

## Abstract

This thesis seeks to examine selected works of James Baldwin, including both fiction and nonfiction, using an interdisciplinary approach, in light of the current resurgence of interest in the author.

The work highlights Baldwin's role as a foreseer of *blackness* via his predictions of beauty and love. Written with lowercase initials to avoid confusion with Blackness as a racial category or an aesthetical revindication movement, *blackness* is understood as a force, mode of knowledge, and practice that can promote a more ethical perspective on language (the word) and global human existence (the world).

The first two chapters provide an overview of theories from the English-speaking world that have engaged with Baldwin's ideas in the present time. It also explores the perspectives on *blackness* put forward by the Black radical tradition, namely via the works of Fred Moten and Denise Ferreira da Silva. By using a contrapuntal reading and utilizing the approach of critical and appositional *augmentation*, which is informed by my translation practice, I establish a connection between works from the 1960s and those from the 1970s and 1980s.

Chapter 3 presents an analysis of Black aesthetics by contrapuntally reading *The Fire Next Time* (1963) and *The Devil Finds Work* (1976). It explores the idea that beauty is not only an aesthetic value but also an ethical one. The chapter examines how the use of language and different styles in these works intertwine with the sensitive and spiritual aspects of the Black experience.

In Chapter 4, the thesis explores Baldwin's ethical perspective on love. By analyzing the works *Another Country* (1962), *No Name in the Street* (1972), and "Here Be Dragons" (1985) alongside *If Beale Street Could Talk* (1974), and *A Dialogue* (1972) with Nikki Giovanni, it becomes evident that the writer not only embraces Black feminism but also incorporates the influence of Black Church spirituality and music into his concept of transformative love that generates a poetic ethic. The contemplation of love leads to a reexamination of infancy, which symbolizes both the early stages of human existence and openness to change. Ultimately, "*blackness* next time" is an invitation to hope for *another country*, another mode of existence.

**Keywords:** James Baldwin, *blackness*, prophecy, beauty, love, Black radicalism, Feminist Poethics