

Chapter 1: Introduction

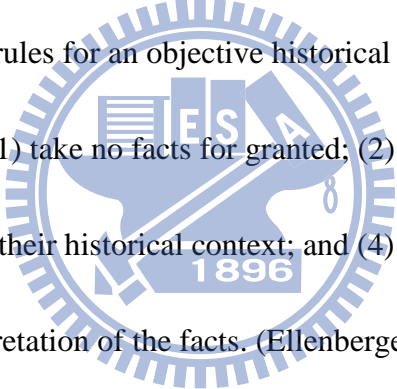
The criticism on Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* have up until now been based upon post-colonialism and feminism. Most papers have indicated that Bertha's blood, birth, and background make her a pre-destined victim as she meets her white husband, Edward Rochester. Because Bertha is neither English nor Anglicized Creole she fails to live up to Rochester's perceived norm. As a consequence, Bertha must react by setting fire to Thornfield Hall, her alien prison, in order to set herself free—free from racial prejudice and patriarchy, where men have all the power. Her predicament of being mistreated by the English is fully shown in Ferguson's book that introduces the history of Caribbean.

They [the coloured people] faced enormous discrimination from the white elite, which passed legislation to limit their power and imposed humiliating social restrictions. Mulattos were forbidden to carry arms, to dress in the same way as whites and were subject to special curfews.

Trapped in the middle of a stratified social order, with a status lower than the colonies' illiterate poor white or *petits blancs*, the coloured population was beset by contradictions. (Ferguson 116)

Joya Uraizee concludes that “Western history can only define itself by constructing a

less-developed or ‘history-less’ other” (262). And yet in psychoanalytic perspective, this novel more interesting than ever because I realize that madness may be caused by many reasons. Of course, the pressure brought about by imperialism and patriarchy contributes to Bertha’s madness. However, in my thesis I would like to discuss *Wide Sargasso Sea* from the psychoanalytic perspective. My thesis follows Henri F. Ellenberger’s principle that he applying in his book *The Discovery of the Unconscious* by offering a “new contribution to the objective study of the history of dynamic psychiatry” (255):



The four basic rules for an objective historical methodology in the history of psychiatry: (1) take no facts for granted; (2) verify everything; (3) place all materials in their historical context; and (4) firmly separate the facts from the interpretation of the facts. (Ellenberger 255)

The meaning of the dialectics of hysterical desires in my thesis implies the intricate relationship between Rochester and Bertha, who is also known as Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Jacques Lacan, according to Dylan Evans, develops his idea on dialectic from Alexandre Kojève’s lecture on Hegel in Paris in the 1930s.

Following Kojève, Lacan puts great emphasis on the particular stage of the dialectic in which the Master confronts the slave, and on the way that desire is constituted dialectically by a relationship with the desire of the

Other. (42)

In other words, Lacan's dialectic goes beyond Hegel's "The Master-Slave Dialectic" in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. In Lacan's dialectic, desire is involved. One of Lacan's famous formulas is: "man's desire is the desire of the Other" (Lacan, *The Seminar* 235). "This universal feature of desire," according to Dylan Evans' interpretation, "is especially evident in hysteria: the hysteric is one who sustains another person's desire, converts another's desire into his own" (38). Because "an hysterical subject," to borrow Colette Soler's words, "is a subject who has a special link with the Other's desire" (253). Thus what the analysts have to find out for their analysands is not the object of their desire but the subject with whom the patients identifies. In other words, patients who have hysterical desires tend to involve other people around them because they are "sensitive to the Other's desire" (Soler 235). Take Dora, a famous patient of Freud's, for example: she tries to blame everyone around her for her illness, making everyone unhappy. Thus, Rochester, who is a hysterical subject in my thesis, involves Bertha in his hysterical imagination, locking her up, and at the end of the novel drives her crazy. In short, according to Dylan Evans, a Lacanian critic, "desire is constituted dialectically by a relationship with the desire of the Other" (43).

The reading further gives rise to my curiosity to re-examine the famous madwoman

Bertha in the attic in *Jane Eyre*. Jean Rhys' motivation in writing *Wide Sargasso Sea*, according to her *Letters 1931-1966*, is to give the mad Bertha a chance to "be right on stage." Because Rhys thinks that "the Creole in Charlotte Brontë's novel is a lay figure – repulsive which does not matter, and not once alive which dose" (*Letters* 156). Rhys further notes that

She [Antoinette] must be at least plausible with a past, the *reason* why Mr. Rochester treats her so abominably and feels justified, the *reason* why he thinks she is mad and why of course she goes mad, even the *reason* why she tries to set everything on fire, and eventually succeeds. (*Letter* 156)

Jean Rhys, a native of Dominica, is the author of this novel. She creates a history for a Jamaican madwoman locked in the attic of the British manor house in *Jane Eyre*. In Charlotte Brontë's novel we learn very little about Bertha. All we know is that she's a white monster who comes from the Caribbean and who must be guarded against. Rochester marries her for the sake of money. Whereas, the madwoman in *Jane Eyre* is silent and invisible and seen even as a ghost by Jane.

I had risen up in bed; I bent forward: first, surprise, then bewilderment, came over me; and then my blood crept cold through my veins. Mr.

Rochester, this was not Sophie, it was not Leah, it was not Mrs. Fairfax: It

was not—no, I was sure of it, and am still—it was not even that strange woman, Grace Poole.

I know not what dress she had on: it was white and straight; but whether gown, sheet, or shroud, I cannot tell.

Fearful and ghostly to me.... (*Jane Eyre* 249)

On the contrary, Jane is noted by Rochester as “my sympathy—my better self—my good angel” (*Jane Eyre* 277). Therefore, Jean Rhys decides to give Bertha her own story and make her speak. *Wide Sargasso Sea*, published in 1966, reveals the cause and effect of how Bertha becomes sick at the end of *Jane Eyre*. Rhys discloses the predicament of this “white cockroach” female and soon the book provides popular materials for studies on feminism and post-colonialism. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Bertha’s background is complicated in that her father is a plantation master owning many black servants one time. Her mother, Annette, is a well-known madwoman in the village and her real name is Antoinette. The true purpose for Rochester to come to the West Indies is money. In other words, his marriage with Antoinette is not based on love but on money, which causes many troubles later in the novel. Since Antoinette’s madness is related to her marriage, I’ll take Rochester, an Englishman who enjoys the superiority in some way, into consideration. It turns out that, Rochester is probably a hysterical subject. In accordance

with his behavior in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, we know that he has his own deep-sealed problems and hysterical desire. These unknown disturbances may contribute to his mental problems and to Bertha's madness that the reader are not aware of. *Wide Sargasso Sea* provides an access for me to examine Rochester and Bertha deeper. The concern of my study is to look into the core of Rochester's hysterical desire and Bertha's madness. I would like to explore that Antoinette's madness, which results from her miserable childhood of being a Creole and her husband's intentional betrayal, has a very loose connection with gene as inherited from her family; while Rochester's perturbation, derived from his family. *Wide Sargasso Sea* probes into the causes of disturbances through the background of Rochester and Bertha.

According to Joya Uraizee, postcolonial literature is not a resistance to Western cultural hegemony but a subversion of it. She further points out the main differences between subversion and resistance in her paper

...subversion (which, following Tiffin's lead, I call the writing of an "anti-history") means working to destabilize an epistemological structure from within, while resistance (which I term the writing of an "alternative history") means creating a new identity or conceptualizing a new epistemology that is not dependent on an existing or imperial notion of

identity/epistemology. Further, I suggest that Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) "rewrites" by subverting a Western feminist *bildungsroman* to create a clear history or identify for the Caribbean Creole woman. (262)

In her view, *Wide Sargasso Sea* is not a novel of resistance nor a novel that aims to present an alternative history because there is no intention to "dislodge Antoinette/Bertha from her role as scapegoat, and the narrative of *Jane Eyre* is not reversed" (263).

Although Rhys gives marginal characters like Christophine and Antoinette voices, she does not attempt to create an alternative history. For example, the voice of Christophine, despite being powerful and defiant, ultimately remains subversive and is not resistance per se. Uraizee has provided a very different angle for us to read *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a subversive text.



I agree with Uraizee that this novel is not a resistance to *Jane Eyre* but a text that unearths some covered truth. My purpose in writing this thesis is to reveal the different face of Rochester, who locks Antoinette up. I'll try to investigate that Rochester is a hysterical subject who likes to involve others. Secondly, I'll argue that Bertha's violent reaction to the pressures is created by both her own background and her hysterical husband. Her dream provides a private space for a free play of her repressed affects.

Here are two main questions that I would like to initiate in my thesis. My first

question concerns whether Rochester stands just for the incarnation of imperialism or is, on the contrary, merely a target to be criticized by feminist critics. Isn't he a possible hysterical subject as psychoanalysis understands it and what then are the causes of his mental problems? Secondly, I'll discuss what has really driven Bertha crazy. Are there any other possible causes aside from imperialism or patriarchy or even heredity that brings about Bertha's madness? Is it possible that Bertha's madness results from her childhood, her miserable memories, and her marriage with Rochester?

In the second chapter, I'll argue that Rochester has hysterical tendency and will analyze his hysterical anxiety and jealousy. Chapter two is entitled as "Anxiety Follows Rochester Everywhere." As a hysterical subject, he does not only deal with his anxiety improperly; he also attempts to involve everyone around him in his trouble. He is too obsessive to be a mature man, which makes him unable to admit failure (Kendrick 241). His hysterical desire is probably created by his family. As the second son of the family, Rochester suffers a lot from his low social status and from being cut off from heritage, both of which traumatize him so heavily and turn him into a hysterical man. Rochester's hysterical desire is his desire of gaining more of his father's love.

To understand what Rochester thinks, we need to trace back to his family life in England first. According to the letters that he writes to his father in the novel, we know

that he is the second son and is less loved by the family. His miserable situation results from the English law of primogeniture, which deprives the right of the second son to inherit family property, because

“according to the English common law of patrilineal inheritance (i.e. primogeniture) that all land is granted to the eldest son.... Nevertheless, fathers usually exercised their rights to settle some portion of their estate on younger sons and daughters” (WSS 41).¹

As a result, younger sons often marry heiresses to support themselves. Under this unfair law, Rochester unconsciously thinks himself inferior as a woman,² having no right to inherit the family fortune and gaining the least favor from his family. In other words, he is symbolically castrated by the English law, his father and his brother. What’s worse, his father apparently does not love him as much as he does his eldest brother, because his father doesn’t exercise any of his right to settle some portion of estate for him. Instead, judging from Rochester’s letter to his father we know that his father has arranged an exotic marriage for him as soon as possible in order not to support him anymore.

Dear father. The thirty thousand pounds have been paid to me without

¹ To be abbreviated *Wide Sargasso Sea* hereafter as WSS.

² Juan-David Nasio has noted the role of women for hysterics in his book that “In the fantasy of a neurotic man, being castrated is the same as being a mere woman, a woman who, like all women in his fantasy, can only be submissive” (87).

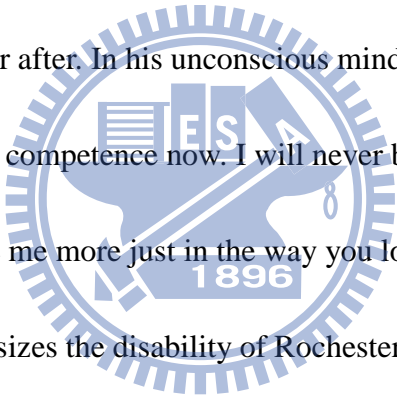
question or condition.... I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you or to my dear brother the son you love. No begging letters, no mean requests. None of the furtive shabby maneuvers of a younger son. I have sold my soul or you have sold it, and after all is it such a bad bargain?

(WSS 41)

Being castrated, he is invisible to his family and suffering a lot, but, paradoxically, the castration anxiety comforts him as well. It is just like a patient once told by Juan–David Nasio in *Hysteria From Freud to Lacan* that “I like to be afraid; it reassures me” (83).

Because of the overwhelming castration anxiety, he becomes hostile to everything and everyone around him. Nevertheless, this letter reveals that there is at least a twofold meaning behind it. First, we know he wants to show his anger and hatred to his father for having “sold” him and dumped him. In this letter he wants to prove that he has the “modest competence now” to support himself independently by marrying someone rich. Now, he is rich enough to compete with his father and brother. He has “the thirty thousand pounds,” no longer a shabby beggar anymore. The ultimate purpose of writing this letter is to make his father feel guilty for having sent him away and regret making the decision. However, there is another possible reading of this letter aside from hatred and disaffection. To borrow Juan-David Nasio’s words, “in place of the repressed hatred,

there appears the opposite affect: love for the father" (61). The second hidden meaning in the letter is his love for the father. He writes begging for love and seeking to mean that "I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you...." All in all, he wants to let the father know that his little boy behaves well now and promises not to make any trouble. Besides, he unconsciously wants to show that he is an independent man who needs no support from his father because "the thirty thousand pounds have been paid to me without question or condition." In other words, there will be "no begging letters, no mean requests" from him ever after. In his unconscious mind, what he really means to write is that "I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you...I am a good boy now, so please love me more just in the way you love my eldest brother."



Robert Kendrick emphasizes the disability of Rochester as a mature man in his article "Edward Rochester and the Margins of Masculinity in *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*." The author suggests that Rochester's violent defense is designed to cover up his fear brought by Antoinette and her Caribbean world. In fact, what Rochester fears is the loss of his phallic power "and by extension his recognition of himself as a male subject" (236). He has no right to inherit his family's fortune, "without money and holding of his own he does not fit his class's narrative of a mature male subject" (236). In other words, Rochester, according to Kendrick, enters "a space in which his discourses of

ideological and subjective identification are to be deconstructed” (239) and the locals refuse to recognize him on his terms by pointing out his lack. However, Rochester accepts Antoinette because of her fortune, which enables him to be an “independent” gentleman.

Wishing to be recognized properly is the main reason why Rochester listens to Daniel Cosway, an illegitimate son of the Cosway’s family. In Daniel’s blackmail letter, he describes Rochester as “a tall fine English gentleman” (WSS 76) who is armed with power and symbolizes patriarchy. As a result, Rochester accepts Daniel’s imagination of Antoinette as “insane and outside the bounds of legitimating” because it allows Rochester to see himself as a sane and legitimate subject (Kendrick 242). Ironically, Rochester proves his status by listening to the illegitimate Daniel. In fact, the “legitimate” and “legal” subjects only appear in Rochester’s misrecognition and imagination that provide him with an access to a world where there is no castration and lack. Whatever Rochester has attempted to prove, his “competence” inevitably “lead[s] him back to a position of insufficiency and ‘slavery’” (Kendrick 246). To escape from his fear of castration and self-contempt, Rochester locks Antoinette, who highlights his disability, away in the attic.

My third chapter is entitled as “Dreams, Antoinette’s Ultimate Weapon,” which focuses on the mad Bertha. Bertha’s hysterical desire is her wish to be recognized by the

black, the white, and her husband. Concerning Bertha's madness, Ronnie Scharfman suggests that it results from the failure of the mother-daughter bond "because the mother figure represents the first external mirror into which a girl-child looks to discover her identity" (89). Antoinette's fatal quest for identity is caused by "the mother's refusal or her inability to allow the small daughter to perceive her reflection in a loving gaze" (90). Antoinette watches her mother more than she interacts with her. But she never sees herself reflected. Her mother's concern for Antoinette is mainly "a disappointing narcissistic extension of herself" (100). What her mother cannot give is given by Christophine, a black servant of the family. Consequently, the unsuccessful bonding between mother and daughter contributes to a fatal psychological bondage for the little Creole girl, being caught up between the black and white racial identity fragments in Antoinette's selfhood. In this chapter, I'll argue that Antoinette's madness, apart from the gaze of love of her mother, results from her childhood memory and her love relation with Rochester. Due to her awful experiences of being insulted by people, Antoinette hopes her white husband can raise her status so that no one will look down on her anymore. However, her dream is shattered after her husband's infidelity. These unexpected life experiences and emotions emerge in the form of dreams, which provide a private solution for Antoinette to discharge her uneasiness. Also, that Antoinette sets fire at the end of the

novel is an effective way to expel Rochester from her life.

It is said that Antoinette's illness is related to her unique background. She, as a Creole, cannot find her fixed reflection from people around her. In due course, she does not know who she is and eventually suffers a mental breakdown. However, many of us ignore the importance of her childhood which, according to Freud, has a lasting impact on a person's later life. Unfortunately, Antoinette experienced so many miserable things when she was just a child. Later, she may forget the "ideas" about the terrible memories but the piled-up "affects" show no tendency to disappear. However, these affects will never disappear from her life; they are just kept from her consciousness. Nevertheless, these affects will always find their way out. In other words, in my thesis I am going to investigate that one of the reasons that shapes Antoinette's madness is her unforgettable affects. For example, as soon as she has learned the vicious slanders about her, Antoinette vents her overwhelming anger by "cutting through the hem and tearing the sheet in half, then each half into strips" (WSS 60). Her extreme response to rumors has a close connection with her childhood memory. As a child, she heard "what all these smooth smiling people said about her [mother] when she was not listening" (WSS 17) on her mother's wedding. The gossips were too malicious for her to accept especially at her young age. The feeling of helplessness and speechlessness has traumatized her seriously,

planting a seed of trouble in her later life.

Due to these unreleased affects, they not only provide the raw materials of Antoinette's dreams but also give her energy to produce dreams. There are several dreams in this novel and I am going to explore Antoinette's inner life through these dreams. A dream is a secret space where our wishes get fulfilled. Before having the third dream, Antoinette has suffered a lot for a long time from her husband's disdain and indifference, as a result of his discrimination against her color and her wealth. Her precarious state goes from bad to worse as she senses Rochester's mistrust and betrayal. As a Creole wife, she can do nothing to defend herself. Although Antoinette has not found any proper way to express her despair, she projects her complicated thoughts and emotions onto her dreams. Setting fire in the last dream is Antoinette's ultimate conversion, which helps her to release her affects of being mistreated by the West Indies residents and being betrayed by her husband. The fire of anger and despair serves as a final blow to Rochester. Setting fire on Thorndfield is Antoinette's first and last opportunity to cope with her troubled mind face to face and brings her excessive emotion back to tranquility.

The fourth chapter is entitled "Another Possible Reading of Jane and Bertha's Relationship." The purpose of offering another reading of Jane and Bertha is mainly to

respond to Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's article "A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane's Progress." The two authors proclaim that Jane's undisciplined spirit enables her to confront the masculine society and refuses to accept its norms and customs. The celebration of Jane's unique character makes the two critics take Bertha as Jane's dark double. Jane "details a woman's relentless struggle for emotional and spiritual satisfaction" (Burns). However, Bertha, to some extent, echoes Jane's own fear of being a monster in the Victorian period. Bertha and Jane, to borrow Rosenfeld's words, are the "two characters, the one representing the socially acceptable or conventional personality, the other externalizing the free, uninhibited, often criminal self" ("The Shadow Within" 314). In other words, Bertha becomes the most worthless person when compared to Jane. This line of thinking, in spite of its simplicity, is not without merit. It seems to warn people that if women are not aware of Victorian social rules, they will definitely be discriminated against like Bertha. However, it is not convincing for I don't get sufficient information about Bertha in *Jane Eyre*. It seems improper to accuse a silent woman of being mad and consider Bertha merely as Jane's dark self. Rather, we should investigate the possible grounds for her madness such as her background, childhood, and her marriage with Rochester. Thus, in chapter four I'll argue that the relation between Bertha and Jane are not double as the two authors has suggested. They are two individual

characters, whose relation can only be depicted through the more intricate psychoanalytic perspective.

In addition, I want to take Rochester into consideration because “none of these questions can, of course, be answered without reference to the central character of... Edward Fairfax Rochester” (Gubar and Gilbert 351). Unlike *The Double* or “William Wilson,” the doubles as being Jane and Bertha are determined by Rochester. To put it differently, it is Rochester who shapes Bertha as the opposite of Jane. Here are some possible reasons to understand Rochester’s intention to disgrace Bertha. First, we already knew that Rochester is a less loved child who wants his father’s love so much. At the very beginning, Rochester marries a wealthy Creole to please his father, hoping his father will love him more. However, in time Rochester turns his love for the father into hate. As a revenge, Rochester tries to disappoint his father’s wish by locking up Antoinette, a bride given by his father, and marry the poor and plain Jane. By degrading Bertha, Rochester, firstly, means to go against his father to some extent and secondly wins himself a chance to justify his second marriage to Jane. However, Rochester, depicting Bertha as the dark side of Jane, gives him a reason to keep and lock up Bertha. Keeping Bertha somehow amounts to retaining his father’s love because Bertha is a bride given by his father and thus becomes the displacement object of his father. In short, no matter what

Rochester does to Bertha and Jane, his motivations definitely have something to do with his love/ hate for his father. In brief, taking Bertha as a dark double is one of the strategies that Rochester adopts to devote his love to his father. Every decision Rochester has made is all connected to his father. Thus, accusing Bertha of being the dark double of Jane is Rochester's false identification with his father's wishes.

In conclusion, the dialectics of hysterical desires in my thesis refer to Rochester's false identification with his father and Bertha's being madly in love with Rochester. In chapter two "Anxiety Follows Rochester Everywhere," I'll point out that Rochester tries his best to remind his father not to love him less. In chapter three "Dreams, Antoinette's Ultimate Weapon," Bertha's hysterical desire is to gain love from Rochester because Rochester is her last chance who can save her from her current in-between situation. The more Bertha longs for love, the more she keeps Rochester away from her. The purpose of the fourth chapter "Another Possible Reading of Jane and Bertha's Relationship" means to reinforce Rochester's false identification with his father because Jane and Bertha being the double is determined by Rochester's hysterical desire of his father's wishes.

Chapter 2: Anxiety Follows Rochester Everywhere

In the second chapter, I'll argue that Rochester is actually in a hysterical condition and will analyze him through his hysterical anxiety and jealousy. At the beginning, we have to know from Nasio that

...hysteria is not... an illness affecting an individual, but rather the unhealthy state of a human relationship that subjects one person to another.

Hysteria is, above all, the name we give to the tie and the bonds that the neurotic weaves in his relation with others through his fantasies. (Nasio 4)

In short, the hysterics live their lives with unique fantasies. Rochester's opening remarks in the second part of *Wide Sargasso Sea* show that he is not willing to come to the West Indies, let alone marry an unfamiliar woman. His unwillingness can be detected as he describes his marriage as lifeless "it" (WSS 38) instead of "my marriage" and as if it is none of his business: "So it was all over, the advance and retreat, the doubts and hesitations. Everything finished, for better or for worse" (WSS 38). Besides, his first impression on the servants in the West Indies is "sly, spiteful, and malignant perhaps, like much else in this place" (WSS 38).

Moreover, at the beginning of part two, Rochester is trying to make us think he is

the victim who is naively manipulated by an unknown scheme because he has no right to protest himself but to have “agree, as he had agreed to everything else” (WSS 39). From this point, we can easily form a general picture in mind that Rochester is more or less in a hysterical condition, because a hysteric tends to apply his sick logic to others. The hysteric, according to Juan-David Nasio, in his fantasy “play(s) the role of a wretched and forever unsatisfied victim.” (4)³

In addition, Rochester tends not to pay too much attention but tries to make possible excuses on everything that has happened to him so that he can claim that he is not involved in his father’s mythical intention i.e. the exotic marriage. For example, Rochester consciously or unconsciously ignores his wife and the West Indies because he “noticed it before and refused to admit” what he has seen and makes excuses to justify himself by saying that “not that I had much time to notice anything. I was married a month after I arrived in Jamaica and for nearly three weeks if that time I was in bed with fever” (WSS 39). From the first two pages of part two which is narrated by Rochester, it is predictable that Rochester will not only give himself but also others a hard time in the

³ According to Freud and Breuer, the obvious and outward symptom of hysteria is somatic conversion such as neuralgias, contractures, paralyzes, and hysterical attacks (*Studies on Hysteria*). Nevertheless, no organic causes can be found. Lacan later connects hysteria to the image of fragment body, coming to define hysteria not as a set of symptoms but as a structure. This means that a “subject may well exhibit none of the typical bodily symptom of hysteria and yet still be diagnosed as a hysteric” (Evans).

West Indies for he refuses to face what he has encountered and prefers to experience things in his own unique way because “the daily reality of the neurotic,” according to Nasio, “is shaped by this fantasy” (5).

However, no one is born to give himself and others a hard time. Every act has its motivation. Thus, in order to know Rochester better, I have to go back to Rochester’s relation with his family first. As we know from both *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Rochester is the second son of his family, which leads him to an unhappy life, for

...according to the English common law of patrilineal inheritance (i.e. primogeniture) that all land is granted to the eldest son....Nevertheless, fathers usually exercised their rights to settle some portion of their estate on younger sons and daughters. (WSS 41)

Nevertheless, younger sons often married heiresses to support themselves. Under this unfair law, Rochester thinks himself as submissive as woman, who has no right to inherit family fortune and seems to gain the least love from the family. It is because neurotic tends to “assimilate the repellent image of himself as castrated to the image of a humiliated woman” (Nasio 87). In other words, as the second son of the family, Rochester is deprived of any fortune that should belong to men. Namely, he is symbolically castrated by the English law, his father and brother, which traumatizes him,

generating his castration anxiety. What's worse, his father in the eye of Rochester apparently does not love him as much as he does to his elder brother, because his father doesn't exercise any of his rights to settle some portion of estate on him as he could have, thus forcing him marry a wealthy woman in order to survive. Besides, judging from his letter to his father we know that his father arranges an exotic marriage for him as soon as possible in order not to support him anymore. His letter addresses his grievances:

Dear father. The thirty thousand pounds have been paid to me without question or condition. No condition made for her (that must be seen to). I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you or to my dear brother the son you love. No begging letters, no mean request. None of the furtive shabby maneuvers of a younger son. I have sold my soul or you have sold it, and after all is it such a bad bargain? (WSS 41)

Although the first few sentences seem to make a short report to his father on the event of receiving money, Rochester's letter is not as simple as it looks. Instead, the letter reveals at least a twofold meaning behind it. First, on the surface, we know Rochester wants to show his anger and hatred to his father for dumping him and loving him less. He adopts an acrid tone to express himself by writing that "I will never be a disgrace to you or to my *dear brother the son you love.*" In fact, Rochester's brother is not the *beloved*

brother but a hateful man for him because his brother, the first son of the family, is legally endowed with everything valuable in the family including the love of the father. Being given a cold shoulder by his father, Rochester considers his brother the son his father loves most is understandable. Having married someone rich, he wants to prove that he has the ability to support himself independently. Now, he is rich enough to compete with his father and brother. He is not the beggar anymore. Namely, one of the purposes of writing this letter is to make his father regret having belittled him.

On the other hand, love and hate are inseparable. Suttie doubts “whether a state of absolute personal hatred can exist” (62). He further notes that

The greater the love the greater the hate or jealousy caused by its frustration and the greater the ambivalence or guilt that may arise in relation to it.

Thus, “love threatened” becomes anxious, that is to say partly transformed into anxiety. So far as it is denied it is transformed into hate, while external interference (supplanting) switches it into jealousy. (*The Origins of Love and Hate* 60)

In fact, Rochester’s anger in the letter is a technique of self-preservation and appeals for his father’s attention. He’s behavior of begging love is the same as children’s, which Suttie notes that

“Goodness” may be neglected and ignored by complacent parents, but naughtiness and anger compels attention (i.e. response) of some kind, which is better than none at all. (*The Origins of Love and Hate* 63)

Therefore, the second hidden meaning contains in the letter is his love for his father. It is easy to understand Rochester’s interwoven emotion for his father and brother because love and hate are the two things that can’t be separated. If there is no love then there is no hate because hate generates its energy from love. When people seriously fail to get their reward from a love relation, it is highly possible that they may hate their lovers instead. Rochester’s letter exemplifies the entangled love-and-hate relation. As he writes, “I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you...”; Rochester wants to let the father know his little boy behaves well now and promises not to make any “mean request.” In his unconscious, what Rochester wants to say is something to such an effect: I have modest competence now, both wealth and status. I will never be a disgrace to you...I am a good boy now, so please love me more just like the way you love my elder brother. It is likely that, through this letter, Rochester intends to convince his father of his “competence,” which empowers him to be considered as a useful man in his family.

In addition to the first letter, Rochester’s love for the father appears also in his second letter:

Dear Father, we have arrived from Jamaica after an uncomfortable few days.

This little estate in the Windward Islands is part of the family property and

Antoinette is much attached to it. ...All is well and had gone according to

your plans and wishes....

I was down with fever for two weeks after I got to Spanish Town. Nothing

serious but I felt wretched enough....It was difficult to think or write

coherently. In this cool and remote place it is called Granbois. I feel better

already and my next letter will be longer and more explicit. (WSS 45)

At first glance, Rochester seems to be making a report to his father as well as telling him

about his arrival. However, he unconsciously submits to his father's command, hoping to

be a good boy because he mentions that "All is well and had gone according to your

plans and wishes." In other words, what he has done is for his father, or we may say that

whatever he has done is to please his beloved father. Wining his father back is

Rochester's top priority though he is not in England. "The neurotic," according to Suttie,

"cannot take love for granted, but must constantly solicit the little signals which betoken

its existence" (58). Thus, Rochester purposely writes about his fever and his weariness in

order to call his father's love and sympathy. To malingering, saying something or acting like

getting sick, is a quite common approach for children to gain more attention from their

parents. Just like Dora, she knows that she has a powerful weapon in her hands, and she “would certainly not fail on every future occasion to make use once more of her liability to ill-health” (Freud, *Fragment* 42) because being ill means that she does not need to share “the affection of her parents with her brothers and sisters” (Freud, *Fragment* 44). It is definitely the easiest and the most effective way for children to achieve what they want. Unfortunately, although Rochester is a young man now but mentally a child, he still can’t develop a better strategy to win his father’s attention. What’s more, he skillfully mentions the “next letter will be longer and more explicit.” It indicates that his letter contains partial information due to the limitation of a letter. However, his intention of adding the last sentence seeks to arouse his father’s curiosity and anticipation. As a result, his father, in accordance with Rochester’s plan, will more or less give some caring thoughts to his younger son. Living very far away from his father, keeping writing “love-hate” letters to his father is Rochester’s ultimate strategy to remind his father of not forgetting him.

From the letters we know that without certain privileges, Rochester thinks that he is invisible to his family and unconsciously suffering from castration anxiety. Castration anxiety, according to Nasio, is an anxiety “in the face of the *threat* of castration, since it refers to...the fear of perceiving the threat of it” (41). In other words, castration anxiety is the “fear of the threat of visually perceived castration, not fear of being castrated in

reality. The only figure who is truly castrated in the fantasy scenario of hysteria is the mother; castration always pertains to the other” (41). Though Rochester is not a real castrated woman here, compared to his brother, who is rich and has the legal right to inherit the family fortune, he has nothing to endow himself. Under this precarious situation, he feels deprived in his family. In psychoanalytic terms, what Rochester is deprived of is his phallus. The phallus, according to Nasio, symbolizes “the idol of the penis, the fiction of a powerful penis which charged with the utmost libidinal tension, and a simulacrum of the penis” (42). The importance of the phallus is that people either have the phallus or are deprived of it and they are accordingly divided into the “powerful and powerless beings, the healthy and the sick, the beautiful and the ugly, not into men who have penises and women who have vaginas” (43). In other words, the phallus is not the male genital organ in its biological reality but the role that this organ plays in the fantasy. Unlike the “penis” as a biological organ, the phallus carries the imaginary and symbolic functions of this organ, which symbolizes power and status. Without the phallus, Rochester regards himself as a woman because, according to Nasio, “in the fantasy of a neurotic man, being castrated is the same as being a woman, a woman who, like all women in his fantasy, can only be submissive” (87). In order to lessen his anxiety, Rochester, a hysterical subject, “has found no recourse other than to sustain unremittingly,

in his fantasies and in his life, the painful state of dissatisfaction” (Nasio 4). As long as Rochester is not satisfied, he would be safe from the dangers that lie in wait for him.⁴

Anxiety, according to Lacan, is a way of sustaining desire when the object is missing (Evans 11). With the unbearable anxiety, he gains strength to fight against everything.

Because of the hysterical castration anxiety that he carries, he becomes hostile.

Consequently, as Rochester comes to the West Indies, he takes the unbearable anxiety with him for he is banished to a remote place for money. Rochester sees everything on the unfamiliar island as harmful and unacceptable. However, it is quite understandable for an English man to think the environment of the West Indies as something bizarre. The weather, the scenery, and even the culture in the West Indies are totally different from his motherland, England. Nevertheless, Rochester describes hyperbolically that the West Indies is “not only wild but menacing” (WSS 41). In fact, what really threatens him is not the place or the people but his own hostility, his insecurity, and even his castration anxiety. In his eye, “everything is too much... Too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flower is too red, the mountain too high, the hills too near” and his first impression on the West Indies is “somber people in a

⁴ The danger, according to Freud, has something to do with Oedipus complex. Children love their parents, hoping to marry them. But incest is not allowed in our society. Under such a condition, children know that if they keep themselves unsatisfied, they are away from trouble/ law.

somber place” (WSS 40-1). His fear of being hurt or killed makes him feel that things around him are too excessive and too spiteful for him to bear. Accordingly, the best way for Rochester to deal with these uncontrollable is to hate them in advance and convince himself that the West Indies deserves to be hated. Therefore, he adopts negative words describing what he has experienced. Rochester assumes that people in the West Indies are somber and not friendly to him. In order to protect his precarious status, he castrates others first by unsatisfying everyone and down grading them. Namely, Rochester is trying to escape from criticism and from consciousness and his method of “defending himself against a self reproach” is to “make the same reproach against someone else” (Freud, *Fragment 35*). For example, Rochester criticizes Christophine, the favorite black nanny of Antoinette, for being lazy and dawdling about because he notices that Antoinette cares for Christophine very often rather for him. Also, Rochester describes the servant Amélie as someone who is “full of delighted malice, so intelligent, above all so intimate that I [Rochester] felt ashamed and looked away” (WSS 40). Keeping a distance from these local people makes Rochester feel safe despite the fact that he feels intolerably lonely by doing so.

Although Rochester has arrived to the West Indies, his castration anxiety shows no signs of improvement. Instead, he tries harder than ever to cover his weakness by venting

hostility in front of his wife and people in the West Indies. As Rochester and Antoinette enjoy their honeymoon, they chat about the red earth on the way to Granbois.

She said, ‘After this we go down then up again. There we are there.’ Next time she spoke she said ‘The earth is red here, do you notice?’ ‘It’s red in parts of England too.’ ‘Oh England, England,’ she called back mockingly, and the sound went on and on like a warning I did not choose to hear. (WSS 42)

Rochester mentions England. When Antoinette unconsciously repeats “Oh England, England,” Rochester considers her repetition as a mockery and the sound of England goes on and on like a warning which “he does not choose to hear.” Unquestionably, according to their dialogue, Antoinette’s unintentional repetition of England does not “call back mockingly” as Rochester assumes. It is Rochester’s hysteric fantasy that makes him hear the unfriendly sound. What’s more, only Rochester suspects “Oh England, England” as a warning, for England is a traumatic place, where he is deprived of phallus and always as inferior as a woman. As a result, it is normal for Rochester to react negatively or defensively as soon as he hears the word *England*. Both the place of England and the experience of being a miserable second son in England traumatize him heavily that makes him take “England” as a “warning” and a mockery.

As I mentioned above, a hysteric tends to apply his unconscious fantasy to the other, sustaining his discontent by creating the fantasy of a monster in the other. To put it differently, Rochester is constantly “expecting to receive from the other a frustrating non-response” (Nasio 3). The disappointing expectation is what Rochester keeps perpetually. Hence it is predictable that Rochester doubts that there lies something sinister behind his blessings as he leads a smooth life with his newlywed wife and usually “drink[s] to their happiness, to their love and the day without end” (WSS 49-50).

It was a beautiful place—wild, untouched, above all untouched, with an alien, disturbing, secret loveliness. And it kept it secret. I’d find myself thinking, ‘What I see is nothing—I want what it hides—that is not nothing.’

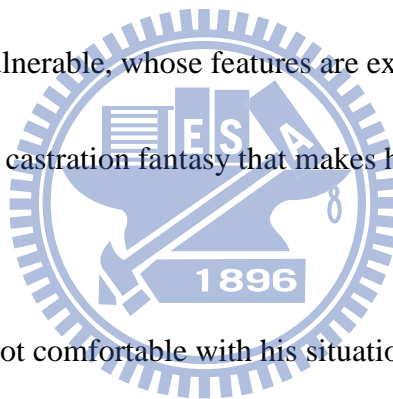
(WSS 52)

In a post-colonial point of view, Rochester doubts the wild place because he sees everything with his “English Eye” (Hall 174),⁵ which makes him unable to appreciate the beauty of the West Indies, a place where he classifies as “the other.” Thus, the secret that Rochester suspects should turn out to be Antoinette’s madness or her family’s terrible reputation. Nevertheless, in terms of psychoanalysis, Rochester fails to appreciate “the other” due to his dissatisfaction and his discontented mind. In other words, a hysteric will

⁵ According to Stuart Hall, English identity is strongly centered and the English does not only place the colonized other, they placed everybody else. (174)

try “to avoid at all costs any experience that would suggest, directly or indirectly, a state of complete and absolute fulfillment” (Nasio 5). Out of a sense of unfulfillment, Rochester feels, firstly, that he is superior to the people in the West Indies, for nothing can meet his need. In addition to superiority, he can disguise his unbearable trauma, a dispossessed second son who is sold by his father, with perennial dissatisfaction so that no one will discover his lack. It is just like what Rochester claims that “what I see is nothing” because he always preconceives that there’s something behind the curtain so that he chooses to believe what he wants to believe. Thus, what he sees is not the whole picture of truth. In other words, what hides behind the secret “is not nothing” but his castration anxiety. In fact, the prevalent secret in the West Indies is his fear of facing his anxiety both directly and properly and accepting his own inferiority that he is a miserable man who needs to beg someone to survive. He originally thought he might get rid of his castration status by marrying someone rich so that his father and brother will show their respect. However, as soon as Rochester achieves his goal, he is trapped into his castration anxiety again because the money that enriches him belongs to a Creole woman. Money is portable but respect and position are not transportable. Under this circumstance, fortune doesn’t guarantee Rochester anything at all. To gain respect from his family, Rochester has to admit to his low status first. To put it differently, Rochester, before gaining money,

has to accept the arranged marriage for a dispossessed son first. Then, Rochester has to accept another truth that he is poorer than a Creole woman, who purchases him his father and brother's respect. Hoping to get rid of his inferior in front of his family as a woman makes him reluctantly submissive to Antoinette financially. However, Rochester's attitude toward the rich Antoinette is out of hatefulness and hostility because, compared with Antoinette, he is poorer than a woman. What frightens Rochester is his hysterical fantasy of being a woman. For a neurotic, the image of a woman is someone who is castrated, submissive, and vulnerable, whose features are exactly what Rochester hopes to eliminate. It is his anxious castration fantasy that makes him perceive the West Indies as a place full of secret.



Although Rochester is not comfortable with his situation, he does not yet take any serious action to involve others or to defend himself until he has sex with Antoinette and identify with Daniel's letters. Laurence Lerner mentions in "Bertha and Critics" that many writers such as Helene Moglen and Patricia Yaeger suggest that Antoinette is a symbol of physical lust. One of the reasons that Rochester mistreats Antoinette and regards her as a savage is due to her immense sexuality which is not allowed in the Victorian world. However, I'm going to discuss sexuality through psychoanalysis and focus on Rochester's. I'll prove that Rochester is a hysteric who cannot be satisfied

sexually. Instead, he chooses his unique way to experience sex.

Having been overwhelmed by anxiety, Rochester experiences castration through symbolization. It is just like Frau Cacilie, a patient of Freud's, who "was afflicted with a violent pain in her right heel—a shooting pain at every step she took" when she thought she might not "find herself on a right footing" with strangers (*Studies on Hysteria* 179). No matter how hard Rochester tries to reject anxiety, he unconsciously performs its sign on his physical body i.e. the incapability of having sex. Whenever making love with his wife, Rochester says that "Die then. Sleep. It is all I can give you....I wonder if she ever guessed how near she came to dying. In her way, not in mine" (WSS 56). As he finishes his work, he "turned away from her and slept, still without a word or a caress" (WSS 55). As we already know that a permanent and latent state of dissatisfaction is not confined to a hysteric's daily life but extends to his sexual involvement because the desire for dissatisfaction is exactly the feature of hysteria. The hysteric, thus, transfers his castration anxiety to the non-genital body and anesthetizes the genital body.

Thus, as a hysteric, Rochester has genital inhibition in his sexual life. It discloses a truth that he can't get any jouissance from his genital organ because of the unconscious symbol of castration. Thus, whenever having sex, Rochester cannot experience "dying" in his way (WSS 56). On the contrary, Rochester experiences his sexuality everywhere in

his body “except in the very place where he should experience it” (Nasio 51) for he thinks he can do as whatever he likes. Obviously, his jouissance lies in another body—the erotogenic body. Thus, he considers physically genital coupling not his way of experiencing “dying.”

Besides, there’s another sexual scene that highlights Rochester’s inability although this can also be interpreted as that Rochester’s illness due to Christophine’s love potion.

I woke in the dark after dreaming that I was buried alive, and when I was awake the feeling of suffocation persisted. Something was lying across my mouth; hair with a sweet heavy smell. I threw it off but still I could not breathe.... I was cold too, deathly cold and sick and in pain. I got out of bed without looking at her... I could not vomit. I only retched painfully. (WSS 82-3)

These sentences are uttered by Rochester after having sex with Antoinette. Rochester’s dizziness, respiratory difficulty, nausea, and vomiting, according to Wade Davis, are symptoms of poisoning. However, these symptoms, in accordance with *Studies on Hysteria*, are also some of the features of hysteria. In order to win Rochester’s heart back, Antoinette asks Christophine to practice some mythical ceremony and give her love powder to make Rochester love her again. As a result, having these symptoms leads

Rochester to think he is poisoned by Antoinette. Apart from being poisoned, his hysterical tendency might be another possible reason that causes Rochester's illness. Due to his castration fantasy, a hysteric has genital inhibition not because of his indifference to sexuality as one would assume but his aversion and disgust toward all carnal contact. Thus, Rochester's poison symptoms such as suffocation and retching can be seen as his hysterical symptoms of being disgusted by sexuality.

Although Rochester has a sexual affair with the black servant Amélie later in the novel, it cannot prove Rochester's sexual normally. We have to find out Rochester's true motivation behind having sex with Amélie. Before discussing Rochester's affair with another woman, I have to take Daniel Cosway's letter into consideration first. Robert Kendrick suggests that Rochester may be completely under Daniel's influence because Daniel recognizes him [Rochester] as a "tall fine English gentleman," a legitimate, empowered patriarch even if this recognition occurs during the process of a blackmail attempt" (242). Nevertheless, the importance of Daniel's letter, in psychoanalytic terms, is its provocation because it awakes Rochester's unbearable castration anxiety, which makes him hate the West Indies and Antoinette more than ever. I will put Daniel's long letter into several short paragraphs below and analyze them one by one.

Dear Sir, I take up my pen after long thought and meditation but in the end

the truth is better than a lie. I have this to say. You have been shamefully deceived by the Mason family...., but they don't tell you what sort of people were these Cosways. Wicked and detestable slave-owners since generations—yes everybody hate them in Jamaica.... Wickedness is not the worst. There is madness in that family. (WSS 56-7)

Rochester, as I mentioned before, suggests that the West Indies is a place full of lies and he is anxious to know “what it hides” (WSS 52). At the beginning of the letter, Daniel mentions lie and deception which matches exactly Rochester’s imagination of this place that he is victimized by everyone. Daniel uses negative descriptions such as “wicked,” “detestable,” and “madness” to portray Antoinette’s family and these words are the precise adjectives that Rochester wants to describe the people in the West Indies with. In other words, Daniel’s words bespeak Rochester’s chaotic feelings. In fact, both Daniel and Rochester intend to demonize others, especially Antoinette, in order to justify themselves. To make Rochester believe in him, Daniel has to introduce his special relation with Antoinette and Cosway’s family history.

You ask what proof I have and why I mix myself up in your affairs. I will answer you I am your wife’s brother by another lady, half-way house as we say. Her father and mine was a shameless man and of all his illegitimates I

am the most unfortunate and poverty stricken.

This young Mrs Cosway is worthless and spoiled, she can't lift a hand for herself and soon the madness that is in her... come out.... As for the little girl, Antoinette, as soon as she can walk she hide herself if she see anybody.

(WSS 57)

Daniel's "the most unfortunate and poverty stricken" position recalls Rochester's castration anxiety as well. Like Daniel, Rochester is the less powered and poor man in his family because of the English inheritance law. In addition, Daniel decodes the myth for Rochester. The secret, under Daniel's guidance, turns out to be Antoinette's madness. Being in the same boat and being the first person who discloses the secret to Rochester, Daniel gradually gains his trust. If there were no Daniel, the outcome of the "secret" can be anything but madness. Perhaps, the secret may be his wife's miserable childhood that Antoinette doesn't want to let Rochester know so that he won't look down on her.

Nevertheless, I find that Daniel, to some extent, is also a hysteric, too. He enjoys involving others in his game and shaping himself as the only answer to Rochester's secret. In other words, Daniel hopes to "present himself as the truth teller, the excavator of all that Antoinette (and Richard Mason) has kept veiled" (Robert 242).

Then it seems to me that it is my Christian duty to warn the gentleman that

she is no girl to marry with the bad blood....and it's certain that the Lord
 put the thing on my shoulders and that it is I must speak the truth to you....
 I beg you sir come to see me for there is more that you should know. (WSS
 58)

In fact, Daniel rationalizes his hysteric tendency as a Christian duty that was given by the
 Lord. In other words, Daniel makes himself a phallus that everyone wants. To accomplish
 his involvement, Daniel keeps dragging other people in his scheme. He wants Rochester
 to ask Améile and “someone else—everybody in Spanish Town” about what he said (WSS
 71).

However, Daniel gains more trust from Rochester not only because of his disturbing
 letter but also his meeting with Rochester. As they meet each other, Daniel endlessly
 complains about the maltreatment of his father which arouses Rochester's sympathy or, I
 may say, fear.

All I get is curses and get-outs from that damn devil my father.... The man
 have a heart like stone. Sometimes when he get sick of a woman which is
 quickly, he free her like he free my mother, even he give her a hut and a bit
 of land for herself, but it is no mercy, it's for wicked pride he do it.... He
 don't refuse to see me; he receive me very cool and calm and first thing he

tell me is I'm always pestering him for money. This because sometimes I ask help to buy a pair of shoes and such.... He look at me like I was dirt and I get angry too. (WSS 73-4)

Daniel's hatred for his father in some way bespeaks Rochester's ambivalent feelings toward his own father. His situation just like Daniel's, who has no money and no status in the family but has to beg for money. Rochester is freed by his father's "mercy" by arranging an exotic marriage for him. However, the mercy, for Rochester, is out of his father's "wicked pride" because his father has "a heart like stone," who has sold him away. What's worse, Daniel also has a rich brother, Alexander, who is "the old man's favorite and he [the father] prosper right from the start" (WSS 75). As Daniel painfully and agitatedly expresses his misfortune, Rochester experiences the same anguish of being "received very cool and calm" by his father. Having undergone the same adversity, Rochester identifies with Daniel's decoding of secret by taking his marriage as a dedicatedly designed fraud and Antoinette the chief suspect in the scheme.

To revenge and to relieve his anxiety, Rochester chooses his own way to fight back by sleeping with the black servant Amélie. As I mentioned before, hysteria has sexual inhibitions but that Rochester sleeps with Amélie doesn't indicate that he is not a hysteric anymore. Instead, Rochester's sexual affair with Amélie proves his hysteria, for a hysteric

only experiences sex in his own way. Rochester feels “satisfied and peaceful but not gay” (WSS 84) at all.

I pulled her down beside me and we were both laughing. That is what I remember most about that encounter. She was so gay, so natural and something of this gaiety she must have given to me, for I had not one moment of remorse. Nor was I anxious to know what was happening behind the thin partition which divided us from my wife’s bedroom.

In the morning, of course, I felt differently.... I felt satisfied and peaceful, but not gay as she did, no, by God, not gay. I had no wish to touch her and she knew it, for she got up at once and began to dress. (WSS 84)

In fact, the hysteric is hysterical precisely because of the means he uses to avoid his anxiety. What satisfies him is not the genital pleasure but the mental pleasure of vengeance. Because after having sex with Amélie, Rochester claims that “by God, not gay.” Furthermore, he understands clearly that he “had no wish to touch her [Amélie] and she knew it, for she got up at once and began to dress.” His true intention to do so is to let his wife hear the whole process of his affair. What’s more, in order to reassure himself, Rochester comes up with an ultimate solution—castrating his wife’s two bodies because “there are always two deaths, the real one and the one people know about” (WSS 77).

Antoinette's physical body becomes his first target.

The cold light was on her face and I looked at the sad droop of her lips, the frown between her thick eyebrows, deep as if it had been cut with a knife. She may wake up at any moment, I told myself. I must be quick. Her torn shift was on the floor, I drew the sheet over her gently as if I cover a dead girl. (WSS 83)

Castrating Antoinette's physical body, of course, doesn't mean that Rochester has to hurt her physically. Rather, Rochester castrates her body by doing something ritually like covering her as a dead body. The atmosphere that Rochester creates is like engaging in a murder. Rochester is the murderer; Antoinette his victim. After that, Rochester's next target is Antoinette's imaginary body. He unexpectedly renames Antoinette Bertha just because "it is a name he is particularly fond of" (WSS 81). The name of Antoinette represents a strange rich Creole woman and an estranged West Indies resident which are "too much" for him to bear. Thus, renaming Antoinette has a significant meaning that anything unfamiliar to him no longer exists and he becomes the only master in the world. To put it differently, Rochester, in order to preserve his phallus, imagines himself to be becoming it. By giving a name and a frame to something that goes beyond his knowledge, Rochester becomes more confident for he turns everything under his control. He is the

creator and the object/phallus that everyone worships.

However, Christophine, the favorite nanny of Antoinette, fights against Rochester for Antoinette. She unearths the hardest truth in front of him:

...it is you come all the way to her houses—it's you beg her to marry. And she love you and she give you all she have. Now you say you don't love her and you break her up (WSS 95).

She again provokes Rochester's unconscious castration anxiety that he has always been a beggar needing someone's help to survive both in England and the West Indies.

Furthermore, Christophine suggests that he should let Antoinette "marry with someone else" and "she forget about him and live happy" (WSS 95). Obviously, Christophine rubs

Rochester the wrong way. The idea of letting Antoinette marry someone else strikes

Rochester's imagining of himself as a phallus. Being a phallus means to be the most

important person that every one worships. In short, if Antoinette does marry someone

else, the meaning of renaming Antoinette won't sustain. He won't be the creator of

Antoinette.

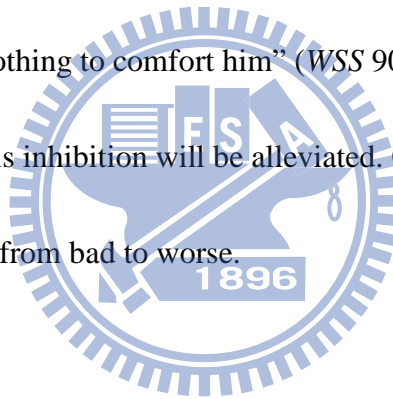
Consequently, after arguing with Christophine, Rochester suddenly decides to leave and go back to England. At this moment Rochester is just like Dora, who is described by Jonathan Lear as a girl "flooded with anxiety" (Lear 126).

Unpleasant as this experience is, it has one strategic advantage for her. In the angry-anxious outburst, she disrupts herself—and thus she does not have to continue to live with her angry feelings....in the disruption there is a certain relief....She disrupts this process by overwhelming herself with anxiety” (Lear 126).

As a result, Dora lashes out at Freud and abruptly ends Freud’s treatment. In fact, when Christophine argues with Rochester, she ignites his “overwhelming anxiety and the anxiety triggers a massive, angry reaction” (Lear 127) and Rochester’s delusion as his reaction is to leave this unpleasant place. Thus, “the reaction is strategic—it breaks an anxiety-provoking situation apart – and thus we can consider it a defense” (Lear 127). In other words, leaving the West Indies is Rochester’s conversion, only by doing so can he relieve the anxiety aroused by Christophine. In addition, we may have the second interpretation of his leaving. As I mentioned above, Rochester tries to castrate Antoinette symbolically to reassure his masculinity; however, leaving the West Indies is his last step to castrate her. In his fantasy if he doesn’t take any measure to guard his penis, he may probably lose it. Therefore, it is possible that he wishes to complete his castration project by taking Antoinette away from where she loves and is familiar with. However, while Rochester plans to leave his hysterical traits behind, his hostile fantasy is shown. He says,

You hate me and I hate you. We'll see who hates best. But first, first I will destroy your hatred. Now. My hate is colder, stronger, and you'll have no hate to warm yourself. You will have nothing. (WSS 102)

Obviously, he wants to be the phallus for Antoinette, if she has “no hate to warm herself”; Rochester, of course, is the one who she could only rely on. Besides, he always has a sense of insecurity. Rochester deeply believes that there must be something that he used to hold but it has now gone. What he quests about for is actually his fantasy of castration fear and what he wants is “nothing to comfort him” (WSS 90). Therefore, going back to England doesn't mean that his inhibition will be alleviated. On the contrary, it will make his neurotic inhibition going from bad to worse.



Chapter 3: Dreams, Antoinette's Ultimate Weapon

Rochester is mentioned in chapter two to the effect that he, with his own hysterical fantasy, regards Antoinette as someone who deserved to be hated especially after he learned rumors about her family and her madness. Nevertheless, the interpretations of Antoinette's madness vary from person to person. Gayatri Spivak suggests that Antoinette's madness is related to the politics of imperialism. Kathy Mezei refers Antoinette's madness to her effort to engage in the act of narration but in vain because Rochester is neither an ideal listener nor an ideal reader. However, in this chapter I am going to offer a different way to understand Antoinette's madness through her unforgettable childhood, which has something to do with her unique background of upbringing, and her relation with Rochester.

However, before discussing Antoinette, we must mention her mother Annette first, who is said to have inherited her delirium from her mother's family. To clarify the origin of madness, we must include Annette in our discussion. At the beginning of the novel, we know from the guests that her mother Annette is "such a pretty woman" (WSS 17). Nevertheless, she is also taken as a mad and bad woman by others. Here, I would like to offer a different reading, aside from heredity, to explain why she has gone mad. After the

death of her first husband, she hid herself in the house because people rumored that she had killed him without stopping him but encouraging him to drink instead. As a result, she has become very lonely and unhappy. A young and beautiful woman as she is, Annette tries “for all the things that had gone so suddenly, so without warning” (WSS 10).

Without a husband, her inner life has gone wild like the garden in her Coulibri Estate, where “the paths overgrown and a smell of dead flowers mixed with the fresh living smell” (WSS 11). It implies that if there is any man appearing and taking care of her garden again, Annette’s garden will come back to life soon and could improve her poor mental and physical condition. Although Annette never shows any sense of sadness about her husband’s death, a similar analogy from Frau Emmy Von N., one of Freud’s patients indicates that her husband’s death has probably also “produced the most lasting effect on her and came up most often in her memory” (Freud, *Studies on Hysteria* 60) and “the essential origin of this fear of people was the persecution to which she had been subjected after her husband’s death” (*Studies on Hysteria* 65). Even though her first marriage results in her misfortune, Annette’s wish to get remarried is very obvious as Antoinette puts it: “I got used to a solitary life, but my mother still planned and hoped...” (WSS 10).

Although Antoinette doesn’t bring up exactly what her mother is hoping for, we all know that Annette is more or less planning to get married and hoping to be loved by someone

again. Being trapped in such a solitary and dissatisfying circumstance, Annette can't do anything but focus all her energy on nursing her sick little son, Pierre, in order to allay her desire for getting married again, for nursing a sick person is a time and strength consuming job. Consequently, she "grew thin and silent, and at least she refused to leave the house at all" (WSS 10). After leading an isolated and unhappy life for a long period of time, Annette gradually develops a neurotic temperament. And as waiting for a long time, Annette finally meets "visitors" from Spanish Town and gets a chance to remarry to Mr. Mason. The marriage is significant because it saves Annette from being impoverished. Annette's marriage seems perfect until the black servants set fire to her house. The cruel and unexpected fire not only burns the house to ashes but also seriously injures Pierre, who dies at last. The loss of Pierre, who has long been Annette's world, leads to the collapse of her inner world. If Pierre had not died in the fire, it might be possible that Annette could still more or less live normally without the house, because taking care of Pierre, is regarded as a repression mechanism to lower her excessively sexual and emotional urges. According to Freud,

Anyone whose mind is taken up by the hundred and one tasks of sick-nursing which follows one another in endless succession over a period of weeks and months will, on the other hand, adopt a habit of suppressing

every sign of his own emotion, and on the other, will soon divert his attention away from his own impressions, since he has neither time nor strength to do justice to them. (*Studies on Hysteria* 161)

In addition to diverting attention, Pierre plays an important role to Annette because a child is often considered as the only support and hope for parents in adversity. As long as Pierre is around, she knows she is not alone and there's still someone who needs to depend on her. It enables Annette to get rid of her bad reputation of being good for nothing. In other words, Pierre gives his mother great courage to deal with her loneliness.

Pierre's death ignites Annette's long-term anger toward Mr. Mason, who always holds the different opinion from Annette and has no idea about her life of being a Creole. For example, Annette says that the servants "invent stories about you, and lies about me" (WSS 19). However, Mr. Mason told Annette that "You imagine enmity which doesn't exist. Always one extreme or the other" and "they're [the black servants] too damn lazy to be dangerous" (WSS 19). Before the fire, Annette tries so hard, albeit gently, to make clear their complex situation for Mr. Mason because Annette knows that it is Mason who saves them from "going wild." However, Pierre's death, Annette can't tolerate Mr. Mason's ignorance any longer. In fact, the fire represents the anger of the black servants, who are mistreated and despised by Mr. Mason. Thus, Annette condemns Mr. Mason

severely.

You would not listen, you sneered at me, you grinning hypocrite, you ought not to live either, you know so much, don't you? Why don't you go out and ask them to let you go? Say how innocent you are. Say you have always trusted them. (WSS 24)


After leaving the burnt house, Annette can't bear the truth of Pierre's death. Her strategy to alleviate her grief is not to cry but to continuously curse and scream to everyone in her sight "I'll kill you if you touch me. Coward. Hypocrite. I'll kill you" (WSS 28). Pierre's death traumatizes her so heavily that she is driven mad at last. In other words, Annette's madness may be the consequence of the unbearable blow of her son's death.

I have already shown that Annette is not born a mad woman. Instead, her madness has close relation with Pierre's untimely death and her two miserable marriages. Thus, her daughter Antoinette's madness is not without any reasons. To know Antoinette better, we have to go back to her childhood. According to "The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence," Freud notes,

In every case a number of pathological symptoms, habits and phobias are only to be accounted for by going back to these experiences in childhood, and the logical structure of the neurotic manifestations makes it impossible

to reject these faithfully preserved memories which emerge from childhood life. (165)

It can thus be assumed that Antoinette's childhood plays a vital role in her whole life. It is said that she has derived the predisposition to her illness from her parents. However, I am not going to attribute her madness to the heredity and blood. Instead, I'll take the psychoanalytic point of view which includes affects and ideas to clarify her madness. As a white nigger girl belonging to nowhere, Antoinette endures many insults and sufferings at a very young age.



They hated us. They called us white cockroaches. Let sleeping dogs lie. One day a little girl followed me singing, 'Go away white cockroach, go away, go away.' I walked fast, but she walked faster. 'White cockroach, go away, go away. Nobody wants you. Go away.' (WSS 13)

These unhappy memories produce many affects and ideas, but as a little girl she doesn't know how to deal with them or maybe she doesn't even know what a white cockroach means. At that time she is just too young to understand the "idea" of insult. The things she can do is either to run away and hides herself "close to the old wall at the end of the garden" (WSS 13) or "run away and did not speak of it" because she thinks if she "told no one it might not be true" (WSS10). However, according to Breuer and Freud, "the fading

of a memory or the losing of its affect depends on various factors” (*Studies on Hysteria* 8).

Above all, reacting to the insults or misfortune is one way to discharge affects. If the reaction is suppressed, “the affect remains attached to the memory” (*Studies on Hysteria* 8). As a result, she may gradually forget the insulting ideas, pretending that nothing has happened. The affects, on the contrary, are left unattached in her unconscious mind.

What really traumatizes Antoinette is her only friend Tia’s making use of her in her childhood. At first, they meet each other nearly every morning at the turn of the road to the river, going to the bathing pool together. However, Tia befriends her for her pocket money. Tia doesn’t only take her money, her starched and ironed clean dress away but also laugh at her Creole background. Being insulted and laughed at on numerous occasions, Antoinette develops a sense of self-abasement and insecurity to people.

Having done nothing to ease her pain caused by Tia’s betrayal, Antoinette transfers all her disappointment and fear into her dream.

I went to bed early and slept at once. I dreamed that I was walking in the forest. Not alone. Someone who hates was with me, out of sight. I could hear heavy footsteps coming closer and though I struggled and screamed I could not move. (WSS 15-6)

Antoinette’s dream unveils her repressed affects. Dreams, according to *The*

Interpretation of Dreams, are not meaningless and absurd. Dreams help Antoinette to unearth her hidden fears. The content of the dream has something to do with Tia's betrayal and her fear of being laughed at because "in every dream it is possible to find a point of contact with the experiences of the previous day" (*The Interpretation of Dreams* 197).

The forest, which is mythical and easily to get lost in, represents Antoinette's complicated feeling of her position. Once you walk into a forest, you may find there's an endless road that leads nowhere. The further you walk into the more you confuse yourself. However, there's someone who hates her with her. In fact, "someone" who remains "out of sight" indicates that Antoinette has personified her fear of being laughed at and hated by referring to it as "someone" who hates her. The process is what Freud has called condensation. Antoinette condenses all her experiences of being mistreated into a person who doesn't like her as everybody else. In other words, this "someone" in her dreams doesn't suggest any particular person. On the contrary, this "someone" refers to many people who have bullied her before, such as Tia and the girl who sings about the white cockroach .

Likewise, the approaching heavy steps, which create a feeling of anxiety and desperation oppresses Antoinette. She can do nothing but just "struggle and scream" like

what she does in reality. Incapable of moving in dream reflects her transfixed reaction to Tia's betrayal and the other girl's insults. By analyzing her dream, we see how miserable Antoinette's life is. As a result, it is understandable that Antoinette in her real life hides herself away from people. But since Antoinette, an abandoned child, doesn't have a safe and warm place to hide, she can only retreat in a dangerous manner.

I am safe....There is the tree of life in the garden and the wall green with moss. The barrier of the cliffs and the high mountains. And the barrier of the sea. I am safe. I am safe from strangers.

And if the razor grass cut my legs and arms I would think 'It is better than people.' Black ants or red ones, tall nests swarming with white ants, rain that soaked me to the skin—once I saw a snake. All better than people.

Better. Better, better than people. (WSS 16)

It is possible that Antoinette's behavior is the same as Dora, who according to Lear "does not remember anything of what she has forgotten and repressed; however, affects still roots deeply inside her mind and makes her 'act it out'" (Lear 137). Antoinette could suppress her anger into unconsciousness, but her anger returns to her again via dream work. In the dream world, she truly acts her affects out. These affects cause her to furiously react to insults or miserable encounters later in her life. For example, the day

after her mother's wedding, she, an immature girl, hears "what all these smooth smiling people said about her [mother] when she was not listening" (WSS 17). They even curse the marriage as "a fantastic marriage and he [Mr. Mason] will regret it" (WSS 17). These malicious remarks have bad impact on Antoinette even though she can't fully understand what they mean. Antoinette can't find words to defend her mother. The bad experience of being maligned makes Antoinette sensitive to gossips. As she grows up, when she learns that Denial, her illegitimate brother, intentionally speaks ill of her to her husband for the sake of money, she recalls her traumatic memory of being rumored by the white and other children. The accumulated excessive emotion forces her to react violently by "cutting through the hem and tearing the sheet in half, then each half into strips" (WSS 60).

The helpless and painful experience of being utilized in childhood explains the reason why she later becomes ill soon after overhearing the love-making between her husband and the black servant. It is these non-abreacted affects that establishes her hysterical temperament. In addition to the excessive affects and memory traces, we have another explanation for Antoinette's violent reaction from Jonathan Lear's point of view. We may assume that Antoinette is just like Dora, who "has been reacting to anxiety since childhood with angry outbursts" (Lear 127). Whenever she undergoes the repetition of traumatic memory, Antoinette "has only one available defense," that is anger, as if "a

three-year-old emotions have been preserved in the young woman” (Lear 127). In conclusion, Antoinette just can “ sat on the bed and with clenched teeth pulled at the sheet, then cutting through the hem and tearing the sheet in half, then each half into strips.” This strange behavior is her strategy to calm herself down like a little girl.

As her family falls apart, Antoinette is sent to a convent by her Aunt Cora to learn the virtues of women. In fact, the convent serves as an area of repression. Living in such a religious place, Antoinette has to learn how to forget her miserable childhood and to repress all kinds of desires. However, we know that the mechanism of repression is not easy. Before being fully immersed in the convent, she is guided by one nun after another one, who’s function is to repress and to “exclude bad events from the process of thought” (Freud, “Part II: Psychopathology” 351).

‘You must not ring the bell like that,’ she said. ‘I come as quick as I can.’

Then I heard the door shut behind me.

I collapsed and begin to cry. She asked me if I was sick, I but could not answer. She took my hand... and led me across the yard, past the shadow of the big tree, not into the front door but into a big, cool, stone-flagged room.... There was another nun at the back of the room... and a third nun was with her who said in a calm voice, ‘You have cried quite enough now,

you must stop.’ (WSS 30-1)

The process of repression is, in fact, the defence of the ego. According to J. Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis, unpleasurable affects stir up the defence of the ego because “the ego... seeks freedom from all forms of disturbance” (*The Language of Psycho-analysis* 104). In other words, the aim of defence is to “maintain and re-establish the integrity and the constancy of the ego and to avoid all perturbing factors liable to be transposed into subjective unpleasure” (107). All the unpleasant memories should be confined in “a big, cool, stone-flagged room.” Living in the convent for more than eighteen months, Antoinette gets used to repressing her sexual desire and unpleasant memories. Although sexual desire is included in the realm of defence and not allowed in the convent, at the mature age of seventeen, Antoinette’s desire appears in the form of dream after Mr. Mason pays her a visit. During the visit Mr. Mason brings presents to Antoinette such as sweets, a locket, a bracelet and even a dress. Mr. Mason tells Antoinette that she “can’t be hidden away all her life” (WSS 35) and promises to find her an Englishman. In fact the meeting, presents and the promise arouse her hidden desires. At night she dreams the following:

It is still night and I am walking towards the forest. I am wearing a long dress and thin slippers... following the man who is with me and holding up

the skirt of my dress. It is white and beautiful and I don't wish to get it soiled. I follow him, sick with fear but I make no effort to save myself; if anyone were to try to save me, I would refuse.... Now we have reach the forest.... Now I do not try to hold up my dress, it trails in the dirt, my beautiful dress. (WSS 36)

According to *The Interpretation of Dreams*, we know that “dreams really have a secret meaning which represents the fulfillment of a wish” (146) and only “an unconscious wish or one which reaches down into the unconscious has the force necessary for the formation of dream” (Freud, *Fragment 67*). In addition, “the instigation to a dream is always to be found in the events of the previous day” (Freud, *Fragment 147*). As a result, the second dream must have something to do with her father's visit. Antoinette mentions in the daytime that the pretty dress given by her father can't be worn in the convent. It implies that the dress may be too pretty and splendid to wear in the convent, where simplicity is advocated. Secondly, the dress also symbolizes secular sentiments such as sexuality, which is strictly banned in the convent. In fact, this dream reveals her deepest desire for sexuality. According to Freud, “dreams all have a sexual content or are derived from sexual motive forces” (*An Autobiographical Study 46*).

Walking into the forest, as in Dora's case, indicates walking into the mysterious realm of

sexuality and the dress appears in the dream is exactly identical with what her stepfather gave her in the previous day. In her dream, Antoinette doesn't "wish to get it soiled" at first because the white dress symbolizes not only her virginity and morality but also her marital desire. As a seventeen-year-old woman, Antoinette must have some knowledge about sex; thus she may understand that having sex means the exchange of "drops" that may soil her white dress, i.e. her pureness. She follows a man with fear, which means that she is curious and worried about what the man is going to do to her. In fact, her virginity is at risk with a man holding her skirt. Nevertheless, Antoinette doesn't want to withdraw from the fear but keep following the man. It implies that, having repressed her desires in the convent for so long, Antoinette now decides to unfetter her deepest wishes.

Consequently, entering the forest with the man, she tries not to save her white dress but trails it in the dirt. The dream is the fulfillment of her wish because in the day time she, living in the religious convent, has to act as if she were a saint, repressing her libido. However, at night she satisfies her impulse through the dream. In other words, only in the dream world can she follow her instinct and fulfill her desires.

Judging from Antoinette's second dream, it is possible for us to assume that she is longing for marriage. However, on her wedding day, Antoinette has some second thoughts about her marriage and thinks that she "won't go through with it" (WSS 46). She

tells Rochester she is just “afraid of what may happen” in the future because Rochester doesn’t know anything about her (WSS 46). What Antoinette tries to avoid may be, first, her madness in her blood as others have predicted. Secondly, it is also possible that she tries not to fall into the same fate as her mother, who is misunderstood and distrusted by her English husband and is abandoned at last. The Englishmen, at first, are their hope, for they can bring not only money but also respect to the Creoles, whose position in the West Indies is controversial and often be deemed as parasites; however, they turn out to be their destruction. What Englishmen have destroyed is not just a house but also Creole women’s life. Antoinette is wary of the recurrence of tragedy. She doesn’t want to experience the same grief of losing someone such as her beloved mother, brother, and something that she loves. Her childhood memory is a scar for her, like the wound on her forehead she got while escaping from the burning Goulibri.⁶ It heals well and Aunt Cora says it won’t spoil her on her wedding day. However, Antoinette feels that it does spoil her wedding day and the rest of her life because the wound on her forehead can be fully healed, but the mental trauma will never disappear from her memory. In other words, the

⁶ Goulibri is a place where Antoinette and her family lived when she was a child. However, Goulibri was set to fire by black servants who hated Mr. Mason because he had planned to import labourers from East Indies. Annette accuses Mr. Mason of destroying all her life and house. After the fire, Annette “gives up, she care for nothing” (WSS 94), and at the end she becomes insane.

wound and childhood experiences not only spoil her wedding day but also her future.

Although Antoinette is afraid of what may happen in the future, she marries Rochester, hoping to be saved from her current situation. She gives all her love to Rochester and tries to win his heart. Unfortunately, their marriage doesn't go very well. The third dream is her last and ultimate way to release her oppression and dismay of being misunderstood by both the West Indies residents and Rochester. Antoinette asks Christophine for help by giving as many excuses as possible. Antoinette exclaims that:

Going away to Martinique or England or anywhere else, that is the lies.

He would never give me any money to go away and he would be furious if

I asked him. There would be a scandal if I left him and he hates scandal.

Even if I got away (and how?) he would force me back. So would Richard,

So would everybody else. Running away from him, from this island, is the

lie. What reason could I give for going and who would believe me?

Oh Christophine, I am so afraid, I said, I do not know why, but so afraid.

All the time. Help me. (WSS 68-9)

Thus, the only breakthrough for Antoinette's impasse is Christophine's obeah. That is why Antoinette refuses to do what Christophine has suggested:

Have spunks and do battle for yourself. Speak to your husband calm and

cool, tell him about your mother and all what happened at Coulibri and why she gets sick and what they do to her. Don't bawl at the man and don't make crazy face. Don't cry either. Crying no good with him. Speak nice and make him believe. (WSS 69)

There are two possible reasons that we can explain her being afraid all the time.

Firstly, Antoinette doesn't want to face the unbearable trauma again because her past was a painful experience of which she would rather not to think. Speaking of "what happened at Coulibri" and "why she[Annette] gets sick" again means she has to experience the misfortune again. Her strategy to solve her problems is usually not to speak of anything because "it won't be true if she told no one" (WSS10). Secondly, Antoinette doesn't want to involve Rochester in her tragic world so that he won't look down on her. Generally speaking, it is really a shame for someone you love to know how miserable you were; instead you just want to show the best side of you. In other words, she is just madly in love with Rochester, caring too much about how he thinks of her.

Antoinette is angry like many other women in Freud's cases like Anna, Emmy, and others. According to André Green, their madly reactions are about "want[ing] to live and to love" ("The Psychotherapy of Hysteria" 88). Therefore, Antoinette after hearing the flirtation between Rochester and Amélie serves as a vivid example of madness in love.

When I saw her I was too shocked to speak. Her hair hung uncombed and dull into her eyes which were inflamed and staring, her face was very flushed and looked swollen. Her feet were bare. However, when she spoke her voice was low, almost inaudible. (WSS 87)

Through Rochester's description, Antoinette looks like a madwoman or even an animal.

...when I felt her teeth in my arm I dropped the bottle....She smashed another bottle against the wall and stood with the broken glass in her hand and murder in her eyes....this red-eyed wild-haired stranger who was my wife shouting obscenities at me. (WSS 89)

Antoinette's behavior and her appearance make people think she has really gone mad.

However, her madness is not inherited from her mother as others have postulated. Instead she is so madly in love with Rochester that his disloyalty strikes her heavily. In fact, no women can tolerate their husbands' extramarital relations with other women. Antoinette's violent reaction is not an exceptional case. Every woman will show a tendency for madness as they learn of their husbands' affairs. Rochester sleeping with a servant is a greatest insult to Antoinette's pride because she, a Creole, has long been rejected by both black and white communities.

Antoinette's in-between situation fully shows that she is neither accepted nor

respected by the locals when she tells Rochester that

It was a song about a white cockroach. That's me. That's what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa sold them to the slave trades. And I've heard English women call us white niggers. So between you I often wonder who I am and where is my country and where do I belong to and why was I ever born at all. (WSS 61)

Consequently, Rochester's infidelity with a black reinforces Antoinette's insecurity.

Nevertheless, what tortures Antoinette is Rochester's depreciation of her after their marriage, which makes her think of her mother's awful relationship with her stepfather.

Unfortunately, Antoinette has not known how to deal with her anger and anxiety since childhood, she can only release her excessive emotions by shouting, staring, and

smashing bottles, bringing herself close to a breakdown. To put an end to Antoinette's

suffering, Christophine suggests to Rochester that Antoinette should "marry with

someone else. She forget about you and live happy" (WSS 95). However, after

Christophine's proposition, "a pang of rage and jealousy shot through" Rochester (WSS

95). Rejecting Christophine's proposal of letting Antoinette remarry someone else,

Rochester would "give his life to undo it" and would "give his eyes never to have seen

this abominable place" (WSS 96). Suddenly, he decides to take Antoinette back to

England, making Antoinette his own mad girl to keep.

Antoinette's third dream happens in England. In accordance with Rochester's motivation of taking her back to England in chapter two, we notice that Rochester's problem will not be alleviated as he wishes. The way Rochester treats Antoinette in England is predictable that she becomes the "unpleasant memories" or "trauma" to him. He locks her up in a secret attic and hires a nurse to keep watching over her. In order not to hear anything about Antoinette anymore, he writes to his chief housekeeper that "If Mrs Poole is satisfactory why not to give her double, treble the money. But for God's sake let me hear no more of it" (WSS 105). Rochester's intention, on the surface, is to put an end to all rumors about him or his mad wife. If they are all rumors as Rochester claims, he doesn't need to care about them at all. Because, firstly, he is not in England very often, it is unlikely for him to hear about rumors. Secondly, if they were not true, gossips cannot possibly hurt him.

In fact, the nurse who is named Grace Poole symbolizes the repression mechanism in Rochester's mind, repressing anything that the ego doesn't like. Grace is not candid at all, for what she does is to keep the truth away from Rochester. However, the unpleasant trauma cannot be easily repressed, for if you block it out of this place, it will always find its way back. Thus, the ego needs to pay "double, treble" attention on it to maintain its

stability and integrity. In order not to hear gossips about Bertha, Rochester is willing to pay more money to Grace. Because he knows clearly that anyone who is responsible for the “fierce and unruly” (WSS 106) Bertha will need more strength than ever. As Grace heads for the place where Bertha is locked, she finds the atmosphere and the setting of the house very weird and gloomy:

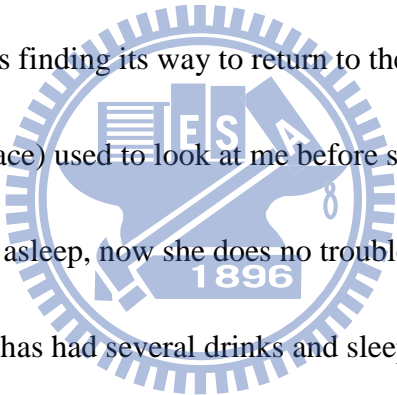
The thick walls. Past the lodge gate a long avenue of rooms and inside the house the blazing fires and the crimson and white rooms. But above all the thick walls, keeping away all the things that you have fought till you can fight no more. (WSS 106)

She has to pass through “the thick walls,” “the lodge gate,” and “the crimson room” before arriving at Bertha’s room. These heavy buildings also indirectly prove that Bertha is Rochester’s unbearable trauma. He projects his castration anxiety and what he thinks as secret onto Bertha. If he wishes not to hear any more about his unhappy memory, he must build these heavy walls around this secure prison to segregate it and to make sure rumors won’t return to the surface. Locking Bertha up makes Rochester feel self-assured.

However, we may suggest that Bertha is the nuclear of Rochester’s anxiety, “a mixture of memories of events or a train of thought” (Green 76) and Rochester guards her with different strata. The thick walls, the lodge gate, and the crimson room serve as

different strata and their purpose is to imprison Bertha, the pathogenic idea, into the invisible attic. Therefore, if someone wants to dig out what's going on in the attic, he has to overcome resistance first. Because he has to "move forward and backward, dropping threads and picking them up again or selecting others," before he may "at the end reach the nuclear" (Green 75).

Although Bertha, source of Rochester's trauma, is guarded by Grace and those thick walls, she "hasn't lost her spirit. She's still fierce" (WSS 106). Bertha is just like the powerful unconscious, always finding its way to return to the surface.



At first she (Grace) used to look at me before she did this but I always pretended to be asleep, now she does no trouble about me.... When night comes, and she has had several drinks and sleeps, it is easy to take the keys.

I know now where she keeps them. Then I open the door and walk into their world. (WSS 106-7)

Bertha at her young age tends not to speak of what had happened and try to repress her feelings. However, the repression is piled up more than she can digest. Her act of taking keys and walking into the other world is the return of her repressed. Bertha knows where to take the keys without awaking the guard. Her act implies that her unconscious mind is "still fierce" and it finds channels to let off their excessive affects, which are ignored

purposely by the conscious mind. In addition, Bertha does not only evade the guard with skills; she also transfers her repressed situations into an aggressive drive to fight someone she might think an invader. In short, Bertha's attack is the return of the repressed.

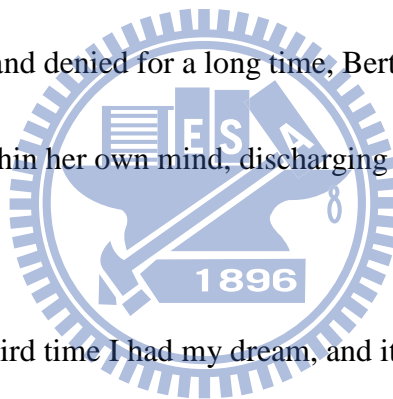
This gentleman arrived suddenly and insisted on seeing you and that was all the thanks he got. You rushed at him with a knife and when he got the knife away you bit his arm. You won't see him again. And where did you get that knife? ... You must have bought it that day when I took you out. (WSS 108)

The attack is not an accident at all; instead, this event reflects how hopeless and fear she is and it also signifies that Bertha's life in the attic in England is too cold (both psychologically and physically) for her to bear. She expels her long-term torment by attacking people who invades her private territory. At that very moment, Bertha focuses her anger and helplessness onto the knife, hoping to defend herself. In fact, the knife is dedicatedly exchanged from an old woman. Bertha gives the locket round her neck in exchange for it. The knife for her is not just a tool to guard herself with; it also gives her hope to cut her despair off and to destroy the English world which she believes is "made of cardboard," where "everything is coloured brown or dark red or yellow that has no light in it" (WSS 107). In other words, the function of knife, for Bertha, is regarded the same as a pair of shears for clipping papers, i.e. the cardboard so that she can "see what is

behind the cardboard” and let “the sea come in” (WSS 107). Once the sea comes in, she probably can follow the ocean current finding her way home.

If the knife fails to do what she has intended, fire may become the next approach to solving her problems because fire, according to her personal experience, can burn everything to ashes. Consequently, fire, after the knife, becomes the effective way for her to achieve her goal and the only means that warms her shivering body in the cold and dark attic.

Having been repressed and denied for a long time, Bertha, apart from attacking people, finds her evasion within her own mind, discharging her powerful affects through the form of dream.



That was the third time I had my dream, and it ended... In my dream I waited till she began to snore, then I got up, took the keys and let myself out with a candle in my hand. It was easier this time than ever before and I walked as though I were flying..., but it seemed to me that someone was following me, someone was chasing me, laughing. I went down the staircase. I went further than I had ever been before...

At last I was in the hall where a lamp was burning.... There was a door to the right. I opened it and went in. It was a large room with a red carpet and

red curtains. Everything else was white....it seemed sad and old and empty to me...

But I imagined that I heard a footstep and I thought what will they say, what will they do if they find me here? I held my right wrist with my left hand and waited. But it was nothing. I was very tired after this. Very tired. (WSS 111)

In her dream, Bertha also circumvents Grace's guard easily like just as she does in real life. It becomes a routine that if she wants to go out of the attic, she's often wait until Grace falls asleep. It is possible that Bertha also practices the same process in her dream in order to go out of the attic. In terms of her easy escape, there are two possible interpretations. First, we can attribute her success to having done the same thing for several times in her life. With so much "preparations," of course, it is easier for Bertha to escape. Secondly, we can see it differently and regard it as her wish. Being watched over for years, Bertha always wishes that she could go out easily without waking anybody and could explore the cardboard world without any hindrance. Thus, her dream makes her wish come true. In other words, her dream is the fulfillment of her wish.

However, she feels that someone is following her and she fears being found out in the dream. In fact, her fear in the dream reflects her situation in reality. According to

Freud, “an affect experienced in a dream is in no way inferior to one of equal intensity experienced in life” (*The Interpretation of Dreams* 497). Bertha has been laughed at and hated by others since her childhood and she always hides herself in nature in order to eschew more insults. Thus, Bertha is still worries about what people might do to her if they see her. It is likely that people will laugh at her and call her “white cockroach” or “white nigger” again. “A footstep” which arouses her intense fear maybe an imaginary one created by Bertha, but the fear is real. In other words, the emotional experiences will never be demolished in the dream world though the scene may not be completely based on reality. The fear results from the sound of the footsteps at the end ceased, for nothing has happened. However, after being caught in fear, Bertha becomes very tired both physically and mentally, tired of being afraid of what she has suffered and has to continually endure in the future. This dream also signals that red is the favorite color of Bertha because everything in white “seems sad and cold, and empty” to her. In order to fulfill the meaning of her dream, Bertha’s next measure is to paint everything in the color of fire. Fire does not only warm her shivering body in this unfriendly country but also her heart, for red makes her think of her country. As Antoinette and Rochester in their honeymoon, they watch the sunset every evening and “watched the sky and the distance sea on fire—all colors were in that fire and the huge clouds fringed and shot with

flame” (WSS 52). In addition to red, other bright colors are common in her hometown. It is probably a hint that she might make good use of her favorite color to save herself away from her endless confinement.

Bertha’s dream continues, she dreams that she has knocked down candles in a room, which “the lovely colour spreading so fast” (WSS 111).

Suddenly I was in Aunt Cora’s room. I saw the sunlight coming through the window, the tree outside and the shadows of the leaves on the floor.... I saw flames shoot up. As I ran or perhaps floated or flew I called help me Christophine help me and looking behind me I saw that I had been helped. Then I turned round and saw the sky. It was red and all my life was in it... I heard ... the man who hated me was calling too, Bertha! Bertha!... I saw the pool at Coulibri. Tia was there.... All this I saw and heard in a fraction of a second. (WSS 111-2)

Bertha claims that all her life is in the red fire because in the dream she sees many representative things and people in her real life and also her childhood trauma. Each thing and person has significant meaning for Bertha. In terms of Aunt Cora’s room in her dream, it is not just an ordinary room. Instead, the meaning of this room in her dream is more than an ordinary room. In fact, Aunt Cora’s room symbolizes Antoinette’s loss of

everything. She lives in Aunt Cora's house after Couleri has been burned down though it at the same time means safety for Antoinette. In short, she condenses all her traumatic memories into the representation of Aunt Cora's room. The room in the dream is connected with her fear of losing a home, a mother, and a brother. After the fire not only her home disappears but also her baby brother and her mother. In other words, she has nothing to lose after the fire because she owns nothing at all. Her situation after the fire is even worse than a white cockroach; she is no less than an orphan. The room in the dream is built out of her sense of loss, her loss of friendship, parenthood and confidence in her future life. Thus, it is understandable that Aunt Cora's room is a place where Antoinette can see sunlight and shadows simultaneously.

Christophine, the black servant meanwhile, appears in Bertha's dream as a helper.

In Bertha's memory, Christophine protects her from harms when "old time white people nothing but white nigger now, and black nigger better than white nigger" (WSS 14).

Servants are not likely to show their respects to masters. Amélie, a black servant, hits back at her "white cockroach" mistress as Antoinette hits her. Under this circumstance, Christophine, the woman knows how to practice obeah, is the only person who can mash others faces like mashing plantain, for the mysterious black magic empowers Christophine with some power to destroy anything she doesn't like (WSS 61).

Besides, Christophine also helps Antoinette fight against Rochester in their marriage. In other words, Christophine is for Antoinette not just a servant but a helper. Whenever Antoinette feels afraid, it becomes a routine that she waits for Christophine's help even in the dream. Antoinette hopes that Christophine can put an end to her misery condition because she knows that she can't do anything to end but to accept her current situation. Only through magic can she change her story.

As for the man who hates her calls her the other name, it underlines identity. The "man" does not only stand for Rochester but also indicate some other people who have nicknamed her before. The name of Bertha, at the same time, condenses the other nicknames that she has been given. Since her early childhood, she has been intentionally called white cockroach, a mad girl, or a white nigger. No one wants to call her by her real name. Nevertheless, these given names are fortunately nicknames, which to some extent reflect part of her situation in her society. However, things go from bad to worse as Rochester renames her as "Bertha" and "Marionette." The purpose of the two given names is not to ridicule her poor situation but to reshape her identity by external force. The importance shows as Antoinette puts it: "Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name" (WSS 88). Name matters because it represents a person's history.

But I loved this place and you have made it into a place I hate. I used to think that if everything else went out of my life I would still have this, and now you have spoiled it. It's just somewhere else where I have been unhappy, and all the other things are nothing to what has happened here.

(WSS 88)

What Rochester has changed is not just a name but also her cultural identity. Due to Antoinette's Creole identity, she cannot get any sense of belonging from neither the white nor the black. Thus, she derives her identification from her name and the place of the West Indies. As for the pool at Coulibri and Tia appearing in the dream, they signal betrayal and impoverishment. It can be told by Antoinette befriending Tia.⁷ What's worse, Antoinette lets Tia cheat on her and grab her money and clothes at the Coulibri pool. These people and places that she dreams of "in a fraction of a second" are her life because each of these characters are "the closet representation of what happens there, but only a deformed reflection" (Vermote 33).

As she wakes up, Bertha gets up to take the keys and unlocks the door. She is

⁷ Before the Act, it is impossible for a slave-owner to play with a servant. Their friendship indicates the declining of the slave-owner. After the Emancipation Act, slave owners no longer share the higher and richer status than slaves. The main purpose of Emancipation Act is to abolish slavery. "Between 1834 and 1838 former slaves in the colonies were forced to work under a so-called apprenticeship system, after which slave-owners were compensated monetarily". However, according to Rhys, many slave-owners waited in vain for the compensation (WSS 9).

outside holding her candle. She says, “Now at least I know why I was brought here and what I have to do” (WSS 112). We know what she is going to do is to set fire to the house and unfortunately burns herself to death in *Jane Eyre*. Many interpret Bertha’s suicide as her revenge on Rochester. Besides, Curtis Jan suggests in “The Secret of Wide Sargasso Sea” that “death is necessary for rebirth” (90) because Bertha has nothing to lose.

However, I would like to argue that the idea of setting fire to a house has already been established in Bertha’s mind for a long period of time. In other words, Bertha’s dream of fire has long been planned in her mind. It is not an idea which comes to her unexpectedly. According to Vermote, “it is amazingly quick, neuroscientists state that at these unconscious level decisions and perceptions are in 95% of cases already made before we decide at the other logical, differentiated, conscious Reason vertex” (34). We see the repetition of setting fire to a house in this novel. In Antoinette’s early childhood we know that she has gone through the fire, which was set by the angry black servants. Obviously, in her great fear and anger she “quells her own anxiety, calms herself, by experiencing the world in a familiar pattern” like Dora (Lear 124). Consequently, Bertha thinks that if she could “experience the world in a familiar pattern” by burning the house down like the black servants have done to what they hated, then Mr. Rochester would leave the house in the way her family escaped from the burning house. By practicing her familiar pattern,

she can destroy what she hates. The fire can be interpreted as Bertha's conversion. What she has converted is her memories and experiences of being mistreated and betrayed by Rochester. Her bodily suffering makes her burning to death. Only by burning herself can she abreact her excessive affects. At the same time, however, Rochester is also suffering from his own conversion which caused by Bertha, his "unpleasant memory" and "trauma."

On the other hand, it is possible to assume that Bertha commits suicide in the fire because of the loss of love. According to Juan-David Nasio, when someone we love dies, we feel pain. In fact, what makes us painful is the loss of the "imaginary framework that made it possible for us to love him" (95). What the imaginary supports is our own "image sent back by the living and loved other. Now that he is no longer there, I find his traces and his love, but without finding my own image" (96). In this cardboard world, she has no one to love or to be loved because she is renamed and reshaped by Rochester as a total stranger, who has no past and future living in a estranged world; thus, she can't get anything meaningful to support her own existence.

Looking at the tapestry one day I recognized my mother dressed in an evening gown but with bare feet. She looked away from me, over my head just as she used to do.... Names matter, like when he wouldn't call me

Antoinette, and I saw Antoinette drifting out of the window with her scents, her pretty clothes and her looking-glass.

There is no looking-glass here and I don't know what I am like now.... The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself.... Now they have taken everything away. What am I doing in this place and who am I? (WSS 107)

The woman who is locked up in the room is not Antoinette anymore, for Antoinette has drifted out of the window with her scent, clothes and looking-glass. What the drifting Antoinette has left behind in the room is Bertha, an empty body without soul. As far as Bertha is concerned, she can neither see her reflection from the eye of her cruel husband who wishes to hide her in the attic forever nor from the gaze of her mother. What's worse, there's no looking-glass in the attic, the only device which can reflect Bertha's image.

Without the help of mirror, she can't get a complete image of herself; thus it is understandable that Bertha says "The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself." In other words, her image falls apart into pieces. Bertha fails to gather her broken body images together to form a complete picture of who she is. She seems to be a nonexistent ghost. Having nothing to rely on, she commits suicide.

Chapter 4: Another Possible Reading of Jane and Bertha's Relationship

In chapter four, I'm going to respond to the article "A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane's Progress" in *The Madwoman in the Attic* written by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar. Since my thesis mainly focuses on the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, it is not my intention to make further study on *Jane Eyre*. Instead, I want to, firstly, answer the idea of Bertha being a possible double of Jane because Gilbert and Gubar do not include Rochester in their discussion. In fact, it is Rochester who determines Bertha as Jane's dark double. Secondly, I would like to speak for silenced Bertha after reading *Wide Sargasso Sea*. I'll argue that the importance of mad Bertha is more than we have expected, for Bertha means a lot for Rochester, who, to borrow Mitchell's words, "never knows whether he loves or hates" (20).

The authors mention that Jane Eyre's confrontation with Rochester's mad wife Bertha, "is the book's central confrontation, an encounter...with her own imprisoned 'hunger, rebellion, and rage,' a secret dialogue of self and soul..." (339). The article regards Bertha as Jane's double. What the mad woman does is exactly what Jane wishes to do. For example, the idea of destroying the wedding veil and burning Thornfield is deeply repressed by Jane; and, Bertha becomes instead the one who puts it into practice. As far

as I am concerned, the advantage of taking Bertha as Jane's double, in terms of the narrative frame, is to make Rochester and Jane's romantic story more readable. Without the mad wife, Jane would never know how much she loves the "ireful and thwarted" Rochester (*Jane Eyre* 99). In addition, the idea of the double offers us a different way to know Jane better and make Jane a rounder character in the novel. Besides, with the help of a *mad* wife, readers are more likely to justify Rochester's second marriage with Jane and are unconsciously reminded that they had better repress their dark sides in order not to be in the same position as Bertha.

Nevertheless, after reading *Wide Sargasso Sea*, we know that Antoinette is not just a shadow or a secret self of anyone. We can't judge a thing by not digging beneath its surface. It is possible that taking Bertha as the dark side of Jane or a symbol of violator is not fair. Rather, Antoinette has her own story to tell and her unique character to present. Most importantly, her madness results from her unforgettable experience as the wife of a hysteric and being an in-between Creole girl I have discussed in chapter three. Bertha's extreme behavior like tearing up sheets and stabbing Richard has her reasons. She is irritated by certain words like "fair" and "lie." Antoinette feels that she is never treated fairly by anyone because of her Creole identity and her social position, both of which make her distrusted and mistreated by everyone. And now being watched and locked up

in England, Antoinette's narrative stops. Kathy Mezei notes that

When the narrative stops, Antoinette dies. By her act of narration, she retains her tenuous fragile hold on sanity, on life itself, since to narrate is to live, to order a life, to "make sense" out of it. If "narrative is a strategy for survival," Antoinette survives only as long as she creates narratives. (197)

But her disappearance doesn't allow us to bestow upon her all the negative attributes. It is quite unfair for Antoinette to be adversely judged as an animal-like mad woman who totally has no sense of how a decent woman should act.

Therefore, it is hard to simplify Antoinette as a secret self of Jane, especially after we have had a better understanding of Antoinette and Rochester from *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Besides, there is a limit to the notion of the double. Laurence Lerner suggests that Bertha is of course a possible double, but she is not the only possibility.

Mrs. Reed represents Jane's often overpowering urge to self-punishment.

She must be forgiven, 'for you know not what you did'—just as Jane does not know what it is that drives her to behave rebelliously and be punished by being locked in the red room....("Bertha and Critics" 293)

Likewise, Katharine Bubel suggests in her paper that Bertha represents Rochester's bodily desire while Jane spiritual desire. Because the reason Rochester courtships Jane

means to make Jane his better self and his good angel. While the motive for marrying Bertha, according to Rochester, is to make “[a]ll the men in her circle...envy me” (*Jane Eyre* 268). Obviously, considering Bertha as Jane’s dark double as Gilbert and Gubar have proposed requires more clarification because Helen, Mrs. Reed, Rivers, and even Rochester can be seen as Jane’s possible doubles to some extent. Besides, the definition of doubles in the article is too generalized. It seems that critics, in a broad sense, tend to combine a dark subject and a bright counterpart together and named it the double.

However, we know that sometimes it is hard to divide a thing into black and white, let alone human’s inner world. In other words, it is more likely that black and white coexist inside us. The operation of human mind is so complicated that sometimes we don’t even fully realize what we are doing or thinking. Dreams exemplify this point. We have dreams but we don’t quite comprehend their meanings. We cannot simply divide the world or human mind in terms of dualism because there is something beyond the realm of white and black; normalization is “the attempt to make all people subject to one view of individuality (both somatically and ideologically)” (P. A. Darke 328). In short, what we have called normal people more or less have a hysterical tendencies, which is not serious to affect our daily life and to violate what we have so called civilization. The human mind is God’s elaborate design, which packed with infinite possibilities.

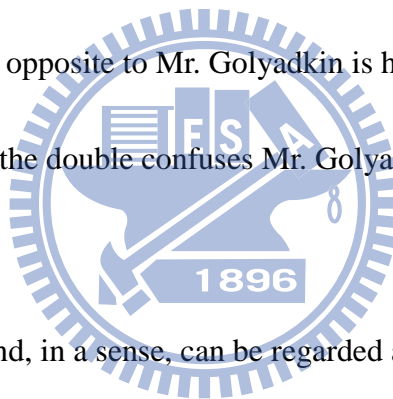
Doubles, according to Steven Jay Schneider, fall into two basic categories:

doppelgängers (physical doubles) and alter-egos (mental doubles). Physical doubles can be further divided into two types: replicas and replicants (i.e. natural doppelgängers and non-natural doppelgängers). In terms of replicants, they fall into four groups: robots, cyborgs, clones, and apparitions. In the realm of alter-egos, schizos, shape-shifters, projections, and psychos fall into the same group. Thanks to the definition of the double, we know that the two authors haven't taken the definition of doubles into their consideration. Thus, it is too generalized and too unconvincing to claim Bertha as the dark double of Jane. Thus, it needs more clarification.

The doubles, according to Dostoyevsky's *The Double* and Edgar Allan Poe's "William Wilson," are different from the connection between Jane and Bertha as Gilbert and Gubar have proposed it. The interactions between protagonists and their doubles in *The Double* and "William Wilson," unlike Jane and Bertha, are quite close; however, the doubles gradually irritate the protagonists. For example, the hero Mr. Golyadkin in *The Double* has no confidence in himself and hesitates to make any decision. He always asks himself, "Will it be all right? Will it be proper? Will it be appropriate? After all, though" (5). In addition, Mr. Golyadkin is proud of his personality of "not try[ing] to degrade those who are perhaps purer than you and I.... I don't like insinuations; I've no taste for

contemptible duplicity; I'm disgusted by slander and calumny. I only put on mask at a masquerade, and don't wear one before people every day" (10). A noble person as he suggests himself to be, however, Golyadkin believes that he has "malignant enemies who have sworn to ruin him" (11). In fact, one of the enemies is his "nocturnal visitor who was no other than himself—Mr. Golyadkin himself, another Mr. Golyadkin, but absolutely the same as himself – in fact, which is called *a double* in every respect...."

(38). The second Mr. Golyadkin works as a titular councilor, the same position as Mr. Golyadkin. The guy who sits opposite to Mr. Golyadkin is his terror, his shame, and his nightmare. The appearing of the double confuses Mr. Golyadkin, inciting his deepest sense of insecurity.



Mr. Golyadkin the second, in a sense, can be regarded as the perfect physical double of Mr. Golyadkin because the new Mr. Golyadkin shares "the same height, the same figure, the same clothes, the same baldness" with the old one (42). It is really hard to distinguish who is the real Mr. Golyadkin and who is the counterfeit. In addition to the likeness, the new Mr. Golyadkin, who is good at the social, has the totally opposite character to Mr. Golyadkin.

And every one is pleased with him and everybody liked him, and everyone was exalting him, and all were proclaiming in chorus that his politeness and

sarcastic wit were infinitely superior to the politeness and sarcastic wit of the real Mr. Golyadkin.... (86-7)

Finally, the new Mr. Golyadkin replaces the old one, treating Mr. Golyadkin with the unseemly way. In other words, Mr. Golyadkin junior takes Mr. Golyadkin senior as someone who “had been polluted with something horrid” (97). At the end of the novel, the double, Mr. Golyadkin junior wins over Mr. Golyadkin and successfully expels Mr. Golyadkin from the world.

In other words, the relationship between the double and the original one should be very intricate and close and the counterpart should haunt the protagonist and follow him everywhere. As a result, the double will definitely annoy the real one. Unlike Golyadkin and his counterpart, Jane and Bertha do not share the similarities of being doubles. In the same way, Edgar Allen Poe portrays in his short story “William Wilson” the plight vividly.

I [William Wilson] felt angry with him[the namesake] for being the name, and doubly disgusted with the name because a stranger bore it, who would be the cause of its twofold repetition, who would be constantly in my presence and ...must inevitably, on account of the detestable coincident, be often confounded with my own. (217)

Apart from sharing the same name, they should also have the same physical features so that other people consider them as brothers or relatives, though the way they behave is totally dissimilar. What's more, the double at the end takes over the true one, making the life of the later a tragedy.

However, what Gilbert and Gubar suggest about Bertha as Jane's double is not tenable if we examine it according to *The Double* and "William Wilson"—sharing the same physical appearance with each other and keeping haunting the original one to the end. Firstly, Jane does not share the same physical appearance with Bertha because Jane "felt it a misfortune that she was so little, so pale, and had features so irregular and so marked" (*Jane Eyre* 86). On the contrary, Bertha is "tall and large" (*Jane Eyre* 249) and was once, in the eye of Rochester, "thought to be beautiful" (WSS 41). Although identical physical appearance is not necessary for being doubles, it can be a useful index. Secondly, Bertha and Jane's characters are not totally opposite since the description of Bertha is partial in *Jane Eyre* and we don't see much interaction between the two. Thus we don't have enough information to draw a conclusion that Jane and Bertha are double merely by examining their characters. Unlike the second Mr. Golyadkin or the second William Wilson, who are undistinguishable from their counterparts in the end, Bertha and Jane obviously are two dissimilar individuals. Jane clearly keeps a certain distance from the

mad Bertha. I'll even argue that Bertha should not be just a doer who fulfills all the dark desires of Jane's and becomes the ultimate person who experiences hunger, rebellion, and rage. At least we don't find any precise clue in *Jane Eyre* that supports the opposite relation of Bertha in Jane. Thus, the idea of being the double of each other awaits more clarification. Instead of being a dark double, I categorize Bertha as Jane's alter-ego to some extent, though not yet totally so. We can't take it for granted that Bertha is merely a shadow for someone else. Rather, Bertha's action such as tearing up the wedding veil has her own motivation. Every action of a human being has its apparent or hidden meaning. Therefore, it is unfair to attribute all Bertha's violations to Jane's anger or fear.

It is possible that the relation between Jane and Bertha is more than doubles.

Although Rochester himself cannot find a proper way to explain Bertha's trampling wedding veil to Jane, he just puts that "it must have been unreal" (*Jane Eyre* 250). Their connection in fact goes beyond the realm of the double because Gilbert and Gubar do not include Rochester in their discussion of Bertha and Jane. Chen Chin-Ping writes that the triangular relation among Rochester, Bertha, and Jane is like "the host, the exhibit, and the viewer" in Victorian freak show (371). The author further notes that "The Rochester-Bertha freak show is but one of the freak show metaphors underlining Jane's struggle toward a desired female selfhood" (369). Of course, Rochester is the host, who

introduces monstrous Bertha and highlights “her ‘exotic’ background and hybrid inheritance as the ‘anomalous’” (368), Jane and other wedding party are the viewers. By exhibiting Bertha as a freak, Rochester exercises his power to establish the truth about the “crime” of a woman. Like Chen, I see Rochester as the key person who creates the relation. As we discussed before, Rochester is afraid of Bertha because of what she represents and regards her as “mental terrors” (*Jane Eyre* 250). In order not to admit of his own failure, Rochester has to deny and refuse everything related to Bertha, who brings him bitterness and humiliation. To justify his second marriage, Rochester announces to everyone that he surely has “a right to break the compact, and seek sympathy with something at least human” if they see “what sort of being” he was “cheated into espousing” (*Jane Eyre* 257). It is predictable that, after Rochester’s grandiloquent assertion, everyone has a preconceived idea about Bertha. In other words, it is Rochester’s tactics that shapes Bertha as Jane’s ugly side so that all others presents in his wedding including readers will show him their understanding and think that he deserves a woman totally different from Bertha.

As the throng of people who follow after Rochester to the attic have expected, Bertha Mason has gone mad as Rochester says it and it is hard to tell whether she is a “beast or human being” because “*it* grovelled, seemingly, on all fours; *it* snatched and

growled like some strange wild animal: but *it* was covered with clothing...” (*Jane Eyre* 257-8). According to Rochester’s assertion, Jane is his life saver while Bertha seems to be the ugliest part of humanity who is with “pigmy intellect and giant propensities” (*Jane Eyre* 269). Every witness can punish “it” and lock “it” in “a goblin’s cell” (*Jane Eyre* 272). In fact, it is Rochester who manipulates the relation between Jane and Bertha, taking Bertha as Jane’s opposite as the most distasteful part of humanity.

Rochester purposely draws an invisible line for people to follow. What he has pursued is just a figure that is the exact opposite of Bertha, who was once rich and beautiful. In fact, what makes Rochester hate his first wife is not because of her madness but what she symbolizes. Bertha represents not just a mad wife of Rochester’s but also Rochester’s lack of fatherly love and the neglect of his family. Rochester states in *Jane Eyre* that he has failed to find his ideal woman among “English ladies, French countesses, Italian signoras, and German grafinnen” (*Jane Eyre* 274) because those women are either rich or beautiful. Rochester’s position is like what Jane has said to him that he does not need any “haughty disavowal of any necessity on your part to augment your wealth, or elevate your standing, by marrying either a purse or a coronet” (*Jane Eyre* 247). In fact, Rochester keeps looking for a woman who is poor and plain like Jane. Rochester’s fear of Bertha can be proved again through the words toward his mistresses. An Italian Giacinta

and a German Clara are both considered “singularly handsome” but Giacinta is “unprincipled and violent” while Clara is “heavy, mindless, and unimpressible” (*Jane Eyre* 274). Rochester’s disapproval toward these mistresses reflects his hatred toward Bertha because Bertha, in his eyes, possesses all the similar negative elements.

Consequently, Rochester claims that “amongst them all I found not one whom, had I been ever so free, I—warned as I was of the risks, the horrors, the loathings of incongruous unions—would have asked to marry me” (*Jane Eyre* 274). What he exactly longs for and suits him best is “the antipodes of the Creole” (*Jane Eyre* 274). To put it differently, Jane is the only woman who does not “seem to approach Rochester to her [mad Bertha] and her vices” (*Jane Eyre* 274), and everything he eschews because Bertha (i.e., Antoinette) reminds Rochester of his castration anxiety which I have discussed in the previous two chapters. Therefore, a perfect woman for Rochester should be the one who is not good enough to bring her husband “neither fortune, beauty, nor connections” (*Jane Eyre* 247).

Unconsciously, Rochester attempts to pave his way for gaining people’s approval. He painstakingly makes all the people attend to his wedding and, of course, the readers identify with him and take Bertha as a wicked wife bearing “a discolored and savage face” which is “fearful and ghostly” to all of the witness (*Jane Eyre* 249). If we take Bertha as the dark self of Jane, it is obvious that we seem to approve of Rochester’s

desire, helping him to refuse the reality as it is.

To put it differently, if we accept Rochester's scheme in taking Bertha as Jane's double, we, in fact, take sides with Rochester. On the surface, it seems that we merely identify with the law and the virtues of Victorian norms that Rochester purposely installs. In reality, we accept Rochester's way of thinking. The process of identification is close to a case of hysteria in Freud, the dream of the smoked salmon.⁸ The identification of the butcher's wife occurs in the form of dream. Recently her husband has made acquaintance with a painter, who is constantly praised by him. However, the husband prefers plumper figure, not the skinny and thin women like the painter. As the painter asks the wife to hold a supper party, she unconsciously denies the painter's request.⁹ This is the dream of the butcher's wife from *The Interpretation of Dreams*:

I wanted to give a supper-party, but I had nothing in the house but a little smoked salmon. I thought I would go out and buy something, but remembered then that it was Sunday afternoon and all the shops would be

⁸ The smoked salmon dream is one of the dreams that Freud mentions in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. The dream is offered by a female patient whose purpose is to make this dream "invariably contradict my assertion that all dreams are fulfillments of wishes" (180).

⁹ Freud mentioned that his patient's husband "had remarked to her the day before that he was getting too stout and therefore intended to start on a course of weight-reduction. He proposed to rise early, do physical exercises, keep to a strict diet, and above all accept no more invitations to supper" (*The Interpretation of Dreams* 180).

shut. Next I tried to ring up some caterers, but the telephone was out of order. So I had to abandon my wish to give a supper-party. (180)

However, gaining weight is the last thing that the wife is willing to do for the painter.

Through the dream we realize the true purpose of the wife, she wishes not to help her friend to grow plumper. On the surface, the wife seems to be trying to go against her friend's will; however, we find that the wife identifies with her painter friend if we probe deeper. According to Freud, if the person in the dream indicates not the wife herself but her painter friend, that she has put herself in her friend's place. Namely, she has identified with her friend. The purpose of identification and replacement for the wife is "to take her friend's place in her husband's high opinion" (184).

In Rochester's scheme, he intends to posit himself as the butcher, the one who plays the key role in the wife's dream, we readers are the butcher's wife, and Bertha is set as the painter friend. If we approve of Rochester's thinking of Bertha as Jane's double, we then carelessly identify with Rochester's wish that Bertha is the embodiment of the dark side of humanity. Like the butcher's wife, we are deceived by ourselves. We naturally think we identify with Jane's beauty and virtues and are not yet aware of Rochester's greater project of evading of his guilt. In other words, the process of identification of Bertha as the ugly part of humanity happens in the second half of the process, which is

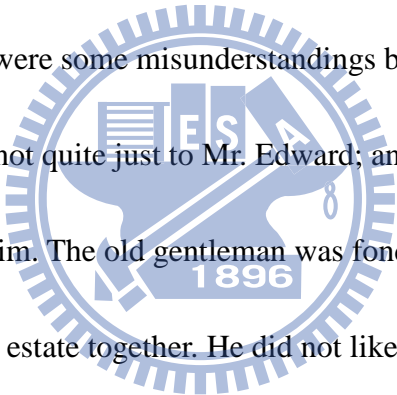
already determined by Rochester. Thus, it is possible that if we don't include Rochester in our discussion of Bertha and Jane, we may easily be fooled by Rochester, since hysterics are good at involving people into their cabals. Therefore, we can draw a conclusion that the role of Rochester makes Jane and Bertha's relation more than that of the double.

In addition to purposely taking Bertha as the darkest side of humanity, Rochester, in fact, can't live without Bertha. Although Rochester tries his best to undermine the influence brought by Bertha by deliberately demonizing Bertha; he, paradoxically, proves the importance of Bertha in his life. Taking Bertha with him is just like to "stand on a crater-crust which may crack and spue fire any day" (*Jane Eyre* 190) but he doesn't choose to remove the maniac elsewhere. In fact, Rochester "possess[ed] an old house, Ferndean Manor, even more retired and hidden than this [Thornfield], where he could have lodged her safely enough" (*Jane Eyre* 264). In addition, Rochester shows his care to Bertha as she attacks him. As a matter of fact, Rochester "could have settled her with a well-planted blow; but he would not strike: he would only wrestle" (*Jane Eyre* 258). Moreover, Rochester, despite his great hatred toward Bertha, tries to save his wife from fire that he "went up to the attics when all was burning above and below, and hot the servants out of their beds and helped them down himself—and went back to get his mad wife out of her cell" (*Jane Eyre* 377). Firstly, it is obvious that the mad Bertha gives

Rochester the righteous excuses to go on with his life with dissatisfaction and to seek his second happy marriage. Without Bertha he would have no reason to find for his “very angel as his comforter” (*Jane Eyre* 228). Bearing Bertha in mind lets Rochester regard plain Jane to be a beauty and a beauty just after his heart—delicate and aerial (*Jane Eyre* 227). Secondly, Bertha represents Rochester’s first half of his life, from his childhood to his adulthood before marrying Jane. As we have already known from chapter two that Rochester wants his father’s love so much, Bertha thus symbolizes for him, to some extent, his last chance to win his father’s heart. In spite of Rochester’s dislike of Bertha, he still shelters and takes care of her. Bertha’s role, in the eye of Rochester, transforms into a shadow of his father because she is the bride assigned by his father. To put it differently, keeping Bertha with him somehow means that Rochester keeps more or less his father’s love or wishes. The relation between Bertha and Rochester can also be understood by the case of the Butcher’s wife’s love triangle: Rochester becomes the butcher’s wife, the place of the butcher is replaced by Rochester’s father, and Bertha becomes the painter friend. Both the Butcher’s wife and Rochester bear some similarities. They are afraid of not being loved. Rochester is at first curious about what his father desires in order to receive more love from his father. By doing everything that his father wants such as marrying a wealthy Creole girl and inheriting her money, Rochester thinks

and does gradually like his father through the process of identification. In this sense, owing to his love for his father, Rochester identifies with what his father loves or wants. This makes Rochester think himself inseparable from Bertha, the bride given by his father.

However, the appearance of Jane misleads Rochester, who thinks that it severs as a chance to escape or cut off his relation with his father. Mrs. Fairfax notes how Rochester's family "harass[es] him and make[s] his spirit unequal" (*Jane Eyre* 112).



I believe there were some misunderstandings between them. Mr. Rowland Rochester was not quite just to Mr. Edward; and, perhaps, he prejudiced his father against him. The old gentleman was fond of money, and anxious to keep the family estate together. He did not like to diminish the property by division, and yet he was anxious that Mr. Edward should have wealth too, to keep up the consequence of the name; and soon after he was of age, some steps were taken that were not quite fair, and made a great deal of mischief. Old Mr. Rochester and Mr. Rowland combined to bring Mr. Edward into what he considered a painful position, for the sake of making his fortune.... He is not very forgiving: he broke with his family, and now for many years he has led an unsettled kind of life. (*Jane Eyre* 112)

Jane, basically, is not the type that Rochester's father would arrange as a marriage partner for him because Jane is neither beautiful nor rich. Indeed, Jane, on the surface, is a totally outsider person to Rochester and his father's wishes. As a result, the event of choosing Jane as his life saver and wife makes Rochester think that he is independent and "has a modest competence now" which is the most important thing that he has urged to prove (WSS 41). However, Rochester's behavior establishes the fact that he still lives in the shadow of the love-and-hate of his father. He never gains a modest competence to leave his father no matter he marries to Bertha or Jane. Thanks to his love for his father, whatever he does follows his father's wishes which can be proved by his choice of Jane. As I mentioned above, Jane has probably the loosest tie with his father. Nevertheless, Jane, in the eye of Rochester, is the total opposite of what his father has suggested. In fact, Rochester takes not only himself into consideration but also his father (or his father's wishes) and the mad Bertha. In other words, the relation among Rochester, his father, and Bertha is a circuit in perpetuate motion. As a result, Rochester struggles to escape it one way or another by technically accusing Bertha of being Jane's double. No matter how hard he has tried, he, unfortunately, is captured by his false identification with his father, for "the hysteric never knows whether he loves or hates" (Mitchell 20). Therefore, it is almost impossible for us to exclude Rochester from our discussion of Bertha and Jane,

for he is the pivotal role who tries to maneuver everything in his own hand. Naming Bertha as the dark self of Jane is just one of the artifices that Rochester takes to deny his failure and his love of his father.



Chapter 5: Conclusion

I have tried to make two main points that I lay out in my thesis. Firstly, I try to speak for mad Bertha (Antoinette) in light of what Rhys has done in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

Antoinette's insanity is not merely derived from her bad blood or her mad mother as people have assumed. Her madness has actually resulted from her numerous insults

which cause many traumatic affects and later contribute a lot to her madness-like

behavior and her unfortunate marriage with Rochester. Thus, critics may very well fail to take her background and her marriage into consideration but declare her mad.

Secondly, I offer a different perspective on Rochester, who has long been seen as a symbol of English "male middle class society" (Peck and Coyle 175). Instead of embodying the social privilege there, Rochester has his own fear and anxiety. As the second son of his family, he has been caught in a hysterical fantasy in which he sees himself as being symbolically castrated by his father, his eldest brother, and the English law. Whatever he has done in the West Indies and in England can thus be traced back to his love and hatred of his father. To re-examine the characters Rochester and Antoinette, I discuss them respectively in chapters two and three. I make an attempt to sketch the distinctive familial, social, and cultural environment of both in order to make more

comprehensible their particular neurosis.

In chapter two, I argue that Rochester is not a perfect man, who represents colonization and patriarchy. I take Rochester merely as an individual man plagued by discontents. According to the right of Primogeniture, as a second son he is deprived of the right to inherit the family fortune. Nevertheless, fathers tend to give their second sons a small amount of money. Rochester, unfortunately, is not one of these fortunate second sons. His father marries him to a wealthy Creole woman, who is said to be mad. In order to cope with his position, Rochester has to accept this exotic marriage and travels to the remote West Indies. As he arrives there, Rochester is careless about everything and everyone around him because his mission is to get the money which he supposes to will enable him to gain his father's love and hence a sense of security.

Out of his love for his father, he writes many letters to him. These letters literally show his hatred and hostility to his father. However, by reading between the lines, we find in them Rochester's love for his father and his hope to win his father's love. It is easy to understand that if Rochester really hates his father, he would never write him. In fact, Rochester's motive behind writing letters is to remind his father not to forget him. Rochester's sense of insecurity caused by his self-perceived low status in the family results in his hostility to the West Indies residents. He thought he might avoid

disappointment by hating people first. Among all the annoyances, Rochester hates his wife Antoinette most because she reminds him of his deprivation in wealth and love. In order to assert his status, Rochester resorts to having sex with their black servant intentionally and calls Antoinette Bertha as if by this renaming act he could turn her into his creation and reverse his lower status in the capacity of a creator. Due to his fear and anxiety, Rochester fails to get along well with his wife as well as with himself.

The third chapter focuses on the reason, apart from family heritage, as to why Antoinette goes mad. Antoinette's madness is not passed down from her mother because her mother Annette has gone through many traumatic adversities such as Pierre's death and the burndown of her estate. These adversities result in her madness. Thus, Antoinette's madness is not an unavoidable result of her bad blood. Her traumatic childhood experiences of being taunted and betrayed by her friends have some unbearable affects on her life. These traumatic affects make her reactions to misunderstandings of others later in her life madly and become the materials for dreams. Antoinette's first dream reflects her helplessness in her real life; her second dream stems from her desire to leave the convent and get married. After getting married, Antoinette's husband Rochester, who has some hysterical tendencies, is harsh to her and disturbs her mind a lot. Eventually, Rochester's infidelity becomes the last straw that breaks

Antoinette's mind because Rochester has long been her hope—hoping he could shelter her from adversities. Being betrayed and locked up by Rochester, Antoinette projects her miseries onto her third dream, in which the fire is used to as a weapon to defend herself. Helpless as she is, Antoinette can only follow the black servants' pattern by setting fire on the house so that she can expel Rochester far from her life and also put an end to her suffering.

In chapter four, I mention Rochester's love for his father by way of responding to Gubar and Gilberts' article "A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane's Progress." These two critics have not included Rochester in their discussion of Jane's relation to Bertha. They take Bertha as Jane's dark double without mentioning Rochester's intention for doing so. Rochester regards Bertha as the ugly part of humanity due to his desire to marry Jane, a woman who is the exact opposite of Antoinette and will never be admired by his father. By marrying a woman his father does not like means that he can get rid of his fear and his fate dictated by his father. However, no matter what decision Rochester has made, he takes his father into his consideration. Locking Antoinette up instead of setting her free exemplifies Rochester's lasting love of his father because Antoinette is a bride given by his father. In other words, having Antoinette is equal to having his father's love and attention. In short, behind Rochester's cruel behavior lies his yearning for his father's

love. Depicting Bertha as a dark double of Jane is derived from his hysterical fantasy about his father.

In conclusion, my thesis sheds light on a different face of Rochester, whose fear and anxiety are generated from his self-perceived low status in his family and his hysterical fantasy of being abandoned by his father. His anxiety does not cease even after marrying a rich woman. Rochester keeps projecting his hysterical fantasy onto his wife Antoinette, who has been mistreated since her childhood. Countless misfortune and Rochester's infidelity eventually bring about Antoinette's fatal breakdown.



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