

ANALYSIS OF THE CULTURAL HIERARCHY OF BRITISH AUTHORITY: A HOLISTIC VIEW OF JANE EYRE AND BERTHA MASON/ ANTOINETTE IN THE NOVELS JANE EYRE AND WIDE SARGASSO SEA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to discuss about an idea of cultural hierarchy that British could both dominate and control. In *Culture and Imperialism* "fortified each other to such a degree that it is impossible to read one without in some way dealing with the other". Through these lines it's clear that, British identity becomes a major theme of many nineteenth century British novels.

Colonization has been spread out its wings for colonizing several countries of this world, such as West Indies, India, Australia etc. By establishing their regime, the English narratives became the predominant cultural issues along with the British inhabitants throughout the British Raj. Since the ideology of British people was to acquire the lands from non-European countries and they felt that they have the utmost right to do. The English literature incredibly announced their superiority and did build a higher class with English traits at the top of it and also made sure about their credibility throughout the British realm.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Hierarchy, British Empire, Jane Eyre, Wide Sargasso Sea, Bertha Mason, Antoinette.

INTRODUCTION

The influence of British colonialization became one of the dominant features to all kinds of English novels such as *Mansfield Park*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Jane Eyre*, *Vanity Fair* etc. Also we have seen the strong influence of colonialization about how it has spread its dominance to the post colonial literature. The best example of a post colonial literature is *Wide Sargasso Sea* where we did notice the

influence of English traits and its values. However in the British novels we also have seen the presence of 'other' which actually denotes the issue of subordinate people as a colonized inhabitants or colonized other. Charlotte Bronte employed this strategy in her choice of Bertha, the novel's anti heroine, as a West Indian creole woman.

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As Gikandi discussed in "Maps of Englishness", "English novels can assert their characters' legitimacy as English by holding them up to the colonial other for comparison, highlighting their difference and alterity, and thereby asserting their Englishness". In *Jane Eyre*, Bronte did set up a dichotomy whereby Jane's Englishness got enhanced by Bertha's otherness. To compare the character of Bertha and Jane Bronte did focus on six major segments such as health, appearance, liberty, violence, religious issues and at last the issue of sexuality. To analysis those six major areas of differences regarding English traits and otherness, it's almost vivid that the author of *Jane Eyre* did dig something significant on the topic of portraying Bertha as a character of otherness. Bronte did present Bertha as an animal like figure when she described her attack towards Rochester, she asserted, "the lunatic sprang and grappled his throat viciously and laid her teeth into his cheek". (Bronte, 328)

In the novel called *Jane Eyre*, Bertha has been presented as a sub-human, therefore Bronte did remove the readers pity for her very tactfully. Hence showed Bertha as an imprisoned woman and kept the readers within a illusion, for example Bronte has described Bertha as a beast without anyessence of English liberty.

Bertha has been presented not only like a beast but also she wasseriously dehumanized and the author did cast her as the role ofimpediment and didn't show her as a victim of English people. Bertha was remained constant between the main male protagonist Rochester and Jane which was based on their culturally sanctioned union. Besides the character of Bertha as "other", which was neither completely English nor entirely human. While on the other hands, Jane's character has been constructed as a pure English woman who can love Rochester.

INVESTIGATION OF JANE AUSTEN'S CREATION JANE EYRE AS THE SUPERIOR AND BERTHA MASON AS A BARBARIC CHARACTER

First of all if i want to analyse the character of Bertha then we will see that, Bronte did create Bertha as a character of contamination and peculiarity, therefore denoted her as a figure of colonial disease. Here in this matter i would like to mention Alan Bewell's statements in his work, which is *Jane Eyre and Victorian Medical Geography*, As Alan Bewell discussed in his work, *Jane Eyre and Victorian medical geography*, where Bronte refused " to separate question of spiritual or national well-being from question of health and mobility". Imperial medical geography set out to elevate England as a metropole by showing that disease came from other places on the globe, particularly the West and East Indies. Medical geography thus plays a large role in determining which places are good for health and also it refers about the renovation of places. Since we know liberty, purity and normality are the symbols of moral and ideological values and by these a country's climate and medical pathologies can be detected. First of all i would like to discuss about Jane's physical superiority and Bertha's otherness through the analysis of their physical repulsion and immune response to that location. It can be expressed and explained by the issues of Englishness over other race, ethnicity or culture. In the novel *Jane Eyre* we saw that the English characters were actually habituated to feel themselves as the superior ones and also did present another culture or locality as uncivilized and barbaric. Apart from the novel *Jane Eyre*, in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, we have seen the influence of Englishness in many ways. For example, Antoinette's aunt Cora thought herself as the inferior human being in front of the English people. She left the islands because of her poor health and returned to

England for a year. Cora's exposure to the West Indies has tainted her, therefore she started to fear that another English winter will kill her. Bertha's madness too can be seen as the proof of her moral inferiority that accompanied through her physical deterioration and discolorations. The comparison between Jane and Bertha's health is salient. In *Jane Eyre* Jane's existence has been shown as thriving existence while on the other hands, Bertha's character has been portrayed as like a beast or uncivilized mad woman. The English heroine Jane proved that she is the best and showed her disgust towards Bertha, she said, "It was a discoloured face, it was a savage face, i wish i could forget the roll of the red eyes and the fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments" (Bronte, 317). Thus we can say Colonial sickness means, discoloration, blackened and inflated lineaments on one's body, and in this novel Bertha was that actual character who suffered from colonial contamination. In *Jane Eyre* Bertha's health has been presented as weak and unimproved while we saw Bronte did progress the novel with Jane's improved health. Bronte made Jane's first arriving at Thorn field with the touch of superior attitudes. Jane's reaction after seeing Bertha for the first time while she went on walking in the English countryside was shocking. Because Jane described she saw a unblemished savage face means Bertha's appearance. As the novel progressed we saw that Jane's relationship with Rochester became upgraded from master servant relationship to mutual friends with respect. Therefore Jane reflected, "the blanks of existence were filled up, my bodily health improved, i gathered flesh and strength" (Bronte, 166). Jane was a character who knew about her English health which was fit and perfect from every sides and appropriate in a colonial world. But in one point of this novel Rochester did reveal about his previous marriage and her colonial diseased wife to Jane. That is why their wedding ceremony got

interrupted and Jane fled to Thornfield, therefore was welcomed by the Rivers family. There Jane did meet with St. John Rivers, later she discovered that he is one of her cousins. St John Rivers gradually fell in love for Jane and showed his interest in her. He told Jane can earn his respect as a suitable Christian wife and worthy missionary wife. Also he asked her to accompany him to India to spread Christianity within the British rule. But after knowing all these things, Jane became terrified and she felt afraid of leaving England. She then asserted, "If i go to India, i go to a premature death" (Bronte, 450). And by this statements it's almost proved that Jane felt comfortable to live in England no matter she is in sad or uncomfortable situation or not, her main happiness lies to live in England. And this is one of the greatest English thoughts of an English girl like Jane. St. John's sister also knew about Jane's motifs and she also agreed that "Jane's delicate English constitution would not live three months there as she would surely fall victim to colonial disease and eventually death" (Bronte, 462). As a whole Bronte did able to construct Jane's character as purely superior English girl over the tainted and savage character like Bertha.

In *Jane Eyre*, Bronte constructed a connection between physical debility and moral weakness and did expand the connection to the political arena, also highlighted the way Bertha and Jane have responded to oppression. As Edmund Bunk stated in his writings on the French revolution, "the English citizen's inherent right to freedom stems from history: you will observe that, from Magna Charta to the declaration of right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert out liberties as an entailed inheritance derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our Posterity as an estate Specially belonging to the people of this kingdom. English people's most prominent

English trait is about their pure English blood. Here in this novel *Jane Eyre*, Bronte did show how Jane got the permission to assert her independence and able to throw off her oppressions as the Reed family but Antoinette can't do like that, since she got hybrid identity which we call creole. So on this point we can identify the main discrimination between Jane and Bertha. The readers encountered some moments of liberty for Jane and also observed the occasion of Bertha/Antoinette's imprisonment. Therefore Jane was able to express her desire for liberty while staying at Lowood, saying, "I desired liberty; for liberty I gasped; for liberty I uttered a prayer; it seemed scattered in the wind then faintly blowing" (Bronte, 99). By acting rationally, Jane was able to place an ad in the local newspaper, then she acquired a new position as a governess at Thornfield, and ultimately her desired freedom from Lowood.

On the other hands, Antoinette can be successfully imprisoned by Rochester in a room on the third floor of Thornfield, Rochester can not force Jane to stay once as she would discover his disastrous marriage. Here Rochester played the role of indicator who can show the difference between Jane and Bertha. In the final chapter of *Wide Sargasso Sea* Antoinette recalled her offering that she has done to Rochester in exchange for her freedom and being denied. However, Jane never felt urgency to ask Rochester to release her, and instead described as a resolute, wild, free thing who leaves without his knowledge. The superiority of Englishness paved its way in *Jane Eyre* for showing the attitudes of Rochester. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* Rochester did escape his completely miserable marriage to Antoinette by locking her in a "cardboard world" (Rhys, 115). She was locked in an attic room and was avoided by Rochester. Being an English gentleman Rochester was an irresistible character and he used to do heedless deeds in

his life. To enjoy his life to the fullest he was very efficient and did roam in Europe, took several mistresses but in the time of his married life he disowned his wife and marriage both at the same time. Like Rochester Jane was also free from her awkward and unhappy life at Thornfield after her illegitimate marriage to Rochester which got halted. On the other hands, in *Jane Eyre* Bertha got an opportunity to create her freedom from her imperial and oppressor husband Rochester. "Even when Antoinette is still at her estate, Granbois, she cannot follow Christophine's advice and escape to Martinique or England because she has forfeited her fortune to her husband" (Rhys, 69). As we know Rochester's life was very heedless and for this reason England was a haven for him but for Antoinette England was a prison rather than a refuge. Because Antoinette did lose her freedom in England and also lost her voice to say something in front of Rochester and all over the English people. As Gikandi points out, "empire equals domination and a culture of silence, nation equals freedom and the culture of liberation". It can be said that, in *Jane Eyre*, Bertha and Richard Mason can be seen as colonial subjects. Bronte did enact Gikandi's dichotomy, created an English national narrative which has asserted only through the voices and as Spivak discussed in her discussion of the subalterns, and they can be represented only through the description of others who fall within the English meta-narrative, never herself. Bertha was a perfect example of subaltern group and her effective silencing of the subaltern identity did couple with Rochester's silencing of the colonial body. once again Gikandi's dichotomy got enacted as Rochester's national identity which did allow him to rule Mason and silence him, warning, "Richard it will be at peril of your life if you speak to her: open your lips-agitate yourself-and I'll not answer for the consequences" (Bronte, 236). So we can say Bertha and Mason's forced colonial silence was important to suppress the

threat of a subaltern discourse. And this could challenge the authority of Rochester's narrative of victimized English inhabitants therefore accordingly the holiness of Rochester's English union. Hence it's clear that Bronte's novel justified by preventing Bertha to point out her own lack of restraint, regarding violence and sexuality. And her lacking once again enhanced Jane's Englishness. During the nineteenth century. One mark of Englishness won control over passion and aversion to physical violence. Of all the forms of physical violence, the use of the knife was considered the most primitive and uncivilized by the English courts system. In Jane Eyre, Bertha didn't show repeated violence against Mr. Rochester and Richard Mason, but she took a knife as her weapon which did prove her lack of civilization. Bertha did revolt by doing some violence. Within this novel Jane Eyre Bertha did play as slave narrative that has taken her native area by the European colonizers. She did travel on her own middle passage from her home country Jamaica to England. But she got enslaved in Thorn field by her English husband Rochester who acted like colonial oppressor. But once again Bertha's status as colonial other became prominent after enacting the slave rebellion similar to the incident of burning Coulibri by former slaves in the novel Wide Sargasso Sea. There she was named by Antoinette and Antoinette did set fire to Thorn field while colonial master was sleeping inside. Again Bertha's excessive sexuality made her perfect foil to prove Jane's Englishness and proved her as a true West Indian creole. In 19th century, the people of Britain believed that colonial women are intemperate unchaste, hence Bronte did insert this ideology in her novel Jane Eyre for Bertha. In the novel Wide Sargasso Sea Rochester was not satisfied with Antoinette and told her as provocatively sexual. "Sometimes a side long look or a sly knowing glance disturbed me, but it was never for long", (Rhys, 54). As we know in Wide sargas so Sea Rhy's depiction of the

character Antoinette was in direct opposition to Bronte's Jane. Because in Wide Sargasso Sea Antoinette refused to be Rochester's mistress. Though her state of marriage was broken and also she had strong love for him. Now if we want to discuss about Jane's attitudes towards Rochester then we will see that in the time of their engagement Jane did restrain her extreme sexual feelings and also didn't allow to touch her, pamper her or even compliment her. Jane's self discipline and Antoinette's lacks were one of the quintessential qualities and noticeable issues of Englishness during Victorian era. While Rochester criticized Antoinette for being emotionally transparent in Wide Sargasso Sea and not being concealing her feeling as he has learned to do. Jane was adept at hiding her emotions. She was even able to discipline herself into not showing her attraction to Mr. Rochester; "I had reason to congratulate myself on the course of wholesome discipline to which i had forced my feelings to submit", (Bronte, 184). As a English girl Jane believed on her untainted body while Antoinette's madness polluted her and made he as a character of colonial other. Therefore created a scope for Jane to uphold her Englishness with her superior traits. We saw that in this novel Jane Eyre, Jane got the virtue called self-control while on the other sides, Berta's lack of restraint regarding sexuality did generate Jane's Englishness and Bertha's otherness.

As a post colonial writer, Jean Rhys wrote Wide Sargasso Sea and tried to give post colonial answer to the novel Jane Eyre. Therefore she did opposed Bronte's characterization of Bertha as other and created her own character instead of Bertha as Antoinette, because Bronte depicted Bertha as an inferior figure in front of Jane in Jane Eyre novel. But her own project did fail to express the actual post colonial answer rather than giving a strong write back novel. Hence Jean Rhys gave us a complicated one

with her ideological contradictions. Rhys was actually confused and within her writing style we have found the element of Englishness which she did prefer the most. The construction of the narrow borders of Englishness that made Rhys to become a British worshiper but never she can achieve an English domestic citizen. Rhys wrote from her own experience and showed how the limits of Englishness manifested themselves among the native English inhabitants in her journal. There she wrote about English people's peculiar smug about themselves which made her inferior in some ways. She remarked that, she faced the discrimination where the English people told her that you are not English but an inferior being. Then her mother told colonials aren't ladies and gentlemen, etc. So she said, if on the other hand I'd say exasperated, "All right then I'm not English as a matter of fact I'm not a bit. I'd much rather be French or Spanish. They'd get even more amazed at that. I was a traitor. You're British they'd say neither one thing nor the other. Heads you win tails, i lose and i never liked their voices any better than they liked mine". Mainly Rhys was not efficient to produce a consolidate national identity which has been reflected in her depiction of Antoinette as a hybrid character. Hence we have found implicit contradiction about the characterization of Antoinette. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Rhys both did fight against troops of Englishness using what Homi Bhabha terms "colonial mimicry" and colluded with the colonial project by using black characters as props to the creole identity just as Bronte used the creole as a prop to the English identity. Throughout the novel, Rhys did present the social hierarchy that British regime actually imposed upon the west Indies by displaying her protagonist Antoinette's constant, attempts to achieve Englishness. Here also in post colonial writing we can see the importance of English attributes taught by the British. The effect of British colonization seemed very strong upon

the colonial subjects from the beginning of the novel *Wide Sargasso sea* where Rhys did portray Antoinette as a person who was having lack of sense belonging. The Caribbean black people faced the cruel phase of destructive racism from European white inhabitants. Rhys showed how Antoinette did enjoy to behave like an English girl. She liked to eat traditional English beef and mutton, and she acknowledge that "it is only a facade as she truly craves Christophine's spicy West Indian cooking (Rhys, 16). Antoinette's deviation from English tastes symbolized her physical and cultural difference from the domestic English person. Since the creole food she used to Chose that came to exemplify her creole otherness. Now if we want to analyse about Mr. Mason then we will see that he didn't understand Antoinette and her mother's alterity, and found them as self admittedly. "so without a doubt not English", (Rhys, 16). Antoinette's inability to proclaim her Englishness actually lied within her family's lack of wealth. And it is sure that for the black people of Jamaica, whiteness means the wealthy planter class. Therefore Antoinette can't properly call her as a member of whiteness, and also she cannot acquire Englishness.

EXAMPLES OF ENGLISHNESS THROUGH THE ISSUES OF LEISURE, RELIGION, AND EDUCATION

For English people leisure time is one of the significant marker of social class and rank for Victorian women. In the novel *Jane Eyre*, Jane was able to acquire both her uncle's inheritance "she is financially independent (possessing a fortune of £ 5,000) and is able to quit her post as a teacher at St. John River's school in order to have the leisure time required of an upper class lady (Bronte, 433). The source of Jane's wealth actually came from her uncle's involvement in the slave trade in Madeira which was forgotten by Jane and Rochester

while they did enter in their own life together. In one point of this novel Jane informed Rochester about her new status as an independently wealthy woman at the end of the novel. Then he immediately paid no attention of her money's origins and instead he focused on her new social station. While Rochester proclaimed his love to Jane because she fulfilled his needs as "the antipodes of the creole" (Bronte, 349). She was basically settled in the West Indies and it's colonial project. Jane's ability to claim Englishness through her new social class depend on her inheritance obtained from the colonial project in the West Indies. Hence while Jane's colonial connections did allow her to gain the final markers of Englishness that made her like Rochester's social and intellectual equal. In the time when the couple did reunite at Ferndean, Jane was same as Rochester who got contaminated by her dirty colonial money and involvement in the colonial project. After the issue of leisure, religion and education also served as important markers of Englishness in the two novels. Antoinette did represent colonial polytheism and Jane did represent English Protestantism. During the time of adolescence Jane and Antoinette did attend Christian school. Antoinette attended mount Calvary convent in Jamaica, while on the other hands Jane attended Lowood in England. Antoinette's catholic education did mark her as alien since Britain, therefore determined itself by its rejection of Catholicism. As Linda Colley point out: "They defined themselves as protestants struggling for survival against the world's foremost catholic power. Through her affiliation with cruel and miserly characters like Eliza from *Jane Eyre*, whose choice to enter the convent has more to do with a lack of residential options than religious vocation (Bronte, 272). Now the question about Antoinette's connection with Catholicism did contaminate her. Because she was familiar with obeah that perfectly made her as a colonial

other. Because the English people have outlawed the practice of obeah. According to history the practice of obeah was done by the black Caribbean inhabitants who used it as a source of power in the time of slave rebellion in Jamaica and Haiti.

It is this historical aversion to obeah which caused Rochester to contact the English authorities when he discovered Christophine and Antoinette using it on him to try and make him love Antoinette again. As Antoinette practiced Catholicism and obeah simultaneously, she has been cast into the role of colonial other with the polytheistic black Jamaican community. Conversely, Jane's seamless Englishness was the evidence through about her exclusive protestants as opposed to Antoinette's polytheism. Jane has been known as a true English protestant, who did attend Lowood, a protestant school, as a child Jane asserted her Christian values through her refusal to become Rochester's mistress and the charity she showed the Rivers by sharing her inheritance with them. While Jane rejected the type of Christian martyrdom Helen Burns subscribed "I must dislike those who, whatever i do to please them, persist in disliking me; I must resist those who punish me unjustly"(Bronte, 68). She performed this act of Christian martyrdom with St. John Rivers later in the novel. Jane did place her unhappiness when she got to know about learning Hindostane and also she was scared to fulfil all of St. John's expectations. She said, "I found him an exacting master: he expected me to do a great deal; and when i fulfilled his expectations he, in his own way, fully testified his approbation. By degrees, he acquired a certain influence over me that took away my liberty of mind: his praise and notice were more restraining than his indifference. I could no longer talk or laugh freely when he was by; because a tiresomely important instinct reminded me that vivacity (at least in me) was distasteful to him. I was so

fully aware that only serious moods and occupations acceptable, that in his presence every effort to sustain or follow any other became vain: I fell under a freezing spell when he said 'go' I went; 'come' I came; 'do this', I did it (Bronte, 443).

Yet Jane was willing to submit to St. John and travelled with him to India as his missionary wife, despite her fears of colonial disease and her scorn for his "counterfeit sentiments" (Bronte, 454) as well as his person, "were I but convinced it is God's will," (Bronte, 466). Jane's martyrdom has been evidenced in this desperate act of self-sacrifice in the name of God and Christianity. However, Jane's sacrificial act got interrupted by the sound of Rochester's calling out for her; a sound which Jane later discovered from Rochester's praying to God when he called out for her name. Jane received the power to perceive his prayer because she had her ardent faith and spirituality. This is the reward from God to the protestants. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* we can also see that Antoinette observed that the Englishman called out to God for stopping the Blacks from Coulibri. "mysterious God heard Mr. Mason and answered him at once" (Rhys, 22). So we can say in both texts the value about the power of Protestantism was present while polytheism was allotted for colonial others.

From the perspectives of education the colonizers and the colonized subjects are different just like religious perspectives. Intelligence and appropriate education are also characteristics inherently linked to Englishness within the two novels. Jane proved herself to be a competent governess while Antoinette seemed to lack any solid knowledge: "she was undecided, uncertain about facts any fact" (Rhys, 52). Bronte showed the virtues of the British education system in *Jane Eyre* and said, "for after all, the British peasantry are the best taught, best mannered, most self-respecting of any in Europe" (Bronte, 434). Because

Rochester did wish that, Adele to have an English governess: "I even took the poor thing out of the slime and mud of Paris, and transplanted it here, to grow up clean in the wholesome soil of the English country garden," (Bronte, 164). Rochester's metaphor alluded to Bewell's discussion of medical geography once again as England is coded as clean and pure while anywhere outside the domestic English sphere is depicted as dirty and contaminated. Therefore Adele was to be colonized by English teachings and morals in order to eradicate any traces of moral contamination from her French mother Celine. The superiority of the English can be seen through Rochester's contemptuous description of all his mistress each was confirming to a national stereotype. Celine became Rochester's fake mistress while on the other hands Italian Ginevra was violent and not a disciplined woman. The last one was from Germany The Englishwoman Celine proved shallow and false, the Italian Ginevra unprincipled and violent, and the German Clara honest and quiet; but heavy, mindless, unimpressible, "Jane's ability to rid Adele of the vestiges of her French defects" (Bronte, 500). Highlighted her crucial role in the cultural battlefield of a creolizing nation. Therefore Jane's urge was to become a perfect English girl and she did reinforce by her obvious power to teach and transmit Englishness to others.

JEAN RHYS'S STRATEGY TO TRANSFORM BERTHA MASON AS ANTOINETTE IN THE NOVEL WIDE SARGASSO SEA

Jean Rhys's main aim was to write the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* for showing the world about the power of black nigger that the white British or white nigger. Tia was one of the black Jamaican girl with whom Antoinette made good friendship. But Tia pointed out about the incongruity in Antoinette's social status. She said, "Real white people, they got gold money.

Old times white people nothing but white nigger now, and black nigger better than white nigger" (Rhys, 8). Once Tia referred to "old time white people" means she was referring to former slave owners whose familiarity and involvement did lie in the slave trade that creolized them. And estranged them from their English brethren both morally and biologically. Antoinette's physical status was also very ambiguous because of her skin colour. Therefore she did put her in difficulty for claiming Englishness. Though some literary critics have assumed Antoinette as a white creole after knowing Rochester's comments about her ability to pass a English at times. While on the other hands, Bronte's text did analyse her as having darkened skin and almost looking purple to Jane. Bertha/ Antoinette's racial ambiguity did contribute to her exclusion from an English figure. The description of having darkened skin as her description of having darkened skin affiliated her with blackness which is the opposition of English whiteness. In Britain people believe that blackness means the colonial slaves and their violent mutiny in the West Indies against the white British imperial power. There is one connection between the previous statements and the end of Wide Sargasso Sea about Antoinette's slave revolt when she did set fire to Thorn field. The English people got angst on Antoinette's racial ambiguity because she was linked to colonial slave violence against the colonizers. Hence made her emphatically un-English.

Rhys indeed tried to show about Antoinette's inability to become a true English lady. Therefore she did create problem about the premise of Bronte's novel. In Bronte's novel she did depict that Antoinette/Bertha was the reflection of Jane's Englishness thus the upholder of the term otherness. Rhys did further ask about opposition of the two female characters in Jane Eyre novel after using the

theory of Homi Bhabha's colonial mimicry theory. Homi Bhabha remarked that "the act of colonial mimicry consists of a desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence in order to be effective, mimicry must produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. Thus colonial mimicry reveals the ambivalence of racial markers and arbitrariness of cultural hierarchy". In the scene in Wide Sargasso Sea where the black slaves did set fire to Coulibri, Rhys re-enacted the famous scene of Bertha who was setting fire to Thorn field in *Jane Eyre*. By mimicking this scene of colonial violence, Rhys made Antoinette a victim of the colonial other associating her with the English Rochester and Jane who also became the victims of the colonial other in *Jane Eyre*. Such as a comparison destabilized the supposedly inherent difference Antoinette's creoleness and Rochester and Jane's shared Englishness.

There are some more evidences about this euphoria in the predominant discourse of Englishness. Rochester did noticed how Antoinette might have been any pretty English girl, and Granbois "looked like an imitation of an English summer house" (Rhys, 40). Both of Rochester's attentions elucidated the dangers of colonial mimicry when it has generated the borders on resemblens with Englishness and undermined its authenticity. Such subversive ideology became a threat to the British, as it revealed Englishness as an empty fiction and called into question the very integrity of the English culture and identity. Rhys emphasized the fallacy of the English hierarchy by undermining Rochester who claimed to moral and cultural superiority. Rhys did portray the sharing qualities with Daniel Cosway, who was Antoinette's biracial alleged half-brother. She also did analyse about Rochester's betrayal to his Englishness. Because he has endangered

the homogeneity of the British race after sleeping with the black servant Amelie and earnestly imbibed in miscegenation. In this way Rhys has successfully problematized Englishness's autocracy in casting Antoinette as the colonial other and English colonizers' subordinate. But Rhys did collude with the ideology of English people consciously or unconsciously, therefore Antoinette viewed the black inhabitants as ethnically inferior. The English fear of miscegenation was clearly present when Antoinette saw a black servant kiss her mother. She did proceed to grow her disgust at the black servant by condemning Christophine and calling her a "damned black evil from hell", (Rhys, 86). By connecting Christophine with the black man, Antoinette demonstrated that racial dyad of white and black were always there in the back of her mind, always she used to structuring and warping conceptions and relations, even her relationship with Christophine. In the scene where Antoinette was chased by the biracial boy on her way to school, she described her horror at the child's hybrid features, "he had white skin, a dull ugly face white covered with freckles, his mouth was a negro mouth, worst, most horrible of all, his hair was crinkled, a negro's hair, but bright red and his eyebrows and eye lashes were red". (Rhys, 26). So it is almost sure that Antoinette's apparent fear of the biracial boy derived from his endorsement of colonial mimicry because he was engaged in the act of passing almost the same but not white. Her abomination at the physical evidence of miscegenation did produce Rochester's English aversion. He reflected that Antoinette and Amelie were similar to each other and could be connected, through which Antoinette would be the colonial subject who was trying to pass and penetrate the borders of whiteness. In the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* Antoinette did attempt to break out of her unsettled role of the "other" and did construct herself within one cultural group which made her continually frustrated. When Antoinette

attempted to assimilate with the black population in Jamaica, did befriend Tia and was speaking patois, her complete assimilation has been prevented by both Tia and Rochester when Coulibri has burned down and Antoinette did run to join her friend Tia, she threw a rock at Antoinette's face and signalled Antoinette's rejection by the black community. Rochester of course will not let Antoinette find a place among the blacks as she earned the title of wife for an Englishman and voiced his disapproval with her speaking patois with Christophine along with hugging and kissing the black servants openly. Antoinette got some vague prejudice, such as Tia's rejection of friendship and Rochester's reprehension did eliminate her from identifying with the Caribbean black inhabitants. But her birth and familiarity with the former slaves prevented her to adjust with the English community. In *Jane Eyre* Rochester remarked that, it was Bertha's sexual "excesses that had prematurely developed the germs of insanity". (Bronte, 345). Rhys' characterization of Antoinette did argue about her madness which was the consequence of adjusting within the narrow confines of Englishness. As Seodial Denna pointed out, "Antoinette is a victim of colonization, one of the purest forms of cultural destruction and mass human denigration". Also the British colonizers did tolerate from a loss of cultural identity, since they are creolized and rejected by their British relations. Antoinette mentioned about this when she and Mr. Mason were in a conversation about Cora's husband's family and how they refused to help Cosways because of their involvement with slavery. However, Antoinette's endeavour to make herself as English became perished by the nature of her position as a Creole. Because we know the boundary of Englishness and otherness being additionally and essentially different but inherently similar to Rochester. Eric Johnson did analyse this dichotomy of inclusion and exclusion within the canon of Englishness when she said "Rhys is careful to

show how the history of colonialism operates in such a way that creole characters never achieve the same sense of national or even geographical identity that the English character possesses. Antoinette exists in an imperial system which simultaneously forces her to submit to the British nation state's domestic legal and cultural practices yet refuses to view her as anything more than a distant imperial subject never domestically English. She is rejected by the Jamaican black community, and while her label as other is problematized, she is still denied her Englishness, Antoinette addresses her own lack of identity when she reflects. It was a song about a white cockroach. That's me. That's what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa sold them to the slave traders. And I've heard English women call us white niggers. So between you and I often wonder who I am and where is my country and where do I belong and why was I ever born at all (Rhys, 63).

After doing a holistic view of both Brontë and Rhys's texts, it is to be said that the entire character Bertha aka Antoinette that the synthesized character Bertha, aka Antoinette did bypass all assumptions. We can say that she was neither Brontë's mad criminal nor Rhys's responsible victimized English wife. Therefore her identity did remain unknown both to the reader and herself. But its affability was demonstrated by Rochester's ability to construct the free spirited Antoinette who became lost and also confused Bertha. Antoinette did not understand about Rochester's plan to manipulate her identity and self concept that's why she said "Bertha is not my name. You are trying to calling me by another name" (Rhys, 95). Rochester used to call Antoinette in another nickname which was "Marionette". Hence this name signified the loss of identity as a character of Antoinette because she was going to become Rochester's possession to be locked away in the attic.

Patrick Hogan asserted on the appropriateness of "Marionette" as a nickname for Antoinette therefore claimed that it did reflect her change in identity to "a mere manipulated thing, a puppet, a piece of wood. And these changes were without reflection or self-independent action, without social connectedness beyond minimal population, without identity". Antoinette's inability to forge identity for herself coupled with the loss of her primitive self-concept did lead her later madness at Thornfield. Not only did Antoinette lose all concepts of time and place neither remembering how long she was in the cardboard house where there she didn't believe that she was in England and did lose touch with herself. Antoinette escaped her attic prison in Thornfield and also did observe a traumatic experience. This was one of the last scenes in the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*. "I went into the hall again with the talk candle in my hand. It was then that I saw her the ghost. The woman with streaming hair she was surrounded by a gilt frame but I knew her", (Rhys, 122). So we can say Antoinette did witness her own transformation from a West Indian Creole woman into Rochester's mad creole wife. And for Bertha who did view her reflection in a hall mirror. It is to be known that she did effectively pass through a reverse Lacanian mirror phase. And she became aware that her mirror image became dismantled and broken, therefore replaced her as a formerly entire self-concept.

MY ARGUMENTS REGARDING THE ISSUE OF BRITISH COLONIALISM AND ITS IMPACT ON ENGLISH LITERATURE

Here in my paper I would like to present how the Western literary world showed their supremacy through the help of their subordinate countries. In the texts of Western authors they portrayed and analysed their legacy through slave trade, and the master like influence upon their subordinate countries. In

the novel Jane Eyre Bronte did show how the Character Jane became the prominent character than other character like Bertha Mason. Charlotte Bronte made Jane as a superior lady because she got the title of British while on the other hands Bertha Mason was considered as a savage and mad character who got locked by the male protagonist Rochester. To analyse the British traits I also took another post colonial novel named Wide Sargasso Sea, and the author got biased by the British ideologies.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, we can say in the novel Jane Eyre, Bronte did depict the character of Jane as a superior one while on the other hands Bertha Mason was considered as an uncivilized other. Besides this novel I have discussed about another post colonial novel Wide Sargasso Sea where the author was biased by the English traits, therefore in her writings we have found some influence of British upon the character Antoinette. But Rhys needed to present Antoinette as a full post colonial character. So it is this disassociation between Antoinette who was formerly holistic self-concept in Jamaica and her currently fractured identity in England that causes Antoinette to assume the role of Rochester and Bronte's mad creole woman Bertha. Rhy's haunting image of Antoinette's face being reflected on Bronte's mad creole

woman in the gilt frame foreshadowed Antoinette's life as voiceless Berth in Bronte's text trapped by Rochester in her gilt cage on the third of Thornfield. While on the other sides we have seen how Jane has been portrayed as a superior human being in Thornfield compared to Bertha Mason/ Antoinette.

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