



Disguised Subjugation as Education: Colonial and Maternal Pedagogy in Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*

Hediye ÖZKAN¹ 



¹Dr., Aksaray University, Faculty of Arts,
Department of Western Languages and
Literatures, Aksaray, Turkey

ORCID: H.Ö. 0000-0002-7613-553X

Corresponding author:

Hediye ÖZKAN,
Aksaray University, Faculty of Arts,
Department of Western Languages and
Literatures, Aksaray, Turkey
E-mail: hediyeozkan@aksaray.edu.tr
ozkanhediye212@gmail.com

Submitted: 14.02.2020

Revision Requested: 09.04.2020

Last Revision Received: 28.05.2020

Accepted: 24.07.2020

Citation: Ozkan, H. (2020). Disguised
subjugation as education: Colonial and
maternal pedagogy in Jamaica Kincaid's
Lucy. *Litera*, 30(2), 325-342.
<https://doi.org/10.26650/LITERA2020-0025>

ABSTRACT

Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy: A Novel*, an autobiographical narrative as opposed to what the title suggests, examines the colonial and immigrant experience of an Antiguan girl, who grows up in the British Caribbean and comes to the U.S. at the age of nineteen as an au pair. The colonial and maternal education along with the textual capture and erasure in her childhood controls Lucy's choices over her intellect, voice, body, mobility, and sexuality, while leading her to a stage where she seeks the new definitions of womanhood, female re-embodiment, and personhood in the New Land. This paper focuses on the autobiographical narrative as a catharsis for Lucy, who confronts the constructed reality through personal reflections on colonial education, and by doing so, who eases the predicament of colonisation and dualisms due to the coloniser inside. I argue that the systematic colonial and maternal pedagogy depicted in the narrative is employed to mythicise reality, obliterate the Caribbean self/culture, and disenfranchise colonial society. Referring to "cultural invasion," a concept developed by Brazilian educational philosopher Paulo Freire to investigate disguised subjugation as education, this paper scrutinises Lucy's retrospection both on her maternal and colonial tutelage that later becomes a leading force of her own decolonisation.

Keywords: Colonial pedagogy, maternal pedagogy, cultural invasion, Jamaica Kincaid, *Lucy*



Introduction

Jamaica Kincaid's harsh critique of colonial narratives and pedagogy in her writings is deeply rooted in her childhood and adolescent experiences in Antigua and in the U.S., where she came to work as an au pair depicted in her semi-autobiography, *Lucy: A Novel* (1990). *Lucy* is viewed by many critics as a mother-daughter text and continuation of *Annie John* (1985), and studied mainly from the lenses of postcolonial theory and psychoanalytic approach. For example, Ifeona Fulani (2011) examines the mother's role and maternal discourse in the novel as a mode of repression that teaches the daughter, Lucy, her place within socio-cultural hierarchies (p. 1). Veronica Majerol (2007) argues that aesthetic representations such as writing, photography, and paintings in *Lucy* engender disidentification with the colonial discourse and create an alternative means of excavation of history (p. 17). Helen Tiffin (1993), on the other hand, suggests that Kincaid's novel explores possible ways of retrieval of an erased body under the colonial discourse. Reading *Lucy* through the concept of "translation" explored by autobiographer Eva Hoffman, Edyta Oczkowicz (1996) proposes that by abandoning the former self—the reproduction of her post-colonial experience— Lucy liberates herself (p. 144).

Despite diverse arguments about the content of the text, little emphasis is given to form by critics, except Maria H. Lima (1993), whose discussion centres on how Caribbean women writers, including Kincaid, use bildungsroman as a mode to represent their personal and national identity (p. 858). Therefore, this paper focuses on both content and form by examining the autobiographical narrative as a catharsis for Lucy, who confronts the constructed reality through personal reflections on colonial education, and by doing so, who eases the predicament of colonisation and dualisms due to the coloniser inside. I argue that the systematic colonial and maternal pedagogy depicted in the narrative is employed to mythicise reality, obliterate the Caribbean self/culture, and disenfranchise colonial society. Referring to "cultural invasion," a concept developed by Brazilian educational philosopher Paulo Freire to investigate disguised subjugation as education, I will scrutinise Lucy's retrospection both on her maternal and colonial tutelage that later becomes a leading force of her own decolonisation.

"Cultural invasion" in Freire's foremost work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is defined as "a parochial view of reality, a static perception of the world, and the imposition of one world view upon another" (2005, p. 160). Such psychological violation implies the dichotomy of the superiority/inferiority between the invader and those who are invaded.

In cultural invasion, both an instrument and the result of domination, “it is essential that those who are invaded come to see their reality with the outlook of the invaders rather than their own; for the more they mimic the invaders, the more stable the position of the latter becomes” (Freire, 2005, p. 153). The imposition of the invader’s reality on those who are invaded aims the reproduction of synthetic phantoms who do not look like the invader, yet talk, act, see, and think like him. Institutions such as homes and schools are employed particularly for this purpose and “function largely as agencies which prepare the invaders of the future” (Freire, 2005, p. 154). They meticulously transmit the myths of the invader that nourish the cultural invasion, an antidialogical action, whose fundamental characteristics are primarily dividing and manipulating. Freire’s concept of “cultural invasion” evokes the perennial homogenising and hierarchicising practices of the British Empire in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, where it had pervaded with an authoritarian cultural and political scheme to distort the reality and impose “Englishness” upon the natives within institutions.

Colonial Education

Educated under the indoctrination of English values in Antigua, one of many colonies of England in the Caribbean, Kincaid experiences the alienating “cultural invasion” of the British Empire and portrays how such a violent act shapes her sense of self and the perception of the world in her entire oeuvre. For example, in “On Seeing England for the First Time,” Kincaid recalls her first encounter with England, explores the idea versus reality, and reflects on her identity stranded between the two severely contradicting world views. She writes: “When I saw England for the first time, I was a child in school sitting at a desk. The England I was looking at was laid out on a map gently, beautifully, delicately, a very special jewel; it lay on a bed of sky blue” (1991, p. 32). Young Kincaid is introduced to the image of England in the classroom, a formal educational setting, ensuring initial loyalty and deference to the Empire in colonial sites. Contrary to the naïve student impressed by the pseudo glory of England, the resentful narrator in *A Small Place* (1988) directly addresses the coloniser/invader and attacks its educational institutions, where the culture and values of the colonised is systematically wiped out:

You loved knowledge, and wherever you went you made sure to build a school, a library (yes, and in both of these places you distorted or erased my history and glorified your own) ... If you saw the old library... the beauty of us sitting there like communicants at an altar, taking in, again

and again, the fairy tale of how we met you, your right to do the things you did, how beautiful you were, are, and always will be. (Kincaid, 1988, pp. 36, 42)

The narrator vehemently condemns England after her critical confrontation with the constructed reality. She realises that the actual and primary reason of England's launching education campaigns within its colonies is, on the one hand, to terminate the existence of native history, language, and culture, and on the other, to sustain the legacy of the power-hungry Empire. The narrator's sarcastic reproach continues with a comparison between "the old library" and the church along with the students and communicants, who enthusiastically wait to receive a set of religious tales and doctrines without questioning them. Such deceiving tales transmitted to students as if they were divine rules imply that what is told about England in colonial schools and libraries are ostensibly sacrosanct that should be acknowledged and strictly internalised as an ultimate truth. Through personal experiences, Kincaid continues to draw our attention to the constructed reality about England injected into the students' innocent minds:

When my teacher had pinned this map up on the blackboard, she said, "This is England" -and she said it with authority, seriousness; and adoration, and we all sat up. It was as if she had said, "This is Jerusalem, the place you will go to when you die but only if you have been good." We understood then -we *were* meant to understand then - that England was to be our source of myth and the source from which we got our sense of reality, our sense of what was meaningful, our sense of what was meaningless-and much about our own lives and much about the very idea of us headed that last list. (1991, p. 32)

Similar to the metaphor of "the old library" and the church, Kincaid uses another religious analogy between England and Jerusalem to accentuate the enshrinement of England by the educators acting as a stooge for the colonialists. Instead of the original culture, England and everything about this island is forced to become the foundation of students' knowledge, and how they perceive themselves and the world around them. Such destructive narrative teaches them who they are supposed to be based on imperialist policies while reinforcing individual and collective estrangement to Caribbean values, history, and culture.

Parallel to the visual image of England as a teaching material employed to establish a constructed reality, in *Lucy*, European textual representations like Wordsworth's canonical poem "Daffodils" are taught to impose a set of linguistic and cultural principles. Pointing out the "English tradition" installed at schools in an interview, Kincaid states:

You know most people, especially people from my generation, had an education that was sort of an English public-school education. We got kind of the height of empire. They were trying to erase any knowledge of another history, another possibility. So we learned Shakespeare, the King James version, Wordsworth, and Keats. That's the tradition. I'm of the English-speaking-people tradition. British people, not English people. (Ferguson & Kincaid, 1994, p. 168)

In *Lucy*, Kincaid challenges this tradition by using Wordsworth's poem that creates a literary space for herself and the protagonist. Kincaid re-contextualises a Romantic poem as subversion by reading it in a different cultural and geographical context. Lucy recalls reciting the poem in a performance at her school in the British Caribbean when Mariah, who becomes a surrogate mother to Lucy in the U.S., tells her that she "is made to feel alive" by seeing daffodils "in bloom and massed together" (1990, p. 17). Lucy "had been made to memorise" the poem when she "was ten years old and a pupil at Queen Victoria Girls' School" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 18) that evokes Kincaid's school, "The Princess Margaret School," "the name of which [Kincaid] absolutely hate[s]" (Cudjoe, 1989, p. 397). Lucy "had been made to memorise it, verse after verse, and then had recited the whole poem to an auditorium full of parents, teachers" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 18). After Lucy recited the poem, she notes how,

Everyone stood up and applauded with an enthusiasm that surprises me and, later they told me how nicely I had pronounced every word, how I placed just the right amount of special emphasis in where that was needed, and how proud the poet, now long dead, would have been to hear his words ringing out of my mouth. (Kincaid, 1990, p. 18)

The internalisation of the European text is encouraged by Lucy's schoolmates, teachers, and parents, whose passionate reactions cause contradictions in her sense of self. Bénédicte Ledent (1992) states that "'Lucy' is ironically also the title of one of Wordsworth's poems... suggesting that [Kincaid's] Lucy cannot really escape colonial

tutelage and in some way also belongs to Wordsworth's world, whether she wants to or not" (p. 60). Lucy's immaculate and impressive oral performance disciplines her voice, tone, and accent. Through this performance, Lucy becomes an obedient reader as well as a re-producer of the English script, and a submissive embodiment of the European world and the English ideology. The students are not just passive literary readers but the reproducers of colonial history by reciting "Daffodils," an example of the erasure of self within the European script, which imposes the accusation of not only the English language but also its values. Ironically, neither the reader nor the listeners are English; rather, they are the representatives of the Empire in the Caribbean.

Lucy is aware of how she becomes a representation and reproduction of the Empire expressing her self-contradiction. Reflecting on her inner conflict, she confesses:

I was then at the height of my two facedness: that is, outside I seemed one way, inside I was another; outside false, inside true. And so I made pleasant little noises that showed both modesty and appreciation, but inside I was making a vow to erase from my mind, line by line, every word of that poem. (Kincaid, 1990, p. 19)

The critical confrontation with her memory is traumatic for Lucy and reveals how Lucy's contradiction turns her into a hypocrite, who describes the opposite positions inside of her with the dichotomies of outside/inside and false/true. These oppositions represent Lucy's constant struggle between her Caribbean identity defined as authentic, while the English language and values imposed upon her later in school are constructed, fake, and superficial. The disagreement and dilemma of Lucy is what Freire (2005) puts, "The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being.... They are at one and at the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalised" (p. 48). Even though Lucy is determined to forget the poem she recites by heart, like other colonised subjects, she is haunted throughout the narrative and in her life.

Teaching a canonical poem to impose the linguistic and cultural values of the dominant ruler fulfils the mission of the Empire better than any other genres. Tiffin (1998) points out that Romantic poetry is used in the "idealisation of British and European flora, . . . The Readers contained poetry about the English countryside and about flowers, and Wordsworth's poem 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' was an enduring favourite" (p.

60). Similarly, Ian Smith (2002) asserts that Romantic poetry with its focus on the beauty of nature is a perfect instrument for the Empire because “colonised people can be made to celebrate nature in a totally de-contextualised way, rapt in poetry’s rhythmic cadences, treasuring its signs as free-floating signifiers” so that “they can be distracted from seeing the history of nature as conquered, appropriated and made the site of forced labour” (p. 817). Along with the content of Romantic poetry, poetic form and language disrupt the perception of the natives about themselves and the nature.

Discussing the differences between poetry and prose, Russian literary theorist Michael Bakhtin defines poetic language as totalitarian which reduces multiple voices to a single one. He asserts:

The language of the poetic genre is a unitary and singular Ptolemaic world outside of which nothing else exists and nothing else is needed. The concept of many worlds of language, all equal in their ability to conceptualise and to be expressive, is organically denied to poetic style. (1981, p. 286)

The language of poetic genres is not conversational or dialogic. Rather, it merely serves for the interests of the elite and “often becomes authoritarian, dogmatic and conservative, sealing itself off from the influence of extra literary social dialects” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 286). Besides rejecting the existence of accents and dialects, “If, during an epoch of language crises, the language of poetry does change, poetry immediately canonises the new language as one that is unitary and singular, as if no other language existed” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 399). The invasive nature of poetic language, as Bakhtin argues, benefits the Empire to deliberately spread its linguistic, socio-cultural, and political agenda in colonial sites. “This verbal-ideological decentring” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 370) becomes the instrument of the dominant group/the imperial power to banish the indigenous linguistic, literary, and cultural diversity of the Caribbean. Furthermore, instead of “dialogic” language that involves a multiplicity of speakers, plurality of voices, and a variety of perspectives, the imperial power uses “monologue,” which is associated with a central power and points out the existence of a single voice. Lucy does not have a voice of her own since Wordsworth’s, not Lucy’s own words ring out of her mouth. By using a monological language, the oppressor silences the other voices and consciousness by imposing a single reality and single-thought discourse. Within this monological world, the oppressor monopolises the circulation of information and knowledge and dominates the narratives and curriculum.

Besides defining what should be taught, such as Wordsworth's "Daffodils" to enforce the English language and a set of western standards in colonial sites, the oppressive power defines how it should be taught. As Lucy narrates, students not only read the poem, but also memorise it by heart and recite it in front of an audience as a verbal indication of loyalty and deference to the Empire. Practice separate from interaction is one of the characteristics of the monological world. Recitation is an epitome of the monological language of the oppressor and substitutes the old oral tradition of the Caribbean as being a ritual of obedience to the master. Colonies absorbed the message of the master through English scripts and performance that mould their consciousness and identity in favour of the colonial interests and benefits.

The disciplining of natives' bodies and minds is an old project that the British Empire deployed for different nations. Thomas B. Macaulay (1952) argues that the British educational policy was designed to produce "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (p. 729). The colonialist education throughout the Empire frequently enforced a separation between mind and body in the colonised subject. As Gauri Viswanathan (1998) mentions, language and "English literature—is in essence an affirmation of English identity" (p. 20). Literary education and literature is one of the important apparatus of the coloniser to disseminate the dominant ideology. In order to gain so-called Englishness, "assimilate and to experience the oppressor's culture, the native has had to leave certain of his intellectual possessions in pawn. These pledges include his adoption of the forms of thought of the colonialist bourgeoisie" (Fanon, 1963, p. 49). This practice gradually subjugates both the body and the mind of the native. Tiffin (1993) claims, "Afro- and Indo-Caribbean traditions also assumed a community that was interpretive and interactive, not an audience of disciplined applauders" (p. 914). However, Lucy's performance in an auditorium full of "parents, teachers and [her] fellow pupils" indicates a lack of interactive communication and suggests the forced absorption of western aesthetics.

Even though Lucy is introduced to the image of daffodils at ten years of age, she sees actual daffodils nine years later in the U.S. with her employer and surrogate mother, Mariah, a representation of British imperialism and the privileged class in the New World. Perhaps, in order to find meaning from their complicated relationship, Kincaid gives a special emphasis to Mariah in the narrative by naming the second chapter of the book as "Mariah." She is described as a woman who has "too much of everything, and . . . longed to have less," while Lucy has spent her life deprived of luxury and dreams

of having “more than was needed” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 87). Considering the U.S.’s intervention in South America and the Caribbean, Mariah symbolises Lucy’s new master, who desperately “wanted to show [Lucy] her world and hoped that [Lucy] would like it, too” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 36). “As a privileged, liberal feminist of the First world,” Mariah “inscribes [Lucy] into a narrative of immigrant inclusion and upward mobility” (Majerol, 2007, p. 18) and attempts to pass her privileged experiences and colonial perceptions to Lucy, which turn into nothing but exclusion and alienation. Lucy disclaims Mariah’s passionate desire by asserting her selfhood and framing her own world view. By doing so, Lucy deconstructs Mariah’s Eurocentric world as she challenges colonial pedagogy in her life later.

When Mariah sees daffodils “in bloom and all massed together” and “a breeze comes along and makes them do a curtsy to the lawn stretching out in front of them,” she asserts that she “feel[s] so glad to be alive” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 17). However, the same daffodils Lucy sees “looked simple, as if made to erase a complicated and unnecessary idea” and essentially represent Lucy’s erased Caribbean identity. The disparity in the two women’s reactions to daffodils is significant in terms of their different postcolonial experiences because “nothing could change the fact that “[Mariah] saw beautiful flowers while [Lucy] saw sorrow and bitterness” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 30). Mariah’s inability to empathise with Lucy suggests that she “has a worldview closer to Wordsworth than does Lucy” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 31). Mariah wants Lucy to “see things the way she [does];” however, Lucy does not share her enthusiasm, as she states:

Mariah, mistaking what was happening to me for joy at seeing the daffodils for the first time, reached out to hug me, but I moved away, and in doing that I seemed to get my voice back. I said, “Mariah, do you realise that at ten years of age I had to learn by heart a long poem about some flowers I would not see in real life until I was nineteen?” (Kincaid, 1990, pp. 29-30)

In their discussion, Lucy is no longer silenced by asserting her selfhood. She demystifies the image of daffodils in Wordsworth’s poem. As Edward Said (1994) argues in *Culture and Imperialism*, “stories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world; they also become the method colonised people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history” (p. xii). By narrating her memory about daffodils, the epitome of imperial presence in native landscapes, Lucy defies the colonial project.

In addition, Lucy shakes Mariah's perception by fading her "beloved daffodils in a scene she had never considered, a scene of conquered and conquests; a scene of brutes masquerading as angels and angels portrayed as brutes" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 30). From a proud reciter to an aggrieved colonizee, Lucy wonders, "how could I explain to her the feeling I had about daffodils—that it wasn't exactly daffodils, but that they would do as well as anything else?" (p. 29). Lucy has a violent impulse about the daffodils: "I wished that I had an enormous scythe; I would just walk down the path, dragging it alongside me, and I would cut these flowers down at the place where they emerged from the ground" (p. 29). Sidonie Smith & Julia Watson (2001) mention that the autobiographer who suffers due to "the agonies of traumatic memory are haunted by memories that obsessively interrupt a present moment and insist on their presence. These memories may come to the surface of consciousness in fits and fragments, again and again, despite the passing of years" (p. 21). Traumatized by memories, Lucy is haunted by daffodils in her dreams, and she sees "bunches and bunches of those same daffodils," the remnants of the colonial narrative in her seized consciousness (18). Echoing Lucy's experiences, Stuart Hall, (1991) a West Indian native, shares his experience about daffodils when he first arrived in England in 1951, writing, "I looked out and there were Wordsworth's daffodils. Of course, what else would you expect to find? That's what I knew about. That is what trees and flowers meant. I didn't know the names of the flowers I'd just left behind in Jamaica" (p. 24). Hall's first-hand experience parallels with that of the character Lucy who is filled with the information and images of the western world from an early age, yet encounters actual daffodils years later. This points out the deliberate disconnection between the image and reality impelled in colonial sites, as Kincaid writes, "The space between the idea of something and its reality is always wide and deep and dark. The longer they are kept apart—idea of thing, reality of thing—the wider the width, the deeper the depth, the thicker and darker the darkness" (1991, p. 37). Her statement suggests how the constructed world of the imperial power pushes its subordinates into an abyss where they can no longer distinguish what is reality versus what is illusion.

As part of the imperial project, the world of students educated in colonial sites revolve around the European orbit, and their "entire way of looking at the world, even the world of the immediate environment, [becomes] Eurocentric" due to the colonial curriculum (Thiong'o, 1986, p. 93). The systematic colonial indoctrination defined as "the imperial curriculum" by J. A. Mangan (1993) promoted "racial stereotypes, the creation of ethnocentric attitudes and the 'labelling' of colonial peoples" (p. 1). Imposed

“language and literature were taking us further and further from ourselves to other selves, from our world to other worlds,” states Kenyan postcolonial theorist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o in his book *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986, p. 12). Parallel with Thiong’o’s point about cultural alienation due to colonial education, Kincaid notes:

My teacher showed us the map, she asked us to study it carefully, because no test we would ever take would be complete without this statement: “Draw a map of England.... I did not know then that this statement was part of a process that would result in my erasure, not my physical erasure, but my erasure all the same. (1991, 34)

Kincaid describes her education as “very ‘Empire,’ only involved civilisation up to the British Empire” (Cudjoe, 1989, p. 398). Identifying the function of such education, Freire asserts: “Education as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity of students, with the ideological intent ... of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of oppression” (2005, p. 78). The educator’s role, on the other hand, “is to regulate the way the world ‘enters into’ the students” and “organise a process which already occurs spontaneously, to ‘fill’ the students by making deposits of information which he or she considers to constitute true knowledge” (Freire, 2005, p. 76). In practice, “[T]his concept is well suited to the purposes of the oppressors, whose tranquility rests on how well people fit the world the oppressors have created, and how little they question it” (Freire, 2005, p. 76). However, Kincaid questions such domination, as she utters, “When I was nine, I refused to stand up at the refrain of ‘God Save Our King.’ I hated ‘Rule Britannica’; and I used to say that we weren’t Britons, we were slaves” (Cudjoe, 1989, p. 397). Besides the canonical works of British literature, songs and hymns are employed to establish the loyalty to the Empire at schools. Giving an example from her school days, Kincaid narrates how they sing songs as a verbal ritual of the master. She notes:

At school we gathered in an auditorium and sang a hymn, “All Things Bright and Beautiful,” and looking down on us as we sang were portraits of the Queen of England and her husband; they wore jewels and medals and they smiled. I was a Brownie. At each meeting we would form a little group around a flagpole, and after raising the Union Jack, we would say, “I promise to do my best, to do my duty to God and the Queen, to help other people every day and obey the scouts’ law.” (1991, p. 36)

As visual representations of the Empire, the pictures of the Queen and the King are presented in a symbolically superior position while the students perform their morning rituals to reinstate their loyalty to the master. In a dialogical relationship between students and teachers, a response and participation is anticipated. However, used as a tool by the cultural invader/coloniser, "Words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated, and alienating verbosity" (Freire, 2005, p. 71). Thus, students mechanically "receive, memorise, and repeat" the content, which "turns them into 'containers', into 'receptacles' to be 'filled' by the teacher" (Freire, 2005, p. 71). They are deliberately forced to adopt the fragmented view of the oppressive reality.

Maternal Pedagogy in *Lucy*

Along with formal colonial pedagogy at schools, the oppressive maternal pedagogy depicted in *Lucy* sustains the objectives of colonial public education in the domestic sphere. The oppression on the macro level in society is observed in Lucy's home, where Lucy's domineering mother, Miss Annie takes the role of both the imperialist and patriarch. Miss Annie's despotic actions are the explicit reflections of the environment she experiences, as Freire (2005) puts, "If the conditions which penetrate the home are authoritarian, rigid, and dominating, the home will increase the climate of oppression" (154). Being a perpetuator of colonialism and patriarchy, Miss Annie intends to pass the imperialist values to her daughter and evokes Kincaid's mother. In an interview, Kincaid comments on her background, saying "My whole upbringing was something I was not: it was English. It was sort of a middle-class English upbringing- I mean, I had the best table manners you ever saw" (Cudjoe, 1989, p. 400). Expanding this point in her essay, Kincaid writes:

And my mother taught me to eat my food in the English way: the knife in the right hand, the fork in the left, my elbows held still close to my side, the food carefully balanced on my fork and then brought up to my mouth. When I had finally mastered it, I overheard her saying to a friend, "Did you see how nicely she can eat?" (1991, p. 33)

Drawing the character of Miss Annie from her childhood experiences with her mother, Kincaid confronts her colonial past through semi-fictional characters she creates.

Miss Annie, the embodiment of the colonial power at home, desires to raise her daughter around the Victorian code of morality, defining women with four virtues: “piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity” (Welter, 1966, p. 152). Miss Annie moulds Lucy according to her worldview and “teaches the daughter her place and her role within hierarchies” (Fuani 1). The strict black mother figure is a reflection of the histories of slavery and colonisation that create oppressive mothers, who desire to raise their daughters “to adhere to the norms and standards of ‘respectable’ black womanhood to secure their social status as ‘marriageable’ women” (Fuani, 2011, p. 2). Internalising the colonial past, Lucy’s mother attempts to hinder Lucy’s self-affirmation and conveys the colonial, communal, and official discourses to Lucy during her childhood and adolescence to form a “marriageable” woman.

One of the ways in which Miss Annie transmits the domestic virtues is that she prohibits all behaviour and attitudes considered as “sluttish” while encouraging Victorian values of an idealised English woman. As the voice of the colonial authority, she educates Lucy to fulfil the female role that postcolonial and patriarchal society prescribed for her to act like a “lady” not like a “slut.” Miss Annie is policing Lucy’s body, mobility, and sexuality by imposing the domestic roles such as being chaste, ladylike, and a good wife. According to Miss Annie, “Her ways were the best ways to have and, she would have been mystified as to how someone who came from inside her would want to be anyone different from her” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 36). She desires to create a replica of her as Lucy notes, “I had come to feel that my mother’s love for me was designed solely to make me into an echo of her,” which is strongly denied by Lucy, who “would rather be dead than become just an echo of someone” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 36). On an interpersonal level, Lucy refuses to simply be a reproduction of her mother, in a broad sense; she resists various types of domination.

As a response to her mother’s oppression and teachings that devalue the female child, Lucy chooses to cut the ties with her past and, consequently, her mother by developing a perspective based on her own interpretation of the world, one which allows her to act in opposition to her mother’s teachings. For example, Lucy grows to like going for walks “in the park and look around, then pick out the men [she] imagined [she] would like to sleep with” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 88). She becomes aware of her reproductive power saying that she “had not known that such pleasure could exist, and, what was more, be available to [her]” (Kincaid, 1990, p. 113). Upon meeting Paul, her first boyfriend in the U.S., Lucy says “‘How are you?’ in a small proper voice of the

girl [her] mother hoped [she] would be: clean, virginal, beyond reproach"; however, she "felt the opposite of that" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 97). Moreover, Lucy chooses Paul over Peggy—her best friend, despite her mother's teachings that she "should never take a man's side over a woman's" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 48).

Contrary to her advice, Lucy's mother ironically values and chooses Lucy's brothers over her daughter, who perceives such an act as a personal betrayal. Whenever Lucy sees her mother's eyes "fill up with tears at the thought of how proud she would be at some deed her sons had accomplished, [she feels] a sword go through [her] heart, for there was no accompanying scenario in which [Miss Annie] saw [Lucy]" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 130). Because of her anger and disappointment, Lucy labels her mother as "Mrs. Judas" and "began to plan separation from her" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 130). Separation from the mother symbolises the separation from the mother land (England) and the colonised island (Antigua). Laura N. De Abruna (1999) asserts that "the alienation from the mother becomes a metaphor for the alienation from an island culture that has been completely dominated by the imperialist power of England" (p. 173). For Alison Donnell (1993), the mother is the colonising power, England, "which sought to repress and erase differences through institutions which demanded both acquiescence and imitation" (p. 22). Unlike Donnell, I argue that the mother is both the coloniser and the colonised, whose reality about herself and the world is also distorted by the colonial policies of the British Empire.

Towards the end of the narrative, in one of the letters, Lucy informs her mother that her pedagogy is a "failure" which also suggests the failure of the patriarchal and colonial education:

I wrote my mother a letter; it was a cold letter. It matched my heart. It amazed even me, but I sent it all the same . . . I reminded her that my whole upbringing had been devoted to preventing me from becoming a slut; I then gave a brief description of my personal life, offering each detail as evidence that my upbringing had been a failure and that, in fact, life as a slut was quite enjoyable, thank you very much. (Kincaid, 1990, p. 128)

Lucy distances herself from her past and mother not only by "putting enough miles between them, but also by putting enough events" in order to develop her autonomy

and liberate herself from internalising colonial repression (Kincaid, 1990, p. 31). She physically and psychologically separates herself from her personal history. However, Lucy also deals with conflicting feelings all the time. One manifestation of this dilemma is her rejection of the reading of the letters that she stuffs, unopened, into a drawer. As the narrator states: "it was not from a feeling of love and longing that I did this; quite the contrary. It was from a feeling of hatred" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 20). Lucy does not throw her mother's letters out, but keeps them unopened as if she was waiting for the right time to face the past she had left behind. Furthermore, she is preoccupied with memories and ambivalent feelings. Hearing the voice of her mother saying, "You can run away, but you cannot escape the fact that I am your mother, my blood runs in you, I carried you for nine months inside me" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 90), Lucy feels her mother's omnipresence, and cannot escape from Miss Annie, whose face is "godlike" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 94). The echo of her mother's voice reassures Lucy that she is doomed to carry her colonised past inside. However, it is in Lucy's hands to retell her past, shape her present and future as she claims: "It was my past, so to speak, my first real past—a past that was my own and over which I had the final word" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 23). She rejects the master narratives of colonial discourse and rewrites her present different than her past, which asserts Caribbean female subjectivity.

Besides storytelling, Lucy reinvents herself with photography by recreating images that diverge from her colonial past. Using visual media provides a new gaze she can use to form her own world view and sense of self. She captures "a picture that no one would ever take—a picture that would not end up in one of those books, but a significant picture all the same" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 80). Lucy decides to be the person "who draws herself" (Kincaid, 1990, 137). In the last chapter of the book entitled, "Lucy," she is "making a new beginning again" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 133). Commenting on her inner changes, Lucy notes, "[t]he things I could not see about myself . . . those things had changed, and I did not yet know them well. I understood that I was inventing myself, and that I was doing this more in the way of a painter than in the way of a scientist" (Kincaid, 1990, 134). She grows to an independent woman, telling:

One day I was a child and then I was not . . . I had begun to see the past like this: there is a line; you can draw yourself, or sometimes it gets drawn for you; either way, there it is, your past, a collection of people you used to be and things you used to do. Your past is the person you no longer are, the situations you are no longer in. (Kincaid, 1990, pp. 136-37)

Lucy's life stands as "two banks, one of which was my past . . . the other my future" (Kincaid, 1990, pp. 5-6). Even though Lucy cannot change her past, she rewrites it by declaring the ownership of her life and choices.

In the final act of the narrative, Lucy is depicted with a pen and journal given by Mariah as a gift, which symbolises that Lucy is the owner of her story. Lucy notes that as Mariah handed her the journal, "she spoke of women, journals, and, of course, history" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 163). Depicting Lucy with a pen and journal, Kincaid suggests that "By writing her self," Lucy "will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her" (Cixous, 2010, p. 1946). The act of writing will give Lucy "back her goods, her pleasures, her organs, her immense bodily territories, which have been kept under seal" (Cixous, 2010, p. 1947). As H el ene Cixous (2010) points out, Lucy can liberate her colonised body and intellect and breaks the silence by writing. In addition, through writing in a journal, "A previously 'voiceless' narrator from a community not culturally authorised to speak—the slave, the non-literate, the child, the inmate of a mental hospital, the formerly colonised, for instance—finds in identification the means and the impetus to speak publicly" (Smith & Watson, 2001, p. 28). The journal given by Mariah could mean, as Ledent (1992) claims, "the colonised inheriting from the coloniser" (p. 61); however, it also suggests that Lucy must move beyond her past/history and ultimately seek a future for herself which is "stretched out ahead of [her] like a book of blank pages" (Kincaid, 1990, p. 163). The first person autobiographical narrative in *Lucy* leaves us with the question of writing and forming a text that will keep the personal and collective history as well as records the catharsis of Kincaid under the disguise of the protagonist, Lucy. As Smith & Watson (2001) argue, autobiographical narratives "signal and invite reading in terms of larger cultural issues and may also be productively read against the ideological grain" (p. 19). By projecting her life in *Lucy* to write against the Empire, Kincaid eases the burden of the traumatic colonial experience.

Conclusion

Through *Lucy: A Novel* (1990), Jamaica Kincaid criticises suppressive master narratives and Anglo-European epistemology imposed in colonial sites. Different forms of colonial texts such as Wordsworth's poem about daffodils, Mariah's efforts to introduce Lucy to unfamiliar experiences, books that she gives to Lucy, the letters sent by Lucy's mother, and the journal at the end of the narrative function as colonial and maternal pedagogical instruments which shape Lucy's body, intellect, and identity. Although she leaves her

past behind, Lucy is constantly occupied by her personal history intertwined with colonial history that chronologically emerges in different modes with every new experience. As a creative response to these repressive modes, Lucy invents a personal mode of expression through autobiographical narrative which becomes a catharsis. Reflecting on her textual, cultural, political, and intellectual captivity through the systematic colonial and maternal pedagogy imposed in institutions allows Lucy to reconstruct her own voice, reality, self-perception, and womanhood.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Conflict of Interest: The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

Grant Support: The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.

Çıkar Çatışması: Yazar çıkar çatışması bildirmemiştir.

Finansal Destek: Yazar bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir.

References

- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination*. (C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.) London: University of Texas Press. (Original work published 1981).
- De Abruna, L.N. (1999). Jamaica Kincaid's writing and the maternal colonial matrix. In M. Conde & T. Lonsdale (Eds.), *Caribbean women writers: Fiction in English (172-183)*. London: Macmillan Press.
- Cixous, H. (2010). The laugh of medusa. In V. B. Leitch (Ed.), *The Norton anthology of theory and criticism*. (2nd.ed., 1942-1959). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company Inc.
- Cudjoe, S. R. (1989). Jamaica Kincaid and the modernist project: An interview. *Callaloo*, 39, 396-411.
- Donnell, A. (1993). When daughters defy: Jamaica Kincaid's fiction. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 4(1), 18-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09574049308578142>.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth*. (C. Farrington, Trans.) New York, NY: Grove Press. (Original work published 1981).
- Ferguson, M. & Kincaid, J. (1994). A lot of memory: An interview with Jamaica Kincaid. *The Kenyon Review*, 16(1), 163-188.
- Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (M. B. Ramos, Trans.) New York, NY: Continuum, (Original work published 1970).
- Fulani, I. (2011). Gender, conflict, and community in Gayl Jones's *Corregidora* and Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 32(2), 1-30. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/10.5250/fronjwomestud.32.2.0001.

- Hall, S. (1991). The local and the global: Globalization and ethnicity. In A. D. King, (Ed.), *Culture, globalization and the world-system: Contemporary conditions for the representation of identity*, (19-40). New York, NY: State University of New York.
- Kincaid, J. (1988). *A small place*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Kincaid, J. (1990). *Lucy: A novel*. New York, NY: Plume Books.
- Kincaid, J. (1991). On seeing England for the first time. *Transition*, 51, 32-40.
- Ledent, B. (1992). Voyages into otherness: Cambridge and Lucy. *Kunapipi*, 14(2), 53-63.
- Lima, M. H. (1993). Decolonizing genre: Kincaid and the bildungsroman. *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture*, 26(4), 431-459.
- Macaulay, T. B. (1952). Indian education: Minute of the 2nd February 1835. In G.M. Young (Ed.), *Macaulay prose and poetry (719-730)*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Majerol, V. (2007). Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy* and the aesthetics of disidentification. *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, 4(3), 17-27.
- Mangan, J. A. (1993). *The imperial curriculum: Racial images and education in the British colonial experience*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Maxwell, L. R. (2013). *Romantic Revisions in novels from the Americas*, West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt6wq40b.5.
- Oczkovicz, E. (1996). Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*: Cultural 'translation' as a case of creative exploration of the past. *MELUS*, 21(3), 143-157. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/467979.
- Réjouis, R. (2003). Caribbean writers and language: The autobiographical poetics of Jamaica Kincaid and Patrick Chamoiseau. *The Massachusetts Review*, 44(1/2), 213-232. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/25091937.
- Said, E. (1994). *Culture and Imperialism*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Smith, I. (2002). Misusing canonical intertexts: Jamaica Kincaid, Wordsworth, and colonialism's 'absent things'. *Callaloo*, 25(3), 801-820. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/3300118.
- Smith, S., & Watson, J. (2001). *Reading autobiography: A guide for interpreting life narratives*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Thiong'o, N. W. (1986). *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. London: James Currey Ltd.
- Tiffin, H. (1993). Cold hearts and (foreign) tongues: Recitation and the reclamation of the female body in the works of Erna Brodber and Jamaica Kincaid. *Post-colonial Discourse*, 16(4), 909-921. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/2932217.
- Tiffin, H. (1998). Flowers of evil, flowers of empire: Roses and daffodils in the work of Jamaica Kincaid, Olive Senior, and Lorna Goodison. *SPAN*, 46, 58-71.
- Viswanathan, G. (1998). *Masks of conquest: Literary study and British rule in India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Welter, B. (1966). The cult of true womanhood, 1820-1860. *AQ*, 18, 151-174. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2711179>.