

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

A. Souls at Exile

Immigrants lose their ability to understand easily and effortlessly what is going on around them. As a result of their estrangement from their way of life and the pattern of values and social relationship which were part of that life. The immigrants find that the norms no longer have the meaning they once did. Their inability to speak the local language, especially in its vernacular form, the existence of changed value systems, and 'strange' social attitudes, are all combined to fill life with ambiguity, and to make every situation ambivalent instead of relatively clear out-cut and readily interpretable.

The result of the immigrant's lack cultural know-how is a state of marginality (Kovacs 43). This state is most pronounced in those who have had a history of oppression and persecution in the former land—the bereaved and dispossessed were already alienated from various aspect of their old society before they ever come to the new place. The result is a state of isolation and loneliness peculiar to the marginal person.

Each Individual person, immigrant or native, derives much of his or her sense of purpose, belonging and control of life from his or her feeling of belonging to a particular culture (Kovacs 18). This strong in-group feeling is a highly subject to ethnocentrism, in which its own way of doing things is viewed as normal, natural and

right, while all the other groups are relegated to the status of out-groups in which the way of life and modes of thinking are deemed wrong, unnatural and abnormal (alien) proportionally to the extent to which they depart from the ways of the in-group. A major result of this process is the development of ethnic prejudice, in which member of ethnic out-groups are stereotyped in unfavourable terms (Kovacs 32).

A.1. Colonial Exile

Gayatri Spivak, at a visiting professorship at the Centre for Historical Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, in 1987, delivered her speech. She said that an exile is someone who obligates to stay away (68). The main male character has to go away from his homeland to the unwanted Jamaica in Caribbean. He is exiled by a notably colonial supreme to the colonised land where he thinks he doesn't belong to. In a different way, Antoinette is also exiled.

An exile faces the problem of finding and defining 'home,' physical and emotional confrontations with the 'new' land and its ancient and established meaning (Ashcroft 27). Exiles think themselves as forgotten unfortunates who are dispossessed and expatriated. They endure an experience of erasing boundaries and charting new territories in deviance of the classic economic enclosure, however, much its loss and sadness should be acknowledged and registered.

Wide Sargasso Sea is set in Jamaica, in the Caribbean during 1830's, so it is important for us to know what was going on in both the Caribbean and England at that time. Nineteenth century becomes the highlight of the British Empire glorious

time. And in the mid 1830s British society was leading to the most prosperous era during the reign of Queen Victoria. She was the figurehead of the vast and growing British Empire, which fed the Victorians sense of superiority tempered by Christian duty toward their colonial subjects.

For the early Victorian 'lady' and her mother of the Regency period, too often had nothing to do but to be paid for and approved by men (Macaulay 488), and to realize the type of female perfection, which the breadwinner of the family expected to find in his wife and daughters. And for that reason a man was demanded to be rich.

Arranged marriage was something so common at this time. In the upper and middle classes, husbands were often found to girls on the principle of frank barter. Since almost everyone regarded it a grave misfortune to remain single, women did not account it as a universal grievance that their hands should often be disposed of by others. There was no doubt usually consulted as to their destiny. Parents had the right to choose for their daughter a husband. She should take her chosen husband as a match of prudence and common good liking, without any mixture of the ridiculous passion of romantic love. This description would probably have covered a vast proportion of the arranged marriage of the day (Macaulay, 313-314).

Whereas, the West Indian Islands were regarded as the richest jewel of the English crown, in which English capital was invested. The population of the West Indian consists of a variety of racial groups all more or less in ancestral exile, like the main male character himself. It is dear, from Caribbean history, that race and ancestry was issues of supreme and inescapable importance, crucial not just to philosophy, but

to the dynamics of day-to-day survival (Ashcroft 146-147). This had to be so in a society, which bore the permanent traces of conflicts, repression, immigration, and forced migration.

Rich English immigrants came to the Caribbean for seeking another opportunity in doubling their money. The more English immigrants come to the Caribbean; the great deal of English (European in broad) culture has been 'nativized', naturalized, and creolised in local planter or settler society (Hall 172). And thus the West Indies was a convenience, a useful offshoot of the British economy.

The Caribbean is peopled by immigrants from Europe, Asia, and Africa. In this all-immigrant culture, European is predominant (Henriques and Manyoni 60). The dominance of the European in the Caribbean becomes quite explicit if the economy of the region is considered. Economical domination implies cultural domination. Other cultures than European have no choice but to adapt the cultures without much trouble. This fact leads to the rejection of European values, even by the Creoles themselves. Creoles here are meant to be the local-born Whites.

Jamaica, where Wide Sargasso Sea is set, is a society stratified by class / colour (Hall 150). White Creole elites were rarely to be found, especially after the Slave Emancipation Act in Jamaica at this time. The society is divided into three main classes: white, brown, and black (Hall 156). In the plural culture society where social relations between white, brown, and black are differentiated, and stratified, but belong within one socio-economic—it has been widely noted that there are differences of family organisation and mating pattern (Hall 157). And the main male

character and Antoinette's marriage is a typical of what Stuart Hall mentions as 'Creolised version of Victorian marriage' (157).

A.1.1. The main male character's Incapability to Understand the New Culture

Charlotte Brontë depicts the main male character as a victim of his father and elder brother who marry him off to Antoinette for her dowry in the full knowledge that madness runs in her family. As a second son, the main male character does not have any legacy to his family wealth and estate. The first son has all the privilege of having the family possession. The main male character has no choice; he could live in England from his father and brother's beneficiary. But, what would he become with the condition of the society of that time. He feels disposed already. So he decides to go to Jamaica in the hope that he will get a better life. In Jamaica, the main male character is the outsider in an alien culture and community, and it is his ideology and perception, which are at odds with the dominant world-view (Spaul 104). Rhys has displaced the main male character into an alien culture he is not prepared or is never willing to prepare to get along with. In his journey to the honeymoon place, the main male character's attention is centred on a letter he is going to send back to England.

'...''Dear Father. The thirty thousand pound had been paid to me without question or condition. No provision made for her (that must be seen, too). I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you or to my dear brother, the son you love. No begging

letters, no mean requests. None of the furtive shabby manoeuvres of a younger son. I have sold my soul or you have sold it, and after all, it is such a bad bargain? The girl is though to be beautiful. She is beautiful and yet...'

The letter is the main male character's expression of anger toward his family. He is attached to the letter though, since it is the only thing he feels to be real—his anger and the knowing that he is sending the letter to England. He feels his detached powerlessness, perhaps also his self-induced unwillingness, to enter and become part of what he saw is the source of his being suffer in exile.

The differences between the naturally wild landscape of the Jamaican countryside, and memories of the cultivation and urbanisation of England, represent the conflicts between nature and culture. He is even nearly three weeks in bed with fever soon after his arrival in Jamaica (Rhys 67). He describes Jamaica as he describes Amelie, the maidservant who he involves in an affair with later on, 'as a lovely little creature but sly, spiteful malignant like much else in the place (Rhys 65). He also produces other remarks that obviously a reflection of his despise to the place: 'a place not only wild, but menacing' (Rhys 69), everything is too much for him, 'too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flower too red, the mountain too high, the hills too near' (Rhys 70). He even describes the beauty of the place as 'an extreme green'. The main male character feels alienated in a beautiful place—wild, untouched, above all untouched with an alien, disturbing, secret loveliness, and it kept its secret. In this part Rhys is trying to show that the main male character is

being magicked by the place which is (or was) a lovely, but also a violent place (The Letters of Jean Rhys; Geason 424). It can be a very disturbing kind of beauty. And now he thinks it is wrong for him to come. Mason's inability to understand the blacks, or indeed the Creole race into which he has married, is also later reflected in the main male character's uneasiness amongst his wife's friends and servants, his ceaseless but fruitless attempt to unveil the 'secret' of the place and its natural inhabitants (Spaul 98). He even calls Antoinette's friends 'sombre people in a sombre place' (Rhys 68). His feeling of discomfort and melancholy make everything even worse.

Mr. Mason does not understand what is waiting for his new family to face, and he also does not understand why his wife, Antoinette's mother, insists to move away. Antoinette and her mother are white but very poor, so there is nothing left to hate. But Antoinette's mother's marriage to a rich Englishman has started up again all the hatred from the past slavery time and even worse than before. She and her mother try to tell that out in Jamaica is not like English people think it is (Rhys 34). And his false understanding will lead to their downfall as the main male character's incapability will finally give Antoinette (and later on to himself) a downfall.

The main male character is always feeling insecure and suspicious almost about everything. Even in her letter to Diana Athill on 28th of April 1964, Rhys explains that the main male character is feeling uneasy and suspicious (Geason 424). He is a good observer; his suspicion makes him like that. He is offended whenever

Hilda, a girl servant, giggles before him. In all the faces he has met, he sees the same expression: curiosity, pity, and ridicule upon him. Above all his insecurity is that he cannot understand 'patois', a French dialect that is used by Antoinette and all the local people. This gives his servants power over him. 'Whatever they were singing or saying was dangerous. I must protect myself' (Rhys 149). By this line, it is obvious that the main male character feels threatened and mad whenever his servants or other people are talking behind his back. This feeling of not knowing gets him some horror and terror that even more segregates him to the edge of his self-defence. Actually, language is not the key factor in assimilation at all, but that the feeling of acceptance into the receiving society is a crucial positive factor and a sense of rejection (alienation), a crucial negative one (Kovacks 34), a state of condition that the main male character just never gets. All the point about the language problem is that the main male character describes Antoinette and Caroline are standing 'in the doorway of the hut gesticulating, talking not English, but the debased French patois they use in this island' (Rhys 67) The word 'debased' emphasizes the main male character's feeling about this particular language spoken by sombre people that he hates.

The main male character's lack of understanding about the Creole culture becomes apparent in a discussion between him and Antoinette about Christophine:

'Her coffee is delicious but her language is horrible and she might hold her dress up. It must get very dirty, yards of it trailing on the floor.'

'When they don't hold their dress up it's for respect,' said Antoinette. 'Or feast days or going to Mass.'

'And is this a feast day?'

'She wanted it to be a feast day.'

'Whatever the reason it is not a clean habit.'

'It is. You don't understand at all. They don't care about getting a dress dirty because it shows it isn't the only dress they have. Don't you like Christophine?' (Rhys, 85)

Answering Antoinette's question, the main male character simply gives some remarks, 'I can't say I like her language' and 'she looks so lazy. She dawdles about...' Again he is mistaken. His ethnocentrism ego drives him to think that what Christophine, Antoinette, and the rest of Jamaican residents are deemed wrong, unnatural and abnormal. The main male character creates his own alienation by holding racist beliefs that Antoinette does not share, and does not seem to care to understand. This is clear when the main male character recalls a discussion between the two of them about Antoinette's contact with Christophine.

'Why do you hug and kiss Christophine?' I'd say.

'Why not?'

'I wouldn't hug and kiss them,' I'd say. 'I couldn't.'

At this she would laugh for a long time and never tell me why she laughed' (Rhys 91).

The main male character hates Christophine, ever since their first acquaintance.

'I look at her sharply but she seemed insignificant. She was blacker than most of her clothes, even the handkerchief round her head, were subdued in colour. She looks at me steadily, not with approval, I thought' (Rhys 72)

At that moment, the main male character has got a clue or glimpses of slight impression that Christophine is going to be his obstacle and bring trouble. Most of all, the main male character hates Christophine because she dares to challenge him, speaks against him, and for all she says is the truth. That is why he has to separate Antoinette from her.

The worst of all, is that the main male character always sees Antoinette as a stranger, questioning her purity of race. 'The woman is a stranger' (Rhys 70) and is always be a stranger to him. Everything about Antoinette annoys him: her pleading expression, her songs, her large eyes, and eventually her face and the whole madness of Jamaica. The main male character is associated with England, with London—the city, streets and houses full of people. Antoinette becomes one with the rivers, mountains and sea of her homeland, the intense colours and smells, and above all, the intense emotions. The main male character is afraid of this intensity, afraid of an environment and feelings he is unable to control. And he is even more afraid of a woman—indeed what could be described as a whole matriarchal community (Spaul 165)—over whom he is seemingly powerless and his patriarchal power is not enough to defend himself. The place is his enemy (Rhys 129). Feeling that he both does not belong to the place and is not welcomed neither, as his confession to Antoinette, 'I

feel very much a stranger here. I feel that this place is my enemy and on your side' (Rhys 129), the main male character needs to hold Antoinette as his only weapon against the strangeness and all his threatening. This has a meaning that the main male character must possess and completely takes control over both Antoinette and her wealth to flee away from 'this a very wild place—not civilized' (Rhys 68).

A.1.2. Antoinette's Struggle of Identity

Antoinette is caught in between two cultures—in a world affected by imperialism she is not the conqueror, but also not the vanquished. The novel opens with a stark portrayal of this division as she says: 'they say when trouble comes close ranks, and so the white people did. But we were not in their ranks' (Rhys 17). Rejected by both the black and the white cultures, Antoinette is a victim of her inheritance from both. Antoinette is rejected by her society and her mother, which makes her absolutely alienated in her own place of birth and upbringing. Antoinette always feels that she is hated by other people. She even says 'my hating face' (Rhys 28) to describe herself. She thinks that animals, ants and snakes, are 'all better than people'. On her mother's wedding day, Antoinette hears someone says, 'the boy an idiot kept out of sight and mind and the girl is going the same way...' (Rhys 29). Antoinette thinks that what other people say about her is nothing but the truth that she is a 'maroon', the word that her mother often says.

Antoinette mother's rejection has made her the victim of patriarchal force, which is part of colonial culture. When Antoinette tries to be close to her mother only to feel a little affection from her, she pushes Antoinette away, not

roughly, but calmly, coldly, without a word, as if she has decided once to all that Antoinette is useless to her (Rhys 20). A former slave owner, Annette is *beke* who cares too much for money and class and her own 'eroding social status as a slave owner in a post-emancipation culture'. Antoinette's sense of identity is never validated by her mother, Annette, who did not approve of Antoinette's behaviour. 'Then there changed' (Rhys 132). As a result, she turns to Christophine, a Martinique black house servant, for nurturance.

Christophine, however, cannot give Antoinette the sense of completion she is looking for because race and class differences keep them separated, Christophine is black, but Antoinette is white. Antoinette will always be *beke*, but she does not have the views on values of money that most *beke* have. Because she is a woman, she does not have access to her *beke* money, but she is barred from the black culture because of her whiteness.

Despite her close relationship with Christophine, Antoinette is still not let entirely into the black culture. Antoinette mother's rejection toward her becomes so obvious when after the burning of the house, Antoinette sees her mother. Antoinette kisses her and puts her arm around her. But, when Antoinette says that Pierre, her brother, has died and that Antoinette is there for her mother, she refuses Antoinette and flings Antoinette from her. Antoinette falls against the partition and hurts herself (Rhys 48). Antoinette, even three-times deserted by her own flesh and blood, the people who live around her, the community, and later on, by her own husband.

As poor white Creoles, Antoinette and her mother are excluded from the society. To the real white people, Antoinette and her mother are not in their rank. The black people call them 'white cockroach'. 'Plenty white people in Jamaica. Real white people, they got gold money. They didn't look at us, nobody see them come near us. Old time white people nothing but white nigger now, and black nigger better than white nigger' (Rhys 24). These mother and daughter are hopeless and helpless until Antoinette's mother marries Mr. Mason. Antoinette's confusion to identify herself well reflected by her saying to the main male character after her dispute with Amelie: 'so between you 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 102).

There is always a never-ending arguing about identity inside of her. Once at dinner, Antoinette looks at her favourite picture, 'The Miller's Daughter', a lovely English girl with brown curls and blue eyes and a dress slipping off her shoulder. By her description, Antoinette is longing to be like the picture, an English girl. She is angry when after the Negroes' attack; her hair has to be cut to cure the wound on her forehead. She is frightened that it may grow darker. Then she looks at Mr. Mason, who is so sure of himself and who is without doubt English. Then she looks at her mother, who is without a doubt not English but no white nigger either.

Antoinette is contented enough to be like an English girl by eating English food, but she also misses the taste of Christophine's cooking (Rhys 35). On the way to the convent, Antoinette is followed by two children; a white boy and a black girl, only to chide and intimidate her. Then a tall boy comes to help her.

Antoinette remembers that he is her own cousin, Sandi. But Mr. Mason's lectures have made her shy about her coloured relatives (Rhys 15). Mr. Mason has taught her some English values as a duty of an English gentleman to teach his value of ethnocentrism to his white stepdaughter who carries his name.

Antoinette has lost her sense of identity with full knowledge that she is only what the Niggers call her 'White Cockroach', she feels like the Nigger herself sometimes. She is experiencing double-projection of identity. She calls her stepfather 'white pappy' (Rhys 33), meaning that she thinks herself as a Negro. On the night of the attack of Coulibri, Antoinette sees Tia and her mother are standing not far from her. Then, decides to run to them. Tia is what Antoinette wishes to be—her projected double—strong and resilient, 'fire always lit for her, sharp stones did not hurt her bare feet' (Rhys 23). Their separation is as painful to Antoinette as a splitting of the self. Tia acts out Antoinette's own rage and grief, but from the other side of the mirror of racial division. Tia throws a stone at Antoinette, which hurts her face, but as though it is happening to her image in the mirror, she does not feel it. The tears on her double's face mirrors the blood on Antoinette's. Then she says, 'It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking glass' (Rhys 45). To join her own dark double, Antoinette must act out her vengeance and destroys Bertha, the other woman her husband has made her to become, and the patriarchal house, which is imprisoning her.

Antoinette's identity is so completely diminished through patriarchal oppression, that when she looks into the mirror, she does not recognize her own reflection. 'It was then I saw her—the ghost. The woman with streaming hair. She

was surrounded by a guilt frame but I knew her' (Rhys 188-189). Antoinette does not realize that what she sees is a reflection of her deteriorated selfhood; for her selfhood has undergone an irretrievable split.

Similar to the main male character, Antoinette also feels insecure. Her turbulent childhood and a constant state of fear of something she cannot describe have made her so dependant on the main male character. Antoinette's aunt, Cora, always tells her that she is safe and the same word is used by the main male character to comfort his wife, 'She'd like that—to be told "you are safe"'. The convent she is sent to is a refuge for her and she gets used to a solitary life until the main male character enters her dramatic world in isolation. Antoinette is not used to happiness, she always thinks that happiness does not exist. Then, the main male character comes to turn her thinking upside down. She is so unhappy until she would rather die. The main male character's coming to her life is so amusing for Antoinette and yet makes her afraid as seen in their dialogue:

'Why did you make me want to live? Why did you do that to me?'

'Because I wish it. Isn't that enough?'

'Yes, it is enough. But if one day you didn't wish it. What should I do then? Suppose you took this happiness away when I wasn't looking...' (Rhys 92)

Antoinette's biggest mistake is marrying a constrained and domineering Englishman, the main male character. As a typical Nineteenth-Century Englishman, the main male character's view of his wife is entirely the product of paradigmatic

plots promulgated by his culture, which expects anywhere outside England to be a place of evil and madness (Newman 20). That is why Antoinette's identity has been erased by the politics of imperialism and of patriarchy. Only the skirt, the sexual marker, identifies her as a woman. Dehumanised, depersonalised, renamed, she is now a helpless puppet, a character under the main male character's control (Newman 16).

Instead of her real name, the main male character starts calling Antoinette, Marionette, which means 'doll'. On the argument between the main male character and Christophine, the main male character admits that he does call Antoinette with other name, Marionette, and when he says that, he really means it. He wants her to be his doll; something to play with, to control and to possess.

'She tell me in the middle of all this you start calling her name, Marionette. Some word so.'

'Yes, I remember I did.'

(Marionette, Antoinette, Marionetta, Antoinetta)

'That word mean doll, eh? Because she don't speak. You want to force her to cry and to speak.'

(Force her to cry and to speak) (Rhys 154)

The words in the parentheses are the main male character's consciousness, though he always tries to hide his admitting guilt to Christophine. His heart does say he is guilty of all this. His denial is a defence, that he is also the victim of a conspiracy between his father and brother and Richard Mason, notably

Antoinette's brother. What the main male character says to describe Antoinette's state on the night after their dispute settled down is even more to convince that the main male character does treat Antoinette as a doll. 'I could see Antoinette stretched on the bed quite still. Like a doll. Even when she threatened me with the bottle, she had a marionette quality' (Rhys 149-150)

An attempt at stripping Antoinette of her identity even further is made when the main male character renames her 'Bertha'. He does this in an attempt to make her to submit to all the 'cultural and personal associations' of a white English woman that he has constructed for her. Though Antoinette tries to escape this trap by confronting her husband, 'Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name' (Rhys 147), but it is useless. The main male character has expected Antoinette to become someone else he wants her to be ever since he sets his eyes on her.

'Don't laugh like that, Bertha.'

'My name is not Bertha. Why do you call me Bertha?'

'Because it is a name I'm particularly fond of. I think of you as Bertha.' (Rhys 135)

The main male character is even more forceful when he says, 'Of course, on this of all nights, you must be Bertha.' Antoinette simply surrenders by giving a remark, 'As you wish' (Rhys 136) the main male character does not like something dark about the West Indies, the dark part he just simply does not understand what and why it is dark, while Antoinette seems to be comfortable in the dark as the part of the

darkness itself. And thus, the main male character renames her 'Bertha', taken from a German name, which means 'bright'. The main male character wants his wife to be in the light and knows everything about his wife he does not know yet. He wants her to be in the bright place, a place as bright as England in winter.

The final and ultimate stripping of Antoinette's identity is done when the main male character moves her and himself to England. By taking her away from her homeland, the main male character has taken her even further away from her identity as a West Indian woman. He has taken away any chance that she might have in trying to establish an identity. Antoinette is so attached to the land where she was born and raised up. She loves the place more than anywhere else in the world, as if it were a person. More than a person (Rhys 89). She loves the place because she has nothing else to love, even though it is so indifferent to her (Rhys 130). She thinks that if everything else goes out of her life she would still have the place. And what will happen if the most important thing is taken away from her or she is taken away from the thing itself.

Once in England, Antoinette is seen as a mad woman. She no longer envisions England as a fantasy. Now she describes it as 'a cardboard world where everything is coloured brown or dark red or yellow that has no light in it' (Rhys 181). Antoinette does a great deal of reflection during the short span of the book that covers her stay in England. She remembers a looking glass she used to have.

'There is no looking glass here and I don't know what I am like now. I remember watching myself brush my hair and how my eyes

look back at me. The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely I tried to kiss her. But the glass was between us—hard, cold and misted over with my breath. Now they have taken everything away. What am I doing in this place and who am I?’ (Rhys 180).

This passage is especially important because it raises the issue of identity again. The image of herself in the looking glass symbolizes her ‘other’ self, the solid feeling of identity that she is missing. By moving Antoinette to England and by taking away her looking glass, the main male character has symbolically taken away any chance she has of establishing that identity. Antoinette has descended completely into madness.

After having a dream, in which she sees herself burning the main male character’s mansion, Antoinette states, ‘Now I know why I was brought here and what I have to do’ (Rhys 190). She has taken a candle from her room and walks down the hall. It is suggested that through burning down the mansion, Antoinette will gain back the power that she had lost to the main male character. The flames will have purifying effects. It is also suggested that she will finally establish an identity for herself, even if it is through death. In the dream she has, in which Tia is standing, beckoning Antoinette to join her. This is significant in a way similar to that of the looking glass, with the reflection of Antoinette’s identity. The difference here is that this looking glass, the pool, is permeable. There is no hard cold glass to stop her from joining identities and her ability to get to the other side of the reflection symbolizes

her ultimate 'completion' of herself. By jumping into the pool, she will finally be able to merge the colonial blackness and Creole whiteness that have torn her apart and driven her to madness.

A.1.3. Antoinette and the Main Male Character's Contradictory World-view

Antoinette fails to find a unified 'sense of self' in her 'mothers' (Annette and Christophine) and as a result, looks for it in her new husband. She does not find it because he does not love her. Although their relationship runs smoothly and happily for some time, her new husband, the main male character, states, 'It meant nothing to me. Nor did she, the girl I was to marry. When at last I met with her I bowed, smiled, kissed her hand, danced with her, played the part I was expected to play' (Rhys 76) and Antoinette did not know any better. Differences between Antoinette's Creole culture and the main male character's English culture become more and more apparent to the reader as the story progresses. They did not really understand one another—this deepens her sense of alienation and drives her close to madness. The main male character tells Antoinette, 'So much of what you tell me is strange, different from what I was led to expect' (Rhys 135).

The main male character describes Antoinette as English in heritage, yet not quite English, or even European, in culture. 'She never blinks at all, it seems to me. Long, sad, dark, alien eyes. Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either' (Rhys 67). The main male character does not understand the Creole culture, which Antoinette loves, and she has no understanding

of England. To her, England is a fantasy place. 'Her mind was already made up. Some romantic novels, a stray remark never forgotten, a sketch, a picture, a song, a waltz, some notes of music, and her ideas were fixed about England and about Europe' (Rhys 94). There is nothing the main male character could do to change them. Antoinette's fix ideas would never change. Obviously, it is the main male character's inability to feel comfortable in Jamaica, and Antoinette's inability to understand England that forms a barrier between them.

A.2. Sexual Exile

Both Antoinette and the main male character experience sexual exile. As a typical Nineteenth-Century Englishman, the main male character's view of his wife is entirely the product of paradigmatic plots promulgated by his culture, which expects anywhere outside England to be a place of evil and madness (Newman 20). So it is when he receives the letter denouncing Antoinette's madness, he feels no surprise. It is as if he had been expecting it. It is rather as if he already knew the plot Antoinette's life must now imitate. This madness becomes the reason of the main male character's detest of his wife, Antoinette.

Mason's Englishness as it appears to Antoinette, carrying with it the apparent security of a stable father figure. It is the longing for similar security and stability that would seem to underlie Antoinette's acquiescence in her arranged marriage with the main male character (Spaul 101). Antoinette's never met any gentleman before the main male character. The main male character is her first and

important love. For Antoinette, 'I never wish to live before I knew you. I always thought it would be better if I died. Such a long time to wait before it's over' (Rhys 91).

There can be no denying that both Antoinette and the main male character have a happy and romantic honeymoon, although it is a brief one. The main male character as a British-male impostor is driven into a loveless but money-promising marriage partly because of the West Indies exoticness. If Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* states that 'Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe' (190), the main male character chooses the other 'otherness' of Europe, West Indies. But his absolute essential Englishness puts him in a sexual exile because none of the exoticness can satisfy him, not even his wife.

He keeps questioning his wife's purity of race, 'she might have been any pretty English girl', in fact, she is just not 'white' enough to be English. He dislikes and distrusts Antoinette's ambiguous racial background. Unable to 'place' her within a race, he implies that there must be impurity in her dual national heredity—a criticism carrying heavy moral overtones including that of sexual promiscuity: 'She never blinks at all it seems to me. Long, sad, dark alien eyes. Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either' (Rhys 67). From the outset, the main male character describes Antoinette in these terms: as an alien, a stranger, sometimes almost sub-human. And for that reason and the others, he does not love her, 'I felt very little tenderness for her, she was a stranger to me, a stranger who did not think or feel as I did' (Rhys 93).

The main male character then refuses to make love to her, even to speak to her. Having once described her as 'alien', a stranger, the main male character now sees Antoinette as animal-like: savage, wild, and unruly:

'Then she cursed me comprehensively, my eyes, my mouth, every member of my body, and it was like a dream in the large unfurnished room with the candles flickering and this red-eyed wild-haired stranger who was my wife shouting obscenities at me' (Rhys 148).

The main male character also accuses his wife of sexual guilt to enslave her. For him only a prostitute—or a mad woman—could take pleasure in sex (Newman 16). He comments that Antoinette would 'moan and cry and give herself as no sane woman would' (Rhys 105). The main male character puts Antoinette in a total sexual exile by saying, 'Vain, silly creature. Made for loving? Yes, but she'll have no lover, for I don't want her and she'll see no other' (Rhys 105).

Moreover, Antoinette is sexually exiled because she is a woman with a faint identity. She is hopeless in the hand of a gentleman who is so well appreciated himself, and thus puts him in a sexual exile in a society he has now become a part of. Antoinette's social and economic position is within patriarchal society: a society so repressive that at time it has barely allowed women a voice at all (Spaul 84-85). Society is defined by men, some features of women do not fit that definition. Men have been in the position of having to define themselves in relation to women and to nature. Consequently, those elements of female experience, which fall outside the

dominant structure, as defined by men, are also seen as features of the 'wild' (Spaull 93). Although they have never experienced it first hand, women may know what male experience is like, since it has been the subject of myth and legend. But a man can never know what is in the 'wild' (94). It is always imaginary. The main male character's growing hatred of Antoinette, owing to his inability to understand or influence her (as a part of the wild). Now that he finds justification in his discovery of Antoinette's inherently pathological mind from Daniel Cosway, the main male character can complete his suppression on Antoinette by returning with her to England, where he can regain the security of controlling the dominant world-view, where he will be 'sane', his reality real, and Antoinette is 'insane', being in a dream world.

B. The Relationship between Money, Lust, Sex, and Power

The main male character seems to marry Antoinette for money, or perhaps for lust, or perhaps for power. The main male character makes love to Antoinette in part to gain power over her. Antoinette persuades Christophine to use the power of her *Obeah* to entice the main male character to her bed. Amelie has sex with the main male character for her own purposes, and the main male character sleeps with Amelie for his. There are inseparable relationship between money, lust, sex, and power in Wide Sargasso Sea. One is become the reason or provocation for the other. One is essential and related to each other. The following parts will talk more about it.

B. 1. Money

Money is not merely the means of controlling men but embodies men's 'estranged being', his alienation from himself and society, and as such represents the 'alienated' ability of mankind (Laurenson and Swingewood 43-44). The main male character is both attracted to and suspicious of money, believing that it might be able to help him regain his patriarchal power of himself aside that he is the victim of the same power of his father and older brother. In the end he is an alien to himself, doing things, which he regrets, and he cannot step back. According to Rhys, a woman is powerless to intervene, but susceptible to economic exploitation. What is happening in Wide Sargasso Sea is real; that there were many Antoinette and the main male character in this world, according to Rhys. One of her letters on 5 October 1957 is a confirmation:

This fiction was founded on fact rather several facts. At that date and earlier, very wealthy planters did exist, their daughters had very large dowries, and there was no Married Women Properties Act. So a young man who was not too scrupulous could do very well for himself and very easily. He would marry the girl, grab her money, bring her to England—a faraway place—and in a year she would be an invalid or mad. I could see how easily all this could happen. It did happen and more than once... there have been one or three novels about this. One was called The Little Girl from Dominica (quoted in Newman 21).

It is so obvious that the main male character's first reason to marry Antoinette is for her dowry. In broader terms, Antoinette's history also becomes representative of the West Indies history. In a society built upon the buying and the selling of human beings, Antoinette's marriage to the main male character is also envisaged as an economic transition. Antoinette experience the evil of slavery in her own self. She is acquired for a profit, given a more 'English' name, transported overseas, economically enslaved and then quite literary a captive with a keeper, treated as an animal and degenerated. It is surprising that she reacts, much as her father's ex-slaves did, by setting a fire to the great house, Coulibri and Tornfield Hall.

On page 111 in the novel Antoinette says, 'he will not come after me. And you must understand that I'm not rich now, I have no money of my own at all, everything I had belongs to him.' Before the Married Women's Property Acts of the late Victorian period, a women property became the husband's at marriage (Macaulay 488). The law was in curious contrast to the words of the marriage service, when then man was to say, 'with all my wordly goods I thee endow.' It was really the other way around. The main male character is fully aware of his rights concerning Antoinette properties and wealth. He uses this privilege against Christophine words. 'I assure you that it belongs to me now, you'll go or I'll get the men to put you out (Rhys 159). The main male character is threatened by Christophine existence between him and Antoinette, that's why he has to separate them and secure his own position. Christophine's words haunt the main male character consciousness because all she says are true:

'She don't come to your house in this place England they tell me about, she don't come to your beautiful house to beg you to marry with her. No, it's you come all the long way to her house—it's you beg her to marry. And she love you and she give you all she have. Now you say you don't love her and you break her up. What you do with her money, eh?' Her voice was still quiet but with a hiss in it when she said 'money' (Rhys 158).

To this, the main male character stands in alert, he is no longer dazed and tries to refuse his being hypnotised and ready to defend himself. Christophine has made him appear to be a villain who is very greedy to money by saying. 'Your husband certainly love money. That is no lie. Money have pretty face for everyone, but for that man money like pretty like pretty self, he can't see nothing else' (Rhys 114).

Amelie's reason to sleep with the main male character is also money. It is obvious that Amelie has been trying to seduce the main male character even on the first day of their arrival in Masacre. 'Her expression was so full of delight, malice, so intelligent, above all so intimate that I felt ashamed and looked away' (Rhys 68). After the fornication, the main male character gives Amelie a large present that she takes with no thanks and no expression on her face. Amelie has wanted to go to Rio, where she can find rich men. And she has used the main male character to achieve her aim. When Christophine says, 'She love money like you like money,' the main male character might feel ashamed. How can he be equal to a girl like once he called 'a half-caste servant girl.'

Antoinette's aunt, Cora, has foreseen that this is going to happen by giving Antoinette some of her valuable belongings. 'My rings. Two are valuable. Don't show it to him. Hide it away. Promise me.' Meanwhile, Antoinette's legal brother, Edward Mason, trusts the main male character thoroughly, 'Why should I insist on a lawyer's settlement when I trust him? I would trust him with my life.' Antoinette is just being unlucky for living before the Married Women's Property Act in 1869 was published. It released the wife if she had money of her own, from economic bondage to her husband: the equality of the sexes began to be advocated in theory, and found its way increasingly into the practice of all classes (Macaulay 552). She is now totally dependant upon the main male character.

Rhys furthermore shows that the main male character's cruelty toward Antoinette is due to a projection onto her of his hatred for his father, and the marriage arrangement, which he has been pushed into: 'They bought me, *me* with your paltry money. You help them to do it. You deceived me, betrayed me' (Rhys 170). His anger is the anger of the oppressed. Like Antoinette, he is the victim of imperialistic and patriarchal oppression. In this, too, they are doubles, but they do not recognize their duality. Antoinette's mother's second marriage to an Englishman marks their reinstatement in the white community. Therefore, it appears the marriage foreshadows that between the main male character and Antoinette both matches are initially materialistic, and in both an attitude of British imperialism evolves—the need to conquer and control.

B.2. Lust

Lust is a violent desire to possess something by equal means. One scene in Wide Sargasso Sea focuses on these issues of possession, narrative control and domination. The criterion of manliness is that of the penetrator, not the penetrated (Posner 24). Therefore, in her letter to the Gender and Postmodern Communication on Friday, 16 August 1996. Liz Lewis wrote: men 'penetrate', women 'envelope'. Hence, the argument has been put forth that men seek to quest into the unknown, to push the envelopes of the physical and conceptual worlds, and to utilize the impetus of 'conquering' as a motivational asset (n. pag). Because man is the penetrator, it is man who takes control over women to possess her both physically and mentally.

Antoinette has lost her control over her own life completely once she is married for her money to a man that does not understand her but desire to possess her, a husband who will ultimately incarcerate her in his patriarchal English house, Thornfield Hall, in the attic precisely. The process of Antoinette's captivity can be explained as follow:

When a man is in the presence of a tender gentle, fruitful, dependent woman, he immediately feels a sublime expansion of his power to protect and shelter this frail and delicate creature. In the presence of such weakness, he feels stronger, more competent, bigger, and manlier than ever. This feeling of strength and power is one of the most enjoyable he can experience. The apparent need of the women for protection, instead of arousing contempt for her lack

of ability, appeals to the very noble feeling within him (Pringle and Stericker 85).

Even though, the main male character involves into a loveless marriage but he still has a sort of desire toward Antoinette. 'One afternoon the sight of a dress that she'd left lying on her bedroom floor made me breathless and savage with desire' (Rhys 93). But then, he dumps her with an awareness that he has already managed to possess her firmly. 'You made love to her till she drunk with it, no rum can make her drunk like that, till she can't do without it. It's she can't see the sun anymore. Only you she sees. But all you want is to break her up' (Rhys 153).

Christophine tries to protect Antoinette by suggesting a divorce with some amount of money as the compensation. Christophine has planned something for Antoinette and she says: "she marry with someone else. She forget about you and live happy' (Rhys 159). The main male character's reaction toward this is shocking by the fact that how much he has been longing to go away from the island and the woman he hates so much. 'A pang of rage and jealousy shot through me than. Oh no, she won't forget.' the main male character has wishes to send Christophine away and keep all Antoinette's money for himself. It's only half true, because there's something else. The main male character has also wanted to protect or possess powerless Antoinette wholly and never let her to see someone else. 'Vain, silly creature. Made for loving? Yes. But she has no lover, for I don't want her and she'll see no other' (Rhys 165). the main male character words are so contradictive to what he is doing to hold Antoinette in his possession. There is a sort of ambivalence here,

between love and hate. The main male character might suffer from disorientation in determining whether he loves or hate his wife or may be both.

What the main male character has done seems to make all sexual and indeed familial relationship appear commercial in character and by doing so distorts their actual character (Posner 118). Every happy married man and woman (even more to the unhappy one) must always be in the market for a better spouse. The main male character does not let Antoinette to have this chance with a risk loosing half of the money by divorcing her. Divorce will create a problem and an economic disadvantage that is a realistic view of marital assets of the financial consequences of a divorce. In a society in which men dominate women, the husband might be able to coerce his wife to 'agree' to whatever the husband wants their marriage to be (whether a divorce or a unification).

Love definitely can be given a precise economic meaning. Love illustrates the differences between a bioeconomic and a purely economic approach to sex. The main male character experiences an emotional character of the love bond. He has been bond both to the Antoinette's presence and money. Love, then, is natural in a fairly literal sense; where culture entry is in deflecting, sublimating, erasing, or otherwise controlling love. To love, in the main male character English viewpoint is to give protection—a false one—to Antoinette, partly because he is bond to the fact that Antoinette had given him the wealth. He must accomplish what he has firmly stated. 'I did not relish going back to England in the role of rejected suitor jilted by this Creole girl. I must certainly know why' (Rhys 78). The main male character has

successfully accomplished his lust by taking control over Antoinette's life thoroughly, which is so clear as he states: ' I have found it in a hidden place and I'd keep it, hold on fast. As I'd hold her' (Rhys 168).

B.3. Sex

We can find some implicit sexual exploitation in Wide Sargasso Sea. There are things about sexual matters that are worth to be discussed and analysed such as the main male character and Antoinette's dispute, the main male character and Amelie's liaison, and the relation between the two, or even Christophine's contribution helping Antoinette with her *Obeah*.

The model of rational sexual behaviour emphasizes the varied goals of sex and the nature of marriage as critical determinants of sexual practices and attitudes along with the occupational and financial situation of women.

The woman's desire is further complicated by the fact that she both desires to have a man, that is to have him sexually, and desire to have the body of a man, that is to inhabit the stylistic signifiers of maleness as her own... the male participants also desire the women, although they are forbidden to express their desire freely by the scenes (Still and Worton 198).

Victorian women were less free sexually than women in eighteenth-century England; how income and wealth affect sexual morality differently (Posner 5). This Eurocentric point of view that spurs the main male character to compare

Antoinette with a prostitute—or a mad women—could take a pleasure in sex (*ars erotica*). ‘She’ll moan and cry and give herself, as no sane woman would—or could.’ To regain the main male character’s affection, Antoinette goes to Christophine asking for her *Obeah* power in a form of love-potion. In her lifetime, Antoinette never knows what a happiness is until she meets the main male character. Antoinette however, is in a state of complete erotic surrender. She whispers to the main male character. ‘If I could die. Now, when I’m happy. Would you do that? You wouldn’t have to kill me. Say die and I will die’ (Rhys 92). The main male character’s response is decidedly less romantic: ‘Die then, die. I watch her die many times in my way, not in hers’ (Rhys 92). The main male character understands death as the French understood the phrase *la petite mort* as sexual orgasm. This is may be because Antoinette is sexually bewitched by the main male character: ‘She love you so much. She thirsty for you. Wait, and perhaps you can love her again. A little, like she say. A little. Like you can love (Rhys 157). Here Rhys makes the point, forcefully, that it is sexuality, which enslaves the woman and destroy her independence.

Antoinette has become the main male character’s sexual zombie before she attempts to turn the table on him. There is, then, a form of double zombification at work here, in which both the main male character and Antoinette featured as victim and aggressor, possessor and possessed. The image underlines the dual dependence of coloniser and colonised—and it also has implications for questions of literary domination and independence (Newman 20)

Richard A. Posner in his book Sex and Reason proposes that the practice of sex falls into three end groups: *procreative*, *hedonistic*, and *sociable* (111). Hedonistic end is associated with sexual desire and *ars erotica*, which is a deliberate cultivation of the faulty of sexual pleasure. The sociable group of sexual end refers to the use of sex construct or reinforce relationship with other people, such as spouses or friends (111). Sociable sexual end can be explicitly commercial; thus, the ends persuade by the prostitutes also fall into this category—like the main male character-Amelie’s sexual liaison. But there many sexual relationships that are not classified as prostitution, nevertheless, a certain strong commercial element, for example, marriage for money—like the main male character-Antoinette sexual relationship—(Posner 112).

The main male character and Antoinette’s marriage is more to be noncompanionate rather than companionate one. In noncompanionate marriage, husband and wife are virtual strangers from an emotional standpoint, and the sexual relationship between them is no more rewarding than that between strangers (Posner 112). Noncompanionate marriage will foster extramarital sex on the part of both spouses, coupled either with strenuous efforts by the husband—motivated either by instinctual jealousy or by conscious concern of human impulse. The main male character chooses to do the liaison with Amelie—a particular women that Antoinette hates for Amelie has insulted Antoinette against the fact that Antoinette is her mistress. In companionate marriage, marital sex is invested with effective elements

thereby creating 'socioemotional closeness and exchange' rather than just 'psychophysiological pleasure and relief' (Posner 112). There isn't such a thing in The main male character-Antoinette's marriage. The main male character here is practicing philandering by committing extramarital sex, even though it would only be for an inferior substitution of his marital sex.

Sex is the glue to a marital relationship. It is essential to companionate relationship—at least this is a kind of marriage that Antoinette has expected hers to be. When one of the spouses is no longer interested to do so, the marriage soon comes into pieces. Sexual activities in a marriage are the obligation for each spouse to submit to the others request for sexual intercourse as the Roman Catholic concept of the 'marital debt' (Posner 111). In the end, the main male character refuses to make love to Antoinette and betrays this 'marital debt,' but he makes love with Amelie instead. This is to denounce the main male character's double standard of sexual preference.

Edward Rochester—never named in the novel—is a creature of his culture and history; his motivation reflects both his engrained racial prejudice and the attitudes of his time to purity in women. If on page 71, the main male character says, 'She might have been any pretty English girl,' but on the other page he says, 'For a moment she looked very much like Amelie. Perhaps they are related, I thought. It's possible, it's even probable in this damned place' (Rhys 127). This is a prove that the main male character demands a purity of race in Antoinette for he can't accept anything which is not essentially English. But why then, he performs such fornication

with Amelie? After one last night of love in the favour of Christophine's love-potion, the main male character covers Antoinette's face with a sheet, as though she were dead, and retreats to the arm of his maid, a women whom he can possess and dominate sexually without any complications—a paid woman. That what is called as 'debasement.'

In spite of the main male character not loving Antoinette, 'I did not love her. I was thirsty for her, but that is not love. I felt very little tenderness for her, she was a stranger to me, a stranger who did not think or feel as I did' (Rhys 93), he admits that she is beautiful and is in an equal rank as himself, 'She is sitting on the sofa and I wondered why I had never realized how beautiful she was' (Rhys 80). His refusal to Antoinette is due to his inconvenient situation. 'I have not bought her, she has bought me, or she thinks.' (Rhys 70). The main male character's marriage to Antoinette is a wreck since the first place. Antoinette sexual zombification to the main male character has given a total damage to their marriage. The damage is caused by the initial frustration of sexual pleasure is seen in the fact that the freedom later given to that pleasure in marriage does not bring full satisfaction (Freud 143). The main male character's love as a civilized man is caught in the middle of two instincts—the sexual and the egoistic. His hatred to Antoinette drives him to some perverse sexual aims. The main male character needs a debased sexual object, a woman who is ethnically inferior, to whom he needs to attribute no aesthetic senses of right and wrong, who does not know him in his other social relations and cannot judge him in them. It is to such a woman, like Amelie, that the main male character

prefers to devote his sexual potency, even when the whole of his affection belongs to a woman of a higher kind.

‘In the morning, of course, I felt differently. Another complication. Impossible. And her skin was darker, her lips thicker than I had thought. She was sleeping very soundly and quietly but there was awareness in her eyes when she opened them, and after a moment suppressed laughter. I felt satisfied and peaceful, but not gay as she did, no, by God, not gay. I had no wish to touch her and she knew it, for she got up at once and began to dress’ (Rhys 140).

The main male character is assured of complete sexual pleasure only when he can devote himself unreservedly to obtain satisfaction to hurt Antoinette.

‘She was so gay, so natural and something of this gaiety she must have given to me, for I had not one moment of remorse Nor was anxious to know what was happening behind the thin partition which divided us from my wife’s bedroom’ (Rhys 140).

B.4. Power

The power that we are talking about here is the patriarchal power. Patriarchy subordinates the female to the male or treats the female as an inferior female, and this power is exerted, directly and indirectly, in civil and domestic life to constrained women (Selden and Widdowson 214). This patriarchal power is equal to sexual politic, acting one of the sex-roles in the unequal and repressive relations of

dominated and subordinated. For men the other sex is something other than power. Let others have rule; there is nothing a woman can do with it. Her role is to say power, 'that's not it', 'that isn't enough'. An element of negation, of change, of movement (Kristeva 115). And if it's necessary to seize power for a woman to speed this movement on its course, a woman must never forget that it is an instance in the process, to be surpassed.

Jean Rhys, in Wide Sargasso Sea, has made an analogy between imperial oppression upon women. Antoinette suffers first at the hands of her own society—a 'white nigger', resented by the recently freed slaves—and, later, as the main male character's wife, subject to his Western, male desire for imperialistic domination (Spaul 96). The main male character is the personification of British Imperialism with masculinity and as the dominant group, whilst assigning Antoinette, Christophine, Tia, even Amelie to the muted group. The main male character clearly embodies the imperialism, which brought his forefathers to the West Indies, and it is the attitudes that characterise this nationally inherited trait which seem to have become naturalised in him to form part of his 'maleness'. This following dialogue between the main male character and Antoinette makes a clear vision about 'man is the ruler and woman is under his ruling':

'What right have you to make promises in my name? Or to speak for me at all?'

'No, I had no right, I am sorry. I don't understand you, and I cannot speak for you.....' (Rhys 171)

This is a good example to prove that women have no voice at all. It is particularly hostile to female subjects, and that it inevitably subjects women to the threat of male violence and patriarchal domination.

The main male character cannot accept the dysfunction between his previous experience and the 'reality' now confronting him. And despite his apparently having the upper hand, the main male character can never achieve overall power. Antoinette retains a reserve of female power which the main male character can never destroy, and of which he will always feel the lack (a castration traditionally associated with women (Spaul 108)): 'Above all I hate her. For she belongs to the magic and the loveliness. She had left me thirsty and my life would be thirst and longing for what I had lost before I found it' (Rhys 172). There is still some matriarchal power that the main male character cannot defeat or even touch: it's Christophine's power—the *Obeah* that belongs to the culture of the islands. The *Obeah* might merely releases all the misery, jealousy and ferocity that has been piling up in the main male character for so long. He pretends to think he's been poisoned—that's only to pile up everything he can against Antoinette and so excuse his cruelty (Geason 425).

In his conversation with Christophine, which strips of his imperialistic and patriarchal justification, the main male character realises his own guilt. When she chastises him for his intentional cruelty, the main male character inner voice says 'It was like that, I thought. It was like that. But better to say nothing' (Rhys 152). The main male character wins the duel with Christophine by threatening her with the

'letter of the law'. He reads her a letter from the local police chief, making the point that one word from him will be enough to send her into the jail. Without Christophin's shadowing Antoinette's life. The main male character will be able to takes full control over Antoinette.

The main male character has attempted to destroy Antoinette's identity as completely as possible by taking her name and mirror. He eventually complete his suppression to Antoinette by returning with her to England, where he can recuperate the security by controlling the dominant world-view, where he will be 'sane', his 'reality real', and Antoinette 'insane', living in a dream world.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION