

The Autotelic Self in Jamaica Kincaid's *at the Bottom of the River*

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ABSTRACT- *Kincaid's fiction focused on the Caribbean dislocation and displacement which relates to racism, colonialism, and trans-culturality with little or no consideration of the role of the autotelic self in contesting these cultural forces. This study examines the extent to which the Julia Kristeva's principles of language and subject formation and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's principles of autotelic personality could intersect with this autotelic self. Using the postcolonial feminist literary theory and the Csikszentmihalyi's principles of autotelic personality, it seeks to ascertain the degree to which Jamaica Kincaid's selected fiction violate or adhere to Kristeva's principles of language and subject formation and Csikszentmihalyi's principles of autotelic personality. It applied the cultural and novel of the Julia Kristeva's principles and the Csikszentmihalyi's principles to Kincaid's selected poetic novella. The study depicts that Kincaid in the selected novella violates the Kristeva's principles as well both in the same cadre.*

Keywords- *Autotelic Self, Csikszentmihalyi's Principles, Postcolonial, Kristeva's Discourse.*

1. INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to be autotelic? Is autotelic an attribute of the individual, or do certain environmental factors facilitate or inhibit the enactment of the autotelic self? This study proposes that autotelic behavior is the idiosyncratic perception that one is behaving in a way that is in accordance with his or her core being. As such, the sense of the autotelic is considered an important component of the self.

Autotelic is a word composed of two Greek roots: auto (self), and telos (goal). An autotelic activity is one we engage with and do for one's own sake because to experience it is the main goal. Applied to personality, autotelic denotes an individual who generally does things for their own sake, rather than in order to achieve some latter external goal. The mark of the autotelic self is the ability to manage a rewarding balance between the play of challenge finding and the work of skill building.

The dialectical principle and the complexity inherent in autotelic experiences are often not only stimulated through the traits of a person but also through the environment: Autotelic self tends to have family, society, school, and environments which simultaneously provide challenge and support, independence and cooperation, flexibility and cohesion, integration and differentiation. Discussing the autotelic self, the researcher admits that; 'the autotelic self is an analytical problem solving self, self-motivated personality and an intuitive action self-oriented being'. In other words, it is a self that finds itself among other selves

and is able to distinguish itself into a final emancipation of self.

Autotelic self is a value—a species of the genus credibility. It is the kind of credibility that comes from having the appropriate relationship to an original source. In many ways, his definition of autotelic self—parallels the personality of the self-addressed in the original source being the true self.

In accordance with the ideology of self, Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has described as "the autotelic self----- a self that has self-contained goals" (207). For Csikszentmihalyi, the idea of autotelic self is incorporated into self-sufficient, self-referential, self-deciphering, self-existent, self-defining, and self-serving totality.

Correspondingly, Ikenna Dieke elucidates this kind of self (autotelic) in his Critical Essays on Alice Walker, he denotes; "It is a self that fiercely asserts and guards the validity and integrity of her own experience, validity and integrity that requires no other validation either morally, socially, or culturally". (204) This illustrates the unifying nature of autotelic self as an epitome of self-contained goals as is revealed most trenchantly in Kincaid and Walker's *The Autobiography of my Mother, Lucy, Annie John, At the Bottom of the River On Stripping Bark from Myself, Good Night, Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning*.

The sheer audacity of voice with which this self-announces her presence on this earth is unmistakable. The announcement, which sounds almost bellicose, comes down like a peal of thunder. It is as if out of the nebulous depth of social conformism and conditioned selves, a new

ego wrapped in sympathetic eros emerges to claim her place in the logos of the world. Ikenna Dieke in his *Critical Essays on Alice Walker* presents the core image of the autotelic personality through the speaker in one of the Alice Walker's poems. The speaker depicts the notion of self in merely a special quality which is attributed to a pulsating non-conformist "self". We read, "I find my own small person, a standing self against the world. An equality of wills, I finally understand." (12)

A number of works have been done by scholars on the study and interpretation of Jamaica Kincaid's prose fiction, especially through the instrument of critical and literary analysis. However, no study has engaged Kincaid's works from the standpoint of the autotelic self. Kincaid's fiction have generally focused on the Caribbean dislocation and displacement which is basically related to racism, colonialism, and trans-culturality; but little or no consideration has as yet been given to the role of the autotelic self in contesting these cultural forces.

Undoubtedly, this work proposes that autotelic self is synonymously related to: an analytical problem solving self, self-referential, self-motivated personality, and intuitive active self-oriented being. It is in this context that I would like to concur the engendering of "autotelic self" in Kincaid's works as works that are sound representation of "art" that simply exists for its own sake. Therefore, this study analyzes and describes the autotelic self involving the protagonist in Jamaica Kincaid's *At the Bottom of the River*. The protagonist in her fiction struggles to form a coherent sense of self while living within the inhibiting culture and colonial ideology that objectify them and deny them identities as subjectivity. Particular attention is given to the way in which the protagonists' relationships with their mothers both threaten and necessitate their emergence into Csikszentmihalyi's autotelic personality and Kristeva's symbolic order of language, and therefore into the postcolonial feminist discourse community. There can be no doubt that postcolonial feminist theory is an important framing and structural devices that account for the inner life and socio-cultural situation of Kincaid's protagonists since Kincaid's fiction foregrounds that black female protagonists who are seen as individuals struggling from the pain of both cultural and societal constraints and justifies that their resistance to this historical and cultural impediment is necessary for the character's attainment of autotelic selfhood. Kincaid's fiction detests interrogates, colonial, and cultural entrapment and creates protagonists that are able to open up spaces from which their true selves are conspicuously seen, thereby enabling them to move beyond the master-slave entrapment.

However, various theorists have posited that language is the source of autotelic self and identity. For Csikszentmihalyi and Julia Kristeva; 'the process through which the individual becomes a speaking subject is related, in varying degrees, to the process through which the individual acquires self-serving language. (17)'. The subject is continually constructed and reconstructed by the signifying process, a concept Foucault uses to elaborate on

the potential for reciprocal relationships between a subject and a discourse community.

Jamaica Kincaid's re-negotiation with the politics of self-relations in her novels conveys the concept of autotelic self-referential Caribbean fiction. By attaining this literary image, her novels depict the strategic deployment of 'autotelic self' writing and redress the personality dimension in the notions of the autotelic self and history. The fact that Kincaid frames the field of self relations within the thematic recurrence of mother-daughter relations structures her novels in a way that conflates her personal stories with her group history. Moreover, such a structure emphatically registers the self-positioning act of Kincaid's writing as a strategy for self survival.

Additionally, Kincaid through implicating the poststructuralist fracture of self in the protocol of decolonization, attempts to strategically inhabit what Homi Bhabha calls the 'in-between space to define herself'. Kincaid's works establishes the aesthetics of 'autotelic self-writing'. At first, she unpacks the relations between history and the politics of women's writing in the West Indies, and borrows the poststructuralist interrogation of Western historical knowledge to contradict the West's epistemological claims a bow Caribbean history. Kincaid's autotelic self-creation elucidates thematic deployment of mother-daughter relations and turns on the political empowerment in her strategic integration of her persona and collective history. Kincaid's literary novels demonstrate the complexity of forging an identity as a speaking subject in the face of a colonial power that sets them up to be anything but self-attained and self-fulfilled.

For Kincaid, obviously, "history" has been a question rather than a certainty. Kincaid's speculation on "history" grounds her contradictory act of resistance to and reclamation of the past. As a writer living in and with the aftermath of "history," she juxtaposes her personal story with a collective one to articulate an autobiography that is at once hers and theirs, one that speaks from the elsewhere of pain and anger and demands an attentive hearing through writing her personal stories against the fabric of empire, is redressed. As Kincaid observes her own writing in an interview; "in figuring out the relationship between the girl and her mother . . . I must have consciously viewed my personal relationship as a sort of prototype of the larger, social relationship that I witnessed (144)".

Moreover, it is important to note that the ambivalent relations between mother and daughter in Kincaid's novels account to some extent for the ambiguous relations between the powerful and the powerless in *Antigua*, to her statement— 'I met the world through England, and if the world wanted to meet me it would have to do so through England (33)'. This spells out the predicament of her articulation central to her textual agenda of decolonization. The historical landscape of *Antigua* has created a through-the-looking-glass world of twisted semantics in which Kincaid must alertly move and against which she should strategically function.

Davies Boyce in *Black Women Writing and Identity* asserts that “Kincaid’s writing suggests that a blind allegiance to an oppressive community and nation can hurt the individual and can propagate unending cycles of oppression unless the individual is able to contest and question her relationship with the society”. (37)

The autotelic self in Kincaid’s novels is a subject that examines the textual aesthetics of the unique self. Thus, the literary interpretation comprises individual but interlocking works of Kincaid that explore a complex set of interrelated issues such as the need for a renaissance self. That is, the autotelic self as a continuous negotiation of post- colonial subjectivity; subversive selfly acts as the resistance to the inscription of historical forces; the double reference of the past in Jamaica Kincaid’s autotelic stories. For George Lamming in *Caribbean Contest and The Search for Self*, “Kincaid clearly hints at the association of history with the unique self as it is articulated in the (neo-) colonial landscape of the West Indies where she foregrounds the inscription of historical forces on the body and the politics of power relations it implicates”. (3) This depicts that the self struggles in Kincaid’s novels not merely register the politics of self relations, but also suggest to the significance of embodying the West Indian history. That is to say, the West Indian selves are not merely the productive and reproductive selves; they are also resisting selves, uncooperative, extravagant, and signifying selves, all of which carry a rhythm and aesthetics that resist western inscription.

This brings us to investigate the aesthetics of subjectivity in the self-positioning act of Kincaid’s writing as textual resistance.

2. SEPARATION BETWEEN GIRL AND MOTHER

Most stories in are set on the island of Antigua, where the author was born and spent her childhood, and articulate the experience of a child growing up in the 1950s, when the island was still a colony of the British Empire. Motherhood and colonialism are explored in their interrelationship - as the mother either symbolizes the mother-country or is subjected to colonial logic- and set against the child’s contradictory feelings of love and hate, dependence and separation, longing and resistance. The tensions result from a prolonged period of symbiosis between mother and child. Like the colonial motherland, the mother views her daughter as a narcissistic extension of herself. But, as she grows up, the child goes through a process of Ordering by the mother (both biological and colonial) that makes her a subaltern, a powerless subject. In this condition she must strive for survival, and to escape the threat of erasure she must find a way to articulate identity and affirm validation and agency is the journey through such struggle.

The journey towards selfhood necessitates a separation from the mother, as is suggested in title story 'My Mother'. The protection that was initial during childhood becomes

stifling in adolescence. That being the case reveals that the Girl’s feelings are ambiguous thereby relating an outstanding sequence in the novel.

At the Bottom of the River is the mythologized burden of “Girl”. It plots her progress through life in terms of this sense of her mother, to take the form of a journey extending from childhood right into the present struggle for survival. The first piece tells of the painful necessity of being weaned from total dependence on her mother and the submerged tensions and hostilities that entered their relationship from that time. We read;

Placing her arms around me, she drew my head closer and closer to her bosom, until finally I suffocated. I lay on her bosom, breathless, for a time uncountable, until one day, for a reason she has kept to herself, she shook me out and stood me under a tree and I started to breathe again. I cast a sharp glance at her and said to myself, 'So.' Instantly I grew my own bosoms, small mounds at first, leaving a small, soft place between them, where, if ever necessary, I could rest my own head. Between my mother and me now were the tears I had cried, and I gathered up 'some stones and banked them in so that they formed a small pond. The water in the pond was thick and black and poisonous, so that only unnamable invertebrates could live in it. My mother and I now watched each other carefully, always making sure to shower the other with words and deeds of love and affection. (BR p 53,54)

The strange movement of imagery here is remarkably direct and literal in its impact: it is almost as if the feelings and incidents she recalls actually registered in that way. This particular piece has been quoted at length because it gives a clear insight into the underlying sources and dynamics of Kincaid's style, especially in *At the Bottom of the River*. We are taken with childlike simplicity and spontaneous fantasy into what emerges as the dream-scape of the subconscious. Images and fragments from the favourite children's stories and strong personal symbols from Kincaid's childhood, surface in the memory of that experience.

Thus, the pond of tears separating her from her mother is reminiscent of Alice's 'Pool of tears', in *Alice in Wonderland*; while the image of being sent out to eat her dinner under the breadfruit tree whenever she was being punished, is reflective of a similar scene in *Annie John*. These images hark back to the child's original acceptance of the world of fantasy and symbol. One factor is of special significance here. The climate of local superstition and obeah practices in which Kincaid grew up had a lasting influence in deepening these impulses towards the fantastical. These extend, increasingly as the sequence unfolds, into the surreal accesses of dream.

The all-protecting mother of the earlier stories transforms herself into a mythic monster and thus threatens the emerging selfhood of the daughter. The daughter, however, also grows 'invincible', like her mother. Only after the daughter completes her own journey towards separating from her mother as a result of the need to re-define govern herself is her mother no longer a threat: "...

as we walked along, our steps became one, and as we talked, our voices became one voice, and we were in complete union in every way. What peace came over me then, for I could not see where she left off and I began, or where I left off and she began... ." (BR p 60)

Finally she finds her way to an envisioned reconciliation with her mythical mother, evoked in this paradisaal movement:

My mother and I live in a bower made from flowers whose petals are imperishable. There is the silvery blue of the sea, crisscrossed with sharp darts of light, there is the warm rain falling on the clumps of castor bush, there is the small lamb bounding across the pasture, there is the soft ground welcoming the soles of my pink feet. It is in this way my mother and I have lived for a long time now. (BR p 6 1)

The child-mother relationship thus deepens into an ultimate significance in Kincaid's imagination. It is a paradigm of the struggle between the self and the mother, the tug between the yearning for completion and all outside us that seem to resist it, provoking, as Kincaid tells us, the will to master or be mastered. Beneath this struggle lies the final need for union. Kincaid's journey thus recovers an aesthetic mythic level in 'My Mother': the loss of innocence and security, initiation into experience, and the struggle to regain that innocence. The narrator, who at first knew only the love of her mother, suffers from its necessary withdrawal. Adrift, she embarks on a symbolic journey in which she submerges herself in a river-fed sea. Discovering a solution at the bottom of the river, she emerges with a commitment to the present.

She thus finds the strength to escape annihilation, in a strong and yet un-authoritative voice that concludes the whole collection: ". . . how bound up I know I am to all that is human endeavor, to all that is past and to all that shall be, to all that shall be lost and leave no trace. I claim these things then - mine - and now feel myself grow solid and complete, my name filling up my mouth." (BR p 82)

Kincaid's protagonist detests the colonial entrapment because she is suffocated by it. The mother tells the daughter about their union at a time the girl's memory cannot fully grasp and the girl constantly dreams for separation from her mother's world that is related to colonial subjugation seeing that their worlds are not compatible.

3. SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF GIRL

The story "Girl" from *At the Bottom of the River* serves as an example of making explicit the importance of this regime of power upon the female body. Articulating in the form of a quasi- monologue, in which imperatives, accusatory questions, prohibitions, and directions interweave one another, the mother discloses her intention to caution her daughter against "becoming a slut." Kincaid writes:

On Sundays try to walk like a lady and not like the slut you are so bent on becoming; don't sing Benna in Sunday school; you mustn't speak to wharf-rat boys, not even to

give directions . . . this is how to hem a dress when you see the hem coming down and so to prevent yourself from looking like the slut I know you are so bent on becoming . . . this is how you smile to someone you like completely . . . this is how to behave in the presence of men who don't know you very well, and this way they won't recognize immediately the slut I have warned you against. . . don't squat down to play marbles— you are not a boy . . . don't pick people's flowers— you might catch something this is how to make a good medicine to throw away a child before it even becomes a child . . . this is how to bully a man; this is how a man bullies you . (BR 3-5)

Seemingly, the mother associates female sexuality with sluttishness. In the mother's perception, the comportment and the bodily orientations of her daughter are considered as lascivious and lustful. It is important to note the doublings of the normative articulation of the mother, however. In the process of disciplining her daughter, on the one hand, the mother resorts to the English bourgeois norms. And, on the other, she falls back upon the native customs.

The traditional association of Black people with monkeys responds to a Western rationale by which Blacks are condemned to a lower level on the scale of civilisation. In contrast, in Afro-centric narratives the monkey is usually a trickster capable of mocking authority. In this story, however, the trickster is more likely to be the woman, as powerful as the mother who can make a man drop dead by "a red, red smile" (BR 25).

The anger, fear and admiration of the girl for the woman, who, in the figure of the teacher and the mother, symbolizes both the authority of colonial power, obeah magic and biological ancestry, is articulated as a fantasy of power and revenge, "I shall grow up to be a tall, graceful, and altogether beautiful woman, and I shall impose on large numbers of people my will and also, for my own amusement, great pain". (BR 22)

In this story, Kincaid's protagonist tries to enact a separation from her mother. She envisages herself as a separate being, projecting herself in the external world of school and nature, but in the end she finds herself paralyzed in both worlds. We have already seen that in the case of the mother the light could be interpreted as a sign of her magic powers lost with the loss of her daughter. If we read the passage as narrated by the daughter, then the light comes to symbolize irrecoverable pre-oedipal love. The voice could be heard as the mother and the daughter in unison, standing for all the Black women who crossed the sea in the Middle Passage, taken away from Africa to become slaves in the New World. Then the light would symbolize origin, the roots that were lost when the names given by mothers were replaced by those given by slave masters in an attempt to erase African culture.

The conclusion of the first part announces the self-consciousness of "Girl" pertaining to her colonial environment (seen as an intrusion in the natural world) is invalidated by the eternal cycle of life and death, "Someone has piled up stones, making a small enclosure

for a child's garden, and planted a child's flowers, bluebells. Yes, but a child is too quick, and the bluebells fall to the cool earth, Dying and living in perpetuity". (BR 18-19)

Even if the narrator seems to find final relief in the acceptance of impermanence, she expresses anger at the awareness of death's annihilation of experience: "But at last, at last, to whom will this view belong? Will the hen, stripped of its flesh, its feathers scattered perhaps to the four corners of the earth, its bones molten and sterilized, one day speak? And what will it say? I was a hen? I had twelve chicks? One of my chicks, named Beryl, took a fall?" (18). The life of any living creature, the author seems to say, - either a mother and a daughter or a hen and its chicks - comes to nothing in the end, because the "stillness comes and the stillness goes. The sun. The moon" (19). A similar meditation on nature, its innocence and cruelty, the inevitability of death which makes all things superfluous is at the conclusion of another story, "Wingless". It seems that Kincaid's protagonist resorts to nature when she senses she is not able to understand and cope with her position in the world, specifically her relation with "the woman I love, who is so much bigger than me" (27).

Like nature, the girl is at once innocent and cruel, she senses the danger in her own self, because she is "a defenseless and pitiful child" (23). This is the great contradiction of life and human nature, where there are no essential opposite dualities, good or evil, but rather a combination of the two. Life, then, cannot be understood according to Western binaries, because there is so much more to life than that. As she grows up, the girl becomes aware of the vulnerability of her own nature, of her own power and powerlessness:

My charm is limited, and I haven't learned to smile yet. I have picked many flowers and then deliberately torn them to shreds, petal by petal. I am so unhappy, my face is so wet, and still I can stand up and walk and tell lies in the face of terrible punishments. (BR 23)

Jamaica Kincaid explores the position of the human subject at two levels, historical and metaphysical, articulating the girl's experience both in relation to nature and in relation to a colonial environment. The mother-daughter theme serves as a backdrop, providing the tension of the mystery of origin and individual development, the great eternal union and breach between the world and the self.

She senses her powerlessness as she, a colonial child, is attracted to and wishes to please her teacher. This woman is clearly a reproduction of the powerful maternal figure, careless as she plays on the child's innocence:

Don't eat the strings on bananas - they will wrap around your heart and kill you.' 'Oh. Is that true?' 'No.' 'Is that something to tell children?' 'No. But it's so funny. You should see how you look trying to remove all the strings from the bananas with your monkey fingernails. Frightened?' 'Frightened. Very frightened.' (BR 24)

This exchange, so similar to the mother-daughter exchanges in other stories, shows the cruelty of colonial schooling, in which children are not only forced to learn things which have little to do with them in order to have them mimic Western children, as pointed out in the first part of the story, but in which their efforts are constantly derided by a racist logic which produces self-loathing. The traditional association of Black people with monkeys responds to a Western rationale by which Blacks are condemned to a lower level on the scale of civilisation. In contrast, in Afro-centric narratives the monkey is usually a trickster capable of mocking authority. In this story, however, the trickster is more likely to be the woman, as powerful as the mother who can make a man drop dead by "a red, red smile"(25). The anger, fear and admiration of the girl for the woman, who, in the figure of the teacher and the mother, symbolizes both the authority of colonial power, obeah magic and biological ancestry, is articulated as a fantasy of power and revenge.

4. THE AUTOTELIC SELF IN THE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE RIVER

The personal quest for the self by Kincaid's protagonist is articulated in contrast to and set against a superficial middle-class world (presumably white) in the story entitled "Holidays". Here the narrator is physically (and apparently also emotionally) far removed from the maternal world. She is in a holiday house, although it is not clear whether on a Caribbean island or in a North American village, likewise, her sense of her own identity, even of her physical presence, is feeble. If we thereby accept the hypothesis that this story is set far from the Caribbean, specifically in a Western environment, then the self-void perceived by the narrator would be the consequence of geographical and cultural displacement. The woman tries to gain a sense of self by taking note and enumerating in detail each single movement she performs and then she tries to demonstrate to herself the physical presence of her body by checking it. As she cannot see her head, though she can feel it now, she places her hands on top of it, but self-discovery seems to throw her back to the maternal world, as she suddenly remembers that "if you sit with your hands on your head, you will kill your mother" (31).

It is interesting to note that, the manifestation of the autotelic self is then, associated withatricide. It is as if the woman could not exist fully unless she kills her mother, even in memory. Matricide is not enacted, though, as the narrator removes her hands from her head and affirms her resistance to the Western view of certain cultural practices: "I have many superstitions, and I believe all of them" (31). If the affirmation of one's own identity is made impossible by the maternal bond, it is even less likely to be achieved by a narrator who is burdened with colonial history:

Standing in front of the fireplace, I try to write my name in the dead ashes with my big toe. I cannot write my name in the dead ashes with my big toe. My big toe, now dirty, I try to clean by rubbing it vigorously on a clean royal-blue

rug. The royal-blue rug now has a dark spot, and my big toe has a strong burning sensation. (BR 30)

As a colonized subject, the narrator has been robbed of her name and she cannot affirm her identity on the dead ashes of her people's history, but her body can leave a mark, a sign of the pain for the dispossession suffered, on the royal-blue rug that symbolizes the British Empire. The unbridled quest for the autotelic self is then set against the apparently strong sense of dignified personality of a middle-class Westerner:

I have the most sensible small car in New York. 'I will put my sensible small suitcase in my sensible small car and drive on a sensible and scenic road to the country. 'In the country, I live in a sensible house. 'I am a sensible man (BR 32)

Kincaid in this story presents protagonist who is full of herself, so affected, and unconnected with the natural world. We observe Kincaid's sharp attack, the people in this feel "so pained, so unsettled" (33) by thinking back, perhaps sensing the superficiality of their existence.

Equally open, fragmentary, multiple and paradoxical is also the frightening 'I' in the story 'Wingless'. It is at the same time unaware, defenseless and pitiful, primitive and wingless, and yet it has the strength to declare: "I shall impose on large numbers of people my will and also, for my own amusement, great pain." (BR p 22) But the questioning of the unity of the self reaches its climax towards the end of the collection: "I stood as if I were a prism, many-sided and transparent, refracting and reflecting light as it reached me, light that never could be destroyed. And how beautiful I became." (BR p 80)

This is made possible by setting the narrative in the maternal context that blurs the distinction between open and closed, between one and other. In 'The Letter from Home', the narrator's growing awareness makes it impossible for her to maintain the comforting simplicity of her child's world. Questions about life and death intrude. These inquiries, however, are set aside in favour of the present physical reality - a cat scratching a chair or a car breaking down. Even love and conception are reduced to the simplest terms, She is not ready to confront the idea of death, so when death beckons, she 'turned and rowed away'.

Just as the philosophical questions about life and death disrupt the bliss of childhood, so does the journey toward selfhood, which Kincaid symbolically represents as a journey over rough or impassable terrain or water. In 'What I Have Been Doing Lately', the obstacle is water:

"I walked for I don't know how long before I came up to a big body of water. I wanted to get across it but I couldn't swim. I wanted to get across it but it would take me years to build a boat. I wanted to get across it but it would take I didn't know how long to build bridge." (BR p 41)

Because the journey is difficult, as any passage to adulthood would be, the narrator is hesitant, afraid of finding the world not beautiful, afraid of missing her parents, so she goes back to bed: she is not ready yet. Soon, however, she will not have that option of retreating

and waiting. To add one final side to the 'prism' of the new self, one could note the insistent refusal to stick to a definitive statement, by going back to the beginning again and again: open-ended post-modern fiction, one could conclude. This story ends with a manifestation of a mythical mother at the bottom of the river, who conforms to the new self (autotelic personality) that is, the 'self' that exists for its sake rather than continuing with the biological mother that embraces and manages her colonial world and its entrapments. The narrator cries out her powerful 'no' against the existing order of things.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The expedition for autotelic self is a ubiquitous concern in the literature of the postcolonial feminism and culturally evicted people of the America precisely the Caribbean people. A postcolonial writer like Jamaica Kincaid is profusely obsessed with the plight of the evicted Caribbean people and this obsession is deeply inoculated into her works. In studying the concept of autotelic self in the literature of this writer, definite background issues such as dislocation and displacement are conveyed into play. The works of Caribbean literary artists such as Harris Wilson, Jamaica Kincaid, V.S Naipaul, Andrea Levy, Oonya Kempadoo, George Lamming, just to mention but a few, focus on the perspective of the Caribbean displacement involving mediation and the quest for the autotelic self in a new cultural environment.

Owing to our indisputable findings so far, the depiction of cultural entrapment, displacement, immigration, hybridity like we observe in the writings of Caribbean people who in conspicuous cases suffer the quandary of irrationalities and unfairness, need no other resort other than redefinition of being. The quest for autotelic self unequivocally forms the foremost concerns of the writing of the Caribbean's.

Kincaid through implicating the poststructuralist fracture of self in the protocol of decolonization, attempts to strategically inhabit in what Homi Bhabha calls the in-between space to define herself. Tiffin and Lawson critically examine the textuality of 'the autotelic self' in Caribbean literature by exposing the correlation between colonization and the colonizer's textual control over the colonized. They argue that the interpellation of the colonized by the textual fabric of colonial domination becomes central to the material maintenance of established self relations: "imperial relations may have been established initially by guns, guile and disease, but they were maintained in their interpellative phase largely by textuality of self " (3). At the same time, Tiffin and Lawson also emphatically map out the possible textual trajectories of resistance against colonial domination. It is not surprising that they assert: "just as fire can be fought with fire, textual control can be fought with textuality" (10). From profuse elucidation, one can comprehend that the autotelic self serves as an appropriate attitude to analyzing the Caribbean cultural dislocation both nationally and internationally.

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