

Evaluation of Intertextuality and Irony in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*: A Postmodern Outlook

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Abstract: *This study tends to delve into the two important characteristics of postmodernism, intertextuality and irony in *Wide Sargasso Sea* which is written in 1966 by Dominica born British author Jean Rhys. Rhys shows every literary work is a continuation of another literary work by using intertextuality in her novel. She writes *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a prequel to a nineteenth century classic, Charlotte Bronte's *Jean Eyre* and this study attempts to focus on the aspects of subject matter, theme of dream and use of Gothic features which are become as an inspiration for Rhys to write an alternative story of later novel *Jean Eyre* by bringing the idea of postmodern intertextuality in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. This study also depicts different kinds of Irony which are used by Rhys in her novel to unfold the fact to the reader that how it is difficult to be a lonely woman in a creole position and try to buckle with inevitable future. So Rhys by using these features in her novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, has paved the way to give it a postmodern scrutiny.*

Keywords: *Intertextuality, Jean Eyre, Charlotte Bronte, Irony, Postmodernism, Wide Sargasso Sea, Jean Rhys*

1. INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism literally means 'after modernism'. It is used in critical theory to refer to a point of departure for works of literature, drama, architecture, cinema, journalism and design as well as in marketing and business and in the interpretation of history, law, culture and religion in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The period of postmodernism dominance begins early in the Cold War and continues to the present. Postmodern literature is part of socio-cultural and historical development like modernism. In literary theory and criticism, it was especially the emergence of feminist and post-colonial theories which was a result of postmodernism development. It can be seen as a specific way of a depiction of the postmodern life and culture showing a crisis of identity of human being such as sexual, ethnic, social, and cultural and the struggle for legitimization in a hypocritical society. Farah Yeganeh believes that postmodernism changes the people's way of life in the second of twentieth century. It is a reaction to the widespread style of modernism. It can be said postmodernism is the abandonment of modernism quest for artistic coherence in the fragmented world and an attack on Enlightenment values and truth claims. She added that postmodernism is not a single style or school, but it is used for multitude of styles or schools (675).

The term postmodernism originated among critics and artists in New York in 1960s and it was taken up by European theorists in the 1970s, one of these theorists was Jean-François Lyotard. Lyotard does not see the postmodern as coming after the modern but rather as being a more radical trend concurrent with modernism. A postmodern work criticizes the aesthetic form in its subject matter and even, in a self-reflexive move, subverts aesthetic expectations of its own form. Lyotard believes under the concept of postmodernism can get rid of the uncompleted project of modernism, that of the Enlightenment. In the forward of Lyotard's book Jamson argued that:

Lyotard is in reality quite unwilling to posit a postmodernist stage radically different from the period of high modernism and involving a fundamental historical and cultural break with this last. Rather, seeing postmodernism as a discontent with an disintegration of this or that high modernist style — a moment in the perpetual "revolution" and innovation of high modernism, to be succeeded by a fresh burst of formal invention — in a striking formula he has characterized postmodernism, not as that which follows modernism and its particular legitimation crisis, but rather as a cyclical moment that returns before the emergence of ever *new* modernisms in the stricter sense (xvi).

Sarup states that Lyotard attacked the progressive liberation of humanity through science, and the legitimation myth of modern age, the idea of philosophy, can restore unity to develop universally valid knowledge for humanity. Sarup says postmodernism is a movement in advanced capitalist culture, especially in art. He believes that if one sees modernism as the culture of modernity, postmodernism is also the culture of postmodernity. According to him with the critique of universal foundation and knowledge, postmodernism can identified. He says Lyotard believes that it can not talk about the totalizing idea of reason because there is no reason, only reasons (131-132). In his book *Postmodernist Fiction*, Brian McHale also argues the definition of postmodernism. He says that it can not make the sense to define postmodernism by explaining that modern means pertaining to the present and postmodern means pertaining to the future. He continues that post is not means like what it said in the dictionary; it is function as a kind of intensifier. He added that postmodernism doesn't means post modern. Postmodernism follows from modernism rather than it follows after modernism, and it is so important to know this that postmodern comes after modernist movement, and it does not come after present (5). According to Bran Nicol *The Simpson* is one of the good examples of postmodern texts because it has irony and intertextuality. He rejects the claim which is written in that book: postmodernism is weird for the sake of weird, and said that postmodernism in not weird for the sake of being weird. According to him postmodernism is the continuation of values and techniques of modernism. He believed that postmodernism first was widely used in 1960 by the American cultural critics such as Susan Sontag and Leslie Fiedler. They argued that the in this new era, characteristics of modernism should be rejected or expanded in order to gain new sensibility in literature (1). So, the term postmodern literature relies heavily on fragmentation, temporal distortion, paranoia, intertextuality, irony, playfulness, blackhumour paradox, allusions and references, technoculture and hyperreality, fabulation, metafiction, magic realism, intertextuality, pastiche and parody.

2. DISCUSSION

This study tends to shed lights on the two important concepts of postmodernism, Intertextuality and Irony in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, a novel was written in 1966 by Dominica born British author Jean Rhys. She was born Ella Gwendolen Rees Williams, on August 24, 1890, in Rseau Windward Isle of Dominica, one of the former English colonies in the Caribbean. She would become known throughout the literary world as Jean Rhys. Her father William Potts Rees Williams was a Welsh-born doctor while her mother Minna Lockart was a native white West Indian. As a white girl in a black community, perhaps most notably she felt intellectually and socially isolated (Pizzichini 7-8). According to Pizzichini she becomes popular nearly at the end of her life after the publication of *Wide Sargasso Sea* which was awarded the W.H. Smith literary prize of £1000 and a bursury on December and this leads her toward many interviews (290). She writes *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a prequel to Charlotte Bronte's nineteenth century famous novel *Jane Eyre*, which tells a backstory of a character from *Jane Eyre*. As Pizzichini notes,

The difficulty was that she had to re-create the mad woman Charlotte Bronte had turned into a monster, and then she had to write the man who married her. At the same time, she had to make her reader understand them both. She had to find sympathy for Mr Rochester. She knew

that 'a mad girl speaking all the time is too much!' If it was too much for her, it would be too much for her readers. But she had to make Mr Rochester speak too. (279)

The story of *Wide Sargasso Sea* is about Antoinette Cosway, a white Creole heiress, from the time of her youth in the Caribbean to her unhappy marriage to an unnamed Englishman (he is not named by the author) who soon renames her, declares her mad and then requires her to relocate to England. She is caught in an oppressive patriarchal society where she belongs neither to the white Europeans nor the black Jamaicans. At the end her husband imprisoned her in an attic in Thornfield Hall.

3. RHYS'S WIDE SARGASSO SEA AS AN INTERTEXTUAL OF BRONTE'S JEAN EYRE

Reference of a text which is mirrored and reflected in another text, is called intertextuality. So an author influences by a text and creates a new original work of literature by using another existing text. It puts two texts in an interdependent situation so in order to produce meaning, these two texts stand in relation to one another. Intertextuality becomes one of the central ideas of cultural postmodern and contemporary literature. It refers to 20th century linguistics, especially to the works of Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913). According to Allen, Julia Kristeva produced the first articulation of intertextual theory in the late 1960s by combining Saussurean and Bakhtinian theories of language and literature together (3). It means that the term intertextuality has been borrowed and transferred many times since Julia Kristeva the Bulgarian-French philosopher coined this term in late 1960s. In Julia Kristeva's view literary texts are constructed of mosaic of quotations and have relation to other texts, she believes that any text is transformation and assimilation of another text (66). She obtains her theory of intertextuality from Michael Bakhtin's idea of Polyphonic which describes a literary text as a part of literary texts in the history of literary tradition and it is open to various interpretations and voices. What she considers from it is that a text is not only a product of an author but it exists within specific cultural and literary contexts. By using the term intertextuality, Kristeva aims to explain the intricate and heterogeneous nature of discursive materials that intersect in specific textual production. For her text is a kind of productivity in which various semiotic codes, genres, and meaning relations are combined and also transformed. Kristeva argued that texts have two axes: a *horizontal axis* which connects the author and reader of a text to each other, and a *vertical axis*, which connects the text to other texts (69). Abrams notes about intertextuality that:

The term intertextuality, popularized especially by Julia Kristeva, is used to signify the multiple ways in which any one literary text is in fact made up of other texts by means of its open or covert citations and *allusions*, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earlier texts, or simply its unavoidable participation in the common stock of linguistic and literary conventions and procedures that are "always-already" in place and constitute the discourses into which we are born. In Kristeva's formulation, accordingly, any text is in fact an "intertext" — the site of an intersection of numberless other texts and existing only through its relation to other texts. (364)

In modern cultural life and postmodern era intertextuality highlights conceptions of interconnectedness, interdependence and also relationality. These terms mean that being relational and dependent to other things. Theorists claim that in this epoch it is not possible any more to speak about uniqueness and also originality of the artistic object or the author's work since every work is obviously gathered from pieces of already existent works of art. So generally speaking, intertextuality is at the center of these contemporary notions of cultural production and art (Allen 5-6). The idea of intertextuality is similar to an allusion but it is more pervasive and widespread. It is not just influence a small part or an unimportant passage but it has the capability to affect the majority and sometimes the whole of literary or artistic work. Allen argues that "the term intertextuality promotes a new vision of meaning, and thus of authorship and reading: a vision resistant to ingrained notions of originality, uniqueness, singularity and autonomy" (6).

Jean Rhys writes *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a prequel to a nineteenth century classic, Charlotte Brontë's *Jean Eyre*, which has always been one of the greatest novels in English Literature and most popular love stories. Rhys extrapolates events that earlier occur in Brontë's *Jean Eyre*. She uses the idea of intertextuality in her novel in order to tell an alternative story of later novel although she comes from very different background and presents her novel in different century in contrast

to Bronte. It can better say that *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a hypertext of *Jean Eyre*, according to Genet who describes the idea of Hypertext as “any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary” (qtd. in Allen 107-08). Allen believes hypotex and inter-text are the same as he said “What Genette terms the *hypotext* is termed by most other critics the *inter-text*, that is a text which can be definitely located as a major source of signification for a text” (108).

Rhys writes *Wide Sargasso Sea* in different century from Bronte’s *Jean Eyre*. She was a West Indian novelist that writes *Wide Sargasso Sea* under the influence of *Jean Eyre*, a novel which is written by a famous Victorian novelist. As Herrischian mentions that *Wide Sargasso Sea* interwoven with some likeness and differences as Rhys uses *Jean Eyre* a basic source of her novel, so her novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea* can be considered as a response to Bronte’s novel *Jean Eyre* (72). According to Harrison "In responding to her reading of Brontë's text, Rhys sought not only to correct an omission, but also to correct what she considered a misreading of 'Creole women', part of whose identity was shaped by the British exploitative context"(qtd. in Herischian 73).

As it is mentioned earlier Abrams explained intertextuality, it is about repeating or transforming the formal or substantive features of another text in order to make a new text of literature (368). So Rhys uses the characters of *Jean Eyre* and writes a new novel related to this. Before coming to the details of the use of intertextuality it is worthwhile to have a brief summary of *Jean Eyre*.

Jane Eyre is a about true love confronts many obstacles and problems but deals successfully with these troubles and problems to fulfill destiny. It is the story of title character from her childhood and her growth. It is narrated in first person by Jane and the setting is in north of England. The story started from Jane’s childhood at Gateshead Hall. Jane is a young orphan who is raised by her wealthy and cruel aunt, Mrs. Reed. Mrs. Reed and her three children John, Eliza and Georgiana, always abuse and neglect her emotionally and also physically. A servant named Bessie provides Jane with some kindness, that she tells her story and always she is singing songs to her. She goes to Lowood School which had a cruel and abusive headmaster. Although she suffers from the operation, she acquires friends there. She becomes a teacher there after that she accepts to work as a governess at a manor called Thornfield. Jane has an employer at Thornfield who was an impassioned man named Rochester. Rochester has a Byronic character in this novel with whom Jane finds herself falling secretly in love. One night she saves his life from a fire. Finally beyond Jane’s expectation Rochester propose to her and she accepts that disbelievingly. In the wedding day a man named Mr. Mason claimed that Rochester already has a wife and he introduces himself as the brother of that wife whose name is Bertha. So the main source of trouble in this novel is this woman who was Rochester's insane first wife. After hearing this fact Rochester takes the wedding party back to Thornfield, where they see Bertha growling like an animal there. Although Jane loves Rochester more than anything else she refuses to betray the God-given principles, which she has always believed in she chooses to leave there, miserable and penniless. Bertha is locked in the attic of his country house, Thornfield Hall. Eventually Bertha escapes and burn Thornfield to the ground, and tragically committed suicide by jumping from the roof and she loses her life. Rochester saves the servants life but lost his eye sight and one of his hands. When Jane hears about this event goes to Rochester and at last romantically At Ferndean, they rebuild their relationship and marry. Eventually Rochester recovers his sight in one eye and can see their first child the baby is born.

3.1. Subject Matter of *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Jean Eyre*

Actually Jean Rhys composes *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a creative response to *Jean Eyre* by using one of the postmodern devices, intertextuality. Jean Rhys doesn’t satisfy with this tragic ending that happens to Bertha and she is not agreeing with the presentation of Bertha Mason, while reading Bronte’s novel *Jean Eyre*. She decides to write a story of Bertha’s life. In an interview with Vreeland Rhys said:

When I read *Jane Eyre* as a child, I thought, why should she think Creole women are lunatics and all that? What a shame to make Rochester’s first wife, Bertha, the awful madwoman, and I immediately thought I’d write the story as it might really have been. She seemed such a poor

ghost. I thought I'd try to write her a life. Charlotte Brontë must have had strong feelings about the West Indies because she brings the West Indies into a lot of her books, like *Villette*. Of course, once upon a time, the West Indies were rich, and very much more talked about than they are now. (qtd. in Aktari 73)

So she takes the character of Mr. Rochester's first wife, Bertha Who has a secondary role and a minor character in Brontë's novel and makes her major character in her novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, while she creates a back story for this major character named her Antoinette also she is sometimes called Bertha by other characters through the course of novel. Now this questions comes to the readers mind that how one can know Antoinette and her husband in *Wide Sargasso Sea* are the same characters in Jean Eyre who are known as Bertha and Rochester? Through reading the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, it can be seen several times that Antoinette is called Bertha, without any pre-information about this name. So if the reader refers to the Brontë's novel *Jean Eyre*, it can be seen that it has a character named Bertha who is imprisoned by her husband Rochester.

...Then I said sharply, 'Bertha, are you asleep, are you ill, why don't you answer me?'

'Certainly I will my dear Bertha.'

'Not Bertha tonight.' She said.

'Of course, on this of all nights you must be Bertha.' (Rhys 123)

Rhys also changes the setting from England to Jamaica. So she did her job well by using Jane Eyre as an inter-text of her novel which becomes a major source of signification for her work *Wide Sargasso Sea*. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* Rhys shifts the perspective from first person narrative that Brontë uses in her novel and express her story from the viewpoints of different characters. She writes her novel as a multiple narrative, but most of it is narrated by Antoinette who is known as Bertha in Jean Eyre, which is giving Bertha a previously unheard voice.

Brontë starts her novel with Jane's life, from her childhood till her maturity, and it is better to say that she writes about the story of Jane. So Rhys takes one of the minor characters of Brontë's novel who named Bertha as the heroine of her novel and gives her another name Antoinette. She starts to write about her life in the form that Brontë did earlier in *Jean Eyre*, by starting from Antoinette's childhood until her growth to a woman. In Brontë's novel Jane starts the story by talking about her miserable childhood that how she was raised by her tyrant aunt Mrs. Reed but she copes with the life and tried to find good friends while she was at school although her school master was tyrant too. She is ignored by her mother and she has a surrogate mother whose name is Bessie. Herischian states, *Jane Eyre* can be considered as a Bildungsroman that from childhood Jane grows into selfhood and reaches her ideal identity by overcoming the problems and difficulties, this ideal identity gives her the feeling of security, strength, and autonomy (74). So Jane Eyre can be called a Bildungsroman which is a German term means "a novel of formation" that is about character's growth from childhood to maturity. According to Abrams "The subject of this novel is the development of the protagonist's mind and character in the passage from the childhood through varied experiences __ and often through a spiritual crisis __ into maturity, which usually involves recognition of one's identity and role in the world" (229).

Rhys uses Brontë's method of starting point in her novel by choosing one of the minor characters in Jane Eyre, Bertha, to go through her life in detail. Just as Brontë did in her novel earlier, Rhys shows a girl's ability to perceive the atrocious world. She begins her novel by Antoinette's describing her childhood, that Antoinette is a white creole girl who is rejected by both white and black people In other world, Ramchand states that, "*Wide Sargasso Sea* is in part about the contrast of two worlds, a contrast which becomes as well 'a lament for the divided self'" (qtd. in Herischian 75). Like Brontë, Rhys shows Antoinette's life as a miserable one who is also ignored by her mother and she has a surrogate mother named Christophine, and like Jane in Brontë's novel she couldn't benefit from her maternal love. Although both Antoinette and Jane have the same childhoods, grow up in the same environment by suffering from the isolated and lonely life, both are powerless in their life and without any protection, and they live in a world which is hostile to unsupported women, they end up differently.

Unlike Jane, Antoinette can't cope herself with the cruel environment which she lives in. while Antoinette is vulnerable Jane becomes stronger by her experience. She becomes insane and

paranoid just as her mother, Annette. Howells remarks, "Rhys shows her heroine trying to construct an identity in radically unstable situations where traditions and social conventions prescribe certain rituals but are emptied of meaning" (qtd. in Herischian 75). Jane overcomes the difficulties and problems and reaches her ideal identity while Antoinette can't surmount the problems although both of them are always long for freedom and independence, Antoinette is never reaches her ideal identity or freedom, she lives in isolation with fragile sense and cultural identity, so the difficulties and problems of life defeat her. She Jean gets some kind of maturity from her childhood to adulthood but as a surprise to the readers Antoinette doesn't get any maturity as she grows up. Her condition of life is made worse by an arranged marriage to a man who is incompatible with her in character and cultural background. At last Rochester incarcerate her in an attic in Thornfield and she just gains freedom, which she wish for, through committing suicide, while Jane reunion with Rochester, and enjoys a happy married life. As it said earlier *Jane Eyre* is called a Bildungsroman because of it's narration from Jane's childhood that followed by her maturity and independence and by showing this difference *Wide Sargasso Sea* can be called an anti- Bildungsroman. Herischian remarks, *Wide Sargasso Sea* is an anti-Bildungsroman which shows the life of Antoinette and demonstrates her loss of self and sanity. Antoinette passes through her stages of childhood toward adulthood in black and white society, however her psyches development is not the same as this, and it is shown quiet different (74-75).

3.2. Using the Theme of Dream in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Jean Eyre*

Another thing that Rhys takes from Bronte's *Jean Eyre* and use it in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is idea of dream which is a prevalent theme in both novels and it foreshadows future and reflect the suppress desires and fears of the two heroines in these two works. Ancient culture gives various kinds of meaning to dream. They said that dreams have some significant such as foretelling the future and also it can be as a means of communication of divine and human. Psychoanalysts believe that dreams could be interpreted scientifically. Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* argued that during the dream thoughts which are latent, the person is alone, and no other people is around him/her, so in this situation the construction of dream happen by using the days real events as its material. During the dream the ego withdraw from all interests of life and focus on the thoughts and desires which are repressed and the materials which are restores in unconscious mind find their way into conscious via the dream. These repress thoughts and desires manifest themselves through condensation, displacement and dramatization in dreams (Habib 576-77). Therefore Freud defined a dream as "the disguised fulfillment of a repressed wish" (qtd. in Habib 577).

Bronte in her novel *Jean Eyre* uses dreams to express the repressed material in the unconscious mind of Jean as well as foreshadowing future that finds a way to consciousness. Rhys rewrites *Jean Eyre* in *Wide Sargasso Sea* by using its theme of dream and diffuses it in every line of her novel. The two characters which are also heroines in these novels see dreams which foreshadow their future, and their lost identities that both of them represses it in their unconscious, finds its way to their conscious in their dreams.

Over the course of Bronte's novel *Jean Eyre*, Jean has a series of dreams which most of them represent a picture of kid. As Habib explains, "While a dream expresses fulfillment of a repressed wish, it can also continue the preconscious activity of the previous waking day, expressing an intention, a warning, or a reflection" (577). Bronte uses the theme of dream for the heroin of her novel to open a window to unconscious mind of Jean and make the reader to know more about the character of Jean. She shows the inside part of Jean and her desires that she repress them, such as her passion and love toward Rochester. Gordon also expresses that dreams in *Jane Eyre* can be serve as presentiment or warning of future events and her dreams are known as general symbols (Dreams in *Jean Eyre*). One day Bessie, the surrogate mother of Jean tells another one that she had a dream about a little child and when a child comes to the dream of a person, something bad will happen and it is a sign of trouble. Jean hears about this superstition and believes in it while the next day she finds out that Bessie's sister is in death bed.

When I was a little girl, only six years old, I one night heard Bessie Leaven say to Martha Abbot that she had been dreaming about a little child; and that to dream of children was a sure sign of trouble, either to one's self or one's kin. The saying might have worn out of my

memory, had not a circumstance immediately followed which served indelibly to fix it there. The next day Bessie was sent for home to the deathbed of her little sister. (Bronte 259)

So one day she sees a child in her dream and just like what Bessie said earlier Jean catch in a trouble. She recalled that saying in the afternoon of the following day someone informs Jane about the death of her cousin John and she is known that her Aunt Reed lies on her deathbed.

Of late I had often recalled this saying and this incident; for during the past week scarcely a night had gone over my couch that had not brought with it a dream of an infant, which I sometimes hushed in my arms, sometimes dandled on my knee, sometimes watched playing with daisies on a lawn, or again, dabbling its hands in running water. It was a wailing child this night, and a laughing one the next: ... I grew nervous as bedtime approached and the hour of the vision drew near. (259)

She saw another dream after she engages with Rochester. This time she dreams she carries a child while she is walking and Rochester walks ahead she can not catch up to Rochester. She couldn't walk very fast. "... here I stumbled over a marble hearth, and there over a fallen fragment of cornice. Wrapped up in a shawl, I still carried the unknown little child: I might not lay it down anywhere, however tired were my arms—however much its weight impeded my progress, I must retain it"(331). Homans suggests that "the child of the dreams may represent Jane's love for Rochester, or "Mrs. Rochester," the new identity Jane will assume after marriage. Alternately, the dreams may represent Jane's orphan childhood, an alter-ego that Jane cannot free herself of, even with marriage to Rochester. In any case, the dreams give marriage-anxious Jane an uneasy "intimation of what it would be like to become other than herself" " (qtd. in Gordon, *Dreams in Jean Eyre*). Her dreams continue through the novel. So Bronte by representing Jean's dreams in the novel shows Jean's emotions in different situation of her life, forecasting her future and gives a warning for the following events in her life. Dream form as a prediction of what is happening during Jeans life.

As it is mentioned earlier Rhys uses *Jean Eyre* as a major source of her novel and makes it an intertext for *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Bronte's idea of Jean's dreams which are act as foreshadowing the character's future inspires Rhys to develop Antoinette's character. She takes the theme of dream and foresight from *Jean Eyre* and brings it in her novel. Gordon remarks that "In rewriting *Jane Eyre*, Jean Rhys preserves these functions, and goes even further by making the whole text of *Wide Sargasso Sea* a kind of dream. In *Jane Eyre*, the distinction of dreaming and waking is as strong as Jane's disposition; in *Wide Sargasso Sea* it is as feeble as Antoinette's" (*Dreams in Wide Sargasso Sea*). However dreams in both novels have the has the same meaning as in *Jean Eyre*, which shows that Jean Rhys knows as well as Charlotte Bronte about different interpretation and uses of dreams which are made clear by Freud. Like Jane, Antoinette's dreams have meaning. In Rhys novel images of dream represent the emotions, fears, repressed desires and identity of Antoinette and also just as like as in *Jean Eyre*, the heroine dreams predicts the future events of

During the novel Antoinette has three dreams, which have the same them and each one continues the other. She saw her first dream when she was a child and that day she was cheated by Tia. In her dream she was followed by a man while she was walking in the forest. "I went to bed early and slept at once. I dreamed that I was walking in the forest. Not alone. Someone who hated me was with me, out of sight. I could hear heavy footsteps coming closer and though I struggled and screamed, I could not move. I woke crying" (Rhys 24).This dream shows Antoinette's repressed fear and paranoia in her unconscious mind while it forecasts her fearful future that awaits her. According to Gregg "The dream in its first appearance hints at the danger which awaits the protagonist, as she is in a forest being followed-by-someone who hates her" (qtd. in Herischian 77).

When Antoinette is seventeen she has her second dream after her stepfather's visit in convent. Again she dreams about a forest, although this time she follows the faceless man in her dream rather than run from him who leads her into a garden and up some steps, as she resists and cries. Antoinette wakes up while she is shivering with fear and tells a nun that she dreamed of hell.

This was the second time I had my dream.

Again I have left the house at Coulibri. It is still night and I am walking towards the forest. I am wearing a long dress and thin slippers, so I walk with difficulty, following the man who is with me and holding up the skirt of my dress. It is white and beautiful and I don't wish to get it soiled. I follow him, sick with fear but I make no effort to save myself; if anyone were to try to save me, I would refuse. This must happen. Now we have reached the forest. We are under the tall dark trees and there is no wind. "Here?" He turns and looks at me, his face black with hatred, and when I see this I begin to cry. ... (Rhys 54)

This dream like the first one predicts Antoinette's fearful future but this dream reflects that her danger is more imminent. Herischian argued "The dream, in fact, suggests Antoinette's adolescent sexuality and her anxiety about her arranged marriage. It also suggests the troubles that Antoinette will face after meeting Rochester" (77). By these dreams like Bronte, Rhys opens a window for readers to know the characteristics of Antoinette better. Gordon remarks Antoinette's whole life laden with emotions, surreal events and images rather than being realistic, expository or logical and her dreams are not just revealing while she sleeps (*Dreams in Wide Sargasso Sea*)

Rhys closes her novel by Antoinette's last dream which attaches her novel to Bronte's. Bronte shows the doom of her character, Bertha as a very disastrous one which happens in reality. In *Jean Eyre*, Bertha at the end of her life is locked in a room. Finally she can escape from there and set the Thornfield hall ablaze while she flung herself from the roof with the rage of fire around her. Rhys doesn't satisfy with the end of this character as a guilty one. She takes this ending from *Jean Eyre* and brings it to Antoinette's last dream. Antoinette's see this disastrous doom in her dream which shows her repressed desire for escape and also her suppressed rage. Antoinette dreams that she steals the keys from Grace Poole, opens the door and goes through the way while carrying candles. Just like her first dream she goes downstairs and enters a red room that reminds her of a church. Again she feels someone is chasing her and laughing at her. She goes downstairs and she sees a room like a church without alter. She becomes angry and knocking a candle when Ant Cora 's house comes to her mind, then she goes back to the hallway and sees the ghost of the other woman, she is frightened and the candle falls down from her hand which sets fire to the room. She runs away from the ghost and believes that Christophine sends her this wall of fire to protect her. She flees to the roof and again another candle falls down which cause a big fire. She Moves away from the fire to the roof and watching the sky and sees fragments of her life pass before her, she hears Rochester calling her name Berta and sees Tia encourages her to jump to the ground. "That was the third time I had my dream and it ended. I know now that the flight of steps leads to this room where I lie watching the woman asleep with her head on her arms. In my dream I waited till she began to snore, then I got up, took the keys and let myself out with a candle in my hand..." (Rhys 168).

Unlike Bronte, Rhys wants to keep Antoinette's innocent character in the readers mind till end by just depicting her fate as a dream. She does not portray Antoinette's final life directly and leaves the end of novel open as to what happen. To get to the point "This violent dream is literalized not in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, but in *Jane Eyre*, when Bertha Mason burns Thornfield to the ground and jumps to her death. Antoinette thus remains innocent in Jean Rhys's novel. While she gets her violent revenge in *Jane Eyre*, she only dreams of it in *Wide Sargasso Sea*" (Gordon, *Dreams in Wide Sargasso Sea*). So by bestowing Antoinette a kind of triumph at the end, Rhys delays and it can better to say prevents Antoinette's fatal jump and also doom which was earlier depicted in *Jean Eyre*.

3.3. Using Gothic Elements in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Jean Eyre*

Another thing which connects *wide Sargasso Sea* to *Jean Eyre* is using of Gothic features. Rhys is inspired by Bronte and powerfully makes use of Gothic elements in her novel, which are prevalent in *Jean Eyre*. *Jane Eyre* was published in the middle of nineteenth century, before the time of *Jane Eyre*, in early nineteenth century, Gothic novels were in fashion. So Bronte was influenced by Gothic novels while she was writing *Jean Eyre* and she uses Gothic Features in her novel.

Gothic novel is a kind of prose fiction flourished through the early nineteenth century which was started by Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story* (1764). The place of gothic novels is often a gloomy and dark places specially castles with secret passages, and the story

focuses on a character who is suffering by a cruel and lustful villain, bountiful ghosts, terror and gloom, and the uncanny, macabre and melodramatic events which are sometimes deal with psychological states, madness and supernatural occurrences (Abrams 137). One of the Gothic features in *Jane Eyre* is the idea of ghost and happening of supernatural events which are the common devices in gothic literature.. In the time when Jean was 10 years old, she was locked in a room which is named "red room" as punishment for her bad behavior. That room is a frightening place because Jean's uncle Reed died there. The walls of that room are as red as blood and Jane has a bad feeling there. As it rains outside she sees the light is floating across the wall and she imagines her uncle's ghost moving around the room and she believes that he is coming to avenge her because of her misbehaving.

Was it, I asked myself, a ray from the moon penetrating some aperture in the blind? No; moonlight was still, and this stirred; while I gazed, it glided up to the ceiling and quivered over my head. I can now conjecture readily that this streak of light was, in all likelihood, a gleam from a lantern carried by some one across the lawn: but then, prepared as my mind was for horror, shaken as my nerves were by agitation, I thought the swift darting beam was a herald of some coming vision from another world. My heart beat thick, my head grew hot; a sound filled my ears, which I deemed the rushing of wings; something seemed near me; I was oppressed, suffocated: endurance broke down; I rushed to the door and shook the lock in desperate effort. (Bronte 16)

In this section Bronte evokes a frightening and palpable atmosphere of mystery and supernatural in that room while Jane thinks that the ghost of her uncles goes there for avenging. In order to invoking fear in the reader, she describes these events with an eerie mood to Bessie. She tells "I saw a light, and I thought a ghost would come" (17), and she shows her worries about existence of ghosts when she asks Mrs. Fairfax at thornfield: "So I think: you have no ghost, then?" (122). Bronte also shows the elements of Gothicism in the setting of the novel. The main setting of *Jane Eyre* is Thornfield hall with dark, gloomy and mysterious atmosphere which evokes disturbing feelings of supernatural with the moonlight, lightening, coldness, unusual and mysterious noises and footsteps uses to create tension in this novel. "... portraying effigies of strange flowers, and stranger birds, and strangest human beings,—all which would have looked strange, indeed, by the pallid gleam of moonlight" (122). Bronte uses a central mystery in her novel to highlight Gothicism by depicting Rochester and his first mysterious marriage to Bertha who was a mad woman.

All these elements of Gothicism used in *Jane Eyre* to create a sense of spooky, horror and psychological suspense in the reader mind. Rhys by inspiring from Bronte's novel also wants to create this feeling of suspense and frightening in the reader, and she takes gothic elements from *Jane Eyre* and brings them to *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Not only Rhys echoes the elements of Gothicism but also she builds them up in her novel. The atmosphere of *Wide Sargasso Sea* is full of superstitious with Caribbean beliefs of Christophine about obeah and magic which gives the reader an idea of supernatural and this is shown in the novel when Antoinette wants love posion from Christophine. Christophine said: "So you believe in tim-tim story about obeah" (Rhys 102). Rhys show the Gothicism features by Rochesters uncanny experiences of strange and eerie landscape which is extreme. These extreme landscapes invoke a crucial gothic element like in *Jane Eyre*.as Rochester describes the landscape to his father "Every thing is too much, I felt as I rode wearily after her. Too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flowers too red, the mountains too high, the hills too near. And the woman is stranger" (63). And in other place Rochester said "it was all very brightly coloured, very strange,..." (69). Like Bronte, Rhys uses madness which is one of the gothic features. Antoinette and her mother suffer from madness. They withdraw in their own worlds to the extent that they aren't able to distinguish between reality and fancy which frightens Rochester. So the main aim of Rhys to bring gothic elements in her novel from *Jane Eyre* is representing Rochester's fears and worries about Antoinette, her culture and the place where she leaves.

So By the earlier proves it can be said that Rhys uses *Jane Eyre* as an intertext of *Wide Sargasso Sea* while she uses the theme of dream, Gothic features and the same subject matter that Bronte uses. As a postmodern intertextual novel, it must be read together with *Jane Eyre* to fully appreciate how they related and complete each other, and also how each one is a novel in its own

right, with distinct plot and story. The most important thing that one can get from this postmodern concept of *Wide Sargasso sea* is that “there is no originality in literature and any literary work can be the repetition, continuation, or mixture of previous texts” (Herischian 73).

4. RHY'S USE OF IRONY AS A POSTMODERN FEATURE IN WIDE SARGASSO SEA

Irony is the expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect. Using irony is using of the non-literal language in which it is different between what is appeared and what is actually true or also what one expect to happen and what is happen in reality. Nicol states that:

Irony is a non-literal usage of language, where what is said is contradicted by what is meant (either deliberately or unwittingly) or what is said is subverted by the particular context in which it is said. It works because we are unconsciously aware that in language meanings are not fixed but contain other possible meanings. All words bear traces of previous and other potential uses, and their meaning changes depending on the tone of utterance or the particular context in which they are uttered. Irony is therefore not just cynical, not just a way of making fun of the world. It demonstrates a knowingness about how reality is ideologically constructed. (13)

Postmodern authors use irony in their works although they are not the first to use Irony and Humor in their writings. It can say that irony is one of the hallmarks of postmodern works as to show very serious subjects from distance and disconnected events of life in an ironical and humorous way. Rhys uses irony in *Wide Sargasso Sea* to express the idea of postmodernism and enable the readers to realize the difficulty of being an out casted woman. Rhys wants the readers to recognize that everyone has to accept things as they happen and no one can change the inevitable just as herself in her life, by depicting the Antoinette's Creole character in her novel.

One of the forms of irony is structural irony which introduces the structural features to sustain a duplex meaning and evaluation through the work (Abram166). Rhys ironically expresses the story of herself as a lonely and out casted woman in the shape of Antoinette's story by exhibiting structural irony. Jean Rhys uses many of the events, feeling, people, experiences and locations of her own childhood and her life and brings them in the story of Antoinette's childhood. Rhys from her early childhood has a feeling of separateness from others. She was born after two dead girls, so her mother always mourns for them and never has she paid attention to her. Pizzichini remarks Jean Rhys felt as though she were the ghost of her mother's baby. She would carry this feeling of insubstantiality with her into adulthood as she grew, her mother's inattentiveness and mournful demeanor had far-reaching effects. As far as the young Jean could see, nothing could compensate her mother for her loss” (7). Another thing that makes her to feel lonely and out casted is that she was white while her siblings were black. She was a West Indian girl while she was not black, and she was white while she didn't belong to England or Europe. She was completely different from her siblings and would never accept as one of them and this matter always bothers her.

There were other more tangible reasons for her sense of separateness from others. Ella Gwendoline, or Gwennie as her family called her, was fair and delicate. Her siblings were strong and dark. ... Jean was her mother's fifth baby and would always feel lost in the crowd. She did not fit in: ... Nor was she like the black girls who lived on Genever, her family's estate. ... To make matters worse, her mother was fond of remarking that black babies were prettier than white babies. (Pizzichini 7-8)

So Rhys depicts these conditions of her childhood that she grows in the form of Antoinette's childhood. Antoinette is a sensitive and lonely young Creole girl and she didn't grow up with her mother's love and she is also rejected by West Indians and English people just like Rhys. Rhys shows Antoinette's rejection by her mother through the novel. One time when Antoinette fans her mother, her mothers turns away and asks to leave her alone. “I started to fan her, but she turned her head away. She might rest if I left her alone, she said” (Rhys 18).

Rhys depicts her own dreams in her life in the form of Antoinette's dream. For example Rhys had a dream which is described Black Exercise Book by her: “I follow him sick with fear of what is going to happen but I make no effort to save myself: If anyone were to effort to save me I would

refuse. If anyone were to say shall I save you I would answer no. It must happen. It has to happen" (Linett 444), so she brings this same dream and sense of doom to her novel, to the second dream of Antoinette in which she is followed by a man in the forest. "I follow him, sick with fear but I make no effort to save myself; if anyone were to try to save me, I would refuse. This must happen" (Rhys 54). By using this nearly identical dream, Rhys wants to demonstrate the features of traumatic stress for the reader in her novel through the character of Antoinette which she was experienced in her life, that the individual inevitably accepts victimization (Linett 444).

Another irony that Rhys uses in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is situational irony in which the character expects something but something else happens. She uses this irony when Antoinette pleases a love potion from Christophine. When Antoinette gives that love potion to Rochester she hopes his love will increase but it never happens and ironically Rochester betrays her. "But Christophine, if he, my husband, could come to me one night. Once more. I would make him love me" (Rhys 102). Rochester becomes hostile toward her and starts an affair with a servant named Amelie.

A writer uses a situation in a narrative in which the reader is aware of events and circumstances of future or present but the character is ignored, that called dramatic irony (Abrams 167). In depicting Antoinette's destiny, Antoinette struggles to have a love affair with her husband and she always try to improve their relationship. Antoinette doesn't expect that her husband will leave her in a locked room, while the reader knows about Rochester's feeling of hatred toward her. The reader is aware of the fact that Rochester just marries with Antoinette because of her wealth. So a reader is able to foresight the tragic destiny which awaits her while Antoinette never ever thinks of that.

By using these ironies Rhys wants the reader to apprehend the fact that how it is difficult to be a lonely and out casted woman and try to buckle with the inevitable future. As Eco believes that postmodernism is a way of dealing with the past that is both in opposition and derived from the way modernism deals with the past. In a way that, the postmodern recognizes the past cannot be destroyed so it is revisited with irony (67). So Rhys shows the reader with irony that it is better to cope with the events of life as they happen and make good things out of bad ones rather than change the unavoidable.

5. CONCLUSION

To put it in a nut shell, this study is an attempt to conceptualize Intertextuality and irony which are the two important postmodern elements, in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, proving that *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a postmodern novel. Rhys makes use of Bronte's novel *Jean Eyre* as an inter-text of *Wide Sargasso Sea*. She takes Bertha one of the characters in *Jean Eyre* and writes a back story for her. This study covers the idea of intertextuality through examination of three aspects. One of the aspects is subject matter of the two novels which concerned with the characters and the subjects of two novels. Rhys uses the same characters from *Jean Rhys*, she doesn't satisfy with this tragic ending that happens to Bertha and while reading Bronte's novel and decides to write a story of Bertha's life just like the story of Jean in *Jean Eyre*. The other aspect is using the theme of dream which uses to foreshadow and foresight the future happenings to the major characters. The last aspect is using Gothic features. Rhys is inspired by Bronte and powerfully using gothic elements in her novel to create the feeling of suspense and frightening in the reader. These three aspects prove the existence of one of the other postmodern characteristic, intertextuality in this novel which shows that there is no originality in literature and any literary work can be the repetition, continuation, or mixture of previous texts" (Herischian 73).

Also, different kinds of irony can be traced in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Rhys uses irony in order that the reader apprehends the fact that how it is difficult to be a lonely and out casted woman and try to buckle with the inevitable future. As Eco identifies that "The postmodern reply to the modern consists of recognizing that the past, since it cannot really be destroyed, because its destruction leads to silence, must be revisited: but with irony, not innocently" (67). So Rhys by using irony in *Wide Sargasso Sea* shows the reader that, in postmodern era it is better to cope with the events of life and revisit them as they happen by making good things out of bad ones rather than change the unavoidable or destroy the past.

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