

# Sample essay on civilization and its discontents

[Countries](#), [Vietnam](#)



Freud noted that it was possible to have the duality of drives in the sense that every engagement entails more sinister dimension of hatred and aggressiveness. A number of people can be bonded together in love implying that people are connected together as a shared identification. When people are driven by hatred and aggressiveness, it is likely to realize that it is hard for a human to unrestraint the inclination towards aggression. As a result, the cohesion between members of the society is made easier. For instance, when a particular group is connected with universal love as the foundation for togetherness, the members of the group develop explicit intolerance towards the groups that do not share the values or morals (Freud 89). In this case, the “ other” is perceived to be a threat to survival, which leads to anxiety within the community. Freud implied that people hate strangers as a defensive function of narcissism inclined to self-preservation. However, this self-preservation is concerned to distracting innate aggression into the “ other” as a group or individuals. Therefore, people are united by love that is nothing but a defense against other. In a nutshell, Freud applied an assumption that the actor responds aggressively of towards the other party if they had been previously provoked.

In the context of the “ No Name Woman” story, the Freud idea of reality prevails in a sense that people are connected with love as a defense against others. The Chinese culture, where No-name Woman was living, is connected by love that makes them develop hatred for the people that do not follow what their culture requires. In the old China, there was no private life, but the people were required to work and perform every task for the sake of the entire community, implying that the community loved each other. However,

the community was united by the fact that there existed another group that could not follow their cultural ideology. In this case the Freud's other is the people who were against the Chinese culture (Freud 90). For example, when the community realized that No-name Woman had engaged into a premarital sex, which appears to be condemned by the society, they developed explicit intolerance towards the woman.

No-name woman had been pregnant for a man whose identity was revealed. According to the Chinese culture, this was prohibited and resulted to No-name woman being casted out of the family into the wilderness. Simply, this was because the woman was serving her private interests, and not the role the Chinese community and traditions had forbidden for her. This implies that a woman has acquired the traits of the "other." After the villagers realizing that the child to be born was illegitimate, they attacked the No-name Woman resident and destroyed everything in the house.

Consequently, the woman gave birth to the claimed illegitimate child in a pigsty. Subsequently, the woman could not bear the humiliation of the village, and she committed suicide together with her child (Freud 91). From the "No-name Woman" story, it is evident that there is a possibility of the villagers to be united by the love because there is another group that does not follow their customs and traditions. No-name Woman was once a member of the Chinese villagers because she was not doing what "others" were doing. When she failed to fulfill the requirements of the culture, the villagers developed explicit intolerance towards the woman. The No-name Woman became the one to "receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness." In addition, the tale of the No-Name woman serves as a

warning to Kingston that people tends to be united because they follow the customs and traditions. When one fails to follow such requirements, they are casted out of the society and considered as the other. Consequently, such people become prone to humiliation, exclusion, and to some extent death serves as punishment for such actions (Freud 92). In this case, the community is inclined towards self-preservation and therefore tends to be aggressive to the people who do not do what they expect.

In the context of the “ The Good Immigrant Student” story, the Freud idea of reality also prevails in a sense that people are connected with love as a defense against others. Nguyen, a Vietnamese woman from faces discrimination in United States. Nguyen was brought up in Michigan by her family that suffers prejudices from the white neighborhood since they were Asian. According to Freud, the whites build up friendships because in them there was “ other” who did not belong to their ethnicity. The white’s society becomes united since they did want to be involved with the Asians (Freud 93). As Nguyen explains about her education life, she faced discrimination and in short she became others according to Freud. She received antagonism since she was looked at different by white students and treated unfairly. It is clear that there was friendship in whites since they did not discriminate themselves. From another aspect, Nguyen was a bright and intelligence student in school that made her got good grades in the school. However, her teacher, Mrs. Alexander built friendship with the white students in the class that shows the love that bind them. On “ other” that is Nguyen could get snaps and different reaction from her teacher than any other student in the class. The teacher used to criticize anything that Nguyen could

do despite being the best student in academics. However, the teacher did not treat the white student in the same manner due to the friendship that was in them. Nguyen faced and received the manifestations of the white's aggressiveness, and she felt terrible being in unwanted society. Also, in her class she was ignored even during the time for presents, nevertheless the teacher could not afford to ignore the whites. Mrs. Alexander treated her unfairly, and she made it hard and worse to be an individual (Freud 94). Nguyen felt a sense of shame in her since she felt like she was so different from everyone, particularly at her tender age. The teachers bind together her students in love since there was Nguyen, who could receive their antagonism.

The quote illustrates how individuals destroy their own externalized insidious qualities to reinforce the feelings of love to the homogenous group. Nguyen's essay "The Good Immigrant Student" demonstrates how the whites committed communal violence towards people of different races. The group of the whites felt empowered and loyal towards each other since they defended their interests irrespective of the suffering of the Asians. The whites were ready to lose their desires, feelings and personality traits as long as the 'other' groups were subjected to discernment (Freud 96). The anger of the Asians excited the Whites as they felt very superior. Nguyen describes how her life was full of complications. She indicates the effect of the American life to her family, friends and herself. The authors' mother-in-law, Rosa ensured that Nguyen with her sister enrolled for bilingual classes so that they could preserve the culture of the Vietnamese. The fear of the mother-in-law was that, "English would take over wholly, pushing the

Vietnamese out of our heads.” The whites were united in promoting their language and making it superior. The author explains how other kids lived double lives by speaking two languages, one to interact at home and English to communicate with the world.

In conclusion, Nguyen was an example of “ other”, and she experienced hardship and discrimination for the fact that she was not from American ethnicity. She became a catalyst that made the white to be united with the aim of fighting her and showing her that she does not belong being an American. Therefore, she received and faced the manifestations of the white’s aggressiveness. Therefore, the Kingston’s mother and aunt’s community is connected by love because there exists a different group [other] that is to obtain the expression of their aggressiveness.

## **Works Cited**

Freud, Sigmund. Civilization and Its Discontents. New York: W. W. Norton, 1962. Print.