Reclaiming Bodies and Beauty: Analysing Eurocentric Ideals in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *The God of Small Things*

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This academic exploration delves into the captivating realm of body politics within the context of colonial beauty standards as depicted in two literary works, Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. Focused on the theme of colonialism, these novels provide insightful portrayals of the profound impact of Eurocentric beauty norms on the characters, particularly on those whose physical attributes deviate from the dominant European aesthetic. Drawing from postcolonial and feminist literary theories, this research undertakes a comparative analysis to unravel the multifaceted intricacies of Eurocentric beauty ideals and their profound implications on self-perception and identity. The narratives act as compelling mirrors that reflect the internalisation of colonial beauty norms, leading to feelings of inadequacy and unworthiness among the protagonists. This academic inquiry delves deep into the interplay of race, beauty, and power dynamics, revealing how Eurocentric beauty standards perpetuate racial hierarchies and contribute to the marginalisation of individuals with non-European features. Through close textual analysis, the study unveils pivotal moments where characters disrupt the confines of Eurocentric beauty ideals, embodying resilience and agency. By shedding light on the enduring legacy of colonial beauty standards, this academic endeavour aims to make a significant contribution to the discourse surrounding body politics, colourism and cultural identity.

Keywords: Body politics, Colourism, Eurocentric beauty standards, colonialism, postcolonial aesthetics, identity, resistance