

DEPICTION OF FEMININE LUNACY AND POSTCOLONIAL IDENTITY IN *WIDE SARGASSO SEA*

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ABSTRACT

Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a post-colonial response to Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*. In the subject of post-colonialism, authors from former colonies raise questions about self-identity while simultaneously attempting to give voice to the cultural, political, and sociological identities of those on the periphery. They also dispute the mainstream society's oppressive authority. *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys is one such attempt to give voice and identity to the oppressed Creole lady. Jean Rhys uses the center's conventional methods and traditions, such as Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, to convey the tale of the other, the peripheral. In her post-colonial response, Jean Rhys denies imposing imperialist techniques and methods of fiction writing to identify the oppressed, because post-colonialism seeks to disrupt, dismantle, or deconstruct the West's logic and beliefs. The misunderstood point of view in *Jane Eyre* suddenly turns out to be a fundamental crucial perspective in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, in which the tale of the other is prominently depicted. *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a brilliant post-colonial spoof of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*. This research paper focuses on the character in *Wide Sargasso Sea* who is doubly disenfranchised as a result of colonialism.

Keywords: Post – Colonialism, Orients, Female Madness, Creole woman.

INTRODUCTION:

Jean Rhys is regarded as one of the finest Caribbean authors, well known for her work *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Jean Rhys' youth on the Caribbean island of Dominica affected her as a writer significantly. Her compositions reflect the qualities of the area. The process of creolization,

which describes the process of blending ancient traditional traditions with new modern components of an inherited culture, is a key topic in Caribbean literature. As a result of colonialism, this word arose in Caribbean nations. People from Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean islands are mingled together, resulting in the emergence of new identities. The figures experiencing creolization effectively represent the complexity of cultural identities. Innocence, exile, endurance, involvement, alienation, self-determination, and control are themes explored in Caribbean literature. Her art represents the sociopolitical situations of her birthplace, as well as the deplorable state of women in the first half of the twentieth century. Thus, Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*, as a literary creation of Caribbean literature, directly depicts the essential elements of Caribbean literature.

Critics and their View

Many reviewers and researchers have praised Rhys' masterwork for its literary merit and have attempted to study it using various critical techniques. Many commentators are approaching the problem of Antoinette's identity dilemma from various angles. C.M. Mardorossian, for example, addresses *Wide Sargasso Sea*'s assertion of identity in the midst of a debate within feminist attitude postcolonial studies over the portrayal of racial otherness. According to certain historians, such as Liping Chen, the phantasmatic character of White identity implies a condition of hybrid identity crises. Others, such as Lida Pollanen, examine Antoinette's crisis through the lens of abjection and argue how it operates in a colonial and patriarchal society. Laine Remignant depicts hair as the major carrier of gender, race, and national identity, whilst Hogan and Tiffin underline her identity's uncertainty through the novel's pastoral images. Edna Aizenberg also highlights Antoinette's identity issue as a result of her zombie imperial culture. As a result, this work becomes a comment on the post-colonial world.

Voice of Unvoiced:

The progressive breakdown of colonial empires and the resulting self-esteem of former colonies in the twentieth century led in a plethora of new literatures in recent years. These works of literature serve as a platform for marginalized people to express themselves. Within this vast post-colonial literature, *Wide Sargasso Sea* forms, where, according to Ashcroft, both a national and a regional awareness attempt to establish distinctions from the imperial core. Such literature challenges the imperial prerogative of the centre in order to give voice to the periphery, which

has been deafeningly mute for years. It is past time for the world to hear "the other side of the story," as well as the voices of denigrated and replaced indigenous peoples who are inferior to the West for unjustified reasons.

Jane Eyre and Wide Sargasso Sea Post- Colonial Reading:

The effect of the second wave Post-colonial intellectuals in literature began to write for a definite goal, employing the language of mainstream power and aiming the target. The phase 2 of post-colonial critique covers post-colonial writers' studies of themselves and their culture. Jean Rhys' masterwork *Wide Sargasso Sea* delves at the lives of Indigenous women in the Caribbean. Jean Rhys provides voice to the unseen stories of creoles, individuals who, like the heroine of the *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Rhys herself, are from the Caribbean. According to Jean Rhys, creole women are misunderstood and reviled by both the island's blacks and the wealthy White Europeans. After the liberation act is approved, White Europeans move in the West Indies, taking advantage of the fresh economic downturn. Rhys observes the Creole heiresses' suffering. They are, as she puts it, sad women exploited for the slave-based wealth they inherited from their fathers, who controlled the plantations, to English spouses who ventured to the fringes of the British Empire to grab the riches. Rhys is enraged after reading Charlotte Bronte's novel *Jane Eyre* due to Bronte's portrayal of the Creole lady. Bronte's madwoman is discovered in the bleak backdrop, silent and faceless, and she becomes a victim of the triumph of the narrative of the great English heroine. Rhys shows "That's the only one side" (WSS viii) and refers to it as an English side. Jean Rhys is determined to recreate Bronte's depiction of the Creole woman. "I wanted to narrate her life," Rhys decides (WSS ix). Rhys rescues the insane woman from the cardboard world of Thorn Field Hall's attic. The Englishman's Native wife emerges as the thinking, feeling, and speaking heroine at the centre of the Caribbean universe. Rhys decided to rename her Antoinette Cosway, giving her a name, voice, and gives her a name, a voice, and a back story. By recreating Bertha's tale, she provides a post-colonial response to Western writers who have an orientalist attitude toward non-Western people. Individuals' position is turned upside down with the passage of the Emancipation Act in the British West Indies in 1833. This act causes seismic social and political transformations, as well as dramatic financial adjustments. This geopolitical scenario has an impact on Antoinette's life in a variety of ways.

Conclusion:

Although *Wide Sargasso Sea* appears to be the sorrowful love tale of a Creole lady, via a post-colonial interpretation of the work various critical, cultural and political orientalist ideas towards Creole people, Europe's alternative and prospective 'Other' are revealed. Edward Said's term is mostly used in Orientalism to define and locate Europe's others. As a result, the portrayals of the character Mr. Rochester and his Orientalistic approach toward Antoinette Cosway, as well as Antoinette's linked critical identification concerns, stand as markers of Orientalism. Antoinette's dual status isolates her from her own society. And her hybrid identity, along with her orientalist mindset, drives her insane. Even though it is not a sickness, it is a product of society. Postcolonial literary theorists re-examine colonial and postcolonial literature, focusing on the social discourse that created and generated the literature between the coloniser and the colonised. In *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said investigates how the cultural myth of European racial superiority influences both colonisers and colonised people. Homi.K.Bhabha is another significant theorist of colonial discourse. He coined several neologisms and essential concepts in the discipline, including hybridism, third space, imitation, difference, and polarity.

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