

國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士論文

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閣樓中的殭屍：

探討《夢迴藻海》的克里奧爾化和帝國主義現象

The Zombie in the Attic:

Creolization and Imperialism in *Wide Sargasso Sea*



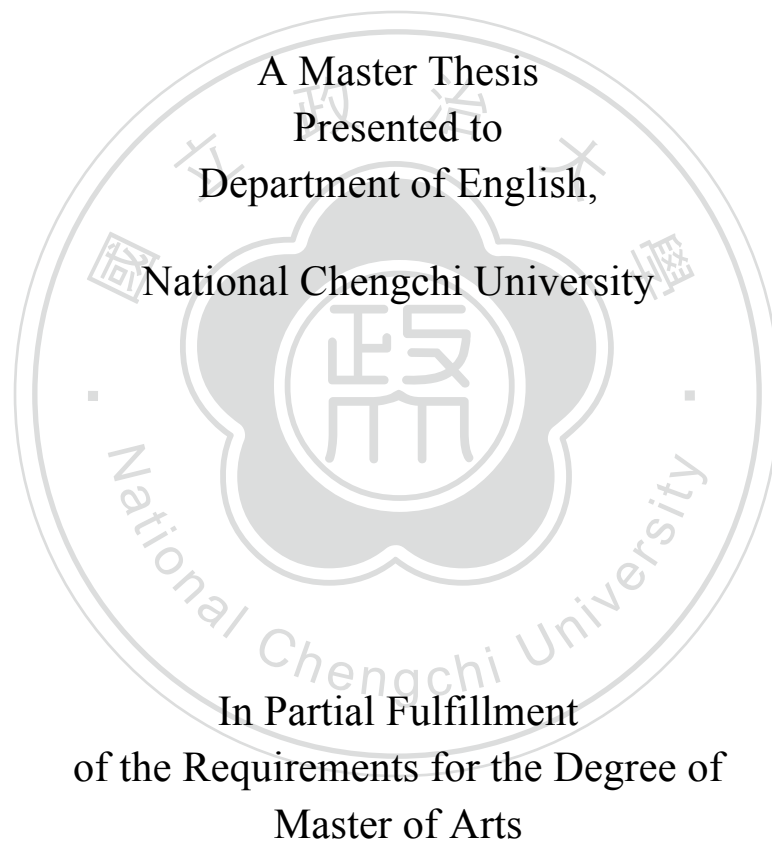
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國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士班

碩士論文提要

論文名稱：閣樓中的殭屍：探討《夢迴藻海》的克里奧爾化和帝國主義現象

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論文提要內容：在十九世紀英國女性作家夏綠蒂·勃朗特所著的小說《簡愛》（*Jane Eyre*）中，女主人翁簡愛（Jane Eyre）親眼目睹了糾纏著羅徹斯特莊園居處的女鬼魂：如野獸般，在黑暗中潛伏的一個不明生物－柏莎·梅森（Bertha Mason）。在勃朗特的筆下，對柏莎行徑的不解透露出其英國維多利亞時代的帝國主義主導意識。茲此，多明尼加女性作家珍·瑞絲（Jean Rhys）撰寫了《夢迴藻海》（*Wide Sargasso Sea*），不僅作為呼應《簡愛》的前傳，還挑戰簡愛對柏莎的主觀偏見，並嘗試從瘋狂、殭屍化現象解釋女主人翁安東娃妮塔（Antoinette）（柏莎）發瘋的原因。而從印度後殖民主義學者史碧華克（Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's）提出的壓迫第三世界被殖民者現象－第三世界系統（thirdworldism）理論，可做為解釋壟罩整本小說之下的權力運作體系與對克里奧爾人的種種影響和迫害。在瑞絲的筆下，她寫出安東娃妮塔遭受到丈夫羅徹斯特的帝國主義式、專權統治般的對待，更進一步，他對她施行了「殭屍化」（zombification），成為屬於他的女殭屍。本論文以瑞絲的文本架構為基礎，從史碧華克的「世界化」（worlding）和馬提尼克學者格里頌（Édouard Glissant）的克里奧爾化現象（Creolization）討論顛覆帝國主義現象的可行性；並且，透過分析被當代整體社會種族體系否認克里奧爾身分的女主人翁處境，進一步解釋她對羅徹斯特施行殭屍化和失敗；而後，作為反擊，羅徹斯特對其妻的終極殭屍化。最後，透過分析女主人翁被囚禁在英格蘭閣樓中所經歷的夢境，闡述她如何從中自我覺醒，並促成了她至終戰勝自我的去殭屍化現象（de-zombification）。

Abstract

A monstrous, unknown creature lurking in the night was the description of the ghost woman haunting Rochester's manor in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* – Mrs. Bertha Mason – as witnessed by the protagonist, Englishwoman Jane Eyre. Beneath Brontë's writing, the author's contempt for Bertha revealed the underlying dominant consciousness of British Imperialism in the Victorian age. Dominican female writer Jean Rhys's novel *Wild Sargasso Sea* offered a different perspective of the “mad woman in the attic” than that of Brontë. Rhys's *Wild Sargasso Sea* served as a prequel to Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Rhys attempted to explain that a multitude of reasons contributed to the madness, or zombification, of her heroine, Antoinette Cosway. In Indian literary critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concepts on postcolonial critique, Spivak introduced the notion of Western “thirdworldism” suppressing the colonized populations, which will be incorporated later in this thesis.

In contrast to Brontë's version of the heroine's psychopathic personality, Jean Rhys had endowed an utterly different life on Antoinette. Rhys's Creole heroine pointed out the fact that she suffered deeply from an identity crisis under Rochester's tyrannical attempts to westernize and imperialize her. In the end Antoinette became the “crazy wife,” a lifeless being like a zombie. From uncovering the imperial system that Western countries imposed on the third world, I will further explain the generalization of zombification as the outcome of imperial discourse.

For the purpose of this thesis, I will apply to Édouard Glissant's hermeneutic of Creolization, and Spivak's ideas such as ‘deworlding,’ to discuss a new anti-imperial possibility for Rhys's different portrayal of the heroine in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Furthermore, through the negation of Antoinette's Creoleness, I will discuss the issues of why Antoinette

fails to zombify Rochester, and in the opposite how Rochester performed the zombification successfully. As a result, I will focus on the analysis of Antoinette's series of dreams in the attic of Thornfield Hall, which is seen as her awakening in the triumph of fulfilling her de-zombification.



Introduction

“In the deep shade, at the further end of the room, a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not... tell; it groveled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face.” (*Jane Eyre*, p. 295.)

An unknown creature lurking in the night, with clothes covering its body; similar to a human being, but rather it appears like a wild animal that crouches at the ancient inner cage. This is the picture of Bertha Mason described in *Jane Eyre*. The monstrous metamorphosis indicates the antagonism towards the Creole otherness depicted by the nineteenth-century English novelist Charlotte Brontë was challenged many years later, by Jean Rhys’s version of Antoinette Cosway in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

The Dominican novelist Jean Rhys, the author of the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* published in 1966, dedicates this prequel of *Jane Eyre* to tell a different story for Antoinette. “The novel rewards those who give it not just a careful close reading,” as critic Thomas Loe suggests, “but who also explore its potential for extra-textual stories and avenues of meaning.” Rhys provides a new avenue for her readers to interpret Antoinette’s case, an “open text” that offers a way to engage in the “constructive activity” (Todd Bender 97-8). She sees her heroine as a victim, who is dehumanized under Brontë’s pen that dramatizes her as a cursed beast. For Rhys, sympathizing with Antoinette, she attempts to reopen Antoinette’s case, and refutes

Brontë's Western-based standpoint. Her observations of a girl who is a vagabond drifting between the communities of 'legitimated' Englishness and 'heterogeneous' Creoleness, Rhys sees Antoinette as an outlaw from her contemporaries. Therefore, this becomes the motivation for Rhys to rewrite Antoinette's story.

Beside her harsh attack on the Western imperialized tyranny the English civilization builds and her fight over the female identity on plantation soil, one of the unique ideas which Rhys's Caribbean writing reveals, is that she left potential traces of the symbology of zombiism. Encountering with the encroachments of Western criterion, Rhys indirectly implants the mysterious atmosphere of zombiism in her writing, from Antoinette's proctor, Christophine's, Afro-Caribbean witchcraft, or "obeah", the love potion concocted by Christophine and the room with white power and candles when Rochester enters, to Antoinette's terrifying appearance of the white face and dark eyes. Professor Edna Aizenberg writes in her "I Walked with a Zombie': The Pleasures and Perils of Postcolonial Hybridity" study that she defines Antoinette as a nymphomaniac. In her description, "Rochester comes to perceive Antoinette's honeymoon pleasure-in-sex as the crazy nymphomania of a 'dark alien,' a 'white nigger' too dangerously imbued with an eroticized Caribbean Africanness" (463). Aizenberg's interpretation of a Caribbean "nymphomania" who excessively desires for intercoursures is reinforced and reaffirmed by Rhys's hints of pointing Antoinette's potential of uncanniness to the outcome of zombiism. If the zombie exists in Rhys's writing, then, there must be the certain portrayal of zombification in the novel. Hence, I will present two performers of zombification in my thesis, one is Antoinette with her love potion, and the other being Rochester, with his white obeah of renaming Antoinette to the European-styled "Bertha". In my study, I've discovered that the master-slave bond they've shared is so intense, that both of them are dreaded

by each other, which induces their cravings to conquer love — through the zombification of the other.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the historical narrative of colonialism in the Caribbean during the Victorian Age provides clues and interpretations of zombiism during the reign of the First World countries of Europe. Jean Rhys introduces the world of slavery, colonialism, and imperialism to readers, to show that under the rule of the First World countries, Third World countries are subjugated and its natives are exploited. The West Indies is predominately colonized by the nineteenth-century British Empire. The Indian literary critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak presents the term of “worlding,” that under the governing of authoritative norms of the First World countries, the colonized objects are thus being re-defined and Westernized as the Third World. The “axiom of Imperialism” thus is constructed within the structure of Marxian master-slave relation. As Rhys invites the tradition of Afro-Caribbean voodooism into her text, the purpose of paralleling the Western imperial violence to the exotic zombiism is inevitably conjectured.

In my thesis, it is my intention to apply to Spivak’s imperial critique on “thirdworldism” (289) and the Martinique philosopher Édouard Glissant’s hermeneutic of Creolization, to challenge the Western imperial system through deconstructing the dominant discourse of imperialism. Although Glissant’s poetics of Creolization, according to my study, is posited on the utopian-like dream, or an ambiguous expectation of a new land that seemed to be out of reach. But, after all, Creolization does provide a way to imagine and envisage a different viewpoint on postcolonial studies. Aiming to solve the dimensional racial conflicts in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Glissant’s Creolization suggests an approach in dealing with the cross-cultural conflicts between Jamaican blackness and the Cosways’ Creoleness, as well

as the clash between an imperialistic Rochester and a Creole girl, as diversity. For Glissant, the Unitarian ideal generated from the world criterion maltreats the people whose existences lived outside the defined First World zone. They are deemed as a group undefined, unqualified to any field of biology, culture and nation. Thus, Creolization gives answer to the outcasts that in which once the world is finally in the state of “de-worlding,” the state of diversity is displayed, which I will discuss it later in chapter I.

After I explain the historical structure of imperial movements, Spivak’s term of “worlding” (235), and the optimistic alternative from Glissant’s poetics of Creolization, I will continue to discuss Rhys’s strategies of the making of zombies. First, the obstacle to declare the possibility of zombiism in Antoinette’s case is shown for the absurdity of cataloging the heroine into a zombie may be seen as a ridiculous suggestion to allude to, however, as critic Thomas Loe suggests, “(the) fashioning links in the design of the novel one extremely potent central image associated with Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea* needs more attention,” which references, “the figure of the zombie.” Second, if Antoinette is, in the end, registered as whether being in a semi-zombified state or becomes a genuine zombie, Loe suggests it may be far-fetched but can be expounded in its extremes. That is to say, the making of the zombie figure risks equating to the post-modern Haitian walking dead creatures which is “too fanciful an allusion to be taken seriously even within the context of the hallucinatory fictive world created in *Wide Sargasso Sea*” (35). Even though the difficulty of recognizing the pattern of zombies in Rhys’s narrative exists; but still, there is anticipation in conceiving the narrative if we can find affordable evidences to sustain the paradoxical premise of zombiism.

One of Rhys's plans to make her zombie existence conclusive is through Rochester's discovery of the book *The Glittering Coronet of Isles* by an unnamed author. This book documents the description of Afro-Caribbean witchcraft, or obeah, and an existence of a zombie: "A zombie is a dead person who seems to be alive or a living person who is dead" (Rhys 67). By associating Antoinette's wilderness, mysterious temper and exoticism to the form of a zombie, Antoinette the zombie is thus evoked by Rochester's own dread; and his fear for a zombie is later revealed by the maid Amelie's taunt: "Your husband's he outside the door and he look like he see zombi" (Rhys 91). When analyzing the content of zombiism, the post-modern impression of a zombie is usually a deformed walking corpse who craves human flesh, as portrayed in many of Hollywood's movies. In my study of the Caribbean folklores, during the conjuration of obeah, the performer, or the bokor holds a ritual and casts a curse upon a corpse in order to seize the soul of the dead, in result enslaving the dead. In describing the details of zombiism, I refer to Canadian anthropologist Wade Davis's study *Passage of Darkness* (1988), in which details the researches on zombiism, the process of zombification, and a few cases to sustain its authenticity. As Thomas Loe suggests, Davis offers the "detailed ethno-pharmacological credence and explanation for zombies and revealed Rhys's use of zombie as a significant allusive base and central metaphor for the structural design for her novel." Hence, the design of the zombie metaphor proves Davis's own solid testimonies.

In addition, Rhys emphasizes that the key point for making a zombie came from the human inborn dread which is ingrained in Rochester's feeling for Antoinette. His fear of being out of control and of his wife's unbridled behavior, Rochester turned to recognize her as a potential danger. Through his gimmickry of carefully treating

Antoinette as the other type of being, Rochester transforms his fear for zombies into performing real zombification upon her, which I will discuss in chapter II.

Chapter I: The Critique of Imperialism, and Creolization in *Wide Sargasso Sea*

In Chapter I, I will begin to introduce Spivak's critique of imperialism and the implement of her anti-imperial project into Rhys's text, appealing to uncover the imperialized administration embedded in the Caribbean plantations. It is my main argument that Rhys's depiction of the nineteenth-century post-slavery time in *Wide Sargasso Sea* has manifested the contradictory situations between ex-slaves and ex-planters. For viewing both of the parties as victims living under the time of imperialism, none of them escapes the imperative of "thirdworldism" (Spivak 243).

In Spivak's "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," she undertakes the study of British literature to the literatures of European colonizing cultures and discovers a narrative produced from the literary history, which is the imperial apparatus of 'worlding,' of what now calls the "Third World" (243). The term "worlding" comes from Spivak's adaptation from Derrida's linguistic apparatus, which considers the world organization is systemized and structured through the using of the dominant language and this linguistic system leads and controlled the operation of the global communities. Once an authoritative community holds the power of linguistic system, it is capable of narrating the world with "worlding" advantageously. In the interview with Elizabeth Grosz, Spivak states that our world is "bound up with the history of European imperial expansion from nineteenth-century British colonialism to twentieth-century US foreign policy-making" (Morton 18). The imperial history of Europe and U.S. undergoes a period of colonizing legalization, as

Spivak suggests, “when the colonizers come to a world, they see the undeveloped colonies as uninscribed earth upon which they write their inscription” (129). That is to say, throughout the legislative narration of “worlding” from the authorized communities, the distant Third World is prescribed for the following cultivations and rectifications, as Spivak suggests:

To consider the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact literary heritages waiting to be recovered interpreted, and curricularized in English translation fosters the emergence of “the Third World” as a signifier that allows us to forget that ‘worlding,’ even as it expands the empire of the literary discipline. (Spivak 243)

Hence, the “worlding” of the world is a conventionalized signifier for stereotyping any related colonized place. As for the Third World women, whose lives are remained in its primitiveness, become the objects of “worlding” in the eye of the Western cultures. They are rectified and their lives are deprived from the intrusion of the West, in which the outcome is the silence of their voices. Moreover, the feminists’ seemingly moral acts of defining the Third World women, may be deem as “a basically isolationist admiration for the literature of the female subject in Europe and Anglo-America establishes the high feminist norm” (243).

Rhys’s female protagonists, in common, have suffered from the “worlding” of the world. In Spivak’s study, she manifests Jane Eyre’s observation of Bertha as associated with a imperialized tone of the First World; through her witnessing, she objectifies Bertha as a beast, as Spivak suggests, Eyre “renders the human/animal frontier as acceptably indeterminate, so that a good greater than the letter of the Law

can be broached” (248). Thus, Eyre defines Bertha as a nonhuman being, “it” but “covered with clothing,” “snatched and growled like some strange wild animal” (Brontë 295). The installment of the allusion of animalism onto an unknown object, in Spivak’s term, is a making of “not-yet-human Other of soul making” (247). It is the “unquestioned ideology of imperialist axiomatics,” as Spivak suggests, that Eyre chooses to scar the colonized object within the axiom of imperialism in regards to protect her terrain of Englishness. Eyre’s English identity, as Catherine Hall suggests, is “not a fixed identity but a series of contesting identities, a terrain of struggle as to what it means to be English. Different groups competed for the domination of this space and the political and cultural power which followed from such domination. Englishness is defined through the creation of an imagined community ... built on a series of assumptions about ‘others’ which define the nature of Englishness itself” (26). Hall’s explanation of Englishness locates in the imperial text has shown how Eyre, being as an Englishwoman, is conditioned to move from the “counter-family set” to the set of the “family-in-law” (Spivak 248).

As Spivak expounds upon the work of axiom of imperialism prevailed in the civilizational regions, I want to move on to seek a solution for the “worlding” barrier. By introducing Martinique philosopher Édouard Glissant’s hermeneutics of Creolization in “the Mediterranean of the Americas” (33), I will demonstrate his demand for regional independences. In Glissant’s arguments, “the Caribbean Sea,” for him, “is not a lake of the United State. It is the estuary of the Americas” (427) of which he affirms a new “regionally-specific identity” (Niblett 52). Glissant presents the composite identity engaged in a historical position as a site of cultural crossing. He opens a new defined space towards the “Other America” in his *Poetics of Relation* (1997), and re-emphasizes the possibility of the American Mediterranean transformed

through the estuary of Caribbean Sea: a passageway, a sea which “explodes the scattered lands into an arc” (33) that heads toward the American continent. Apart from the aggressive anti-imperialist means that rumble the postcolonial studies, Glissant tempts to secure the Mediterranean of the Americas by sliding into through a diversified canal. By informing a new concept of Relation /Creolization, Glissant in his “Creolization in the Making of Americas” presumes a composite, cross-cultural phenomena in the Mediterranean of the Americas:

a place of passage, of transience rather than exclusive, an archipelago-like reality, which does not imply the intense entrenchment of a self-sufficient thinking of identity, often sectarian, but of relativity, the fabric of a great expanse, the relational complicity with the new earth and sea. It does not intend toward the One, but opens out into diversity. (Glissant 5)

In Relation, it opens up a new thinking of a composite identity that can co-exist with multiple cultures. Glissant’s offer of the “experience of diversity” is a “long-unnoticed process it spawned” which brings up the relational complicity with the new Oneness. It is through Creolization, “the repercussion of cultures, whether in symbiosis or in conflict” that we figure out a becoming image of “an unknown forever both near and deferred.” Instead of positioning as a fixed mechanism, literary critic Lorna Burns states that Creolization is a state of becoming, a production of varied interrelations of identities rather than “the discourse of filiation and genesis that legitimized the colonial project.” The discourse of filiation in Glissant’s *Caribbean Discourse* is defined as a way of insisting on “fixing the object of scrutiny in static time, thereby removing the tangled nature of lived experience and promoting

the idea of uncontaminated survival” (101). Rather an uninterrupted continuation of human history it is, it gets more arbitrary for it neglects the lived experience and blocks the process of a Creolized identity.

From Spivak’s discovery of the imperialized narrative “thirdworldism” (243) constructed by the literary discipline of Western knowledge, to Glissant conjecture of Creolization in seeking the regional self-dependences of the Mediterranean of the Americas, I want to proceed to the scenes in Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*, to excavate the coalitions of the dimensional master-slave conflicts, and the insufficiency of a Creolized sphere. In my study, there are more than two scenes that fit the scenario of such conflicts in the novel. First, in the first part of the text, the conflict between ex-planters Cosway family and ex-slave blacks appears, from Annette’s dead poisoned horse, the name of “white niggers” and “white cockroaches,” to the final torching of the Coulibri Estate. Second, Rhys puts forward the conflict between Rochester and Antoinette as a miniature of master/slave, self/other relation. If we read Antoinette’s otherness not as uncanniness but a key for Glissant’s passage to Relation, it is possible that we can conclude with a different closure for Antoinette’s identity. In reading Glissant’s Creolization, Professor Derek Attridge in his *The Singularity of Literature* discerned it as the discourse that “brought into relation with ‘otherness’.” The otherness, according to Attridge’s explanation, is not a colonial other but an “other to the sum of a culture knowledge,” which “lies outside the current limits of understanding” (51). Therefore, it is my hypothesis that through Glissant’s Creolization, Rhys may bridge Antoinette’s otherness which leads to a new space of in-betweenness. As soon as we figure out that Rhys’s heroine lives, strolls between the two parties of white and black, that she walks on the boundary of Sargasso Sea,

we can either victimize her in the work of “worlding” or envisage a way for her release through Creolization.

In Rhys’s design of characters, I want to discuss the function of the heroine Antoinette’s proctor, the nanny Jamaican Christophine. Through Christophine’s eyes, she is the only objective witness in the whole transition from the colonized period to the time of slave emancipation. She survives from the time of slavery, and is associated with the mysterious Afro-Caribbean voodooism; she stands in between the relational conflicts and inspects them with exceeding distinction and cleverness. In favor of the Creole heroine and sympathized with her for the plights she undergoes, Christophine loves and supports Antoinette; in aiding her making the potion, Christophine risks getting arrested for performing the obeah. It is my intention, to consider Christophine as the Glissantian arbitrator who positions herself in the work of Creolization. As Antoinette’s surrogate mother who judges Rochester’s imperialist doing, Spivak read Christophine as “an aporia of différence,” an “Other” who cannot be “served” for she can not be fitted and contained by a “canonical English text within the European novelistic tradition in the interest of the white Creole rather than the native” (253).

Chapter II: From Rhys’s Magic to Zombification

In this chapter, I want to give a detailed explanation for the allusion of zombiism by tracing back to the historical origin in the ancient Haitian mythology. In professor Edna Aizenberg’s “‘I Walked with a Zombie’: The Pleasure and Perils of Postcolonial Hybridity,” she reads Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a magnified fulfillment for putting the symbology of zombiism into her text, that she redresses

“the other side of the master narratives and to undermine their authority by giving voice to confined, enslaved, repudiated ‘monstrosities’, threatening in-betweens, zombies.” Through the attributes of critic Wade Davis’s study on the zombiism in *Passage of Darkness* and the performance of zombification, he gives a thorough explanation on how a zombie is arisen from the Voodoo conceptualization of the soul. Davis defines a zombie as in “the altered state of the creature,” who “reflects the loss of ‘the essence of one’s individuality’” (56). Similar to Antoinette’s state of madness during her prison in Thornfield Hall, I will give an analysis of how Antoinette’s loss of her consciousness is the result of Rochester’s zombification. Most of all, it is my main argument that not only does Rochester zombify Antoinette through his white obehah, but also Antoinette’s desperateness does she perform the zombification ahead through a dose of poison concocted by Christophine.

In Davis’s research on the tradition of voodoo rituals, he finds that a human soul was made by two parts. One is the *ti bon ange*, and the other is the *gros bon ange*. During the ritual, the *ti bon ange*, “the essence of individuality of one’s soul,” plays an important part for it leaves the body in a slumber in which a victim is in the trance and experiences dreams. Once a victim’s *ti bon ange* is deprived, he has no consciousness but is still capable of reacting on the surrounding stimuli. After the sorcerer, the Voodoo practitioner calls *boker* captured the victim’s *ti bon ange*, with the complicated follow-up procedures, the zombification is thus completed. In Rhys’s text, she pictures Christophine as a woman with great knowledge of skilled voodooism, in order to show her well-planned strategy and thus invites the readers to jump off the framework of canonical English text to imagine an existence of a zombie.

When we look into Rhys's making of her heroine a zombie, Antoinette is, as Aizenberg describes, "a sexualized, hybridized zombie woman with a narrative of imperial domination." What's more, she is a hot-blooded, "nymphomaniac" woman who craves and wants more. Antoinette is not the first zombie Rhys brings forth. In fact, the first appearance of a zombified victim Rhys invites in is Annette, Antoinette's mother whom an insane woman is in the asylum after the fire; her insanity foreshadows Antoinette's potential of becoming a zombie, when she is told that she is "crazy like your mother" that "she have eyes like zombie and you have eyes like zombie too."

In Rhys's rewriting of the relationship between Antoinette and Rochester, and Antoinette's wedding to Rochester is only based on a deal under the patriarchal structure. Their union is not coming from love but for a great inheritance from Antoinette's stepfather Mr. Mason. In Rochester's eyes, the marriage is nothing but a trade. As Rochester gets to know his wife who appears so unfamiliar, unpredictable, wild and luscious, he can't endure but reject her, and turns his abjection into the blind fear. As a result, with an unknown fear, Rochester chooses to use his imperial power of "worlding," judging Antoinette and making her a zombie. Through what critic Romita Choudhury terms that Rochester's rejection and resentment towards his Creole wife is coming from "the unquestioned ideology of imperialism permeating the dominant discourse and canonicity of Brontë's text," empowering Antoinette seems reasonable. Through Rochester's patriarchal domination we also see that he claims for an Anglo-Saxonised version of Antoinette. Critic Wally Look Lai asserts this relationship is "doomed to failure from the very start," both parties are "so rooted in their separate worlds." Because of their different family background and class

origin, “they remain complete strangers to each other, for each of them the world of the other is like some mysterious and inaccessible dream” (44).

After setting up the structure of Caribbean history and discussing the difficult situations between Rhys’s heroine and her English husband, I will move on to the topic of the practice of zombification with Davis’s explanation on the process of rituals, and describe the scenes in Rhys’s text that match the procedure of zombification. The crucial factor for the Voodoo ritual, as Davis suggested, is the making of zombie drug. With verification of the result from the laboratory analysis Davis finds that “together with discoveries in the field and the biomedical literature ... The consistent and critical ingredients in the poison appear to be marine fish containing known toxins capable of inducing a physical state that could allow an individual to be misdiagnosed as dead.” (7). The drug with an effect of being “misdiagnosed as dead,” could induce a “catatonic-like state resembling death.” In Rhys’s text, the zombie drug may be produced and used in Antoinette’s performance of zombification upon Rochester. If Christophine is concocting the zombie drug instead of the aphrodisiac mixed with wine in Antoinette’s request, she is prepared to assist Antoinette in zombifying Rochester. Loe explains the reaction of Rochester’s poisoning indicated to the symptoms during the zombification: “I woke in the dark after dreaming that I was buried alive” (90) This vision of suffocation is predicted and his feeling of “deathly cold and sick in pain,” as Loe suggests, are “the initial slowing down of the body metabolism that produces the catatonic first stage of zombification.” But how does Rochester counteract the course? Loe suggests it was through his vomiting that he expels the drug out of his body so the effect is mitigated. In other words, Rochester’s de-zombification succeeds in his direct reaction to vomit, which “reduces[ed] his vulnerability” to be zombified. Through extracting the zombie

poison out of one's body, Rochester is then restored to his self-consciousness. By discussing the zombification performed by Antoinette that is failed in Rochester's counteract through vomiting, in return, Rochester turns to zombify her with his white oboeah of renaming.

Chapter III: Rochester's Zombie, and His Zombification

As we can see, Rochester's carry out of dehumanizing his Creole wife reveals an underlying ideology of imperialism, which prompts him to imperialize the "colonized female subject" through a series of patriarchal commands and sexual abuses. I will put forward an inquiry of the imperial myth accompanied with Englishness, to discuss the glitterati Rochester's English identity in the nineteenth-century Victorian period, so we can understand why in his deep-rooted belief, he disgusts at his wife so intensively who is supposed to be colonized. The imperial myth is, according to Professor Kathleen J. Renk, the "spectacle of Empire" which is originated and altered from the Christian doctrine of "English/queen mother" in the colonial world. For the purpose of ingratiating the British queen, or the Victorian mother, "the aristocracy," noted by critic Jan Morris, "had long followed the example of the monarchy;" to show the empire's superiority and divineness, it procures a way to dominate, cultivate the natives in the colonies through an imperial project out of the queen's mercy, converting the colonial people into the offsprings of "English mother" (37). As an Englishman who is also endowed with the British "English/queen mother" system, Rochester thereby inevitably reinforces the imperial project to cultivate Antoinette. From analyzing the English imperial myth to the norms of Victorian womanhood, I want to argue that it is Rhys's purpose to uncover the imperial violence

of Rochester through her Caribbean-oriented manifestation of zombiism in Antoinette's case.

For Rochester and Antoinette, the motive for both of them using the obeah is the fear of being enslaved, and the desire of making a "love slave." Rochester's fear is what Aizenberg defined as "the imperialist's fear of slave rebellion;" and Antoinette's fear obviously is the lack of love. So each one takes the offensive. Rochester's shallow, skin-deep affection for Antoinette makes him nothing but an "imperial buyer," who objectifies the colonized female subject into a product. The objectification of Antoinette, thus, helps Rochester fulfill his project of making a love slave through the baptism of renaming; and through this Bertha zombie making, Antoinette loses her last Caribbean connection with her mother Annette. By emptying out Antoinette's identity, Rochester succeeds in making the Other, the zombie in the attic. Loe argues that Rochester's renaming of Antoinette is a way to erase her Caribbean identity and to enslave her as a zombie:

Rochester's narrative repeatedly stresses the doll-like, marionette qualities of Antoinette, which resemble the descriptions of zombie behavior, and he follows through as well with the ritual zombification process of robbing her of her previous identity by 'baptizing' her with the new name of Bertha, a practice he has begun earlier..." (Loe 34-42)

Moving from Rochester's renaming in West Indies to the attic in England, Antoinette ends up in becoming a mad woman, a "ghost woman" with a "blank lovely eyes." Her imprisonment in the Thornfield Hall, as Davis suggests, may be seen as a completed zombification; for a victim should "be socialized into a new existence" and

isolated and fed with “a debilitating diet.” Surprisingly, in Loe’s argument, he thinks Rochester’s zombification is in the end failed, for he moves his zombie away from the West Indies, which is a magical bond with his white obeah. Threatening the British motherland, Bertha zombie “provides a destructive incubus working against him on his home territory” (Loe 35). Although Antoinette’s madness is diagnosed by Western conventional psychology, but as Rhys invites the version of the allusion of zombiism in the story, she offers a different angle and a new vision for readers to understand Antoinette’s state.

Conclusion

In my conclusion, after discussing the practice of zombification, it is my intention to discuss the possible de-zombification of both the English husband and the heroine. First, I will discuss Rochester’s de-zombification, which is casted by Christophine’s Caribbean obeah through his counteraction of spewing the zombie drug out. Second, I will argue that Antoinette in the last part of the novel also experiences the process of de-zombification, through the dreams of her self-awakening as her “grounded revolt” (Choudhury 365).

Antoinette is a Creole Other who fights over her identity through many obstacles in Rhys’s version. As Glissant argues, the plight for a colonized object is described in the Marxian-like structure that, which a colonized one is in the inferior zone of periphery, fighting against the center of imperialism. The outcome, as the counter-colonial study shows that, the marginalized community is always facing the destiny of objectification, mapping, and the making of Other under the axiom of imperialism. But, on the contrary, Glissant’s poetics of Creolization may give the

subaltern a voice to speak. Through Antoinette's dreams, a scene of seeing Tia who calls her on the edge reveals Antoinette's urge for freeing herself from the Other scenario. For Antoinette, she realizes that the true place for her after her leaping off the burning house is the Sargasso Sea in-betweenness, which is in Glissant's final ideal of fulfilling "the Caribbean Sea." I want to argue that through Antoinette's awaking from the slumber, she is capable of retrieving her Creole identity and counteracting the zombification by her using of the "mirroring" (Spivak 248) and her subconscious seeking in the past of West Indies.

In my study, Antoinette's potential of de-zombification is seen possible, for Rochester's white obeah lacks the accuracy of Afro-Caribbean Voodoo procedures, and the powerlessness of his magic in England leaves the zombie a possibility to dispel the curse. In the final scene of Antoinette's captivity in the Thornfield Hall, the literary critics deconstruct her dreams in displaying a sequence of symbols like homeland, a red room, a red dress, and the encounters with Tia and Rochester through the multiple interpretations. Renk expounds upon the red room is more than a parallel to "Jane Eyre's experience in the infernal, godless red room;" rather, it is "the ritual she enacts identifies her with magical resistance to the colonizer's discourse of hegemonic power." Through enacting the ritual of her red vision, Antoinette recalls the past of West Indies and fights against the ghost woman she sees in the mirror.

In Antoinette's final dream, she finds herself in the burning house, and later, on one hand, she follows the voice and finds out the image of her childhood companion Tia on the edge, calling her and asked her if she is frightened. On the other hand, a man's voice calling Antoinette Bertha is behind her. Through the work of mirror images, critic Belinda Wyndham suggests that Antoinette searches for the existence of the "femaleness which is aligned with blackness and historylessness"

(149). Yet, Choudhury argues that the “an uneasy balance” between the white identity and the “hybrid Jamaican images... culminating in the vision of a black girl” (29) forces Antoinette to not engage in. In the opposite, instead of choosing from one side of the communities “as if Antoinette has glimpsed the failed possibility of achieving a composite culture,” with “no looking glass,” Antoinette awakes in the Creolized place, the in-betweenness of Sargasso Sea.

For my concern, it seems difficult to discuss Antoinette’s last death expanding to the torching of Thornfield Hall and her suicide continued in *Jane Eyre*. In Spivak’s study, she prefers to define Antoinette as a true victim for her suicidal death. “Now at last I know why I was brought here and what I have to do.” Antoinette’s last words, in Spivak’s regards, is her determination to become a sacrifice for achieving the greater consummation of imperial mission:

In this fictive England, she must play out her role, act out the transformation of her “self” into that fictive Other, set fire to the house and kill herself, so that Jane Eyre can become the feminist individualist heroine of British fiction. I must read this as an allegory of the general epistemic violence of imperialism, the construction of a self-immolating colonial subject for the glorification of the social mission of the colonizer. (Spivak 251)

In other words, Spivak deems Antoinette’s death as a completion of imperial mission, regardless of her final self-awareness, and sees her as nothing but a tragedy, authorized by Jane Eyre as being a feminist individualist in the realm of thirdworldism. But for Rhys, in my argument, she gives an ambiguous ending of

Antoinette walking in the corridor with a candle held in her hand; for she envisages a different story for Antoinette's death against the accusations of her deliberate arson which highlights her insanity. She fails to recognize herself as situated in either the English whiteness or the Jamaican blackness, in one way, is her giving up on connecting to the two parties for she is aware of the fact that both parties never approve her; but in another way, it is through her understanding that the Creoleness belongs to nowhere but in the gulf of Sargasso Sea: "now at last I know why I was brought here and what I have to do" (189).

By lighting up the candle, with the fire that symbolizes the rebirth in her hand, Antoinette walks into the "dark passage." As critic Wilson Harris suggests, it is the process of "shadow catching," which is the religious practice of Caribbean obeah by lighting up the candle, the lighter or the "believer" may restore her shadow and retrieve her destiny from dispelling the darkness. To conclude, Antoinette's de-zombification, in Choudhury's assumption, describes that it is "not simply passivity or an inability to think, but an inability to think differently, so de-zombification is not the emptying out of the mind but the confrontation of a heavily inscribed terrain criss-cross by histories." In Glissant's view, he speculates the possibility for beginning one's Creolization is "to dream or to act," which, paralleling to Antoinette's reaction of walking on the dark passage, in Glissant's term, is her final quest for fulfilling the Creolization – "becomeing Caribbean."

Chapter I: The Critique of Imperialism, and Creolization in *Wide Sargasso Sea*

“She is Creole girl, and she have the sun in her. Tell the truth now. She doesn’t come to your house in this place England they tell me about, she come to your beautiful house to beg you to marry with her. No. IT’s you come all the long way to her house -- it’s you beg her to marry. And she love you and she give you all she have. Now you say you don’t love her and you break her up. What you do with her money, eh?” [And then Rochester, the white man, comments silently to himself] Her voice was still quite but with a hiss in it when she said “money.” (Rhys 130)

Compare to Charlotte Brontë’s description of the debased Bertha in the Western world in *Jane Eyre*, Jean Rhys presents a story of a hybrid Creole in the 19th century West Indies in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Through the description of Antoinette’s vagabound life, Rhys builds up a structure of colonialism and racial complications, and places her heroine among the termoids of colonized blacks and whites. By “rescuing the white Creole madwoman from the denigrating descriptions of her found in *Jane Eyre*” (Olaussen 65), Rhys recurs the story of Antoinette and dedicates it to her innocent upbringing during the time of nineteenth-century Victorian age. Some treats the doing of Rhys as a way of projecting herself onto the Creole girl, so Rhys insists on writing for Antoinette. In Rhys’s letters, she restates the necessity to reconstruct a story of a confused Creole identity within the political context of particular colonial discourse as a matter of great importance. Influenced by the cultural and historical reformations from the British education, Rhys says, “it might

be possible to unhitch the whole thing from Charlotte Brontë's novel, but I don't want to do that. It is that particular mad Creole I want to write about" (Rhys 153). In an unpublished letter to actress Selma Vaz Dias in 1963, Rhys herself says: "I don't think that English people have the slightest idea of the real West Indies in 1830's." As a reformist, she challenges the "History" of European discourse (Gregg 72) and invokes the case of the Creole identity for readers to examine.

Therefore, in contrast to Brontë's "paper tiger lunatic Bertha Mason" (Rhys 262), Rhys undertakes a reconstruction of Antoinette's case with a texture of Caribbean historical basis. As critic Veronica Marie Gregg suggests, Rhys "uses and reworks historical and autobiographical data as a means of resisting the cannibalizing of West Indian history by the dominant European narratives, while producing the Creole's version of that history" (72). That is to say, by endowing her heroine with a voice, she challenges the dominant canonical English text of European narratives.

In my first chapter, first, I will try to explain the term "Creole" for looking through Rhys's making of the Creole protagonist, which "overtly and even aggressively constructs a West Indian subject position" (Gregg 72). Second, I will discuss the colonized term – the Third World, which is created and determined under the Western authorized system. By introducing the concept of author Kathleen J. Renk's study on the imperial myth and the hermeneutics of Indian literary critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's critique of imperialism to my study, I will discuss the situation for the colonized subjects during that particular period, to support Rhys's view of her objectified Creole heroine. Last, I will apply to the Martinique philosopher Édouard Glissant's hermeneutic of Creolization, to challenge the imperial system of the First World through deconstructing the dominant discourse of

imperialism, and offer an alternative for the heroine in her realization of the Creole identity.

In Rhys's text, it is her request for telling Antoinette's story from an unbiased Caribbean stance, to go against the contemporary dominant European narrative.

Within her understanding of Afro-Caribbean knowledge, Rhys's heroine is placed in the sequence of inequitable turmoils, from the deportation of the Coulibri Estate, the betrayal of her English husband to the dehumanization by Rochester's renaming.

Former Columbia University professor, Laura E. Ciolkowski, in her "Navigating the Wide Sargasso Sea: Colonial History, English Fiction, and British Empire" indicates Antoinette "has come to stand for a form of 'native' resistance to English patriarchal power for many contemporary feminist readers of Rhys's text;" with Rhys's endeavor, she "ultimately discloses a certain complicity with the very English patriarchal logics she challenges." Rhys endows a certain belief that, as Ciolkowski argues, not as "an exposé of empire" but as "the occasion to confront the ever-shifting relations between complicity and resistance that mark all aspects of feminist thoughts" (340).

In Rhys's design of the nineteenth-century West Indies where the slave emancipation has just begun, the gap between the former slaves and the former plantation owners is existant during Antoinette's childhood. For the blacks (negros) who are formerly enslaved, they resents their ex-governers' children including the Cosway family, for they are termed as the Creoles – the hybrids, and offsprings resulted in the crossbreeding of white planters and Jamaican natives. According to poet Edward Kamau Brathwaite's study, the term of the Creole is originated from the etymological combination of the Spanish words: *criar* (to create, to imagine, to establish, to found, to settle), *colono*(a colonist, a founder, a settler,) and *criollo*;

which means a committed settler, or “one identified with the area of settlement, one native to the settlement though not ancestrally indigenous to it” (Brathwaite 1015-105). The Oxford English Dictionary standard definition defines a Creole as a person who is born and naturalized in the West Indies or other parts of America, Mauritius, etc., but of European or Africa Negro race. In short, he who bears the name of Creole has no “connotation of colour.” In other words, as H. Adlai Murdoch, Tufts University Professor of Francophone Studies, states, “a Creole can be either white or black, colonizer or colonized,” and embodies the identity of “doubling, difference, and dislocation on the cultural and performative planes” (254). As Dr. Lorna Burns, a researcher at the University of St. Andrews, suggests, a Creole is considered a hybrid, inter-racial mixing subject, the “New World experience” (99) in the need of being distinguished by other new theoretical approaches.

In literary critic Veronica Marie Gregg’s observation, the white pioneers who lands and settles down on the plantations of the West Indian soil, with a group of black slaves they own, are viewed with the superior positions. Gradually, through the inter-racial marriages with the locals including blacks, the mix-blood offsprings, the “Mulatto Ascendancy” (22) takes over their forefathers’ titles of plantation owners. They inherit the plantations and the slaves, “in which the slaves are enslaved as surely as the descendants of their former bondsmen” (Gregg 70). But, in the nineteenth-century, the master-slave relation faces the first collision when the slavery emancipation treaty is released during the 1830’s. Thus, they become the “apprenticed labourers” (22). Which means, the blacks are no longer enslaved to white colonials, and become free men. In various confrontations with their former plantation owners, especially the white Creoles, the blacks “intoxicated with freedom, abandon the helpless plantation owners” (94). The existence of Creoles, as Gregg

suggests, is thus being assembled by “the sociohistorical, discursive fabric of the colonial West Indies,” and is characterized in the “discursive self-destruction articulated within the historical specificity of racialized slavery in the Caribbean” (38).

As a result, the white Creole plantation owners have no claims for the blacks; worse, they become the subjects of contempt and scorn. For they are the hybrids with an “inextricably disqualification in the system of ethnology” (38), resulting in what Gregg terms as the artificial compound in postcolonial rhetoric. In the end, the term of Creole is formed, added to the category of the “recruitment of the silenced, degraded black/ mulatto” (40). Condemned and unfitted in their post-slavery society, the former Creole plantation owners are hereby positioned as the excluded white niggers with no regional independences.

As a muddled, complex subject matter, Rhys concerns the Creole subjects with a linking of the colonial discourse in the Caribbean history. Judging the European enterprise which is seen with “little knowledge of the region and ... depends[ed] upon a willed ignorance,” the colonized subjects are thus deemed as “an always constructed narrative of the Other within and by metropolitan discourses” (11). Which is to say, once the making of the Other race is constructed within the imperial project of “worlding,” the history of West Indies risks being recognized as the production of the Third World. In Spivak’s examination, through the operation of Western imperialism, the colonized people are classified into the group of uncivilized in the axiomatic norm of “thirdworldism” (Spivak 289). Thus, the colonials are obligated to exercise the imperial mission in the Third World through the work of imperial “worlding” (Spivak 243); which, according to Spivak, is a conventionalized signifier for stereotyping any related colonized place. In addition, Spivak’s term of “subaltern” (257) is one of the

results from the work of “worlding,” adopted by Southern Utah University professor Kyle William Bishop. Bishop presents a new rank of colonial world classifying the term of zombie into the sixth level “sub-subaltern” (71), which I will expound upon this subject later in Chapter II. As critic Veronica Marie Gregg warns, the work of “worlding” in the “colonialist discourse is not mere representation but an event that helps to create ‘History’ and shape materially the lives of people in the metropolis and the periphery” (15). Through the making of the other “History,” Gregg concludes, the unknown Other Creole, “the legend of the mad West Indian was established” (84).

In Rhys’s arrangement, under the structure of colonialist discourse, her first step is to sell her Creole girl to the English imperialist through the commercial trade. By presenting Antoinette’s need for a husband, who inherits a great fortune from her father but needs a husband to earn the inheritance, Rhys proceeds Antoinette’s story with a miserable foreword. Gregg finds the evidence to confirm the existence of cases similar to Antoinette’s. According to Gregg’s documents, after the release of the slavery pact, many plantation owners leave wealthy dowries to their daughters, and yet there are restrictions for them to inherit that money unless they are married. So, a young man like Rochester, who as a second son of an English family with no rights to the family inheritance, are desperate to find a wealthy wife. As Gregg assumes, Rochester “would marry the girl, grab her money, bring her to England -- a faraway place -- and in a year she would be an invalid. Or mad” (84). With the urgency to proclaim a money-spinner, so to speak, Rochester is truly an imperialist who claimed his property from a colonized object for the sake of financial concerns.

Before Antoinette’s selling of her marriage to a British master, during her childhood, Rhys inscribes her with an orphan-like, motherless life. Starting from Rhys’s first-person narrative of the girl Antoinette in the first part of the novel, she

describes Antoinette's confusions in her encounters with other blacks. In Antoinette's description, she witnesses her mother Annettes, who is excluded from the whole community. Hinted by a suicide of their neighbor Mr. Luttrell, Rhys foretells the collapse of the socio-systemic structure of plutocracy, and moves on to the eventual persecution of the Cosway family by burning down the house as a symbol of eradicating the threat to the black society.

Before explaining the inscribed structure of the Third World in Spivak's study, I want to take a look at the Coulibri Estate, for it not only represents the symbolism of the Cosway family's rise and decline, from the imperial movement to the slave emancipation, but also the link to Antoinette's memory of the West Indies when she is captured in England. In Rhys's writing, the house incorporates the past, the beauty and heavenliness of West Indies, which is demolished later by the new order of the post-slavery society. Rhys embodies the house in the form of Edenian Garden, with the typical Caribbean beauty, it is transcended to the state of "the Romantic sublime" as described by critic Nicholls and Watt. Affected by the transcendent prospect of the "virgin soil mapped out in thriving plantations," the Westerners are attracted to the Caribbean beauty and "turned to the East" (14). Furthermore, as critic Andrew Wilton describes, the sublime landscapes of the Caribbean enable the viewer "to accomplish the leap from the 'local' and trivial to the grand and universal" (20). In Antoinette's retrospection, the Edenian garden of Coulibri Estate is "large and beautiful as that garden in the Bible -- the tree of life grew there. But it had gone wild" (Rhys 17). But, different from the biblical garden Antoinette anticipated, as Gregg describes, the present West Indian post-slavery period is not a "sui generis" but "the nightmare of history." "All the human relationships are marked by slavery and the plantation society" (85), as she concludes.

The decline of the Coulibri Estate, of the West Indies is eventually in the state of “ruinate” (Thomas 157), the decaying plantation which “reverted to the tropical vegetation” (156) is now squatted by the former slaves. In this post-slavery society, Antoinette’s memory of the past and exuberant Edenian Garden is then turned into the abandoned runis mercilessly. Later, we see it is through the state of ruin which Antoinette strives to survive, with “an ability to transcend the materiality of place” (Thomas 156), she suffers from Rochester’s “green menace” and anticipates a chance to “go home;” which, is a home of “the ruinate land of Coulibri of her early adolescence” (157). Responding to Antoinette’s reminiscence of the house, critic Michelle Cliff concludes that, “as individuals in the landscape, we, the colonized, are also subject to ruination, to the self reverting to the wildness of the forest” (40).

As critic Michelle Cliff suggests, the “self” which goes against the exotic wilderness, can be seen as the self of European ideology attempting to cultivate the colonized wild. In literary critic Kathleen J. Renk’s study, it is the “the Victorian myth of the family” (Renk 7), which is shaped by the religious appeal of Christianity and rooted in the imperialist movements. The imperialistic myth is, in Renk’s explanation, “the hierarchal systems and hegemony, discrete, limiting categories, and an inexorable colonialism” (7) pervaded in the Caribbean. Through the demystification of the Victorian myth, we can understand the meaning of the mission. Granted by the “queen mother” (29) of the British Empire, the imperial movements are thus proceeded for the purpose of protecting the daughters in the “garden” or the “angel of the house” (32) from the unknown East. Also, for the purpose of propagating “a noble and supposedly superior English race” (29), the cultivation of building English morals is deemed necessary, including the West Indian colonies, otherwise is referred to as the “Little Englands” (32).

As the education of English knowledge progressed throughout the colonies, Renk further expounds upon the idea of Victorian womanhood, “Queen’s Garden” (29). This term is extended from the rhetoric of English art critic John Ruskin’s “Of Queen’s Gardens” as Renk described:

Forming a triumvirate of ascending maturity, the three princesses are genteel goddesses of leisure. Like the delicate pastel flowers, the girls in the garden, as Ruskin suggests, ret, reside, and grow “effortlessly.” The flowers in the background seemingly from a dense wall that protects the monarchical descendants, and the “daughters” of empire from all harm. They and the family reside in a mythic realm, a garden, a heavenly nook presided over by the queen of the garden, the English mother, the queen mother, and implicitly by God ... As daughters of empire, they will propagate a noble and supposedly superior English race. (29)

The rhetoric of Ruskin’s Garden, according to Renk, obligates the women to protect the garden of the English mother through supporting the English superiority, “with a notion of England as a heaven on earth” (29). To shape the English womanhood, it is only through “the cultivation of women’s morality” (10). Endorsed by the Christian credos, author Mrs. Sarah Ellis, in her “Women of England, Their Social Duties, and Domestic Habits,” states that the “True Home” of British Empire entails the qualities of domesticity and self-sacrifice. The English women, in other words, should be recognized as keepers of “nation’s moral wealth” (18), as leaders of a “new era” by setting up the norm of “female sovereign” (80). As imperialists

encounter with the “homeless,” uneducated people in the colonies, their urges to civilize the untamed are thus revealed, waiting to “spread[ing] light, wisdom, morality and order as they gather the ‘homeless’ nations at their feet” (31).

In critic Jan Morris’s view, the drive to imperialize the colonies is reflected as a spectacle that “plays[ed] an important role in British imperialism and in the transmission of English ideology” (12). Intended to “overawe the natives,” the English colonials present the “elaborate ritualistic ceremonies” (12) to demonstrate their power and build the Anglican Church on the lands. Morris argues that this is the initial phase of “Queen’s Progress” (11) for inviting the monarchy of British aristocracy in. By building the churches, the schools, the country house estates and other institutions, “the Victorian ideology” (Renk 32) is thereby slowly inserted into the colonies.

As the Queen legitimates the imperial project, the imperial troops march forward to the colonies, work to civilize and shape the moral characters in the colonial world. As a result, many natives receive the Western educations. But, the rectification of the colonized, paradoxically, has never introduced them into the English family. In the end, they are marked as both members and nonmembers. Although in the nineteenth century the historian James Froude discerns the colonized people in the West Indies as Britain’s “scattered offspring,” still, according to his study, the citizens of the colonies are “not so enamored of constitutional theory that they will patiently see their fellow-country men in less favored situations swamped under the vote of the coloured races” (325). That is to say, Froude here indicates that the genuine offsprings of the Great Britain are still the white-raced colonists.

The master from the first world, with the privilege to tame the slaves, is deemed as the key to dominate in the East. In the Victorian age, the imperial project is

disguised in the good intention to purify the slaves accompanied with Christianity, which aims to fulfill the holy work of God by humanizing the savages and making them pledge to the British motherland. In Kathleen J. Renk's book *Caribbean Shadows & Victorian Ghosts*, a picture drawn by Thomas Jones Barker's *The Secret of England's Greatness* (1861) is shown in describing a scene of an African prince, receiving a book of the Bible from the Queen for he asks for advice on how to build a great empire. The painting itself is incarnation of the "prescribed Victorian-colonial relationship that codifies the supremacy of England over the conquered," showing how "England 'subdued' the so-called uncivilized through the power of God's word" (2). Here, the queen represents the "Christian enlightenment" (3) intending to save the "fallen" African prince implied as the "primitive pagan darkness;" through the bowing to the superior conqueror, the colonized should "gladly accept the modes of discourse that transform the primitive into the civilized" (4). Thus, "the revelation of Victoria's imperial secret" (4) is revealed and the master-slave relation is consolidated in the colonial world.

The meaning of the master, the slave owner is reinforced and explained in the eighteenth century, by the apologist Edward Long in *The History of Jamaica*. He considers the master, the slave owner as the "beneficent and revered father-figure" protecting the slaves from the "monstrous parent Africa." The slaves are in awe of him, with no "abject prostration of real slaves," but as a "common friend and father" (271). As Long describes, the power of a slave owner is almost equal to an ancient patriarch; who is obliged to soothe and rectify the people. Long also stresses that the British plantation owners discover a way to bond with the slaves which is to welcome them into the Victorian family. Within the realm of the family, the slave owners take care of the natives; and are discerned as leaders like Moses in the Bible who is

ordained by God to guide those “wandering people.” Renk presents another picture of a “bucolic scene,” in which the patriarchal slave owner is surrounded by a bunch of slaves, adoring and smiling at him, “awaiting[s] his beneficent touch” (64). But, at last, the cultivated natives are still regarded as the outsiders under the first world criteria; worse, they are described in such a debased tone that “they are now everywhere degenerated into a brutish, ignorant, idle, crafty, treacherous, bloody, mistrustful, and superstitious people” (353-54). They are seen as the “fathers to their slaves” (Renk 64) who rule the plantations.

With the holy, religious values of justifying the imperial activity in the name of God, as critic Benita Parry suggests, the West takes over the plantations and constructs “the European self” (18). Furthermore, in privileging Europe’s “diverse modes of self-presentation,” Parry continues, “in the triumphalist culture of colonialism-as-imperialism,” the Europeans facilitates the “imperial project” to marshal into the colonies. This is activated by “a cultural hegemony where western norms and values are equated with universal forms of thought” (18). By legitimating the imperialist movement as a way to purify the untrodden lands, the Euro-centric authorities position the “European self,” and treat the discovered continents as “other,” “uncultivated” and “inhuman.” As Caribbean writer Marlene Nourbese Philip states, the patriarchal mechanism of Europe “has traditionally designated certain groups not only as inferior but also, paradoxically, as threats [...] Women, Africans, Asians, and aboriginals [...] constitute the threat of the Other – that embodiment of every thing which the white male perceived himself not to be” (295). Therefore, the imperial mission of taming the “unmanageable” (Renk 66) is now justified.

Critic Anouar Abdel-Malek describes the contemporary imperialism as a hegemonic imperialism that “exercising to a maximum degree a rationalized violence

taken to a higher level taken ever before [...] through the attempt to control hearts and minds.” With “the combined action of the military-industrial complex and the hegemonic cultural centers of West” (145), the imperialists act on the imperative of Westernization by any means. In response to the insidious plots of the Western imperial project, the Indian theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in her “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism” proposes the literary term produced by the western imperial axioms, called “the worlding,” or “the Third World” (243) in which the organization of European cultures uses to define the narrative of Other, to stereotype the colonized through their legal imperial violence:

To consider the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact literary heritages waiting to be recovered, interpreted, and curricularized in English translation fosters the emergence of “the Third World” as a signifier that allows us to forget that “worlding,” even as it expands the empire of the literary discipline. (Spivak 243)

The term of “worlding,” as Spivak explains, is enlightened and adopted from French philosopher Jacques Derrida’s early work of writing and textualism. By examining the way in which the real world is “constituted by a network of texts, from British colonial archives to US foreign politics,” Spivak reveals how Derrida’s deconstruction of the “binary opposition between the text and the world” has influential in constructing the “compositional style and rhetoric of Spivak’s thought” (Morton 17). As Derrida comments that in the linguistic system, language does not transparently reflect the social and historical world. In his *Grammatology* (1976), he asserts that “there is nothing outside of the text” (163). In other words, Derrida denies

the existence of a real world outside of language, and asserts that there is no essential difference between the text and the world. As Morton suggests, the terms “‘language’ and ‘world’ were themselves privileged signs that are part of a larger, irreducible system of linguistic and non-linguistic ‘marks.’”

For Spivak, assuming there is “a stable and transparent correspondence between language and the so-called real world,” she points out one of the problems within this transparent model of language as “it has been variously used to represent and constitute the world as a stable object of western knowledge.” That is to say, bounded up with “the history of European imperial expansion from nineteenth-century British colonialism to twentieth-century US foreign policy-making,” Spivak refers to the dominant representation of the world as “worlding.” In an interview with Elizabeth Grosz, Spivak assumes, the term “worlding” is “the assumption that when the colonizers come to a world, they encounter it as uninscribed earth upon which they write their inscription” (Morton 18).

In investigating the work of imperial “worlding,” Spivak examines the context of Anglo-American feminism in Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*. In Spivak’s reading, through the negation of the historical structure of the Caribbean in the Bertha character, Spivak presents Eyre’s making of the Other on the authority of “worlding,” and writes in her inscription of Bertha as a dehumanized creature. Bertha is thus underlined as an unknown Other, a “not yet human” (Spivak 247) in the assumption of Western cultures.

In the work of “worlding,” Spivak also questions the Western feminist thought which is influenced by the “the universal claims of feminism to speak for all women” (Morton 78). Persuaded by French feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva, instead of focusing on the essentialist debate of sexual

separation between men and women, Spivak's critical strategy focuses on the cultural difference between "Third World" women and "First World" women. Endeavored to break the ideological axiom in which demonstrating all women are the same without differentiations, Spivak condemns the individualistic feminists as being like colonials stereotyping the female natives of "Third World" into the category of subaltern. They take risks of "falling prey to the very binary oppositions that perpetuate women's subordination in culture and society" (Morton 74).

As Spivak states, the lives of "Third World" women suffer from the political and social oppressions by U.S. and the Western Europe for sustaining "the continued resources of the U.S. academy" (Morton 76). Like Spivak, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, in her "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," also discusses the struggles of "Third World" women in the "hegemonic white women's movements" (333). Mohanty appeals to disclose the legalized imperial acts and characterizations made by "the most evident economic and political hierarchies." Thus, she invokes a necessity of "forming strategic coalitions across class, race, and national boundaries" (333-348) to challenge the Western feminist theories. As Mohanty states, the long-term effect of feminist movements are linked to the West world criterion in which they perform the mapping of the Other women into the "average third world women" (337). In particular, "Western feminism" is implied as a "monolith" (353) in which it systemizes the Other woman as the non-Western objects, in order to make the female Westerners superior to their counterparts. Therefore, in "the Western feminist re-presentation," the Third World women are labelled as "ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, etc.," in contrast to "the self-representation of Western women" as educated, modern, self-determinable of their bodies and sexualities.

In order to challenge the “worlding” by the Western female individualists, of “sanctioned ignorance of western academic paradigms towards ‘Third World’ women,” Spivka presents a project of “de-worlding” (Bell 18). Through the “un-learning our privilege as our loss” (Morton 77), as Spivak suggests, people can start to “recognize[ing] how dominant representations of the world in literature, history or the media encourage people to forget about the lives and experiences of disempowered people” (Morton 58). By undoing the imposed norms directed by “worlding,” Spivak says, “de-worlding” “undone[ing] the opposition between verbal text and the biography of the named subject,” resulting in the self-contradictory question left for the West world which is induced by their eurocentrism:

In spite of their occasional interest in touching the other of the West, of metaphysics, of capitalism, their repeated question is obsessively self-centered: If we are not what official history and philosophy say we are, who then are we (not), how are we(not)? (Morton 80)

In response to the “axioms of imperialism” which is a “deliberately nontheoretical methodology with self-conscious rectitude” (243), Spivak states, “If even minimally successful, the readings will incite a degree of rage against the imperialist narrativization of history ... situate feminist individualism in its historical determination rather than simply to canonize it as such.” Explaining that, if “de-worlding” of the “axioms of imperialism” (243) is possible, it may, in a manner, be a solution to the degraded situation for the Third World people impaired by imperialism.

Following Spivak's analysis on Brontë's self-disciplined Englishwoman Eyre and Rhys's Creole Antoinette, it is certain for she sees Brontë's heroine as the paradigm of a well-educated Victorian female model. Eyre, as a white woman who is endowed with the ideology of thirdworldism, dehumanizes Bertha with the outcome of a "not yet human":

... it groveled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face.
(Brontë 295)

Here, Eyre's dehumanization on Bertha corresponds to Aimé Césaire's term "thingification" (42), which objectifies Bertha as an animalized thing, rendering "indeterminate the boundary between human and animal and thereby to weaken her entitlement under the spirit if not the letter of Law" (247). It is, in other words, Eyre's act of othering, colonizing the Third World woman from her "soul-making enterprise" (Morton 88). The inequality between the two women intensifies and culminates in Bertha's suicide in Thornfield Hall, which, can be seen as a celebration of Eyre's imperial conquest. "The understanding of Bertha's subjectivity," Morton suggests, "is latent in *Jane Eyre*" (88), until we see Rhys's rewriting of Antoinette's death as a result from the "epistemic violence of imperialism" (Morton 19).

As Antoinette is victimized through the process of imperial "worlding", she suffers from ill treatments and is driven crazy in *Jane Eyre*; different from Brontë's version, Spivak shows that Rhys's heroine still maintains a part of sanity while is imprisoned in the attic. When the character in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Grace Poole, for

instance, describes Antoinette's attack upon her stepbrother Richard: "I didn't hear all he said except 'I cannot interfere legally between yourself and your husband'. It was when he said 'legally' that you flew at him'" (119). Endowed with a "circumscribed position," as Morton suggests, Antoinette becomes a "legal object within the patriarchal terms of the marriage to Rochester" (119). Spivak states that Antoinette becomes aggressive because "the dissimulation that Bertha discerns in the word 'legally' -- not an innate bestiality -- that prompts her violent reaction" (Morton 88). For she is the "legal object" altered, mutated by the system of Western imperial soul-making project and bounded within the faked marriage, she can not tolerate but resist the lie of the "legal" marriage. In the end, through Rochester's othering converting, he makes his wife "something people from the metropolitan center regard as monstrous or bestial and eventually the protagonists take their own lives" (Gruesser 36). Critic John Cullen Gruesser agrees with Spivak's keeping "Bertha's humanity, indeed her sanity as critic of imperialism intact" (268), that she is "perceived this way first by Rochester and later by other (English)men in positions of powers" (138).

In light of the allusions of zombiism introduced in Rhys's writing, Antoinette not only is marked as an inhuman Other, but also a zombified object shown latter in my study. Influenced by Spivak's theoretical term of subaltern ranking, I want to present professor Kyle William Bishop's cultural discourse on "sub-subaltern" beforehand, to examine the lowest class of zombies as in the state of "literally silent, enslaved, and unable to connect with the dominant culture through any liminal space of discourse" (141), so that we can understand how Antoinette is treated and situated in the "sub-subaltern class." In Bishop's view, Spivak's critique of the colonial class system was related to the "social system of the zombie narrative" (146). Bishop

applies to the system and creates a sixth level of “sub-subaltern” class, “below that of indigenous women and (living) slaves.” Due to the lack of consciousness, desire and opinions, different from Spivak’s subalternized women, the zombies have no audience to speak for themselves. They are truly “other” because of their “fundamental lack of humanity” (146). Reduced to the “subservient working class,” as Bishop suggests, the zombies thus are “the ultimate dream -- a slave laborer that is truly a thing, unthinking, un-aspiring, and non-threatening” (71).

Lacking the power of speech, as Bishop concludes, this leads the zombies to Spivak’s seminal essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” In her analysis of the subalternized women in subaltern cultures, Spivak presents “the colonial social hierarchy as outlined originally by Ranajit Guha” (Bishop 146):

1. Dominant foreign groups
2. Dominant indigenous groups ...
3. Dominant indigenous groups as the regional and local levels.
4. The ...“people” and “subaltern classes. ...” (Spivak 284).

As stated by Spivak, the foreign women and slaves constituted a social level beneath the lowest group, creating the fifth social level, “ignored and marginalized by not only the dominant foreign (i.e., white) class but also their own indigenous (i.e., native) populace” (Bishop 146). In Bishop’s study, he brings forward the sixth level of zombification beneath the level of subaltern for two reasons:

- (1) the master has no responsibilities towards a group of automatous that requires little food, no pay, and no time off, and (2) the zombies

have no voice, no opinions, no consciousness, and (most importantly) no ability to organize (although they do appear threatening when they mass together, as they often do). (Bishop 146)

For this reason, Bishop infers the Other sub-subaltern, with “their ‘stain’ of the human, makes them decidedly uncanny” (147) and gives a conclusion for the silenced zombies imperialized by the West:

Thus, in a very one-sided and imperialistically minded way, the sub-subaltern zombies are finally heard, but they speak with their very existence rather than their voices. The white heroes are the only ones capable of giving them a voice, and that recognition comes at a price. (Bishop 146)

Overall, both Spivak and Bishop have discussed the “worlding” scenario within the structure of imperialism, to present the subalternized groups in subaltern cultures. In reversing the sub-alternized state of Third World, I will continue to discuss a hypothesis, a possibility to resolve Spivak’s axiom of imperialism by introducing Martinican literary critic Édouard Glissant’s hermeneutic of Relation/Creolization. Influenced by Martinican philosophers such as Frantz Fanon and Homi Bhabha, Glissant’s motive for his study in *Caribbean Discourse* and *Poetics of Relation* is to seek the in-between “composite culture” (Burns 99), or the “Mediterranean of Americas” (Glissant 81) through the lens of Relation. In his *Poetics of Relation*, Glissant states that Relation is a term for “a relation of equality,” as critic Celia M. Britton describes, “with respect for the Other as different from

oneself” (11). Seeing Relation as a new “anti-imperialist” project, Glissant anticipates a new space of “nonhierarchical and nonreductive” impositions. Respecting other cultures’ fluidity and multiplicity, Relation thus allows people to be engaged in “a radically nonhierarchical free play of interrelatedness” (12). By applying the work of Relation to the area of the “Mediterranean of Americas,” Glissant presents Creolization as the alternative of a passage out in the cross-cultural interrelations, reacting to find a new Creole identity:

Creolization, one of the ways of forming a complex mix ... The first opens onto a broader ethnocultural realm ... The second is an attempt to get at Being. But that would constitute a step backward in comparison with how creolizations can function. We are not prompted solely by the defining of our identities but by their relation to everything possible as well -- the mutual mutations generated by this interplay of relations. (Glissant 89)

As critic Celia M. Britton emphasizes, Creolization is posited in the cross-cultural conversation with a “self-conscious” hybridity, Creolization generates “the same kind of dynamic multiplicity that characterizes the chaos-world” (16), and the result is impossible to foresee. Glissant asserts that the function of Creolization is worked as a mingled living experience, a long, unnoticed process which rejects the filiation and fixed identities; it is not “the uprooting, a loss of sight, a suspension of being.” Through Glissant’s observation, Creolization is a “mingling of experience ... there for us to know and producing the process of being;” and “a celebration of cultural transformations that recognizes that ‘synthesis [is] not a process of

bastardisation as we used to be told, but a productive activity through which each element is enriched. He has become Caribbean” (8). Through this Glissantian view of multiculturalism we can envisage a new identity of what critic Lorna Burns in her “Becoming-postcolonial, Becoming-Caribbean: Édouard Glissant and the Poetics of Creolization” study terms a “becoming-Caribbean” (101). Burns conceives this identity of becoming-Caribbean as a “synthesis of cultural features, never finally realized in some static and essentialised form but always as a becoming-Caribbean” (100). Therefore, as Burns concludes, Glissant’s Creolization is a mixed identity that refuses to “solidify into a specified and fixed model” (101). With the diversity and totality engaged, Glissant introduces the principle of Creolization as the “articulation of a deterritorialized” into the reality of “rhizomatic” (11). In Glissant’s explanation, a rhizomatic thought maintains the idea of rootedness but “challenges that of a totalitarian root. Rhizomatic thought is the principle behind what I call the Poetics of Relation, in which each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other” (11). That is to say, with a principle of a rhizomatic thought intertwined with different cultural identities, which is always in flux, always in becoming, Glissant assumes this Creolized identity as a new vision for his lecture in 1933:

... can we not imagine a new dimension of identity, open to the truth, or simply the presence of the Other? An identity that would not be the projection of a unique and sectarian root, but of what we call a rhizome, a root with a multiplicity of existence, in all directions? Not killing what is around it ... but establishing communication and relation? It seems to me that man’s mind, and especially his

imagination, must assume this challenge, not only on behalf of the Americas but of the entire world ... a Utopian ideal. (Glissant 84)

To sum up, Glissant's utopian project of a rhizomatic root is appealed to the whole world, designed to deconstruct the oppositions among the "pure extremes" (140) of rooted and systemized ideologies. For Glissant, Creolization is not restricted to the specific cultural and historical areas of Caribbean archipelago; rather, he presents a concept that "no people has been spared the cross-cultural process" in the "whole-world" (140).

In the always-becoming and chaotic world, diversity is the primary value of Creolization. Britton noted that in Glissant's *Caribbean Discourse*, under the thingification of Western imperialism which "drive to reduce everything to the same," diversity "allows the creation of a relation that sees the Other as equal and as a presence that is necessary because it is different" (12). Diversity, for Glissant, is "neither chaos nor sterility," but "the human spirit's striving for a cross-cultural relationship, without universalist transcendence" (Burns 103). Diversity also leads to eliminate "the hierarchical opposition between center and periphery" (Britton 13). In search of the totality, Glissant suggests that it is a mobile, non-imperialist "errance" (211). The "errant" incessantly looks for adventures, desires to find out its totality, but, in the end, the errant realizes he is drifted in "the endangered beauty of the world" (33).

Glissant also defines the "endangered beauty of the world" (Britton 13) as the "*chaos-monde*" (94), which is inaccessible to comprehend through a single system of measurement or an alternative theories. The aesthetics of *chaos-monde*, compare to the aesthetics of the universe which "assumed pre-established norms," is "the

impassioned illustration and refutation of these” (94). “The forms of chaos-world (the incommensurable mixing together of cultures),” in Glissant’s words, “are unpredictable and guessable” (Britton 13). With its unpredictabilities and variabilities, in the “laboratories of chaos,” Glissant considers chaos itself is “beautiful” (88):

... not chaos born from hate and wars, but from the extraordinary complexity of the exchange between cultures, which may yet forge future Americas that are at least and for the first time both deeply unified and truly diversified. (Glissant 88-89)

In *chaos-monde*, it “senses, assumes, opens, gathers, scatters, continues, and transforms the thought of these elements, these forms and this motion” (95). Although Glissant admits the violence may be involved in the *chaos-monde* of Creolization, challenging the norms of universalism with a series of anti-imperial rebellions; but still, it invests a newness of becoming, and may as well deconstruct the imposed identity of subalterns in the Third World.

But, as Dr. Lorna Burns asks, “how does newness(Creolization) enter the world” (110)? As a result, we turn to critic Derek Attridge’s theory of singularity in *The Singularity of Literature*. In summary, Attridge’s project is to locate the singular in the process of “creating literature” (110). Attridge suggests that a writer’s duties should differentiate between the former existing order and the latter otherness (not the colonial other):

The creative writer registers, whether consciously or unconsciously, both the possibilities offered by the accepted forms and materialis of

the time, and their impossibilities, the exclusions and prohibitions that have sustained but also limited them. Out of the former emerge reworkings of existing modes, out of the latter emerges the otherness which makes these reworkings new works of literature. (Attridge 20-21)

Here, the “otherness” brings about newness, “exceeds the possibilities offered by current models” (21). Instead of defining the other as a “colonial other,” as to Attridge’s knowledge, it is “other to the sum of a culture’s knowledge”: “It implies a wholly new existent that cannot be apprehended by the old modes of understanding, and could not have been predicted by means of them” (Burns 111). Intriguingly, Burns assumes that for Attridge, literature in some way helps engage in the Creolization; the creative writer, thus, becomes part of the process of Creolization. For a writer, Burns continues, his task of writing has to reveal the “broader sense of the word” for seeing a possibility of “gaps” hidden in the materials, which the otherness may lie in, something which is situated “outside the current limits of understanding” (111) that can never be fully grasped. Thus, the process of Attridge’s “becoming-singular” of the known and the unknown, the self and the absolutely-other, Burns concludes, is “fundamental to Glissant’s concept of Creolization, which in turn may be termed a becoming-creolized” (112). Once the self/other relation have been settled, it may “affect newness” through the process of “becoming-singular” so that the newness may enter the world.

By anticipating a newness, Glissant urges to enter an open world in the work of Creolization. With the similar form of Aristotelian poetics which can be employed in “any case that brings into existence something that was not there before,” for

Glissant, the concept of poetics of Creolization is “precious for mankind’s imagination, and its capacity for invention” (Burns 114). “By accomplishing a real integration in this area, giving birth to the new dimension of being,” Glissant concludes, “this obligation gave to the Creolization process another new dimension, that of opening ways” (87). That is to say, Creolization perceives identities of others with a more respectful attitude, rather than a mode of universe that assumes the pre-established norms. In terms of Glissant’s Creolization which causes the “mutual mutations generated by this play of relations,” the other is always in relation; the identity, therefore, is always opened in relation, existing as “a shifting term in a network of multiple relations with the Others who constitutes it” (Britton 17).

When examining the evolution of the composite Creole language, Glissant views it as a “propagation of dialects,” “each extending toward the other.” Afraid that the Creole language may disappear in one place, Glissant thinks it can turn into an “instant setback for the processes of bringing-into-relation,” but, as he asked in reply:

... how many languages, dialects, or idioms will have vanished, eroded by the implacable consensus among powers between profits and controls, before human communities learn to preserve together their diversities. The threat of this disappearance is one of the facts to be incorporated, as we earlier remarked, into the field of descriptive linguistics. (Glissant 95)

For a vanished language may change so rapidly within themselves and with such feedback, “so many turnarounds of norms that their fixity would lie in that change,” through what Glissant terms as a “fluid equilibrium,” he imagines that there

is a linguistic sparkle, so far “removed from the mechanics of sabirs and codes, is still inconceivable for us, but only because we are paralyzed to this day by monolingual prejudice” (98). Through the working of the instrument of monolingual prejudice, it tries to administer the evolution of threatened languages, such as Creole, by “attempting to ‘furnish’ such a guarantee to the principle of identity that language implies” (98). Therefore, Glissant challenges the principled identity of linguistics, to show how “minorities are there struggling within diglossia,” for instance, like the numerous French-speaking Creole negros in southwestern Louisiana; furthermore, by opposing to the authoritative Western knowledge, Glissant assumes “an imaginary construct of reality,” as an access for us to “escape the pointillistic probability approach without lapsing into abusive generalization” (100).

As I have discussed Spivak’s “worlding” in the axioms of imperialism and Glissant’s poetics of Creolization, I will attempt to go through Rhys’s narration and propose these findings in my study. First, I will start by discussing the downfall of Cosway family and heroine’s Creole identity and her exclusion from the Creole society through Glissant’s explanation of root and Relation identity, to the Creolization realized through the heroine’s surrogate mother Christophine.

In Rhys’s construction of the Caribbean post-slavery society, Antoinette is an outsider excluded from the local society. Resented by the former slaves, marked by Rochester’s imperial act of “worlding,” the heroine suffers from an identity crisis. With no sympathy, for the heroine’s English husband, the violent imposition of imperialism can be seen as the final purification. Being a pure white who has the right to “embrace other white colonists in other parts of empire” (Renk 63), Rochester is authorized to recruit the undefined hybrid into the English family, by splitting his Creole wife’s identity and readdressing her with the new identity of Bertha. Through

Rochester's narrative, he observes his wife in the view of an alien and dehumanization in the novel:

I watched her critically. She wore a tricorne hat which became her. At least it shadowed her eyes which are too large and can be disconcerting. She never blinks at all it seems to me. Long, sad, dark alien eyes. Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either. (Rhys 60)

Treating his wife as “not English or European,” Rochester is unable to see Antoinette's opaque Creoleness and this frightens him. Estimated from his pre-existing Western ideology, Antoinette is something posited outside the values of Englishness, becoming “the repository or projection of those aspects of themselves which Westerners do not choose to acknowledge” (Barry 193). Rochester not only rejects his Creole wife, but also grows hostile to the Caribbean soil: “everything is too much... too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flowers too red, the flowers too high, the hills too near. And the woman is a stranger. Her pleading expression annoys me” (Rhys 63). Thus, Rochester's unbearable sense of “too much,” his “Caribbean horror” is thus revealed towards the unknown, disapproving of “an environment that requires a relinquishing of control as the price of entry” (Kloepfer 146) as stated by critic Deborah Kelly Kloepfer.

Rochester's choice of “worlding” is a result of his incomprehension of his Creole wife. In Glissant's view, he emphasizes the other's “opacity,” to explain the obscurity of other during the Creolization. Opacity, as Glissant describes, is “a whole alluvium deposited by populations ... indistinct and unexplored,” that each of us

encounters the density (opacity) of the other during the Creolization. For “there are no truths that apply universally or permanently,” the opacity works to resist the “reductiveness of humanism” (Britton 19). The right for one’s opacity, thus, is “not to be understood” as “an object of knowledge” (Britton 19). Similarly, in Rhys’s narration, Antoinette’s opacity of the heroine’s Creole hybridity is stated as the obscure and in-between other and ought to be respected.

By respecting other’s opacity, Glissant embraces the composite characteristics of identity as variables either “under control” or “wildly fluctuating.” Thus, he classifies the identity into two modes, of “root identity” and “Relation identity” (143-4). Root identity, as Glissant suggests, is an old but universal idea; “founded in the distant past in a vision, a myth of the creation of the world,” root identity is constructed of the general values. It is sanctioned by “the hidden violence of a filiation,” disapproving the uncontrollable variables but legitimating through the conquests of obtaining the lawful properties. Posited as a universal standard and adopted by “the elite population in southern countries,” root identity thus acts to the mapping of minorities and decided to “renounce their own difficult definition” (143).

In Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Glissant’s root identity works through the transition of Cosway family. Being resented by the blacks, as the child Antoinette says, “They hate us. They called us white cockroaches” (Rhys 20), they were pathologized as “white cockroaches.” As critic Richard Kearney suggests, “most nation-states bent on preserving their body politic from 'alien viruses' seek to pathologize their adversaries.” The former slaves as the rightful owners of post-slavery Caribbean Islands thus persecute those who they deem as their adversaries. As Kearney continues, “faced with a threatening outsider the best mode of defense is attack. Again and again the national We is defined over and against the foreign

Them” (65). The opposition of We and Them in the work of root identity appear, as Antoinette is taunted and yelled at by a girl on the road: “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 want you. Go away’” (Rhys 20).

Later, the climax of racial anger is materialized in the burning of the Coulibri Estate. A riot of raging negroes set fire to the house and casted the Cosway family out of the Caribbean, realizing what critic Nancy Casey Fulton stated as : “the former slaves, intoxicated with freedom, abandon the helpless plantation owners” (14). The rage of collective blackness thus is revealed as Antoinette stated that “they all looked the same, it was the same face repeated over and over” (Rhys 41). They cursed the Cosway as the “damn white niggers” (Rhys 38), the dramatic scene states the Cosway family’s downfall and the former slaves’ victory of revenge, as Gregg asserts, “reduc[ing] Antoinette and her family to penury, from white to black” (89).

As Glissant’s argues, the problem with the descendants of the deported Africans or the mulattoes is that they risk being mapped by the root identity. Glissant suggests that “when identity is determined by a root, the emigrant is condemned to being split and flattened.” Thus, the emigrant is “forced into impossible attempts to reconcile his former and his present belonging” (143). In other words, he is marked as a rootless exile, like the Cosway family.

In Rhys’s text, as the former slaves reclaim their “ontological possession” of Jamaica, in Glissant’s mind, the Caribbean or the Martinican soil is not a place of “rooted absolute” (146). He not only reprobates any proclamation of one land by a single root, but also implores his readers to accept the complicity of Creolization for forming a new relationship with the land. By presenting an ideal picture of “rhizomed land”

(146), an equal rhizome-like network, spreading to any direction for either the forward predecessors or the descendants in the cross-culture, as Glissant anticipates, it is a dream of a new land of relativity:

Those who have endured the land's constraint, who are perhaps mistrustful of it, who have perhaps attempted to escape it to forget their slavery, have also begun to foster these new connections with it, in which the sacred intolerance of the root, with its sectarian exclusiveness, has no longer any share. (Glissant 147)

Before introducing Glissant's Relation identity as a solution to view Rhys's heroine's identity in a different light, I would like to discuss Glissant's Creolization realized by one character who oversaw the entire plot of racial conflicts and imperial movements in the novel. As Professor Marika Preziuso conjectures in the Jean Rhys conference (2004) that "years of Creolization in the a *béké* environment will never fully mitigate," the possibility of overcoming the system of "root identity" and expecting a rhizomed land is seen difficult. But in my study, the process of Creolization is in part undertaken by Rhys's character, who is the heroine's proctor Christophine. As a native Martinique, instead of a native of Jamaica, Christophine belongs to the category of a good servant rather than of a pure native, as Spivak suggests, "within these borders, Rhys creates a powerfully suggestive figure" (252). As Professor Christopher GoGwilt suggests, Christophine provides "a subaltern perspective within the novel or, on the contrary, shores up a white Creole fantasy of the loyal and devoted and reduplicates the novel's own ambivalence, as registered in her patois voice, with regard to the emergent Creole modernism of the 1950s" (143).

In Christophine's perspective, she understands the heroine's Creole identity and is sympathized with her, as she describes Antoinette as a "Creole girl, and she have the sun in her" that can never be tamed (Rhys 130). Spivak observes the character of Christophine as a female individualist, "the first interpreter and named speaking subject in the text" (252), who through the Creolized lens understands the true nature of Creole cultures, and dares to "defy[ies] the demands of the discriminatory discourses impinging on her person" (Parry 22). Although a wedding gift, a "commodified person" (Spivak 252) given to Annette, Christophine is Antoinette's spiritual mentor and only friend: "Oh Christophine, do not grow old. You are the only friend I have, do not go away from me into being old" (Rhys 103).

In Rhys's description, Christophine understands and loves Antoinette, and gives her advice to run away from her husband. Even in Antoinette's puzzlement, Christophine knows better than her: "I stared at her, thinking, "but how can know the best thing for me to do, this ignorant, obstinate old negro woman, who is not certain if there is such a place as England? She knocked out her pipe and stared back at me, her eyes had no expression at all"" (Rhys 102). As critic Sue Thomas describes it is difficult to "rewrite[s] a canonical English text within the European novelistic tradition in the interest of the white Creole rather than the native" (158); even so, in my study, it is Christophine who dares to challenge the European canons; through her understanding of what Glissant terms "Relation identity" as opposed to the root identity, she observes, and acts to help the Creole heroine. In Glissant's *Poetics of Relation*, he classifies "Relation identity" into four points:

- is linked not to creation of the world but to the conscious and contradictory experience of contacts among cultures;

- is produced in the chaotic network of Relation and not in the hidden violence of filiation;
- does not devise any legitimacy as its guarantee of entitlement, but circulates, newly extended;
- does not think of a land as a territories but as a place where one gives-on-and-with rather than grasps.

Relation identity exults the thought of errantry and of totality. (Glissant 144)

Possessed with this identity, Christophine is thus postulated as the “curious guardian at the margin” who stands on the ground of “Relation identity.” As Spivak suggests, “for every territorial space that is value coded by colonialism and every command of metropolitan anti-colonialism for the native to yield his ‘voice’” which can be seen as a space of root identity; “there is,” as Spivak argued, “a space of withholding, marked by a secret that may not be a secret but cannot be unlocked” (23). Similar to Glissant’s idea of opacity, Spivak’s mysterious marginalized space may as well fit into the range of Relation identity where Christophine is positioned in. As Christophine once warns Antoinette, that in this “territorial space,” she worries for Antoinette being surrounded by a group of mistrustful people:

“Listen *doudou che*. Plenty people fasten bad words on you and your mother. I know it. I know who is talking and what they say. The man not a bad man, even if he love money, but he hear so many stories he don’t know what to believe. That is why he keep away. I put no trust in

none of those people round you, Not here, not in Jamaica.” (Rhys 103)

In Rhys’s text, Christophine challenges and confronts Rochester many times. For she strives to help Antoinette who should “be protected, legally” (Rhys 104), she fights against Rochester in a face-to-face encounter. Christophine not just makes harsh accusations on Rochester’s actions, her analysis is also powerful enough to scare the white man: “I no longer felt dazed, tired, half hypnotized, but alert and wary, ready to defend myself” (Rhys 131). As Spivak describes, Christophine recognizes “their power” of patriarchy and imperialism “when the Man refers to the forces of Law and Order” (253):

No more slavery! She had to laugh! These new ones have Letter of the Law. Same thing. They got magistrate. They got fine. They got jail house and chain gang. They got tread machine to mash up people’s feet. No ones worse than new ones -- more cunning, that’s all. (Rhys 154)

For Christophine, she is aware of the fact that the ongoing circle of the imperial system would never cease, the “new ones” with Letter of the Law, the “more cunning” would always replace the old one and dominate the world. As critic Lucy Wilson points out, in such a short monologue, Christophine captures the fact of what critic Michel Foucault terms “the endlessly repeated play of dominations”:

Humanity does not gradually progress from combat to combat until it arrives at universal reciprocity, where the rule of law finally replaces warfare; humanity installs each of its violence in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination ... The successes of history belong to those who are capable of seizing these rules, to replace those who had used them, to disguise themselves so as to pervert them, invert their meaning, and redirect them against those who had initially imposed them; controlling this complex mechanism, they will make it function as to overcome the rulers through their own rules. (Foucault 151)

Therefore, through deconstructing the dominant code in the first world, Christophine takes her “frontal assault” and confronts with her adversary. As Parry addresses, “Christophine subverts the creole address that would constitute her as domesticated other, and asserts herself as articulate antagonist of patriarchal, settler and colonialist law” (22). With the knowledge of Afro-Caribbean obeah, Christophine gains the power over the white settlers as an antagonist of colonialist law:

This articulation of empiricism’s farthest reaches spoken by a black woman who knows from experience that her powders, potions and, maledictions are effective in the West Indies, undoes through its excess the rationalist version valorized by the English, while at the same time it acknowledges the boundaries to the power of her knowledge. (Parry 22-3)

Thus, Christophine's Afto-Caribbean obeah works to temporarily protect Antoinette from Rochester's "worlding". By addressing a voice for the subaltern Creole, she judges Rochester's "worlding" for his ignorance of perceiving his wife's opaque Creoleness: "She is Creole girl, and she have the sun in her. ... She don't come to your house in this place England they tell me about, she don't come to your beautiful house to beg you to marry with her. No, it's you come all the long way to her house – it's you beg her to marry" (Rhys 143). Unfortunately, Christophine can not protect Antoinette, for Rochester latter in the novel uses his "white obeah" and claims Antoinette as his colonized lunatic. As Spivak concludes, Christophine in the end is faded out from the story, for she no longer serves as Antoinette's guardian: "immediately after the exchange between her and the Man, well before the conclusion, she was simply driven out of the story, with neither narrative nor characterological explanation or justice. "Read and write I don't know. Other things I know." She walked away without looking back" (Rhys 146).

The way Christophine treats Antoinette, besides her affection for the heroine, is accorded with the envision of seeing the other in a more open, respectable way. Thus, Christophine provides the possibility for the heroine to pronounce in the narrative "I," as in critic Deborah Kelly Kloepfer's observation, the heroine clings to Christophine because she can freely pose herself in Christophine's Creolized perspectives. For Antoinette, in the last part of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, when she is transported to England, without Christophine's protection, she is faced with her loneliness and claimed no self-identity in the attic. For Christophine, who watches her daughter-like Antoinette being sent away, she predicts the end for her: "she will be like her mother" (Rhys 145). "Do you wish to say goodbye to Antoinette?" Rochester asks, and Christophine sadly replies: "I give her something to sleep – nothing to hurt

her. I don't wake her up to no misery. I leave that for you" (Rhys 146). Eventually, Rochester's fulfillment of "worlding" and the taking of Antoinette away from Jamaica, for Christophine, she can no longer be her custodian in full protection. The only thing she can offer was to put Antoinette to "sleep." Rhys doesn't detail how Christophine assists Antoinette's final slumber; but, as to the readers' understandings, the heroine's slumber might be caused by Christophine's obeah, leaving the mystery of Antoinette as a ghost woman who wandered in Thornfield Hall.





Chapter II: From Rhys's Magic to Zombification

I did it too. I saw the hate go out of her eyes. I forced it out. And with the hate her beauty. She was only a ghost. A ghost in the grey daylight. Nothing left but hopelessness. Say die I will die. Say die and watch me die. (Rhys 154)

In Chapter I, I have demonstrated the historical experiences of post-slavery in the West Indies, to show the transition of Cosway family and the lopsided situation Antoinette had been positioned in. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the racial quarrel between the blacks and Creoles is well inscribed in Rhys's narrative. By recalling the forgotten past of the West Indies, Rhys revises Antoinette's story and constructs it with historical facts and events. Viewing the Jamaican soil as "a liminal space where Western Christianity fused with ancient African ritual and mysticism" (Bishop 42), Rhys thus envisages the place as "the return of colonial slave culture" (Phillips 27). While Rhys deals with Antoinette's plight, she infuses the colors of Caribbean magic and Haitian folklores of zombiism into her writing to phrase her Caribbean-based tone in the canonical English text. In this chapter, first, I will explore how the heroine's Creole identity is puzzling to the Western culture, and demonstrate its entanglement through the racial conflicts in the novel. Second, I will introduce the "black magic," the "obeah" as it appears in Rhys's text, which is greatly influenced by the Afro-Caribbean tradition in critic Wade Davies's study on zombification; and finally, I will argue that through the heroine's negro proctor Christophine's assistance, Antoinette performs the process of zombification upon her husband Rochester by administering him a dose of love potion which failed.

“The slave society” in West Indies, as historian Elsa Goveia asserted, “is one of the most fundamental experiences shared by the West Indies,” “including masters and freedom as well as slaves” (7). In this society, under the hierarchal structure of blacks and whites, slaves and masters, the Creoles in the general population are seen as the hybrid race, and are excluded from the ruling class after the emancipation of slavery. Critic M. G. Smith argues that the West Indian societies, are constructed by “culturally distinct social segments – ‘Whites,’ ‘Coloreds,’ and ‘Blacks’ – who practiced different forms of the same institution and that these societies were held together by the political power exercised by a dominant demographic minority” (Bolland 51). Thus, as critic Nigel Bolland suggests, “the connection between culture and nationalism was highly problematic in the West Indies”:

The common culture, without which West Indian nationalism cannot develop the dynamic to create a West Indian nation, by its very nature and composition preclude the nationalism that invokes it. This is merely another way of saying that the Creole culture which West Indians share is the basis of their division. (Bolland 51)

Before the decolonization takes place, as critic Ketu H. Katrak describes, “the prejudice against dark skin” is held by the class privileges, which are the white settlers and “a light-skinned Creole population” (139). As the manumission occurs, the privileged class of Creoles shatters and they are reduced to the lower ranks. Creole, in Bolland’s term, is referred to “a local product which is the result of a mixture or blending of various ingredients that originated in the Old World”; Creole, thus, is “anything and anybody native to the New World as a consequence of mixing,”

“culturally distinct from the Old World populations of their origin” (50). To counter the idea of the problematic categorization for the West Indian population, Bolland thus presents the “Creole society thesis,” to enhance the Caribbean nationalism in the third quarter of the twentieth century as a “significant ideological moment in the decolonization process of the Caribbean” (51). But as critic Viranjini Munasinghe suggests, instead of registering the Creolization into the West Indian societies, rather, the “insistence on racial accounting on the bias of pure ancestral types” enters. By subverting the “coherence and integrity implied by fusion,” while races seem to mix, as a result, they do not “amalgamate to produce a homogeneous type” (681):

The distinctive mythical time is expressed by race – white blood and black blood have been passed down from the beginning of society from generation to generation, endlessly mixed and still distinct, into the present. (Carnegie 487)

This view acknowledges the mixing of Creole culture, but still denies “amalgamation,” and goes against the Creole society theory, which insists upon the creation of a new and stable form through racial mixing. Therefore, the tension of mixed ethnicity, drawing from a distinction between nationalist ideologies in the West Indian society, thus, tends to take the “miscegenation” as a symbol of their national identity (Munasinghe 681).

In the process of retelling the Caribbean history, the native female writers strive to construct the collective consciousness of Caribbean enslavement in “the oldest form of building historical consciousness” (Trinh 148). Through writing about the hidden lives of the subjugated women, Rhys invents her version of Antoinette

Cosway, distinguishing her from Brontë's Bertha in *Jane Eyre*. Critic T. Minh-ha Trinh describes the rewriting of the lost life of Creole as a "tangible magic," through inviting the forgotten memories of Caribbean traditions, Rhys in her writing "mesmerizes, educates and nurtures the listeners" (121). Gifted as artists, as writer Carolyn Cooper stressed, Rhys's story of a Creole conveys "a body of knowledge that is the accreted wisdom of generations" (4). Therefore, by performing the artistry or the "tangible magic" in "the discovery of the hidden past," Rhys finds a voice for her heroine, which is "lost from the darker side" (Cliff 13). Similar to Trinh's "tangible magic," as Glissant suggests, in order to tell their stories, the "collective unconscious" of the suppressed appears to "forge[d] through indigenous cultural practices and local traditions" (Renk 157) in a "no time-honored body of knowledge" (159).

In the work of Western "worlding," through judging Brontë's imperialized design of Bertha, Rhys uses her "tangible magic" to write anew for Antoinette in the "collective psyche" (Cliff 159) of Caribbean reservoir. As Renk concludes, "Women are writing themselves into being. They write because the time has come when they must invent their new world" (8). Linking to Glissant's idea of "get at being" (89) and Spivak's "making of human beings" (244), they've postulated the possibility of a new vision in the postcolonial society. Hence, through Rhys's interpretation, she challenges the norms of Western ideologies and brings about the content of Creole cultures.

Rhys's writing has invited us to see through the lives of Creoles in the West Indian societies. In viewing the Creoles, they are discerned as a group of mixed blood, resulting from the inter-racial marriages between the white plantation owners and the natives during the colonial period. Linked to the ideology of zombiism, as critic Gyllian Phillips assumes, the Creole is embodied in the fear of the unknown:

To white imperialist American, the very existence of the creole is a source of ideological horror because it underlines the white/black binary that keeps the power structures of white supremacy in place ... creole culture and the zombie are represented as an ambivalent mix, and this ambivalence is reflected in the book's combination of sensational exploitation and racial explanation of Haitian postcolonial culture. (Phillips 27)

Treated as a “different kinds of whiteness” (Evelyn O’Callaghan 98), the Creole thus is ostracized from Caribbean nationalism, inscribed within “the zombie metaphor” as “a threat to the social order” (Evelyn O’Callaghan 29). Marked as a threat revealing the return of colonized other, the white superiors are thus terrified of being invaded and enslaved.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Rhys invites the readers to imagine the possibility of the allusion of zombie, as critic Todd Bender argues, the “open text” of Rhys’s provided “the constructive activity” (97-8) for the novel. For Rhys, she retains a repressed voice embedded within her Creole heroine, as critic Erna Brodber states, through the silent part of the Creole, “the half has never been told” (34); which, is implied in the zombie symbolism.

The term of zombie, as an emptied creature that is resulted from the colonial education system, is constructed in “a massive cannon in the artillery of Empire” (Ashcroft 425). In European society, as Brodber argues, for the colonials, instead of “filling West Indians with knowledge,” they inscribes the colonies in “emptying or zombifying,” resulting in the situation of “the West ignored or misrepresented

colonials.” By exploring the process of zombification, Brodber suggests “through colonial education West Indians were made into zombies, their minds emptied and their spirits stolen” (Adams 161). Deprived of power, the imperial text prevails through the colonial system and “their identities are erased” (Adams 161). Consequently, the imperial educating system, or the “colonist book” thus completes “a denial of African world views, a contorted history, a British literary canon that serves colonialism, and a brand of literature concocted specially for consumption in the colonies” (Puri 100). Through the Western imperial project, which can be seen as a general process of zombification, the identities of the colonized subjects are thus obliterated by the imperialistic education system. Living on their homeland without proper roots, the colonized natives are stripped of their indigenous culture. Some of them suffer from mental illness – deranged and insane; worse, they are treated as the bunch of mindless and soulless zombies.

In Rhys’s text, critic Thomas Loe discerns the allusions of zombies in the novel as too fanciful “within the context of the hallucinatory fictive world” (35); the zombie, as Loe continues, is still recognizable in Rhys’s narration. Tracing back to Haitian folklores from the nineteenth-century, the encounters with zombies are first documented in the West Africa; it is not until the twentieth century that the metaphorical term of zombie is formed. They are described as unconscious individuals who threaten the society in Western cultures. By recognizing the existence of zombies appearing in the literary construction, Loe assumes, “the appropriateness of the figure will also start to emerge, especially in terms of how it energizes and unifies the text by giving its ethos a thematic depth and seriousness” (35).

The zombie is scientifically described in Australian psychiatrist Joshua Bierer’s journal of social psychiatry, who defines the state of the zombie as a “Golem

syndrome”: “who as a child has neither experienced nor been trained in the three ingredients of emotional life: attention, love and affection” (197-9). By specifying the etymological term of the zombie, as writer Elsie Clews Parson elaborates, the French word of ombres means shade or shadow; and hence the word of z’omb’e (zombie) is created. The other possibility is that the word zombie is derived from the West Indian term: jumbie, which means a ghost. With the illuminations and images provided to us by the Hollywood, zombies are commonly recognized by “their fixed staring expression, their nasal intonation (which they share with manifestations of the spirits of the dead); by repeated, purposeless, and clumsy actions; and by limited and repetitive speech” (Littlewood Douyon 1094). Mysteriously implanted within the field of Western knowledge, the genesis of zombies is given elucidations in literary critic Davis Wade’s *Passage of Darkness*, who affords the sufficient details of ethnopharmacological evidences to the existence of zombies, and the precise practices of zombification. As Wade suggests, the image of a zombie is known as:

a corpse in tattered rags, trailing remnants of necrotic flesh as it rises from the commentary on a state of trance-like animation, entirely subservient and beholden to the nefarious authority of some unknown master. (Davis 56)

As Davis states, a zombie or a *corps cadavre* is “the living dead,” a corpse in a state of “comatose trance” which is raised by the sorcerers. Easily recognized as a form of “docile natures,” with “glassy, empty eyes,” uttering a “nasal twang to their voice” (60), a zombie thus has haunted the literal fictive world, embodying in the loss of one’s will, memory and emotion. Positioned in the boundary of living and dead, as

critic Alfred Métraux argues, a zombie exists in a “misty zone which divides life from dead”:

move, eats, hears what is said to him, even speaks, but he has no memory and no knowledge of his condition. The zombie is a beast of burden that his master exploits without mercy, making him work in the fields, weighing him down with labour, whipping him freely and feeding him on meager, tasteless food. (Métraux 282)

A zombie thereby is situated as unconscious slaves, living in the timeless, “the continuous present where the past is dead and the future consists of fear and impossible desires” (Davis 60). To the native Haitians, as critic Amy Fass Emery asserts, the real fear for the zombies is signified in “the uncanny return of fears [...] of the dispossession of voice and the loss of self” (330), fearing they might become one of the zombies entailed “the image of a fearful destiny” (Laroche 47).

For the Haitians, their mutual fear of being zombified lies in the past history of enslavement, as writer Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert suggests: “the accursed fate conjured by the myth of the zombie is that of the Haitian experience of slavery, of the disassociation of people from their will, their reduction to beasts of burden subject to a master” (39). As the contemporary studies of Haitian voodooism have documented the procedures of zombification in the scientific and psychoanalytic fields, the literary imaginations thus arise people’s genuine fear from the metaphoric entity of a zombie – enslaved and deprived of his free will. In a separate study, critic René Depestre generalizes the imperial conquest of the colonized subjects as an act of zombification: “the history of colonization is the process of man’s general

zombification. It is also the quest for a revitalizing salt capable of restoring to man the use of his imagination and his culture” (20).

In Depestre’s view, the scheme of imperialism is seen as a general zombification, colonizing the blacks through its “worlding.” Thus, the blacks are similarly degenerated into the “category of human cattle, malleable, pliable to one’s will.” As treating the whole enslavement as “a collective zombie,” Depestre worries that the history of imperialism may comprise the long development of zombification, “denying the people’s centuries-long struggle against natural calamities, dictatorship, and repression” (128), therefore enslaving them as the zombies. By classifying the people of Third World as “gullible, and poor, are trapped in zombiedom forever,” the colonized objects are termed as what critic Jennifer Fay pointed, “a mournful expression of loss born out of a people’s transition from Africa to slavery in the New World” (131); within the structure of imperial criterion, the Western theorists inevitably come up with the outcome of marking the colonized subjects as the third-world beings of the New World.

In describing the procedure of zombification, as Depestre explains, once a victim’s loss of identity completes the Haitian zombie, his life hence is cut in two – the separation of one’s body and soul – in the cosmological worldview of Haitian voodooism. In critic Kette Thomas’s study of “Haitian Zombie, Myth, and Modern Identity,” the author postulates an assumption of the validity of the zombie’s subjectivity, and argues that the zombies are incapable of “generating [e] consciousness of a self” (2). As Davis puts the analysis of the zombification in details, discerning a zombie’s identity is cited “at the cusp of death” or “at the intersection between the natural and supernatural realms” (57), he gives a further explanation of

life and spirit in the Haitian cosmology. According to the Haitian cosmological concepts, a human soul is divided into two parts, of *gros bon ange* and *ti bon ange*:

The two aspects of the Vodoun soul, the *ti bon ange* and the *gros bon ange*, are best explained with a metaphor commonly used by the Haitians themselves. Sometimes when one stands in the late afternoon light the body casts a double shadow, a dark core and then a lighter penumbra, faint like the halo that sometimes surrounds the full moon. This ephemeral fringe is the *ti bon ange*, the “little good angel,” while the image at the center is the *gros bon ange*, the “big good angel.” The latter is the life force that all sentient beings share; it enters the individual at conception and functions only to keep the body alive ... As the *gros bon ange* provides each person with the power to act, it is the *ti bon ange* that molds the individual sentiments within each act. It is one's aura, and the source of all personality, character, and willpower. (Davis 186)

As Davis elaborates, the *gros bon ange* is defined as the body law, the animating principal that conducts the human mobilization. It is a “life-force,” as critic Leslie G. Desmangles describes, an “internal dynamism planted within the body that serves as its shell” (66). Desmangles continues to define this biological integral function of body, “the source of physical motion” guaranteed the human life like the multi-functioned system of autonomic nervous and vascular system: “It is identified with the flow of the blood through the body, and movements of inhalation and exhalation of the thoracic cavity” (67). Thus, the *gros bon ange* represents the

originated force of life which enacts the human motion, as Thomas discusses; and once the *gros bon ange* leaves the human body, the human body would stop functioning: “nothing exists and one can speak plainly of the finality of death” (4).

On the other hand, the *ti bon ange* is seen as another soul matter, as Davis suggests, it is “the essence of one’s individuality” that “govern thought, memory, and sentiments, the essence of human personality; it leaves the body during sleep, is displaced during possession by *loa* [lesser gods in the Vodou pantheon], or Vodou gods, is the target of magic and sorcery, and can be captured and sold” (187). The *ti bon ange*, in other words, stands for the human subjectivity indicating to our selfhood “I”. It works to detect sensations, store and accumulate knowledge, and experience dreams. Once the *ti bon ange* is taken away from the bodies, as Thomas suggests, human beings “personify redundancy and lack, especially of desire, hope or self-preserving needs” (4). Both the *gros bon ange* and the *ti bon ange* are the factors constituting a human soul according to the Voodoo doctrine, playing a large part of voodoo rituals. In the zombification process, the *ti bon ange* is crucial for performing the rituals. By extracting the *ti bon ange* from a person’s *corps cadavre* (physical body), a human body is thus vulnerably exposed to the voodooist’s sorcery during the ritual. Once the houngan or the Voodoo priest then completes the *ti bon ange* extraction, a person’s selfhood or the “active re-animation of the self” (Thomas 4), including human innate desires, emotions and communicative abilities is irrevocably removed from his body.

Surprisingly, with the loss of *ti bon ange*, as Davis states, the human body remains in a state of normal function; for the *gros bon ange* of the body law is still in the operation of human activity. To complete the zombification, the houngan keeps the victim’s *ti bon ange* in a clay jar or a container for the soul called a *canari*, and

places it in a hounfour temple, which is a sanctum designed for the Voodoo practitioners for a totally quarantine from cursed flesh. “In this way,” Davis concludes, “the *ti bon ange* continues to animate the living body while remaining directly within the protective custody of the houngan.” Until the houngan holds the second-phase death ritual called *Dessounin*, which entails the extremely vulnerable *ti bon ange* would then be released and descended to “the dark abysmal waters,” the world of Les Invisibles for 366 days; and finally, the most important final stage of zombification – the *Wété Mo Nan Dlo* is performed to summon “the death from the water” (Davis 187) in the form of a new-born soul *ésprit*, and retains it in the other jar called *govi*. The *ésprit* which typifies the spiritual birth as a providential essence will be in a great care of a houngan, and then liberates it into jungles to abide in trees and grottos, waiting for its reborn. After sixteen incarnations of the *ésprit*, it returns to the circle of *djo*, which is “the cosmic breath that envelops the universe” (Davis 188). In Davis’s study, he provides a worldview of Haitian universalism conceptualizing the Voodoo cosmology into the order of the universe.

The dispute over the zombie’s death emerges from different aspects. In Davis description, a state of a zombie is worse than death: “the victim of zombification suffers a fate worse than death – the loss of individual freedom implied by enslavement, and the sacrifice of individual identity and autonomy implied by the loss of the *ti bon ange*” (190). In defining a zombified victim, his “loss of individual freedom” (208) is implied, displaying the absence of the *ti bon ange* makes a victim unconsciously void of human perceptions but cannot be diagnosed as a genuine death. Thomas concludes that the zombie’s abnormality is the “product of magic” which resulted from the work of soul-extracting in the “miraculous concoction” (4) during the ceremony. As a pragmatist, Metraux suggests that the zombies are merely suffered

from the “severe psychological impairment” (Thomas 5). In the field of anthropology, according to Dr. Roland Littlewood and Chavannes Douyon’s research papers, the medical accounts of zombification come to a clinical diagnosis of the “empirical state – catalepsy or motor paralysis – which is induced by neurotoxins followed by retrieval and revival of the ‘dead’ person extracted from the tomb” (1094).

Viewing the zombie as a “product of magic” from voodooism, the plantation owners in the colonial world feel threatened by the fear of becoming a zombie, and they turn to claim and dominance over their slaves. As critic Annette Trefzer points out, the power of zombification not only “marks a fluid boundary between domination and resistance,” but also “defines a zone of struggle between public and private discourses of dominant and subordinate groups” (301). Thus, through intensifying their power proffered by the Western imperialism, the containment of the colonized groups is seen necessary for the masters that must maintain their dominances in avoid of the zombie invasion.

The allusions of zombies are manifested through the implications of dialogues and the staging of witchcrafts in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Rhys deliberately implants the “Gothic mode of her predecessor, supplying omens, premonitory dreams, references to zombies, obeah and poisonous potions, as part of the process of reclaiming the first wife for West Indian culture” (Newman 16). In critic Thomas Loe’s “Patterns of the Zombie in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*,” he assumes the first zombie is inserted in the novel through the heroine’s psychotic mother, Annette Cosway. As Loe suggests, Rhys’s purpose fully victimizes both the mother and the daughter, by writing that they unavoidably have suffered from the fate of being zombified. Critic Judie Newman in her book *The Ballistic Bard: Postcolonial Fictions* also perceives that “the mother

figure responsible for zombification” is relevant to Antoinette’s personality in which “the weakness of the mother-daughter bond” made the heroine vulnerable.

In the child Antoinette’s own accounts, the description of Annette appears to match what Davis terms a state of a female victim with the absence of *ti bon ange*, while she prays for her mother in the nunnery, Antoinette states: “This is for my mother, I would think, wherever her soul is wandering, for it has left her body” (Rhys 52). Also, in the later part of the novel, Antoinette elaborates her mother’s condition on the “two deaths” in a dialogue with Rochester:

“Is your mother alive?”

“No, she is dead. She died.”

“When?”

“Not long ago.”

“Then why did you tell me that she died when you were a child?”

“Because they told me to say so and because it is true. She did die when I was a child. There are always two deaths, the real one and the one people know about.” (Rhys 104)

Here, Loe poses an intriguing prospect of Annette’s second death, which might be interpreted as a “zombie state,” equaling to the heroine’s half-blood brother Daniel’s judgment towards Annette’s zombie death, as he concludes ambiguously: “Some say she is dead, other deny it” (Rhys 88).

Annette’s madness in the novel is seen as the incarnation of being zombified by the “mother country” (Newman 18). As a white woman born in Martinique, Annette is rejected by the black Jamaicans and the question of “what she is” becomes

less important than “what she is not” in response to the colonial discourse she is trapped in. Underlining her “lack” (Kloepfer 142), Annette is married to the absolute Englishman Mason as her protection, for he stands for the patriarchal domination of white superiors over their subjects. But, as the riot occurs and Coulibri Estate is destroyed in arson, resulting in the death of her deficient son Pierre, Annette suffers from a nervous breakdown. In ruination, Coulibri Estate is engulfed in flames and transformed into “the naturalness of ruin” (Cliff 40), which, is once Annette’s attachment to her nostalgia for the nation. Followed by her precious son’s death, the mother finally loses her survival instincts to sustain the purpose of living. A part of her soul dies in the fire – thus represents her being zombified by the ruthlessness of her “mother country.” Before the child Antoinette sees her mad mother in the English sanctuary, she has already been certified of the possibility of zombification by her mother: “She was part of Coulibri, that had gone, so she had gone, I was certain of it” (Rhys 43). As the child Antoinette sees her mother, she barely recognizes her, and worse, she confirmed her previous assumption:

A coloured woman, a coloured woman, and a white woman sitting with her head bent so low that I couldn’t see her face. But I recognized her hair, one much shorter than the other. And her dress. I put my arms round her and kissed her. She held me so tightly that I couldn’t breathe and I thought: ‘It’s not her.’ (Rhys 44)

In my study, through the view of Annette’s confinement in the sanctuary, first, her incapability of recognizing her daughter is designated to be one of her experiences of the “zombie death” (Loe 4); second, not only does Annette suffer from the delusion

of living in the Coulibri Estate, but also does she act like a zombie, as Loe describes, “in the stupor-like state of the typical zombie: she is mobile enough to get around, but sufficiently unaware of her surrounding that she could injure herself walking on broken glass. In addition, she also grows ‘tired’ and goes ‘soft and limp’ when lifted up and kissed by her caretaker” (4). Therefore, Annette’s madness has brought about the image of zombies, which introduces in Rhys’s writing predisposed the later zombification of her daughter. Proceeding to the latter part of the novel, the key to confirm Annette’s zombie state is situated in Christophine’s statement. When Christophine suggests that Antoinette should tell the truth of what exactly happened to her mother, she said: “... tell him about your mother and all what happened at Coulibri and why she get sick and what they do to her” (Rhys 116). In this conversation, Annette’s sickness is seen as a taboo subject to discuss, for she is in reality a zombified female, as Loe suggests: “if Antoinette does believe her mother has been turned into a zombie,” unavoidably, it can explain “why she might be frightened and unwilling to discuss what has happened to her mother” (5). In Davis’s analysis, Annette, an outsider of the local community, is deemed as a threat to the society, assigned to a “social death” or banishment from the system of social order: “the belief system’s inherent need for validation ... create a form of social death for the victim” (212). Hence, the victims, as Davis argues, are “exceedingly unpopular in their respective community” and “ostracized by the community” (214). Therefore, the process of zombification is justified through the need as a necessarily imperative of “social sanction,” “designed to enforce order and conformity” (215) by the group authority to zombify the member who offends the community; which, is in accordance with Annette’s situation.

As previously demonstrated, both Annette and Antoinette have been victimized and categorized as deranged Creoles. Specifically for Antoinette, she suffers from the disorientation of racial ethnicity. In the first part of the novel, Antoinette's childhood is teamed up with her misconceptions of the surroundings in the Caribbean environment in which she spends her youth there. As critic Carine M. Madorossian mentions, in the great abundance of outlandish scenes Antoinette fails to "comprehend the relationships between the broader sociopolitical and discursive fabric of the Caribbean and the few individuals that people her world" (1073). Due to Annette's deliberate avoidance of racial issues and confrontations, Antoinette is ignorant of her Creoleness in her childhood, naturally, thus inherits and replicates her mother's views and sometimes finds it hard to identify with "whether she is transcribing her mother's words or sharing the beliefs she has internalized and naturalized" (1074). Despite the blacks' jeers at the shrinkage of the Cosway's financial status when Annette's "riding cloths grew shabby" (Rhys 18) and the decline of the Coulibri Estate "gone wild like the garden, gone to bush" (30); in Antoinette's perspectives, being a "internal perceptual focalizer" (Madorossian 1074) makes her oblivious to the social environment in Jamaica at the time. The only thing she is aware of, is that there is "no more slavery" (Rhys 30), resulting in the marking of her family as "white niggers" and "white cockroaches" (Rhys 23). Since both the mother and the daughter are marked as the white minority on the island, they are thus discerned as transgressors and nonmembers on the Jamaican soil. In other words, it is easier to target them as the objects of zombification in the eyes of Jamaican community sequentially.

The relationship between the mother and the daughter, moreover, is emphasized by Rochester's accusation against Antoinette and Annette in *Jane Eyre*,

which is based upon his perception of the “excluded insane” according to his British thought process of the family myth, ascribing their madness to the “hereditary position” of the family. In his self-proclaimed argument, he describes Bertha who “came from a mad family; idiots and maniacs through three generations,” “like a dutiful child copied her parents in both points.” And Annette, in his eyes, is “a creole, was both a madwoman and a drunkard” (Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* 320). Failing to be a guardian of morality on the homeland, unable to shape “their offsprings’ moral characters” (Renk 111), Annette cannot offer her daughter a moral example except for one of a mad, Creole woman.

While the different social and environmental factor shape Antoinette’s eventual zombification, one cannot ignore the influence put upon her by Rochester, as well as the hold she tries to exert on Rochester. Thus becoming the second force, which causes Antoinette’s zombification. References to this are shown in Rhys’s presentation of Afro-Caribbean “obeah.” In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the Dominican witchcraft used by Christophine, obeah, is commonly known as the black magic or voodoo, as Newman describes, is a “survival and development of West African religious beliefs, brought over by slaves” (16). With its hybrid content incorporated with Haitian voodoo, West African traditions, and even Christian symbols, obeah thus is incorporated into the social and political ground of the Antilles. Originally, in Haiti, “the almost universal acceptance of voodoo by the common populace,” as Bishop suggests, “requires scholars to consider its social influence in terms of an ultimately repressive ideology, not merely as an innocuous system of religious beliefs.” Voodoo is linked to pagan practices, which is the “concrete manifestations of a history and a social culture that transcend the pervasive influences of the European imperialists.” Most importantly, voodoo provides the Haitians the protection of avoiding being

enslaved. "... voodoo gave hope to the Haitians -- first to the slaves, and later to the poor. Voodoo allows the slaves to organize and rebel, and voodoo united -- and continues to unite -- the common people against the central government and the prevailing economic system" (Bishop 52).

In the twentieth century, Western attention turns to voodooism and attracts people's curiosities to the fascinating voodoo rituals and zombie practices. Tales of reanimated corpses, manipulated by local plantation owners to increase the production were of great interest to visiting ethnographers, which makes the topic of zombies a main subject in the investigation of Haitian folklores. Voodoo is "a dangerous source of empowerment for the slaves," as Mardorossian delineates, used by the obeah witches who are deemed as the "go-betweens among the slaves," "the main instigators of slave revolt, inspiring both fear and awe among believers" (133). Yet in discussing the historical function of obeah as a veritable, a doable practice, the typification of zombiism is not clearly pointed out but rather as an underlying theme within the novel. Rhys describes this venture of subverting the text with the imbuing of zombies consummated by the performance of obeah is indubitably beyond our comprehension. She also claims that obeah is what Choudhury calls "the idiom of midsummer night madness," which cannot be written because of its unaccountable creepiness, as Choudhury writes to critic Francis Wyndham: "A Zombie is a dead person raised up by the Obeah woman, it's usually a woman I think, and a zombie can take appearance of anyone. Or anything... But I did not write it that way and I'm glad, for it would have been a bit creepy! And probably, certainly I think, beyond me" (324). That is to say, for Rhys, the kernel of obeah is seen as an uninterpretable borderland for black Creoles, similar to what critic Wilson Harris describes that it is negatively seen as a "pejorative term" which "reflects significantly a state of mind or embarrassment in

both black and white West Indians ... a necessary hell-fire ... to re-enter 'lost' origins, 'lost' heavens, 'lost' divinity" (142). At the same time, Mardorossian somewhat reckons with the effect of obeah in the novel, which lies not in the decipherable metaphors but in the "unreadability" of the Caribbean tradition destabilizing the white superiors' panorama. That is to say, rather than documenting the all-inclusiveness of obeah processes into the novel, it works as an avenue, an intermediate for the ambivalent colonial authority to "unman those in power." "The novel is not about obeah and what it does ("[Rhys] wouldn't know")," as Mardorossian continues:

Instead of evoking black magic as a practice objectively determined from an underlying historical and social reality, *Wide Sargasso Sea* presents it as a discursive construct deployed by the colonizer as much as by the colonized... Obeah is thus appropriated by the white colonizers as a way of preserving his sense of superiority within his purist and racist frame of reference. (Mardorossian 1079)

Thus, as Mardorossian affirms, although the practice of obeah is historically embedded in black cosmology, the text gives no such thing to pronounce its influences upon the Afro-Caribbean community. On the contrary, the performances among the black Creole insiders remain vague and "cryptic." In Rhys's writing, there still remain several unsolved incidents without further explanations. The black servant Amelie's whereabouts, for instance, is kept unclear after the sexual intercourse with Rochester even though they live in fear of Christophine's retaliation of performing obeah on them; Christophine's power of obeah is seen as the "nebulous presence," the "foolishness" without substantial evidence despite the fact that the black Creoles may

simply want to distance themselves from the practice or to “appease the British colonizer by dissimulating resistance behind a mask of docility” (Mardorossian 77). As much as the accounts of ambiguity and opaqueness keep depleting with the narration of Antoinette’s and Rochester’s soliloquies, the muteness of Afro-Caribbean traditions (including references to obeah) have been voiced through the framework of Anglo-European stereotypes and “given meaning in the nineteenth century than about the alternative Afro-Caribbean epistemology that the practice embodies,” as Mardorossian concluded (133).

In Rhys’s literary strategies of engaging obeah, the insinuations of zombies are implied, from Antoinette’s accounts of her mother being zombified, the introduction of Caribbean traditions as Rochester’s discovery of finding of *The Glittering Coronet of Isles* depicting obeah and zombies, to the love potion concocted by Christophine. With the intervention of black magic, Rhys embeds the possible existence of zombification exploited by the Jamaican black obeah woman Christophine, as a representative of matriarchal force in the novel.

In the novel, Christophine is a woman from Martinique who is apt to the mysterious obeah. As Spivak reifies her position as a “first interpreter and named speaking object” (252) in the text, Christophine denounces Rochester’s imperial “worlding” of persecuting Antoinette’s identity. Being an obeah woman makes her possess the power, to resist her adversary and protect the daughter-like heroine Antoinette by opposing to the authoritative patriarch, Rochester. An unfathomable aroma of necromancy, for instance, which pervades in her room on the Coulibri estate, as the child Antoinette infers that, there seems to conceal some sanguinary stuffs such as “dead man’s dried hand,” “white chicken feathers,” and “a cock with its throat cut” (Rhys 28), superimposing Christophine’s association with obeah. The

official verification which attests to her position as a obeah woman is revealed when Mr. Fraser tells Rochester about Christophine's imprisonment due to her practice of obeah and the stern warning made by the "white inspector of police" to forbid her from using any sort of this "nonsense" (130). Through others' whispering of Christophine's peculiarity of using witchcraft, she feeds to the fear instead. During the tête-à-tête between Rochester and Daniel, arbitrary and direct accusations made by Daniel also state Christophine's "unequivocal" operation of dark arts: "She obeah woman and they catch her" (113). As Loe suggests, Rhys's statements has made clear of the fact indicating to Christophine as a "practitioner of this powerful folk religion." Above all, the making of the love potion, the so-called aphrodisiac Christophine concocts for Antoinette to regain Rochester's love, is surely seen as the authentication of her obeah knowledge; moreover, as Loe suggests, it also "helps generate the atmosphere in which the practice of zombification is taken seriously" (37).

Christophine's concoction of love potion is re-examined and interpreted as the "zombie poison" (Davis 166), intended to zombify Rochester. Through the voodoo ritual, as Davis explains, the act of capturing the intended victim's *ti bon ange* can be accomplished in several ways; and yet, all of these rituals require a crucial piece – the death of a victim. By classifying the types of the deceased, as Davis argues, he names the two deaths: "the unnatural and natural." As the natural death is defined as "a call from God (*mort bon dieu*)," which, cannot be applied to the zombification for it is "beyond the influence of man." Therefore, only through the accomplishment of an unnatural death can a voodoo practitioner make his zombie. In Davis's description, he explains in faking a victim's death, a victim becomes vulnerable in exposing to the sorcery:

... only someone who dies an unnatural death can be made into a zombie, for only in such a circumstance will he or she be vulnerable to sorcery ... Causing an unnatural death does not create a zombie; it just makes the victim immediately susceptible. (Davis 190)

In zombifying a victim with an unnatural death, the broker requires the zombie drug to perform his ritual by spreading “toxic powders” (Davis 190) in a cross form on the threshold of the victim’s doorway. Made by the broker’s cocktail of different ingredients, the main component of the zombie powder is said to be “tetrodotoxin” (6), which contains “toxic plants, toads, frogs, polychaete worms, tarantulas, snakes, puffer fish, and a few shavings of a human skull” (194); dramatically, the formula may “lower [s] the metabolic rate of the victim” (195) and cause the prerequisite unnatural death by killing the victim slowly, discreetly, and effectively. Through victim’s intake of the potion, the zombie drug can directly contact with the human blood in his body, rendering the broker’s spiritual possession of a victim’s soul.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, requested by Antoinette, it is conceivable that Christophine’s potion design is for the preparation of Rochester’s zombification. In Antoinette’s own narrative, on the way to Christophine’s house, it seems as if she has passed the zombie-like rocks – the “Mounes Mors (the Dead Ones)” (Rhys 98) documented as the protection for witches, which gives access to Christophine’s enlisting in her obeah, provided aids to Antoinette to recapture Rochester’s love in her spelled shelter. While Antoinette begs Christophine, she is fully aware of Christophine’s power of black magic as dangerous but effective: “Yes you can, I know you can. That is what I wish and that is why I came here. You can make people love or hate. Or ... or die” (Rhys 102). Here, as Loe suggests, either the aphrodisiac or

the zombie drug is what Antoinette claims for, it is most likely that “Christophine is trying to capture control of Rochester through the zombification process” (39).

Rochester’s description of the room setting, in a way, qualifies the procedure of Davis’s study on zombification. In the room, there are “nine candles lighting the darkened room” (Rhys 136) which might link to the set of candles in the voodoo rituals. Later on, another reference to zombies is also strengthened by Antoinette when she points out that Christophine “knows about ghosts too, but that is not what she calls them” (137). The most crucial evidence for Rochester’s zombification is the enigmatic “white powder strewn on the floor,” (136) which Antoinette spreads and claims as the repellent of cockroaches. Once the ritual is prepared, Antoinette then gives Christophine’s wine for Rochester to drink. As Davis assumes, the powder is explained as the psychoactive poisons that should be absorbed by the human skin. Thus, the aphrodisiac may act on Rochester’s lowered senses caused by the liquor to the excess eroticism, but mostly, it helps increase the absorbability of the zombie poison in his body as well.

After drinking the poisonous venom, Rochester feels drunk and falls asleep. Later, when he wakes up, he recalls a terrible and vivid dream he has, of the burying-alive scene:

I woke up 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 ... I was cold too, deathly cold ... I thought, I have been poisoned. But it was a dull thought, like a child spelling out the letters of a word which he cannot read, and which is he could would have no meaning or context. (Rhys 124)

Rochester's reactions of "the feeling of suffocation" and "deathly cold" in his dream are deemed as qualification for Davis's depiction of the zombified victim's response. He is, like the victim during the asphyxiant, paralytic state, "buried alive." According to Davis's clinical observations, one of the patients who ingests a fish liver assumed to be the main ingredient of zombie powder called "*Diodon Ocellatus*" (150) becomes suddenly chilled in an excessive cold, and turns numb unconsciously. Similarly, the patient's symptoms more or less fit Rochester's situation of the preliminary zombification. "Is the voodoo charm of Christophine 'really' magic?" as Bender ponders, "or is it, as Rochester thinks, just poison?" (97) In Rochester's delusive fantasies in his dream, Loe underlines his dream as a precognition of the vision of Rochester's zombified stage. After all, "as the conclusion of *Wide Sargasso Sea* shows us, dreams predict truth in the novel, and Rochester's earlier dream should perhaps also be taken seriously as a vision of truth" (39). Although Rochester seems to have luckily escaped zombification by vomiting in "the retching and sickness" and resisting to "lie there and sleep" (Rhys 125); nevertheless, the scene embodies the procedure of zombification potentially executed by Christophine's obeah, and makes Rochester an imperfect victim of female witchcraft.



Chapter III: Rochester's Zombie, and His Zombification

In my previous chapter, I've demonstrated how Rhys's heroine, for the sake of regaining his love, performs the zombification on her husband Rochester through a dose of love potion. But as Rochester vomits the potion, the heroine's zombification thus is seen failed. With terror and rage, instead, Rochester performs the zombification upon Antoinette to reclaim his name and position of a superior imperialist. Thus, in this chapter, first, I want to discuss Rochester's identity of pure whiteness to uncover his imperialistic plan by earning a fortune through a master-slave marriage; second, I want to explore Rochester's complicated emotion entangled with sexual attraction, desire, disgust, and fear for his wife, by inheriting literary critic Julia Kristeva's idea of abjection, to explain why he is repelled by his Creole wife to such an extremity that he zombifies her. Through Rochester's imperial act of "worlding," accompanied by his "white obeah;" at last, I attempts to discuss Rochester's zombification, of how he westernizes, objectifies, and zombifies his wife through sexual control and the baptism of renaming, resulting in a dehumanized puppet of his own-- a zombie in the attic (Renk 65).

In Rhys's version, she endows her male protagonist with a disproportional situation to his claiming of a title. As Spivak discusses, Rochester is "a victim of the patriarchal inheritance law of entailment rather than a father's natural preference for the firstborn." As a young second son dispatched to the colonies, Rochester is desperate to the concept of "buying an heiress." By introducing the "thematics of Oedipus" into the case of Rochester and his patrimony, Spivak presents Rochester's Oedipus complex through his writing to his "Dear Father," by suggesting it is Rhys's

design of making Rochester a son without “the Name of the Father, or the patronymic” (251):

Rhys denies to Brontë’s Rochester the one thing that is supposed to be secured in the Oedipal relay: the Name of the Father, or the patronymic. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the character corresponding to Rochester has no name. His writing of the final version of the letter to his father is supervised, in fact, by an image of the *loss* of the patronymic: “There was a crude bookshelf made of three shingles strung together over the desk and I looked at the books, Byron’s poems, novels by Sir Walter Scott, *Confessions of an Opium Eater* ... and on the last shelf, *Life and Letters of* ... The rest was eaten away” (Spivak 251).

Thus, Rochester, in Rhys’s description, is a brat with paternal issues, crying out for an heiress with a great inheritance. Critic Silvia Panizza describes Rochester’s circumstances as “like the heroine, unsettled by conflicting emotions, not one-sided or romanticized as in *Jane Eyre*, but troubled and multifaceted” (3). He is, after all, a money seeker who yearns for recognition from his father. Therefore it is difficult for us to judge whether Rochester loves Antoinette. In his view, Antoinette is just a source of easy money, thus the end justifies the means.

Shortly after the marriage, problems appear when the young heir took his newly wedded wife back to her homeland of Jamaica. At first, Rochester is curious about the nature in Jamaica: “Everything finished, for better or for worse. There we were, sheltering from the heavy rain under a large mango tree, myself, my wife

Antoinette ... to the honeymoon house” (Rhys 59). But later, his curiosity and awe for the hills, the mountains and the blue-green sea turn into a sense of repulse, even for his wife. Critic Sue Thomas presents the term “green menace,” which she uses in describing Rochester’s hostility toward the tropical Jamaican soil which is foreign to him:

... everything around me was hostile ... The trees were threatening and the shadows of the trees moving slowly over the floor menaced me. That green menace. I had felt ever since I saw this place. There was nothing I knew, nothing to comfort me. (Rhys 149)

As Thomas explains, it is Rochester’s “green menace, his xenophobia, misogyny, racialization of sexual desire, and fears of emasculation” (154) that induced his resentments. The “unknown and hostile” place, thus, makes Rochester very much “a stranger here”; worse, his distaste for the place turns to blame towards Antoinette: “this place is my enemy and on your side.” His terror is, as Thomas suggests, “of a palimpsestic erasure of imperial Christian enterprise by Obeah and of the entanglement of his lower body in plant emblems of the ‘native’ that threaten to bring him to the ground” (163). Therefore, encountered with such a threat of “Obeah,” Rochester acts on defending his “imperial Christian enterprise” from the contamination of the natives.

Although Rochester cares little about Antoinette, he succumbs to the temptations of Antoinette’s physical attractiveness. Critic Silvia Panizza describes the “unwanted passions” (3) inside Rochester, which is shaped as the irresistible sexual desire for his wife. Despite blaming Antoinette’s “mad coaxing” (Rhys 56) and her

characteristics of “morally insane” (Renk 111) craving for the “erotic intercourse,” Rochester cannot resist her. During the sexual encounters in the passionate nights and the torrid lazy afternoons, Rochester expresses his extreme sexual impulse for his wife’s body by brutally tearing apart her dress, manifesting his “savage with desire” (Rhys 56). After the fiery lovemaking, although he initially despises the flowers (orchids and frangipani) of the tropical land, Rochester takes pleasure in the aroma of the “flowers that open at night,” and inhales the scents of his guilty solitude. The white gentleman as an Oedipal figure with a lack of paternal assurance, who is frightened at the “powerful womanhood of his wife and her native land,” as Panizza suggests, rouse in his mind “a mixture of attraction and repulsion,” which ultimately induces his “blind fear” (4).

In Rochester’s mind, a mingling feeling of attraction and repulsion towards his Creole wife bring about the outcome of blind fear, a fear of which critic Ania Loomba calls “the fear of the colonial land” (151). This unexplainable fear for the Creole wife confuses Rochester: for both the desire and disgust coexist. In literary critic Julia Kristeva’s study *Powers of Horror*, she terms “abjection,” describing the entangled feeling that “cannot be assimilated.”

It beseeches, worries and fascinates desire, which, nevertheless, does not let itself be seduced. Apprehensive, desire turns aside; sickened, it rejects ... that impetus, that spasm, that leap is drawn toward an elsewhere as tempting as it is condemned. Unflaggingly, like an inescapable boomerang, a vortex of summons and repulsion places the one haunted by it literally beside himself” (Kristeva 1).

Beset by abjection, Rochester is bewildered, for this sickened feeling, “something” he does not recognize as a “thing:”

“Why do you hate me?” she said

“I do not hate you. I am most distressed about you ... She was wearing the white dress I had admired, but it had slipped untidily over one shoulder and seemed too large for her. I watched her holding her left wrist with her right hand, an annoying habit” (Rhys 115)

This sense of distress, and the annoyance he feels towards Antoinette’s white dress, in other words, is signified as Rochester’s abjection. He feels “a weight of meaninglessness, about which there is nothing insignificant, and which crushes me,” as Kristeva elaborates (2). In Rhys’s text, when Rochester receives a letter from Antoinette’s half-blood brother Richard in which reveals the secret of her mother and the Cosway family, Rochester “felt no surprise” like he has expected. Heading home, Rochester’s fear for both the Jamaican environment and his wife is transformed into anger: “Then I pass an orchid with long sprays of golden-brown flowers ... I remembered picking some for her one day. ‘They are like you,’ I told her. Now I stopped, broke a spray off and trampled it into the mud. This brought me to my senses. I leaned against a tree, sweating and trembling. ‘Far too hot today,’ I said aloud, ‘far too hot’” (Rhys 91). Like a disgust for corpses grew inside him, Rochester treats Antoinette with contempt, resulting in seeing her as a zombie as the servant Amélie describes: “Your husband’ he outside the door and he look like he see zombi” (92).

As Kristeva suggests, the upmost of abjection comes with the corpse, “seen without God and outside of science, and incarnated as “the death infecting life” (4). Kristeva thus turns to the subject of one’s ego, that “for the benefit of the ego,” as Kristeva explains, “or its detriment, drives, whether life drives or death drives, serve to correlate that ‘not yet’ ego with an ‘object’ in order to establish both of them” (14). That is to say, through the source of death, the ego has broken away and revived. Abjection thus is “a resurrection that has gone through death (of the ego). It is an alchemy that transforms death drive into a start of life, of new significance (15). In Rhys’s text, the image of death appears during the conversation between the heroine and her husband. Through ordering Antoinette to “die” in a literary sense, Rochester’s death drive transforms his abjectness into something new, by turning his wife into a dead corpse:

Antoinette: ‘If I could die. Now, when I am happy. Would you do that? ‘You wouldn’t have to kill me. Say die and I will die. You don’t believe? Then try, try, say die and watch me die‘

Rochester: ‘Die then, die!’ I watched her die many times. In my way, not in hers. In sunlight, in shadow, in moonlight, by candlelight [...] Very soon she was as eager for what’s called loving as I was -- more lost and drowned afterwards. (Rhys 55)

By watching his Creole wife dying by his own doing, Rochester’s abjection leads to the actual death of Antoinette, through his purifying process of zombification. As for Antoinette, Rochester’s act of commanding her to die, as critic Linda Pollanen assumes, arouses her sexual “orgasm” (Savory 85). Loomba recounts this drive of a

native woman for claiming the dominator's love is "the submission of the colonized people" (153); with abjection, Rochester turns to dominate his erotic wife through the sexual manipulation, put her into a state of "erotic surrender" (Newman 20), as Pollanen suggests, "sex itself becomes a way of control for Edward to achieve domination over her" (13). Hence, Rochester's indifference to Antoinette is seen as a deadly weapon to crush her and makes her vulnerable.

In Rhys's design, both of the heroine and the husband have their own fear towards the other. Especially, as for an Oedipal figure, Rochester's insecurity evokes his rage towards other people, and the first one who encounters this rage is his wife: in "evoking the social power he has as a man and a European to vent his hostility on Antoinette" (James 66). Their fear and hostility, are drawn from the anticolonial thinker Frantz Fanon, as Panizza explains, is caused by their mutual terror of colonizers and the white Creoles after the decolonization:

... the radical change in the whole colonial society, which occurred with decolonization, resulted in a fundamental insecurity and sense of danger haunting the minds of both the colonizers, who saw the empire they had created collapse, and the white Creoles, whom the natives identified with the Western invader. (Panizza 4)

Therefore, for Rochester, by clinging to his European values and reason, he chooses to confront with Antoinette and discerns her as his "perfect opponent," as Panizza assumes, "a specimen of the 'other side'." In her, Rochester "embodies [y] all that he fears, the world he felt threatened by, the feelings and passions that his rational

mind will not acknowledge. In his reaction he re-enacts the anxiety his colonial class suffered from when decolonization began” (4).

I have discussed Rochester’s Oedipal feature and his sense of abjection that lead to his drive to quench the other Antoinette. Next, I will move on to Rochester’s appeal for purifying his Creole through his “worlding” and zombification. In Rhys’s deliberate design, with suspicions, Rochester accidentally discovers a book called *The Glittering Coronet of Isles*; in which, he learns the word “zombi” (97), which confirms his hypothesis and carries out later in the novel. Assuming that the book Rochester read prompts him to have doubts about his wife’s existence, thus, it is likely that he is inspired by the book and comes up with an allusion of a zombie wife, as a way to act out his abjection. Critic Thomas Loe raises a couple of questions and indicated the possible motives for Rochester to the finalized zombification:

How much about zombies does he already know? Is this book the source that provokes him into having the ritual practiced on Antoinette? What more does he learn and how far does he pursue this interest in zombies? Is the sense of “betrayal” suggested by the cock crowing also a betrayal of knowledge about zombification process so that Rochester may perceive it as a solution to his imbroglio? Or is the mention of the cock only meant to remind us of the sacrifice of a cock during the zombification ritual? Is Rochester trying to subvert an element of West Indian culture for the supremacy of his male-oriented, European purposes? (Loe 38)

The main part of Rochester's zombification, accompanied by his imperial "worlding," is his endeavor to drive his wife crazy – by renaming. As critic Christopher GoGwit explains, the "inherited madness" of Antoinette is inscribed by Rochester's suspicion of her kin and to her insane mother Annette; later as Antoinette is baptized as Bertha, she is "simultaneously figured as the inherited madness of a pure white heritage and as the product of her mixed racial family background" (131). This is to say, through Rochester's renaming, he tries to incorporate Antoinette into "an English civilizing narrative," as Ciolkowski suggests, "whose radical logics and insidious global trajectory are so elegantly mystified by Charlotte Brontë in *Jane Eyre*" (342). As the outcome, Rochester's baptism can be seen as the objectification of Antoinette, which puts her into the state of "morally insane," with a "gross, impure, and depraved nature, she is intemperate and unchaste," as critic Showalter Elaine suggests, is "the antithesis of the English lady" (334) being "morally managed" (Renk 111).

In treating a morally insane woman's sexuality, Rochester's "worlding" is operated under the pretense of the British domestic economy, in which his reinvention of Antoinette as the "red-eyed, wild-haired stranger who was my wife" is attached to "the local interests of an English domestic economy that is:

... dependent on the stigmatization of female self-indulgence and sexual appetite to the global interest of an English empire that is dependent on the very same elements of female bodily management for the successful reproduction of power. (Ciolkowski 343)

Through the working of the British domestic economy, Rochester thus retains his control over a mad woman who “thirsts for anyone --not for me ... She’ll loosen her black hair, and laugh and coax and flatter (a mad girl. She’ll not care who she’s loving)” (Rhys 156). Hence, by reinforcing the values of patriarchal family in which underlines the lives of female domesticity, it thereby “regulates the genetic makeup of the English imperial race” (Ciolkowski 343). Blemished as a degenerated black “whore,” the heroine’s absence of shame for sexual pleasures is thus condemned by the British domestic economy.

Rochester recognizes the addiction to sex as his importance of masculine power, a guilt evolved, mingled with an imperialist’s abjection towards the hybrid white nigger. As Rhys uncovers, during the honeymoon, Rochester comes to perceive his wife as “the crazy nymphomania of a dark alien, a white nigger,” as Edna Aizenberg presents, “too dangerously imbued with an eroticized Caribbean Africanness” (464). In treating Antoinette’s luscious behavior, Rochester self-diagnoses she as “the crazy nymphomania” or “the zombie woman,” reducing to a disease caused by the abnormal movements of uterus which unleashes by any excess of emotion in the field of Western medicine:

Through the zombie woman, the Caribbean, much like Conrad’s Africa, becomes a screen onto which North Americans can project their fantasies and insecurities, the id forces of the libidos, irrational, violent, dangerous, and, yes miscegenated, intermingled, or hybrid. (Aizenberg 462)

In a sense, “the zombie woman” of Caribbean is then interpreted as a social deformation, and as critic Evelyn O’Callaghan posits, “the damaged West Indian psyche ... fragmented as a result of colonial/postcolonial conflict” (Renk89). In response to the lunatic Caribbean native, Rochester decides to contain her through the “paternal surveillance and governance” (Renk 89).

In dealing with the Caribbean horror incarnated within Antoinette, the English husband releases his dread through a series of “spectres,” all connected to his wife, “externalised images of what he would most strongly reject” (Panizza 5). By unveiling the images of “spectres” that are embodied within Rochester’s own fear, in the end, the real “ghost” arises:

These “ghosts” are nothing but the embodiment of the most distressing fears of the Western man: blackness, bring back the menace of a race despised but never really subdued; madness, reminding a sane man of the precariousness of human rationality; womanhood, from time immemorial threatening patriarchal power and associated with feelings and emotions, which were considered disreputable as well as dangerous for a ‘civilized’ European. Lastly, when the delusion has become complete, the real ghost arises, imagined as a zombie or soucriant and connected with the magical world of sorcery and obeah that the Caribbean seems to be in foreign, ill-formed eyes. (Panizza 5)

Rochester sees all four “spectres” in his wife, overlapped in Antoinette’s behaviors. Through abhorring the ghost woman, the complete delusion of Rochester’s motivates him to zombify his wife. By taming the “black blood” or the “mammy,”

Rochester views his imperial act as legal and justified, as Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle asserts, “if the British do not rule the blacks of the West Indies, they will become more indolent and will not carry out the work for which they are suited” (Renk 94).

Retaining in his superior stance, Rochester’s “puritan ethics” not only rejects Antoinette’s “black blood,” but also reflects in his contempt towards getting along with her. As Rochester dances with his wife, he withholds his “own voice and marvel at it, calm, correct but toneless” in a “faultless performance,” for he perceives his partner as “a black face not a white one” (Rhys 70), “the pale silent creature I have married” (80). Regarding Antoinette as a “black mammy,” a mulatto, Rochester’s pure whiteness resents her; instead of loving Antoinette, Rochester is only “thirsty for her” (Rhys 85), debasing her as a prostitute or a “paid woman” (Newman 16). Thus, Rochester’s doubts about his wife’s ethnicity, as Panizza concludes, emerges “through his alarmed vision of her sexual behavior, also seem as the means of propagating the ghost of the black race” (5). In the end, after Rochester’s “ironically bastardizing the English ‘race’” (Ciolkowski 344), Antoinette is thus “transformed from a morally insane colonial to a colonial beast” (Renk 110) as a result of Rochester’s imperial actions.

Rochester’s final triumph of domesticating Antoinette, from my standpoint, lies in his scheme of zombification. In the novel, Rochester’s doubts about his wife’s ethnicity in the Creole grotesque are thus confirmed and exaggerated by Antoinette’s half-blood brother, a bastard son Daniel Cosway. The rotten colors of the Creole “half-caste” (Ciolkowski 344) he is, as Ciolkowski describes, Daniel’s existence is linked to the “already extremes of the text’s West Indian landscape (“Everything is

too much” ...) to illustrate a monstrous violation of limits” (344). The “yellow sweaty face” of Daniel disgusts Rochester, after he realizes what Antoinette truly is, the swollen feeling of sickness arises: “Now disgust was rising in me like sickness. Disgust and rage.” (Rhys 114). As he runs out of Daniel’s house, he stops, catches a sight which worsens his disgust:

At the end of the path out of sight and sound of the house I stopped.

The world was given up to heat and to flies, the light was dazzling after his little dark room. A black and white goat tethered nearby was staring at me and for what seemed minutes I stared back into its slanting yellow-green eyes. Then I walked to the tree where I’d left my horse and rode away as quickly as I could. (Rhys 114)

The tethering of black and white goat is interpreted as the symbol of hybridity, threatening Rochester with an excessive pair of yellow-green eyes. Ciolkowski states, “the carnival cast of misfits and sexual deviants that wander through” the scene, is seen as a threat of “accursed system of slavery” to “the innocence of the English body” (345). As a result, Rochester proceeds in defending his English identity from the “terrain of an utterly maddening colonial intransigence”:

Rochester ... not only enter into the struggle to fix the commonsense logics of Englishness on the terrain of an utterly maddening colonial intransigence ... He must also attempt to manage the danger to English cultural identity that is introduced by a degenerate past. (Ciolkowski 345)

By anticipating and reacting against the danger to his English identity, as Ciolkowski suggests, an Englishman fabricates a “plantocrat indecency as a modern variation on the theme of female disease and bodily contamination” (346). Through victimizing himself in the exposure to his wife’s disease of “black blood,” Rochester presumes he has been infected, for instance, at the moment when he holds his Creole wife’s hand, feeling “cold as ice in the hot sun” (Rhys 77). And when his reaction of disgust appears after drinking the wine given by Antoinette, he immediately vomits the wine out, fearing he might have been infected by Antoinette’s poisoning.

As a “morally upright English gentleman with superior religious and ethical principles” (Ciolkowski 349), beset by the Jamaican wilderness and his untamed Creole wife, Rochester in the later part of the novel turns to repulsion towards the two. In his avoidance of being infected by the Caribbean blackness, Rochester appeals to rebuild the hierarchical structure of “an English core” and “an ethnic periphery” through his reclaiming of the authoritative order, as Ciolkowski suggests. Within this structure, the “peripheral subjects can be classified, managed, and perhaps even mastered” (347). Under the pretense of Rochester’s own defending of his English identity, he becomes annoyed as Antoinette performs the zombification; for she trespasses the border between the English master and the colonized slaves. A sense of betrayal and terror thus arise, as Rochester spews out the wine. He realizes that he is almost zombified by Christophine’s obeah, and his abjection turns into rage, for the “black blood” has infected and violated his English body. Thus, Rochester’s plans to take revenge that he first tortures Antoinette by betraying her, and makes love to her servant girl Amélie. Following that, in order to completely domesticate her, Rochester tyrannically applies to his objectification of renaming, decapitates Antoinette’s

maternal lineage of her Caribbean heritage and renames her Bertha. As Kloefer asserts, “in a deliberate act of revenge, he set out to alienate her from the wild, to destroy her maternal heritage just as Coulibri was destroyed in the early part of the novel” (152).

As an imperial “slavemaster” (Ciolkowski 349), through Rochester’s baptism of renaming, he enacts to enslave his mulatto wife in the worst act of erasing her identity. As Spivak suggests, in the figure of Antoinette whom Rochester violently renames Bertha, Rhys attempts to show how “intimate a thing as personal and human identity might be determined by the politics of imperialism” (250). So fragile Antoinette’s Creole identity is, and so cruel a master Rochester becomes, as Christophine harshly accuses Rochester of being a cold-blooded slavemaster: “You abused the planters and made up stories about them, but you do the same thing. You send the girl away quicker, and with no money or less money, and that’s all the difference” (Rhys 133). By arranging his Creole wife a “new and often ridiculous name[s]” (Bush 24), Bertha the Westernized lunatic thus is born, away from the “exotic cultures and dangerously alien social structures” (Ciolkowski 349).

In the renaming of Antoinette, Rhys shows that the heroine does strive to fight back in defense of her name, which is the last thread attaching her to the maternal lineage of Annette. As Antoinette explains in the novel: “names matter, like when he wouldn’t call me Antoinette, and I saw Antoinette drifting out of the window with her scent, her pretty clothes and her looking-glass” (Rhys 117). Slowly losing the assertion of her name, Antoinette’s identity thus is slipped through her grasp, drifting out of the window. Confused and terrorized, in Antoinette’s description, she is mentally tortured and becomes desperate for Christophine’s help:

“He hates me now. I hear him every night walking up and down the veranda. Up and down. When he passes my door he says, ‘Goodnight, Bertha.’ He never calls me Antoinette now. He has found out it was my mother’s name. ‘I hope you will sleep well, Bertha’ -- it cannot be worse, I said. That one night he came I might sleep afterwards. I sleep so badly now. And I dream” (Rhys 103)

As Christophine senses Rochester’s renaming as a part of his zombification, Antoinette must, as Christophine strongly advises, flee from Jamaica and her husband before it is too late: “You ask me a hard thing. I tell you a hard thing, pack up and go ... Do it and he come after you” (Rhys 99-100). But, it is Antoinette’s love, which stops her to escape: “Go, go where? To some strange place where I shall never see him? No, I will not ...” (Rhys 99). Thus, by gradually dehumanized by her husband, the zombification process empties out her soul and Antoinette’s identity no longer remains intact. As Rochester says, he fulfills claiming for Bertha as his zombie with “blank lovely eyes,” “mad eyes”: “I did it ... She was only a ghost, A ghost in the grey daylight. Nothing left but hopelessness. *Say die I will die. Say die and watch me die*” (Rhys 154). As the outcome, Rochester accomplishes his wife’s social death by venting his abjection on his zombie wife, and bursts out his hatred in a victimized stance:

They bought me, *me* with your paltry money. You helped them to do it. You deceived me, betrayed me, and you’ll do worse if you get a chance ... You hate me and I hate you. We’ll see who hates best. But 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. (Rhys
154)

Through his overwhelming hate for Antoinette, Rochester's rage is accompanied by his "white obeah" which disavows Antoinette's self being and leads to the division of her identity – Antoinette/Bertha – in which later when the zombie Bertha creeps in the night, she is also searching for the Creole Antoinette in her dreams.

If we look into Rochester's zombification of Antoinette/Bertha, the possibility of a white English performing magic seems dubious. But, as Renk suggests, Rochester does actually cling to the ritualistic act of the West Indies; in spite of his resentments toward the tradition and the black magic of the Caribbean, still, he is "culturally conditioned to believe in magic" (65). Borrowing from the black magic, Rochester modifies and assembles his own "white obeah" with a power of counteracting the broker's black magic. According to *Journal of a West Indian Proprietor* (1834), historian Matthew Gregory Lewis states the father-and-son bond between the minister and the natives. When Lewis arrives at Jamaica, he acts like "a returning father bringing wealth to his children" (Renk 65). Signifying himself as a "monarch" who bestows gifts from England, furthermore, Lewis ascribes his act of his baptism as the "white obeah": "a magical intervention that counteracts the effects of the obeah man." Possessed with a power of "white obeah," capable of "removing the terrors" (Lewis 148) of blackness, Lewis thus envisions himself as a "beneficent-king-magician" while he is surrounded by a crowd of slave women kissing his feet in his departure. Thus, the slaves not only discern a master of "white obeah" as a "father," he is also the "son, the lover, and the husband" (Renk 65).

When it comes to discuss Rochester's renaming as the master-stroke of his zombification, I will refer to critic Kette Thomas's "Haitian Zombie, Myth, and Modern Identity," to explain the importance of a name as an intimate joint to one's identity and existence. As Thomas suggests, "to have a name is to have a means of locating, extending, and preserving oneself in the human community, so as to be able to answer the question 'who' reference to ancestry, current status, and particular bearing, with reference to the full panoply of time" (Cooke 167). Names matter in the African American society, which is an indication to the named subject's existence of power. Thus, as Thomas continues, the abandonment of one's African identity is seriously resulted in one's powerlessness, especially "the renaming of those captured with their master's identities as a profound form of subjugation and powerlessness" (King 687). What's more, naming also determines one's social position in society, for instance, in China, "naming makes important social transitions: the more names a man has the more 'socialized' and also, in a sense, the more 'individuated' he becomes" (Watson 622). Therefore, as Thomas suggests, the power of naming has influenced in one's subjectivity which is easily "transferred, reflected, and recognized in words," reinforced in "an act of locating and representing a subject." In the ritual of zombification, as a zombie is arisen, the broker thus gives his zombie a new name, to claim it as his slave. In Thomas conclusion, through the deprivation of the name of the subject, he may also face his *ti bon ange* being stripped off: "if zombie are nihilistic of the *ti bon ange*, so, too, the name" (6).

In critic Wade Davis's study on the rituals of zombification, when a victim is "affected by the drug and traumatized by the set and setting of the total experience, is reported bound and led before a cross to be baptized with a new name ... During the course of that intoxication, the zombie is socialized into a new existence" (196). By

renaming a victim, he is endowed with a new form of death living in the reign of a master. As critic Judie Newman suggests, Rochester is certainly guilty of obeah; as in Antoinette's suspicion, she recognizes Rochester's white obeah of calling her Bertha: "Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name. I know, that's obeah too" (Rhys 133). The effect of zombification, as Davis elaborates, is relied on the victim's belief in the magic "that mediated the sorcerer's curse and the fatal outcome" (200). That is to say, believing in the power of a conjuror's magic increases the possibility of being zombified. Davis also presents the research made by physician W. B. Cannon, who studies on the soldiers' "fatal shock" in the "physiological mechanism," inducing an actual voodoo death. When an individual is shocked, as Davis asserts, by a so-called magic spell from "an overstimulation of the sympathetic-adrenal system," the result will be a "loss of blood volume and pressure, and ultimately fatal shock. Fear, in other words, Davis concludes, "could initiate actual physiological changes that quite literally lead to death" (200). Dr. David Lester also believes in the voodoo death, which might be activated by the physiological compound in the victim's mind: "a sense of helplessness and helplessness reinforced by social process ... may lead to death ... by making the individual vulnerable to pathogenic disease" (Davis 201). By feeding a victim with a dose of fear, a new name, and a trait of magical tricks, he may thereby be convinced and transformed into a zombie. In the novel, Antoinette's fear is obviously reflected in her pleading for her husband's understanding, for she conceals the past of her family and her insane mother; but as a result, she fails. Fearing that her husband might turn away from her, and view her as a mad woman just like Annette, Antoinette can only seek shelter from Christophne:

‘I have tried,’ I said, ‘but he does not believe me. It is too late for that now (it is always too late for truth, I thought). ‘I will try again if you will do what I ask. Oh Christophine, I am so afraid,’ I said, ‘I do not know why, but so afraid. All the time. Help me. (Rhys 105)

In fact, Christophine does help her. In my study, the process of Rochester’s zombification upon Antoinette is delayed and mitigated by the aid of Christophine. In Rhys’s text, with no power to counteract Rochester’s “white obeah,” Christophine instead tries to slow down Rochester’s zombification through giving Antoinette a liquid mitigator – the rum. In critic Jennifer P. Nesbitt’s “Rum Histories: Decolonizing the Narratives of Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Silvia Townsend Warner’s *The Flint Anchor*,” she specifies that rum is not just an intoxicant, but a force historically ascribed in colonialism: “its historical and cultural affiliations troop colonialism as a force that perpetuates itself through economic institutions and internalized beliefs” (309). Instead of stereotyping the rum as a poison, as Nesbitt described, it is a “pervasive feature of life in the West Indies” (312) for the spirit of the Caribbean. Thus, the rum works to revive and renew, “induce revelation,” “opens new paths to understanding” (313). Rum is used by Christophine as a mitigating drink to ease Antoinette’s pain and her zombified appearance of a dead woman, as she brings a cup of coffee to her: “Good shot of white rum in that, she said. You face like dead woman and your eyes red like *soucriant*” (Rhys 105).

Without a doubt, later, as Antoinette drinks too much rum and attacks Rochester, he accuses Christophine of making Antoinette “dead drunk on bad rum” (Rhys 136), and indulges in an easy explanation of her plight. But, Christophine’s intention to protect Antoinette is certain. With the effect of white obeah moderated by

the rum, accompanied by Christophine's singing of the unknown spells perhaps, Antoinette is thus calmed by her ritualistic obeah, as Rochester describes mysteriously:

I listened. Christophine was talking softly. My wife was crying. Then a door shut. They had gone into the bedroom. Someone was singing '*Ma belle ka di,*' or was it the song about one day and a thousand years. But whatever they were singing or saying was dangerous ... I could see Antoinette stretched on the bed quite still. Like a doll.... '*Ti moun,*' I heard and '*Doudouche,*' and the end of a head handkerchief made a finger on the wall. '*Do dol'enfant do.*' Listening, I began to feel sleepy and cold. (Rhys 135-136)

For certain, Christophine casts a protection spell upon the heroine with a healing handkerchief, hypnotizes her, and suspends the state of her turning into a zombie. As obeah is used for "the process of healing/protection through seeking out the source or explanation of the cause ... of the disease or fear" (Bilby 156), for Christophine, although she can not disavow the "white obeah" which bounds Antoinette, she can use her obeah to protect her; hence, she chooses to "make her sleep" (Rhys 140), calming her down with her black magic. When Rochester moves the heroine to England, as Christophine describes, she saves the "misery" for Rochester; for she gives Antoinette something to sleep through her obeah of healing, that sooner or later, Rochester's power may be faded and Antoinette may finally be awoken from her slumber, as I have conjectured.

Frightened by Rochester's arbitrary renaming, Antoinette is petrified; ironically, the fear grows inside her and actually legitimates and approves Rochester's "white obeah." With Rochester's later betrayal which makes Antoinette "sexually bewitched," as Newman suggests, "it is sexuality which enslaves the woman and destroys her independence" (Newman 20) that she ends up as Rochester's "sexual zombie" (20). Through critic Mona Fayad's observation, Antoinette "becomes a ghost/undead, the zombie that Rochester had been afraid would be his fate" (448). "Having effectively killed her ('I drew the sheet over her gently as if I covered a dead girl) ... he brings her back to life but now in another form" (448).

In Rochester's narrative, he repeatedly stresses Antoinette's doll-like and marionette qualities, which resembles to the pattern of a zombie. Before transporting Antoinette to England, Rochester draws an English house surrounded by trees, and delineates Antoinette as a "stick-woman" (Newman 16) in the room on the third floor: "a child's scribble, a dot for a head, a larger one for the body, a triangle for a skirt slanting lines for arms and feet" (Rhys 148). The image of a stick-woman, thus, is noticed as Rochester's ultimate fulfillment of erasing Antoinette's identity, as Newman concludes: "Antoinette's identity has been erased by the politics of imperialism and of patriarchy. Only the skirt, the sexual marker, identifies her as a woman. Dehumanized, depersonalized, renamed, she is now a helpless puppet, a character under Rochester's control" (16).

Due to "the scarcity of identifiable selves" (Scharfman 14) both in whites and blacks Antoinette has been positioned in, by depriving Antoinette's "secret identification" with her mother, her own existence is now repudiated and effaced by Rochester's new marking. In the end, Antoinette turns into "only a ghost," with "blank lovely eyes," who will "join all the others who know the secret and will not

tell it. Or cannot ... They can be recognized. White faces, dazed eyes, aimless gestures, high-pitched laughter” (Rhys 156). By taking Antoinette to England, “kept in isolation and fed a debilitating diet,” as Loe suggests, the confinement is well indicated to the completion in the zombification process; which, is what Davis describes: “a zombie is baptized with a new name and led away to be socialized into a new existence” (179).

It is obvious that Rhys deliberately plots to lure the traits of zombiism into the text; moreover, by submitting at least two recognizable forms of zombification into the novel, Rhys demonstrates both of the two involving personas are marked as victim and aggressor, possessor and possessed, colonizer and colonized. As Rochester’s abjection in extremes mutates into loathing Antoinette’s existence (“my hatred is colder, stronger” (Rhys 154)), he then zombifies her, demonstrating “the sorcerer’s lust,” and “the urge to transcend or subvert race and class barriers.” But, a question arises in the last part of the novel: does Rochester complete his zombification to the last? As Loe assumes, Rochester’s attempt to zombify, eventually, is seen failed. For the lack of geographical bond with the obeah in Jamaica, leaving the magical zone may be seen as Rochester’s setback and instead “provides a destructive incubus working against him on his home territory” (Paravisini-Gerbert 42).

Diagnosed as madness in Western medicine, Antoinette thus is kept in the attic of the Thornfield Hall. As I have mentioned, the readings of female madness as a mental illnesses may not solve the Caribbean-based case of Antoinette. Critic Sarah Juliet Lauro and Karen Embry in their article “A Zombie Manifesto: The Nonhuman Condition in the Era of Advanced Capitalism” reveal an answer for Antoinette’s case, linking her state of a zombie to the social death, in which she wanders on the boundary between the living and dead:

The embalmed madmen are real-life zombies: like the women with puerperal fever, who were contaminated with the bacteria that infest corpses, these were real bodies that straddled the civic and social border which determines the difference between the living and the dead. Just as the cyborg is a body implemented with or affected by technology, these real-life zombies also, on a micro level, contain within their forms the attributes of the corpse. In the example of the embalmed madmen, we see how the social death of the mentally ill, deemed inferior, is translated into a literal transgression of these vital boundaries, as the living are construed as already dead and treated accordingly. (Lauro 103)

Instead of tagging the real zombies with the “convenient European label” (Paravisini-Gerbert 42), Rhys presents her story with the allusion of the identifiable patterns of zombies, displaying the intriguing plot of Rochester’s “white obeah” and his renaming. As Rochester seemingly has zombified his Creole wife, his imperial drive is finally pacified: “I was exhausted. All the mad conflicting emotions had gone and left me wearied and empty. Sane” (Rhys 155). As a result, the feeling of saneness, of taming the mad woman, after all, is all he aspires, with “the doll’s smile” nailed to his wife’s face.

Conclusion

I hated the mountains and the hills, the rivers and the rain ... I hated its beauty and its magic and the secrets I would never know ... Above all I hated her. For she belonged to the magic and the loveliness. She had left me thirsty and all my life would be thirst and longing for what I had lost before I found it. (Rhys 156)

Previously in my chapters, I have discussed from the standpoint on the critique of thirdworldism, the post-colonial discourse from Glissant's Creolization, to the historical structure of Rhys's generation and specified the zombification mainly from Davis's study. In chapter three, I have discussed Rochester's zombification, whom, with grudges, resents the obeah Antoinette performed on him; and as a result, he returns this with a merciless act of white obeah, and moreover turns his Creole wife into a zombie. In fact, while heading towards England, both of them lose a part of themselves and suffer from a psychological disorder afterwards. In my conclusion, I would like to discuss Antoinette's strategies of self-seeking, awareness, and the final transformation during her imprisonment in the English manor house in the last part of the novel, to give my further uncovering of the heroine's dezombification.

First of all, I would suggest that by searching for the true identity in the dream sequences, as the concept of mirroring as Spivak argues, Antoinette dreams about her past which included her homeland, the fire on the Coulibri Estate, the parrot, Coco's, death. And most of all, the connection with Tia is crucial for Antoinette's self-awakening. Second, I would like to argue that by failing to connect with her black friend Tia, Antoinette arises from her pitiful past through her "jump," and discovers

she herself is nothing but an unknown Creole that cannot be determined in the blurred gap between black and white, the colonized Wide Sargasso Sea and a white, superior, Europe. Third, through her self-awakening, I would like to assume that if Rochester could reject and break Antoinette's zombification, it is also possible that Antoinette acts out the final dezombification on her own, presumably as a way to release herself from the worlding of imperialism, a possibility to the result of Creolization. Finally, I would like to discuss the mystery of Antoinette's death in the end of Jean Rhys's closure; whether it is Antoinette's act out of revenge or her way of reclaiming her freedom, Rhys makes unclear but leaves an open ending to invite more possibilities for readers to contemplate, to assume Antoinette's wandering in the passage as self-destruction or salvation.

From mistreatment of the insane Bertha through the inhumane confinement in Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, her mind wanders through a series of dreams as a way to connect with the past, to the world she once lived. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, after Rochester renames Antoinette as Bertha, not only does he achieve in Westernizing his Creole wife but also does he accomplish the initial phase of zombification. While Bertha becomes weaker and more vulnerable, perplexed by her new British marker, she indulges in alcohol, thus self-destructing herself, which leads to the end of becoming Rochester's puppet, a zombie slave who "... join all the others ... White faces, dazed eyes, aimless gestures, high-pitched laughter" (Rhys 156). After transporting her to Rochester's estate in England, Rochester locks her up in the attic, for there is no course of action to disclose his "mistake" to the European world. He hides his shame, isolates Antoinette and makes Grace Poole her guardian. According to the contemporary Western psychological analysis, Antoinette's state of mind is diagnosed as absolutely mad and unhealed. Consequently, Rochester's

zombification, like Antoinette's imperfect obeah, is also deemed a failure, as Thomas Loe suggests: "Rochester's attempt at zombification also eventually fails, of course, and provides a destructive incubus working against him in his home territory. Madness is only a conventional and convenient European label for what happens to Antoinette and her mother" (40). Clothed with a garment of a monster or a wild woman, Rochester, like other Westerners with Euro-centered knowledges fears the unknown, treats his insane wife as a mentally disordered patient; as he and other white superiors all neglect the inner essence of Antoinette's Creoleness.

As we can see, Rochester's act of the passive confinement not only shows his incapability of pacifying his zombie wife, but also states his deep dread for his wife. What's more, instead of freeing her, Rochester's negation of Antoinette's unfinished zombie state makes the dezombification possible; for he has not consummated his white obeah upon Antoinette, therefore the possibility of counteracting the magic becomes feasible.

As in a jail-like incarceration, Antoinette does not totally lose her sanity and could even react on others' conversations and attack her half-blood brother, for instance. Due to the restriction on her body, to awake from the zombified nightmare, Antoinette has dreams. In her dreams, she revisits and recalls the past, with plenty of memories to resonate with. Spivak in her "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" suggests that one of Antoinette's strategies relating to the theme of identity is presented through the images of "mirroring" (250). Adopted from the idea of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Spivak invites the thematics of Narcissus to examine Antoinette's development through looking into the mirrors. On one hand, Panizza suggests the effect of mirroring may help Antoinette "(be) closer to understanding her true identity," but on the other hand, Spivak warns, the mirroring reflects either as

“faithful reflections of one’s self,” or as “a distortion of truth, reflected by the desires and states of mind of the subject” (Panizza 12). For instance, in the encounter with Antoinette’s black mate Tia, Antoinette believes that she sees Tia as “in a looking glass.” The risks of loss in the mirror images exist but is a necessary method for Antoinette to depend on. As critic Helen Tiffin explains, “[The white Creole] sees herself as a gauche, immature distortion of the Europeans on the one hand, and a pale and terrified ‘deformed’ reflection of her Black compatriots on the other. As the distorted reflection of two images, neither of which is really her but which beckon and taunt her with their normality, the Rhys heroine relies on mirrors and mirror images...” (328-329).

From identifying with Tia from Antoinette’s childhood, she finds a projection of her desires with Tia, which serves as the symbol of blackness; and later, after she is betrayed by Tia and other black folks, she suffers from an identity crisis to the end of uncovering of the “ghost” woman in the hall glass at Thornfield Hall. Consequently, when Antoinette strives to find out who she really is, “the importance of observing herself as if from the outside increases and enables Antoinette to contemplate more objectively the question of her selfhood” (12). In her dreams, this time, there is no “looking glass” anymore that she can identify with the girl she seeks from Tia. “It is as if,” Choudhury continues, “Antoinette has glimpsed the failed possibility of achieving a composite identity” (325). What comes is her own loneliness without any thing to link to. The question “Who am I?” thus becomes the beginning to search for the self which is different from whites or blacks.

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

black at me. The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely I tried to kiss her. But the glass was between us -- hard, cold, and misted over with my breath. Now they have taken everything away. What am I doing in this place and who am I? (Rhys 185)

The process of finding one's true self is crucial in reference to Spivak's hermeneutics of "othering the self," explaining how Antoinette is able to re-establish her identity by "othering" the "false and deceiving part of her that eclipsed her authentic self" (12). In the figure of Antoinette, as Spivak suggests, one's self-identity can be easily shifted or twisted by the intrusion of authorized powers. "So intimate a thing," Spivak says, "as personal and human identity might be determined by the politics of imperialism." In her study, Antoinette as a Creole is "caught between the English imperialist and the black native" (250) that she faces the dilemma of locating herself with one side of the party. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the images of mirroring occur many times, and one of the symbolic figures Antoinette's attaches to is her black companion Tia. "We had eaten the same food, slept side by side, bathed in the same river. As I ran, I thought, I will live with Tia and I will be like her." (50). The intimacy they share makes Antoinette more akin to Tia like her twin sister, and the thought of being like her infatuates Antoinette. But later, when the black natives ignite the fire on the estate, Antoinette runs to Tia for help but what came next is the opposite of what she has hoped for:

When I was close I saw the jagged stone in her hand but I did not see her throw it ... We stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking glass. (Rhys 38).

Even when Antoinette's face is covered with her own blood, she still hasn't given up on the hope to recognize Tia as her another black self in a looking glass; but the fire tears their relationship apart by the hatred and disapproval of the blacks. Here, Professor Veronica Marie Gregg explains Tia's violent attack "repudiates the Creole's needs and gesture as acts of simultaneous coercion and erasure." This scene, made up of "need and rejection, pain and pathos, tears and blood, anatomized the intimate violence that inhered within the Creole's cathexis to the black Other and Tia's refusal of this role" (96). Rhys hasn't really pointed out if Tia throws the stone or not, which is out of Antoinette's line of sight, Tia's tears and her crumpled face obviously indicate her denial of and separation from Antoinette. Critic Maria Olausen indicates that Antoinette craves to become a member of black community, naively believing that "her racial identity is simply a matter of choice, that through an act of will she can make herself belong to the black community" (78). But eventually, facing her other as in a looking glass, she stares at Tia, realizing that the link they've shared is now officially disconnected. Antoinette is thus banished from the black groups and placed "firmly within the white community" (Olausen 78) which also rejects her mercilessly.

After failing to find connection with Tia and even her lover Rochester, Antoinette turns to search for herself through the mirroring in a following series of dreams, in order to finish her journey of self discovery. Antoinette's mirror images, according to Spivak's theoretics from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, are associated with

Narcissus's madness. Spivak describes through Narcissus's mirroring, he recognizes his own reflection or his other as his self. Therefore, Spivak infers to the similar situation that she states "Rhys makes Antoinette see her self as her Other" (250), which is the imperialized, zombified Bertha Mason in *Jane Eyre*. In the last section, Antoinette has her dreams in which there is a "ghost of a woman" of whom has been haunting in the house:

In my dreams 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.

All the people who had been staying in the house had gone, for the bedroom doors were shut, but it seemed to me that someone was following me, someone was chasing me, laughing. Sometimes I looked to the right or to the left but I never looked behind me for I did not want to see that ghost of a woman whom they say haunts this place.

(Rhys 187)

Eventually, when the zombified Antoinette looks into the mirror, "yet not quite herself" as she discerns the woman in the mirror, she finally recognizes herself as the so-called ghost of Thornfield Hall. The "ghost" is herself. "I went into the hall again with the tall candle in my hand. It was then that I saw her -- the ghost. The woman with streaming hair. She was surrounded by a guilt frame but I knew her" (Rhys 188). Surrounded by a "guilt frame," as Panizza concludes, "what the mirror actually shows her is the objectified 'Othered self'" (12). Spivak suggests that the frame which encloses the mirror is a metaphoric reference for guilt: "as Narcissus's

pool reflects the selfed Other, so this 'pool' reflects the Othered self" (12). Figuring out that the ghost woman for whom she becomes by Rochester's unfair renaming, she can finally start to separate herself from this cursed other. Spivak concludes that Antoinette's selfed Other imposed by Rochester's imperialist violence "can never be selfed, because the fracture of imperialism rather than the Ovidian pool intervened" (250). Through the functioning of the Ovidian pool, the selfed Other, as Panizza discusses, is the "schizophrenic identity" objectified in the mirror through the image of a mad figure which embodies "the extremes of aggressive insanity and evanescent fragility which others saw in her but did not define her" (12).

Spivak's theories of Narcissus's mirroring of one self determines to uncover the possibility of de-worlding in the Westernized system, it further opens the opportunity for passive victims suffered from Westerners' oppressions to overthrow the imposed identities they've been marked and seek the true one. In Antoinette's final scene, she acts out with all the effort to defeat the "ghost woman." Facing this "schizophrenic identity," instead of yielding to the imperialized, zombified Other scenario, Antoinette, as James suggests, acts and "fights against it" (68). Critic Kathy Mezei assumes that Antoinette's narration and her dreams allow her to "remember what it is she has to do" (208). Through dreaming, as Renk suggests, Antoinette "locates her purpose through her unconscious;" thus, with dreams and "a series of counterfetishes," those mediums show her "a mode of release from English madness" (104). Therefore, it is most likely, Antoinette awakes from her state of madness, resulting in counteracting the zombification.

In recounting Antoinette's process of her awakening, Renk addresses the essential requirements for Antoinette's counteractivity of Rochester's white obeah. "Two fetishes counteract Rochester's practice of obeah that denies Antoinette her

past,” as she discussed, “as they counteract Rochester’s magic, the fetishes resurrect Antoinette’s ‘memory’ of her Caribbean past.” The first fetish which revives Antoinette’s retrospection to the past is the “vision of of her mother in a tapestry” which hangs on the wall of Antoinette’s room in Thornfield. The second fetish, Renk points to the red dress which “acts as a powerful unconscious talisman, a ‘juju’ charm that brings together several buried threads of Antoinette’s past” (114).

The red dress with the “colour of sunset and fire,” on one hand, ignites the lasciviousness within Rochester and makes him “savage with desire” (Rhys 90); on the other hand, it reflects Antoinette’s hidden Caribbean nature when Tia swaps her dress, which also became an allusion when Christophine orders: “Get up, girl, and dress yourself. Woman must have spunks to live in this wicked world” (Rhys 101). As Antoinette lets the red dress fall to the ground, the image of her past is evoked:

I let the dress fall on the floor, and looked from the fire to the dress and from the dress to the fire ... But I looked at the dress in the floor and it was as if the fire had spread across the room. It was beautiful and it reminded me of something I must do. (Rhys 186-187)

Here, unlike the symbol of eroticism for Rochester and the “fire that destroyed Colubri” which the red dress addresses, the dress fetish dream Antoinette clings to represents “what will release her” (Renk 115). Additionally, by means of reviewing her memories in the final dream, the red sky and the fire are also featured as the important manifestations to Antoinette’s self-awareness. In her dream, she sits on the battlements and “turned around and saw the sky. It was red and all my life was in it”

(Rhys 189). James suggests that till this point, Antoinette starts to see “her whole life is coming to her, coming together, finally.” James further continues:

... everything that she has lived through, as a woman, as a white West Indian, as an immigrant to Britain. Now she begins to face her past, the past of the descendant of the slave owner, the daughter of one Great House and the wife of another. (James 71)

She also sees the her grandfather’s clock, Aunt Cora’s patchwork, orchids and the stephanotis and the jasmine, and amount all “the tree of life in flames” (Rhys 189). The vision of flames, the fire incorporates her past in West Indies. And in the next scene, Antoinette is caught between the voice of her parrot Coco from childhood shouting in Creole native tongue “Qui est la? Qui est la,?” and her husband Rochester calling “Bertha! Bertha!” (Rhys 189). James discerns this as the time Antoinette “is now identifying herself,” “from being the object of Rochester’s power, Antoinette is transforming herself into the subject, by grasping the power to determine her own actions and her own fate” (71). In the last dream scene, Antoinette is home again and this time there are two voices calling her, one is from Tia and another is still Rochester. At last, she concludes the dream with a jump and wakes up.

As we can see, those fetishes in Antoinette’s dreams guide her, lead her to the past so she can respond to and ultimately liberate her; which, uniting with the mirroring effect, Antoinette cries out for Christophine and examines the edge to see Tia in a pool in which resembles the scene of Antoinette seeing Tia as in a looking glass. Renk here gives the conclusion that through Antoinette’s unconscious self-searching, she uses “countermagic,” for unlocking the prison “to find the Martinique

connection, a connection to a woman's community, an intimate relational space that she desperately needs" (115). As the above reflects that through a series of fighting back the ghost woman or the English moralized Bertha, Antoinette's madness diagnosed by westerners on the contrary becomes her final stage to dream, exceeding her zombified state and furthermore bringing her to the Creolized space caught in the Martinique lineage in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

As we further look into the psychological state of Antoinette's drastic revolt, in the practice of her dezombified countermagic, her urges to seek for the true identity, according to critic Lida Pollanen's study in her "Abject by Gender and Race: The Loss of Antoinette's Identity in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*," come from her divide from the abjection of self. In literary critic Julia Kristeva's article "Approaching Abjection," the author indicates how the climax of abjection happens when "the subject, weary of fruitless attempts to identify with something on the outside, finds the impossible within; when it finds that the impossible constitutes its very being, that it is none other than abject" (5). Since Antoinette's childhood is filled with the rejections from whites and blacks, she has to repress her identity around others. Later when she tries to identify with Rochester, she attempts desperately to achieve happiness and the outcome is nothing but the rejection from him. Pollanen suggests that Antoinette's vulnerability is exposed when she "starts to become abject to even herself" (14); and this gradually leads to her hatred towards herself and other self-destructive deeds like drinking and hysteria. The resentment of her is resulted from the continuous failures of recognizing, and is recognized by her own kin. "Nothing is familiar, not even the shadow of memory" (Kristeva 5). She begins to treat herself as a debased animal by picturing herself as "something contaminated, repulsive, abject" (Pollanen 14):

And if the razor grass cut my legs and arms I would think 'It's 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. Watching the red and yellow flowers in the sun thinking of nothing, it was as if a door opened and I was someone else, something else. Not myself any longer. (Rhys 16)

Pollanen examines Antoinette's case and sees her abjection of self of which goes back to her relationship with her mother, Annette. Linked to the "primal repression," Antoinette suffers from the lack of maternal care, which, according to Kristeva, an individual experiences the step of "homologous to another in order to become himself" (13). Pollanen also echos this particular point and then the person may abject the maternal in order to "become a subject" (Pollanen 14). However, Antoinette barely has a mother -- a distant, indifferent, and mad woman, whom she finds hard to identify with and abject, and in return whom abjects her, "as is she has decided once and for all that I was useless to her" (Rhys 11). Therefore, Antoinette retreats, secludes herself from the outside world. For example, she perceives language itself indicates her way to keep her thoughts to herself in daytime and reveals her secrets in dark. "Shall I wake her up," as Rochester says, "and listen to the things she says, whispers, in darkness. Not by day" (Rhys 54).

Professor Ania Loomba's study of race and colonialism in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* presents that "both women and colonized are split subjects who watch themselves being watched by men, then turn themselves into

objects” (162). Thus, through the abjection of self, Antoinette undergoes an identity crisis in which her self is split into an objectified Other. Pollanen observes Spivak’s theories of mirroring and comes up with a point of view that through observing herself as an unidentified object in the mirror, Antoinette hypnotizes herself:

... rather than observing herself as an object, what is more important is her failure in surveying herself at all ... therefore, she is hypnotized with the mirror, trying to find herself and understand what she sees ... The further she subjectivity and identity are oppressed, and the more she becomes abjected by others and herself, the harder it is for her to relate to her own image. (Pollanen 15)

Suppressing and loathing her Creole identity by the hypnotism of mirroring, Antoinette thus shapea a phantom corresponding to the outside judgements imposed upon her. “It lingers, threatening its master,” as Pollanen describes, “just as Antoinette does when she escapes her prison from time to time and creeps around the house.” By the end of the text, Pollanen concludes that she finally sees her Other with no connection to any identifiable subjects: “when Antoinette has been locked in the attic in England and deprived of all identity and subjectivity, she no longer recognizes herself in the mirror but instead sees the abject, the ghost of woman” (15). Which, with no doubt, is her dissolution from the objectified Other.

From confronting to the mirror image of the ghost woman to her last wakening, Antoinette chooses to follow Tia and jumps off the edge of the house “... when I looked over the edge I saw the pool at Coulibri. Tia was there. She beckoned to me ... And I heard the man’s voice, Bertha! Bertha! ... And the sky so red. Someone

screamed and I thought, Why did I scream? I called ‘Tia!’ and jumped and woke” (Rhys 155). The dream ends at this point and thus leads her to the final realization that “now at last I know why I was brought here and what I have to do” (Rhys 156). Olaussen describes the burning fire here not only symbolizes the past of West Indies but also shows Antoinette’s liberation and fulfillment which is derived from the work of “refusing the English context.”(82). The final jump, on one hand, indicates Antoinette’s embodiment of the burning parrot jumping from the roof of Coulibri; on the other hand, it is as critic Wilson Harris suggests in *Carnival of Psyche*, Rhys’s evoking of the black legend of “flying to freedom”: before being exported to America, some of the African slaves keep their secret of flight; when arriving to the plantations they “shed their wings,” which will only be recovered when the slavery gets harsher and unbearable that they eventually have to “fly away to be free and safe” (81). Hence, by referring to the black mystery as an option to release the heroine from the enslaved prison, Rhys guides her heroine on the path to her mission for freedom, as Olaussen infers:

Rhys similarly invokes a secret knowledge which changes the meaning of her actions, a mission which will give her a new identity outside of that prescribed for her by patriarchal demands. The Master will always have her own interpretation of events, but within this frame Antoinette creates her own alternative. (Olaussen 80)

Therefore, Rhys allows her heroine to apply to the “black strategies of resistance,” and further reinforces the meaning of the blackness as liberation. Antoinette denies the existence of oppressed black women but as Olaussen concludes,

she reaches to the another side of “prisoners of another’s desire as the white Creole madwoman is set free” (81).

As we proceed from the black legend “flying to freedom” to Antoinette’s jump into fire in the dream, there remain disputes whether it is an implication of her later literary death or Olausson’s assumption of blackness freedom. The jump, in the distinctive poet Edward Kamau Brathwaite’s study equates to as “the jump to death” (36). So Antoinette awakes to death instead of life. Both worlds of life and death are unreal, since she wanders between her dreams of England and the West Indies. But in critic Wally Look Lai’s “the Road to Thronfield Hall” he gives a different concept that Antoinette’s jump, far from acting as a self-destruction, as a way to “save herself from an existence which has become a form of death, and to restore to her life the only possibility which she has come finally to see as capable of leading to fulfillment. “Her leap, after all, was her “first attempt to take command of” (48). Carrying a sign of rebirth, the jump into the burning fire also indicates Antoinette’s flight or escape to a new life; which, coming from the earlier reference of Grace Poole’s mystery of the “flamboyant flower”: “If you are buried under a flamboyant tree ... your soul is lifted up when it flowers. Everyone wants that” (Rhys 109).

Whether Antoinette’s leap represents an implication of her suicidal death with her torching the Thornfield in Jane Eyre or her liberation from the zombified shape, Rhys here clearly does not answer but rather put her heroine in the passage of in-betweenness. Pollanen decides to make Antoinette’s death as a means for escape, that through the manifestation of her mad existence can she then realizes her death and truly “escape the condition of waste, reject and abject” (15). But if we go back to *Wide Sargosso Sea*, Rhys only writes in the end of the story Antoinette walking in the corridor, holding a candle in her hand, “replicating the beginning of the dream she

has just had,” as Panizza presumed, “but not acting out.” Panizza then provides a conjecture to the end of *Wide Sargasso Sea* in which remains “open and does not provide any definite solution” for readers to imagine a different future for the heroine, “either trying to find out what the author had imagined but did not write out, or accepting that Jean Rhys herself did not choose any particular conclusion but decided to leave the story open-ended” (12). Deborah Kelly Kloepfer also makes the assumption in *The Unspeakable Mother: Forbidden Discourse in Jean Rhys and H. D.* that Antoinette “seems to prepare to act out the dream” (157) but Rhys only makes an obscure description of her fate similar to Bertha’s when she takes off into the dark passage.

The plausible explanation of Antoinette’s jump stays unresolved in Rhys’s writing, but in Panizza’s interpretation of Antoinette’s death, the author comes up with the analysis of Antoinette’s reaching to the termination where she is belonged to – the Sargasso Sea. When she jumps off the edge, she jumps not towards Tia, “the friend who was never her mirror after all” and her “fiery Caribbean life.” But, as Panizza states, Antoinette jumps to the Sargasso Sea:

Between England and the West Indies, between the two worlds to which she never belonged, there is the Sargasso Sea. There does Antoinette belong, and there she jumps ... the final jump towards selfhood takes her to her real homeland, inhabited by her alone but where she can finally be truly herself. After all her impossible attempts to be accepted by two different communities she realizes that her strength lies in her uniqueness, in the complexity of her personality,

and the solution is to stop trying to penetrate two worlds where she does not belong and to be somebody else. (Panizza 14-15)

Instead of fitting herself either in England or West Indies that all refuse to let her in, Antoinette finally locates herself in the in-betweenness, which, according to Glissant's idea of "get at being" (89), is her consummation of inviting the Creolization in entering the new world. The great victory for Antoinette is that, she accepts her Creole identity which is unique, unusual from her English contemporaries but true, through a various ways of seeking and self-retrospection. Rhys constructs up the passage across the "world of sanity" of Jamaica and the "world of madness" (Olaussen 79) of *Jane Eyre*, to present an opacity that is incomprehensible, in turn, bring out the possibility of transformation and newness. Although confined to the attic, Antoinette dreams to fight against Bertha in which she lastly discovers a passage to her salvation.

Antoinette not only finds a way to locate herself, before that, it is also her using of countermagic to defeat the cursed state of Rochester's white obeah. In the end of my conclusion, I will discuss the possibility of Antoinette's dezombification and the outcome of doing so awakens and releases the Creole girl with dignity. In Choudhury's conclusion, she assumes the prospect of possible dezombification. In the dominant discourse of "Manichean colonialism in Europe and America's cultural progress," postcolonial study can be more than "a magnifying glass held to the ambivalences and slippages. Its revisionings and rewritings will be haunted by the always present agenda of restitution." Thus, for Choudhury, looking into the hypothesis of zombification, it is not mere a passive thinking but what obstacles the further study as "an inability to think differently." For dezombification is not "the

emptying of of the mind but the confrontation of a heavily inscribed terrain criss-crossed by histories.” Rhys’s text revitalizes a new narrative and challenges the dominant imperial discourses, as Choudhury concludes, “from the imperatives of the struggle to construct an alternative history of the colonial subject” (326).

In Professor Sandra Drake’s article “All that Foolishness/That All Foolishness’: Race and Caribbean Culture as Thematics of Liberation in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*,” Drake explains the process of dezombification in detail and puts forward on Antoinette’s ability to counteract, similar to Renk’s hypothesis on “counterfetishes” (104), through the “taste of salts” – the smell of the red dress. According to critic René Depestre, “the history of colonialism is the process of man’s general zombification. It is also the quest for a revitalizing salt capable of restoring to man the use of his imagination and his culture” (56). That is to say, once a zombie tastes salt, Depestre continues, “the fog enveloping their minds is immediately dispelled and they become suddenly aware of their enslavement” (51). Hence, with a vital dose of salt, it can dispel the hex and awaken the slumbering zombie. Drake then argues that when the zombified heroine perceives her red dress with “the colour of fire and sunset,” of “flamboyant flowers,” she is able to smell the scent that “came from the dress ... of vetivert and frangipanni, of cinnamon and dust and lime tress when they were in bloom. The smell of the sun and the smell of the rain. (Rhys 185). The smell of the red dress, frangipanni, vetivert, cinnamon and lemon are the Caribbean salts which awaken the zombified Antoinette from her slumber. In Davis’s study on concocting the antidote, it contains dried leaves and six plants, and the end product is a “green liquid with a strong ammonia scent” (166). Salt, among all the ingredients, as Davis mentions, works immediately and helps return the zombie to the realm of the living. Hence, the victim may be able to “regain their natural senses and

all their mental faculties if they taste the least grain of this substance” (Davis 179). “One grain of salt,” as Newman adds, “will restore the memory, and the zombie returns to the grave to ‘die’ all over again” (17). Therefore, it is likely Antoinette arises with fiery dread when she wakes up from her jump in the final dream, as in Drake’s analysis, “the term for a zombi coming out of a trance.” By dezombifying, Antoinette then “possesses herself of the divine fire, of vengeance and self-reclamation;” she is determined to consummate her revenge, by converting Thornfield Hall itself “into a flamboyant (flaming) tree; her own soul rises up as it ‘blooms’” (109).

If we revisit Rochester’s dezombification, we have no doubts that it is quite confirmed that a zombie can be resuscitated from its slumber. As stated by the Afro-Caribbean belief, the zombie state is “transitory and reversible;” in the words of Daniel Bernard Roumain, the Haitian novelist and poet, “life comes round again,” because “death is only another name for life” (205). As Drake describes, the interpretation of Antoinette’s end, positively is reinforced in his assumption, is her conquering over death, because the novel’s end is not “the ‘end’ of ‘Bertha Mason’”— Rochester’s creation — in *Jane Eyre*:

In achieving this clarity of decision and action, the novel reads as victory over death itself by changing the cultural and belief system from a European to an Afro-Caribbean one. Antoinette, in accepting Christophine’s wall of flame, Depestre’s “revitalizing salt” capable of restoring human imagination and culture, takes her place in an American tradition—and an Afro-American tradition, in the wider sense. (Drake 112)

In Rochester's terms, she is always “Antoinette marionette”; but in the Afro-Caribbean idiom, she is undoubtedly a zombie. Although Rochester attempts to Westernize, or zombify Antoinette to the best of his ability, as Loe suggests, “he ultimately fails in suppressing her ‘virile force’” and with no assistance he withdraws from the unknown Caribbean world and takes his zombie back to England. With his unfinished zombification, Antoinette dezombifies herself through a series of dreaming and retrieves her selfhood. By accepting Christophine, the “empowering gift of fire,” and the jumping off to freedom, “Antoinette gained the strength of that Afro-Caribbean idiom, as the Haitians drew strength from the Vaudam oath at Bois-Caiman” (Drake 112).

By interpreting Antoinette’s dreams as a phase of dezombification to her last triumph of, Drake emphasizes it is her “victory over death” and awards for her metaphysical victory which permeates through the Afro-Caribbean belief system. Therefore, it is Antoinette’s final “victorious struggle against European-colonial imposition of the zombi state;” which, as her ultimate retrieval of her Creole identity, stolen by the cultural imperialism. In critic Maximilien Laroche's terms in “the Founding Myths of the Haitian Nation,” Antoinette’s case is seen as “an American myth in an African-derived idiom,” and her final realization and action become an “American battle against a European colonialism” (Drake 112).

From Spivak’s hermeneutics of de-worlding, endeavoring to remove the imperialized mark imposed by the Westerners, I have referenced Glissant’s poetics of Creolization to assume a future of which can make peace with or without the intrusion from the dominant discourse of imperial system; and through Rhys’s heroine I have introduced the possibility of zombification on the basis of Afro-Caribbean ideology to

suppose a different ending for the imperialized Creole victim who belongs to nowhere except in her Creolized realization of opaque sphere, and later achieves her final self-awareness through a series of dreaming in her subconsciousness. It is, Antoinette's "blooms redemption," in Lorna Goodison's "Garden of Women Once Fallen", which invites the new meaning for the archetypes of madness associated with distorted modes of western psychoanalysis and diagnose; thus coming up with a mode of "remembering the past," and of "resurrecting indigenous and African spirituality" (14-15). But most of all, it provides a new beginning for glimpsing a Glissantian "new garden" possible, which once is sequestered and managed by the "moral English" (Renk 119).

In my thesis we can determine, Antoinette in the last part of the novel *Wild Sargasso Sea* who is zombified by the white obeah in the form of a demonic English husband Rochester, is spiritually awakened as she jumped off the burning house into the arms of her childhood companion, the black Jamaican Tia. In death, she transcends and finds her ultimate resuscitation from the zombified state, and returns home in which is the in-betweenness Sargasso Sea. In my research, Drake's analysis of Antoinette's countermagic, not only "exploits most fully the African diasporic spiritual context of Wide Sargasso Sea," but also offers "the most utopian, optimistic analysis" (Erin Mackie 208) serving as a furnishment on Antoinette's victorious closure instead of sentencing her death as a pure tragedy as predetermined in *Jane Eyre*.

Unlike the western imposed Other, Bertha Mason, in *Jane Eyre*, Rhys's making of Antoinette's "blooms redemption" restates the Afro-Caribbean symbology of zombiism in *Wide Sargasso Sea*; by showing how colonizers aim to domesticate and assimilate other cultures but are met with backlash. The Caribbean obeah, for

example, is a way to understand the in-depth Afro-Caribbean culture instead of treating it as a merely indigenous witchcraft, which in Rhys's text indicates either as an exoticized black magic, or an universalized one. To recall from Glissant's hermeneutics of opaqueness, it is rather a resisting principle of opaqueness that Glissant calls the "nonhistory" of the Caribbean people (224), which is, according to Mardorossian, "a history characterized by ruptures and that began with a brutal scission, slavery" (89). Thus, Rhys poses the problem in the extrication of language and thought from the dominant structure of imperial culture. As such, it expects nothing but a newer narrative that can address the canonical norms of West through the struggle of constructing "an alternative history of the colonial subject" (Choudhury 326). If we endeavor to seek the newer narrative to fit Antoinette Cosway's story, possibly, in the journey of the work of Creolization can we imagine a new garden, a new land before us. By separating the disturbing stereotyping from the Westernized world, we can anticipate a new end for the heroine instead of pronouncing her tragic death. Therefore, we can picture a vision of the final scene of Antoinette, who holds a candle and wanders in the passage as she realizes her final end to her belonging – Sargasso Sea.

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