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Unstable Borders: Gender and Postcolonial Construction of Identity in Jean Rhys's *Voyage in The Dark*

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Dedications

**In the NAME of ALLAH, the most GRACIOUS, and the most
MERCIFUL,**

I dedicate this work to the closest people to my heart

To the light of my eyes, my mother **Amina** and my dear Sister **Wahiba**,
for their endless care, love, and prayers

My Friends and My relatives:

For their unconditional support.

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Thanks to Allah for giving me the inspiration, strength, and patience to write
this modest dissertation

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Abstract

This dissertation studies the novel *Voyage in the Dark* by Jean Rhys. It looks at how the main character, Anna Morgan, suffers because of her background as a Caribbean young woman living in England. She is neither accepted by the English society nor does she feel attached with her past in the Caribbean. The study uses the postcolonial feminist theory to understand Anna's pain. Postcolonial theory explains how the history of colonization affects people's lives. The feminist theory looks at how women are treated unfairly in a male-dominated world. Together, these theories help show how Anna suffers not only because of her race and culture but also because she is a woman, a double colonization. The dissertation also looks closely at Anna's relationships with other characters, such as Walter, Hester, Ethel, and Laurie. These relationships show how women like Anna are controlled, judged, and often left without support. Even other women sometimes become part of the system that hurts her. By studying *Voyage in the Dark* through postcolonial feminist ideas, this work shows that Anna's story is not just about one person. The novel helps readers understand the deep emotional effects of colonialism and patriarchy. Jean Rhys uses Anna's story to give a voice to those who are often silenced.

Key words:

Feminism, gender, in-betweenness, identity construction, Postcolonialism

الملخص

تهدف هذه الأطروحة رواية "رحلة في الظلام" لجين ريس. وتسلط الضوء على معاناة الشخصية الرئيسية، آنا مورغان، بسبب خلفيتها كامرأة شابة من جزر الكاريبي تعيش في إنجلترا. فهي لا تجد القبول في المجتمع الإنجليزي، ولا تشعر بالانتماء إلى ماضيها في الكاريبي. تستخدم هذه الدراسة نظرية النسوية ما بعد الاستعمارية لفهم ألم آنا. تشرح نظرية ما بعد الاستعمارية كيف يؤثر تاريخ الاستعمار على حياة الناس، بينما تركز النظرية النسوية على كيفية تعرض النساء للظلم في عالم يهيمن عليه الذكور. وعند الجمع بين هاتين النظريتين، يتضح أن معاناة آنا ناتجة ليس فقط عن عرقها وثقافتها، بل أيضاً لأنها امرأة، أي أنها تتعرض للاستعمار المزدوج. كما تتناول الأطروحة علاقات آنا مع شخصيات أخرى مثل والتر، وهاستر، وإثيل، ولوري، وتُظهر هذه العلاقات كيف يتم التحكم بالنساء مثل آنا، والحكم عليهن، وتركهن دون دعم. بل إن بعض النساء أحياناً يصبحن جزءاً من النظام الذي يؤذيها. ومن خلال دراسة رواية "رحلة في الظلام" باستخدام أفكار ما بعد الاستعمار والنسوية، تُظهر هذه الدراسة أن قصة آنا ليست مجرد حكاية فردية، بل تُساعد الرواية القارئ على فهم الآثار العاطفية العميقة للاستعمار والنظام الأبوي. وتستخدم جين ريس قصة آنا لإعطاء صوت لأولئك الذين يتم إسكاتهم في العادة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النسوية، النوع الاجتماعي، التداخل الثقافي، بناء الهوية، ما بعد الاستعمار.

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General Introduction

In both postcolonial and feminist studies, identity is seen as something complex and often unstable. When these two areas of thought are combined, it becomes clear how race, gender, class, and colonial history affect how people see themselves and how they are seen by others. Jean Rhys's novel *Voyage in the Dark*, published in 1934, is an important text that shows how identity becomes uncertain, especially for women who have lived through both colonial and gender-based oppression. Jean Rhys was born in the West Indies, in Dominica, and later moved to England. This mixed background influenced her writing, which often focused on women who feel lost, excluded, and silenced.

In *Voyage in the Dark*, the main character Anna Morgan moves from the Caribbean to England and faces many challenges, such as racism, poverty, and emotional suffering. She is caught between two cultures and does not feel fully accepted in either. Because of her gender and background, her sense of identity becomes confused and unstable. The story of Anna shows how colonialism and patriarchy can make someone feel like they do not belong anywhere. Anna is treated as inferior because she is a woman and because she is from the colonies. These two forms of oppression work together and make her situation worse. As a result, her identity is shaped by both her personal experiences and the larger systems of power around her. This shows how the borders of identity, such as race, gender, and culture, can shift and become unclear.

The way the novel is written also reflects this confusion. Rhys uses techniques like stream-of-consciousness and flashbacks, which mirror Anna's confused thoughts and feelings. This style helps show the inner world of a woman who is struggling to hold on to a stable sense of self. This dissertation is expected to provide an approaching answer to the

following the general question :How is the identity of the female protagonist deconstructed in Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark*? This general question generates in the following number of sub- questions: How does the protagonist Anna Morgan struggle to construct her identity in a patriarchal and colonized society? In what way does the novel embody the feminist postcolonial codes in portraying female and male characters?

This dissertation will also be dissected into two chapters, starting with the General Introduction and ending with the General Conclusion. The first chapter covers the theoretical framework, which include background to Postcolonial and Feminist theory. The second chapter will include the practical analysis of the novel to show how the relationship among characters, female and male, embodies the feminist postcolonial codes.

The research also uses scholarly articles and critical sources to support the analysis. This approach allows for a deep understanding of the novel's message about how women from colonized backgrounds struggle to find their place in society. and discuss how Rhys's writing style helps express this instability. The work will use ideas from postcolonial feminist theory to better understand how the novel challenges traditional views of women, identity, and colonial history. Scholars like Gayatri Spivak and Chandra Talpade Mohanty have pointed out how the voices of colonized women are often silenced or misrepresented in literature (Spivak 1988; Mohanty 2003). In Rhys's novel, Anna's voice, even when quiet or confused, becomes a way of resisting the roles that society tries to force on her. Through this study, the novel will be shown as a powerful example of how literature can reveal the struggles of women living at the edges of empire and society.

Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark* is a novel that has received much attention from literary scholars, especially for how it explores identity, gender, race, and colonial history. The story of Anna Morgan, a young white Creole woman from the Caribbean living in

England shows how a person's identity can become broken when they are caught between two cultures. Many critics agree that Rhys uses Anna's character to explore what happens when someone no longer belongs anywhere. Andrés Ibarra Cordero, in his article "Divided Self in Jean Rhys' *Voyage in the Dark*," says that Anna has a "divided identity." She is physically in England but mentally and emotionally still tied to the Caribbean. Cordero points out that Rhys uses modernist writing techniques, like flashbacks and shifts in time, to show this inner conflict. These changes in memory and time help the reader understand that Anna is emotionally lost. She feels disconnected from both her past and her present, which causes her to feel hopeless and confused (Cordero 2022).

Afaf Al-Saidi "Female Protagonist in Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark*: A Gender Analysis" focuses on how Anna is shaped by her role as a woman in a male-dominated society. The article explains that Anna has very little control over her life. She depends on men, like Walter, for money, attention, and emotional support. But these men use her and then abandon her. Al-Saidi says that Anna's beauty is seen as her only value, and once that fades, society no longer has a place for her. Rhys shows how women were judged unfairly during that time and how they were often trapped in unhappy or unhealthy situations. This article helps the reader understand that Anna's pain is not only because of her identity as a colonized person, but also because of the way women are treated in society. She feels powerless not only because she is an outsider, but also because she is a woman with very few options (Al-Saidi 2011).

Elham Taheri and her colleagues "Women's Voice through Madness and Trauma in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Voyage in the Dark*" compares Anna's story with another Rhys character, Antoinette, from *Wide Sargasso Sea*. It explains that both women face deep emotional pain because of the pressure placed on them by colonialism and patriarchy. In *Voyage in the Dark*, Anna's sadness and emotional breakdown are described as a kind of

madness. But this “madness” is not weakness. Instead, the authors argue, it is a reaction to her life experiences especially the loss, racism, and loneliness she faces in England. The article shows how Rhys uses mental suffering as a way to speak about women’s trauma, especially when they come from colonized backgrounds and are forced into silence. The idea is that madness becomes a way for Anna to express the pain that she cannot put into words (Taheri et al. 2015).

Moreover, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, especially from her well-known essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?”, help the reader understand Anna’s silence and emotional isolation in a deeper way. Spivak explains how women from colonized societies are often not allowed to speak for themselves and are either silenced or spoken for by others. Although Spivak does not write directly about *Voyage in the Dark*, her theory fits Anna’s situation. Anna can be seen as a “subaltern” figure someone who is pushed to the margins and has no real voice in society. Her silence and mental suffering show how colonized women are often erased from public life. Spivak’s work reminds us that Anna’s emotional struggles are not just personal, but also political. They show how power, gender, and race work together to keep some women unheard (Spivak 1988).

In addition, Benedicte Corhay-Ledent’s article *Between Conflicting Worlds: Female Exiles in Jean Rhys’s Voyage in the Dark and Joan Riley’s The Unbelonging* adds another valuable layer to the discussion. Corhay Ledent argues that Anna’s alienation is not only cultural and racial, but also gender-based. She describes Anna as a woman who is “doubly alienated” first by being a colonial outsider in England, and second by being a woman in a male-dominated world. The article also highlights how Rhys uses sensory memories and nature imagery like flowers and colors to show Anna’s deep emotional ties to the Caribbean, in contrast to the cold, grey life in England. These contrasts help explain Anna’s emotional pain and her feeling of not belonging anywhere (Corhay-Ledent 500–509).

Furthermore, Harmony Farrell in her 2018 university essay titled *Gender Performativity in Jean Rhys's Voyage in the Dark: Fragility, Dependency and Vulnerability*. Farrell focuses on how Anna performs her gender role as society expects her to. The essay explains that Anna learns to behave in ways that make her seem fragile, dependent, and emotionally weak because that is what society rewards in women. But this performance is harmful. It makes Anna more vulnerable and easy to exploit. Farrell uses Judith Butler's idea of gender performativity to show that Anna's behavior is not natural, but shaped by the expectations of others. This essay helps explain how Anna's identity as a woman is something she is forced to act out, rather than something she truly owns (Farrell 2018).

Ultimately, data for this thesis is basically collected from the selected novel, and from from Articles and dissertations that have relevance to the research topics . this study requires the qualitative literary analysis method .This method focuses on understanding ideas, themes and meanings in the text,rather than using numbers or data The analysis is based on a close reading of the novel, looking at how identity, gender, and colonial history are shown through the characters, especially Anna Morgan. The study uses postcolonial theory to explore how colonialism affects identity, and feminist theory to understand how gender and power affect women's lives. These theories help explain the main character's feelings of being "in-between" two cultures.

Chapter One:

Theoretical Framework: The Intersection of

Feminism and Postcolonialism

Introduction

By looking closely at Anna's life through the lens of postcolonial feminist theory, it makes clear that her sadness, confusion, and loneliness are not just private emotions or personal struggles. They are the direct results of larger, deeply rooted systems of power colonialism and patriarchy that shape how people live, think, and feel. Anna is not just a young woman facing difficulties; she is a symbol of how the world treats women from colonized backgrounds. She lives in a world that constantly reminds her that she does not fully belong anywhere. She is expected to behave like the British, speak their language, and follow their customs, but she is never fully accepted by them. At the same time, she has been separated from her Caribbean home, which now feels distant and unreachable. This painful "in-between" condition, where she belongs to neither place, creates a strong emotional and mental struggle within her. She is left questioning who she is, where she belongs, and whether she has the right to feel seen or heard.

Jean Rhys does not simply write about Anna's pain she uses Anna to speak about the hidden pain of many women who live in similar situations. Through Anna, Rhys shows that colonial power does not stop after independence; it continues through language, culture, beauty standards, and the way people are treated. In the same way, Rhys shows that patriarchy is not only about men having more power it is about how women are trained to depend on men, to keep quiet, and to accept a lack of freedom. Anna's life becomes an example of how

these two systems colonialism and patriarchy work together to silence, confuse, and hurt women.

1-Postcolonial Feminist Theory and Background

Postcolonial theory is a way of studying how colonialism has affected the world, especially in countries that were once ruled by European powers. Colonialism was a system where powerful countries like Britain, France, and Spain took control of lands in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. They took resources, forced their culture and language on local people, and treated them as if they were less important. Even after these countries became independent, the effects of colonialism did not go away. People still felt confused about their identity, their culture, and their place in the world. Postcolonial theory helps explain these problems.

This theory became more important after World War II, when many colonies gained independence. Writers, scholars, and critics began to ask important questions. What does it mean to be free after so many years of control? How do people deal with being caught between their own culture and the culture of the colonizer? How do they rebuild their lives and understand who they are? Postcolonial theory looks at these questions and tries to understand how power, identity, race, and culture are shaped by the experience of colonization

Frantz Fanon (1925–1961) Frantz Fanon was one of the first important thinkers in postcolonial theory. He was from Martinique, a French colony in the Caribbean, and later became a doctor and writer. In his book *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Fanon wrote about how colonized people feel forced to act like white Europeans. He said that they often feel ashamed of their own culture and try to copy the people who ruled them. This causes deep

emotional and psychological pain. People feel trapped between who they are and who they are told to be.

In another important book, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon said that true freedom means more than just ending colonial rule. It also means healing the mind. He believed that colonized people needed to free themselves from the lies they had been told about their culture being “inferior.” Fanon’s work helps us understand that colonialism does not just harm countries it also damages people’s minds and self-worth.

Edward Said (1935–2003) Edward Said was a Palestinian scholar who also played a big role in postcolonial theory. His famous book *Orientalism* (1978) explained how Western countries created false images of Eastern people those from the Middle East, Asia, and other colonized places. These images made them seem strange, weak, or uncivilized. Said argued that these stereotypes helped Western countries feel justified in taking control of these regions.

Said showed that literature, art, and media were used to support colonial rule. He said that when Western writers talked about the East, they often did so in a way that made the West seem better. This led to a one-sided story that ignored the real lives and voices of the people from colonized lands. His ideas taught people to be more critical of how culture and power are connected.

Homi K. Bhabha (b. 1949) Homi Bhabha is another major postcolonial thinker who talked about ideas like hybridity, mimicry, and in betweenness. These terms may sound complex, but they describe very real feelings that many colonized people experienced. Bhabha believed that colonialism created hybrid identities identities that were mixed between the colonizer’s culture and the native culture. Colonized people often spoke the colonizer’s language, wore their clothes, and followed their rules, but they also held on to their own

traditions. This created a feeling of living between two worlds. They did not fully belong to either side.

Bhabha's idea of in-betweenness helps us understand how people like Anna Morgan in *Voyage in the Dark* feel. They are stuck between the past and the present, between the culture they were born into and the new one they are expected to adopt. This in-between state can lead to confusion, sadness, and even emotional breakdown. But Bhabha also said that this space could be powerful it could lead to new ideas and identities that challenge old systems.

Another idea from Bhabha is mimicry, which means trying to copy the colonizer. Colonized people might try to act like the rulers to gain respect or acceptance. But this copying is never perfect, and it often makes the colonizers uncomfortable. Bhabha said that this shows the power of the colonized people they can disturb the system just by refusing to fit in completely.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (b. 1942) Gayatri Spivak is a well-known postcolonial scholar who is also deeply interested in gender and feminism. In her famous essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988), she talked about the people who are pushed to the lowest part of society, especially poor women from colonized countries. She called these people subalterns. Spivak asked whether these subalterns can ever truly share their stories in a world where powerful people always speak for them. Even when others try to help, they often take away the voice of the very people they want to protect. Spivak's work reminds us that we must listen carefully to those who have been silenced and not speak over them.

Spivak's ideas help us see that postcolonial theory is not only about politics or nations, but also about people especially those who have been pushed to the margins. She reminds us to pay attention to the voices that are often ignored, including the voices of women. This naturally leads to another important field of study the feminist theory. While postcolonial

theory focuses on the impact of colonization, feminism looks closely at the ways women have been treated unfairly in society.

2. The History of Feminism and Jean Rhys as a Feminist Writer

Feminism is the belief that women should have equal rights, opportunities, and freedom just like men. It is about making sure women can make their own choices, speak freely, and live without being controlled or limited by society. Over many years, women have faced unfair treatment, and many strong voices have spoken up to change that. Writers, thinkers, and activists have worked hard to show the struggles of women and ask for change. Feminism became more popular and active in the early 1900s when women started demanding more rights. One of the most important early voices in feminism was the English writer Virginia Woolf, who used her writing to explain the problems women faced in everyday life and in the world of literature.

2.1 Virginia Woolf and the First Wave of Feminism

Virginia Woolf is remembered as a powerful thinker and writer who helped start what we now call the first wave of feminism. This wave focused on women's legal rights, education, and the right to express themselves. In her famous book *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Woolf said that for a woman to write and think freely, she must have her own money and her own space. She looked at history and asked why there were so few well-known women writers or artists. Her answer was simple but powerful because women were not given the same chances as men. They were not allowed to study, work freely, or write without judgment. Woolf believed that women could do great things if given the same freedom. Her ideas inspired many other women to think more deeply about their own lives and begin to write about them.

2.2 The Second Wave of Feminism

The first wave of feminism focused on education and voting rights, but by the 1960s and 1970s, many women realized that other problems still existed. This led to the second wave of feminism, which focused on issues like job opportunities, family roles, reproductive rights, and how women were treated in private life. Important feminist voices during this time were Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, and Germaine Greer. They believed that personal problems like housework, marriage, and motherhood were also political problems, because they affected so many women. They showed that women's feelings of unhappiness or lack of control in their lives were connected to larger social systems. This wave helped many women see that they were not alone in their struggles.

2.3 The Third Wave of Feminism

Later, in the 1990s, the third wave of feminism began. This wave focused on the idea that not all women have the same experiences. Feminists in this wave pointed out that a white, middle-class woman in America does not face the same struggles as a poor woman of color in another part of the world. Writers like bell hooks and Chandra Talpade Mohanty said that feminism must also think about race, class, culture, and colonial history. They believed that a woman's identity is made up of many parts, and all of them can bring different types of challenges. This wave was more global and inclusive. It asked people to think about how history and background shape a woman's life. These ideas are very helpful when we read and understand the work of Jean Rhys, who wrote about women who were lost, judged, and left out by both men and society.

3. Jean Rhys and Her Feminist Perspective

Jean Rhys is a writer who was born in the Caribbean and later lived in Europe. Her writing is very emotional and focuses on women who feel alone, unsure, and powerless.

Rhys's female characters are often poor, isolated, and dependent on others, especially men. Her stories show how hard it can be to live in a world where men have power and women are expected to stay quiet and behave a certain way. But at the same time, Rhys gives these women strong inner thoughts and quiet feelings that show they are not fully accepting their situation. One of her most famous characters is Anna Morgan, from her novel *Voyage in the Dark*. Anna is a young woman who moves from the Caribbean to England and feels completely out of place. She is judged for how she looks, how she speaks, and where she comes from. She is also judged for being a woman.

3.1 Anna Morgan's Journey in *Voyage in the Dark*

Anna's story is full of sadness and confusion. After coming to England, she struggles to find a place where she belongs. She does not have money or support, and she often depends on men to survive. This makes her feel powerless. But even though Anna seems weak and passive on the outside, her thoughts show that she is aware of her situation and does not like it. She questions the rules society has given her. Rhys uses Anna's silence, her memories, and her quiet sadness to show resistance. Anna does not fight loudly, but her pain speaks for her. Her emotions show that something is deeply wrong with the world around her. Through Anna's story, Rhys is not only talking about gender but also about the experience of coming from a colonized place and trying to live in the colonizer's world.

4 . Postcolonial and Feminist Attitudes in Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark*

Postcolonialism and feminism are two important theories that help us understand how power works in society. Postcolonialism looks at how colonial history has affected people and their cultures, especially after colonizers have left. It talks about things like identity, displacement, and how people from colonized places try to find their place in the world. On the other hand, feminism looks at how women have been treated unfairly in male-dominated

societies. Feminism talks about issues such as gender roles, women's rights, and how women can gain equality. When we bring these two ideas together, we can better understand how women from colonized countries have suffered in both ways as colonized people and as women. This combination is called postcolonial feminism.

In *Voyage in the Dark*, Jean Rhys gives us a story that clearly shows how postcolonialism and feminism connect. The main character, Anna Morgan, is a young woman who moves from the Caribbean to England. She is not fully accepted in England because of her Caribbean background, and she also faces problems because she is a woman. She has little control over her life and depends on men for money and attention. These men often leave her, making her feel powerless and alone. This shows how colonial history and gender rules work together to make life hard for someone like Anna. So, when we read the novel using both postcolonial and feminist theories, we can see that Anna is caught in the middle of two systems that limit her choices and silence her voice.

Anna's identity is very complex. She feels that she belongs neither to the Caribbean nor to England. She is stuck in between two places, two cultures, and two identities. This feeling is sometimes called "in-betweenness." Jean Rhys also experienced this feeling in her own life. She was born in the Caribbean and lived in Europe, so she did not feel fully accepted in either place. Rhys uses Anna to show her own feelings of being lost, different, and unsure. This in-betweenness is not just about geography but also about emotions, memory, and identity. Rhys uses this idea to show how painful it can be when someone has no clear place to belong, especially if they are a woman and from a colonized background.

When postcolonial and feminist ideas intersect, they help us look deeper into Anna's struggles. We can see that she is not just sad or lonely because of personal problems. Instead, her pain comes from bigger systems of power that control her. She is affected by racism,

sexism, and class differences. Her suffering shows how postcolonial feminism can be used to understand the lives of women who live at the edge of society. Jean Rhys uses Anna's voice even when it is confused or quiet to show resistance. Anna's thoughts and memories are a way of saying that she is still human and still feeling, even if the world ignores

4 .1. Lost Between Two Worlds: Anna's Painful Search for Belonging and Freedom

Anna Morgan is the main character in *Voyage in the Dark*, a novel written by Jean Rhys. Her story is about feeling lost and unsure of who she really is. Anna does not feel at home anywhere, and she struggles every day to understand herself. She feels confused and broken inside because of where she comes from, where she lives now, and how people treat her. Her life is shaped by two big problems: the history of British colonialism and the way women are treated unfairly in society.

Anna was born on the island of Dominica in the Caribbean. This island was once a colony of the British Empire. That means British people had power and control over the island's land, money, rules, and even the way people lived. As a child, Anna grew up in a place where everything was influenced by British culture. She spoke English, learned British ways, and heard stories about how beautiful and special England was. But at the same time, she was also part of Caribbean life. She loved her home, the natural beauty of the island, and the warm, close feeling of life there.

However, after her father dies, Anna moves to England with her stepmother. She had always dreamed of going to England. She thought it would feel like home and that life there would be happy and exciting. But when she arrives, things are very different from what she imagined. The weather is cold and dark. The people are quiet, distant, and often unkind. The streets feel lonely, and the houses seem closed. Everything feels strange. Even though Anna speaks English and tries to live like English people, she still feels like she doesn't belong.

At the same time, she begins to lose touch with her past. Her memories of Dominica start to feel far away, like they are fading. The sounds, smells, and feelings of her childhood become weaker. She starts to feel like her past no longer matters in this new country. So she is stuck in the middle she is not fully accepted in England, but she also feels like she no longer fits into the Caribbean world she came from. This makes her feel deeply confused, lost, and sad.

This feeling is something that happens to many people who come from colonized countries. They grow up being taught to love and respect the country that ruled over them like Britain. But when they actually go to that country, they are treated as outsiders. Even though they try to fit in, people look at them differently. They are never seen as truly part of that society. This is exactly what Anna goes through. She has British blood and British habits, but the English people still see her as foreign or strange. They treat her like she doesn't belong. They don't understand her, and they don't try to.

Anna's pain becomes even harder because she is a woman. At that time, women had very little power. Anna has no job, no money of her own, and no support system. She cannot make her own choices freely. She has to depend on men for everything food, shelter, clothes, money, and even love. This makes her feel trapped. She cannot escape her situation because she has no way to survive on her own. If a man decides to leave her, she is left with nothing. She becomes more helpless each time. This shows how women were often controlled by men and had very few options in life.

Anna's life is shaped by two kinds of suffering one because of her background as a girl from a colonized island, and one because of her position as a woman. Both of these forces take away her freedom and break her spirit. She is never able to feel safe, proud, or happy. She is always searching for a place to call home, a place where she can be herself without fear or shame. But no matter where she turns, she feels like she doesn't belong.

Jean Rhys uses Anna's story to show the deep pain of people who are stuck between two cultures, and the deep sadness of women who have no control over their lives. Anna's journey is not just about a place it is about her heart, her identity, and her fight to feel human in a world that keeps pushing her down.

4.2. Racial Oppression and the Colonial Gaze

The idea of the colonial gaze is important in understanding how Anna is treated in England. The colonial gaze refers to the way people from colonized countries are viewed by those from the colonizing country. Colonizers often see people from their colonies as different, exotic, or inferior. Instead of treating them as equals, they treat them as outsiders who do not fully belong.

This idea is discussed by famous postcolonial thinkers like Frantz Fanon and Edward Said, who explain how colonialism shapes the way people from colonized nations are seen and treated. In *Voyage in the Dark*, Anna experiences this colonial gaze when she moves to England. English people see her as different because of her Caribbean background and slightly darker skin. Even though she speaks English and has British heritage, she is not fully accepted as one of them. She is often treated as an outsider, someone who does not completely belong. This makes her feel invisible yet noticed at the same time she is constantly reminded that she is different, yet she is also objectified because of her difference.

Frantz Fanon and the Colonial Gaze , a famous postcolonial writer, talks about the colonial gaze in his work. He explains how people from colonized countries are often seen as “other” by Europeans. They are looked at in a way that makes them feel like they do not belong. They are also treated as less important or less intelligent. This idea helps explain why Anna feels so out of place in England. The way people look at her and treat her is shaped by colonial attitudes they see her as different, not as one of them. Fanon also explains that

colonialism creates deep psychological struggles for people from colonized nations. Anna's feelings of loneliness, sadness, and confusion are not just personal emotions; they come from the way English society treats her. She is constantly reminded that she is not truly English, no matter how hard she tries to fit in. This kind of racial oppression affects how Anna sees herself and makes it even harder for her to find a sense of belonging.

Another important writer, Edward Said, discusses a similar idea in his book *Orientalism*. Said explains how Western societies have historically stereotyped people from colonized regions. They often describe them as exotic, mysterious, or even inferior. This means that people like Anna are not seen as individuals but as representations of a stereotype. In *Voyage in the Dark*, Anna experiences both objectification and rejection. Some people find her interesting because she is from the Caribbean, treating her as something exotic. At the same time, they also look down on her and do not fully accept her. This is a common colonial mindset people from colonized countries are either seen as strange and interesting or as inferior and unworthy. Either way, they are never seen as equals.

Anna's Experience with the Colonial Gaze , race, gender, and colonial background all make her more vulnerable to the colonial gaze. In England, people judge her based on where she comes from, not on who she is as a person. She struggles with this constantly she feels that she is always being watched and judged but never fully understood. Because of this racial oppression, Anna feels disconnected from both England and her Caribbean past. In the Caribbean, she was affected by British colonial rule, which made her feel like she was part of England. But in England, she realizes she is not truly accepted. This creates a painful identity crisis she does not know where she truly belongs.

4.3. Double Colonization: Women's Oppression in a Colonial Context

One important idea in postcolonial feminism is double colonization, which means that women from colonized countries face two kinds of oppression at the same time colonialism, which affects them because of their race and background, and patriarchy, which affects them because they are women. This makes life even harder for them, as they are treated unfairly both because of where they come from and because of their gender.

Anna Morgan, the main character in *Voyage in the Dark*, experiences double colonization throughout the novel. She is seen as different in England because of her Caribbean background, and she is also controlled by men who have power over her. One clear example of this is her relationship with Walter Jeffries, a wealthy Englishman. Walter uses Anna for his pleasure, gives her gifts and money, and then leaves her when he no longer wants her. He never sees her as an equal, and when he abandons her, she has nothing. This mirrors how powerful men in colonial societies often exploited women from colonized backgrounds, using them for their own benefit and then discarding them.

Anna's dependence on men for survival is another example of double colonization. She has no job, no money, and no way to take care of herself. She is forced to rely on men like Walter to provide for her basic needs food, clothing, and shelter. When they leave her, she has no support and no power to change her situation. This happens because of both colonialism, which has taken away opportunities for people like Anna, and patriarchy, which forces women to depend on men.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, a postcolonial feminist thinker, explains that women like Anna experience two layers of oppression they are treated unfairly both as people from colonized nations and as women. Another feminist scholar, Gayatri Spivak, talks about how colonized women are often silenced. In both colonial and patriarchal systems, they have no

real voice, and their struggles are ignored. Anna's story reflects this she has no control over her life, and no one listens to what she wants. Her experiences are not just personal problems; they are part of a bigger system that keeps women like her powerless. Through Anna's story, Jean Rhys shows how colonialism and patriarchy work together to make life difficult for women from colonized backgrounds. Anna's pain is not just about one bad relationship or one difficult experience it is part of a much larger system of oppression that affects many women like her. *Voyage in the Dark* helps us understand how double colonization shapes the lives of women who are forced to live under both colonial rule and male dominance

4-4 The Manifestation of Displacement: No Sense of Home

One of the most important themes in *Voyage in the Dark* is displacement, or the feeling of not belonging anywhere. This is a common experience for people from colonized countries, who often feel caught between two different worlds. In the novel, Anna Morgan struggles with this feeling throughout her journey. She was born in the Caribbean, where she grew up surrounded by its culture, landscapes, and people. However, after moving to England, she realizes that she is not truly accepted there.

At the same time, she begins to feel distant from her Caribbean home. This creates a painful situation for her she does not feel fully connected to either place, and she does not know where she truly belongs. Anna's disconnection from home is one of the biggest emotional impacts of colonialism. Colonial rule often forces people to adopt European ways of thinking, dressing, and speaking, making them feel like they should belong to the colonizers' world. But when they actually move to these colonizing countries, they are still treated as outsiders. This is exactly what happens to Anna. Even though she grew up under British colonial rule, speaks English, and follows British customs, she is still seen as different in England. People look at her and treat her as if she does not belong. This makes her feel

lonely, lost, and unsure of who she is. Many postcolonial scholars have written about this feeling of unbelonging. One of the most important thinkers, Homi K. Bhabha, introduces the idea of “in-betweenness” to explain what happens to people like Anna.

Bhabha argues that colonized people often feel disconnected from both their native cultures and the colonizing culture. They do not fully belong to their homeland, but they are also not fully accepted in the colonizer’s land. This creates a constant identity crisis, where they struggle to understand who they are and where they fit in. Anna’s memories of Dominica comfort her, but at the same time, they remind her that she can never truly return. This shows the deep emotional and psychological impact of colonialism people are forced to leave their homes, but they are never truly accepted anywhere else.

Another important postcolonial writer, Aimé Césaire, describes how colonialism takes away people’s sense of home and identity, making them feel like they are always in exile, even when they are physically at home. For Anna, this is true in both Dominica and England. In Dominica, she was raised under British colonial rule, which made her feel like she belonged to England. But once she arrives in England, she realizes that people do not see her as one of them. This leaves her feeling lost and without a real home. The theme of displacement in *Voyage in the Dark* is not just fiction it reflects Jean Rhys’s own life.

She was born in Dominica, a Caribbean island that was a British colony, but she later moved to England. Like Anna, she felt out of place in both locations. She was never fully accepted as English, but at the same time, she felt distant from her Caribbean roots. This personal experience of not belonging anywhere is reflected in her novels, where she explores the deep emotional pain of being caught between two worlds. Jean Rhys’s own life shows that displacement is not just about geography it is also about identity and emotions. Even though she lived in England for most of her life, she never felt at home there. Like Anna, she

experienced loneliness, alienation, and a constant search for belonging. This is why *Voyage in the Dark* feels so real it is based on the author's own struggle.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have studied several important themes that explain Anna's suffering. First, we looked at how Anna struggles with her identity. She does not know who she really is, and she does not feel at home in either the Caribbean or in England. This lack of identity is made worse by the way others see her as someone who is different, strange, or not good enough. Second, we saw how Anna experiences racial judgment. People in England look at her with suspicion, treat her as an outsider, and see her skin, her voice, and her background as something less valuable. Third, we explored how Anna faces gender-based oppression. She is expected to depend on men for love, money, and a place to stay, and these men often leave her or treat her badly. Finally, we studied how Anna is emotionally and physically displaced. She has no safe place to go, no strong roots to hold onto, and no real feeling of home. These four themes show us how deeply Anna is affected by history, gender roles, and social injustice.

Even though Anna is not a strong or loud character, her quiet thoughts and memories are important. Her silence is not a sign of weakness; it is a form of survival. She remembers her past, she feels deeply, and she tries to make sense of her life. Her quiet voice becomes a way of resisting a world that wants to erase her story. Rhys gives space to that voice and allows Anna to speak, even if it is through confusion and sadness. In doing so, Rhys shows that women like Anna, who are often forgotten or ignored, deserve to be seen and heard. Anna's presence in the novel reminds readers that pain caused by colonialism and patriarchy is real, lasting, and deeply damaging but it is also something that needs to be shared and understood.

For this reason, *Voyage in the Dark* is not just a novel about one young woman's life. It is a powerful story about the emotional and mental effects of systems that control people through race, gender, and power. Jean Rhys uses fiction to show the truth. Through Anna, she teaches us that identity is not simple, that home is not always a place, and that silence can sometimes be the loudest form of protest. This chapter has shown that *Voyage in the Dark* is a deeply emotional, honest, and painful story but it is also a very important one. It opens the reader's eyes to the hidden struggles of women who live at the intersection of colonization and gender oppression. Rhys's work helps us understand not only Anna's inner world, but also the larger forces that create such suffering, making this novel a key text in postcolonial feminist literature.

Chapter two

The Manifestation of Colonial and Gender Power in Characters'

Relationships

Introduction

Voyage in the Dark by Jean Rhys is a powerful novel that explores the emotional journey of a young woman named Anna Morgan. The story is about Anna's life as she moves from the warm, familiar environment of her Caribbean home to the cold, distant world of England after her father's death. Anna's life in the Caribbean was full of freedom and comfort, but everything changes when she is sent to live with her stepmother in England. This new life is harsh, unfamiliar, and full of challenges. The novel focuses on how Anna struggles to adapt to this new environment and the emotional toll it takes on her.

Anna's life in the Caribbean was filled with a sense of peace and connection to her father and the natural world around her. She felt at home there, with the warmth of the sun, the sea, and the people she knew. However, after the loss of her father, Anna is forced to leave everything behind. When she arrives in England, she is shocked by the cold, grey weather and the unfamiliar ways of life. Everything in this new place feels strange and unwelcoming. Anna begins to feel out of place and isolated. She struggles with loneliness and the difficulty of adjusting to a society that seems very different from her own.

As Anna tries to build a new life in England, she faces many challenges. She feels rejected by the people around her and experiences the pain of being seen as an outsider. The racism she faces as someone from the Caribbean makes her feel invisible and unwanted. She also faces poverty and emotional neglect, which further deepens her feelings of isolation. The more she tries to find a place for herself, the more she feels like she does not belong

anywhere. These struggles lead Anna into a deep sense of sadness and hopelessness. As the novel progresses, we see her mental and emotional state become more fragile. Anna begins to lose her sense of self and the hope that things will ever improve.

Rhys's writing is deeply personal, and it is clear that her own life experiences shaped the story. Like Anna, Rhys was born in the Caribbean and later moved to England, where she also felt out of place. The feelings of loneliness, rejection, and displacement that Anna experiences reflect Rhys's own struggles. Through Anna's story, Rhys gives voice to the pain and confusion she herself felt as she tried to find her place in a world that did not always accept her.

In *Voyage in the Dark*, Jean Rhys captures the emotional complexity of Anna's life. The novel is not just about the struggles of a young woman trying to fit into a new country; it is about the deep, quiet pain of feeling lost and disconnected from the world around you. It is a story about survival about holding on to something inside yourself even when everything seems to be falling apart. It is about the emotional cost of being torn between two cultures and the toll that feeling like an outsider can have on a person's mind and heart.

In the end, *Voyage in the Dark* is not just Anna's story it is the story of anyone who has ever felt displaced, alone, and out of place. It shows how loss, loneliness, and emotional suffering can shape a person's identity and their view of the world. The novel reminds us of the deep emotional impact of being forced to leave behind everything you know, and the difficulty of trying to build a new life in a place that does not welcome you. Through Anna's journey, Rhys gives us a glimpse into the heart of a person who is struggling to survive in a world that seems to offer no place for them

5.1. Traces of Postcolonial Feminism in Rhys's *Voyage in The Dark*

Postcolonial feminism is a special way of studying literature and society. It looks closely at the lives of women from places that were once ruled by colonial powers, like the Caribbean, Africa, and India. Postcolonial feminism says that these women suffer in two big ways. First, they suffer because they are women in male-dominated societies. Second, they suffer because of racism they are seen as inferior because of their race, culture, or background. These two kinds of suffering are connected, and they make life even harder for women from colonized places.

In *Voyage in the Dark*, Jean Rhys shows how both colonialism and sexism shape Anna's painful life. Anna comes from the Caribbean, a region that Europeans often describe as exotic, wild, or different. These words sound exciting but are really a way of saying that people from the Caribbean are not "normal" like Europeans. When Anna moves to England, she quickly realizes that people do not see her as equal. They judge her by the color of her skin, her way of speaking, and her background. They treat her as if she is strange, untrustworthy, and less important.

One of the first signs of this is when the novel describes Anna's appearance. People notice that her skin is unusual in tone and that she looks "Hottentot" (Rhys 13). These descriptions show that Anna cannot blend in with English society. Instead of being accepted for who she is, Anna is made to feel like an outsider just because she looks different.

Anna's stepmother, Hester, is one of the clearest examples of how colonial attitudes still live inside people's minds. Hester often makes cruel comments about Anna's Caribbean past and background. She does not see Anna as an individual person. She lumps her together with racist ideas about Caribbean women being wild, loose, or immoral.

This way of thinking is explained by Edward Said, a famous postcolonial writer. In his book *Orientalism*, Said talks about how Western countries have often treated colonized people as “the Other.” This means they are seen as strange, less civilized, and even scary. In England, Anna becomes “the Other.” People do not judge her for her kindness, intelligence, or feelings. Instead, they judge her only because she comes from somewhere different.

Another important postcolonial feminist thinker is Gayatri Spivak. She explains that women like Anna are silenced in two ways. First, colonialism steals their voice by making them feel inferior. Second, sexism also steals their power by making them dependent on men. In Anna’s life, we can clearly see both of these forces working against her. She is young, female, poor, and a colonial subject. All these things leave her with almost no control over her life. She has to depend on men like Walter for money, safety, and survival and these men often use her and then abandon her.

Anna’s body becomes a powerful symbol of her suffering. She is not treated as a person with dreams and feelings but as an object something that can be used for pleasure and then thrown away. This loss of control over her own body and life leads to deep emotional suffering. Jean Rhys shows us Anna’s pain through her broken, confused emotions.

At one point, Anna says, “My God, this is a funny ay to live. My God ,how did this happen” (Rhys 40). This small sentence carries a lot of pain. It shows how exhausted and broken Anna feels inside. She has survived, but at a great cost to her spirit.

Anna’s mixed identity part Caribbean and part English creates even more confusion for her. She does not fully belong to either world. This feeling fits with Homi Bhabha’s idea of “hybridity.” Hybridity means living between two cultures but not being completely accepted by either one. Anna remembers the Caribbean with longing and love. It feels like

home to her. But she knows she cannot return. At the same time, England never accepts her as one of their own. She lives in a painful state of in-betweenness, never fully at home anywhere.

This feeling of being “in between” causes deep psychological pain for Anna. She is like a ghost who belongs to no place. She floats between two identities, lost and alone. This is one of the saddest parts of *Voyage in the Dark*. Anna’s deep sense of not belonging anywhere in the world.

5.2. Psychological Implications of Anna’s Displacement

Anna’s suffering is not just about racism and sexism. She also suffers deeply in her own mind and heart. Her journey in England is a slow journey into sadness, fear, and mental breakdown. Jean Rhys carefully shows us Anna’s inner world, so we feel her pain very closely.

From the beginning of the novel, Anna feels out of place. England feels cold, dark, and frightening to her. She says that the “colour were different” the smells “diffrent,” (Rhys,7)..This shows that Anna feels unwanted not just by people but by the very environment. Everything around her feels unfriendly.

Anna often thinks about her home in the Caribbean. She remembers the bright colors, the warm sun, the singing birds, and the happy sounds. These memories are very beautiful but also very painful because they remind her of what she has lost. When she remembers the Caribbean, she feels happy for a short moment. But when she looks at her real life in England, she feels dead inside. This sharp contrast between memory and reality makes her sadness even deeper.

Psychologists would say that Anna is suffering from cultural displacement. This means losing your sense of belonging when you move from one culture to another. Anna’s

home culture her Caribbean identity is not respected or valued in England. Because of this, Anna feels like she has no place in the world. She becomes disconnected from who she once was.

As time passes, Anna's depression grows worse. She feels more and more hopeless. After Walter leaves her, Anna says, "I don't care any more .And I didn't care any more" (Rhys 98). She feels like she has no soul left inside her only her empty body continues to live. Anna's depression also makes it hard for her to imagine a better future.

Jean Rhys uses a writing style called stream of consciousness to show Anna's broken mind. In this style, Anna's memories, feelings, and present experiences all mix together. Sometimes the novel feels like a dream or a nightmare. This technique helps the reader feel what Anna is feeling confusion, sadness, and fear.

From a psychological view, Anna shows signs of: depression ,hopelessness, tiredness, sadness, anxiety fear of the future, panic attacks, trauma (painful memories, Jean Rhys paints a very real and heartbreaking picture of a young woman whose life is destroyed both by the world around her and by her own inner suffering

6. Anna's Relationships with Other Characters

Anna's relationship with the people around her is very important for understanding her life and feelings. Each person she meets shows a different side of her struggles. These relationships help readers see how lonely and misunderstood she is. Many people in her life hurt her, judge her unfairly, or use her for their own needs. For example, some pretend to care about her but leave her when she needs help the most. Others treat her like she does not belong or make her feel ashamed of where she comes from. Through these relationships, we see how Anna feels lost, unloved, and powerless in a world that does not accept her. These

experiences shape her identity and add to the sadness and confusion she feels throughout the novel.

6.1. Anna and Hester

The relationship between Anna Morgan and her stepmother Hester is important for understanding how women can oppress each other, especially within colonial and patriarchal systems. Hester, a white Englishwoman, becomes Anna's guardian after her father dies and brings her from the Caribbean to England. Instead of helping Anna adjust to a new culture, Hester tries to erase Anna's Caribbean identity and force her into the mold of a proper Englishwoman.

Hester acts like a guardian of colonial and racial norms. She uses her position and power to judge Anna's background and culture. In a painful confrontation, Hester tells Anna, "I tried to teach you to talk like a lady and behave like a lady and not like a nigger... That awful sing-song voice you had! Exactly like a nigger you talked and still do" (Rhys 65). This quote is deeply racist and shows how Hester believes that Anna's identity is inferior.

Hester wants Anna to change her accent, behavior, and way of thinking to fit into white British society. This is an example of how colonial ideologies get passed on even by women. Postcolonial feminist scholar like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has written about the silencing of colonized women. In her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" she explains that women from colonized backgrounds often have no real way to express themselves because they are judged by both colonial powers and patriarchy (Spivak "can the Subaltern Speak"). Hester's treatment of Anna is a clear example. Instead of supporting Anna, Hester silences her. She tells her to be quiet, change how she speaks, and act in ways that erase her Caribbean background.

Anna, on the other hand, feels a strong emotional connection to her past. She remembers the Caribbean with warmth and sadness. She says, “Being black is warm and gay, being white is cold and sad” (Rhys 31). These words reflect how she views her past life compared to her current situation in England. But Hester doesn’t care about Anna’s emotions or memories. She focuses only on respectability and appearances.

Although Hester is also a woman living in a patriarchal society, she uses the little power she has to control Anna. Instead of showing kindness, she becomes part of the system that keeps young women like Anna weak. This is a key idea in postcolonial feminism women can sometimes support systems of oppression if they think it helps them gain power. Anna, meanwhile, feels lost and suffocated in England. She says, “I began to feel awfully miserable, as if everything were shutting up around me and I couldn’t breathe” (Rhys 68). This feeling is partly due to the cold, unfamiliar country, but also because Hester keeps pushing her down emotionally.

Anna has no space to be herself. Hester’s behavior is like a symbol of colonial power. She represents Britain and its efforts to control and change people from colonized lands. She wants Anna to act British, but she never fully accepts her. Even if Anna tries to fit in, she is still treated like an outsider. This shows how colonialism works not just through armies and laws but through personal relationships and family. Anna suffers from both. As a young woman from the Caribbean, she is judged by white British society and also expected to behave in ways that limit her freedom. Hester enforces both these systems. Even when Anna tries to behave according to Hester’s rules, she feels confused and disconnected. “I felt as if I had gone out of myself, as if I were in a dream” she says (Rhys 23). This shows her inner conflict. She cannot fully belong in either world. Hester’s rejection makes it worse.

Another way Hester controls Anna is through money. She refuses to give Anna proper financial support, leaving her vulnerable. Anna eventually becomes dependent on men like Walter for survival. Hester could have helped, but instead she uses money as a tool to control. This shows how women can use economic power to limit each other's independence. Rhys also shows that Anna longs for love and understanding but finds only judgment. She thinks of the Caribbean in warm and colorful terms, but sees England as cold and grey. This mirrors her relationship with Hester. The Caribbean represents freedom and life; Hester represents rules, control, and rejection. Hester's refusal to accept Anna's background is also a refusal to accept a different way of being. She mocks Anna's accent and upbringing and makes her feel ashamed.

This creates confusion and pain for Anna. She doesn't know how to hold on to her identity in a world that wants her to erase it. Rhys does not make Hester a simple villain. Hester herself is shaped by a society that teaches women to value reputation and manners above all else. But by enforcing those values so harshly, she becomes part of the system that hurts Anna.

The relationship between Anna and Hester is a strong example of postcolonial feminist ideas. Hester uses her power as a white Englishwoman to erase Anna's voice and background. Anna is left feeling alone, confused, and powerless. Jean Rhys uses this relationship to show how colonialism and patriarchy can cause women to hurt each other. The novel asks us to think about how power works between women and why it's important to

6.2. Walter and Anna

In *Voyage in the Dark*, Walter Jeffries is one of the first men Anna becomes involved with after she arrives in England. Their relationship is very important in showing how gender, race, class, and power come together to affect a young woman from a colonized background.

From a postcolonial feminist perspective, Walter is not just a man Anna dates he represents white, upper-class, patriarchal power. His actions reflect how white colonial men often treated colonized women with charm at first, but always from a position of control. At first, Walter seems generous. He takes Anna to restaurants, gives her money, and buys her clothes.

Anna, lonely and lost in a strange country, is drawn to this attention. But she quickly begins to feel that the kindness has conditions. "My handbag was on the table. He took it up and put some money into it" (Rhys 38.) This shows that Anna understands she is expected to give something in return. Walter is not helping her out of kindness. He expects obedience, affection, and sex. This kind of exchange reflects colonial power the powerful give gifts, but always in a way that keeps control. Walter treats Anna like she is a child or a toy. He often makes decisions for her without asking her opinion. and calls her "you're only a baby" (Rhys, 51). This shows how he talks down to her, like she cannot think for herself. This is both sexist and colonial he sees her as someone who is below him in every way in age, in intelligence, and in class.

Anna becomes confused about who she is. She says: "Have you ever noticed how different some looking glasses make you look " (Rhys, 38). This quote shows how much Anna's self-image depends on Walter. She starts to see herself the way he sees her not as a full person, but as someone who exists to please him. This is similar to how colonized people were taught to think of themselves through the eyes of their colonizers. Walter's abandonment of Anna is just as important as his presence. When he loses interest in her, he leaves without caring what happens to her. This shows how men like Walter use their power they take what they want and then walk away.

Rhys writes about Anna's feeling of loss, confusion, and hopelessness after he is gone. She turns to drinking and starts getting involved with other men, but none of them offer real

support. Walter has left a hole in her life that cannot be filled. This kind of emotional destruction is another form of violence. Walter doesn't hit Anna, but he hurts her by ignoring her feelings, using her body, and then disappearing. When he says, "Don't be like that, Don't be like a stone that I try to roll uphill and that always rolls down again (Rhys 50), he is blaming her for her own pain instead of understanding it. This is a common tactic of both patriarchy and colonialism make the victim feel like it's their fault.

Postcolonial feminist scholar Chandra Talpade Mohanty writes about the women from the Third World are often seen as weak and helpless. Even though Anna is white, her Caribbean background makes her an outsider. Walter treats her as someone who is exotic but not equal. He is interested in her difference, but only because it makes him feel powerful. He never sees her as a complete human being. Rhys uses Walter to show how colonial and patriarchal power can hide behind the mask of romance. Walter doesn't scream at Anna or hit her he gives her gifts and calls her pet names. But the harm he causes is deep. He makes her feel small, helpless, and alone. His charm is just another form of control. From a postcolonial feminist point of view, Walter is more than just a bad boyfriend. He is a symbol of how the British Empire treated people from the colonies take what they want, give nothing real in return, and leave them to suffer the consequences. (Mohanti ,Russo, and Torres)

He plays with Anna's emotions and uses her need for love and safety against her. The relationship between Anna and Walter in *Voyage in the Dark* is a clear example of postcolonial feminist issues. Walter uses his race, gender, and class to control Anna. He takes advantage of her poverty and loneliness, just as colonizers took advantage of colonized nations. Jean Rhys shows us that this kind of power is not just political it is personal. The emotional damage Walter causes is a result of a system that sees women like Anna as disposable. This makes their story not just a sad romance, but a powerful

6.3. Maudie and Laurie

The characters of Maudie and Laurie both show moments of friendship and support toward Anna. However, through a postcolonial feminist lens, their relationships with Anna reveal deeper struggles shaped by gender, class, and colonialism. While Maudie and Laurie offer some kindness, they are also part of a world that limits women's choices and emotional connections. Their characters show how women's friendships are often shaped and exhausted by patriarchal and colonial pressures. Maudie and Laurie both work as chorus girls like Anna. They are more experienced and have lived longer in London. They offer Anna advice about life, men, and survival.

At first glance, they appear as caring figures. Maudie, for example, comforts Anna when she is upset about Walter. She tells Anna, "The thing with men is to get everything you can out of them and not care a damn"(Rhys,44) Maudie's, speaking from her own painful experiences. She wants Anna to understand that men often treat women carelessly. Similarly Laurie offers advice and encouragement, though her approach is also shaped by the harsh world she lives in. Laurie is portrayed as someone who is practical and focused on material survival.

For instance, she speaks openly about using relationships with men to gain financial support. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, this reflects how women in vulnerable positions are often forced to use the few tools they have like their appearance or charm to survive in a society that offers them little else. Both Maudie and Laurie have learned how to navigate a male-dominated society. They do not hold real power, but they have developed coping strategies. Their advice to Anna while sometimes harsh is meant to prepare her for a difficult life. When Maudie says that getting money from a man is a success, she is not being greedy. Instead, she is being realistic about the limited opportunities available to working-

class women. As she puts it: “It’s all very well, but I bet you she gets off with somebody with money” (Rhys 44). Laurie shares a similar view. She does not seem interested in romance or emotional connection but instead focuses on survival.

From a postcolonial feminist view, this reflects how colonial and patriarchal systems have pushed women into roles where emotional and sexual relationships become ways to secure basic needs. These systems also force women into competition for limited resources such as attention and money from men making true female solidarity more difficult. Despite their moments of support, both Maudie and Laurie sometimes reflect the same harmful ideas that hurt them and Anna. They often joke about men, dismiss emotions, or ignore deeper feelings. These actions are not signs of cruelty, but rather signs of how they have learned to cope in a society that teaches women to be tough and silent about their pain. This internalization of patriarchal norms shows how deeply the system affects even the relationships between women.

Another important point is that neither Maudie nor Laurie truly understands Anna’s background as a woman from the West Indies. Although they do not insult Anna’s identity, they also never fully connect with it. This shows how even well-meaning people can overlook the experiences of those from colonized places. Anna often feels different, and her feelings of isolation are part of the larger colonial system that separates and devalues those from former colonies. As Anna’s emotional and physical condition worsens, both Maudie and Laurie distance themselves. Their friendship with Anna is based more on shared space and work than on deep emotional trust.

When Anna is in real crisis, they are not able to help. This distance is not because they do not care, but because they are also struggling with their own problems. Their limited ability to support Anna reflects how systems of oppression prevent women from forming

lasting and supportive bonds, even when they want to. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, Maudie and Laurie are both victims and participants in a system that exploits women. They want to help Anna but are caught in the same cycle of survival and silence. Their interactions with Anna include moments of comfort, but also moments of failure and misunderstanding. This reflects the reality for many women who live in a world where emotional support is often secondary to survival.

Maudie and Laurie are complex characters who represent both the possibility of female friendship and the difficulty of maintaining it in a harsh, unequal world. Through them, Jean Rhys shows how colonialism and patriarchy shape not just individual lives but also relationships between women. Their stories remind us that kindness and support can exist within systems of oppression, but those systems often limit how far that support can go.

6.4. Vincent

the character of Vincent shows how young women like Anna are treated in a society shaped by both colonialism and patriarchy. Vincent is not romantically involved with Anna, but his short appearance in the novel still tells us a lot about power, control, and how women from colonized backgrounds are often silenced. Vincent is a cousin of Walter the man who had a relationship with Anna and later left her. After Walter disappears, it is Vincent who visits Anna. During his visit, he asks Anna to return the letters that Walter had written to her. At first, this might seem like a simple or polite request. But from a postcolonial feminist view, this moment shows how much control men have over women like Anna, and how little her feelings matter in the eyes of society.

Those letters meant something personal to Anna. They were a part of her emotional life. But when Vincent asks her to give them back, he is showing that Anna has no right to keep even her own memories. He speaks in a polite way, but his words carry the power of a

society where men make decisions and women are expected to obey quietly. From a postcolonial feminist point of view, this act is not just about the letters. It is about taking away Anna's voice and experience. She is from the Caribbean a colonized place and Vincent, as a wealthy Englishman, represents a world where people like Anna are seen as less important. By asking for the letters, Vincent is helping to erase her side of the story. He does not ask how she feels. He does not explain why Walter is gone. He is only there to make sure Walter can leave without any trouble.

This moment also shows how patriarchal power works. Vincent does not need to shout or threaten Anna. His calm, quiet tone is enough to get what he wants. Anna knows she has no power in this situation. She stays silent and gives him the letters. Her silence is not because she agrees it is because she understands that no one will listen to her. This kind of silence is common in stories about colonized women. They are often forced to accept things they do not want, just to survive. It is also important that Vincent never shows real care for Anna. He does not comfort her or speak kindly about what she has been through. He is only there to do a task.

This shows how little her emotions matter to the people around her. In a world shaped by colonialism and patriarchy, women like Anna are often treated as if their feelings, memories, and even relationships do not belong to them. Vincent's short role in the novel helps to show the deeper systems of power that affect Anna's life. Even though he does not harm her directly, his actions are part of a bigger pattern where men control women, and people from colonized places are not treated as equals. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, asking for the letters is not a small thing it is a way of taking away Anna's story, her memories, and her voice.

6.5. Ethel Mathews

In Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark*, Ethel is another important female character who plays a complex role in Anna's journey. At first, Ethel seems to be helping Anna by giving her a job and a place to stay. However, when we look at Ethel's actions through a postcolonial feminist lens, we see that her support comes with control, judgment, and selfish motives. Like other characters in the novel, Ethel is shaped by the systems of patriarchy and colonialism. She may not be a man or a colonizer, but she still takes part in the same oppressive structure, especially toward vulnerable women like Anna. Ethel gives Anna work as a manicurist, which at first seems like a kind gesture.

In a society where women have very few opportunities to earn money respectfully, Ethel's offer might look like a way to help Anna become more independent. But soon we realize that Ethel is more concerned with her business and reputation than with Anna's well-being. She constantly tells Anna what to do, how to act, and how to dress. She says things like, "Smile and say, Please sit down"(Rhys 140

These kinds of instructions show that Ethel is not really interested in Anna's feelings. She only wants Anna to fit into the image that will benefit her own success. From a postcolonial feminist view, Ethel is another example of how women can be both oppressed and oppressors. She is not rich or powerful in a larger sense, but she uses the little authority she has to control someone weaker. Instead of understanding Anna's trauma or her experience as a colonial subject, Ethel judges her for being quiet, emotional, or different. She expects Anna to behave like a perfect English girl, happy, polite, and hardworking without considering her background or pain.

In one scene, when Anna is struggling emotionally and physically, Ethel says sharply, "You can clear out. You're no good; I don't want you here" (Rhys 144). This quote shows

how little compassion Ethel has. She does not try to understand why Anna is suffering. Like many people in a colonial and patriarchal society, she believes that hard work and good manners are all that matter. She has no room for emotional depth or cultural difference. Ethel's attitude reflects how the system teaches women to be harsh with each other instead of supportive.

Ethel also reflects how class and race affect women's relationships. Ethel is English and white. Anna is from the Caribbean and mixed-race. Even though Ethel never directly insults Anna's background, she treats her as inferior. This is especially clear when Ethel accuses Anna of being lazy or ungrateful, without recognizing the emotional and cultural difficulties Anna faces. Ethel wants Anna to behave like someone she can control and benefit from. This shows how colonial thinking can continue in everyday relationships even between women. At first, Ethel pretends to be a motherly figure, but later she reveals her selfishness. She uses kindness only when it serves her purpose.

When Anna no longer fits her expectations, Ethel quickly turns cold. She stops helping and even blames Anna for her own failures. Ethel's behavior shows how even small amounts of power can make people act in oppressive ways. Ethel's control over Anna is not based on care it is based on rules, image, and money. Ethel also represents how women in postcolonial spaces often internalize the values of the colonizers. She believes that success means behaving like the English middle class. being polite, efficient, and emotionless. She does not understand Anna's Caribbean background or her struggles. Instead, she pushes Anna to ignore her feelings and simply perform. This performance becomes a kind of emotional colonization: Anna must erase her true self to survive in Ethel's world. From a postcolonial feminist point of view, Ethel is not just a side character. She represents the way women can become part of the system that hurts them, especially when they have a little bit of power. She judges Anna for being different instead of understanding her. She supports Anna only when it helps her

own goals. Her lack of empathy and her demand for control make her another figure of oppression in Anna's life.

Ethel in *Voyage in the Dark* is a clear example of how women can be both victims and enforcers of patriarchal and colonial systems. She offers Anna help, but her help is conditional and controlling. She uses her position to push Anna into a role that denies her identity and pain. Through Ethel, Jean Rhys shows how complicated female relationships can be in a society shaped by power, class, and race. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, Ethel's character teaches us that real support between women must include understanding, empathy, and respect for difference

6.6. Uncle Bo

Uncle Bo is one of the kindest people in Anna's life. He is different from most people around him. What makes him unusual is that he treats all his children equally both his white and Black children. He even gives them his last name, which was not common at that time. In a society where people believed in strict racial divisions, Uncle Bo's actions stand out. People like Hester, Anna's stepmother, are upset by this because they believe that Black and white people should be treated very differently. Hester's reaction shows how deep racism was in the colonial world. From a postcolonial feminist point of view, Uncle Bo's actions are important because they challenge the racist and unfair ideas of colonial society. By treating his children the same, regardless of their race, Uncle Bo shows that love and family should not follow the cruel rules made by society. He represents a kind of fairness that is rare in the world around Anna.

However, even though Uncle Bo is kinder than many other characters, he is not perfect. When Anna is going through a difficult time, Uncle Bo does not do enough for her. He knows that Hester is not treating Anna fairly, especially with money that Anna should

have access to. But instead of stepping in and making sure Anna is protected, Uncle Bo stays silent. This silence is very powerful it shows how even good men often failed to help women who were suffering. Uncle Bo may have cared about Anna, but he does not act strongly enough to support her when it matters most. This is important from a feminist point of view because it shows how women were often left to suffer alone. Anna ends up in England, far from the warm and familiar world of the Caribbean. She is alone, poor, and emotionally lost. Uncle Bo's failure to act adds to her pain. Even though he is kind, his kindness is not enough to protect Anna from the unfairness of the world. Uncle Bo also represents something deeper for Anna he reminds her of home. When she remembers him, she remembers the Caribbean, a place that felt warm, safe, and full of love. England, in contrast, feels cold, distant, and harsh.

Uncle Bo is part of that lost world, and his absence makes Anna feel even more alone. The comfort she once felt is now gone, and the people who once cared for her are no longer there to help her. In the bigger picture, Uncle Bo's character helps readers understand how racism and sexism work together in colonial society. Even when one person tries to be fair and kind, like Uncle Bo, the world around them can still be cruel and unjust. His actions are a small light in a very dark system, but they are not enough to change the world for someone like Anna. The system is too strong, and women like Anna are left behind. This shows how deep the problems of colonialism and patriarchy go and how they continue to harm those who are most vulnerable.

6.7. Francine

Anna's Black Caribbean maid, and she is an important character in *Voyage in the Dark*. Even though she does not have a large role in the story, she represents the struggles of poor, Black women living in a racist and unequal society. Francine works very hard, but she has no power or freedom. She does not get to make her own choices in life. Like many

women of her background, she is stuck in low-paying, domestic jobs and cannot find a way to escape her difficult life. Francine is kind and gentle toward Anna. She treats her with care, and Anna seems to feel close to her. But their relationship is not equal. Anna is white, while Francine is Black, and this difference matters in the colonial world they live in. Even though they both live in the Caribbean, the society around them treats them very differently because of their skin color.

Francine may care for Anna, and Anna may like Francine, but the racial division between them is always there. Their connection shows how racism shaped even personal relationships under colonial rule. From a feminist point of view, Francine's life is much harder than Anna's. Both of them are women, and both suffer because they live in a male-dominated world. However, Francine also suffers because of her race and her class. She is not only a woman she is a poor, Black woman. This means she has even fewer choices than Anna. While Anna faces problems as a woman in a sexist society, Francine faces more serious struggles because she is also looked down on for being Black and poor. She has no power in the colonial system and no one to stand up for her.

Her life shows how different forms of unfair treatment like racism, sexism, and poverty can all come together to hurt people like her. Francine also represents something emotional for Anna. She reminds Anna of the Caribbean, which feels warm, alive, and full of memories. England, by contrast, feels cold, grey, and distant. When Anna remembers Francine, she is remembering a place and a time that felt more real and more comforting. Francine becomes a symbol of the home Anna has lost. But there is a major difference between them Anna, even with her struggles, gets to leave the Caribbean and start a new life in England. Francine, on the other hand, does not get that chance. She is stuck in the same place, doing the same hard work, with no way out.

This difference shows something very important. While all women suffer under patriarchy, not all women suffer in the same way. Francine's experience shows that poor, Black women often face the worst oppression. They are at the bottom of the social ladder and have the fewest rights. The world around them gives them no freedom and no respect. Francine's character helps readers see how colonialism and sexism work together to keep women like her trapped. She is a quiet character, but her presence speaks loudly about the harsh realities many women faced and still face today in systems that treat them as less than human.

7. The Significance of the Title

Jean Rhys gave her novel the title *Voyage in the Dark* to show that the story is about a sad and painful journey. The word "voyage" means a long trip. The word "dark" means something confusing, lonely, or full of sorrow. Together, these words tell us that the main character, Anna, is going on a journey that will make her feel lost and unhappy.

This title is connected to a famous book called *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. In Conrad's story, a man travels from Europe to Africa. He describes Africa as a dark and wild place. This book shows how European people saw African lands during colonial times. But Jean Rhys tells the story in a different way. In *Voyage in the Dark*, Anna travels from the Caribbean to England. The Caribbean is a place full of light, warmth, and beauty. England is cold, grey, and unfriendly. So in Rhys's novel, the "darkness" is not in the colonies, but in England the place of power. Anna feels alone, out of place, and sad there.

The article titled "Where Does the Darkness Lie: *Voyage in the Dark* and the Subversion of the Colonial Perspective" explains that Rhys changes the usual colonial story. Instead of showing the colonies as dark and uncivilized, she shows how the colonizing country England can feel dark and cruel, especially for people like Anna. The article also says that Rhys uses a modern writing style called Impressionism, where the story is told through

feelings and emotions instead of facts. This helps readers understand how Anna feels confused and in pain.

From a feminist postcolonial view, Anna's "voyage" is also about her identity. She is not fully English and not fully Caribbean. She is a white Creole. That means she is from the Caribbean but with European roots. In England, people do not fully accept her. She is treated as someone strange. She feels like she does not belong anywhere. This is called in-betweenness when someone is stuck between two cultures and does not feel part of either one.

As a woman from a colonized place, Anna also suffers because of her gender. She is treated badly by men, ignored by society, and given no power. The sadness in the story shows how women like her feel lost and voiceless. The "dark" in the title is not just about the weather or the streets of England it is also about how Anna feels inside.

So, the title *Voyage in the Dark* is not just about a trip. It is about a young woman's journey through pain, loneliness, and confusion. It shows what happens to women who are stuck between two worlds. Through this title, Jean Rhys shows that the real darkness is not in faraway lands, but in the way people treat those who are different especially women from colonized places.

Conclusion

Voyage in the Dark presents the deep emotional and mental suffering of women who come from colonized places. Anna Morgan's story is not only about sadness or confusion. Her life shows how colonialism and patriarchy work together to create pain, silence, and loss. She feels like she is between two worlds and does not belong to either. Her background, her race, and her gender all make people treat her as less important. Because of this, she struggles to find her place, her voice, and her freedom.

Anna's relationships with people around her show how these systems of power

control and hurt her. Walter gives her gifts and attention at first, but later abandons her without care. His power over Anna reflects how men, especially white and rich men, use women who are poor and alone. Hester, her stepmother, judges Anna's voice and culture. She wants Anna to forget her Caribbean identity and behave like a proper Englishwoman. This creates more confusion for Anna, who feels shame for who she is. Ethel, another woman who offers Anna work, also controls her. When Anna cannot meet her expectations, Ethel turns cold and sends her away. These characters do not support Anna's feelings. Instead, they make her feel small and powerless.

Even Maudie and Laurie, who seem kinder, cannot fully help Anna. They are also struggling under the same harsh system. Their friendship is shaped by survival, not deep understanding. They give Anna advice, but they cannot give her safety or real care. This shows how even women who are trying to survive can repeat the same hurtful ideas they have learned from a society ruled by men and by colonial thinking. Anna's silence, memories, and emotions are very important. She does not fight loudly, but her thoughts and quiet sadness are signs of how much pain she carries. She remembers the Caribbean with warmth, but she knows she cannot return. She tries to live in

England, but she is not truly accepted. Her life is shaped by rejection, judgment, and loneliness. These feelings are not just personal they are the result of history, racism, class, and gender roles. Looking at Anna's story through postcolonial feminist theory shows that her pain is connected to larger systems of power. Her identity is broken because of how society treats women like her. She is from a colonized background, and she is a woman without money or family support. The world around her takes away her voice, her choices, and her hope. Yet her inner world her memories, dreams, and sadness remains strong. Her silence becomes a quiet form of protest.

Anna's story is not just about one character. It represents many women who have lived at the edges of society, ignored and hurt by others. *Voyage in the Dark* gives voice to that pain. It helps readers understand that the struggles of women from colonized backgrounds are real and lasting. These women are often forgotten, but their stories must be heard. Through Anna, Jean Rhys speaks for all those women who are silenced by power, race, gender, and history.

General Conclusion

This dissertation has tried to explore how Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark* shows the deep emotional struggles and painful identity crisis of Anna Morgan. Through the lens of postcolonial feminist theory, it becomes clear that Anna's story is not just about one woman it is about many women who suffer quietly under systems like colonialism and patriarchy. These systems shape Anna's world and control how she sees herself and how others treat her. She is not only a victim of her personal problems, but also of a much larger system that continues to harm women like her.

In the first chapter, the ideas of postcolonial feminism were explained in detail. This theory talks about how women from colonized places are affected by both colonial power and gender-based control. These women are often made to feel small, powerless, and unwanted. They are judged for where they come from, for the color of their skin, and for being women. They are not treated with respect, and their voices are often ignored. The chapter showed that colonial history and gender rules continue to shape their lives even after the end of colonial rule. This background is very important to understand Anna's pain in the novel.

The second chapter looked closely at Anna's experiences in *Voyage in the Dark*. It focused on her daily life, her memories, and her relationships with other characters. Anna moves from the Caribbean to England, but she does not feel at home in either place. In the Caribbean, she was part of a culture that no longer fully accepts her. In England, she is treated as strange and different. She is always reminded that she does not belong. She is judged because she comes from a colonized land, and she is also judged for being a woman. Her gender and her background work together to make her feel lost and without value.

Anna's relationships show how other people make her feel even more alone. Walter uses her and then leaves her. Hester tries to control her and make her feel ashamed. Ethel

promises friendship but only cares about money. Even other women in the story are not able to support Anna, because they are also struggling. They, too, are trying to survive in a world where women are often powerless. These relationships show that women are sometimes forced to hurt each other because they have no other way to survive. This shows how deeply patriarchy affects all women, not just Anna.

Rhys's way of writing also helps us understand Anna's pain. The novel uses flashbacks and emotional language to show how Anna's thoughts move between the past and the present. Her memories of the Caribbean are full of feelings some happy, some sad. But even these memories cannot save her from the sadness she feels in England. Her silence, her fears, her depression all of these are part of her protest. She does not shout, but her suffering says everything. Her sadness is a form of resistance. It is a way of showing that she does not accept the roles forced on her.

Postcolonial feminist theory helps readers understand that Anna's story is not just about personal sadness. It is about the damage caused by racism, sexism, and colonial history. It is about how society tries to shape women into certain roles and punishes them when they do not fit. Anna's feelings of loss and confusion are not just her own they are the result of a long history of injustice. Her story shows how these systems still affect real people, especially women from colonized lands.

In the end, *Voyage in the Dark* is a powerful novel because it gives space to a voice that is usually not heard. Jean Rhys writes with care and emotion. She helps readers feel Anna's pain, understand her silence, and respect her quiet strength. The novel shows that even when a woman seems weak, she can still resist in her own way. Even when her voice is soft, it still matters. Rhys uses Anna's story to speak for all women who have been forgotten, judged, or pushed aside.

This dissertation has shown that *Voyage in the Dark* is more than a story. It tells us to listen to those who have been silenced. It teaches us that suffering caused by colonialism and patriarchy is real and lasting. Anna's story is a reminder that women from colonized backgrounds still face many struggles today. Their voices must be heard, their pain must be seen, and their stories must be remembered.

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