Reterritorialization in A Small Place by Jamaica Kincaid: A Postcolonial Eco-Critical Study

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Abstract
This article intends to understand how the postcolonial ecocritical writers attempt to reterritorialize their land, its history, and its culture by underscoring the hazards of tourism. In the wake of capitalism, tourism has increased environmental racism and environmental injustice encountered by people of marginalized communities. For this study, we have analyzed a creative nonfiction work A Small Place by Jamaica Kincaid in the light of postcolonial ecocritical theory presented by Donelle N. Dreese. This literary theory deals with the exploitation of land, its resources, its environment, and its people in the context of ecocriticism and postcolonialism. Dreese’s subdivision of the concept of reterritorialization into mythic, psychic, and environmental reterritorialization has been applied on A Small Place. The article explores how Kincaid has reterritorialized her ancestral homeland Antigua by recording the oppressive colonial past of the land that has been ravaged under imperial rule by exploitation of the natural resources (plantations) and subjugation of the human resources (slavery). She has observed that under the influence of capitalism, her homeland is currently facing a new form of colonization in the name of tourism industry that is actually promoting new ways of foreign occupation of the land, enslavement of the local people, and environmental racism. The article concludes by drawing attention toward tourism, which can turn into neo-colonization under the clutches of capitalism and corrupt leadership. We attempt to underscore that there is a dire need of continuous process of planning and management by the local authorities to minimize the problems faced by the natives and to make tourism industry environment friendly.

Keywords
Kincaid, Antigua, A Small Place, postcolonial ecocriticism, reterritorialization, colonization, historicization

Introduction
Postcolonial ecocriticism emphasizes the need of paying heed to the histories of colonial violence embedded in the earth. Land, place, or territory is the primary site of postcolonial recuperation. Under the colonial rule, colonized countries have faced tragic phases of deterritorialization. Postcolonial state implies “a sense of emotional and physical dislocation involving a loss of the self, a cultural alienation involving an eradication of cultural traditions, history, and national character” (Dreese, 2002, p. 17). Postcolonial ecocritical writing is an attempt to recuperate and reterritorialize the place. It involves an attempt to historicize the past and giving voice to the tongueless land and its people. To understand how the postcolonial ecocritical writers attempt to reterritorialize their lands, we have analyzed a nonfiction work A Small Place by Jamaica Kincaid (2002) through postcolonial ecocritical theoretical framework presented by Donelle N. Dreese. Dreese has explored her concept of reterritorialization in the Native American context. We have used her theoretical concept of reterritorialization and traced how writing A Small Place is an attempt by Kincaid to reterritorialize her native homeland.

She recuperates her native land Antigua by mythic, psychic, and environmental reterritorialization. We have used this lens to study A Small Place in which Kincaid tries to reterritorialize and recuperate her native homeland—Antigua. She looks at both the sides of the coin: on one hand, she perceives the encumbering tourist industry as one form of neo-colonialism; on the other hand, she tries to highlight the corrupt behavior of the local authorities which adds to the problems faced by Antiguans.

Literature Review
Human life, as well as literature, is highly influenced by the environment around it. Therefore, since centuries, literature

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and arts have been portraying the interaction between human beings and their environment. Environmental concerns have even been voiced by different writers even in ancient times; for instance, the present-day fear of artificially provoked climatic change has its roots in the works of Theophrastus. After the Greeks and the Romans too, over centuries, humans’ relation to the land and its environment has remained a concern in the works of different writers. However, this concern for the environment got the shape of a prominent literary movement especially in the 1960s. A wide range of literary works, fictional as well as nonfictional, that portray human’s relationship with the environment has been produced. However, the term “ecocriticism” emerged as an eclectic literary movement in the early 1990s. Buell et al. (2011) who is among the pioneers of ecocriticism writes that the term ecocriticism is “most commonly used to refer to environmentally oriented study of literature” (p. 418). To use Glotfelty’s (1996) words, “ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (p. xviii). Because humans are essentially connected with the world around them, study of the environment involves how human beings influence and interrelate with the environment.

It was almost at the start of the 21st century that ecocriticism and postcolonialism were hybridized. The term “postcolonialism” is applied to an academic field focusing on the study of European colonialism and its after-effects on society, history, culture, and politics of the previously colonized. Although first used by historians, since the last decade of the 20th century, Postcolonialism has been used as a literary term for an oppositional reading practice to observe colonial representation and its effects in literary texts. Cuddon (2013) observes that postcolonial writers “reimagine silenced and suppressed histories—of slavery and colonialism” (p. 551). They write about the subjugation of people, land, and its resources under colonial rule.

Postcolonial ecocriticism is based on the concept that study of land and its environmental history and study of the empire building are inextricably intertwined. While postcolonial studies focus on the idea of deterritorialization and displacement, ecocritical studies have a “preoccupation with an ethics of place” (Buell et al., 2011, p. 427). Fanon (2004) links postcolonialism with ecocriticism by writing, “For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity” (p. 9), thus identifying the land as a primary site of postcolonial recuperation. Having an independent and free land provides sustainability and becomes a source of dignity. Natural space is a means of preservation in which histories of that land as well as sea are embedded. In the context of colonization and transplantation in the Caribbean islands, Glissant (1989) thinks that the landscape is a character in itself: “the individual, the community, the land are inextricable in the process of creating history” (p. 105). These embedded histories provide dynamic and vital methodologies for comprehending transformative impact of empire as well as anti-colonial epistemologies it tries to repress. Kincaid’s writing is an attempt to reterritorialize as she tries to explore those embedded histories of her land—Antigua.

It won’t be justified to look at Postcolonialism as merely an anthropocentric field as Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin (2010) point out: “[t]he easy assertion . . . that the postcolonial field is inherently anthropocentric overlooks a long history of ecological concern in postcolonial criticism” (p. 3). Human history and the history of the natural landscape are inextricably intertwined: “postcolonial ecology reflects a complex epistemology that recuperates the alterity of both history and nature, without reducing either to the other” (DeLoughrey & Handley, 2011, p. 4). Historicization of the history of exploitation of the people as well as their land is essential for understanding land and, by extension, the Earth. “This historical dialogue is necessary because the decoupling of nature and history has helped to mystify colonialism’s histories of forced migration, suffering, and human violence” (DeLoughrey & Handley, 2011, p. 4). By making landscape an essential part of the dialogue, Kincaid foregrounds the landscape and seascape as participants in this historical process instead of just bystanders to human experience in Antigua.

Ecological distribution conflicts have been studied by Martinez-Alier in his 2002 book The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation. His observation that between the poor and the rich countries there is a wide difference in “the burdens of pollution and . . . access to environmental resources and services” (pp. 168–169) is what Kincaid portrays well in A Small Place. Likewise, Buell links the concept of toxicity and environmental racism with postcolonial ecocriticism and apprehends that environmental poisoning will generate critically perilous situations on the Earth. He establishes “toxic discourse” by relating toxic poisoning with the capitalist trinity (“land-capital-labour”) into a space of sovereignty at once fragmented and hierarchical” (Buell, 2001, p. 33). Kincaid in A Small Place points out that Antiguan land is more threatened by environmental racism and aims to pinpoint the toxic threats faced by Antigua.

Ursula Heise (2008) in Sense of Place and Sense of Planet stresses upon the need for “eco-cosmopolitanism.” Heise advocates a cosmopolitan approach in ecocritical studies, thus emphasizing upon the need to pay attention toward the developing and underdeveloped areas of the world as well. She seeks to develop an environmental imagination founded “on ties to territories and systems that are understood to encompass the planet as a whole” (p. 10). However, contrary to Heise’s idea to take the planet as a whole, Kincaid shows that in contemporary times tourism is becoming a means of widening the breach between the rich and the poor countries. Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier (1997) focus on the study of ecology in relation with the poor communities of
the world. Underdeveloped countries and their people “respond to environmental destruction which directly affects their way of life and prospect for survival” (Guha & Martinez-Alier, 1997, p. xx). Antiguans have faced environmental destruction which has badly affected their lives. Hence, Kincaid, on behalf of her country folk, tries to recuperate her land by referring to environmental destruction caused under imperial control.

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said (1994) points out that imperialism is geographical violence and the recovery of the land is first of all an act of imagination: “For the native, the history of colonial servitude is inaugurated by the loss of locality to the outsider. . . the land is recoverable at first only through imagination (p. 225). For this imaginative act of recuperating the land, Dreese uses the term “reterritorialization.” Kaplan (1990) uses the term “deterritorialization” for the “displacement of identities, persons, and meanings” (p. 358). Postcolonial Ecocritical writers make an attempt to reterritorialize their land through their writings. In the colonies, people have faced displacement physically as well as culturally. So there is a sense of loss and a cultural alienation. Postcolonial resistance has emerged as a reaction to continuing economic, social, cultural subjugation in the name of racism. Postcolonial ecocritical writing is an attempt to reconstruct land and its culture by raising voice against human exploitation and environmental injustice under colonization. In postcolonial ecocritical discourse, place is “a physical, psychological, ideological, historical, and environmental construct where writers challenge and alter these constructions in order to create a habitable place or home” (Dreese, 2002, p. 3).

“Reterritorialization is not a solely physical act but one that is deeply emotional and intellectual as well” (Dreese, 2002, p. 18). It involves within it emotional associations and intellectual aspirations for recuperating the homeland that has been wronged with. Hence, Dreese divides the concept of reterritorialization into mythic, psychic, and environmental reterritorialization. Mythic reterritorialization involves a reclaiming of the land by recalling the landscapes of the past; by telling tales about the land, its history, and cultural identity. It produces a literature that attempts to “heal and decolonize fragmented and disappearing cultures” (Dreese, 2002, p. 23). Psychic reterritorialization involves a remapping of terrains. The desire for the hometown begins with a memory, a vision, and a nostalgic yearning “involving all the senses envisioning and/or recollecting the details of place within the mind” (Dreese, 2002, p. 47). Hence, postcolonial ecocritical writers strive to redefine the land they traverse by confronting the issues of racism, oppression, environmental degradation on a psychic terrain and thus change the consciousness of their readers. They attempt to retrieve their lost personal as well as national identity. Environmental reterritorialization involves reclaiming of the environment by giving voice to environmental injustice and environmental racism. Environmental reterritorialization “involves writers who position themselves in natural settings in order to rehabit a landscape or place that is intrinsic to their philosophies of being in the world” (Dreese, 2002, p. 19). Dreese (2002) observes that the writers who focus on environmental reterritorialization usually “position themselves in specific terrains in their works, such as in nature writing or travelogues” (p. 19). They foreground the importance of the relationship between the environment and the self-personal as well as national self. Environmental reterritorialization entails a way of life that implies intimate association with a place, recognition of its bioregion, and the interdependence of all living things within that place. To sum it up, reterritorialization can act as a process of decolonization and hence a reclaiming of the self and the place.

### A Small Place as a Postcolonial Ecocritical Text

A New Yorker today, Kincaid’s roots go back to Antigua. *A Small Place* by Jamaica Kincaid is a nonfiction text that can be categorized as a travel guide, a jeremiad, and an autobiographical piece of writing simultaneously. For Kincaid, “the genres of biography and autobiography are intricately woven into the parameters of memory and history” (Braziel, 2009, p. 2). In “Navigating an Unequal World,” Beriault (2018) focuses on the form of *A Small Place*, arguing that Kincaid reconceptualizes the travelogue form by showing a clash of perspectives between the tourist and the local, “revealing the existing conditions of material inequality that have produced a global hierarchal relationship” (p. 398). We argue that in *A Small Place* Kincaid has given voice to her tongueless ancestral land and its exploitation by colonial malpractices and neo-colonial abuses of the tourism industry. The writer has tried to historicize her homeland—Antigua—that has witnessed a long history of colonial oppression. There is continuity between colonial oppression and the emergence of the tourist industry under capitalist neo-colonial set up. One of the major concerns of a postcolonial ecocritical writer is to recover the land that is ravaged by history. The text addresses the need for a renewed sense of place when colonialism, neo-colonialism, and globalization deny local land sovereignty, and when pollution, desertification, deforestation, climate change, and other forms of global environmental issues prevail over the land.

To apply Dreese’s theory, Kincaid as a postcolonial ecocritical writer reterritorializes her land. Hence, the very first sentence of the book takes us to Antigua—*A Small Place*—“a world that is twelve miles long and nine miles wide” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 9). Kincaid’s emphasis on the physical and geographical construct of Antigua as a small place is an attempt to recuperate her land by asserting its geographical boundaries. The very choice of the title of the book is an act of reterritorialization on part of the postcolonial ecocritical writer. Writing becomes a means of recuperating history. The way Kincaid (2012) repeatedly refers to “THE EARTHQUAKE” (p. 9) with capital letters each time, it
seems as if she has consistently at the back of her mind the much greater “earthquake” in Antigua, whom the Caribbean writer Brathwaite (2002) terms as the “worldquake”—the ongoing effects of colonialism as catastrophe (p. 127). In the beginning of section two of A Small Place, Kincaid (2012) categorically historicizes imperial history by putting the blame on the colonizers, especially the British, that “no natural disaster imaginable could equal the harm they did” (p. 15). The text is not only a historicizing of the imperial history but also an attempt to make the next generations of colonizers realize the intensity of disaster that their ancestors have created; so Kincaid (2012) questions them if they can imagine “the destruction of people and land” that came out of the British business of the empire (p. 15). She questions them: “Do you ever try to understand why people like me cannot get over the past, cannot forgive and cannot forget?” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 16). The answer is obvious by reading the first few pages of the book: because that past is constantly present and is overshadowing their lives not only in the form of relics and signboards from the colonial era, but more in the form of poverty, lack of food, dearth of water, and infertility of the land. “The road sign, a rusting, beat-up thing left over from colonial days” is symbolic of the decay and rust that colonizers have left as a painful legacy for the Antiguans (Kincaid, 2012, p. 7).

Kincaid (2012) further tries to reterritorialize her land by telling the tourist, and thus the reader, that Antiguans have suffered “the unspeakableness of slavery” and have for centuries gone through “exploitation, oppression, domination” (p. 9). In 1674, Betty Hope, the first sugar plantation, was established by Christopher Condrington. Kincaid (2012) records that the Condringtons were “the slave-trading family” in Barbuda and Antigua (p. 37). After that Antigua rapidly turned into one of the most profitable sugar plantation colonies for the British. Because of unsuitable working conditions and excessive hours of labor, the death rate was massive. Large-scale labor was needed due to the high death rate of slaves and huge expansion and production in sugar mills. So slaves were imported from the neighboring islands. Kincaid (2012) depicts that the Barclay Brothers were involved in the trade which considered the Black human beings “only commodities” (p. 16). Kincaid further records the imperial history of her homeland that witnessed millions of children becoming orphans due to British atrocities. It is historical fact that a large majority of native population died due to diseases, malnutrition, and slavery. Slaves were mistreated, violently tortured, and even killed by their masters. It was only in 1723 that the Slave Act was passed that declared murder of slaves a crime, but did not ensure any more rights for slaves. Kincaid (2012) addresses the White tourist in a wrathful voice: “We made you bastards rich” (p. 9). Kincaid establishes a link between colonialism and tourism by conveying that White tourists belong to the next generation of White colonizers who have been made rich because of the natural and human resources from the Antiguans.

### Mythic Reterritorialization

Dreese (2002) uses the term “mythic reterritorialization” for the postcolonial ecocritical writing that aims to “recover a sense of home, identity, community, and place in response to various forms of displacement caused by colonization” (p. 17). The writing of A Small Place is an example of mythic reterritorialization as Kincaid reclaims the land by recalling the landscapes of the past. She tells tales about her land, its history, and cultural identity. She records the centuries of colonial subjugation that the Caribbean land and the Atlantic Ocean have witnessed:

In Antigua, people speak of slavery as if it had been a pageant full of large ships sailing on blue water, the large ships filled up with human cargo—their ancestors; they got off, they were forced to work under conditions that were cruel and inhuman, they were beaten, they were murdered, they were sold. (Kincaid, 2012, p. 35)

Colonial powers always have a tendency to hide their atrocities, so the dead bodies of millions of slave were just thrown into the sea without giving them any human rights of decent burial. Through the act of mythic reterritorialization by the writer, the Atlantic Ocean becomes crucial as recuperative site of postcolonial historiography. Kincaid (2012) ridicules the imperialist mentality when at the arrival of the “Princess person” buildings and roads were repaired and made brand new. She questions, “can a sea be made to look brand-new?” (p. 20). Just as colonial power cannot make a sea look brand new, it cannot erase the history of exploitation and oppression. Hence, history stays latent, in Caribbean nature, which is crammed with sorrowful reminders of repression and slavery. Kincaid provides “the right glasses to see what is at the bottom of the Caribbean Sea” (Covi, 2018, p. 7). She informs the tourist, “It would amaze even you to know the number of Black slaves this ocean has swallowed” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 11). This giving voice to the atrocities of the colonizers toward the land, the sea, and the people is an attempt to reterritorialize the place to heal and decolonize this ravaged place.

In the very first paragraph of the book, Kincaid (2012) links the environmental issue of lack of rainfall with the long history of colonial atrocities: Antigua is “a place that suffers constantly from drought” (p. 6). It is an irony that the inhabitants of this land that is surrounded by water from all the sides have to “watch carefully every drop of fresh water” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 6). This reference, to almost a constant state of drought, is in fact an act of historicizing the imperial history of violence against nature, land, and its environment. Under British colonization, there was large-scale deforestation in Antigua and Barbados especially during the 17th century. Richard H. Grove in his book Green Imperialism writes that there were many reasons for deforestation. One major reason was to clear the land to establish cotton and sugar plantations. Another reason was the imperialists’ efforts to “reconstruct the European-type landscapes in the island colonies” (Grove,
ruination. In the Caribbean context, the word “ruination” with the huge piles of bagasse became sights of imperial of the plantation” (Gebert, 2015, p. 89). The plantation areas for “the debris of the history and environmental devastation territories throughout the Caribbean” (p. 73). Sugar plantations. However, the British colonizers found the climate cleared to establish rubber, cotton, and sugar cane plantations. Gebert (2015) notes that the role of sugar cane cultivation was “the most suitable for sugar cane plantation. Gebert (2015) observes that the role of sugar cane cultivation was “the most salient form of power and environmental violence through which empires manifested their hegemony over colonized territories throughout the Caribbean” (p. 73). Sugar plantation was an act of environmental violence and bagasse stands for “the debris of the history and environmental devastation of the plantation” (Gebert, 2015, p. 89). The plantation areas with the huge piles of bagasse became sights of imperial ruination. In the Caribbean context, the word “ruination” stands for disruption of cultivation and commotion of a civilization. Michelle Cliff (2003) analyses the origin of the word “ruination”: “The word ruination . . . contains both the word ruin, and nation. A landscape in ruination means one in which the imposed nation is overcome by the naturalness of ruin” (p. 157). So, exploitation-based British imperial policies ruined the natural resources of the Antiguan nation that is still confronting the terrible aftermaths of imperialism.

European empires instigated large-scale ecosystem change due to its evidently unequal power regimes. When invasion and settlement had been completed and administrative structures had been established, the environmental impacts of Western attitudes were reinforced by “the deliberate (or accidental) transport of animals, plants and peoples throughout the European empires” (Huggan & Tiffin, 2010, p. 6). Kincaid historicizes that in Antigua too European imperialists introduced sugar cane crops and thus exterminated the local ecosystem. Capturing and renaming nature—land, places, flora, and fauna—has been an essential power-game under colonial rule. The original name of Antigua was Waladli or Wadadli, meaning “our own,” but Christopher Columbus named it Antigua in 1493 after an icon in Seville Cathedral, “Santa Maria de la Antigua.” Kincaid points out that streets of Antigua were named after English maritime criminals, such as Rodney Street, Hood Street, Drake Street, Hawkins Street, and so on. The same attitude of possessing by naming was carried in case of plants. This bionomical taxonomy of all the flora and fauna of the globe, an empirical and imperial project, has been termed by Shiva (1999) as “biopiracy,” an act that produces a “monoculture of knowledge” (p. 9). Kincaid (1999) writes in My Garden (Book), “These new plants from far away, like the people far away, had no history, no names, and so they could be given names.” (p. 122). Therefore, the European settlers rendered these Caribbean islands as unowned and unused. They set about rendering these places as productive and profitable through imported European methods rather than by accommodating them to local circumstances.

**Psychic Reterritorialization**

For Dreese (2002), reterritorialization is not just a physical act, but “emotional and intellectual as well” (p. 18). A Small Place is an autobiographical work that strongly reflects Kincaid’s yearning for her hometown at emotional as well as intellectual level. The book can be called a memoir that involves a remapping of terrains by recording a vision and a narrative of the globe, an empirical and imperial project, has been termed by Shiva (1999) as “biopiracy,” an act that produces a “monoculture of knowledge” (p. 9). Kincaid (1999) writes in My Garden (Book), “These new plants from far away, like the people far away, had no history, no names, and so they could be given names.” (p. 122). Therefore, the European settlers rendered these Caribbean islands as unowned and unused. They set about rendering these places as productive and profitable through imported European methods rather than by accommodating them to local circumstances.

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readers; hence, the dominating pronoun is the first person “I.” Second section of the book is especially an attempt to reterritorialize “The Antigua that I knew, the Antigua in which I grew up” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 15). She recalls the names of different roads and various buildings. She nostalgically narrates that “there were flamboyant trees and mahogany trees lining East Street” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 15).

To use Dreese’s (2002) words, this psychic reterritorialization involves “all the senses envisioning and/or recollecting the details of place within the mind” (p. 47). Hence, Kincaid talks about her childhood days, her mother as a darning woman, the headmistress of girl’s school, the visit of Princess Margaret, and so on. She gives voice to her personal as well as national loss by referring to the slave trade under colonization because of which “millions of people, of whom I am just one, made orphans” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 14). Hence, Kincaid fights a battle against colonial oppression by taking sides with the millions of children who became orphans due to colonial oppression (Dreese, 2002, p. 18).

Kincaid repeatedly mentions the library that is in a dilapidated state after the earthquake of 1974. In her childhood, Kincaid had read all the books in the children section of the library. Library appears as a recurring metaphor in A Small Place. It stands at a literal as well as metaphorical level. The library with its big beautiful old wooden building, its wide veranda, and its big open windows symbolizes the beautiful island of Antigua. Kincaid (2012) wistfully reconstructs the memories related to that building and feels the “smell of the sea, the heat of the sun, the beauty of us sitting there like communicants at an altar” (p. 23). The metaphor of the library synthesizes the ecocritical and postcolonial context. Just as the earthquake shook the building of the library, so did the shift from an independent existence to a colonial rule and later a shift from colonial rule to a self-rule cause a seismic disorder in the Antiguan society. Decayed remnants of imperial structure remain like the dung heap of the library’s ruin, but the Antiguans are incapable of repairing it owing to the corrupt and greedy nature of their leaders. The sign on the library becomes a sign of the stasis in which the Antiguans are entangled. Hence, Kincaid’s longing for the reconstruction of the library is in fact a longing for the retrieval of her lost personal as well as national identity. By this metaphor of dilapidated library, Kincaid points out that the responsibility for the deplorable state of Antiguans lies not just on the colonizers but also on the native leaders who ignore their duties owing to their voracity and corruption.

This psychological act of retrieval of a lost identity and reterritorialization of the land is reflected by the way Kincaid cherishes the Antiguan landscape and seascape. Antigua is actually that Edenic dreamland where sea water has shades of blue, sky has a different shade of blue, clouds are really white, the day is so sunny, and the night so thick and deep black. “No real sand on any real shore is that fine or that white (in some places) or that pink (in other places)” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 41). But the painful colonial past and a present full of corruption make this ideal beauty look like a mere dream: “Antigua is too beautiful. Sometimes the beauty of it seems unreal” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 41). This idyllically beautiful land has confronted the issues of racism, oppression and environmental degradation. Kincaid as a postcolonial ecocritical writer strives to redefine her land by psychic reterritorialization.

Environmental Reterritorialization

Dreese (2002) writes that environmental reterritorialization “involves writers who position themselves in natural settings to reinhabit a landscape or place that is intrinsic to their philosophies of being in the world” (p. 19). Kincaid relocates her position in her ancestral homeland after her return from the long stay in America. Her return journey to Antigua can be termed as re inhabitation in a place that is intrinsic to her personality. Dreese (2002) observes that the writers who focus on environmental reterritorialization usually “position themselves in specific terrains in their works, such as in nature writing or travelogues” (p. 19). A Small Place is frequently categorized as a travel guide. The tourist is the first human figure that appears in the beginning of the book. Kincaid treats the tourists in an annoyed and aggressive manner because she sees the majority of tourists as a continuation of White colonizers. Ferguson (2008) records that “in A Small Place tourists are a collective Columbus, new colonists, brash cultural invaders” (p. 15). At present Antigua is an object of consumption for the tourist, just as it was for the imperialists in the past. Kincaid underscores the hazards of tourism by highlighting the fact that tourists are consuming the resources of her land. Antiguan food is sent to Miami at a “dirt-cheap” price and then comes back to Antigua in expensive tin-packs for the consumption of the tourists (Kincaid, 2012, p. 12). “The delicious food anticipated by the tourists turns out to be a sign of Western economic exploitation of Caribbean islands” who are deprived of the possibility of using their own products for their economic benefit (Brancato, 2001, p. 148).

The loveliness of the places that attracts tourists is usually a source of difficulty for those who live there. For example, the sunny, clear sky of Antigua, which indicates a lack of rainfall, makes fresh water a scarce and precious commodity. Tourists just look at the island as an Edenic land: “Oh, what beauty! Oh, what beauty!” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 11). They do not have much concern for the locals who have gone through oppression under the colonial era and are still living miserable lives due to lack of basic facilities. Tourists have a selfish approach in wishing to have sunny climate without realizing that lack of rainfall will intensify the drought. For Kincaid (2012), tourists are ugly: “incredibly unattractive, fat, pastry like-fleshed” people on the beach (p. 11). Tourism involves physical as well as moral ugliness. This moral ugliness is obvious by the selfishness and self-obsession of the tourist for whom Kincaid (2012) repeatedly uses the phrase: “you
see yourself” (p. 11). In fact, tourist is incapable of seeing anything beyond himself.

The concept of tourism is linked with the notion of environmental racism. Environmental racism is “deliberate targeting of communities of color for toxic waste disposal and the siting of polluting industries. It is racial discrimination in the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in communities of color” (Chavis, 1993, p. 3). Tourism is a clear example of environmental racism and environmental injustice that is often disproportionately experienced by people of marginalized racial communities. Antiguans are subject to more pollutant exposure, have less access to clean water and air, difficulty in accessing healthy fruits and vegetables, and cannot even garner political support to address these issues. Tourism is a kind of neo-colonialism for Antiguans because it is another source of environmental injustice. It leads to commercialization which is always at the cost of elimination of native culture and natural beauty of the land. Kincaid (2012) observes that a beautiful “part of St. John’s was going to be developed . . . so that when tourists turned up they could buy all those awful things that tourists always buy” (p. 26). Syrian and Lebanese own large areas of land in Antigua and “on the land they own in the countryside they build condominiums that they then sell to North Americans and Europeans” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 34). This building of ugly, box-like structures is a new form of colonization that is also impairing the natural beauty of the island. As colonialism had deprived the natives of their culture, somewhat similarly tourism is also wiping out the native culture; hence, Kincaid (2012) observes about Antigua that “in places where there is a Minister of Culture it means there is no culture” (p. 27). Kincaid attempts to reterritorialize her land by giving voice to segregation and exploitation carried out by capitalism under the umbrella of tourism. There is a big new hotel having its own port of entry. But “Antiguans are not allowed on the beaches of this hotel” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 31). Under the garb of tourism, this hotel is being used as a drug dealing center. In the name of tourism, re-colonization has started in Antigua.

Dreese (2002) observes that America has expansionist endeavors and is equally imperialistic in its designs. America’s policies are part of the expansionist continuum (p. 13). In A Small Place, the Mill Reef Club is an area occupied by people from North America, an area where Antiguans can enter only as servants/slaves. In a society where there is not much focus on education and school building is so pathetic that it looks like public latrines, one often celebrated institution is the Hotel Training School. This Hotel Training School turns the Antiguans into servants/slaves ready to serve the White tourists from Europe, America, and Canada.

A stereotype of exotic and peaceful Pacific Island has been created during the colonial era and later also by the tourist industry. This stereotyping helps to mystify this region’s nuclearization and militarization. Militourism is a term “coined by American Indian writer Louis Owens and theorized by Teresia Teiawa to explain the mutual constitution of the tourist and military industries, particularly in the island tropics, and how the tourist industry masks the military force behind it” (DeLoughrey & Handley, 2011, p. 33). Kincaid records this act of militourism going on in Antigua: some special nuclear ammunition was tested in Antigua. “A huge government official took millions of dollars in bribes for allowing a particular kind of industrial plant to be built” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 36). The corrupt government of the country also bought “meat known to be contaminated by radiation” (Kincaid, 2012, p. 33). Tourism is being used as a source of income by the corrupt leaders of Antigua, while common Antiguans are once again becoming victims of environmental racism and are being exposed to nuclear radiation. Furthermore, the relatively small size of many islands in the Caribbean makes them especially vulnerable to environmental disasters. Small islands are highly susceptible to climate change and changing sea levels. Kincaid (2012) refers to this danger that Antiguans are facing who have “to live in such heightened, intense surroundings day after day” (p. 42). Kincaid’s effort to give voice to the environmental injustice and the disastrous consequences faced by the small place Antigua and the people there is an act of environmental reterritorialization.

**Conclusion**

This research is significant in the field of postcolonial ecocritical studies. It will pave the way for further research in this field by applying this theoretical framework of reterritorialization by Dreese on other literary works by different writers. It proves that oppression of human resources has an intrinsic link with the exploitation of natural resources at the hand of the oppressor. Kincaid has reterritorialized her homeland by giving voice to injustice faced by the land and its people during colonial rule in the past. She has presented Antigua, A Small Place, from a postcolonial ecocritical perspective. Throughout the text, Kincaid’s focus is on the relationship between the environment and the self—personal as well as national self. Her writing is an act of historicizing the Antiguan past as well as present—an act of reterritorialization which involves a reclaiming of the land by giving voice to environmental injustice and environmental racism. The research explores mythic, psychological, and environmental reterritorialization through theoretical lens. The research also exposes the dangers that lurk behind the tourism industry which is almost turning into neo-colonization under the manipulation by capitalist powers and corrupt rulers of Antigua. Kincaid has not only historicized the oppression faced by Antigua under colonial rule but has also exposed that tourism is gradually becoming a new form of colonization as it is sucking out the remaining resources of the country and bringing in a new form of subjugation for the local people. This study paves way for future research in the field of tourism and shows how it can be turned into a healthy, profitable, yet an environment-friendly industry.
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