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## The Incarcerating Homescapes of Wide Sargasso Sea: A Foucauldian Reading

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### Abstract

*British-Dominican author Jean Rhys (1890-1979) focused primarily on discussing vital issues of Creoleness and Caribbeaness. In her 1966 postcolonial novel Wide Sargasso Sea, Rhys tries to transmit such notions through her protagonist Antoinette Cosway. Such transmission is achieved by utilizing domestic spaces as markers denoting debatable socio-political issues highlighting the nature of the relation of the colonizer/colonized binary. Using a spatial theoretical framework, this study investigates how Antoinette's home, Thornfield Hall, becomes a destructive environment for her life and Creole identity. This research examines the connections between Michel Foucault's concept of carceral space and Jean Rhys's novel Wide Sargasso Sea. Rhys's novel, a prologue to Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre, resembles Foucault's theoretical framework of the disciplinary processes of power and control in limited settings. This research employs a Foucauldian perspective to analyze Rhys's rewritten story and the complex relationship between geography, politics, and individuality. Foucault's concept of carceral space is predicated on the premise that certain institutional settings, including prisons, asylums, and schools, serve as systems of power that limit and govern people. These settings often reinforce existing social order by emphasizing control, monitoring, and conformity. Using this theoretical premise, the investigation dissects Wide Sargasso Sea's several ecosystems. The Caribbean's Coulibri Estate is a carceral space in its actual and metaphorical oppressiveness. Antoinette, the novel's protagonist, and her family are repressed by the estate, which symbolizes the repressive powers of colonialism and foreshadows Antoinette's ultimate spiral into madness and her consequent imprisonment in Thornfield Hall, become a destructive environment for her life and her Creole identity.*

**Keywords:** Carceral space, Jean Rhys, Spatial theory, Identity, Wide Sargasso Sea

### 1.1 Theoretical Framework

Humanities and social sciences strongly feel that space is not only an empty container filled with acts or motions or something to be considered for studying as "the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile" (Foucault, 1980, p. 170). On the other hand, space is not only the cause of our existence but also a result of it. The term "carceral space" was coined by the French philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault as part of his investigation of the ways in which authority and control are exercised in modern society. "Carceral space" describes the physical and institutional settings where authority punishes, controls, and normalizes persons. "Carceral" comes from the Latin word "carcer," which means jail or imprisonment; nevertheless, Foucault's critique encompasses more than just prisons (Pimonratanakan, 2022; Aldawsari & Mabkhot, 2023).

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Michel Foucault's historical analysis uses a vocabulary of spatiality, metaphorically, as in his usage of the term "carceral archipelago" in *Discipline and Punish*, as in his extensive discussion of the panopticon. Foucault stresses the importance of the spatial significance of the order of things, both in a concrete sense, as in the public reaction to the spread of contagious diseases, and in a more abstract sense, as in the collecting and organizing data into charts and tables. Not until much later did his research into ancestry, personality evolution, and sex history allow him to piece together the mobile circuitry of power exchanges. As "the new cartography," Foucault maps the social into diagrams, as Gilles Deleuze memorably put in his assessment of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*. The latter, as Deleuze sees it, is a map or numerous overlaid maps (1995, p. 44).

To put it mildly, Foucault's effort to disentangle people's actual use of freedom from their social ties and the distributions of space in which they live is arbitrary. Insight into either will only be possible with the other. In numerous of his works, Foucault treats spatiality as an analytical instrument in and of itself. (Crampton and Elden, 2007; Hlongwane & Daw, 2022; Stark & Chin, 2022). Spatialization is essential in discovering by helping scientists better appreciate the physical world around them. Foucault contends that the generation of medical knowledge relies heavily on spatialized observation (Grbin, 2015; Jones, 2023; Syarief, 2022). Foucault makes the following remark about medical talk in *Birth of the Clinic*:

The appearance of the clinic must be identified by the minute but decisive change, whereby the question 'What is the matter with you?' with which the eighteenth-century dialogue between doctor and patient began (a conversation possessing its grammar and style), was replaced by that other question 'where does it hurt?', in which we recognize the principle of the clinic and the operation of its entire discourse (1975, p. XVII).

Foucault's work revolves around the panopticon, an idea derived from Jeremy Bentham's jail architecture. The panopticon is a kind of prison that consists of a central watchtower and a circular housing unit for convicts. Inmates are programmed to absorb the impression that they are under continual monitoring, which has a restraining effect on their behavior. Foucault uses the panopticon as a metaphor for contemporary disciplinary societies, in which the same dynamic of monitoring and control is replicated in various institutions, including schools, factories, hospitals, and even virtual places. By analyzing the panopticon prison model, Foucault demonstrates how a facility's physical layout affects inmates' treatment. The panopticon takes the concept of physical isolation, upon which hospitals often rely, to an extreme. Prisoners in a Panopticon are housed in a particular facility:

At the periphery, an annular building; at the center, a tower; this tower is pierced with expansive windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheral building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other on the outside, allows the light to cross from the one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in the central tower and to shut up in each cell a mad, a patient, a condemned man, a worker, or a schoolboy... He is seen, but he does not see; He is the object of information, never a subject in communication. (Foucault, 1975, p. 200)

Since the prisoner is housed in a see-through cell, he is always aware of being watched. The idea behind the panopticon is that a prisoner would be so intimidated by the structure's impersonal power that he will begin to control himself. Internalizing standards is impossible unless the inmates exercise self-control and distribute their resources. By taking a closer look

at Foucault's panopticon prison model, we can see how architecture may be utilized to reinforce and propagate social norms. The panopticon is only one example of an architectural structure with a proactive function that may work almost independently of social actors. (Grbin, 2015; Pangereyev et al., 2023; Dabis et al., 2023). The panoptic jail was created by English social thinker Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th century, a correctional facility where only one guard could see all the inmates. Still, the convicts could not know the officer or each other. Because of this scrutiny, convicts would alter their behavior, making disturbances less likely. The panopticon's continuous and almost automated functioning makes it a time- and labor-efficient monitoring tool at a reasonable cost. Disciplinary power, used in a carceral setting, is a sort of authority that aims to control inmates' actions and thoughts. This authority is subtle, ubiquitous, and distributed throughout society to normalize people and guarantee their conformity to established norms and expectations. Every discipline system aims to produce compliant individuals who can conform to societal standards and exercise self-control without continual policing from above (Foucault, 1995; Xie et al., 2023; Dinh et al., 2022).

The notion of biopolitics, which deals with the administration and regulation of people, is intrinsically tied to Foucault's theory of carceral space. A modern state's authority extends beyond the individual to the collective, including matters of public health, family planning, and social services. Biopolitical policies for the advantage of the state or dominant social forces need carceral areas for their implementation to ensure the optimization and regulation of people. Foucault's research of carceral space included an examination of the concept of "technologies of the self," which he defined as the methods and tools people use to alter their personality and conduct to fit in with social standards. Individuals absorb and embrace these norms, sometimes without realizing they are doing so, in an effort to become more socially acceptable subjects.

## 1.2 Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Jean Rhys claimed that *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte had captivated her for many years. "vexed" is an adequate term to describe how she felt about being in the "all incorrect Creole surroundings and nearly all by the harshness of Mr. Rochester. as she wrote about it in her journal. The story of *Jane Eyre* is retold in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, written before intertextuality was recognized as a frequent postcolonial response to colonial literary canons. Rhys also expertly connects the new story with *Jane Eyre* (Savory, 2009, p. 80). She has focused primarily on themes of cultural upheaval and identity crisis (Kadhim, 2011). The title of Jean Rhys's work has deep symbolic significance. The North Atlantic Ocean has an area known as the Sargasso Sea, which is characterized by seaweed and is bordered by ocean currents. This region is also known as the "North Atlantic Garbage Patch" due to the high concentration of floating debris. In the novel, the Sargasso Sea represents a metaphorical prison for the characters, particularly Antoinette Cosway, who feels trapped and isolated in her own life. The sea symbolizes confinement, and the characters are portrayed as being caught in a current of events beyond their control. The title also highlights the theme of displacement and the sense of being adrift or lost that pervades the novel. The novel's protagonists and antagonists are grappling with questions of self-awareness and social belonging. and the title emphasizes the feeling of being lost in a vast and unknowable sea. As suggested by the title, the novel's protagonist, Antoinette Cosway, is caught amid an identity crisis, unable to swim to shore. The Sargasso Sea, symbolizing both Europe and the Caribbean, is too vast for the heroine to cross, leaving her adrift like a ship in the middle of the night (Shapiro, 1986).

*Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Brontë is often referenced by Rhys throughout her narrative. Antoinette, Rhys's central female protagonist in her novel, has a plan to burn down the house in her fantasies links Rhys's and Brontë's versions. Much of Rhys's version is a prologue describing the woman who goes crazy in the attic and Rochester's adolescence. Rhys rewrote the classic novel *Jane Eyre*, emphasizing dreams, ghosts, and the color red. Rhys's discussion of the Creole wife's vivid description challenged the stereotypical views of white Creoles in the nineteenth-century United Kingdom. The tale ends with Rochester wounded and blinded and the house destroyed, a level of savagery that Rhys found gloriously epic. Rhys also had to allude to the savagery without exhibiting it again because of *Jane Eyre*'s intertextuality (Savory, 2009).

### 1.3 Antoinette's Incarcerating Space

The power dynamics explored by Foucault are reflected in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, with characters experiencing different types of captivity and subjugation. Antoinette's relationships with other characters are characterized by exclusion, isolation, and harshness. Antoinette is subject to the power dynamics of patriarchy and colonialism and the social exclusion that comes with being a white Creole woman in her community. In addition, Foucault explores the notion of "otherness" inside carceral spaces, where those who depart from society's standards are labeled deviant and subject to disciplinary actions. *Wide Sargasso Sea*'s protagonist, Antoinette, and the other Creole islanders have a similar experience, being considered "other" by the mostly white English society of the Caribbean. They are excluded from mainstream society and subjected to segregation and prejudice because of their ethnicity and culture. As a result, she goes through a series of chaotic steps as she seeks solace. She tried to find peace and quiet while living with her mother when she was young, but the constant rejection she experienced, especially from her mother, caused her to withdraw within herself. Coulibri Estate, Antoinette's childhood house, serves as an example of the novel's depiction of genuine carceral places. Coulibri Estate stands for confinement and persecution. Its main feature is a crumbling house, representing the collapse of the colonial system.

Antoinette also saw her mother collapse after witnessing her home destroyed by a group of formerly enslaved people. There was nowhere Antoinette could go to get away from the discrimination she faced. She had been treated like an outcast, making her more likely to marry the wrong man. She wed an Englishman who was only interested in her for her wealth. Since she was a teenager, her mental and emotional health had been worsening. After a string of painful experiences—including problems on her honeymoon and subsequent confinement by her husband in the attic—suicide was the only choice left to her.

In the same way that Rochester does not think of Jamaica as home, Antoinette does not think of England as home. On the one hand, Rochester, the English husband of Antoinette Cosway, does not regard Jamaica as his home because he feels like an outsider in the Caribbean island's culture and society. As an Englishman, Rochester has been raised with certain cultural expectations and beliefs that are different from those of the people of Jamaica. He finds the hot, humid climate uncomfortable, and he struggles to understand the customs and traditions of the locals. Additionally, he perceives Jamaica's racial and social hierarchies as oppressive, which causes him to feel like he does not belong. Furthermore, Rochester's relationship with Antoinette is fraught with tension, as she represents the cultural and racial otherness that he cannot fully embrace or accept. This dynamic creates a sense of distance and alienation between Rochester and the people and places of Jamaica. On the other hand, Antoinette's outsiderhood in the English culture and society stems from her Jamaican descent and Creole heritage, which make her and her family outcast and alienated in the eyes of the black Jamaicans and the British

colonizers. As a Creole, Antoinette has a mixed racial and cultural identity that does not fit neatly into the English or Jamaican categories. This liminality makes it difficult for her to feel like she belongs in either place.

Additionally, Antoinette's relationship with Rochester becomes strained as he becomes increasingly dismissive of her cultural background and tries to mold her into an English wife. This further alienates her from the English culture and society that he represents.

Rochester is aware of how deeply Antoinette held her beliefs towards Britain and continental Europe. Rochester thinks Antoinette is misguided and comes from a dynasty of mad people, so there is little chance she will change her mind about his mansion. For Antoinette, England exists only in the tales of Christophine, Antoinette's caretaker, and in her limited comprehension; she has never been there; thus, the nation remains an abstract geographical place that cannot be concretized. Even more so when Christophine tells Antoinette she doubts there is such a locale since it is simply an abstract fictional realm, and she does not believe in magic. Unlike Rochester anticipated, Antoinette is considering or has seriously considered, moving to England. Moving to England with Rochester may help Antoinette rediscover who she is even though she has no concept of what England is like since she has never felt at home anywhere;

I will be a different person when I live in England, and other things will happen to me. England, rosy pink in the geography book map, but on the page opposite the words are closely crowded, heavy looking. Exports, coal, iron, wool. Then Imports and character of Inhabitants. Names, Essex, Chelmsford on the Chelsea. The Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Wolds. Wolds? Does that mean hills? I must know more than I know that house where I will be cold and not belonging (Rhys, 1999, p. 66).

If somebody's milieu changes, it might provide an opportunity to forge a new self:

Any setting can become a symbol of an element of personal and group identity through sufficient familiarity and prop inquiry. Through extensive interaction with a place, people may begin to define themselves in terms of their relationship with and residence in that place, to the extent that they cannot express who they are without inevitably taking into account the setting which surrounds them as well (Ryden, 1993, p. 76).

Antoinette's efforts at self-improvement and adjusting to her new surroundings are impeded by Christophine's views. That makes Antoinette less optimistic than she could have been otherwise. And these stereotypes about England have caused her to reject the idea of England itself. Her first impressions of Thornfield Hall are not positive since the town's appearance differs from her expectations. Rochester's antagonism against the new environment is mirrored by Antoinette's denial of the house's eccentricity. In her opinion, they missed the turn towards England; therefore, she finds it impossible to accept that they really made it to England:

Then I open the door and walk into their world. It is, as I always knew, made of cardboard. I have seen it before somewhere, Cardboard world where everything is colored brown or dark red or yellow with no light. As I walk along the passages, I wish I could see what is behind the cardboard. They tell me I am in England, but I don't believe them. We lost our way to England. When? I don't remember, but we lost it. Was it that evening in the cabin when he found me talking to the young man who brought me my food? I caught my arms round his neck and asked him to help me." (Rhys, 1999, pp. 107-108).

Antoinette's hopes for her new "home" were crushed when she learned that she and her maid Grace Poole, would be staying in the attic; yet, being confined to her little space allowed her to focus on the task at hand and gain some much-needed clarity.

Grace Poole convinces her that she is in England by taking her out for the first time, where her experiences align with her preconceptions. Antoinette then keeps narrating about that afternoon when she ventured to England. For as long as there existed, in her mind, “fresh grass, olive-green water with tall trees in England, so If [she] I could be here, [she] I could be well again” (Rhys, 1999, p. 109). She attributed much of her hope for recovery to the fact that, unlike being confined in a stuffy house, she thrives in the open air. When her husband returns from the West Indies, Antoinette is transported to England and imprisoned in the attic. Grace gives an overview of Antoinette’s character and hobbies, calling her “the girl who lives in her darkness” (Rhys, 1999, p. 106). Thus, Antoinette has not fully embraced her darkness, but it is still a part of who she is.

Foucault stresses the need for surveillance in carceral settings. Rochester, Grace, and Christophine, among others, all keep tabs on Antoinette throughout the narrative in an effort to influence how she behaves and what she thinks. Constant scrutiny from others saps Antoinette's confidence and makes her feel like a second-class citizen. Foucault's perception of power structures inside carceral spaces is consistent with the power dynamics described in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Both the colonizers and the colonized use dominance and control over the other. Antoinette's lack of control and her final incarceration in an attic represents women's and colonized people's subjection. Thornfield Hall becomes Antoinette’s prison-like home, symbolizing patriarchal domination and captivity. Rochester locks Antoinette up in the attic so that he will not have to interact with her. He has made his point about jailing her in the room rather clearly. Rochester finds it unacceptable for Antoinette to maintain her Creole heritage in his English atmosphere, so he brings her from the West Indies to England. Recognizing Antoinette's neighborhood as a vestige of colonial power in the middle of a nominally English region is crucial.

An individual woman’s sense of her own value and acceptability in the world is influenced by cultural norms about what it means to be a woman. These concepts impacted women because they influenced how they saw their value (Mohammed 87). Rochester resolves to rid her of her Creole heritage and identity by giving her a new, more English name, “Bertha”. Previously, she had been known as Antoinette. Antoinette understands the significance of names (Henderson, 2015):

Looking at the tapestry one day I recognized my mother dressed in an evening gown but with bare feet. She looked away from me, over my head just as she used to do. I wouldn’t tell Grace this. Her name oughtn’t to be Grace. Names matter like when he wouldn’t call me Antoinette, and I saw Antoinette drifting out of the window with her scents; her pretty clothes and her looking-glass. There is no looking-glass here and I don’t know what I am like now (Rhys, 1999, p.106).

Now that she cannot identify herself by name, she feels like a complete stranger to the world (Henderson, 2015). Antoinette is not thrilled with her new existence in a distant country, so she sneaks out of her cell at night to explore the outside world when the other convicts are asleep. When contemplating the house, Antoinette views it as a lifeless-colorless dim house. The cardboard version of England she suddenly finds herself in is not what she expected. Furthermore, she does not presently possess a feeling of belonging here since she is not allowed to feel comfortable there. She writes to Daniel, her stepbrother, an emotional letter detailing her displeasure with her new home and begging him to come and save her from the cold and darkness. Thornfield Hall as shown by Antoinette is frequently seen as a meta-commentary on the work's underlying intertextuality, with Antoinette being transported into the England of Bronte's story. (Spivak, 1986).

The “passages” through which Antoinette wanders are, therefore, not just metaphors for the rooms and hallways of a house but also for the phrases and sentences that make up Brontë’s text. Another set of “passages” comes into play, this time Antoinette’s trek across the Sargasso Sea instead of the houses. At this point, Antoinette pauses in her description of the house to reflect on the journey that brought her there.

He [Rochester] found me talking to the young man who brought me my food? I put my arms round his neck and asked him to help me. He said, ‘I didn’t know what to do, sir.’ I smashed the glasses and plates against the port hotel. I hoped it would break and the sea would come in ..And then I slept. When I woke it was a different sea. Colder. It was that night, I think, It was that night, I think, that we changed course and lost our way to England. This cardboard house where I walk at night is not England. (Rhys, 1999, p.107).

Rhys’s placement of this memory in the midst of Antoinette’s description of the house is meant to be provoking. Her voyage across the Atlantic is not only the third ritual of passage but also a type of intermediary rite of passage that recalls and formally locates her entry into the family. Antoinette’s forced migration is contextualized within the literary depiction of Thornfield Hall and “England,” bringing the memory of the ship’s passage into the rural estate. This whole approach helps to illuminate the colonial origins of the English country house rather than attempting to conceal or reject them (Henderson, 2015). The English country house becomes a “meta-allegory” (Mahdi, 2015, p. 6050), denoting Imperial-Colonial issues.

*Wide Sargasso Sea* is an essential contribution to the current discussion over the narrative literary canon’s worth since it criticizes both post-imperial nostalgia and the tendency to choose the English home as a setting in modern literature. Beginning in the 1940s, there was a greater emphasis on maintaining old mansions. The novel’s detailed depictions of Thornfield Hall support the current theme of Britain’s decline from grandeur back then. The novel employs the archetype of the English country house to affirm and question the conventional English identity that this setting represents.

Antoinette’s scarlet red dress is one of the few items she took to remind her of the land once her home. A flash of recognition occurs as she analyzes the garments:

I said, ‘If I had been wearing my red dress Richard would have known me.’

‘Your red dress,’ she said, and laughed.

But I looked at the dress on 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. I will remember, I thought. I will remember quite soon now. (Rhys, 1999, pp. 110-111).

A crimson dress is what she remembers most about the fire that tore through Coulibri Estate, Antoinette’s early childhood Jamaican family home in her mind. While donning the garment, she had an epiphany about her life’s purpose and obligation to fulfill it. The dress’s flaming symbolism recalls Antoinette’s ruthless character (Hope, 2012). Her destructive attitude is shown when she deliberately burns down one of Thornfield Hall’s rooms. The connection to the flame motif is emphasized even further by the room’s crimson carpet and curtains. Antoinette finds Thornfield Hall as frigid and unwelcoming as Jane Eyre’s Gateshead. While up on the roof, Antoinette, who has been struggling with persistent feelings of alienation, finally comes into her own as she turns and gaze up into the night sky:

Then I turned round and saw the sky. It was red and all my life was in it. I saw the grandfather clock and Aunt Cora's patchwork, all colors. I saw the orchids and the stephanotis and the jasmine and the tree of life in flames. I saw the chandelier and the red-carpet downstairs and the bamboos and the tree ferns, the gold ferns and the silver, and the soft green velvet of the moss on the garden wall. I saw my doll's house and the books and the picture of the Miller's Daughter. I heard the parrot call as lie did when he saw a stranger, *Qui est lei? Qui est Id?* and the man who hated me was calling too, Bertha! Bertha! 'The wind caught my hair and it streamed out like wings. It might bear me up, I thought, if I jumped to those hard stones. But when I looked over the edge, I saw the pool at Coulibri. Tia was there. She beckoned to me and when I hesitated, she laughed. I heard her say, *You frightened? And I heard the man's voice, Bertha! Bertha!* All this I saw and heard in a fraction of a second. And the sky so red. Someone screamed, and I thought, why did I scream? I called 'Tia!' and jumped and woke. (Rhys, 1999, p.112).

Foucault's approach deems the possibility of rebellion and subversion inside penal institutions. Antoinette's battle against the carceral structures that strive to control her is shown in her efforts at rebellion and her reluctance to adhere to conventional conventions throughout the novel. In Antoinette's case, such resistance and subversion are represented by burning herself and everything around her. The safety and familiarity of Antoinette's childhood home have returned, bringing them peace. This fire at Thornfield Hall represents both destruction and renewal. By returning to her old, more genuine self, Antoinette abandons the image her husband had created for her (Lou, 2018). Having burned herself and Thornfield Hall to the ground, Antoinette had accomplished everything she had set out to do: release her pent-up rage, exact her vengeance, learn who she was, and liberate her soul. On the one hand, Dante's Purgatory is where the sinner's soul is purified by overcoming its faults and escaping the bonds of sin. The consequences of sin are dealt with in Hell, while the causes are addressed in Purgatory (Taher, 2012). On the other hand, Rhys's Purgatory is represented by the cleansing power of fire. The fire cleanses her and returns her to her original self and feeling of belonging, even as it destroys the impetus for her to forgive. Her death is tragic, but at least she is free from oppression (Lou 1227). While Antoinette is being forcibly uprooted from her island home, the start of the commencement cycle and a symbolic return to her island life occur when she puts on her red dress again (Tollance, 2020).

The garment's crimson hue is more than just a nice accent color; it might be what the world needs to restore its luster. It is like the blood that runs through Antoinette's veins, a fire she eagerly needs to ignite as she goes through the cardboard house, and such feelings are celebrated with the ecstatic use of the color red. The crimsonness of the dress is the backdrop against which the drama of Antoinette's life is played out. When she is sitting calmly on the battlement, she is having a wonderful dream until she hears a scream that abruptly ends her peaceful reverie. (Tollance, 2020)

## **1.5 Conclusion**

The idea of confinement and imprisonment is omnipresent throughout Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, functioning as a metaphor for colonialism, gender discrimination, and racial persecution. As a white Creole woman, Antoinette is caught between two worlds and ostracized by the black Jamaicans and the English colonizers. One of the primary forms of incarceration in the novel is Antoinette's confinement within her own mind. The past haunts her and the memory of her life at Coulibri Estate as well as being trapped by her family's history and her own racial identity as a white Creole in postcolonial Jamaica. As a result, Antoinette feels like she does not fit in the white or black communities.



Foucault explains how captives in prisons may accept the rules and regulations placed upon them. Like Antoinette, who tragically descends into madness as a reaction to her terrible circumstances, Antoinette internalizes the prevailing discourse of lunacy attributed to her by others. Through the experiences of Antoinette, the novel explores the ways in which individuals are trapped by societal norms, cultural expectations, and their own past traumas. The novel also highlights the destructive effects of confinement, such as isolation, madness, and violence. Ultimately, Rhys suggests that true liberation can only be achieved by confronting and breaking free from the constraints that bind us, whether personal, social, or institutional.

Additionally, the novel explores the theme of confinement through Rhys's portrayal of gender roles and the limited options available to women at the time. In the novel, Antoinette and other female characters are oppressed and constrained by patriarchal systems that limit their choices and freedom. Foucault's focus on the marginalization and subjection of particular groups in society is reflected in the novel's depiction of Creole identity and Antoinette's treatment as an outsider. Rhys uses the prison setting to show how Antoinette's isolation and mental decline result from colonial conventions and power structures.

Antoinette is also trapped in a marriage to an Englishman, Rochester, who is distant and unsympathetic to her feelings and desires as he never manifests any sign of comprehension and treats her with great disdain, so this, in its turn, leads to a sense of entrapment and confinement. As a result, Antoinette's mental state deteriorates due to her sense of displacement and lack of control over her life, making her increasingly isolated and paranoid and experiencing hallucinations, further contributing to her incarceration and isolation. All these psychological disturbances culminate in Rochester's decision to incarcerate her in an abandoned attic because he deems her a disturbing threat to his security. *Wide Sargasso Sea* provides a scathing assessment of colonialism's lingering effects on people and communities by drawing on Foucault's theoretical framework. Rhys deftly reveals the repressive character of carceral places and the power mechanisms that exclude and control people who are labeled "other" by the prevailing powers. This novel's insightful look at authority compels readers to consider the lingering effects of colonialism and the complex relationship between authority, expertise, and individuality as they shape people's lives. *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a powerful illustration of how Foucault's theories continue to be useful for analyzing and criticizing the intricate power relations that permeate all social institutions.

The cumulative effects of Antoinette's different types of incarceration are devastating. Over time, she loses contact with reality and herself, resulting to a terrible and violent catastrophe. So, Antoinette's captivity in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is destructive since it ultimately leads to her mental collapse and ultimate death.

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