12) trouve les voyelles qui débordent le cadre circonscrit comme des voyelles récalcitrantes.

Résumé ou paraphrase :

- ✓ Ourso (2013:12) trouve les voyelles qui débordent le cadre circonscrit comme des voyelles récalcitrantes.

Exemple de référence

Pour un livre

Collin, H. P. (1988). *Dictionary of Government and Politics*. UK: Peter Collin Publishing.

Pour un article tiré d'un ouvrage collectif

Gill, W. (1998/1990). "Writing and Language: Making the Silence Speak." In Sheila Ruth, *Issues in Feminism: An Introduction to Women's Studies*. London: Mayfield Publishing Company, Fourth Edition. Pp. 151-176.

Utilisation de Ibid., op. cit, sic entre autres

Ibidem (Ibid.) intervient à partir de la deuxième note d'une référence source citée. Ibid. est suivi du numéro de page si elle est différente de

référence mère dont elle est consécutive. Exemple : *ibid.*, ou *ibidem*, p. x.

Op. cit. signifie ‘la source pré-citée’. Il est utilisé quand, au lieu de deux références consécutives, une ou plusieurs sources sont intercalées. En ce moment, la deuxième des références consécutives exige l’usage de *op. cit.* suivi de la page si cette dernière diffère de la précédente.

Typographie

-La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* interdit tout soulignement et toute mise en gras des caractères ou des portions de textes.

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Pour les textes contenant les tableaux, il est demandé aux auteurs de les numérotter en chiffres romains selon l’ordre de leur apparition dans le texte. Chaque tableau devra comporter un titre précis et une source propre. Par contre, les schémas et illustrations devront être numérotés en chiffres arabes et dans l’ordre d’apparition dans le texte.

La largeur des tableaux intégrés au travail doit être 10 cm maximum, format A4, orientation portrait.

Instruction et acceptation d’article

A partir du volume 2 de la présente édition, les dates de réception et d’acceptation des textes sont marquées, au niveau de chaque article. Deux (02) à trois (03) instructions sont obligatoires pour plus d’assurance de qualité.

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LITTERATURE

“I Am my Brother’s Keeper”: A Quantum Physics Reading of James Baldwin’s “Sonny’s Blues”

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Abstract:

Quantum physics is about subatomic realities and reveals that atoms are made of particles and waves with characteristics that make them communicate, even when separated. This study explores how Baldwin has represented indifference, separation, unity, and redemption of society through the story of two brothers in his “Sonny’s Blues” for the reader to take notice. Using the quantum physics approach, the study has found out that a brother’s endeavor to protect his junior brother is an allegoric medium for unity, security, justice, and sustainable peace contemporary society longs for.

Keywords : quantum physics, subatomic particle, acoustic energy, waves, unity.

Résumé

La physique quantique concerne les réalités subatomiques et révèle que les atomes sont constitués de particules et d’ondes avec des caractéristiques qui les font communiquer même lorsqu’ils sont séparés. Cette étude explore comment Baldwin a représenté l’indifférence, la séparation, l’unité et la rédemption de la société à travers l’histoire de deux frères dans son récit “Sunny’s Blues” pour éclairer le lecteur. En utilisant l’approche physique quantique, l’étude a révélé que l’effort d’un frère pour protéger son cadet est un moyen allégorique d’unité, de sécurité, de justice et de paix durable auxquelles la société contemporaine aspire.

Mots clés : Physique quantique, particule subatomique, énergie acoustique, ondes, unité.

Introduction

Humanity is facing a series of crises whereby people seem to have lost values that give meanings to their lives despite the feats of science and technology. The apparent contrast between ‘Science and technology’ and morality is a big challenge. It is this disturbing isolation that James Baldwin (1957) substantiates in “Sonny’s Blues,” through suggesting active listening and mutual understanding as ways to filling the isolation gap existing among individuals. This background information needs considering through this study for a better socialization and humanizing perspectives surrounding the paradigm of a brother being one’s keeper. The idea of “Quantum Physics”, as atomic and subatomic realities characterized by particles and waves, points to the oneness of humanity, i.e., the responsibility issue of Frankfurt School in Germany. The philosophy of this school calls people’s attention to their belonging to the same humanity and therefore their being bound by the principle of solidarity and the mutual protection oath for society to achieve and entertain peace for sustainable growth. Thus, this study argues that a human being is the keeper of the other because they belong to the same humanity regardless of their differences.

The universe has a harmony that links the infinitely large to the infinitely small. Everything in the universe is made of atoms, and atoms are made of subatomic particles, which quantum physics helps to study. Taking community as an atom, and the individuals (characters) living in it as subatomic particles, this analysis relies on some quantum physics principle to assess characters behaviors within community.

According to Wigmore (2020), Quantum Physics, also called Quantum Mechanics, is “the theoretical basis of modern physics that explains the nature and behavior of matter and energy on the atomic and subatomic level.” And since everything in the universe is made of atoms, be they liquid, solid, gas, sound, or light, human beings (characters) are an amalgam of such ingredients.

In “Sonny’s Blues” two fundamental organ-senses are at stake: sight and hearing, which in turn evoke the notion of light and sound. Like in Baldwin’s novel *If Beale Street Could Talk* (1974) where Fonny’s story is

phoney (homophone sound), “Sonny’s Blues” sounds like Sunny’s Blues, which call up the notion of light (sight) from the sun and the sound (hearing) from the Blues. These two notions are clearly observed at the beginning of the story where the narrator reads (light-sight) his brother’s story in the newspaper, and at the end where he hears his brother’s Blues. This study is structured around five points of which the first elaborates on key quantum physics principles. While section two deals with the relationships between Sonny and his brother, section three scrutinizes the unifying elements of the story. Sections four and five respectively examine the metaphor and symbolism of darkness, light, and window, and the role music plays in the story.

1. Quantum Physics and Its Principles

Quantum physics is the branch of physics that deals with subatomic particles. Oppermann (2015 : 100) argued that “The correlations between quantum theory and literary discourse, thus, imply an integral relationship with respect to meaning-making practices and knowledge production.” As quantum theory is like an “open-ended book where anything can happen” (Oppermann, 2015: 97), it is, just like literature, subject to interpretations. Against this background, some quantum physics principles will be used to establish the parallel between literature and quantum physics to better explain the connectivity of humanity. In this context, human beings are particles and society atom that derives its identity and performs its functions because of the harmony within. The corpus text is full of evidence as the writer exposes the main reason to the oneness of humanity which is now faced with oddities.

Quantum Physics has principles that are both relevant and interesting to the scrutiny of “Sonny’s Blues.” Such principles, among many others, are wave-particle duality, quantum tunneling, quantum entanglement, and quantum superposition. In 2015, Bennett (2015) stated that “Quantum mechanics boasts all sorts of delightfully odd features. There's the fact that two separated particles can interact instantaneously, a phenomenon called quantum entanglement”. In the context of the story, the phenomenon helps to assess the separation and the unity of the two

brothers. This principle of quantum mechanics suggests that particles can exist in two separate locations at once” (Bennett, 2015). One can infer from this principle that a dead mother can be with the two brothers at once though they are separated since death is a mere change of dimension, from the physical to the invisible ones. The connectivity of humanity transcends the physical world through permeating the spiritual world. The deceased mother leaves behind the affection has it has grown in the life experience of the two brothers. Lincoln (2020) also declared that “Teensy objects separated by miles are tied to one another, and particles can even be in two places at once. The principle of oneness of humanity reads in the similar vein because from the physical appearance to the psychic characteristics of reasoning, human beings have things in common. But one of the most perplexing quantum superpowers is the movement of particles through seemingly impenetrable barriers”. This additional principle is called Quantum Tunneling. This helps the reader see that the two brothers have always been together, at energy level, despite their apparent separation due to misunderstanding. In other words, misunderstanding is not enough reason to construe radicalism.

Another quantum principle that has taken scientist aback is wave-particle duality. Thackray (2012) observed that “Our notion of reality is built on everyday experiences. But wave-particle duality is so strange that we are forced to re-examine our common conceptions.” He explains that “Wave-particle duality refers to the fundamental property of matter where, at one moment it appears like a wave, and yet at another moment it acts like a particle” (Thackray, 2012).

The acoustic energy is sound energy which has the quantum wave-particle duality. It is produced through the vibration of objects or elements like water, air, wood, and metal. It takes the form of voice, whistling, horn, bell, and musical instruments. This vibration is never neutral. And there is evidence that the narrator is acted upon in his daily life. It can soothe, heal, or destroy. The roaring sound of the subway when metal rubs against metal is irritating (Baldwin, 1957: 122). The whistle of the boy which the narrator mentions (Baldwin, 1957: 123), the song played in the bar (Baldwin, 1957: 125), the songs at the street revival, and the final scene are vivid instances of the sound energy. The

quantum principles earlier mentioned help grasp how the sound energy unites characters in the end of the story as a way of proving people's capability to live in harmony.

2. Distance, Deafness and Communicating Brothers

The brothers in communication evolved in two different ways: at distance when they were isolated and when they met in the end for detailed relieving stories of their individual isolated life. Deafness is no disease but a posture, an option not to listen and obey. The story of Sonny and his elder brother is symptomatic to life in the Black community, a story of indifference, distancing, suffering, and in few cases redemption and unity. There is critical need to communicate within the family, and within the community, which may prevent thousands of sufferings. Nelson's remark about "The significance of community in an individual's quest for selfhood" (1983: 30) becomes vital. The story opens with the elder brother reading the bad news about Sonny. "I read about it in the newspaper, in the subway, on my way to work ... I was scared, scared for Sonny. He became real to me again" (Baldwin, 1957: 122). Though this passage reveals distance between the two brothers, the indifference it yielded has vanished into a serious concern. This is corroborated by the brother feeling some ice in his stomach. "Sometimes it hardened and seemed to expand until I felt my guts were going to come spilling out that I was going to choke or scream. This would always be at a moment when I was remembering some specific Sonny had once said or done" (Baldwin, 1957: 122-123). Nelson observes that, "... community plays a central role in Baldwin's novels" (1983: 29). The elder brother's community starts with his younger brother, Sonny.

Like drama is meant for performance, "Sonny's Blues" are meant to be told and heard. "Clearly, "Sonny's Blues" not only tells a story; it is about the telling of stories that heal because they can be heard and decoded for large audience to take notice. The narrator's reading of Sonny's "story" is what inaugurates the text" (Sherard, 1998: 692). And Goldman (1974: 231) puts it that, "words like 'hear' and 'listen' give the title a double meaning." Blues being a music that tells a story makes Kramer think there "is the connection between music and a certain kind of storytelling,

music and a narrativity that is both personal and communal” (Goldman, 1974: 59). The emphasis of this story is on hearing the story rather reading it because reading is learned but hearing is natural.

Distance and Deafness refer to what kept the two brothers separated. Right from the beginning of the story, Ognibene (1971: 37) noticed that “When Sonny's brother loses himself in reminiscence, Baldwin, in a classic dialog of non-communication, reveals the true relationship that exists between the brothers”. The two brothers were distant and separated by both the deafness of Brother (the elder) and his alienation. The elder brother rejects his African heritage and values white culture more. In doing so, he fails to listen to what Sonny has been telling him. This explains why the “I” of his [Baldwin] story, though older, is not wiser, and he uses both Sonny and his music as tools to help the narrator reconcile himself to his racial heritage” (Ognibene, 1971: 36).

Brother, like many Blacks, tries to deny his cultural heritage by alienating himself to the dominant white American culture, which his younger brother, Sonny, has identified as the oppressor and the figure behind the thick darkness that overhangs the Black community. Albert (1984: 181) noted that, “He had tried, as best he could, to reject his black self through becoming a respectable math teacher and dissociating himself from black culture as much as possible.” And the fact he learned about Sonny through the newspaper is taletelling of this distance toward Sonny, the prototype of the Black community. Reilly (1970: 56) argued that “Significantly the mass medium of the newspaper with the impersonal story in it of a police bust is the only way the brothers have of communicating at the opening of the story.” To reduce the distance between Sonny and himself, “Brother’s route to freedom goes from self-image trapped in the subway window to recognizing Sonny as his own brother in the nightclub's spotlight” (Bieganowski, 1988: 75).

The fundamental reason that motivates the distance between the two brothers is their vision of life. “Sonny's decision to play jazz piano is not financial considerations. While his older brother's concern is that Sonny becomes self-sufficient, interests are quite different. The priority of desire over necessity reflects courage, the kind of courage demonstrated by the

successful artist” (Jones, 1999: 472). This gap widens critically to a point that “Throughout the story, one senses that the narrator, in his attempts to help Sonny, is actually driving Sonny further away from him. The harder the narrator tries to help Sonny, the more the estrangement between them worsens” (Golden, 2012: 558).

Yet, something keeps worrying Brother. Their mother made him promise to be his brother’s keeper. This worry is what Walker (1999: 200) coined “prophesy”. “It is this prophesy of Sonny's eventual downfall which elicits so many of the testimonials in the story.” The issue of the prophesy is the oppression of the minorities by American society instead of offering them adequate social security. “In her prophesy/confessional, Sonny's mother reiterates the themes of the evil world and the weak soul” (Walker, 1999: 199). This prophecy from their mother is reinforced by Brother’s anger-filled spoken words when he and Sonny had an awful fight. “I started down the steps, whistling to keep from crying, I kept whistling to myself, *You going to need me, baby, one of these cold, rainy days*” (Baldwin, 1957: 139). These heavily charged words the universe has heard and would bring them to maturity.

Ognibene (1971: 36) has also noted that, “Close perusal of “Sonny's Blues” reveals that while it is ostensibly about Sonny—his descent to the underworld through drugs and his resurrection through jazz—Baldwin's deeper concern is with the narrator, the respectable schoolteacher, the ‘white’ Negro, Sonny's big brother” (Ognibene, 1971: 36). So, the immaturity of Brother is clearly established. Brother’s immaturity makes too proud of himself as better than the other black person. This is the very attitude that Sonny hates. Brother thinks he knows better than Sonny and fails to hear the suffering of his younger brother. “It is not until his own personal suffering that he can begin to understand his brother’s anguish or experience” (Ognibene, 1971: 37). Sherard (1998: 691) keenly observed that “The narrator is only really able to listen, however, after experiencing the loss of his daughter and after observing Sonny enjoy the singing voice of a woman at a street revival meeting-despite the “terrible song.” In the same line, Duncan (1994: 2) argued that

Throughout the story, Baldwin designated the act of listening as the linchpin of this moral tale; by focusing on the often-overlooked component of communication, this early Baldwin story illustrates how Brother, initially deaf to what Sonny calls 'all that hatred and misery and love,' opens his ears to his culture, his brother and himself.

The openness addressed in this excerpt stands the reconciliation, the living together as forms of mediating culture for life in harmony. This attitude accentuates the separation between the two brothers and causes the elder brother to fail listening to Sonny.

The mediation takes up a concept of transition in change of one state to another. This suggests that the narrator moves from the state of ignorance and alienation to awareness and reconciliation with his brother. The time of metamorphosis, transition to self-awareness, before the two brothers understand each other, runs from the moment Brother lost his daughter (Baldwin, 1957: 126) to the revival on the street (Baldwin, 1957: 144). The materialization of this new level of self-awareness is the letter Brother sends Sonny while he is still in prison. The communication going on is a means of keeping in touch with a brother, caring for him and potentially offering a form of protection. "I didn't write Sonny or send him anything for a long time. When I finally did, it was just after my little girl died, he wrote me back a letter which made me feel like a bustard" (Baldwin, 1957 : 126). So far, one can see that the quantum entanglement principle is at work in the lives of the two brothers. One is not at ease while the other suffers.

The other strong transition moment is when the brothers are at the window watching the revival in the street. "While listening to a group of Harlem Street revivalists, the narrator undergoes a transformation that allows him to fashion a new understanding with his brother" (Duncan, 1994: 6). Walker (1999: 201) remarked that, "Spurred by the sight of a street revival, Sonny gains the impetus he needs finally to confess to this brother." This confession is made possible because Sonny knows that to "communicate through the blues, one must be honest, and one must also have suffered deeply" (Mosher, 1982: 113). And by "telling his own tale,

Sonny helps his brother realize that he had been speaking to Sonny without saying anything and listening without hearing. This is the first real conversation the brothers have, and it leads to greater understanding between them” (Ellison, 1964: 478). By doing so, Sonny “reverses the original relationship between the brothers, assumes the role of the elder, and proceeds to lead his brother, by means of the Blues, to a discovery of self in community” (Reilly, 1970: 59).

3. The Unifying Narrative Elements of the Story

For this story to hold together and makes sense, Baldwin uses some unifying elements among which suffering and self-awareness, and black women. Suffering and self-awareness unite the individual to society. And black women unite all the characters together. In turn, these unifying elements create a dichotomy throughout the story. Walker (1999: 197) commented that, “The creation of a dichotomy between the narrator and the world repeats throughout ‘Sonny's Blues.’ In this conceptualization of good and evil, anything outside the narrator's purview is a symbol of the dangers of the world.” This dichotomy opposes darkness to light, male to female, childhood to adulthood just to name but a few.

3.1. Reconciliation as Narrative Flavor

Reconciliation performs a narrative function beyond its thematic importance to oneness. Reconciliation is defined as the restauration of family of friendly relations. Given the context of this study, emphasis is laid on how the suffering of Brother opens his eyes so that reconciliation with Sonny, and reconciliation between individual and society is made possible.

While examining Baldwin's fiction, Bieganowski (1988: 69-70) claimed that “For several of his important characters, reconciliation with society and with each other can occur only after they have made peace with themselves.” Such is the case of the two brothers in the story under study. Walker (1999) observed that despite years of misunderstanding and conflict, the two brothers finally reconcile their differences and achieve a stronger sense of personal identification. In the same vein, Nelson (1983:

28) noted that, "By understanding Sonny's pain and accepting his humanity, his brother understands and accepts himself." The Blues, the pain, the black cultural heritage which Brother has been running away from, have been tremendous to this reconciliation. Reilly (1970: 56) declared that

... in the story of Sonny and his brother an intuition of the meaning of the Blues repairs the relationship between the two men who have chosen different ways to cope with the menacing ghetto environment, and their reconciliation through the medium of this Afro-American musical form extends the meaning of the individual's Blues until it becomes a metaphor of Black community.

At the same that they reconcile, Brother feels the needs to acknowledge Sonny as an artist, a real artist. Sigmund Ro (1984: 25) stated that, "the last stage of the narrator's development, especially his final act of sharing a sacramental drink with his brother, is modeled on the pattern of baptism ... The effect of this ritualization is to make Sonny's art a public act and a communal experience to be shared." In the same line, Jones (1999: 474) has it that this drink, "symbolizing love and understanding between the brothers, is a celebration of the older brother's recognition of Sonny as an artist."

From the beginning of "Sonny's Blues" till the end the quantum entanglement principle has proven right. The two brothers have come from the same womb, fed on the same breasts, lived in the same house, got separated, and have eventually come together again. And "The last section of "Sonny's Blues," in which Sonny plays the piano for his brother in a nightclub, is the culmination of his journey and sets a hopeful tone for Sonny's future" (Jones, 1999: 472).

3.2. Self-Awareness: A Key Factor to Redemption

This subsection connects suffering and self-awareness and shows how the two concepts play narrative functions through the corpus text reaching out to shedding light on the redemption of the two brothers. To James Baldwin, suffering is a mandatory rite of passage. So, "reaching a genuine sense of self and forging an identity depend largely on self-

knowledge and self-awareness which, according to Baldwin, come only through suffering” (Nelson, 1983: 27). He explains that “suffering, if endured creatively, leads to self- knowledge, which, in return, can offer the possibility of achieving genuine sense of self. Hence, suffering has humanizing power and redemptive potential” (Nelson, 1983: 27-28). Yet, Nelson still observed that, “self-discovery is never an entirely private battle; it can be achieved only in spiritual communion with others. Again, the bridge of suffering can enable one to define oneself through a committed, compassionate, and reciprocal understanding of the other” (1983: 28). And he asserted, “Thus, Baldwin suggests that one can achieve a genuine and liberating sense of self only through complete acceptance of one’s self, through loving commitment to another, and through identification with one’s community” (1983: 31).

Suffering goes beyond a mere sensation like pain, or an emotion like fear or sadness. And it clear that suffering affects the mood and quality of life. Suffering is a form energy that nourishes our mood and life quality, our mental health, and our actions in a negative way. This energy feeds on itself and grows bigger and bigger into weighing clusters. The quantum wave-particle duality helps to grasp the reality of suffering being a form of energy, is a wave and a particle. Music being an acoustic energy, wave, and particle, can influence suffering a way or the other. This is the creativity of suffering Nelson refers to.

3.3. Women as Family and Community Unifying Element

Women are a fundamental unifying element in “Sonny’s Blues.” The prophesy of Sonny’s mother is what permanently triggers and questions Brother’s guilt and actions. Reilly (1970: 57) observed that, “guilt for not fulfilling their mother’s request and a sense of shared loneliness partially explain the older brother’s feeling toward Sonny.” Mother is the one who reveals the family history to Brother about his murdered uncle, whom she refers to as “Your father’s brother” (Baldwin, 1957: 123). “Uncle” seems too distant, but “Your father’s brother” increases the degree of mutual responsibility and protection. Mother unites the generation of her husband and her murdered brother-in-law, and the generation of her two sons. She is the one who keeps soothing the depression of her husband

after the murder of his younger brother. And she is the one who urges Brother to look after Sonny. This confirms Sherard's point about black women's "roles as central or shaping forces in the lives of the male characters" (1998: 698).

The women embody major themes of the story, worries and suffering. The reader can see how Brother talks about the black woman he sees in the bar:

And I watched her face as she laughingly responded to something said to her, still keeping time to the music. When she smiled one saw the little girl, one sensed the doomed, still struggling woman beneath the battered face of a semi-whore (Baldwin, 1957: 125).

This woman is a living witness of the suffering and the hardships of the black community, and she bears the marks. Her presence can be viewed as a landmark and milestone in the story. Like other black women in the story, her presence highlights suffering and hardships the black community has been experiencing.

In addition, at the revival meeting in the street on Seventh Avenue, there is proof of suffering in the singing of the black women. Sonny says, "While I was downstairs, on my way here, listening to that woman sing, it struck me all of a sudden how much suffering she must have had to go through—to sing like that" (Baldwin, 1957: 142). He vehemently complains that "It's repulsive to think that you have to suffer that much" (Ibid).

The suffering and the presence of these black women in the story help the two brothers connect with them through their own suffering. In a way, the two brothers and these black women experience the same oppression. Suffering unites them. Moreover, not only does suffering unite the two brothers on the one hand, and unite them to the black women in their community, but also it makes communication possible. The women at the revival meeting have demonstrated this. Sherard (1998: 698) argued, "The inclusion of this reference to "Sisters" is significant in a story that concerns two brothers trying, with not a lot of initial success, to make some sort of connection with each other." When they meet, "It isn't

because they expect something different this time. Rather it is a familiar moment of communion for them” (Reilly, 1970: 58).

The women in the story simply reinforce that theme of communion and communication through their sisterhood alluding to the brotherhood in trouble. In fact, they constitute the gluons that hold together the quarks at a quantum level.

4. The Symbols of Windows and Darkness

In this section, I would like my reader to consider the symbol of window as the opportunity characters may use to move forward. The symbol of darkness represents, in the context of the story, both the dark side of individual and society, and the suffering of Blacks. This suffering is the element that unites and brings characters. It is the redemptive suffering, which underscores the story under study.

Sonny’s Blues” opens with the roaring sound of the subway and the darkness that is observed through the window. So, the sound, the darkness, the window, and the light that allows Brother to read Sonny’s story in the subway are anything but trivial. They are keystone to grasp the meaning of the story. An example of this is the darkness that constitutes the reluctance of telling the truth to the younger generation. “For each generation, however, the tragedy is new, for the older people are reluctant to inform the young ones of the condition of the Black race” (Goldman, 1974: 231).

4.1. Childhood, Adulthood and Darkness

The darkness that is accumulated from childhood to adulthood constitutes the suffering of the black community. The way the adult characters in the story are reluctant to reveal the true nature of the oppression they have been living in initiates the concept of uncertainty and darkness. “The implicit assumption here is that childhood is a holistic state, whereas the process of growing older maims the individual” (Clark, 1985: 198). As the child grows into an adult, he or she is surrounded by this darkness through oppression. Bieganowski (1988: 72) also argued that the “Darkness outside reveals his [the narrator] own inner darkness.” The

narrator is a mere symbol of how darkness outside weighs down every individual in the black community.

4.2. Darkness and Window

Every human being has a dark side which feeds on the darkness in society. “To Baldwin, personal as well as collective failures stem from inability of individuals to confront the "darker" sides of their human nature” (Nelson, 1983: 27). The nature of the darkness both inside and outside rises a profound debate. “For the naturalist, the environment is the ultimate predictor of one's destiny. For the Pentecostal, one can rise above the effects of the environment through religious conversion” (Walker, 1999: 1999). It is rather the second viewpoint, but not necessarily through, that Sonny has demonstrated. His strategy to reduce the pull of that darker side is his delving in the Blues.

There is a strong link between the symbols of darkness and window. In this story, sometimes the window is reflexive like in subway and sometimes one can look through as when the two brothers are watching the revival meeting in the street. The window plays the role of a mirror. “Brother's reflection in the subway's window occurs simply because the train tunnel is darker than the lighted subway car. The outer darkness provides the background against which he can see himself” (Bieganowski, 1988: 72). On the opposite, the last scene of the story where Sonny plays the piano, the music opens a window in the world of energies, in the cosmos, where hope can be experienced. Bieganowski declared that “For Brother, Sonny's blues replaces the family's talk after Sunday dinner. Sonny, in the night club's center light, offers hope to those in the circles of darkness outside” (Bieganowski, 1988: 74).

5. Blues, Redemption, Social Connectivity and Togetherness

Blues have played an important role in bringing together the two brothers. The narrator the elder brother of the story has been influenced by the talent of the younger brother in Blues performance. The memory of the elder brother has flashed back into their common story thereby reviving the emotional attached of the childhood. The acoustic energy of

Blues has played the role of catharsis to self-awareness, self-understanding, redemption, and unity. As the reader is introduced the roaring of the subway car in the beginning of the story, the sound effect is very crucial to the understanding of the story since it is about the Blues. Sherard (1998: 701) observed that, "Significant here is the echo of the word roar, which is the sound the "darkness" outside the subway car makes at the beginning of the story when the narrator first reads about Sonny in the newspaper." The sound energy or the acoustic vibrations is used throughout the story as resistance tool to monitor and handle the inner and the outer darkness.

The final episode of the story where Sonny plays piano in the presence of Brother constitutes the climax and the resolution, where the indifference, the misunderstanding, and the separation of the two brothers have been resolved. Albert (1984: 178) testifies that "The blues, both as a state of being and as music, are basic to the structure of the story." The Blues is a song that tells a story. Similarly, Sidney Bechet said that "My story goes a long way back. It goes further back than I had anything to do with. My music is like that.... I got it from something inherited, just like the stories my father gave down to me" (quoted in Walser, 1997: 26). The Blues tells the story of suffering. "As music, the blues are considered by many blacks to be a reflection of and a release from the suffering they endured through and since the days of slavery" (Albert, 1984: 179). Sherard (1998: 703) said, "These songs, one of the forms out of which the blues developed, as many scholars of the blues have pointed out, are described by the narrator as able to "soothe a poison" out of their listeners."

And Ellison (1964: 78-79), commenting on Richard Wright's definition of the blues, explained that Blues is "an autobiographical chronicle disaster expressed lyrically supports a reading 'Sonny's Blues' as a tale of suffering." But "For James Baldwin, the blues are a chronicle of life experiences, the good and the bad. In singing the blues, one confronts pain and converts it into something positive. While blues songs may sound melancholy, they actually celebrate the resiliency of the human spirit" (Ellison, 1964: 476). This quote clearly summarizes "Sonny's Blues." The final scene is where the so long and dense particles of suffering is converted into something subliminal. It is the individual's

consciousness and awareness of this conscious which favor this conversion of suffering into bliss.

Also, “The Blues-singer describes first-person experiences, but only such as are typical of the community and such as each individual in the community might have. The singer never sets himself against the community or raises himself above it” (Jahn, 1968: 176). It is humility which set the Blues apart. Reilly (1970: 56) argued that “The unique quality of the Blues is its combination of personal and social significance in a lyric encounter with history.” But many people view Blues and Jazz as mere improvisation, as if improvisation is evil. Yet, Darryl Hattenhauer points out that “to improvise is to reclassify, to transvalue, to re-define” (quoted in Sherard, 1998: 695). Jazz is the essence of life itself. We improvise ways and means on daily basis to cope and adjust to events Life presents to us.

Reading is a step-to-step process. As we read the story, we meet events and we improve or design solutions to cope with the challenge. So, improvisation in music like Jazz is much higher than reading and playing music like Creole, or an orchestra. Improvisation deals uncountable combinations of sounds which link man to eternity. By improvising his music in the final scene, Sonny though guided by Creole, surpasses his master, the same way he is younger but more matured than his elder brother.

Today, science has been able to identify particles as components of an atom. And everything that exists, including human beings, is made of atoms. So, everything is made of subatomic particles. If at individual level, people understand they are made of subatomic particles (infinitely small), at the scale of society, they can say that society is made of bunches of human subatomic particles. So, society is made of subatomic particles that are tied together. In this respect, we are all particles that make the infinitely small (the individual) and the infinitely large (society), and we are all interconnected to one another through the quantum principle of intricacy or entanglement. By harming the infinitely small, you are automatically hurting the infinitely large. This quantum intricacy is the very essence of communication between the infinitely small and the

infinitely large, between Sonny and his piano, between Sonny and the other members of the band, between Sonny and his brother, between man and woman, between the individual and their community, between the black race and the other races, between mankind and the other living beings, between the living beings and Nature, between the Earth and the solar system, between the Milky Way and the other billions of billions of galaxies.

Conclusion

Through the quantum physics approach, this study has explored how Baldwin represents indifference, separation, redemption, and unity of self and community through the story of two brothers, Sonny, and his elder brother. Because the elder brother is a math teacher and belongs to black middle class, he runs a deaf ear to his cultural background, and by so doing becomes indifferent to and is isolated from his younger brother, Sonny. By creatively converting his suffering into soothing and healing energies through Blues, Sonny makes redemption and unification with his brother possible.

The quantum physics approach has helped to assess the story in terms of quantum principles of entanglement, tunneling, intricacy, particle-wave duality as to see how characters are particles that build up the human family from its smallest unit (individual) to the largest (mankind). This study has found out that despite our apparent differences, we are all interconnected and interdependent. By hurting one part of humanity, it automatically affects the whole. The study has also confirmed that man is a social being, who can live without community and thereby give meaning to their lives.

This research has advocated that we must be our brothers' keepers like Sonny's mother vividly recommended to her elder son. The study has also supported the idea that suffering is a mandatory rite of passage which art (here music) can sublimate into a driving force to human development. At a quantum level, we are the same with specificities and different perspective which should make the human race a human alphabet where each person, be they a woman, a man, a child, an adult, black or non-black, is a letter thereof.

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