



**IQTIDORLI TALABALAR,
MAGISTRANTLAR, TAYANCH
DOKTORANTLAR VA DOKTORANTLARNING
“TAFAKKUR VA TALQIN”**

**MAVZUSIDAGI
RESPUBLIKA MIQYOSIDAGI
ILMIY-AMALIY ANJUMAN**

TO'PLAMI



Buxoro - 2023

Шарлотты Бронте в русской литературе второй половины XIX века: дис. ... канд. филол. наук / А. А. Сыскина. – Томск, 2013. – 240 с.

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INTERTEXTUALITY IN “WIDE SARGASSO SEA” BY JEAN RHYS

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Annotation. The article discusses the intertextual relationships between two novels “Jane Eyre” and “Wide Sargasso Sea” and analyzes some features of intertextuality.

Key words: intertextuality, relationship, novel, genre, author, symbol, character

Intertextuality is an important thing to understand when it comes to a literary work. Basically, it is the practice by which authors reference, quote, draw from, or reimagine other literary works in a new text. The intertextuality definition is quite broad, encompassing a wide variety of literary connections. Essentially, any writer who deliberately connects their text to any other literary work is engaging in intertextuality.

The original theory of intertextuality was developed by theorist Julia Kristeva as a way to explain the relationships between texts. Kristeva's theory explains that every literary text is essentially depended on earlier texts. In other words, all literature is fundamentally a conversation, and no literary work stands entirely alone[3]. Kristeva argued that every text is actually an "intertext" that exists as an intersection between other literary works. Kristeva's concept of intertextuality is deeper than most contemporary interpretations of intertextuality in media, but it is a compelling one that has been further discussed by other theorists and philosophers. [3]

There are many reasons why authors choose to use intertextuality in their works. A particular author's purpose is often explained by the type of intertextuality that they use in their writing. Intertextuality can function as a means to give audiences key points about a work's themes, thesis, or plot. It can also be used to generate humor or to creatively reinterpret the source material. Some authors use intertextuality to deliberately place their work within a particular tradition or to bring attention to the work of another writer. Sometimes, intertextuality can help give audiences a basic concept that makes it easier to understand a new work through comparison. The purposes of intertextuality are so varied that it would almost be more accurate to suggest that each unique instance of intertextuality has its own unique purpose depending on the needs of the work and the choices of the author. [4]

There are many different types of intertextuality that can be used in literature. There are many ways to create intertextual relationships between works, including:

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the process by which a writer steals someone else's work and attempts to pass it off as their own. While plagiarism is technically a form of intertextuality, it is heavily disapproved and is considered to create dishonesty.

Translation. The means of translating a work from one language to another. It is more than just a technical practice but it is also a creative one that is necessarily intertextual in nature, creating a cultural and linguistic interplay between the two versions of a work.

Allusion. An allusion is an indirect mention to another piece of work, often by mentioning something about its main characters, themes, or imagery in a way that most audiences will recognize.

Parody. Parody is a term for humorous approaches to intertextuality. Parodies often exaggerate and satirize elements of a work to make a point.

Pastiche. A pastiche is a deliberate stylistic interpretation of another work or type of work. For example: a writer deliberately can imitate 19th-century literary voices while writing in the 21st century is creating a pastiche.

English literature shows how different works by various authors can be closely related to one another and share a large amount of characteristics and points. “Wide Sargasso Sea” by Jean Rhys, published in 1966, is a classic example of a postcolonial work in which the author rejects the Victorian culture and British colonial policies shown in Charlotte Bronte's “Jane Eyre”. As a reaction to the way Bronte's novel was portrayed, Rhys' novel explores a variety of problems, including ethnic distinctions, binary oppositions, identity loss, and rejection of oppression. “Wide Sargasso Sea” is comparable to “Things Fall Apart” by Chinua Achebe, a postcolonial reaction to “Heart of Darkness” by Joseph Conrad. “Things Fall Apart” is Achebe's critique of and response to Joseph Conrad's earlier novel “Heart of Darkness”, which he believes affirms Western superiority and the exoticism and inferiority of the colonized peoples, similar to how Wide Sargasso Sea critiques and responds to Charlotte Bronte's colonial novel “Jane Eyre”. Rhys makes reference to the colonialist elements of Bronte's book, while Achebe criticizes Conrad's for his demeaning and disrespectful depictions of Africans. This study examines intertextuality and its importance in “Wide Sargasso Sea” by Jean Rhys.

In the novel, "Wide Sargasso Sea", Jean Rhys gathers some events occurred in the famous novel "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte [5]. The purpose is to tell the readers another tale. Rhys presents the wife of Mr. Rochester, who played the role of a secondary character in Jane Eyre. Also, the setting of this novel is Jamaica not England, and author develops the back-story for his major character [6] While spinning the novel, Jane Eyre, she gives her interpretation amid the narrative by addressing issues such as roles of women, colonization and racism that Bronte did not mentioned in her novel otherwise.

In her novel “Wide Sargasso Sea”, Jean Rhys uses the Victorian concept of madness in the same way that Victorian authors did. Rochester, the spouse of Antoinette gets the letter from Antoinette's step sibling, Daniel Cosway. The letter asserts that Antoinette's family has a history of mental illness and sexual deviance. Antoinette is confined in Thornfield Hall by Rochester. When her step sibling Richard Bricklayer visits her she goes after him. In Thornfield Hall, Bronte evokes a terrifying atmosphere

of supernatural mystery. She describes these events to Bessie in an eerie tone to arouse fear in the reader. "I saw a light, and I thought a ghost would come,"[1] she says in Jane Eyre, (page 122). The moonlight, lightning, coldness, mysticism, noises, and footsteps of Thornfield Hall, the main setting of Jane Eyre, are used to build tension in the book.

The concept of marriage is another theme that Rhys borrows from Charlotte Bronte. In both Jane Eyre and Charlotte's Web, Rochester, Bertha's husband, is the main character. Bertha, on the other hand, has a smaller role in Charlotte's book than Antoinette did in Wide Sargasso Sea. In the book Wide Sargasso Sea, Antoinette is frequently referred to as Bertha.

".....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" [2]

"Wide Sargasso Sea" by Jane Rhys is mainly concerned with patriarchy. Rhys wanted to give Bertha, Mr. Rochester's wife, a life because Bronte's novel only showed her as a mad ghost. Rhys' main character, Antoinette, is a female version of Bertha Bronte before she arrived in England to live at Mr. Rochester's Thornfield Hall estate with her husband. While Antoinette is depicted as an innocent being who seeks love and appreciation, patriarchal dominance and control reduce women's self-esteem, Mr. Rochester is portrayed as a man who wants to maintain his position of power and maintain his patriarchal and colonial status. The main characters, Antoinette and her English husband Mr. Rochester, are culturally different, creating a large gap between them that they will never be able to close. While cultural differences in norms and values can be viewed as madness, they can also be a result of society's operation.

In Charlotte Bronte's "Jane Eyre", the characters Jane Eyre and Bertha are both abused by the male centric arrangement of the nineteenth century Britain. By the time Jane Eyre is nine years old, she is subjected to a great deal of injustice at Gateshead Hall, but the manner in which each woman rebels against culture determines a very different future. She chooses to defy the brutal treatment that she gets from her loved ones. They see her as disobedient because she wants to learn and think for herself, and her

punishment becomes so unbearable that she can't control herself. She attacks John Reed, who is wealthy and spoiled. She is then imprisoned in the redroom, a hunting chamber. In male overwhelmed social orders lady are as yet thought about object of joy. Society's patriarchal structure prevents women from living independently. Men generally attempt to make them their slaves. They want them to do anything and everything for men that they need to do. Women in these societies get ready to fight against a world dominated by men. Wide Sargasso Sea's patriarchal structure is reminiscent of Charlotte's "Jane Eyre", in which Jane and Bertha are ruled by men at various points in the book. When Bertha marries Rochester, he views her as lusty, improper, and deviant. Jane, an orphan, was mistreated at Gateshead as a child. She was referred to as a common woman, low, narrow, and incapable.

Antoinette is alienated from her own identity by Mr. Rochester because of his obsession with dominating and controlling his wife. By calling Antoinette Bertha, he tries to change her identity and make her into Victorian English women, which makes him feel insecure and afraid. He tells Antoinette the reason he calls her Bertha:

"It is a name I'm particularly fond of. I think of you as Bertha"[2]

By calling her Bertha he estranges her from West Indian character and powers an English personality upon her. He tries to make a woman that he can control, control, and own. When Mr. Rochester and Antoinette are about to leave for England at the end of the second part, he worries that he has gone too far. She no longer expresses her emotions. She is completely passive because she has lost her vitality. He worries that he has completely destroyed her. Despite the fact that he deliberately withdrew her identity in order to transform her into an English Victorian Wife whom he could control, he worries that she cannot be fixed and feels remorse:

She stated that she adored this spot. She will not see it again until this point. I'll watch for one tear, one human tear. Not that blank hating moonstruck face. I'll listen if she says good bye perhaps adieu like those old time songs she sang. Always adieu (and all songs say it). If she too says it, or weeps, I'll take her in my arms, my lunatic.
[2]

He is worried about the possibility that that she is unchangeable as far as he might be concerned that she has turned inwards with her frenzy. The expression "Mine, Mine" also reflects his patriarchal nature, indicating his obsession with material success, control, and power.

Wide Sargasso Sea by Rhys is a novel of intertextuality that bears resemblance to Jane Eyre in every way. The aforementioned discussions and citations make it abundantly clear that the structure of the novel Wide Sargasso Sea is identical to that of Jane Eyre.

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