Identity Formation through the Emotional Journeys of the Protagonists in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Annie John*

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1 Introduction

In her book *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Sara Ahmed investigates what emotions do to a person or a group of persons and how emotions can drive you forward or make you stuck. Emotions will push and pull and, in doing so, "[e]motions shape the very surface of bodies, which take shape through the repetitions of actions over time, as well as through orientations towards and away from others" (4). This means that, for instance, pain can shape a body both physically, through a wound, as well orient the subject who feels pain away from the 'other' who inflicts the pain. Ahmed's theories focus on how language and texts describe the emotions and are often applied to non-fictional texts, such as, descriptions of terrorism, race issues and nations. The theories can also be applied to fiction, and in doing so will give insight into how descriptions of emotions are used in developing characters in the narrative.

Narrative as a term is used here as it is defined by H. Porter Abbott in *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* where it is defined to be "the representation of an event or a series of events" (13). The keyword for this essay is 'representation'. How are emotions used when representing the events of the primary works? The emotions that this essay will focus on are love, fear and pain as well as hope. These emotions have been selected purposely to cover key events in the narratives of the primary works. The other emotions investigated by Ahmed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (shame, hate, disgust) would most likely also be the basis for a fruitful analysis, but will not be in focus in this essay.

The two primary works which will be analysed in this essay are *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys and *Annie John* by Jamaica Kincaid. There is a multitude of similarities as well as differences between the two novels. Both novels are written by a female author, they have a female protagonist, they tell the story of a young girl growing into a young woman, they are set in the West Indies, they deal with the interaction between the ruling European people and
the black community, and both protagonists sail off towards England towards the end of the narrative in each novel. There are also differences though. The authors' backgrounds are different, since Rhys is a descendent of the ruling European population whereas Kincaid is a descendent of the black population of the West Indies. This difference is reflected in that the protagonist in Wide Sargasso Sea is a white girl but the protagonist in Annie John is a black girl. The settings of the novels also differs in time by approximately 100 years, where Wide Sargasso Sea is set in the 1830s and Annie John in the mid 20th century. Finally, when it comes to difference between the two novel, the outcome of the fate of the protagonists are also a major difference.

Wide Sargasso Sea and Annie John have been the basis for several studies and articles over the years since Annie John was published. An example of a comparative study of Wide Sargasso Sea and Annie John is "Home is Where the Heart Breaks - Identity Crisis in Annie John and Wide Sargasso Sea" by Maritza Stanchich. She highlights two pivotal moments in the novels related to the differences in fate for the two protagonists to illustrate what is fundamentally different between the two novels. Annie, the protagonist of Annie John, baldy states "My name is Annie John" when she is on her way out into the world, while Antoinette, the protagonist of Wide Sargasso Sea, desperately wonders "Why does he call me Bertha?", when her husband refuses to call her by her real name (454). Stanchich uses these two utterances from the novels to highlight that Annie comes out of her struggles affirming her identity whereas Antoinette is struggling with her identity and is unable to truly own it. Even though both novels describe a girl developing into a young woman in the West indies, the outcome of the two stories could not be more different: one girl sails off to starts a new life as a nurse and the other sails off to be locked up as a mad woman in a tower and eventually jumps from the roof when she sees no other way out.
This essay will include a comparative study of the emotional journeys of the protagonists in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Annie John* and highlight how emotions impact the identity formation for those protagonists. The identity development for each protagonist will be analysed based on the selected emotions and selected key events in each novel and is analysed with support from relevant articles and books for each of the primary works in regards to identity development. This essay will show how emotions can be used to explain the formation of the identity for each protagonist in the primary works and how the identity development in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a movement towards disintegration and fragmentation, whereas the development in *Annie John* is a movement towards consistency and maturity.

1.1 Jean Rhys and *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Jean Rhys was often very enigmatic about her personal life, as described by Elaine Savory in her book *The Cambridge Introduction to Jean Rhys* (1). Rhys was born in Dominica in the West Indies in 1890, into a mixed Welsh and Creole family. 'Creole' as a term is sometimes used as a reference to inhabitants descendant from slaves and sometimes independent of their heritage. The definition of the term 'Creole' as applicable in reference to Rhys is as "a descendant of European settlers born or living for an extended period in the West Indies or Central or South America" (Gregg, ix). That means that the term 'Creole' in this essay is used to refer to the white population of the West Indies.

Rhys left the West Indies for Europe in her mid teens where she attended school. For periods of her life she lived under small circumstances and could not support herself or her family (Savory, 4-10). In her lifetime Rhys published five novels, of which four (*Voyage in the Dark, Quartet, After Leaving Mr Mackenzie, Good Morning, Midnight*) were published in the 1920s and 1930s. The fifth novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, was published in the mid 1960s.
Rhys's Creole heritage was important in her approach to writing and took centre stage as a theme in some of her works, including *Wide Sargasso Sea*. According to Anne Simpson in her study *Territories of the Psyche*, Rhys felt marginalised during her whole childhood in multiple ways: as a remnant of the white people who colonised Antigua, as a woman in a male dominated society, and finally as part of her own family among sibling rivalry and her parents (17). Rhys's ability to describe marginalised characters is seen throughout her work. Elgin W. Mellown goes as far as to describe the typical Rhys heroine in the article "Character and Themes in the Novels of Jean Rhys" as:

Here /.../ are the details of the now familiar Rhys heroine: a happy childhood in a tropical state of nature, growth into adolescence without the presence of a father, a complete submission to physical love, the inevitable loss of that love, and the consequence misery. (472)

This typical Rhys heroine is also prominent in her final novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, even though the happy childhood is not part of the narrative.

When *Wide Sargasso Sea* was first published in 1966 it received generally favourable reviews. One of the most renowned of these first reviews is from the *New York Times Book Review* in 1967 by Walter Allen with the heading "Bertha the Doomed". In it Allen describes one of the key concerns many reviewers have had regarding the novel: that it cannot stand alone but relies heavily on being intertextual with Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, of which it can be seen as a 'prequel' (Savory, 109). This anxiety of *Wide Sargasso Sea* being too dependent on *Jane Eyre* was mainly voiced in the sixties. However, once the post-colonial literature theories started to be applied to *Wide Sargasso Sea* this concern was not so much in focus. In the latter part of the 1970s the idea of 'writing back' to the canonical texts from a post-colonial perspective starts to emerge and Rhys's novel becomes an important part of
post-colonial research. John Thieme states in his book *Postcolonial Con-Texts: Writing Back to the Canon* that "she [Rhys] is at pains both to humanize Bertha, now referred to as Antoinette, and to develop the cross-cultural theme" (77). *Wide Sargasso Sea* is now recognised as a significant work in its own right and is also an important contribution from Rhys in the sense that it is writing back against *Jane Eyre* by telling the story from the Creole perspective.

### 1.2 Jamaica Kincaid and *Annie John*

Jamaica Kincaid was born Elaine Potter Richardson in Antigua in 1949. She was raised in the colonial settings of Antigua in the West Indies, which became self-governing in 1967. Kincaid left Antigua in her late teens and has lived for a long time in Vermont. Kincaid's upbringing in a colonised country with its British schooling system has influenced her work. The British colonial system made her aware of how the literature available to her at the time favoured everything British and diminished everything related to the culture and language of the West Indies (Simmons, 65). Many of Kincaid's novels, such as *At the Bottom of the River, Annie John, A Small Place, Lucy, The Autobiography of My Mother*, and *My Brother*, were influenced by the author's background and personal experiences of growing up in colonised Antigua.

*Annie John* was published in 1985 and received wide public acclaim when it was first published, and the positive attitude towards the novel continues into the 21st century (Edwards, 41). In her review "Paradise with Snake" in the *New York Times* in 1985, Susan Kenney elaborates on the strength of the novel when it comes to describing the coming of age of a girl and the needed separation from her mother. Kenney states:
... what has caused this rejection of everything and everyone she has grown up with? The awful truth is that it appears to be an inevitable and unavoidable result of growing up, and I can't remember reading a book that illustrates this more poignantly than "Annie John." To grow up is to grow beyond, to outgrow.¹

The key theme of mother and daughter bonding is thus identified already in this early review and also the inevitability of how that bond will change. Kenney states that "[i]t is the child's view of change as betrayal, and it is the mother who becomes the focus of her conflicting feelings."¹ "Annie John" is told purely from the perspective of Annie and the key relationship from an early age until she reaches adulthood is with her mother.

Another theme from "Annie John" which Kenney elaborates on is that of a lost paradise. Annie describes her life with her parents in the first part of the book as "a paradise" (Kincaid, 25), and it is that paradise which is then lost when she matures. The lost paradise can be connected intertextually to Milton's "Paradise Lost" and that is an area which has been analysed extensively in relation to "Annie John." An example of such a study is Diane Simmons' "Jamaica Kincaid and the Canon: In Dialogue with "Paradise Lost" and "Jane Eyre". In this article Simmons elaborates on Jamaica Kincaid's personal relationship with English Literature in general, and with the two works mentioned in the title of the article in particular. Simmons states that there are several paradises that Annie from "Annie John" loses. There is the perceived loss of her mother's love but also the loss of her heritage from a post-colonial perspective (68). Kincaid herself has commented on the connection to a lost paradise stating

¹ The two quotes from the review in New York Times by Susan Kenney was accessed through a web formatted version at http://www.nytimes.com/ and not from the printed edition of the paper. Both quotes are from page 1 from the web formatted review.
in an interview that she has based "her entire literary life so far on Paradise Lost /.../ almost all my work centres on the beginning of a paradise from which one falls and to which one can never return (Burrows, 75-76).

The novel Annie John tells the story of the black girl Annie who grows up in Antigua, and is a type of Bildungsroman since it tells the story of how a young person matures and evolves emotionally and morally. Traditionally a Bildungsroman often revolves around a romantic quest of turning a boy into a man. Annie John breaks that norm and Kincaid turns a girl into a woman. This is noted by Louis Caton in "Romantic Struggles: The Bildungsroman and Mother-Daughter Bonding in Jamaica Kincaid's Annie John" (126). Caton states that Annie John embodies many of the traits characteristic for a Bildungsroman and, at the same time, it is a very good study of the psychological relationship between the mother and daughter. Caton continues by saying that "[t]he fusion of romantic quest and psychological union underscores Kincaid's complexity" (127). Caton argues that psychology alone is not the best way to study Annie John but the aspect of a Bildungsroman should also be addressed.

One example of a study of the bond between mother and daughter in Annie John which focuses on the psychological development of the main character, is Roni Natov's "Mothers and Daughters: Jamaica Kincaid's Pre-Oedipal Narrative". Natov highlights how the narrative in Annie John focuses on a girl's painful struggle to separate from her mother (1) and that the severing of the bond between a child and a parent is often about pain and anguish, especially from the child's point of view (2). Annie tells her story of growing up and describes how she develops, and, as Natov observes, it is a story sometimes filled with pain.

Finally, another theme worth mentioning in Annie John, is the field of post-colonial studies which have been done in relation to Annie John. Annie John has been a natural part of
the post-colonial studies regarding the West Indies, and the reasons why can be illustrated by this fairly naive statement made by Annie in the novel:

I was sure that if the tables had been turned we would have acted differently: I was sure that if our ancestors had gone from Africa to Europe and come upon the people living there, they would have taken a proper interest in the Europeans on first seeing them, and said, "How nice" and then gone home to tell their friends about it. (76)

Manuela Coppola highlights the quote above in her article "Caribbean Autobiographies as Weapons in Identity Construction: Jamaica Kincaid's Annie John". Coppola states that "[i]n order not to be haunted by the past, Annie tries to establish some kind of communication with the ghosts of history" (312). In other words, Annie tries to get to grasps with the past of her community and tries to understand the interaction between the ruling British people and the black community.

1.3 Psychological theory background to identity formation

This essay is focusing on identity formation in literature so a general grasp of the field of identity formation in psychology is of use. The field of psychology is vast when it comes to identity formation in adolescence, which is the period which is most important for the formation of an identity for a person. 'Adolescence' is defined as "the period of development and gradual transition between childhood and adulthood" (Passer et al 585).

'Identity' is defined by Passer et al to be dependant of three main components (586). Firstly, it depends on our gender, ethnicity and other similar attributes related to how we define ourselves as members of a social group. Am I a 'daughter', a 'wife', 'black', 'white'?
Secondly, it depends on how we view our personal characteristics. Am I friendly, shy, outgoing, smart, anxious? Thirdly, it depends on our goals and our values. Do I want to achieve a degree, get married, take care of my parents, live a moral life, cheat? Not all three of these three components mature at the same time during adolescence and they can all be revisited and questioned again if triggered. For an adolescent it is common to go through an identity crisis where these components are evaluated. According to Passer et al in *Psychology* "an adolescent's 'identity crisis' can be resolved positively, leading to a stable sense of identity, or it can end negatively, leading to confusion to one's identity and values" (586).

Passer et al describes the identity crisis most adolescence go thorough during their adolescent years as a set of different identity statuses. They describe these four identity statuses a person can be in as follows (586):

1. *Identity diffusion* - the person has not yet gone through an identity crisis and is unconcerned about identity issues and not committed to a coherent set of values

2. *Foreclosure* - the person has not yet gone through an identity crisis but is committed to an identity and a set of values, often on the basis of parental values

3. *Moratorium* - the person is in the middle of an identity crisis and wants to establish a clear identity but has not yet resolved it

4. *Identity achievement* - the person has gone through an identity crisis which has been resolved and has emerged with a coherent set of values

Passer et conclude by stating that most young adolescents are in *identity diffusion* or *foreclosure*, which means they have not yet experienced an identity crisis. In the teens most people start to think about who they are and start to reconsider values they might have
adopted earlier which leads to an identity crisis, the status of *moratorium*. By early adulthood about half have resolved the crisis and emerge with an identity in the status *identity achievement* (586).

To conclude it can be said that culture is key when it comes to identity formation. Passer et al emphasises that culture is a key factor in the identity formation of a person and that "[o]ur cultural upbringing influences the very way we view concepts such as 'self' and 'identity'" (587). This means that it is impossible to form an identity independent of the culture surrounding you which is illustrated by this final quote from Passer et al: "Thus, the question 'Who am I?' is most likely to be answered in ways that reflect a person's relationships with family members, friends and others" (587).

The focus in this essay will mainly be on the identity formation based on the first main component of what an identity is as described earlier, which is how a protagonists defines herself in relation to someone else. The third component of an identity, the goals and values of the protagonist, will also be of importance in some sections.

## 2 Analysis

The analysis in this essay will focus on each protagonist in turn and investigates how key events in the narrative can be seen to impact the identity formation of the protagonist. In order to illustrate this, each subsection will focus on one subject (a protagonist), one of the emotions love, fear, pain or hope, and one object (person or community) which the emotion is directed towards. 'Object' as a term is used here strictly as the entity for which the subject experiences the emotion.
2.1 *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Three emotions will be analysed based on the narrative in *Wide Sargasso Sea*: love, fear and pain. Love is probably the most influential emotion for Antoinette, the protagonist, when it comes to identity formation in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, but it is not a very enduring emotion in Antoinette's life. Love does not bring much happiness into Antoinette's life as will be shown in the analysis. Instead it brings fear and pain, which are the emotions Antoinette experience the most long-lasting periods of her childhood, adolescence and adulthood. In order to understand the identity formation for Antoinette, the analysis will show that love is constantly accompanied by betrayal or conflict for Antoinette, resulting in fear and pain. She is never given the opportunity to create a sense of self without conflict and the end result is a fragmented identity without any hope for the future.

If psychological theory as defined by Passer et al and as described in the introduction is applied to Antoinette is becomes clear that she has never achieved the status of *identity achievement*. Instead she moves from *identity infusion* into a status where she tries to adopt the expected identity and values from her surrounding, which is the status of *foreclosure*. As will be seen in the analysis, she tries to rebel against this on a few occasions when she is in the status of *moratorium*, but she never reaches the status of *identity achievement*.

2.1.1 Love of a Lost Nation

The story in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is set in the West Indies in the first half of the 19th century, right after the emancipation of the slaves. The emancipation of the slaves has changed the way of living for the Creole population fundamentally. For the Creole the emancipation of the slaves is in essence a loss of identity and of national belonging, since their whole lifestyle and economy was built on having slaves.
Antoinette lives isolated at the Coulibri estate with her mother, her brother, and a few of the former slaves and their place in the communal setting is precarious. This is exemplified by the very first sentences in the novel: "They say when trouble comes close ranks, and so the white people did. But we were not in their ranks. The Jamaican ladies had never approved of my mother" (5). Annette, the mother, tries to reach out to the British community in Jamaica but is not considered to belong with them since Annette and her family are French Creole. Annette suffers from being a young widow living in poverty and is therefore desperate to find a way out of the situation, but is not accepted by the majority of the ruling British people. This feeling of not belonging influences Antoinette from a very early age.

Victoria Burrows elaborates on this situation in her book *Whiteness and Trauma*. Burrows states that "[t]he white creoles appear transfixed - [...] - in their wickerwork furniture, suspended between the world of their lost prestige and power and the beckoning anxiety of never again belonging" (25). Burrows describes *Wide Sargasso Sea* as "a mother-daughter story of personal and historical fragmentation and dispossession, a narrative infused with loss, abandonment, racial hatred and a lingering melancholia" (27). Burrows in other words highlights how the former colonisers, the Creole, have lost their nation and the feeling of belonging. Burrows labels this situation for the Creole as "a trauma narrative of lost whiteness" (28). This loss of a community or nation to belong to is something both Antoinette's mother and Antoinette herself suffer from.

Sara Ahmed states in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* that love as an emotion is crucial for an individual to align itself with a collective such as a nation in the shared identification with the nation (124). It is the love of something like a nation which makes people stick together in the shared love of the object (130). Since the Creole community described in *Wide Sargasso Sea* can no longer function without the slave economy there is no
longer a nation to rally around and the Creole community fragments into sub groups. Since Antoinette was very young when the situation for the French Creole changed dramatically due to emancipation of the slaves. Antoinette only has experience from the falling apart of the national group identity of the Creole and has not experienced any alignment with any community. This feeling of not belonging and of being an outcast is imprinted in Antoinette from a very early age. Her identity as Creole is an identity filled with a sense of loss of a better past and of conflict with other groups among the colonisers and with the former slaves.

2.1.2 Antoinette's Love of her Mother

The relationship between Antoinette and her mother is a relationship of love as well as rejection. Since a child's relationship with her mother is a key relationship in the formation of an identity, it is important to study this relationship. A child's love of a parent is a matter of identification, and Sara Ahmed extensively describes what love as identification involves. She states that within the Freudian psychoanalysis "love is ever-present as an affective bond, which is crucial to the formation of subjectivity, sociality and even civilisation" (125). Identification according to Ahmed means that the subject who identifies with an object sees what he or she can become (126). The relationship between Antoinette and her mother is therefore key to understanding the identity formation of Antoinette in Wide Sargasso Sea.

In the narrative, Antoinette clearly identifies with, and loves, her mother, but an estrangement can be seen already from the beginning. The estrangement between Annette and Antoinette is clearly summarised in a statement by Antoinette in the early parts of Wide Sargasso Sea where Antoinette muses that she used to make excuses to be near her mother for mundane activities like brushing her mother's hair, but she no longer tries to do that since her mother gets annoyed and sends her away (8-9). Antoinette understands that her mother does
not want her around at all times, even though Antoinette would love to be near her. This rejection by her mother from a very early age scars Antoinette deeply and follows her throughout her life.

Anne Simpson analyses the mother-daughter relationship in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and says that "Rhys creates a mother in Annette who is genuinely incapable of offering love to her daughter, who repeatedly fails to mirror Antoinette's attitudes and behaviours, and who thereby demonstrates how a child's sense of her own reality may be steadily eroded" (116). Simpson continues this line of thought and explains that even though Antoinette is in clear need of support and love from her mother, the mother is incapable of giving that to her daughter and is instead narcissistic and focuses on her own needs.

Simpson also states that since the mother disappears from Antoinette's life fairly early, Antoinette can never voice her justified anger or hatred of her mother for her abandonment (117). Simpson concludes that this makes Antoinette behave in future relationships in a way where she uses demonstration or inspiring of hate, rather than love, as the only way to receive acknowledgement from the object (117). This mean that Antoinette's attitude towards love is forged already by her childhood by an un-nurturing birth mother who rejects her. Antoinette is unable to function in a mutually loving relationship without demonstrating or provoking hate rather than love.

### 2.1.3 An Alternate Mother Figure

Antoinette is neglected by her mother and therefore she turns to other mother figures for nurture and support. Antoinette turns to, and identifies herself with, other persons at the estate to fulfil these needs. Christophine, a former slave, becomes such a mother figure to
Antoinette. The identification with Christophine is important for identity formation for Antoinette since it involves identification with a person who is not only an object of love but also part of a community which she fears. Antoinette, a young white girl, identifies with a former slave who is not part of the community in which Antoinette is supposed to belong to based on her skin colour. This strengthens Antoinette's feeling of being in between the black and the white communities and adds to her confusion.

Ann Simpson recognises in *Territories of the Psyche* that there are two distinct mother figures in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Simpson explains that one is the biological mother, who represents the bad mother who basically rejects Antoinette, and the other is Christophine, who represents the good mother who is giving and nurturing (115). Love as identification for Antoinette is present in relation to two mother figures, and the difference in social and racial belonging of these two mother figures has a crucial impact on Antoinette in regards to her establishing an identity of belonging for herself. She is not truly part of either the white community or the black community and she both identifies with, and fears, the former slaves.

Victoria Burrows elaborates in her book *Whiteness and Trauma* on the fact that Antoinette identifies with two mother figures and two communities. This identification with two different communities, or rather being trapped between the two, Burrows calls "cultural entrapment" and is described by Burrows as "the unbelongingness of the white creole position between two racially divergent cultures" (26). Burrows continues to describe the anxiety that Antoinette experiences as being "ambivalently caught between the ideologies of coloniser and colonised, oppressor and oppressed, and the menacing anxiety of being neither white nor black" (27-28). This means that Antoinette is trapped between two communities with an ever present anxiety about her own position, and the identification with Christophine adds to that conflict in allegiance.
2.1.4 Tia: a Mirror

Very little is described in *Wide Sargasso Sea* regarding Antoinette's relationships as a child outside her immediate family and the closest servants. She seems to have no friends to play with. This lack of friends emphasises the isolation Antoinette has created for herself. The relationship with the girl Tia is therefore significant since it is so rare for Antoinette to have a friend. It is also important in the narrative due to the significance Antoinette gives to this brief spell of friendship. Tia turns up at pivotal moments in the story and functions as a mirror to Antoinette who strongly identifies with the black girl.

Antoinette as a child is very lonely and isolated and she is in one scene teased by a little black child: "Go away white cockroach, go away go away. /.../ White cockroach, go away, go away. Nobody want you. Go away" (9). After that incident, Christophine arranges for Antoinette to play with Tia, a black girl, who is the daughter of a friend of Christophine's. The brief description of the friendship is followed by a fall-out where Tia steals Antoinette's pennies and her dress and teases her in saying "[o]ld time white people nothing but white nigger now, and black nigger better than white nigger" (10). The whole friendship is established and ended in a few pages in the narrative, but Tia is present throughout the narrative at key events.

One such key moment is during the burning of Coulibri is when Antoinette comes face to face with Tia just as they are leaving. Antoinette's life at Coulibri with her mother and Christophine is brutally ended when the estate is burned down by a mob of former slaves and Antoinette's younger brother is killed (19-24). The moment when they leave is described in the narrative as: "I saw Tia and her mother and I ran to her, for she was all that was left of my life as it had been. We had eaten the same food, slept side by side, bathed in the same river."
As I ran I thought, I will live with Tia and I will be like her" (24). At this moment Tia throws a jagged stone at Antoinette and Antoinette, with blood streaming down her face, stares at Tia, who has tears streaming down her face. Antoinette concludes: "It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking-glass" (24). That Antoinette states that she sees Tia as her mirror image is key as a confirmation of how Antoinette sees herself. She sees Tia and herself as the same and in doing so puts no significance into what community they belong to or what colour their skin is.

Critics have argued that it is not a plausible friendship based on the era and the settings (Gregg 36-37). Veronica Marie Gregg analyses the relationship between Antoinette and Tia in detail in her book *Jean Rhys's Historical Imagination* where she states that this relationship is the most striking in the novel (87). She refers to notes from Jean Rhys herself regarding the relationship with Tia in which Rhys states that "the relationship between the two functions as a dream truth, a kind of death, because a "real" relationship would have been impossible" (96). Gregg argues that the friendship is a direct reflection of the roles they historically have been assigned as black and white people (91) and that Antoinette "needs Tia as the mirror to reflect her self-identity back to her whole, intact" (95). Tia is the mirror image of Antoinette, even though Tia is part of the black community. The relationship might not be very plausible in the narrative, but it is still of great importance for the story.

2.1.5 **An Idealised Husband**

If the love of a parent is a form of identification, then the love of a husband can be described as a form of idealisation according to Sara Ahmed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (127). The relationship Antoinette forms with her husband can be seen as the culmination of the narrative from a relationship perspective. The husband can be assumed to be the same
character as Mr. Rochester from Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, even though he is never named in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. As a married woman in the 19th century she is expected to get married and be settled and cared for for life by her husband. However, based on the conflicts in her identity formation so far, the relationship with her husband becomes complicated. The last steps towards destruction are dictated by this relationship, as will be illustrated in this section.

The marriage is arranged for Antoinette by her stepfather, Mr. Mason, and a substantial dowry is used to close the deal and get Antoinette married (39). Rochester and Antoinette barely know each other but are still married after a month of acquaintance. The pressure from Antoinette's family, as well as her own anxiety regarding having no protection for the future, convinces her to go through with the marriage even though she for a brief moment tries to rebel against the marriage (47). Rochester realises very early that he is married to a stranger and he concludes that "I have not bought her, she has bought me, or so she thinks" (42). Rochester suspects that the family were desperate to get Antoinette married as soon as possible but he does not know why.

Anne Simpson in *Territories of the Psyche* sees the relationship between Antoinette and Mr. Rochester as a mirror of Antoinette's relationship with her mother, where Antoinette seeks warmth and safety, but only finds the same rejection and coldness as her mother treated her with (120). As stated before in the section regarding Antoinette's love of her mother, Simpson says that Antoinette is incapable of any relationship where she does not either responds with hate of tries to provoke hate, even though she loves the object. The relationship with Rochester is following that pattern. Even though the marriage is a relationship which could bring safety and stability into Antoinette's life she dooms it by her own inability to love without, at the same time, antagonising the object.
The honeymoon is decided to take place at an estate which used to belong to Antoinette's mother (43). The sexual attraction is present in the beginning of the marriage and Antoinette has a brief time of happiness and has hope of security. However, Antoinette is already filled with fear as she is not used to happiness and the feeling of happiness makes her afraid (56-57). The relationship falls apart fairly quickly. The breaking point for Antoinette comes when Rochester refuses to release Antoinette from the marriage to go with Christophine. Rochester says "she'll have no lover, for I don't want her and she'll see no other" (107) and calls Antoinette "my lunatic". Rochester is determined to not let her win and says to himself: "You hate me and I hate you. We'll see who hates best. But first, I will destroy your hatred. My hate is colder, stronger, and you'll have no hate to warm yourself. You will have nothing. I did it too. I saw the hate go out of her eyes" (110). Antoinette is a broken woman and Rochester brings her to his estate in England.

Rochester adds to the identity confusion for Antoinette also by calling her by a different name, which Antoinette does not approve of. Rochester calls her 'Bertha' which is a name he is particularly fond of and tells Antoinette that he thinks of her as 'Bertha' (86). Antoinette tries to protest, but in vain. She is not allowed her own identity and her own name, but her husband tries to create an identity for her which suits him and his English manners better. By not being allowed to own her own identity in the relationship with her husband she again ends up with fragmentation.

Idealised love according to Ahmed is not so much about the object, but about the subject in so far that idealised love that "what one 'has' elevates what one 'is'" (128). This means that the subject approaches its own ideal by means of loving an idealised object. Ahmed further claims that love is an emotion which makes you vulnerable and dependant on others since the emotion is related to 'others' and that vulnerability makes anxiety to be a large part of the emotion of love (125). For Antoinette this means that the idealised love she can be
said to feel for her husband early on in the marriage is also the source of anxiety. The idealised relationship with her husband and the safety it should bring into her life instantly becomes something which Antoinette instantly fears to lose. As a woman there are not many options for Antoinette when she grows up and she sees Rochester as a saviour in the sense that he can give her stability, protection and hopefully also companionship in her life.

2.1.6 Fear of Everything

'Afraid' and 'safe' are words that occur over and over again in the narrative in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. According to Sara Ahmed it can be said about fear that "it restricts the body's mobility precisely insofar as it seems to prepare the body for flight". Antoinette is in constant flight mode in the narrative but she has nowhere to run to. Antoinette fears the former slave community, she fears her own mother, she fears her own destiny, and she fears the world in general, as will be illustrated in this section.

At Coulibri, Antoinette has a very concrete fear of the former slave community (5-6). In her fear of the former slaves she turns to her mother in a telling episode when she has heard shouts outside their house:

Long after the sound was far away and faint she [Annette] kept her eyes shut and her hands clenched. A frown came between her black eyebrows, deep - it might have been a cut with a knife. I hated this frown and once I touched her forehead trying to smooth it. But she pushed me away, not roughly but calmly, coldly, without a word, as if she had decided that I was useless to her. .../ 'Oh, let me alone,' she would say, 'let me alone'. and after I knew that she talked aloud to herself I was a little afraid of her. (7)
Antoinette gets no support from her mother when the surrounding community is in uproar, but instead she starts to feel fear of her mother. The fear of her mother, whom she loves, can be seen as a telling example of how Antoinette's emotional universe is complicated and adds on to the struggle for Antoinette to forge a cohesive and stable identity for herself.

Antoinette fears that she will have a similar fate as her mother. The identification with her mother is something which brings fear into Antoinette's life since it would imply also taking after her mother when it comes to the potential for madness. This likeness between Annette and Antoinette is identified not only by Antoinette herself but also, very cruelly, by her surroundings. One example of such an incident is when Antoinette is chased by two black children who shouts: "Look the crazy girl, you crazy like your mother. Your aunt frightened to have you in the house" (27). The formation of Antoinette's identity is heavily influenced of the fear of becoming like her mother.

Even during the honeymoon stay at Granbois there is a constant sense of fear present. This is exemplified by the following conversation between Antoinette and her husband which illustrates Antoinette's general feeling of unspecified fear.

Once,' she [Antoinette] said, 'I used to sleep with a piece of wood by my side so that I could defend myself if I were attacked. That's how afraid I was.'

'Afraid of what?'

She shook her head. 'Of nothing, of everything.'

This conversation shows Antoinette general fear of the world. The fear is unspecified so therefore very difficult to confront and do anything about. It influences Antoinette's life to a large extent though.
Another example of how Antoinette lives in constant anxiety is a statement from Antoinette when she is about to leave the convent school and she is envious of the nuns: "They are safe. How can they know what it can be like outside" (34). To Antoinette the convent is perceived as a safe haven, protected from the outside world, and Antoinette fears to leave. The threat is to a large extent undefined, but the feeling of fear and anxiety is ever-present in Antoinette's life. She envies the nuns who can remove themselves from the world and be safe inside the convent, but Antoinette herself is forced to return to the world outside the convent.

Ahmed states in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* that "[t]he more we don't know what or who we fear the more the world becomes fearsome" (69). For Antoinette that means that the identification with her mother is something which troubles her deeply. Sara Ahmed also states that "[f]ear projects us from the present into a future" (65). Antoinette projects herself into the future and sees a fate for herself which is similar to her mother's, and that brings immense fear to Antoinette.

Antoinette's longing for safety visible already from the first pages of the novel is highlighted by Anne Simpson in *Territories of the Psyche* as a dominant theme. Simpson states that Antoinette has inherited a legacy of despair from her mother and that Antoinette, much faster than her mother, adopts an attitude of isolation. Simpson says that for Antoinette to remain safe she must remain silent and in self-enclosure (114-115). Antoinette uses withdrawal as a defence mechanism to isolate herself from the world and what she fears, and this adds to her feeling of not belonging.

To conclude it can be said that Antoinette's life is dominated by fear throughout the narrative. Either she fears concrete objects such as the former slave community and her own mother, or she fears the world in general and what her fate will be. Antoinette's strategy to
handle the fear when she is younger is to isolate herself. If she is alone no one can hurt her 
and no one can betray her. Since much of the fear is not connected to concrete objects it 
becomes very difficult for Antoinette to protect herself though.

2.1.7 The Pain from Betrayals

Sara Ahmed says that events or encounters that remind us about past trauma can trigger a 
renewed experience of pain (25). According to Ahmed it can be said that emotions align a 
subject towards 'others' and the emotion of pain will make the subject turn away from some 
others whereas for instance love or pleasure will turn a subject towards other others (28). 
Antoinette turns away from the people who hurts her, such as Rochester, and turns towards 
the people she loves even if it is only through memories and dreams.

The losses and betrayals are many for Antoinette and they are often connected to 
objects of love. She loses her mother to madness and a humiliating life tended by people who 
take advantage of her (85-86); she loses her beloved Coulibri in a fire started by hostile 
former slaves (20); she loses Christophine when Rochester and Christophine cannot see eye to 
eye and Christophine leaves (63); she loses Tia when she is betrayed by her friendship (9-10); 
she loses Rochester's love and safety when she is betrayed by him (89); she loses Granbois 
when all her possessions are transferred to Rochester when they marry and he has control over 
her (72). Eventually she loses her freedom and is kept in the attic as a lunatic (115).

The last section of the narrative is told from the perspective of the locked up 
Antoinette. Her world has physically shrunk to the rooms she inhabits except when Antoinette 
can slip out and walk around in the castle, when her caretaker is drunk (117). Antoinette 
mainly lives in her memories and she is dreaming about Tia who beckons her to jump from
high up on the roof of the house (123-124). The pain in Antoinette's life has shrunk her to exist only in her mind and in a few closed up rooms in a big castle in England. The narrative ends when Antoinette sneaks out of her rooms and walks along with a lit candle as a foreshadow of the events of when Thornfield, the estate, is burned down by Bertha in the narrative of *Jane Eyre* (377-378). Antoinette's pain is then over.

According to Sara Ahmed, pain is often described as a private and lonely experience (21) and she states that "pain can often lead to a body that *turns in on itself*" (26). Antoinette can be said to mentally turn into herself since she is no longer capable of handling the world and the people around her. According to Ahmed, pain is an emotion which is difficult, sometimes impossible, to put into words and share with another person even though of course we can all feel for and be sad for other people's pain (22). Ahmed says that "pain is not only a bodily trauma, it also resists or even 'shatters' language and communication" (22). Antoinette fails to communicate with Rochester about her pain and he also fails to find enough empathy for her situation to the extent that he rather keeps her as a lunatic than sets her free to live her life.

### 2.2 Annie John

The analysis of *Annie John* in this essay will focus on four emotions: love, fear, pain and hope. The dominating emotion for Annie in this analysis will be love, just like it was the dominant emotion for Antoinette. For Annie, love is a more nurturing emotion in her life and even though this analysis will show that she suffers from betrayals and pain related to love, it will mainly show how Annie form her identity through a much more rewarding journey. It is a story about how Annie grows and develops into a strong, although not necessarily happy, young woman with a strong identity, founded in her family background.
If psychological theory as defined by Passer et al as described in the introduction is applied to Annie, it is clear that the narrative in *Annie John* is much more of a journey through emotional development than what is seen for Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. As most children, Annie starts out from the status of *identity infusion* and touches on the status of *foreclosure*. As will be seen in the analysis, she then enters into a dramatic identity crisis which is equivalent to the status *moratorium* as defined by Passer et al. True to the format of a *Bildungsroman* Annie then emerges from her identity crisis and is on her way towards *identity achievement*.

### 2.2.1 Love of a 'Second-Class' Community

Antigua in the 1960s was still a British colony, and this is visible in the narrative in *Annie John*. Annie is firmly rooted in the Antiguan black community among the descendants of the African slaves. This section will show how the identification with her community impacts Annie as well as the consequences of belonging to the former slave community. There is no identity conflict as such for Annie, but racism is still a key factor in her life.

Annie sometimes suffers from that the British schooling system favours anything that is British or European over that native to Antigua. That the schooling system in Antigua described in *Annie John* represents the colonisers point of view is brought up by Justin Edwards in *Understanding Jamaica Kincaid*. Edwards argues that the practise of a colonial schooling system makes the student who are not among 'the colonisers' very confused and it "disrupts a clear sense of identity" (52). Annie is not uncertain of what community she belongs to, but to have anything related to that community presented as second class compared to the British has a fundamental impact on her sense of self and her understanding of what is good, beautiful and desirable.
Annie cannot understand why one country should dictate the rules for another to the extent of turning the colonised people into slaves. At one stage in the narrative her school class is studying a text book retelling the history of the West Indies which is not told from the colonised perspective. Annie muses how, if the tables had been turned, her ancestors from Africa would have behaved very differently than the British if the Africans had been the once colonising Britain rather than Britain colonising Africa. She believes that the ancestors would have gone to England and then said "[h]ow nice," and then gone home to tell their friends about it" (76). She believes that her ancestors would have taken the higher road and not colonised and enslaved the people living in the land which they discovered.

Diane Simmons highlights how the situation regarding colonisers and colonised is described in Annie John. Annie and her family and friends in the black community of Antigua, according to Simmons, suffers from a lost heaven "knowing themselves to be the descendants of slaves in a still racist colonial society, people who have been cast out from a place where their existence was right and natural, compatible with the beauty of the creation, to a place where they would "never be a real person"" (68). Simmons argues that the former slaves are eternally criminalised even though the crime has never been fully explained. The former slaves are treated as second class citizens of Antigua during the British rule during the setting of Annie John, and Annie experiences this treatment.

At the end of the narrative Annie sees the need to separate herself from the community in which she has grown up. For her to be able to grow into adulthood she must distance herself from the objects of her childhood which she has loved. At this stage the key thing is to leave Antigua rather than to go anywhere else in particular. Annie longs to be in a place where no one knows anything about her and where she would be liked for just that reason. She has come to a point where she states that "the whole world into which I was born had become an unbearable burden and I wished that I could hold it underwater until it died"
(128). At this stage Annie is ready to leave home and her identity formation is well underway to form her into a woman with a firm identity as separated from her mother and also from her nation. It has at this stage become necessary for her to leave, but this event is not forced upon her prematurely but is a key step on her journey in true Bildungsroman fashion.

2.2.2  A Mother's Love

The key relationship throughout the narrative in Annie John is that between Annie and her mother. Independently of in which development phase Annie is in, the relationship with her mother is dominating everything. From a development perspective this is natural: as a child she is dependent of her mother and idolises her, as an adolescent she need to establish her own identity separate from her mother, and as a young woman she needs to reposition herself next to her mother. In order to show how Annie goes through all these phases this section will highlight key events.

The closeness between mother and daughter is very evident and Annie lives a very protected and nurtured life which shapes her identity in childhood. Annie is the centre of her mother's world and the mother saves keepsakes from Annie life in a trunk in Annie's bedroom. Annie notes of the content of the trunk that "[n]o small part of my life was so unimportant that she hadn't made a note of it" (22). Annie as narrator concludes the first section of the novel describing her early childhood by stating: "It was in such a paradise that I lived" (Kincaid, 25).

Roni Natov elaborates on the symbiotic relationship between Annie and her mother in her article "Mothers and Daughters: Jamaica Kincaid's Pre-Oedipal Narrative". Natov describes the beginning of Annie John as a story where "Annie is completely immersed in her
mother's world as she follows her through her day //. Her sense of self is created through the reminiscence her mother stores away for her along with her childhood belongings" (4). Annie's identity formation is started in a very cohesive and nurtured environment where she lives with a mother who loves her and in a community which is stable and predictable. They are part of the colonised former slaves, and have some hardship, but overall Annie's childhood is helping Annie develop a strong identity.

The hands of Annie's mother are described in many situations in *Annie John*. There are situations where they are nurturing, and gives Annie a ritual bath or caresses her (14), but there are also situations where her mother's hands are associated with death when giving a dead child a bath and dressing her for the funeral (6). Another situation focuses on when Annie comes home early from school and finds her parents in bed together and she sees her mother stroking the back of her husband with her hand. All these different situations shows that the mother that Annie loves is not just Annie's mother, but also have an identity separate from that.

Manuela Coppola highlight in "Caribbean Autobiographies as Weapons in Identity Construction" how the mother as described in Annie John is very much a dualistic figure as both giver and taker of life. Coppola states that "[t]he activities implied in the role women have in the community // inevitably associate death and maternity in Annie's mind" (314). Coppola seas this dualistic view of the mother as a foreshadowing of the breaking of the idyll, or paradise, of mother and daughter bonding and states that "the mother's hands thus function as a means of apprenticeship to adulthood, sexuality and deceit".

The first indications that the paradise which Annie thinks she is living in will end, is when her mother starts to treat her differently, or at least when Annie thinks that her mother is treating her differently. The relationship with her mother must, by nature, evolve once Annie
starts to grow up and mature and there is a very telling scene when Annie starts to realise this. Annie and her mother is shopping for fabric and Annie as usual wants them to buy the same fabric for their dresses. Her mother refuses and states: "You are getting to old for that. It's time you had your own clothes. You cannot go around the rest of your life looking like a little me" (26). Annie's is heavily shaken by this statement. From this moment on in the narrative Annie no longer looks at her mother the same way. She assumes that her mother's feelings for her has changed. As Annie is entering puberty she experiences a perceived betrayal from her mother (30-31). How much of the change that is on the mother's behalf and how much of it is Annie's interpretation of her mother' feelings for her is hard to determine since the narrative is only told from Annie's perspective. The mother-daughter bond is starting to unravel from this point onwards.

A final breaking point for the childhood love between Annie and her mother comes when the mother sees Annie talking to some boys in the street (99-100). At this stage Annie is about fifteen years old and still not very romantically interested in boys. The encounter with the boys in the street was innocent enough, but is severely misinterpreted by her mother. She believes Annie has made a spectacle of herself and she is extremely upset and says that she did not spend all the time and effort in raising Annie to have her behave like a slut. The mother calls Annie a slut over and over again until Annie retorts: "Well, like father like son, like mother like daughter" (102). That makes the mother seem tired, old and broken and she states that "[u]ntil this moment, in my whole life I knew without a doubt that, without any exception, I loved you best" (103) and then she leaves. This episode sets off the events in the narrative where Annie enters into an identity crisis revolving which will be further analysed in the section regarding Annie's pain when growing up.

From a *Bildungsroman* perspective Louis Caton describes the relationship between Annie and her mother early stages of the novel as a childhood which support "a mythical and
romantic understanding of personality development”. Caton claims that the descriptions of the childhood and the imagery used connects Annie with the world and the nature around her where Kincaid creates a vision of wholeness and completeness similar to the romantic idea of returning to nature (130). The quest Annie is on must continue with the separation from the mother and of Annie maturing into a separate and grown-up woman.

Natov states in "Mothers and Daughters: Jamaica Kincaid’s Pre-Oedipal Narrative” that: "The split between mothers and daughters often grows with the recognition of the sexuality of both women: they become rivals" (9) and Natov continues later by stating that "[f]or Annie, as for most adolescents, the world is polarized: either you are an adult or you are a child. And in identifying with either position there is danger and loss". Annie identifies with her mother to the extent that when Annie calls her a slut she tells her mother that the daughter is like the mother. From this moment onwards the bond is all but severed and from Annie's perspective it will never return to the same state of love.

2.2.3 Girlfriends as Steps towards Maturity

When Annie enters puberty her enclosed world with her closest family opens up and she starts to create relationships outside of that group. She becomes friends with other girls, both in school and outside. Two girls especially, Gwen and the Red Girl, are pivotal for the development of Annie's character and they are analysed in this section of the essay. Annie does not share the values of her mother when it comes to become a lady, and the values are a key part of the identity formation, as stated by Passer et al (586).

The idealised love as explained by Sara Ahmed often involves a subject who idealises the future life with the loved object. Ahmed states that the idealised love is not so
much about the object as such, but rather the ideal image the subject has of itself and its surroundings when being in a relationship with the object (127). Gwen and the Red Girl both fulfil the role as an idealised object for Annie and provides her with an idealised image for a future life separated from her mother. Annie is in the middle of the physical and mental change which comes with puberty and her fantasy regarding Gwen and the Red Girl illustrates Annie's need to break free from her mother and to understand how she will live her life when she is not living with her parents.

The first significant relationship Annie has with a girl is with Gwen. Annie starts in a new school and is soon a much appreciated pupil both by many of the teachers and by her fellow students (49). Annie becomes close friends with Gwen and the two girls are soon inseparable (46). This 'school-girl crush' is an example of idealised love, where it many times is more the relationship as such that is the main thing rather than the actual object. Annie fantasises about their future life together and muses to herself that "I [Annie] could not wait for us to grow up so that we could live in a house of our own" (51). Annie has realised that she will not live with her parents forever and to fill that void of her vision of her future life she places Gwen into it. She starts to form an identity for herself which does not involve her parents and Gwen plays an important role in Annie taking this step.

Justin Edwards describes the relationship between Annie and Gwen in Understanding Jamaica Kincaid as "falling in love" (48). Edwards states that Annie replaces the harmonic relationship she has had with her mother up until this point with an idealised relationship of love for Gwen (48). Annie is at this stage going through major changes in her life when she starts a new school but also starts to menstruate, so even though Annie and Gwen have vowed to be friends forever, the friendship is still doomed. Edwards concludes his analysis of the relationship with Gwen by stating that: "Their love is not, as Annie desires, eternal. Rather it is yet another stage in Annie's personal development" (49). By establishing a
relationship outside of her immediate family Annie has started her journey from a child into a woman and Gwen is key in that development.

The second relationship is with an unnamed girl from outside of the school environment. Annie befriends a girl who is never named apart from being called "the Red Girl" (56). The Red Girl is very different from Gwen, with bad hygiene and tattered clothes and behaves more like a boy than a girl in some respects (56). That is part of what intrigues Annie, and the friendship accelerates Annie's puberty rebellion. Many of the things Annie and the Red Girl do together, like playing marbles or climbing the lighthouse (58), are not approved by Annie's mother. Everything about the Red Girl is a secret from Annie's mother and Annie starts to lie to her mother (65). The Red Girl is therefore another key step towards independence from her mother for Annie.

Edwards describes the relationship between Annie and the Red Girl as not only a replacement of her mother's love or Gwen's love but also as a rebellion against her mother (49). The Red Girl is not in any sense of the word 'ladylike' which is what Annie's mother is trying to make Annie into. The connection between Annie and the very 'un-ladylike' Red Girl and her marbles is key according to Edwards since it epitomises Annie's rebellion against her mother when she not only plays and wins at marbles, but also hides the marbles and lies to her mother about it (50).

2.2.4 Fear of Change

Fear is not the most prominent emotion in Annie John, but as always when a narrative centres on love, there is a fear of losing the love. Annie is going through dramatic changes due to puberty and that in itself forces Annie to re-evaluate her life and she enters into an identity
crisis similar to how it is defined by Passer et al (586). Such a re-evaluation always brings change and change can be fearful. Annie fears to lose her mother's love and she is anxious about the changes she is going through. This section will exemplify some of the reasons for Annie's fears.

Annie experiences moments of sheer shock when she realises that she will not continue to live in the same way as she has always lived with her mother. Once that idea enters her mind she starts to rebel against the changes. She refuses to obey the necessary physical, emotional and behavioural changes expected of her. She starts to be educated to become a 'young lady', including etiquette training and piano lessons, but Annie rebels against these activities by misbehaving and is asked to leave (27-28). She starts to side with other girls her own age against the adult world and the expectations of growing up and conforming to the expected mould for a young lady. However, at the same time as the changes are fearful for Annie, they intrigue her. In the discussions with the other girls at school it is with mixed emotions that they see the changes in their own bodies. They pity Annie for starting to menstruate but they are also envious of her. They fear that they will start to develop breast but they still try many different methods for starting the development. (50). Annie shares many of her fears and concerns with the other girls at school and is therefore not completely alone in her fear, even though she at this stage is starting to not confide in her mother.

Roni Natov reflects about the process of growing up in her article "Mother's and Daughter's: Jamaica Kincaid's Pre-Oedipal Narrative". She states that: "For Annie, as for most adolescents, the world is polarized: either you are an adult or you are a child. And in identifying with either position there is danger and loss" (11). By entering adolescence Annie by default must give up her childhood and the childlike relationship she has so far had with her mother. She does not know what she will get to replace that and that is the source of the
fear Annie feels regarding the changes she goes through when her body and mind starts to change.

This narrative of a girl going through adolescence is very telling and yet it does not strike the reader as anything drastically out of the ordinary for any girl growing up. The fear of the unknown is natural and Annie's life is not conveyed as being fully dominated by that fear. What is dominating in the narrative is the change in the relationship with her closest family which has a huge impact on Annie's self image. She questions her relationships and her life and this is, like it can be for any teenager, a sometimes very painful process.

2.2.5 Growing from Pain

Pain is for most of the narrative not a very prominent emotion in *Annie John*, apart from the rejections Annie perceives from her mother. This changes however, when Annie turns fifteen. In order to understand the significance of this pain this section of the essay will analyse the role of pain in Annie's identity development and highlight some key events in the novel.

As stated earlier in the essay, pain according to Sara Ahmed is often described as a private and lonely experience which leads to a person turning inwards both mentally and physically for protection from the pain (219. Ahmed further states that "pain can often lead to a body that turns in on itself" (26). Annie quite literally curls up into a ball when she becomes ill and she is confined to bed. She is however capable of sharing her pain, not with her mother, but with her grandmother, Ma Chess. This is significant for Annie's possibilities to come out of the depression as quickly as she does.

At the age of fifteen Annie becomes very depressed. Annie describes her depression as something deep inside of her, no larger than a thimble, but it has the weight of "worlds"
The depression has come over her slowly, like a mist, and during the time the depression builds up the relationship with her mother has become very infected. Annie describes a relationship where she and her mother "soon grew two faces" (87) where one face was for when they were in company and behaved, and one for when they were alone together and the hate came to surface. Eventually Annie asks for her own trunk, a symbol of leaving home, and reflects that "I could not be sure whether for the rest of my life I would be able to tell when it was really my mother and when it was really her shadow standing between me and the rest of the world" (107). Annie sees her mother as something which stands between herself and the world and something which restricts.

Once the depression is fully developed Annie can no longer get out of bed and her parents are worried about her. They try both western medicine and obeah medicine to cure her. Nothing helps and Annie falls deeper and deeper into depression to the point where she is somewhat hallucinating and cannot understand words that are spoken to her (116). Eventually Annie's maternal grandmother, Ma Chess, shows up from a neighbouring island. Ma Chess is very knowledgeable in obeah tradition and she takes upon herself to take care of Annie and eats and sleeps in her room. Annie observes:

Sometimes at night, when I would feel that I was all locked up in the warm falling soot and could not find my way out, Ma Chess would come into my bed with me and stay until I was myself - whatever that had come to be by then - again. I would lie on my side curled up like a little comma, and Ma Chess would lie next to me, curled up like a bigger comma, into which I fit. (125-126).

Annie is clearly going through an identity crisis in the middle of her depression. She is not herself and in her pain she curls up to be as small as possible to protect herself. The pain is
however shared to some extent with Ma Chess, and this must be a great comfort for Annie. She is not alone in her pain.

Roni Natov highlights the significance of Annie's illness as it described in *Annie John*. Annie retreats into a world of silence and darkness but Natov states that: "This regression into the pre-verbal semiotic world of pulsations, where sounds "rocked back and forth", is paradoxically a movement towards healing. She goes back to the pre-oedipal world that predated her fall from grace to restore herself" (9). For Annie to come out of her identity crisis she needs to regress to the earlier stage where she is cared for like a baby, but the person who cares for her is significantly *not* her mother.

During her illness Annie does not speak and hardly understands what is said to her, which illustrates what pain can do to communication according to Sara Ahmed. Ahmed states that "pain is not only a bodily trauma, it also resists or even 'shatters' language and communication" (22). Annie describes how she listens to her mother and father talking and she muses that: "I couldn't hear what it was that they said, but I could see the words leaving their mouths. The words travelled through the air towards me, but just as they reached my ears they would fall to the floor, suddenly dead" (109). The verbal communication has broken down due to Annie's intense pain from her depression.

Ma Chess takes care of Annie's every need, like a baby, until one day, just as mysteriously as it started, Annie's sickness starts to leave (126). Annie starts to recover and in her recovery she muses how much she never wants to see the sun in Antigua or anything about her mother ever again (127-128). She longs to be somewhere where no one knows her and how much the world she is born into has become a burden for her and how she wish that it would be gone. Her separation process from her mother is now almost complete and Annie can see how she in the future will live an adult life on her own.
2.2.6 The Quest Continues

The end of *Annie John* is on a hopeful note, compared to *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Sara Ahmed describes hope as an emotion that "impresses upon us in the present which requires that we must act in the present, rather than simply wait for a future that is always before us" (184). This means that hope is an emotion which has a history, the situations that the subject is in, and a future, the situation the subject want to be in. To get there the subject must act in the present with direction towards the future. This section of the essay will look into the emotion of hope for Annie in more detail.

After Annie recovers from her sickness she takes steps towards controlling her own future and to become independent of her mother. At this stage she is not necessarily happy, but she feels empowered enough to make decisions for herself that will remove her from her family and from Antigua. Annie decides to leave Antigua and to sail to England to become a nurse. This decision is not so much because she particularly wants to become a nurse, or go to England, but rather that she desperately wants to move on from the life she is living in Antigua. Annie reflects when looking around in her room that "[e]verywhere I looked stood something that had meant a lot to me, that had given me pleasure at some point, // But as I was lying there my heart could burst open with joy at the thought of never having to see any of it again" (131-132). She realises that she does not love her parents the way she used to and it is she who has changed, not them (133).

Annie is, in true *Bildungsroman* fashion, leaving home after a growth process and will continue her adventures in a larger world than the surroundings at home. Louis Caton elaborates on the final separation, which is actually not as final as it usually is in a *Bildungsroman*. Caton argues that:
Kincaid's hero ... defers the psychological splitting off from family and opens up the possibility for a different paradigm, one that resists such early singularity. In fact, she subverts ... elements of the Bildungsroman by suggesting that mother-daughter bonding continues throughout the quest as it redefines that tradition. According to Kincaid, then, the quest pattern can be rewritten to include this emotional bonding without sacrificing the hero's eventual separation from it. (138)

This mean that even though Annie is leaving her family and her home, the bond is not necessarily completely severed with her mother and Caton concludes that "Kincaid stresses the paradoxical, frightening, and mysterious early connection with the mother".

Roni Natov recognises the same situation at the end of the novel. Natov argues that the separation process is not yet completed for Annie and that she is yet struggling with integrating the good mother and the bad mother she experiences when interacting with her mother (12-13). Natov states that: "For Annie the old world is dying, but the new one is yet to be born. With great acuity, Kincaid portrays this terror of stasis, of being frozen between childhood and adulthood, from the perspective of the adolescent Annie" (13). Like Caton, Natov states that the complete separation between mother and daughter is never fully achieved, and is possibly not even desirable, but there is an evolution from the upheaval of puberty into a more independent adult state for Annie (14).

3 Conclusions

This essay set out to show how emotions can be used to explain the formation of the identity for each protagonist in the primary works and how the identity development in Wide Sargasso
Sea is a movement towards disintegration and fragmentation, whereas the development in Annie John is a movement towards consistency and maturity. The analysis has highlighted some of the key events and the involved objects and emotions in each of the primary works.

From the theory of psychology it can be attained that the identity formation for the two protagonists are very different. When the theories of Passer et al are applied to Antoinette it can be seen that she is not moving towards identity achievement, the status where an identity and a set of values have matured and the identity crisis is over. Even her earliest childhood is sometimes riddled with questions about who she is and what values to adhere to. She is throughout her whole life torn between the black and the white community, and she also rebels against the values of her peers when she refuses to marry Rochester but in the end she decides to continue to live by those values. This is also evident when she refuses to leave Rochester after they are married, even though she is desperately unhappy. Antoinette's identity status never reaches identity achievement but is stuck moving between foreclosure and the identity crisis of moratorium to use the terminology from Passer et al.

When the same theories from Passer et al are applied to the narrative of Annie it is clear that she is on a different journey through identity statuses. She travels from rather ignorant childhood where she has no concerns of who she is and what she will become, into a phase where she experiences a dramatic identity crisis, and finally she emerges with the starting point for an identity of her own, separate from her mother. At that stage she can be said to have reached identity achievement as defined by Passer et al.

The confusing situation for Antoinette in Wide Sargasso Sea is supported in the analysis by critics such as Victoria Burrows, Ann Simpson and Veronica Marie Gregg. Burrows focuses on the situation of the white Creole of the West Indies as described in the novel. Both Antoinette and her mother suffers from the fragmentation, isolation, racial hatred
and melancholia which is a consequence of the situation. Burrows continues by highlighting the continued fragmentation for Antoinette with her contrasting mother figures in her birth mother and Christophine. This further highlights the entrapment Antoinette experiences between the white and the black community.

Ann Simpson also highlights the situation of two conflicting mother figures but she focuses more on the failed relationship between Antoinette and her mother, and the consequences this relationship has for Antoinette further on in her life. The rejection and mistreatment from the mother, who then disappears from Antoinette's life before anything between them has been resolved, influences all her relationship to the extent that Simpson argues that the relationship with Rochester is a mirror of the relationship with her birth mother.

Finally, Gregg focuses on the importance of the relationship between Antoinette and Tia, the young black girl at Coulibri. Gregg stresses that this relationship functions as a mirror throughout the narrative to show that Antoinette sees Tia and herself as the same. Again, this adds to the conflicts in Antoinette's identity development, which never comes to a fully developed stage but remains in the stage of identity crisis and questions of who she is and what her place in society should be.

That Annie in Annie John can be said to be on a journey of personal development is supported by critics like Louis Caton and Roni Natov, as has been illustrated in the analysis of Annie John. By being a Bildungsroman Annie John by default sets out to describe the development of the protagonist from an innocent childhood through adolescence into young adulthood. Louis Caton argues the fact that Annie John is a Bildungsroman where Annie is on a quest towards independence and a sense of self separate from her family and her home environment. However, both Caton and Roni Natov highlights the fact that the separation is
not complete at the end of the novel. Even at the end of the novel there is a bond between Annie and her mother that is recognised by Caton and Natov as a significant step away from the traditional *Bildungsroman*.

Diane Simmons argues that everything is not ideal in Annie's world though. The conflicts between the former colonisers and the former slaves are still evident even though slavery has been abandoned for over 100 years when *Annie John* takes place, as highlighted by Simmons. Annie is part of a community which by the ruling class is considered to be second class. Annie is firmly rooted in the community but she experiences the attitude of the ruling class through the schooling system are highlighted in the narrative of *Annie John*.

The emotions of love, fear, pain and hope were analysed based on the framework from Sara Ahmed's *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* with supporting arguments from critics relevant for each primary work. By applying the emotional framework from Ahmed it has been shown how the events in the narrative impact the identity development of the protagonists by the alignment and orientation of the protagonists in relation to objects around them. By turning towards or away from objects of love, fear, pain and hope the identity development of the protagonist is driven forward, or stagnates.

The difference between the experience of the emotion of love for Antoinette and Annie are very telling. For Antoinette every relationship relating to love constantly involves trauma and conflict and there are no sustainable periods of fruitful love. For Annie the loving relationships are nurturing and the only trauma that can be detected is when the relationships change over time. Antoinette experiences fragmentation in what objects she identifies with where Annie consolidates her identity based on her community, her mother and her girlfriends.
For Antoinette, the emotion of love brings not joy but is instead the root cause for much of the conflict regarding her identity formation. Love is a source of trauma for Antoinette as this analysis has shown. Specifically it can be highlighted that Antoinette's identity formation related to the emotion of love is influenced by her lack of community belonging - her 'in-between-ness', by her relationship with her birth mother who rejects her, by her relationship with Christophine who represents a different community, by her friendship with Tia who Antoinette sees as her mirror, and finally by her relationship with Rochester, her husband, who finally breaks her. All the key objects for love for Antoinette can be seen as sources for fragmentation and conflict. Antoinette is brutally forced towards her fate to become 'the mad-woman in the attic' and every step towards that seems to be destined rather than something Antoinette sees she can do anything about. The events described in the analysis of *Wide Sargasso Sea* drive Antoinette into a setting where her sense of self and her identity is fragmented and filled with conflict.

For Annie all the key objects for love are for long periods of time stable and the sources for sustainable loving relationships. Annie belongs to the black community in Antigua and there is now questioning about that. It is not an altogether happy community since the British rule is influencing the schooling system and other governmental institutes, but Annie is firmly rooted and it is clear whom she identifies with from a community perspective. The love between Annie and her mother is also without questioning. Annie lives for a long time in a sort of paradise with her mother's love as a constant and that influences her identity formation immensely. She is a person who knows she is lovable and she is not afraid to express the love she herself has for others. The relationships with Gwen and the Red Girl are key steps in Annie's identity development as breaking free from her mother. These have been identified as idealised love in the analysis and are representative for a girl of the age Annie is in the narrative. Her infatuation grows and wanes not un-similar to falling in and out of love.
for any teenager. These relationships are significant steps for Annie in the separation process from her mother as part of her growing up and in that sense they play a key part in her identity formation. She takes steps towards loving relationships outside her immediate family and in that she is successful.

The emotion of fear is the complete opposite to love when you compare Antoinette and Annie. For Antoinette the emotion of fear is the constant in her life and she fears both concrete objects, such as the former slave community, as well as having a general fear of a threatening world surrounding her. Antoinette has moments when she experiences happiness and love, but the constant emotion in her life is fear. Annie on the other hand has love as the constant emotion when she grows up and does not live in constant fear. She only experiences fear at moments of change which is a natural response to fear and the emotion is not persistent as it is for Antoinette.

Pain is the emotion which Antoinette and Annie can be said to experience in a similar way. Even though completely different circumstances both Antoinette and Annie have similar experiences of pain. The end of Antoinette's story in Wide Sargasso Sea is dominated by pain. She curls up and makes herself smaller in a metaphorical sense as she retreats into her own mind, as well as curling up physically in a world which is physically small. Antoinette's pain is permanent and does not end until she finally ends it herself by jumping off the roof. Annie experiences pain as a consequence of a severe depression and her response is to literally curl up her body and shrink her world to her own mind and her own pain. The pains of growing up may be more prominent for Annie than for the common teenage girl, but none the less she follows a development path from a girl close to her mother, to a girl in rebellion, to a girl maturing and leaving home. She is also fortunate enough to actually have someone to share the pain with, which most likely is a key factor for why the depression lifts fairly quickly thereafter. The pain subsides once the depression subsides and even though she
is not instantly happy from that moment on she has evolved in her identity formation into a more mature woman.

The final emotion of hope was analysed purely from Annie's perspective in *Annie John* since the narrative of *Wide Sargasso Sea* does not include much hope. Hope is about looking for a future and Antoinette rarely looked at the future without fear and mainly followed a predestined path rather than acted herself to change her fate. In *Annie John* it is one of the dominant emotions at the end of the narrative in *Annie John*. Annie makes decisions about her future though. Her main concern in those decisions are to change her current situation and she succeeds in that by leaving Antigua and by leaving the home of her parents. By sailing off towards England there is hope for a fruitful life for Annie and the narrative ends on that note.

Jean Rhys succeeds in drawing a picture of a protagonist in *Wide Sargasso Sea* of a protagonist who's identity is consistently pulled in different directions and never given to opportunity to mature into a cohesive, sustainable identity. This essay has shown how Antoinette never emerges with a strong identity that is all her won, but she suffers from conflicts and fragmentation in her never-ending identity crisis. In contrast the identity formation in Jamaica Kincaid's narrative in *Annie John* builds Annie up towards a young woman on her way out in the world in true *Bildungsroman* style. This essay has shown how Annie emerges at the end of the narrative as an assertive, if not yet fully happy, woman with a strong, personal identity after having lived through her identity crisis.
Works sited


