

GI's at the U.S. military bases, was regulated and protected by the State (dela Cruz 1, 13, 14). The Marcos government supported the Military Bases Agreement not only because it generated more than US\$1,000 million a year in the State revenues but also because it made the Philippines one of the top ten recipients of U.S. foreign aid (Goodno 217). It was not until 1992 that the agreement was lifted.

<sup>7</sup> Oriental sexuality was perceived by the Westerners as "ambiguous, inscrutable, and hermaphrodite" and therefore the Oriental male/female was constructed as a "third sex," an alternative or imagined sexuality that was "potentially subversive and disruptive to the emergent heterosexual orthodoxy" (Lee 85, 88). In this sense, Joey's body can be considered feminized.

<sup>8</sup> I owe this observation to Dr. Kathleen Ferraro, who pointed out to me the connection between Joey's excretion and Kristeva's notion of abject.

<sup>9</sup> Hagedorn's representation of Daisy's subversive act parallels the struggles of the Philippine women's movement during the Marcos era. The movement was instrumental in precipitating the demise of the Marcos regime (Santiago 113). Among the wide array of many women's groups sprung during the period was MAKIBAKA (The Free Movement of New Women). In the novel, Hagedorn's attempt to raise the issue of women's oppression as essential to the postcolonial Philippine nationalist project corresponds to MAKIBAKA's premise, which proposed that women's freedom was a crucial part of the national liberation. The group envisioned the Philippines as a nation in which women are liberated from all kinds of oppression and have freedom to determine their lives (Kwiatkowski and West 152). In addition, Hagedorn's critique of the government-endorsed beauty pageant in the novel is possibly based on MAKIBAKA's protest against the annual Miss Philippines Beauty Contest. The group denounced the pageant as "a crass commercialization of sex and a debasement of the Filipina" (de Dios 145).

It is also possible that Daisy's resistance to the Young Miss Philippines pageant is an allusion to that of Gemma Cruz Araneta, former Miss International, who supported MAKIBAKA's inaugural protest against an annual Miss Philippines Beauty Contest during the Marcos regime. Araneta's "sensational participation" helped MAKIBAKA gain "national prominence" (de Dios 145-46).

However, Hagedorn states in an interview with Kay Bonetti that the Daisy character is "a composite of several people, but one of them had been in the mountains, had fought, had really taken this idea of the revolution very seriously" (102). Although Hagedorn does not reveal the name of that one person, it is possible that Daisy's character alludes to the former beauty queen Nelia Sancho, who later became a revolutionary (Rosca 80).

<sup>10</sup> It is possible that Hagedorn alludes this underground group to the New People's Army (NPA), the radical guerrilla arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Established in 1969, the NPA is comprised of approximately 60-70 percent peasantry with about twenty thousand or twenty-five thousand full-time guerrillas. The NPA was founded on the questions of colonialism and neocolonialism with an emphasis on the U.S. military bases and U.S. multinational economic power, and the issues of social justice, land reform, redistribution of economic power, and the corruption of Marcos' dictatorial government (Rosca 9-10; Steinberg 123-24).

<sup>11</sup> Studies and research have shown that Filipino women have long been engaged in the struggles for national liberation since the Spanish colonial era. Many historians and anthropologists concede that the Philippines in pre-historic times was a matrilineal society in which women were treated as men's equals and played significant roles in the communities' social, cultural, and political affairs. The women's status and role were drastically changed when the archipelago was invaded by the Spanish colonizers, who brought with them the European patriarchal culture. It was this cultural system that turned the Filipino women into the subordinate, submissive, helpless, obedient, and silent wives and daughters (Santiago 114; Diaz x-xi). Filipina scholar Josefina C. Diaz indicates that many patriotic Filipinas have not been well-recognized in most Philippine history books. The number of these courageous women who had sacrificed their lives for the freedom and the liberation of their country from centuries of colonization and decades of unjust rule, was so large that "[e]ven a voluminous book cannot contain all of them and their stories of beauty and sacrifice, of joy and pain" (vi).

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ชุดที่ ๕ “ศิลปะและวรรณกรรมชัดขึ้น ศิลปะและวรรณกรรมเฝ้ายาม”

**Amy Tan's The Joy Luck Club:  
A Break from Convention, a Resistance in Writing**

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**วรรณพรรณ์ สุรนนท์**

เอกสารประกอบการประชุมวิชาการระดับชาติเวทีวิจัยมนุษยศาสตร์ ไทย ครั้งที่ ๒  
สนับสนุนโดย สำนักกองทุนสนับสนุนการวิจัย  
ภาควิชาภาษาไทย คณะมนุษยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่  
วันที่ ๑๐-๑๑ สิงหาคม ๒๕๕๘  
ณ โรงแรมโลตัสปางสวนแก้ว เชียงใหม่

## Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*: A Break from Convention, a Resistance through Writing

Wannapat Suranant

It was not until the year 1989 that *The Joy Luck Club*, the first book by Amy Tan (b 1952,) a Chinese woman, was able to break into mainstream American literature. Concerning with women's lives and instilled with Chinese cultural beliefs, the book became a great success. However, Tan was not the only ethnic woman writer whose fresh and original voice has found its way to the multi-cultural readers of America. The foreground of the book's publication was the social occurrences which supported the literary movement of the ethnic wave. It was the time when minority writers especially woman were provided with more freedom of expression and opportunities to be recognized. They were given the voice to tell their stories while at the same time the western society became more open to new perceptions. It was due the social context of the Post World War II period, beginning with the Civil Right movement that flourished such an artistic response in literature.

The Civil Right movement had raised a new awareness among minority groups concerning the issue of race and gender. It began after the Second World War, through an attempt of the United Nation to write a bill of right concerning with the demand for social equality in race, sex, nationality, and political belief. The attempt became a success when the Civil Right Act of 1974 and the Voting Right Act of 1965 were passed by the United State's congress (Balwin 330). America had taken a big step on the recognition of minority in the political arena. Though the black were the majority of this recognition, according to Rose, the social problems and condition of other minority groups were not overlooked. The white began to notice the dilemma and social injustice that ethnic groups had to suffer. In the mid 70's they agreed on the necessity for the blacks, the Asian Americans, the Latin Americans, and other minority groups to be recognized as members of the American community while maintaining their cultural identity. It was through their strength in objecting to the system of injustice and the sympathy among the whites that these minority groups became successful in both gaining access to political power and sustaining their ethnic roots (172-173). As an outcome of the social changes, the collapse of the "political barrier," as Orville Schell puts it, ended the cultural isolation the first generation of Chinese emigrants had endured. However, contrary to their positive attitude toward this change, the new generation of Chinese American came face to face with cultural crisis. The return to their Chinese roots was faced with difficulties of trying to recognize the country obliged to them by heritage, but had never visited. The new generation of Chinese American was trapped between the two countries and cultures whose disparities were extreme. It was through these experiences that writers like Tan were able to create, in Orville Schell's words, "a new genre of American fiction," reflecting the struggle toward finding and understanding their cultural roots (13).

Also, as a result of the Civil Right movement, a new feminist movement called the "Second Wave" feminism was made possible. In Codye Hill's view it was the period when women became aware of their inferior status as "second-class." Women's groups were formed to challenge the gender bias the society placed upon women. Their movement varied from radical activities to organizing minor "consciousness raising group." The Second Wave determination exceeded beyond the struggle for women social activities. The slogan "personal is political" expressed the intention of altering women domesticity, through the intrusion of the feminine arena of motherhood, sexuality, and cultural expectation (6). To fight against the

bias, these women tried to eliminate the oppression at its roots, that is, defying the social perception forged on women through their role of expectancy. In Adrienne Rich's perspective, through this struggle, women had found a culture of their own. They talked to one another, recovered their "oral-culture" through telling their life-stories and finding their own language. Hence, the process led them towards breaking away from, as Mary Daly puts it, "the radical passivity of men" (Rich 3), whose artifacts such as art and literature led to an integration of passivity among women and the domination of their culture (3). The process can be defined as acts of resistance. Since women had long been "misrepresented," especially in literature, thus influencing the "system of domination," women recovered a way to resist these writings with their own artistic response, calling it resistance writing. Resistance writing then can be viewed as an act to oppose this misrepresentation. Because traditional literature dominates readers' conception through the instillation of its ideology, that is, promoting the supremacy of western patriarchal society. Therefore, resistance writing was an act of struggle to resist and clarify the ideology which shaped this. Particularly in period of social changes in the recognition of race and gender, resistance writing has become an alternative for women and minority groups to resist the "system of domination" encoded in traditional literature (Apetheker, 172-173). It was a space where they could freely portray their culture and ideology which truly expressed who they were, while at the same moment resisted the domination intergraded in conventional literature.

Literary works which portrayed the struggle against the mainstream structure of western convention were considered a piece of resistance writing. Brian Richardson claims that the literary work has for a long time been subjected to conventional writing of master narrative. As a result, literature has become a "disinterested science," very formal and precise in its structure (2). Each literary piece has a narrative voice which controls the narrative style and the story's point of view, thus reflecting the western patriarchal belief of preeminence. This is because the readers are limited to see through the perception of only one narrator. The one voice narration reflects preeminence because the readers' perception is subjected to the point of view of that single narrator. Also, the western ideological belief of individualism is reflected through the character of the protagonist and his conflicts. In conventional literature, the protagonist is the major character of the story and conflicts are obstacles he is to face. These conflicts are traditionally classified as man against nature, man against man, and man against themselves (Bergman 74). It can be perceived from the conflicts that the protagonist becomes the center of the story as the conflicts evolve through and around the protagonist and the conciliation occurs when he can overcome the obstacles. Because he must alone overcome the obstacles, the conflicts are personal and individualized, hence reflecting the belief of individualism of the western patriarchal world. As Mary Eagleton puts it that while female central characters in women literature are "gentle" and contain "conciliatory qualities," the conventional protagonist is "aggressive" and "ego-centered" (89). The chronological structure and plot development in conventional literature reflect the western belief in the linear order of time. The evidence is in its linear fashion of plot development. Bergman explains that this is called the "narrative stage" in literature. The story begins with an "exposition" where the basic information of characters is given. Then the "conflict" is heightened when the protagonist faces obstacles in reaching his goal. Following this is the "climax," the stage where he achieves or fails to achieve his goal. The last stage is the "denouement." This is when the outcome of the climax, how it affect the protagonist and other characters action towards him is narrated (74). The linear order of plot reflects the western perception on the chronological order of time. They believe that this concept is realistic and logical. As Ronald Sukenrick claims in his book, *The Death of the Novel* that "[r]ealistic fiction presupposed chronological time as the medium of plotted narrative, an irreducible individual psyche as the subject of its characterization, and above all, the ultimate, concrete reality of things as the object and rationale of its description" (qtd. in Bergman 217). Due to this, chronological time serves to encode the western fundamental thought of authority and control. The linear perception of time is believed to be a system of logic

so any work which is against this is considered as irrational. This idea is proven by Gayle Greene's assertion that time is perceived as a line which can not be reversed and that events are determined by the previous events. She further states that this idea of time is fundamental to Western thoughts of "patriarchalism." The idea of control, of how one preceding event "earn[s] special prestige" over following events reflects the patriarchal perception of authority and the Western cultural concept of time.

Amy Tan's The Joy Luck Club can be read in the context of resistance literature. Through its new style of writing techniques which focus both on the unconventional structure and Chinese story telling style, the novel becomes a portrayal of both Chinese culture and womanhood. The separate narratives set the plot in motion. It highlights the conflict of the characters and provides each character with a voice to tell her own life story. These techniques are different from the conventional form of mainstream American literature. Separating itself from the convention is resisting the convention, enabling the novel to be considered a piece of resistance writing.

Because The Joy Luck Club expresses resistance through its writing technique, therefore the uniqueness in the writing style is obvious. The novel contains sixteen interwoven stories which focus on the Chinese immigrant mothers and their American-raised daughters. The mothers are Suyuan Woo, Lindo Jong, An-mei Hsu, and Ying Ying St.Clair. The daughters are Jing-mei Woo, Waverly Jong, Rose Hsu, and Lena St.Clair. The stories are divided into four sections, each section containing four stories of separate narrations. The first and the last section, "Feather from a thousand Li Away" and "Queen Mother of the Western Skies" belongs to the mother generation with the mother as the narrators. However, because Suyuan died before the novel opens, her narration is spoken through Jing-mei, her daughter. As for the second and third section, "The Twenty-Six Malignant Gates" and "American Translation," the stories are told through the daughter as the speakers. The novel opens with Jing-mei having to take her mother's place in the Joy Luck Club, a club started by her mother. The club is a club where the four Chinese mothers gather weekly to play mahjong, feast, and tell stories. On her first Joy Luck Club meeting, Lindo, An-mei, and Ying Ying, three of her mother's oldest friends tell her of the success in locating the address of Suyuan's long lost daughter, the baby twin she left in Kweilin. The three women urge Jing-mei to travel to China to see her sisters and tell them about her mother's life. However, Jing-mei believes she did not understand or know her mother well enough to tell stories of her life. This triggers the fears of all three mothers. They fear that their own daughter, like Jing-mei, will not know them enough to carry on their stories and understand their heritage. And this is where the separate narrations begin. Subsequent to the echo of the mother's fear in the first story, in the mother section of the book, each mother speaks in turns, telling stories of their childhood and relationship with their own mother, worrying that their daughter's remembrance of them will never contain the same intensity. In the second section, the narration shifts from the mother to the daughter. They tell stories of their childhood relationship with their mothers. The stories clearly express the conflicts that the daughters have towards their mothers, proving their mothers' fear. The third section of the stories, the daughters narrate their adult dilemmas, suggesting that their search for solution will bring them back toward the understanding of the mother's generation and recognition of their heritage. The last section of the novel, the narrations shift back to the Joy Luck Club mothers. They narrate the struggle to offer the solution and support for the daughters' dilemma by revealing their past. In the last part, Jing-mei again speaks in place of the mother. She finally travels to China and ready to transfer the memory of Suyuan to her sisters. Because Jing-mei speaks for her mother in both of the mother sections, her journey represents reconciliation between the two cultures and the two generations, bringing the novel to its closure.

Through writing a novel which resisted the traditional convention, The Joy Luck Club enables Tan to be regarded as a representative of Chinese American women writer. Being raised



during the period where social changes were immense, her style of writing was influenced by the social context of Asian American women during the political movement of post WWII. During that time, the interest regarding the issue of gender started to focus on the historical studies of women's lives through their storytelling. According to Bettina Apetheker, the 60s was the time when women's liberation movement appeared as a result of the Civil Right and the antiwar movements. Since a large number of women were involved in these activities, they became engaged in the discovery of the past feminist movement. This led women's studies toward the historical studies of women's lives and women's domesticity in different communities and times. Due to these studies, there emerged a stream of resistance which stood outside the conventional realm of "progress and social change." This resistance is about the "dailiness" of women's lives in side their domestic sphere. It brought light to their "fabric of social life," allowing people to see the hardship and the creativity of their daily labors existed for generations (172-173). Hence, Tan's style of storytelling is a reflection to this concept of resistance. As for the issue of race, Tan's writing style also mirrors the focus on the Asian's recognition of being a member of the American communities and their ability to maintain the Asian identity and ideology. Through the unconventional structures and the storytelling, is the instillation of "Asian ethnicity" which functions to "identify against the backdrop of white 'otherness'" (Lim, 12). The novel therefore resists the western ideology encoded in mainstream writings by integrating their own into it.

The "Asian ethnicity" instilled in the writing of *The Joy Luck Club* is an outcome of Tan's conciliation with her Chinese culture. Being raised in a Chinese household and schooled in an American environment, the social differences were quite extreme. As a result, Tan's life is faced with conflicts, both cultural and familial. The novel, then, serves as "a mediation on the divided nature of [her] emigrant life" (Schell, 13). All four daughters in *The Joy Luck Club* become a mouth piece which expresses Tan's conflict with her Chinese identity, the embarrassment of her cultural background and her mother limited English, since it increase her sense of being different. In *The Joy Luck Club*, Lena St.Clair mirrors Tan awkwardness of her Chinese facial feature. As a child she attempts to "westernized" her nose by sleeping with a clothespin on it. Lena as her reflection, tries to change her Chinese style eyes: "...my eyes, my mother gave me my eyes, no eyelids...I used to push my eyes in on the sides to make them look rounder"(104). Not knowing her "Chinese character," Tan was trapped between the two cultures. This dilemma is echoed in Rose Hsu: "I learn how to choose from the best opinions Chinese people had Chinese opinions American is problem which many opinions. And in almost every case, the American version was much better" (191). The inner conflict caused by cultural differences between Chinese and American is a problem which many American born Asians experienced. Therefore, by using all four daughters as her mouth piece and giving them separate narrative voices, Tan is able to make her personal conflict into a political reflection of the identity crisis of most Asian Americans.

After a childhood of conflict, Tan finally came to reconciliation with Daisy, her mother. This made her recognize and value her Chinese identity. The recognition greatly influenced the writing of *The Joy Luck Club*. Since it lead Tan to her fascination with the language which her mother uses, the language of her mother tongue. As an outcome, this language identity is instilled in the writing style of the novel. According to her essay, "Mother Tongue," Tan discusses the differences between the English she uses at home and the "standard English" she uses publicly. The English she uses at home is the "language of intimacy." A full comprehension of this particular language relies on the understanding of its contextual meaning. To an outsider, a person who does not understand Chinese culture, the English would be considered "fractured." However, this English, though described as "broken" or "watered down," according to Tan, it is 'vivid, direct, and full observation and imagery.' To depict this perception,

she uses this language, the “English [she] grew up with” to write The Joy Luck Club. She uses this English as a device to portray the language identity of her mother tongue.

The literary movement of the Post World War II period allows Tan to use the concept of resistance writing as an act of social liberation for Chinese American women. The literary movement was called the Postmodernism. It was a time when literary traditions were challenged and minority's literature which reflects their ethical and cultural identity became an important momentum. To Susan Hawkins, American women writers had taken part in the historical and cultural revolution of the Post World War II period. By participating in these movement, fictions which focus on the dailiness of women lives were introduced. This period of Postmodernism was a time when literary movement states its innovative form, as a reaction against the conventional style of literature, its genre, and structure. The most important drive of Postmodernism is the literature of the “tribal” or the minority. It was when their ethical and cultural identity serves as an important aspect which “dramatizes” the sense of kinship in each ethnic group, especially for women (241-243).

Resistance writing serves as arena of struggle where ethnic groups of women sustain their cultural identity through the dominating system of conventional literature. In Bettina Aptheker's view, resistance writings also compose of stories about these women, and their challenge against the bias of the mainstream white society which oppress their cultural identity. These stories focus on the ability to pass on their identity to the new generation. The writing allow the reader to see the strategies which are used to portray to the question of race, cultural, class, and gender (220). These women are able to create a cultural of their own to reflect them and their cultural heritage by resisting the traditional convention. As Natania Meeker puts it, “[W]omen attempt to define themselves and their community through writing; they struggle to create and shape themselves both as women and as human beings through their text” (201). In addition, by resisting the western ideology in traditional literature, these women can have a space to encode their own ideology to liberate themselves from its domination. This enables them to “envision a future when such ‘interlocking’ categories as gender, race, class, and sexual orientation are no longer mechanism of oppression” (Delamotte 3). The instillation of their identity in the writing is a reflection of their cultural recognition. Since conventional literature internalizes western ideology and its system of oppression, therefore resistance writing serves the attempt to resist such domination by integrating cultural identity and ideology which truly belong to women and ethnic groups.

Since conventional literature serves as an integration of western concept which leads to authority and control, therefore the anti-conventional structure of The Joy Luck Club resists this conception. This resistance provides a space to encode Chinese ideology and to give voice to Chinese American women. To begin with, the multi-narrative style of The Joy Luck Club is a literary technique which gives voice to all characters. The novel is composed of sixteen interwoven stories divided into four parts each with its own separate narratives, the mother generation as the narrators and the daughter generations as the narrators. Each story is narrated through the first person storytelling style. This technique forges all narrative characters as a protagonist in each own story. The style of multi-narrative provides each character a voice to tell their stories from their perspective. This reflects the sense of community where all characters are significant and all narrators contributes to the completion of the novel.

Unlike conventional literature where each story has one narrative voice and one protagonist which controls the story's point of view, in The Joy Luck Club, all major characters and their narratives are connected. They share and overcome the same conflict, thus mirroring the sense of kinship, of love and support that the women in the novel have toward one another. The conflict which shapes the theme of the novel is stated in the first story, through the character

of Jing-mei, who in this chapter serves as a representative of the daughter generation. When Lindo, Ying Ying and An-mei urge her to return to China to tell her sisters story of Suyuan, her mother, Jing-mei doubts her ability to do so: "See my sister, tell them about my mother" I say, nodding. "What will I Say? What can I tell them about my mother? I don't know anything. She was my mother" (40). After this utterance the aunties "look at [her] as if [she] has become crazy," Which makes Jing-mei realize that her aunties see in her the reflection of their own daughters:

"Not know your own mother?" cries Auntie An-mei with disbelief.  
 "How can you say? Your mother is in your bones!"

....  
 And then it occurs to me. They are frightened. In me, they see their own daughters, just as ignorant, just as unmindful to all the truths and hopes they have brought to American. They see daughters who grow impatient when their mothers talk in Chinese, who think they are stupid when they explain things in their fractured English. They see that joy and luck do not mean the same to their daughters, that to these closed American-born minds "joy luck" is not a word, it did not exist. They see daughters who will bear grandchildren born without any connecting hope passed from generation to generation (40-41).

As this awareness is brought to Jing-mei's mind, the conflict between the mother and the daughter due to their cultural gap is stated. Also, the line "your mother is in your bone," states the primary theme of the novel. That is, the finding of one's identity through the reconciliation between the mothers and the daughters.

The conflicts between the Chinese mothers and their American born daughters become the foundation of each narrative episode, thus forging each episode in all four sections of the novel to parallelism. After the conflict is stated in the first chapter, the mothers, Lindo, An-mei, and Ying Ying tell stories in turns, recalling their relationship with their own mother, and worrying that their daughters' recollection of them will never reach the same intensity. As a child, they experience events which part them from their mother. Lindo enters an arrange marriage at a young age. Since childhood An-mei is taught to despise her mother who was cast out of the family. And Ying Ying marries a bad man that ruins her spirit and innocence. However these women never forget the "shou," which is the deep connection they have with their mothers as they always remember "what is in [their] bone" (48). As for "the Twenty-six Malignant Gates" and "American Translation," the middle two sections belong to the narrative of the daughters' generation. The stories reveal the perception of Waverly, Lena, Rose and Jing-mei, the Americanized daughters, as they also in turns, tell of their conflicting relationship with their mother from childhood to adult years. They tell of their dilemmas and how finding for solutions bring them towards understanding their mothers. In the final section, "the Queen Mother of the Western Skies," the mothers express the process of reconciliation through revealing their daughters of their unknown past. They hope that this will enable their daughters to recognize their roots. Their past will teach the daughters "how to lose [their] innocence, but not [their] hope" (213).

The final stitch to the reconciliation of conflict which brings the novel to its closure is revealed in Jing-mei's return to China and her readiness to transfer Suyuan's stories to her sisters. The cultural gap is bridged through Jing-mei's realization of the heritage that lies in her blood. The moment she reaches China, she feels different and becomes aware that her mother was right, that is "[she is] becoming Chinese." It is the Chinese in her blood that is just "waiting

to be let go" (267). Also, the gap between Jing-mei and her mother is mended through the recognition that the three of them, her sisters and herself altogether resemble Suyuan: "[t]ogether we look like our mother. Her same eyes, her same mouth, open in surprise to see, at last, her long-cherished wish" (288). Because Jing-mei is the only character which speaks for her mother, she resembles a connection between the two groups of women. Therefore her success in recognizing her Chinese heritage and carrying out her mother's dream symbolize the bridging between the two generations and cultures of the Joy Luck Club's mothers and daughters. This brings the conflict to conciliation and the novel to its end.

It is through the interconnection of the characters and their stories that the idea of sisterhood among women is encoded. Register states that part of the feminist movement is to arouse the idea of sisterhood through literary works. Literature can create this feeling through the writing of "female-female relationship." The writings are narrations of experiences that women can share and compare with their own (171-172). The concept is reflected in the novel through the characters' sharing of the same conflict and the parallelism of experiences in their narration. The women of The Joy Luck Club are all connected, so are their narratives. Jean F. O'Barr indicates that this association between women is the basis of their strength to resist the oppressive social and cultural domination of men encoded in literature. The interconnected narrative stories of the novel mirrors the relationship between women in their daily lives and the support they have for one another (293-294).

While the interconnection of major characters speaks for sisterhood, the cyclical structure in plot development of The Joy Luck Club also mirrors the concept of time in both eastern and female perceptions. On the contrary to conventional literature which the plot development is chronological and linear, The Joy Luck Club's plot is cyclical. The quest toward understanding "what is in your bone" (40) begins in the first episode. Tan uses Jing-mei as the initiator of the major conflict, and end the novel by using her as a bridge, connecting the gap between the two cultures and generations. Also, the concept of "the East" being the place "where thing begin" further mirrors the cyclical structure of the novel (41). The East is where the original Joy Luck Club started. It is where the tragedies which stage the beginning of the mothers' journey take place. Finally, it is where the novel ends with Jing-mei's return to China to see her sisters. As Gayle Greene states that the protagonist's conciliation with the past is the return to her root, her home, her family (303). The circular structure of the novel resembles the Chinese perception of time. According to Dexter Fraser, Chinese people sees time as cyclical because they belief that man is a part of an "organic whole" that begins and ends circularly. The belief of cyclical order of time based on "astronomical cyclicity," the thought that the word begins a new cycle every 23,639 years, still dictates their perception. To them "man appeared as a living, cyclic portion of universe which comprise cycles upon cycles" (39-40). Another idea which shapes the Eastern view toward time is the concept of karma and the belief of birth and rebirth. Time is circular because life is circular: "[I]ife is the only one of many passing phrases of bodily existence. Death is merely a shedding of the flesh to be reborn in another life" (Wong 207). The circular pattern of The Joy Luck Club also represents the "female form," since it is their physical experiences that forge their lives into a repetition of circular patterns. In the natural aspect, women experience "menstruation, Pregnancy, and birth." In the social aspect, women are engaged the recurrence of "childbearing, childrearing, and domesticity." Because women's lives are circular, "[they] are round and so are their narratives" (Green 15). This circular pattern resists the convention of chronological plot development, a convention in literature which promotes the belief that only linear is logical. The Joy Luck Club, as a piece of resistance literature, portrays cyclical as rational through the perception of Chinese and women.

To resist the western cultural domination encoded in conventional literature, Tan uses the Chinese storytelling style in The Joy Luck Club as a literary technique which portrays the

integration of the Chinese cultural identity. In Dexter Frasure's view, "Storytelling is the art of making connections, of establishing relationship with people... with one's heritage and progeny ...[it] generates continuity, linking the past of the future and 'contextualizing' individual histories within the framework of tradition" (577). Hence, the storytelling of the novel functions to express the ancestral memory of Chinese women which is lost in the western world. The stories of the Joy Luck Club mothers serve as a retelling of their lost past which is unaware by the American-born daughters. It gives oral histories which fill in the blank space of the mothers' lives, thus reflecting how stories can connect the cultural gap between the two generations. In "The Queen Mother of the Western Skies," the parable implies that the mothers will reveal stories of their lives to their daughters in order to transfer to them their wisdom and hope. The stories will lead to the daughters' understanding of the mothers. And this understanding will enable the daughters to recognize their roots and the Chinese side in them. In this section, Ying Ying's decision to tell Lena of her tragic past becomes a reinsertion of her lost identity, which will lead to Lena's discovery of her Chinese identity, the fierceness Tiger spirit in her. The cultural connection in storytelling is also evident through Jing-mei. On her return to China, Jing-mei asks her father to tell the complete story of Suyuan's past in Chinese. The story forges the connection of Jing-mei's relationship with her mother through the understanding of her past and her Chinese culture.

Moreover, the storytelling of the Joy Luck Club mothers succeeds in creating new standpoint which will lead to the completion of the daughters' identity. According to Eugene C. Delamotte, the motivation to enact significant changes in the ideological level derives from the knowledge of women's past life and their experiences. Since the patriarchal society uses what Gerda Lerner calls the "deviant out group" to structure its domination, women must perceive through the barrier of culture, ethnic, race, and nationality in order to gain true knowledge of their lives. Women must "learn" and "unlearn," to attempt changes to the domineering ideology which shape the perception of themselves and how others perceive them (401-402). Through the storytelling of their mothers' past, the Joy Luck Club daughter's perception toward their Chinese heritage changes. As Maxine Hong Kingston asserts that "[u]nderstanding the past changes the present" (Rabinowitz 179), therefore the present which changes through learning of the mothers' past is the complete comprehension of their mothers and their Chinese identity (179). This concept is evident in Ying Ying. The silence of her past is the root of her passivity, causing the loss of her identity. Due to this, Lena's perception toward her mother and her Chinese heritage is shaped by the western point of view. Her father, a white male, forges new identity on her mother. He changes her name from Gu Ying Ying to Betty St. Clair and changes her birth date, as the narrator stated: "with a sweep of a pen (Ying Ying) lost her name, and became a Dragon instead of a Tiger" (104). However, being westernized, Lena beliefs this is how her father has "saved" her mother from a terrible life in China. When Ying Ying finally reveals her story, the truth of her tragic life, she breaks the silence of her past. Confronting it makes her regain her Tiger spirit, which will lead Lena's own Tiger spirit in action, as she is also born as a Tiger. When Lena learns of her strength, her Tiger spirit, the emblem of her Chinese identity is cut lose. Due to this, Lena's perception toward Ying Ying will change to the point of conciliation and respect.

Since each character narrates through their memory, the storytelling of the novel is written in a style of tale. Tales are narrations of events which are ambiguous whether they are real or imaginary. Thus, they are loosely plotted (Shaw 372). Fisher claims that storytelling is a process of narration which attempts to convert the experience of the storyteller into "metaphors for existence," revealing the storyteller's life into a form of art. By telling stories the characteristic and the cultural context of the storyteller is revealed (577). Suyuan's story of Kwellin holds this characteristic. It is a story which she often tells Ying-mei when Ying-mei was a little girl. The Kwellin story holds her past, the past she experiences as a young woman in

China. The story starts as a style of a tale in which the description of the atmospheric surrounding is subjected to her personal emotion and point of view. In her dream, Kwellin is described delightfully: "I dreamed of jagged peaks lining a curving river, with magic moss greening the barks. At the tops of these peaks, were white mists..." (21). In reality, through a point of view of a woman escaping the danger of war, the surrounding is described with a sense of desperation: "The peaks looked like a giant friend fish head, trying to jump out of a vat of oil" (21). Other than the subjective description of surrounding, the ending of her Kwellin story always changes. She becomes the writer of her own memory as "[her] story always grew and grew" (25). This is because memory is not a reliable record of "reality" but rather a "creative writer" that takes freedom in reforming the past through the perception of the storyteller (Green 293-294). Hence, as the storyteller, Suyuan has the ability to choose whether to create a story, "to choose [her] own happiness," or to report historical truth of her tragic life (25).

The Chinese storytelling of The Joy Luck Club uses the English which Tan called her "mother tongue," thus serving the purpose of encoding the identity of Chinese language. In many parts of the novel, Chinese words are often referred to when the character can not give English translation: "Lately I [Rose Hsu] have been feeling *hulihudu*. And everything around me seemed to be *heimongmong*. These were words I had never thought about in English...[m]aybe they can't be easily translated because they refer to a sensation that only Chinese people have..." (188). The use of English words in the stories leads to a comparison between Chinese and English, hence implying that the contextual meaning of Chinese exceeds beyond English translation. The storytelling also portrays the linguistic identity of Chinese America. The daughters' storytelling refers to the English remarks of their mothers. Portraying the considered as "fractured." However, the context of the sentence is far greater beyond the limitation of their language ability: "Bite back your tongue...[w]ise guy, he not go against wind. In Chinese we say come from south, blow with wind-poom!-North will follow. Strongest wind Cannot be seen" (89). Though Lindo's sentence is fractured, Waverly can understand the context. She knows her mother is giving her life lesson on "the art of invisible strength" (89), a lesson that later becomes her strategy in life. The fractured English translation reveals the Chinese linguistic identity. According to Martha J. Cutter, Aaronson and Ferres suggest that "the extent to which context determines the exact meaning will be far greater in Chinese than in English." This is because the words are "radically polysemous." Chinese language usually eliminates function words, prepositions, articles, and placing very little importance in pronouns causing them to be limited. Therefore in order to understand the English translation, a full comprehension of Chinese cultural context is needed (16). The mother's storytelling is a translation of how their stories are narrated if given the ability to speak perfect English. Since Chinese American text must encounter the different of linguistic system, the translation has to be "fore grounded." That is, it must be written with serious use of symbols and metaphors which must be classified by understanding their cultural context (16). In An-mei's story of her mother, she makes a symbolic reference on "magpies" in order to express how Chinese women no longer have to submit to passivity and "swallow their tears" (241). This symbolic expression could only be understood by knowing the cultural context of magpies, which are birds that feed on somebody else's sorrow, turning it into their joy. Conventionally, the language uses in the writing of Joy Luck Club would be considered as "fractured" or "broken." However, Tan was able to use this "fractured" English to portray the depth of Chinese language identity, making The Joy Luck Club into a book which truly portrays the recognition of Chinese heritage.

Amy Tan was born in 1952. The Joy Luck Club was first published in 1989. The time in between, the time in which this Chinese American women writer had grown up was infused with immense social changes. Women and ethnic communities were inspired by the Civil Rights Movement to claim their social recognition in the American community. It was the time when they had to "unlearn" the beliefs which had oppressed them, and had been imposed upon them

by the patriarchal society, via the most subtle device, literature. The traditional literature of the western world has been instilled with ideology which influenced their sense of control. This kind of writhing was conventional and this convention was the base of their literature, thus forging the sense of rationality to their literary tradition. However, in the view of minority writers, they believe that this convention did not reflect rationality; rather, it mirrored the western patriarchal domination. Therefore women created a genre of their own. It is a genre of literature that resists the western writing tradition by eliminating its convention, and creating a convention of its own which has become an arena of struggle, a place where opposition is done through integration, the integration of their ethical identity and beliefs.

As a woman, and as a Chinese American writer, Amy Tan's style of writing in The Joy Luck Club becomes an artistic response to the literary change of the period in which she grew up. She resists the conventional style of writing through the new style of writing technique. As Paula Gunn Allen claims that "the root of oppression is the loss of memory" (432), the unconventional structure and the Chinese storytelling style of the novel become an instillation of Chinese cultural identity and a reflection of what it is to be a woman or more so, what it is to be a Chinese women. The writing style in The Joy Luck Club is an attempt to reject the "root of oppression," making the novel to be a resistance writing.

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ชุดที่ ๕ “ศิลปะและวรรณกรรมชัดขึ้น ศิลปะและวรรณกรรมเยียวยา”

การหยุดนิ่งของเวลาในเรื่องสั้นของ  
เกเบรียล การ์เซีย มาเกซ

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เอกสารประกอบการประชุมวิชาการระดับชาติเวทีวิจัยมนุษยศาสตร์ ไทย ครั้งที่ ๒

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ณ โรงแรมโลตัสปางสวนแก้ว เชียงใหม่

## The Suspension of Time in Short Stories of Gabriel Garcia Marquez

### Introduction

The writing style of magical realism and its profound author Gabriel Garcia Marquez can be considered as the most important literary contribution Latin America continent has given to the world. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a Nobel prizewinner for literature in 1982, employs magical realism style of writing to narrate his political stance as well as establishes a Latin America literary identity that defies the realist literature that populates the western world. According to *The Dictionary of Twentieth Century Culture: Hispanic*, the term "Magical Realism" can be defined as "[f]iction that does not distinguish between realistic and non realistic events, fiction in which the supernatural, the mythical, or the implausible are assimilated to the cognitive structure of reality without a perspective break in the narrator's characters' consciousness" (156). Magical realism, therefore, can be taken as a cross over between a realistic character and the mythical setting, which represents the Latin America, continent itself. The work of magical realism at its core can be read as a fairy tales for adult as it provides historical and political insights.

It is noticeable that one of the most dominant characteristics in magical realism is the suspension of time. Gabriel Garcia Marquez's short stories as well as his novels, including the infamous *One Hundred Years of Solitude* rely heavily upon the function of time narratives. Joan Mellen states that the suspension of time is an outstanding characteristic of magical realism: "The plot seems to be suspended in time, the better for the grotesque and the strange, the unexplained and the mysterious, to yield larger truths. The passage of time loses all relevance" (1). Thus, it is possible to identify the perception of time, as perceived in Latin America, could influence the element of time suspension in Garcia Marquez's works.

The influence of Latin American perception of time in magical realism is taken into consideration due to the basic philosophical knowledge that the perception of time varies according to the individual culture within a certain society. Hence, time perception in Latin America contributed to the uniqueness of Garcia Marquez's works. By carefully analyzing the element of time suspension in Marquez's works, it is possible to discover the changes in the region history as well as the prolific author's personal experience and worldview. In conclusion, Garcia Marquez's technique of time suspension in the writing style of magical realism provides insightful reflection in the spirit of the Latin Americans as well as their suffering in order to aid the resistance toward the colonial hegemony and the oppressing social forces.

## Background History of the Latin American and its Affect on the Mentality of its People

In order to understand the reflection of reality and the Latin American spirit behind magical realism, it is necessary to have a general view of the region's history. Latin American history, as presented in Garcia Marquez's short stories, begins with the colonizing process of the indigenous Aztecs and Indians.

The colonial period of Latin America starts with the conquest of America by the then powerful European nations of Spain and Portugal. Ben G. Burnett and Kenneth F. Johnson state that both Spain and Portugal conquered the Latin America region, oppressed countless number of indigenous population and established the ruling system of monarchy that passed judgment on the lives of the people (2).

The process of colonization by the European leads to the exploitation of natural resources, the enslavement of indigenous population and linguistic colonization as Spanish and Portuguese became the official language of the land. The monarch ruling system, as Burnett and Johnson admit, sets up the concept of class division. At the top, the *peninsulares* or the European born whites, were the ruling class that controls most of the government positions and economic powers. Down the line were the Creoles, white born in Latin America, who were privileged due to their birth on the continent but nevertheless entitled to some wealth. The vast majority of the population consisted of the half-caste, the Indians, and the Negroes, who remained distressed at the bottom of social importance (4). Downtrodden by their inferiority, the Creoles hated the *peninsulares* and soon plotted their own War of Independence.

As the mother countries of Spain and Portugal entered the stage of decline, the Latin American colonies started the War of Independence. The war ended with the

victory of the Latin American and liberated them from colonization. The newly established Latin American nations, however, were left only with the knowledge of the monarchic form of government and military form of government was prosperous after the War. The ruling classes were soon divided into "Conservatives" and "Liberals" parties.

Despite the concept of two parties system modeled after the United States, Latin America political ideology has never come close to democracy. Johnson and Barnett remark that the Liberals, which consist of the middle class group in the society, attempt to change the political status ruled by the Aristocrats, which are the Conservatives. They resort to violence as a means to solve their political differences. After the fierce struggle, the parties made little changes to the lives of the people as member's battle for power among themselves (7).

It can be observed that despite the two parties system, the political state of Latin America revolves around chaotic condition. Political parties struggle for power, as the political ideology of the leaders is usually a form of military dictatorship. Consequently, the people would oppose against the cruelty of military leaders and battled to regain their rights. This political turmoil of Latin America has lasted into modern time.

From the background of the region, Latin America history is disjointed once the process of colonization started. Latin America can be considered as a continent that lacks its own political identity and trapped within its own cultural uncertainty resulted from the massive transformation when the European nations began to colonize the region. It is noticeable that the disjointed timeline of Latin America is contrast to the linear history of the European.

This is evident in the repetition of historical event such as the struggle for political power over who is going to be the "controller" or the military dictatorship which closely resembles the former monarch ruling system justify that the "history" of the region does not move forward into the "future" but constantly goes back into the past.

It is different from the "linear" history of the European, as there are no historical landmarks such as the "Dark Age" or "Industrialization."

Therefore, the Latin Americans who lived under this distorted history attain the "irrationality" that serves as a mental support for their spirit and culture to believe in the supernatural. Hence, it is easier for the Latin Americans to accept myth, omen, or uncanny phenomenon as parts of their way of life under this "irrational" frame of mind. This "irrationality" is also reflected through the writing style of magical realism.

The blending of the real and the fantastic elements in this genre, created a unique form of literary works that communicate effectively with the "irrationality" of the Latin Americans.

### Garcia Marquez's Biography and His Relationship with Magical Realism

Gabriel Garcia Marquez's ability to fuse the real and the fantastic together seamlessly in magical realism can be traced back to his childhood as his upbringing revolved around the "irrationality" of the Latin American spirit. Mendoza, Garcia Marquez's close friend, describes Marquez's upbringing as a boy who grew up among women. Dona Tranquilla, Garcia Marquez's grandmother, had conversation with the dead as if they were at her presence. Many of Garcia Marquez's aunts were fantasists who held on dearly to the memories of the past; all have special power to see into the

future and believe in the supernatural (12). His upbringing, unbelievable as it seems, offers a "logical" explanation to the fusion of the real and the fantastic in magical realism, the literary tool to express his idea.

It is apparent that Garcia Marquez's upbringing is far from ordinary and typical child of any Western family. European boys may develop their imagination by reading fairy tales and enchanting fiction but Garcia Marquez actually grew up with family members who accepted the supernatural as part of their existence. As the boy Marquez discerned his grandmother conversation with the deceased as a usual custom, it becomes perfectly understandable that his "reality" exists between the "irrational" unification of the physical surrounding and the realm of the dead. Her interaction with the invisibles provided him with the "spirit of irrationality" to accept whole heartedly the actuality of the supernatural as part of this daily life and the essence of Latin American culture.

The irrationality to believe in the supernatural of the Latin American spirit obviously influences Garcia Marquez's writing style of magical realism. Garcia Marquez seeks to ratify the influence of the Latin American spirit in the interview with Mendoza by saying that he did not "invent" any supernatural events in his works but "simply capture and recount the world of omens, premonitions, curses and superstitions" that belongs to the Latin American (59). It can be observed that what Garcia Marquez views as the "reality" of Latin America is full of extraordinary phenomenon that defies the rational mentality of the West. The supernatural events in magical realism, therefore, can be regarded as the narrative device that efficiently communicates with the Latin American readers by utilizing the spirit of irrationality, which is the heart of their cultural identity.

Hence, the combination of the "real" and the "fantastic" in magical realism occurs as a result of Garcia Marquez's desire to convey the agony of the Latin American using the spirit of irrationality as he admits in the same interview with Mendoza. During the interview, Garcia Marquez verifies that the reason he stayed away from writing about the subject of Latin America using realistic style is because he feels that rationality limits the perspective of the world. Beside, it does not help achieve any political awareness among Latin American readers as they are familiar with the cruel reality portrayed in realist literature (59).

In conclusion, the writing style of magical realism can be considered as a form of resistance writing on account of its defiance against the Western "realist" rationality that had oppressed region since the time of colonization. Magical realism is a vessel that represents the Latin American spirit of irrationality as its narrative device of supernatural events offer sharp contrast to the "logic" of the realist literature of the Western world. Finally, magical realism not only resists the Western oppression, it also seeks to liberate the political torment the continent has suffered throughout its history. The literary rebellion is cleverly presented by indirectly expressing how the "dominant social forces and events" inflict suffering upon the people.

#### Magical Realism in Garcia Marquez's Four Short Stories

From the background information of Latin America, magical realism can be regarded as the "offspring" of the region turbid history. Firstly, the distorted chronological timeline serves as a psychological support to the irrationality that is the spirit of Latin American. Secondly, magical realism gives Latin America its own form of

resistance literature, which protests against the Western realist rationality that governs the region since the time of colonization. Hence, in order for the people to liberate themselves from the chain of the past, it becomes necessary for the writers of magical realism to expose the identity and wickedness of the oppressors. Therefore, it is possible to analyze Garcia Marquez's four short stories using the historical frame of mind. As the analysis develops, it should be visible that the four short stories reveal specific events that occur during the course of Latin American history. Under the seamless blending of the real and the fantastic, magical realism successfully display the suffering of the Latin American people without preaching.

In the first story, "The Sea of Lost Time," Garcia Marquez narrates the story of an isolated timeless island where its people smell the fragrance of the rose from the sea. Here, the "fragrance of the rose" is a supernatural event that narrates the story. Its spontaneous arrival on the island is obviously unexplainable by any scientific means; however, it triggers the transformation in the character's life. Thus, when this supernatural event functions as a narrative device, the fragrance of the sea symbolizes the changes that are going to happen to the island that is suspended in the state of unmoving time.

The arrival of the smell, which triggers the changes on the island can be traced along the historical context as a representation of colonization in Latin America. The fragrance of the sea, the narrative device that signals the spontaneous appearance of Mr. Herbert who offers immeasurable amount of money to solve the problems of the islanders, represents how the colonizers offered to "educate" the indigenous Latin American. Mr. Herbert's offering, like the process of colonization, affects the life of the





ชุดที่ ๕ “ศิลปะและวรรณกรรมตะวันตก ศิลปะและวรรณกรรมเยียวยา”

**Kincaid's Annie John:  
A search of Independence**

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ณ โรงแรมโลตัสปางสวนแก้ว เชียงใหม่

## Kincaid's Annie John: A Search for Independence

แอนนี่ จอห์น: เสียงเพรียกแห่งอิสรภาพ

Ms. Kopporn Maneerat

นางสาว กอปรพร มณีรัตน์

### Abstract

Annie John thoroughly focuses on a life of an adolescent girl who is struggling through serial changes and difficulties upon reaching puberty. Beside her body's changes, Annie's biggest worry is about her relationship with her mother which deteriorates at the same time her relationship with other female characters develops. Starting from a very close and almost inseparable bound with her mother, Annie John, the protagonist, ends the novel in a great desire of being as apart as possible from her once-beloved mother.

Apart from its universal aspect of adolescent psychology, Annie John's struggle taking place in the significant setting of the British-colonized Antigua implies a larger deterioration and suffrage the people of the island had to undergo. Annie's declining bound with her mother and sense of attachment to her homeland, in other words, represents the exploited lives of those who have experience in being under British colonization. Annie John's struggle in coping with the changes upon her puberty-reaching state especially with the transforming relationship with her mother and other female characters represents the experience of the Antiguans, while having been oppressed by the British colonization, craved for their genuine independence.

In this research paper, the writer will focus on four significant points regarding. Annie in her puberty reaching, its representation and implication along with the applicable theories of Postcolonialism and Orientalism. The first concentration is about Annie's struggle to cope with the changes and difficulties upon her adolescence which parallels the changes Antigua and its indigenous habitants had to face during the period of British colonization. The second point the writer would like to focus is the unequal, uneven and difficult relationship between Annie and her mother which is similar to the relationship of the indigenous inhabitants and the colonizers. Besides Annie's relationship with her mother, the third focus of this research paper will explore the relationship between Annie and other female characters in the story who reveal the favorable aspects of Antigua culture and identity or the unfavorable aspects of British colonization imposed upon certain characters. Lastly, Annie's final decision to leave her mother and the island of Antigua will be the final focused point which implies the ideal independence and self autonomy the colonized Antiguans have always longed for.

In conclusion, this research paper aims to explore the message of Kincaid's Annie John that it is not simply a story of an adolescent girl and the conflicts she encounters upon puberty-reaching but a diatribe against British colonization and its legacies imposed upon her homeland Antigua and lives of its indigenous inhabitants. Annie John's search for herself autonomy, in other words, parallels to the colonized Antigua's desire for their national autonomy.

### บทคัดย่อ

เรื่อง แอนนี่ จอห์น เขียนโดย จาไมก้า คิงเคต นำเสนอเรื่องราวของเด็กสาววัยรุ่น ผู้เผชิญกับความเปลี่ยนแปลงและความยุ่งยากต่างๆ ในขณะที่เธอกำลังโตเป็นสาว นอกจากความรู้สึกว่าุ่นใจเกี่ยวกับสภาพร่างกายที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไปนั้น แอนนี่ยังรู้สึกวิตกกังวลกับความสัมพันธ์ของเธอกับมารดา ซึ่งนับวันจะย่ำแย่ลง ในขณะเดียวกับที่แอนนี่ได้สานสัมพันธ์กับตัวละครอื่นๆ ในเรื่อง แม้ว่าแอนนี่ จอห์นผู้เป็นตัวละครของเรื่องจะดูใกล้ชิดและผูกพันกับมารดาของเธอราว กับว่าทั้งสองไม่สามารถแยกจากกันได้เลยในตอนต้นของเรื่อง เรื่องราวกลับจบลงที่ความปรารถนาของแอนนี่ที่จะไปให้พ้นจากมารดาผู้เคยเป็นที่รักยิ่งของเธอ

เรื่องราวของแอนนี่ จอห์นไม่เพียงแต่นำเสนอ หลักจิตวิทยาวัยรุ่นเท่านั้น แต่เรื่องราวซึ่งดำเนินไปในฉากของเกาะแอนติกัวในยุคที่ตกเป็นอาณานิคมของอังกฤษ กลับแสดงให้เห็นความทุกข์ยากลำบากที่เลวร้ายกว่าความลำบากของแอนนี่ จอห์นโดยนัยว่า ชาวแอนติกัวนั้นต้องได้รับความเจ็บปวดและยากลำบากจากการล่าอาณานิคมเป็นอันมาก เช่นเดียวกัน ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแอนนี่ กับมารดา และความรู้สึกผูกพันกับดินแดนมาตุภูมิที่เสื่อมถอยลง แสดงให้เห็นประสบการณ์อันเลวร้าย และถูกเอารัดเอาเปรียบของชาวแอนติกัวผู้ตกอยู่ในอาณัติของนักล่าอาณานิคมชาวอังกฤษ การที่แอนนี่พยายามเผชิญหน้า และดิ้นรนกับการเปลี่ยนแปลงในชีวิตช่วงวัยรุ่น โดยเฉพาะกับความสัมพันธ์ที่ร้าวฉานกับมารดา และความสัมพันธ์กับตัวละครอื่นๆ ในเรื่องนั้น เป็นอุปมาแสดงให้เห็นว่า ชาวแอนติกัวในยุคอาณานิคมเอง ก็ดิ้นรนต่อสู้เพื่อจะหลุดพ้นจากการครอบงำของอังกฤษ และเพื่อได้มาซึ่งเอกราช

ประเด็นหลักของสารนิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ เกี่ยวข้องกับช่วงหัวเลี้ยวหัวต่อของแอนนี่ ที่กำลังเติบโตจากวัยรุ่น ไปเป็นผู้ใหญ่ ความหมายโดยนัย และความซับซ้อนของเรื่องราว โดยยึดทฤษฎี Postcolonialism และ Orientalism เป็นหลักในการวิเคราะห์ ประเด็นแรกที่ผู้เขียนต้องการนำเสนอคือ ความพยายามดิ้นรนของแอนนี่ที่จะรับมือกับความเปลี่ยนแปลงและความยุ่งยากใจต่างๆ ที่เกิดขึ้นในช่วงที่เธอจะโตเป็นผู้ใหญ่นั้น มีความคล้ายคลึงกับประเทศแอนติกัวและประชาชนชาวแอนติกัว ผู้ดิ้นรนต่อสู้กับความลำบากยุ่งยาก ที่เกิดจากการล่าอาณานิคมของอังกฤษ ประเด็นที่สองนั้นนำเสนอ ความสัมพันธ์ที่ไม่เสมอภาค ไม่ราบรื่น แต่เต็มไปด้วยอุปสรรคระหว่างแอนนี่และมารดา ซึ่งคล้ายคลึงกับสภาพความสัมพันธ์ของชาวแอนติกัว และนักล่าอาณานิคมชาวอังกฤษ ประเด็นที่สามนั้น เกี่ยวเนื่องกับความสัมพันธ์ของแอนนี่กับตัวละครอื่นๆ ในเรื่อง ซึ่งบ้างก็แสดงให้เห็นมุมมองที่น่ายกลยองชื่นชม ของวัฒนธรรม รากเหง้าของชาวแอนติกัว บ้างก็แสดงให้เห็นถึงลัทธิล่าอาณานิคมที่ครอบงำความคิดของตัวละครหลายๆ ตัวในเรื่อง ประเด็นสุดท้าย เน้นที่การตัดสินใจของแอนนี่ ที่จะไปจากอ้อมอกของมารดา และมาตุภูมิ ซึ่งสื่อให้เห็นอิสรภาพ และเอกราชซึ่งชาวแอนติกัวปรารถนาที่จะได้รับอย่างแรงกล้าในยุคที่ตกเป็นอาณานิคมของอังกฤษ

สรุปได้ว่า สารนิพนธ์ฉบับนี้มุ่งที่จะค้นคว้าข้อความนัยยะที่จาไมก้า คิงเคตต้องการนำเสนอผ่าน เรื่องราวชีวิตของแอนนี่ จอห์น ซึ่งมีได้เป็นเพียงเรื่องราวชีวิตของเด็กสาวชาวแอนติกัวธรรมดาคนหนึ่ง ผู้ดิ้นรนกับความเปลี่ยนแปลงในช่วงวัยรุ่น หากแต่เป็นคำตำหนิและการต่อต้านลัทธิล่าอาณานิคมของอังกฤษ และผลพวงอันเลวร้าย ที่ครอบงำประเทศแอนติกัวและชาวแอนติกัวในยุคอาณานิคม การค้นหาอิสรภาพของแอนนี่ จอห์น จึงเป็นตัวแทนของ ชาวแอนติกัวผู้แสวงหา และรอคอยเอกราชของชาติตน

### Kincaid's Annie John: A Search for Independence

Once colonialism is mentioned in our days, we tend to think of an ideology that existed only in the past. We, perhaps, fail to realize that this ideology and its legacy still penetrate many lives in several countries such as in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. Literary works of postcolonial writers who have first-hand experience with colonization, however, mirror the deep-roots of colonialism and its hidden costs in order to unveil the invisible sufferings of those formerly colonized. Annie John, written by an Antiguan writer Jamaica Kincaid between 1982-8, is one of those literary works in the postcolonial world. Kincaid (1949-present) was christened as Elaine Potter Richardson during the period of the British colonization. She was educated and oppressed, in her viewpoint, by the British educational system. Later on she moved to the United States of America trying to leave behind the painful memories of being under the British colonization. Her birthplace is a small island of the West Indies located between the Atlantic and the Caribbean. This island was colonized consecutively by the Spanish, French and British. In 1967 Antigua obtained independence from its final colonizer, England.

Annie John comprehensively focuses on the life of an adolescent girl who is struggling through a series of changes and difficulties upon reaching puberty. Besides her body's changes, Annie's biggest worry is about her relationship with her mother which deteriorates at the same time that her relationships with other female characters grow. Starting from a very close and almost inseparable bond with her mother, protagonist Annie John ends the novel in a great desire of being as far apart from her once-beloved mother as possible. It is important to note that Kincaid starts Annie's John story in the 1950s, the time when Annie is ten years old and Antigua is under British colonization. Kincaid, likewise and intentionally, ends the story with Annie's decision to leave her

mother when she is seventeen in 1967, the exact time Antigua was announced free by its British colonizers. Apart from its universal aspect of adolescent psychology, Annie John's struggle takes place in the significant setting of the British-colonized Antigua exploring the larger deterioration and sufferings of the people of the island. Annie's declining bond with her mother and sense of attachment to her homeland, in other words, represents the exploited lives of those who experienced British colonization. Annie John's struggle to cope with the changes amidst puberty, especially with the transforming relationship with her mother and other female characters, represents the experience of the Antiguan; oppressed by the British colonization, they craved their genuine independence. Annie John's search for personal independence and self-autonomy from her authoritative mother parallels many of the colonized Antiguan's cravings for national independence and national-autonomy from their dominating British colonizers. The exposé of the uneven and difficult relationship between the domineering agents, Annie's mother and British colonizers, and the dominated ones, Annie John and the colonized Antiguan, undeniably unveils Kincaid's disapproval of and resistance against colonization and its inhumane legacy.

This research paper focuses on four significant points regarding Annie and her maturation, its representation and implications. The first part concentrates on Annie's struggle to cope with the changes and difficulties of her adolescence which parallels the changes Antigua and its indigenous habitants had to undergo during the period of British colonization. The second part of this paper focuses on the unequal, uneven and difficult relationship between Annie and her mother which is similar to the relationship of the indigenous inhabitants and the colonizers. The third part of this research paper explores the relationship between Annie and other female characters in the story who reveal the favorable aspects of Antiguan culture and identity or the unfavorable aspects of

British colonization. Lastly, Annie's decision to leave her mother and the island of Antigua parallels and implies the ideal independence and self autonomy the colonized Antiguan have always longed for. Beyond the four major points focused in this research paper, the setting, British colonized-Antigua, also needs to be emphasized as it plays a significant role in disclosing the complication and legacy of colonization imposed upon the lives of the Antiguan, the major message Kincaid implies in Annie John. However, along with the setting, to further understand Kincaid's theme of searching for independence and autonomy, we should explore various theories such as Colonialism, Postcolonialism and Orientalism.

Colonialism, according to Dr. Chalathip Wasuwat, is "a lucrative commercial operation, bringing wealth and riches to Western nations through the economic exploitation of the others" (1). The most observable practices of colonialism, according to Elleke Boehmer, are the "settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands" (qtd. in Wasuwat.) As a result, an unequal relationship is constructed. The natives of the land become inferior, and the intruders superior. Ella Shohat, the writer of *Notes on the 'Post-Colonial,'* states that "'Colonialism'... impli[es] both oppression and the possibility of resistance" (328). The concept of colonialism appears entirely in Annie John as Annie John is "govern[ed]" by her mother, a character who conforms to the British colonial rules as well as her school teachers who represent the British colonizers and their colonial mentality. Annie's uneven and difficult relationship with these characters "impli[es] both oppression and the possibility of resistance" as the story discloses.

Yet, as Annie John was written long after the Antiguan independence (1967), the novel is therefore postcolonial literature and the term "postcolonialism" then helps explain the story of Annie

John and her relationship to other female characters. These bonds parallel the relationship of the British colonizers and the colonized indigenous West Indians, especially the Antiguan. According to Padmini Mongia, the term "postcolonialism" operates as "a historical marker referring to the period after official decolonization" (2). According to Homi K. Bhabha, "the term postcolonial is increasingly used to describe that form of social criticism that bears witness to those *unequal and uneven processes of representation* by which the historical experience of the once-colonized Third World comes to be *framed* in the West" [emphasis added] (qtd. in Mongia 1). Along with the plot of the novel, Annie John's relationship with her mother and her teachers is repeatedly disclosed as "unequal and uneven" as Annie is "framed" either by her mother or her school teachers.

Postcolonial theory, to Mongia, "has been formed as a response to these pressures [from the legacy of colonization] even as it offers a means of speaking to them" (5). Mongia posits that postcolonial theory "problematizes the nation state and its ideologies and reveals the difficulty of conceiving the nation even as an 'imagined community'" (5). Similarly to Mongia's interpretation of postcolonial theory, Kincaid's Annie John "problematizes" Annie John's "difficulty of conceiving" herself as an independent individual. Gyan Prakash, in addition, "describes postcolonial criticism as critiquing the 'historicism that projected the West as History'" (5). Viewed from Prakash's view, Annie John "describes postcolonial criticism" as the author wrathfully criticizes Annie's mother and her school teachers who "project[...] the West as History."

Apart from postcolonialism, Edward Said's theory of Orientalism is an important tool to understand Kincaid's message in the life of Annie John. In Orientalism (1978) Said describes Orientalism as "a Western Style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient" (88) which "tries to show that European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off

against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self..." (89). Said verifies that the Orient is an image of "the Other" of the West (87). In Annie John, the concept of Orientalism is

clearly constructed through the relationship between Annie and her mother as well as her school teachers. Annie's mother and her teachers are portrayed as "dominating, restructuring" agent who have "authority over" Annie, whereas Annie herself is portrayed as "the Other" in the eyes of her mother and her teachers. Even worse, the mentioned characters seem to gain "strength" and authority by "setting [themselves] against" Annie John by disapproving her behavior and opinions.

Having gathered small details of a girl who was born and grows up in the British-colonized Antigua, Kincaid turns Annie John into a resistance and diatribe against colonization and its legacy. Prakash believes that

novels whose engagement (usually suppressed for the most part) with the West Indies or India [...] is shaped and perhaps even determined by the specific history of colonization, resistance, and finally native nationalism. (29)

From Benita Parry's perspective, the writer of "Resistance Theory/Theorising Resistance or Two Cheers for Nativism," Kincaid's Annie John is a resistance and "cultural escape" to colonization (92). Quoted in Parry's article, René Depestre elucidates that the ideological "cimarronaje" is "the means for the Caribbeans to resist depersonalisation" (92). Depetre considers the rebellion as "cultural escape" which is obviously shown through religion, folklore, art and Caribbean literatures.

Annie John is similarly Kincaid's means to "resist depersonalization" of British colonization. While Mrs. John represents the colonizers' authority and control over, Annie herself represents the indigenous inhabitants of Antigua. Moreover, viewed from Jacques Stéphen Alexis' perspective, Annie John agrees with what Alexis considers as "marvelous realism," which is "a literary practice



appropriate to producing the fantastic reality of the Caribbean's broken histories, different temporalities and creolised cultural identities" (qtd. in Parry 92). Annie John's life, especially her relationship with her mother, seems as "broken" as the history of the colonized Caribbean and one of her motherland Antigua.

The plot of Annie John develops around the central character Annie John's adolescence. Annie's struggles to cope with the changes and difficulties upon reaching puberty parallels the changes and difficulties Antigua and its people had to face in the British-colonized period in which the story takes place, both physically and psychologically. Like Annie whose body's changes result in anxiety and frustration, Antigua's physical changes caused by British colonization brings the similar outcome to the indigenous Antiguan. Stuart Hall's article "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," affirms that colonialism has lately been presented by several critics and writers through the body of female:

Elleke Boehmer's discussion of narratives of nationalist recuperation, identity reconstruction and nation formation shows how images of the female body were used to embody ideals of the wholeness of subjectivity, history and the state. Thus, while reversing colonialist iconography figuring penetration, pillage and dismemberment—'repression upon the objectified, enslaved, colonized body'—such invocations of the female body 'resist[s] upon the assumption of predominantly masculine authority and historical agency,' nationalism's core concepts nesting in the metaphor of the maternal body (qtd. in Hall 90).

In addition, Ella Shohat claims that Anticolonial intellectuals have "used gender tropes to discuss colonialism" (qtd. in Hall 90). Based on Boehmer's and Shohat's views, Kincaid, as well,

has used Annie's John "enslaved" and "colonized" body and mind as a metaphor to represent, in a larger scale, the oppression and enslavement the Antiguans suffered under British rules.

At the beginning of Annie John, while narrating Annie's struggle to cope with a series of frustrating physical changes upon her adolescence, Kincaid indignantly uncovers the indigenous Antiguans' struggle in coping with the island's changes they had to face under the British colonization, both physically and psychologically. Annie John's physical changes caused from her puberty and Antigua's physical changes caused from British colonization share the identical idea of alienation both Annie and the Antiguans. Annie hates her changing appearance and sees herself as a stranger. When Annie turns twelve, she has become taller and her clothes "no longer fit" (25). She claims that her legs are more "spindlelike;" her hair is "even more unruly than usual;" and her underarms smell is strange as if she had "turned into a strange animal" (25). Annie's mother informs her that she is "on the verge of becoming a young lady" (26). It clear that Annie is unwilling to accept the incident as she calls her reflection in the mirror "that strange girl" (27). Furthermore, Annie's attempts to physically stop her body's changes reemphasize her desire to avoid the changing appearance. Standing nakedly in front of the looking-glass, Annie tries to press her "unruly hair" down, spots "the small tufts of hair under [her] arms and objects to her nose which has gotten bigger than it usually was" (27). When it comes to her menstruation, Annie calls it "something wrong" and feels so "ashamed" of it that she faints in class thinking about her menstrual blood (52). In other words, besides hating her changing appearance, Annie also feels very uncomfortable and frustrated with her bodily changes.

Like Annie whose physical changes make her a stranger to herself, the island of Antigua became an alien or a "stranger" to its local inhabitants because of the British colonization. Antigua

is no longer Antigua and its people no longer Antiguan. In several parts of the novel, there appears an image of "[t]he Anglican church," (72) and a British school where many Antiguan students attend. The Antiguan identity is replaced by the British one. For instance a church is "Anglican" which means *[o]f or relating to England or the English*<sup>1</sup> at the same time Annie's school is called the "British" girl school despite the fact that their actual sites are located on the land of Antigua. Similarly in A Small Place, another book by Kincaid, the phenomenon of the British colonizers turning Antigua Island into a stranger of the islanders is presented through the names of streets and buildings during the period of British colonization. Horatio Nelson, Rodney, Hood, Hawkins, Drake and all the alien names put into streets and buildings take over the Antiguan's original identity (24). Even the Antiguan's themselves, in Annie John, are titled with English name such as Annie John, Gwen, Miss Edward and Miss Nelson. This phenomenon implies that the indigenous inhabitants are turned, by their British colonizers, into English identified with the English identity.

The physical changes of Annie's body and Antigua lead to psychological sufferings and the identical identity loss for both agents. Several scenes in the book reveal that Annie's psychological sufferings are directly caused from her body's changes and how her mother reacts to them. As Annie's body matures, she feels that she is being deprived of the love from her mother whose statement has made Annie feel that they are the same beings and inseparable. Annie is once told by her mother that "nothing could be farther from the truth—that she would never leave [Annie]" (44). However, Annie's changing anatomy forces her to realize that she is no longer and cannot anymore be a part of her mother although she has an extreme belief that they can be together as the same person for the rest of her life. Annie is awakened by her mother's insistence that Annie

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<sup>1</sup> "Anglican." *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*: 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. 2000.

cannot "go around the rest of [her] life looking like a little [Mrs. John]" (26). Having been notified that she has to grow up to be an individual, Annie feels rejected by her mother and loses the self identity she has long equated with her mother. Annie is not willing to accept her mother's claim that she is her mother's "Other."

In spite of Annie's loss of identity, the physical changes in her adolescence makes her feel deprived of the beautiful and peaceful world she formerly lived in. As she grows older, Annie feels lost in the world whereas her mother enthusiastically keeps her father company. In the chapter "The Circling Hands," Annie expresses her confusion and anger towards the union of her parents. Catching her parents in the act of making love, Annie starts to feel disgusted to her mother's hands. The more she senses the close relationship between her parents, the more she sees herself as an outsider whose mother is stolen. Besides seeing her parents having sex, Annie tells the audience repeatedly in the book about her awareness of her parents' inseparable union. During one lunch she narrates about her parents' interaction: "On and on they talked. As they talked, my head would move from side to side, looking at them" (18). Mr. and Mrs. John's profound engagement in their conversation also excludes Annie from their company. Similarly, Annie feels alone when her parents "talk about [her] as if [she] weren't there sitting in front of them" (67). Being in the middle of her maturation, Annie claims that she is being deprived of her "heavenly life" (27). Annie's unease and frustration over as well as her inability to accept her body changes are seen by Annie as "a small black ball, all wrapped up in cobwebs" in her stomach (85). For Annie, even though the black ball is "no bigger than a thimble," it weighs "worlds" (85). The mysterious black ball Annie feels inside her body signifies her extreme anxiety towards her physical and emotional changes. According to Dennis Todd, the author of Imagining Monsters: Miscreations of the Self in Eighteenth Century

England, imagination and identity are interwoven. The imagination, as Todd puts it, is between sensation and thoughts. Based on Todd's analysis of Mary Toft's incident, "confusion almost always eventuates in the loss of identity." Todd further discusses,

Since the imagination caused an irruption of the body into the realm that normally gave us our *identities*, the realm of spirit and mind, it was seen as an agent that threatened our very *identities* [emphasis added] (107).

In addition, Todd believes that the "body *could annihilate identity*" [emphasis added] (126). Viewed from Todd's view, it can be assumed that Annie's severe sickness during the long rains is caused from her loss of identity. In other words, Annie's identity is lost because of the changes of her appearance onset of puberty.

Like Annie, the physical changes of Antigua Island caused by the British colonization leads to the loss of Antiguan culture, national identity and their previous "heavenly li[ves]" (27). The indigenous Antiguan lost their ethnical identity due to the physical changes of the island caused by British colonization. As mentioned earlier that almost everything and everyone in Antigua is changed to be identified with British identity by the colonizers such as street and building names or even people's names, the Antiguan are deprived of their genuine Antiguan identity. Local names are erased whereas English names implanted. In the essay "What's in a Name? That Which We Call a Rose by Any Other Name Would Smell As Sweet" in Second Thoughts: Seeing Conventional Wisdom Through the Sociological Eye, Janet M. Ruane and Karen A. Cerulo write about the significance of names. Ruane and Cerulo discuss "[n]ames can be used to indicate possession or ownership" (74):

Columbus, for example, named the indigenous people he met "Indians," a term that came to be used generically for all native people. Similarly, *colonial populations were frequently renamed by those controlling them so as to reflect the cultural standards of the ruling power*. In one case, a mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish governor replaced the Philippine surnames of his charges with Spanish surnames taken from a Madrid directory as a method of simplifying the job of Spanish tax collectors (Isaacs 1975) [emphasis added]. (74)

Viewed from Ruane and Cerulo's standpoint, we can assume that by naming objects, places and people of Antigua with English names, the British colonizers have shown their "cultural standards of ruling power" imposed upon the norms of the local Antiguans.

Not only did the Antiguans lose their ethnic identity, they also lost their national identity due to the social influences British colonization imposed onto the island and its islanders. Antigua, as presented in Annie John, lacks a truly Antiguan nationalism. James G. Kellas defines nationalism as "an ideology which builds on the idea of the nation and makes it basis for action" which can be either "political or non-political," adds Kellas (21). Regarding to the Antiguans' both political and non-political actions, Kincaid insists that their national pride be still identified with the connection to England in almost every aspects of life.

Stuart Hall, in his essay titled "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," defines cultural identity as "one shared culture ... shared history and ancestry held in common" (qtd. in Mongia 110). In other words, cultural identity mirrors "common historical experience and shared cultural codes" (qtd. in Mongia 110-111). This conception of cultural identity is crucial in all "postcolonial struggles" (qtd. in Mongia 111). Annie's narration about "Queen Victoria's birthday" celebration (76) in the chapter

"Columbus in Chains" implies Kincaid's disapproval of this official celebration. Annie considers that it is unusual that the Antiguan, who are the "descendants of the slaves" celebrate Queen's Victoria's birthday. The British were, in fact, the ones who turned their Antiguan ancestors into slaves. Annie's statement "it [is] really hard for us to tell on which side [English or Antiguan] we really now belong[...]" (76) unveils that although the Antiguan had been oppressed by the British colonization, they now seem to identify themselves and their national pride with England. Similar evidence which appears in Kincaid's A Small Place regarding the Antiguan's national pride helps illustrate the loss of national identity of the colonized Antiguan Kincaid implies in Annie John.

Kincaid writes in A Small Place that "Antiguan are so proud of [independence day] that each year, to mark the day, they go to church and thank God, a British God" (9). In Annie John, we learn that the indigenous Antiguan, beside their local beliefs in superstitions such as Obeahism, also converted to Christianity like their colonizers. We get to see that Annie and other children at her age are expected to go to church and attend "study-of-the-Bible group" in Sunday school (30). The Anglican Church bell in Annie John is always presented as the appropriate time to do certain things in the story. For example, we learn that Annie's father leaves the house for work at the "stroke of seven by the Anglican church bell" (13). The Anglican church bell and British schools bell represent the social expectation reinforced by the British colonizers. At Annie's school, "[t]he Anglican church bell [strikes] eleven o'clock—an hour to go before lunch" (72). The school bell plays the same role as the Anglican church bell. "When the school bell rang at half past eight," every student is told that it is time to form rows in the auditorium for the morning prayers and hymn-singing (35). The church and school bells then represent the colonial rules imposed upon the colonized through the educational and religious institutions. This daily routine implies that the indigenous Antiguan

have unknowingly conformed to the British colonial rules regarding how to lead their lives appropriately.

Regarding Annie's body's changes and Antigua's physical changes, both changes result in the similar psychological changes of feeling lost and identity deprivation of Annie John and the colonized Antiguan. Franz Fanon's theory can help clarify this conclusion as he contends that "the native is someone from whom something has been stolen." Fanon further validates that "[t]he native, then, is also lack" (qtd. in Chow. 125). Like Annie who is deprived of her beloved mother and lacks self identity upon reaching puberty, the colonized Antiguan are deprived and lack of their ethnical, cultural and national identity.

Besides uncovering the hidden causes of colonization penetrating lives of the colonized Antiguan, Kincaid purposefully attacks the British colonial oppressors through the portrayal of her mother and school teachers who share the same social values and domineering authority over the ones under their control; nevertheless, that Annie's mother and school teachers are indigenous Antiguan reveals Kincaid's intentional attack against the native locals who have internalized the colonial mentality of the British oppressors. Annie's difficult relationship with her mother and her British school teachers similarly illustrate an image of a domineering agent having control over another passive agent; this parallels the always pebbly relationship between the colonized indigenous inhabitants and colonizers. The way Annie perceives of and reacts to her mother and her school teachers is very similar to indigenous inhabitants of a colonized country perceive and rebelliously responses to their intruding colonizers.

In Annie John, the close bond between Annie and her mother declines as Annie is at the edge of becoming an adolescent. The formerly smooth relationship is now becoming uneven. The



initial incident that spoils Annie's tight bound with her mother arises when Annie's mother refuses to buy the piece of cloth Annie thinks is beautiful and tells Annie she is "getting too old" for wearing the same piece of cloth as her mother (26). Annie feels hurt and out of place. She does not at all agree with her mother that "it's time [she has her] own clothes" and disagrees her mother's words, "You just cannot go around the rest of our life looking like a little me" (26). Furthermore, Annie says that aside from those hurtful sentences her mother has spoken to her, the lack of the usual accompanying laugh and bending over to kiss her forehead makes Annie start to tell the "bitterness and hatred" (26). When she asks her mother to "look through the trunk," in which Mrs. John keeps Annie's historical items, her mother refuses to do so, claiming that they "don't have time for that anymore" (27). Right after she hears her mother's answer, Annie sees her mother as a "person [she] [does] not recognize" whose voice she is not familiar with (27). Annie starts to fear another separation once her mother tell her that one day Annie would have her own house and they "would live apart" (29). When Annie first menstruates, her mother's comfort seems superficial to Annie, and she calls her mother "a serpent" (52). Annie's formerly goddess-like mother has now become a devil in Annie's eyes. Annie later calls her mother's eyes "ever-inquisitive, ever-sharp eyes" (61). At this point, we can see that the way Annie perceives of her mother has been changed. She no longer feels that her mother is kind and nice to her but she now starts to feel her mother's lack of understanding and cruelty. Annie's separation from her mother, viewed from Wodak and Schulz's views, forces Annie to separate herself from her mother causing hatred yet forcing her to have her mother as a role model.

Annie not only changes her perception towards Mrs. John but also starts to feel that she is being controlled by a domineering mother at home and domineering British teachers at school.

Annie is told by her mother how to do things appropriately even how to "store linen" or how to fold sheets (28). If Annie fails to follow Mrs. John's standard, she is at risk in making her mother angry. Mrs. John makes "a fuss" (30) when Annie does not place the bedspread with the embroidery right in the middle of the bed as the way her mother wants. Mrs. John states that Annie is "careless" (30). This trifle makes Annie feel as if she has committed a crime and Annie "regret[s] very much not doing that one little thing that would have pleased her [mother]" (30). Annie's mother expects nothing more than Annie's "good manners" in front of her Mrs. John's friends (88). In addition, Mrs. John rewards Annie when she meets her mother's expectation and punishes her when she does not. Annie's claim that she is sometimes granted a reward "for excelling at something that [meets] her [mother's] approval" (86) suggests that Annie's mother is satisfied if Annie meets her expectations and standards. For example, she makes Annie's favorite dessert, blanchmange or kissed her as a reward or compliment. Also, Mrs. John's desire to display with whatever prize [Annie] [has] won" to the public (79) conveys that Annie's obedience and ability to meet her mother's expectation means acceptance, approval or even admiration from the larger community which share the same value as Mrs. John who internalizes the rigid colonial rules. Mrs. John's attempts are the means to keep Annie in the frame she wants. Annie's favorite dessert or a kiss from her mother, then, can be Mrs. John's tool to encourage Annie to behave as she expects and standardizes.

On the opposite, punishment is a solution Annie's mother chooses to terminate what she considers "misdeed" (81). For telling lies, Mrs. John makes Annie have supper "outside, alone, under the breadfruit tree" and telling Annie she will be deprived of a goodnight kiss. The

punishment Mrs. John uses with Annie can probably be considered her method of stopping Annie from violating the social standards set by the British colonizers that Mrs. John approves of.

Like Annie's mother who dominates and controls Annie in every step of her life, Annie's English teachers at the British girl school Annie attends are obviously dominating and authoritative to Annie and her Antiguan peers. As same as Annie's mother, her teachers at school use the same method of rewarding and punishment to control the students' behavior and perception into a frame of British colonial rules. A student is rewarded when she excels in certain things the teachers approve of. For instance, Annie is made "prefect of [her] class" (73) and is given "a prize, a copy of a book called *Roman Britain*" (73) because she takes "first place over all the girls" (72). The incident shows that since Annie excels in her history lesson, her teacher places her as an idol to whom other girls should look up to and try to be in her place. In other words, the "prefect" is awarded to Annie to encourage other girls to follow Annie's excellence at school. Moreover, the prized book *Roman Britain* reinforces her teacher's desire to emphasize the greatness and the powerfulness of Britain. Despite the fact that Annie is already very good at her history lesson, her teacher thinks it is necessary for her to learn as more as possible about England. Another example of the rewarding method used to encourage the Antiguan students to behave accordingly to the British colonial rules can be seen through religious influences in Annie John. At Sunday school, Annie receives a certificate for being "the best student in [her] study-of-Bible group" (30). Besides the Antiguan's local beliefs in Obeahism, the certificate presented to Annie at Sunday school proves that the indigenous inhabitants of the island are under the attempts of their colonizers in religious conversion. The certificate, therefore, implies that if one is able to follow the Christian standards of the colonizers, he or she is praised and accepted. Similar to Mrs. John's aim of rewarding Annie,

Annie's teachers grant her and other students rewards when they achieve the standards set by British colonizers in order to encourage them to conform to the colonial rules. Punishment, on the other hand, is for one who breaks the teachers' standards and expectation. Ruth, for example, is commanded to wear a "dunce cap ... in the shape of a coronet" (74) labeling the word "DUNCE" (75) when she fails to answer Miss Edward's question about Christopher Columbus' discovery of Dominica. The dunce cap is to make the misbehave feel embarrassed and then does not violate the social expectations under the colonial rules again. The "adjustable opening in the back" of the cap suggests that punishment is for everyone who does not conform to the expectation as the cap's end is open to fit any head of the rules-breaker. Along with wearing the dunce cap, a student who fails to give the correct answer to Miss Edward's question has to "repeat the correct answer in the exact words of the other girl" (75). Usually, the sentences repeated are quoted from their book called *A History of the West Indies*, which was possibly printed and written by an English publisher. As a result, the sentences are historical information such as "[o]n the third of November 1493, a Sunday morning Christopher Columbus discovered Dominica" (75) and such information, of course, is interpreted by the British colonizers, not the Antiguan. This additional punishment reveals that Annie's teacher is presenting to her students the Antiguan history viewed from the eyes of the British colonizers not from one of the indigenous islanders. Also, Annie's teacher punishes her for defacing her history book by making her copy "Books I and II of *Paradise Lost*, by John Milton" (82). Besides the fact that Annie is being punished for her so-called misconduct, she is forced to read through and learn more about British culture copying and, perhaps, memorizing English literature of Christianity by a British writer. Both acts of repeating historical sentences from a British-published book and copying English religious books the teacher launches as punishment at Annie's

school, in conclusion, imply the attempt of the British colonizers to make the colonized Antiguan internalize and accept the same sets of standards, values and beliefs as them. For both Mrs. John and Annie's teachers, rewarding and punishment are their reemphasis and reinforcement of the correctness of the British colonial rules, culture and history.

Besides her status under the similar control of her mother and her British teachers, Annie is seen as an uncivilized who needs to be polished through the colonial rules and standards. Although Annie is presented as an adorable daughter at the beginning of the book, she has later become someone who needs to be tamed and civilized upon her puberty-reaching state in Mrs. John's perspective. Not long after Annie has turned twelve, her mother sends her off to "learn one thing and another" (27). This implies that for Mrs. John, Annie needs to be tamed or to be civilized in order to agree with the British colonial rules and social expectation under which they live. For example, Annie is sent to the manner class and piano lesson. However, Annie gets dismissed by her British teachers from the class because she makes "farting-like" noises while practicing a curtsy and eats the plums put on the piano as decoration (28). The fact that Annie's teachers in these special classes are from England (28) and that her mother wants her to attend the classes show that Annie's mother wants Annie to be proper and follow the expectation and social standard set by the British colonizers. Annie lies to her mother that her teachers said her "manners needed no improvement" and that makes her mother very happy. So when Mrs. John hears from the teachers the reasons Annie is dismissed from the classes, she feels that Annie has not been civilized as she has expected. In other words, Annie, at this moment of the story, does not meet the British colonial standards they live in. Annie's unwilling to be in the classes as well as the lies she tells her mother are then the resistance Annie has against her mother's wish. Annie, in fact, sees no need of

improvement to her manners nor musical skill as her mother believes. For Annie, her unwillingness to fulfill her mother's expectation implanted by the British colonial rules has made her mother turn her back on her "in disgust" (28). Even worse, Annie feels rejected by her mother as she sees her mother "with the corners of her mouth turned down in disapproval of [her]" (28). Annie is now punished for her failure to meet her mother's expectation of shaping Annie to be a proper girl. As Wodak puts it, one of the possible outcomes of mother-daughter conflict is "a life-long re-enactment of the familiar 'songs and dances'—the mother attempting to control and daughter to resist" (11).

In the eyes of the British teachers, the Antiguan students need to be civilized by being exposed to and implanted the British civilization. Subjects the students have to study are designated by the British teachers as standard and essential subjects. The subjects they study at school are "English, arithmetic ... Latin and French" (29). Surprisingly, these subjects do not seem practical to the Antiguan students and their condition of lives except it presents the civilization of Britain. Besides academic subjects, the girls at Annie's school are expected to behave properly as the British etiquettes expect them to. Like the manner class to which Mrs. John sends Annie to, the girls have to attend the obligatory "ladylike recreation" during their recess (79). For example they chat about "novels and poems," probably ones they learn in their English class or they show each other the "new embroidery stitches" they learn in home class (79). Sometimes, the girls play cricket, the British national sports. However, non-British activities are prohibited and disapproved of by both teachers and parents of the girls. Playing band and calypso songs and dance is not allowed in the school. Like Mrs. John who thinks Annie's manners need to be improved, the mistress of the school believes her Antiguan students have to be civilized by formal British education. Miss Moore who has "come to Antigua from England," (36) reveals her colonial mentality seeing the Antiguan students inferior to

British colonizers through her morning speech on the first day of school. She expresses her wish that all her students have left their "bad ways" behind them (36).

Annie's mother and teacher, additionally, seem to share the similar desire in making Annie see the world through their eyes which take side with the British colonizers, particularly in term of history at both personal and national level. At a personal level, the toy View-Master Annie mother buys her and Miss Nelson's attitude towards Christopher Columbus suggests the identical concept of Antigua's history distorted by British colonization and its colonizers. Mrs. John's symbolic act of inculcating the Western-based perception on her daughter is shown through the choice of toy she prefers her daughter to play—the View-Master. Perhaps, the "View-Master" s(11), an educational toy Annie's parents have bought her, symbolizes her parents' wish to make Annie see the world through the "masters' eyes".

The View-Master came with pictures of the pyramids, the Taj Mahal, Mt. Everest, and the scenes of the Amazon River. When the View-Master worked properly, it was as if they were alive, as if we could just step into the View-Master and sail down the Amazon River or stand at the foot of the pyramids. When the View-Master wasn't working properly, it was as if we were looking at an ordinary, colorful picture (11)

From Annie's description of the toy, we can see that the pictures of exotic lands become even more exotic and tempting to be explored and discovered when viewed through the lens of the View-Master. The picture collection to be viewed through the lens of the View-Master are those of the non-Western countries and give the sense that they are unexplored lands to be discovered and conquered by the Western colonizers. Moreover, the name of the toy suggests the sense of the Master's view, or a Eurocentric view which means a view that is *[c]entered or focused on Europe or*

*European peoples, especially in relation to historical or cultural influence*<sup>2</sup>. Buying the View-Master for Annie as a toy, her parents, perhaps, are themselves internalizing a Eurocentric perspective as well as trying to implant it on Annie. At least, their decision to buy her this type of toy presents their approval of and support to its functions and the goals of its producers. However, Annie's criticism about the toy's occasional dysfunctions conveys a sense of illusion or distorted images through the lens of the actual toy, the Master-View. Beyond its literal level, however, the distorted pictures viewed through the View-Master lens probably symbolize the distortion when things are perceived through the colonial lens, which are focused only on the Western perspective. Annie's childish narration about her toy in Annie John, therefore, shows the reader the danger of colonization and its adverse effect imposed upon the lives of those who have experienced lives under colonization.

At a national level, the distortion of Antigua's national history can be seen in Annie's class room conducted by Miss Nelson whose opinion towards Christopher Columbus, as well, is as distorted as the pictures viewed through the View-Master Annie's mother has bought her. In a history class at school, Annie's conflict with Miss Nelson over the history of Columbus and the discovery of Antigua discloses the totally opposite perspective towards Antiguan history. For Miss Nelson, who is English and automatically a representative of the British colonizers in the colonized Antigua, Columbus is a hero and his discovery of Antigua is admirable heroic deed. So, from her British perspective Columbus is to be placed up high as a god-like figure who announces the greatness of England to the world. Conversely, when viewed from an Antiguan perception of innocent Annie, Columbus is a monstrous figure who is the cause of turning her Antiguan ancestors into slaves of the British colonizers. Annie is satisfied when she sees a picture of Columbus in the

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<sup>2</sup> "Eurocentric." *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*: 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. 2000.



state of "hands and feet [...] bound up in chains [...] looking quite dejected and miserable"

because she "[does] not like Columbus" (77). To see Columbus being chained as her slave

ancestors, Annie feels as if she has taken a triumphant revenge. Her act of defacing the book by

writing under Columbus' picture: "The Great Man Can No Longer Just Get Up and Go" (78) shows

that Annie ridicules the great British hero and rewrites the history of Antigua from her original

Antiguan perspective. Annie's act, indeed, implies that the history of Antigua interpreted from a

British view and passed down by a British teacher is totally distorted when compared to the feelings of the colonized Antiguans.

Annie's awareness of being under the authority of her dictatorial mother, not surprisingly,

leads to her further attempts to rebel and resist against her mother. Annie starts to be disobedient

and aggressive her mother. She, for the first time, stares directly at her mother "in the eyes" and

talks back to her (31). Annie resists against anything her mother approves of. Annie has become

tough and stronger as she claims she no longer needs assistance from her mother while eating.

Annie says that earlier her mother used to "chew up pieces of meat in her mouth" before feeding it

to Annie (32). Her rejection to Mrs. John's assistance implies that she does not want her mother to

"feed" her anymore. This, perhaps, suggests Annie's refusal to the British colonial rules her mother

tries to implant on her as well. Furthermore, when she hears Mrs. John telling her that her certain

behaviors remind her mother of the similar behaviors in her childhood, Annie insists that she "would

try to do it in a way that she [Mrs. John] could not stomach" (87). Annie's frequent behavior of telling

lies is seen by her mother as a defiant act and then an unfavorable habit. For Annie, her lies are

excuses that enable her to get around whatever her mother might not approve her to do. For

example, when Annie forgets to pick up the fish from Mr. Earl for her mother and lies to her that Mr.

Earl did not go to the sea on that day. Annie lies because she wants to cover the fact that she has gone to the funeral of a girl without asking for her mother's permission and for the fact that Annie knows she "[is] not allowed to go to the funeral" (12). What Annie calls "secret pleasure" is anything that is against her mother's desire. For example, she meets with the Red Girl at the lighthouse and plays marbles and hides them under the house (61).

At school, even though Annie proves her intelligence by excelling other girls and shows her ability to learn essential subjects and standards set by the British colonial rules, her infamous reputation of being one among "the worst behaved" (73) as well as her intention not to put herself up as a "good example" (73) show that Annie does not agree and rebels against the authority of her dictatorial British teachers. The resistance can be seen through her criticism about her homeroom teacher whose words imply the colonial rules and social expectation imposed on the native Antiguan. Annie thinks Miss Nelson speaks "half in a way that someone must have told her was the proper way to speak to [her students]" (38). Also, Annie's observations about Miss Nelson's clothes imply her criticism towards the code of conduct of colonial rules she carries as she wears her "ironed hair and her long-sleeved blouse and box-pleated skirt" (39). Moreover, her disapproval and resistance against her British teachers is conveyed through her criticism on Miss Moore's behavior and appearances. Annie infantilizes her by calling her voice a voice "borrowed ... from an owl" and objectifying her "a prune left out of its jar a long time" (36). Her eyes, as Annie sees it, are eyes that are "going all around the room hoping to see something wrong" (36). At this moment, Annie is expressing her thoughts how stupid and ridiculous Miss Moore, the representative of British colonizers, looks in her viewpoint. Annie even mocks the English people for their bad smell as she thinks they do not "wash often enough" or when they do, they do not "wash properly" enough (36).

So at this point of the novel, Annie has turned the English people into the uncivilized ones.

Furthermore, Annie's criticism towards her old school-notebooks discreetly illustrates her disapproval of and dislike towards British colonization. Annie says she is so glad to get rid of her old notebooks displaying on their covers "a picture of a wrinkled-up woman wearing crown on her head and a neckful and armfuls of diamonds and pearls" (40). This description could have been the Queen of England, the land from where the British colonizers come to Antigua. Annie's dislike of the Queen's photo which represents the governmental institution of England reveals that she is against British government and probably its political policy of colonization. This act, therefore, suggests Annie's resistance against colonialism and her challenge to the Queen of England she disapproves of. Just like how Annie secretly does things that her mother disapproves of, she rebels against her teacher's prohibition of calypso singing and dancing and find the rebellion very pleasant. During recess, Annie and her friends dance and chant the "unladylike words" (80) forbidden by the parents and teachers "from one end of the school ground to the other" (78). Annie's rebellion in dancing against the prohibition of teachers and parents can be seen a resistance against colonial rules when compared to Parry's criticism about limbo dance of the African slaves. Parry asserts that evidence of "native disaffection and dissent under colonial rule" are abundant as well as "of contestation and struggle diverse forms of institutional and ideological domination" (85). One of the "popular disobedience," therefore, is "unwritten symbolic and symptomatic practices in which rejection or violation of the subject positions assigned by colonialism is registered" (85). This resistance of disobedience usually comes with "anarchic and nihilistic energies of defiance and identity-assertion" (85). For example, Wilson Harris considers Limbo dance as "a resistant mode available to the Colonial Caribbean" (85). Harris indicates that this African dance was reinterpreted

on the slave ships of the Middle Passage in order to create "response to the violations of slavery and indenture and conquest" (85). Annie and her schoolmates, sometime, sing and dance calypso in the "churchyard" where the tombstones of British colonizers are located. Annie feels very triumphant sitting above the tombstone of the dead British colonizers as if they were turned to be Annie's and her friend's slaves. Annie expresses her delight in this rebellious act; "What perfection we found in each other, sitting on these tombstones of long-dead people who had been the masters of our ancestors!" (50). Seemingly, the rebellion is the way that Annie and some of her friends assert their Antiguan culture and identity as their national pride over those of the British colonizers. This activity usually results in the girls' "missing ribbons and other ornaments" from their hair, "the pleats of [their] linen tunics became unset the collars of their blouses were pulled out" and all of their bodies become "soaking wet" (80). To untie the uniform designed by the British colonizers, the girls seem to signal their desire to decolonize themselves from the colonial rules reinforced in the form of formal education in the British school.

Later on in Annie John, Kincaid explicitly explodes her rage, disapproval of, and resistance against colonization and the colonizers by inferiorizing the British colonizers represented by Annie's mother and Gwen, Annie's former good friend, as well as superiorizing the praiseworthy indigenous Antiguan represented by her nurturing grandmother along with her girlhood friend the Red Girl. Not only Annie's domineering mother but also conformist Gwen magnifies a sharp contrast to the caring-and-understanding grandmother and independent girl friend. Like the British colonizers who fail to understand the indigenous Antiguan, Annie's mother and Gwen are not successful in understanding Annie John. Vice versa, the Ma Chess and the Red Girl who are portrayed with the

strong image of Antiguan identity speak out loud that the Antiguan know best about what they want for themselves.

Ma chess is presented as a cultural carrier whereas Annie's mother seems to present the faded Antiguan culture replaced by the British one. We get to feel more the authentic sense of local color from Ma Chess when compared to Mrs. John, Annie's mother's portrayal. Mrs. John, in the book, barely provide reader with the sense of authentic Antiguan. She is usually dressed in "a boat neck or a sweetheart neckline, and a pleated or gored skirt" (25), the western style of clothing. Regarding to their faith in Obeah, the cultural beliefs of the Caribbean, Mrs. John and Ma Chess are entirely opposite as Ma Chess is playing an active role while Mrs. John being a passive agent in the Obeah rituals mentioned in the story. Although in certain scenes Mrs. John took the baths filled with barks and flowers as she has "consulted with the obeah woman" (14) or "call[s] Ma Jolie, an obeah woman from Dominica" (109) in order to seek help for Annie's illness, it is clear through Annie's narration that her mother "didn't show more of an interest in obeah things" (123). The point when she seems to show her beliefs in these local superstitions by consulting Ma Jolie, however, she does not believe in it strongly enough that she lets the voice of Mr. John, her husband, out speaks her own. Mr. John refuses to take part in having Ma Jolie treat Annie; "...[C]ount me out; have her come when I am not here" (110). As a result, Mrs. John Annie's mother has to put "Dr. Stephen's prescriptions in the front and Ma Jolie's prescriptions in the back" (117-118) on the shelf in Annie's bedroom in order to avoid Mr. John's "screwed up" face (117). This act of Mrs. John is very symbolic as her arrangement of the prescriptions implies that the Western medicine by Dr. Stephen is more important that it has to be at the front. The obeah prescriptions, however, is less efficient in her eyes as she puts it at the back as her husbands indirectly suggest her to. Unlike

her daughter, Ma Chess is very skillful and has complete ability and knowledge to conduct obeah rituals actively. Whereas Mrs. John seeks for the help of Dr. Stephen to help Annie from her illness, Ma Chess uses the local knowledge of obeah to help Annie. Ma Chess, in other words, uses the Caribbean's cultural beliefs and practice to solve the problem, unlike Annie's mother who pros the Western concept of knowledge.

Though Mrs. John believes in its power, lets the Western medicine be first-prioritized choice as her husband suggests. Kincaid, reinforces her tribute and admiration towards Antigauns' cultural beliefs and her opposition and insultation against Western influences imposed on her homeland in her narration about Annie John's uncle was revealed through Annie's voice. He died "of something the doctor knew nothing about, something the obeah woman knew everything about" (69). Annie's lack of trust is also shown, though indirectly, right at the beginning of the book in the Chapter "Figures in the Distance" when Nalda, a girl of Annie age, had a fever. She was sent off immediately to the Doctor called Dr. Bailey. Annie's monologue is revealed with the lack of trust in this typical medication as she says, "when I heard that I was so glad he wasn't my doctor" (6). This, again, implies trough Annie's voice that "the obeah woman" is superior to the western doctor. The contradictions that Ma Chess reveals against Mrs. John create the superiority to the native Antiguan and its culture over that one of England. Whereas "obeah," usually seen be the West as superstition and unscientifically logical, is being praised and given tribute, the Western style of medical treatment is portrayed as failure.

The sense of superiority and tribute Kincaid has created for Ma Chess and deducted from Mrs. John is portrayed through their attitude and understandings for Annie. Mrs. John fails to realize that Annie needs her attention when she was bed ridden whereas Ma Chess' treat to Annie clearly

shows the absolute attention she pays to Annie. Besides her true knowledge of local medication, Ma Chess is very kind, standing and nurturing to Annie that she knows how to fulfill Annie's need during her severe sickness. On the contrary, we get to see that Mrs. John overlooks the fact that her daughter's illness was caused from her need of spiritual support and need of attention. In the chapter seventh of the book "The Long Rains," whereas Annie mother is trying her best to help Annie from her illness, she is portrayed with only attempts which physically help Annie. For example, Mrs. John changing clothes for Annie, feeding her or bathing her. Mrs. John's lack of attention, or at least her failure to pay enough attention to Annie is simply shown through Annie's words during her sickness; "...while my mother attend[s] my father, keeping him company as he [eats], Ma Chess [feeds] me my food, coaxing me to take a mouthful after a mouthful" (126). At this point of Annie John, Ma Chess is portrayed as a substitute for the mother's love and attention Annie needs. Ma Chess is therefore presented as a very admirable surrogate mother. Unlike her daughter, Ma Chess provides Annie with spiritual support despite her attempts in setting up the Obeah medication. Ma Chess "settle[s] in on the floor at the foot of [Annie's] bed, eating and sleeping there" (125). Sometimes, she holds Annie in her arms and sleeps on the same bed to physically and spiritually give her warmth and support. Because of this, Annie feels "all locked up in the warm feeling soot" (125).

Apart from the contradictions between Mrs. John and Ma Chess, Kincaid presents another pair of characters who show the admirable aspects of local Antiguans and, at the same time, attacks the local Antiguans who have internalized the British colonial ideology. The Red Girl, a new friend Annie meets outside school contradicts Gwen, Annie's classmate and once-beloved friend in British school, in almost every aspect. Whereas The Red Girl is presented with an image of a local

inhabitant of the island like Ma Chess, Gwen, on the contrary, barely suggests the sense of being Antiguan just like Mrs. John.

The Red Girl to whom Annie looks up as a heroine is presented very simple and very local. We can feel the local color around The Red Girl when Annie describes about her new friend,

She had a big, broad, flat feet, and they were naked to the care ground; her dress was dirty, the skirt and blouse tearing away from each other at one side; the red hair that I (Annie) had first seen standing up on her head was matted and tangled; her hands were big and fat, and her fingernails held at least ten anthills of dirt under them. And on top of that, she had such an unbelievable, wonderful smell, as if she had never taken a bath in her whole life. (57)

Having no British name and not being under the educational influences of British school like other girls in the story, The Red Girl is not under the control of British colonial rules imposed on both political and education life as other Antiguan are. The Red Girl's name maintains its local identity without being changed into an English name. The Red Girl is unlike other girls Annie sees in the British school that she goes to because she does not have to conform to the British social etiquettes and expectation. She does not have to dress in a neatly cleaned and well-pressed dress. Her hair is "so unruly that it [has] to be forcibly twisted into corkscrews" (56). She does not have to take a bath everyday like Annie's mother tells her to. The Red Girl breaks the social expectation as she can climb up a tree "better than any boy" (56). Moreover, for Annie, the Red Girl is presented almost a heroine. The Red girl, through Annie's narration, is very brave and courageous. She climbs up the tree, one of the things girls in Annie's time were not expected to do. "All the boys climbed up the trees for the fruit they wanted, and all the girls threw stones to knock the fruit off the trees (56). She



has all the freedom to run around and play on her own without being told by her mother how to behave. She can go up to the lighthouse without worrying about her mother disapproving it. So, for Annie, she sees the Red Girl as an admirable person who has self-autonomy and independence over her life since "her mother [doesn't] force her" (57). Based on Adolescent psychology, Wodak indicates that the adolescent daughter will typically look for another woman role model, apart from the mother. This is usually seen by the mother as resistance. For Annie, the Red Girl is an "angel" who lives in a "heaven" (58) and whose life is the life and wants to have. Annie is jealous that the Red Girl's mother does not force her to take a bath, brush her teeth, change her clothes everyday and does not care when The Red Girl stops going to school on her first day. Her mother, in addition, never forces the Red Girl to go to the Sunday school she dislikes. Unlike the Red Girl, Annie has to follow the social rules in which her mother believes. She has to have her hair combed, take a bath twice a day, put her shoes on before going out and make sure her uniform is "clean and creaseless" (58). Annie is forced to go to Sunday school and is not allowed to play marbles. Annie's rebellion is, again, revealed when she goes against her mother's prohibition of climbing up the old lighthouse. Annie's admiration for the Red Girl is extreme as she declares she "worship[s] the ground her unwashed feet walked on" (59). Mrs. John, on the contrary, considers Annie's friendship with the Red Girl as being rebellious and disobedient. It is clearly shown that Mrs. John disapproves of the Red Girl who, in her viewpoint, violates social norms of the colonial ruled community she lives in. The Red Girl is not approved by Annie's mother. Her disapproval is revealed through her satirical comment about the Red Girl's mother: "Such a nice woman, to keep that girl so dirty" (57).

Unlike The Red Girl who is admired by Annie but disapproved of by her

mother, Gwen is seen by Mrs. John a very proper young lady despite the fact that she appears in the story almost like the imitation of Mrs. John. Gwen follows rigid social rules and expectations. She dresses in the Western style and follows the British etiquettes as Annie describes,

Her panama hat, with the navy blue and gold satin ribbon—our school colors—around the brim, sat lopsided on her head ... the correct-size hat ... had to be anchored with a piece of elastic running under her chin. The pleats in the tunic of her uniform were in place, as was to be expected. Her cotton socks fit nearly around her ankles, and her shoes shone from just being polished (47)

Friends at school usually give comments about the "well-pressedness of each other's uniforms" or on the "neatness of their schoolbooks" (48). Kincaid may want to comment that the uniform that Gwen as well as other school girls pay so much attention to represent the controlling authority of the British colonial standards. To be dressed accordingly to the British standards, perhaps, is to yield and to conform to the British colonization.

After having developed her friendship with the Red Girl, Annie sees Gwen in a different way because she now feels that to agree with Gwen is to conform to the British code of conducts Gwen strongly has as principles. She states that Gwen meets with her mother's "complete approval" (59). For the first time Annie feels "how dull [is] the fresh pressedness of [Gwen's] uniform, the cleanness of her neck, the neatness of her just combed plaits" (60). She wants to get married after school just like how girls in that time were expected to lead their lives. Although Annie loves Gwen so much at the beginning, she claims that Gwen is boring and uninteresting. The fact that, in the early part of the book, Annie seeks Gwen as a substitute for her deteriorating relationship with her mother shows

that Gwen is indeed is another copy of Mrs. John. Both are the local Antiguan who have internalized the British colonial mentality and spawned in different generations.

Annie's friendship with the Red Girl makes Annie dream of independence and self-autonomy she calls the "faraway day" (61). When this faraway day comes, Annie will be "the mistress of [her] own house." To be the mistress of her own house means to be able to control a life of her own and not being controlled by her authoritative mother. Her feelings towards her mother has also changed as she thinks it is the best "to have a mother to whom [she] was not the prime interest (62). Being under the control of her mother is now being "kept prisoner under the watchful gaze of [her] mother" (62) or being deprived of her independence and self-autonomy. Annie also dreams of the day that she would have to "abandon Gwen" (61) who Annie used to think were "inseparable" from her (46). This dreams expresses Annie's desire to be out of the British colonial rules internalized from generation to generation of the colonized Antiguan. Young at age, Gwen represents the young Antiguan who have been unknowingly implanted the social values and expectations of the British colonizers. Annie's another dreams of rescuing the Red Girl from the shipwreck and both of them send "confusing signals" to the colonizers' ships causing them to crash implies Annie's desire to get rid of the British colonizers and the colonial rules they impose on the lives of the local Antiguan. Annie's desire to rescues The Red Girl from the ship of the colonizers suggests that she wants to save Antigua and its people. Her dream revenge the British colonizers is also shown in her triumphant daydream of seeing the British colonizers' shipwreck, "we laughed as their cries of joy turned to cries of sorrow" (71).

In the end of the novel, Annie final action parallels the ideal dream of some of the colonized Antiguan in gaining their true identity and independence. Annie's decision to redefine herself parallels the dream of some colonized Antiguan in gaining their Antiguan identity back. .

Physically, Annie has grown bigger and taller that she cannot wear the same clothes and shoes. She changes from a weak and unwell little girl to a healthy and well young lady. The ideal healthy body of Annie represents the physical liberation from being controlled by the British colonialism some of the colonized Antiguan probably long for. Annie's, after her recovery, becomes very tall that she "tower[s] over" her mother and "almost equal to [her] grandmother [...]" Annie, however, is "unused" to being superior to her mother in height (128), a new thing she has obtained after the long sickness. The idea of Annie being taller than her mother suggests that she is now bigger and physically stronger than her mother. As a result, assistance from Mrs. John is not necessary for Annie to grow up and develop. Annie is now able to stand up on her own. For example, Annie does not need her mother to "chew up pieces of meat in her mouth" before feeding it to Annie (32).

Nonetheless, Annie's physical growth which causes her to outgrow her British school uniforms represents her state of breaking herself from the correctness of British colonial rules imposed through formal education. Annie's needs new school "uniforms and new shoes" (128) because the former uniforms and shoes can no longer fit her. This symbolizes, as Annie is physically stronger, her desire of discarding British colonial rules and expectations imposed on her. Like Annie, some of the colonized Antiguan probably dream of being physically stronger than their colonizers and being capable of the British social rules and expectations imposed upon their lives.