

Exploring Dialogism in the Mistress-Slave Relationship: A Study of Female Slave Characters in Jean Rhys' "Wide Sargasso Sea"

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Abstract

Slavery, an enduring institution devoid of remuneration, has played a foundational role in numerous societies. Literary works explore the changing roles and portrayals of slaves in Great Britain's post-emancipation era in 1833. Within Jean Rhys' seminal work, "Wide Sargasso Sea," a captivating narrative emerges, spotlighting a female slave character whose mistress forms a profound, almost maternal, attachment. This study embarks on an exploration of this intricate mistress-slave dynamic, particularly focusing on the slave's portrayal in a maternal capacity. It delves into the question of whether a slave could embody the utmost empathy towards the extended familial network of her mistress. Framing this investigation is Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin's theory of dialogism, asserting that interaction is shaped by discourse and that each dialogue carries profound significance. The poignant instance of the slave providing solace as Antoinette's mother falters exemplifies this theory. The findings substantiate the hypothesis that the language employed in reciprocal communication profoundly impacts the tenor of the relationship. This study thus sheds light on the profound interplay between language, empathy, and power dynamics within the mistress-slave relationship.

Keywords: Slavery, Female Slave, Maternal Role, Dialogism Theory, Power Dynamics

Introduction

The intricate dynamics of relationships within the complex backdrop of postcolonial societies have been a subject of profound literary exploration. Among these, the portrayal of the bond between Christophine and Antoinette in Jean Rhys' seminal work, "Wide Sargasso Sea," stands out as a poignant examination.

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This relationship, inherently entwined with the master-slave dynamic, transcends conventional boundaries. Antoinette, in her connection with Christophine, experiences a maternal love that defies the societal norms of their time.

This study delves into the nuanced layers of this relationship, illuminating the profound implications of master-slave affiliation in the wake of emancipation. The actions of the masters, often fraught with prejudice and injustice, evoke a deep-seated resentment among the marginalized black population. "Wide Sargasso Sea" emerges as a postcolonial narrative and a powerful feminist exploration of the intricate ties between a slave and her owner.

Drawing on the insightful analysis by Haque (2016), this research aims to dissect the intricate interplay between white and black characters in the narrative, shedding light on the socio-cultural and historical tensions that shape their interactions. Central to this examination is the feminist lens, which unravels the complexities of a relationship that defies societal norms. In navigating this terrain, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted narratives woven into Rhys' masterwork. Through carefully examining the Christophine-Antoinette dynamic, we endeavor to unravel the threads of power, identity, and resistance that define their relationship within the broader context of postcolonial and feminist discourse.

Rhys has been the generation of the slave-owner era in the white West Indies; "Wide Sargasso Sea" can be part of her autobiography (Carriere, 2007). At the beginning of the novel, Antoinette felt alienated with less sense of belonging. She takes herself as destructive and separated from racist society in the black Caribbean population; however, she likes to eat Caribbean traditional food from her beloved mother-slave, though she also does not enjoy the protocol of an English girl. Identity frequently seems to have another meaning of sameness and monotony; indeed, Antoinette and Christophine share a common value system, nationality, language, culture, and attitudes regarding social attributes. However, the complications come out with the tug of dominancy and an influential identity seeking to force the weaker one on implementing its attributes, and that is perplexing for Antoinette: "Antoinette, struggling to create a coherent life in a black and white society both of which reject her" (Hirschman, 2012). Bell Hook in 1982 commented in a dispute that, in the USA, discrimination occurred in feminist movements,

"From a black female's perspective, if white women are denying the existence of black women, writing 'feminist' scholarship as if black women are not part of the

collective group of American women, or discriminating against black women, then it matters less that North America was colonized by white patriarchal men who institutionalized a radically imperialist social order, than that white woman who purports to be feminist support and actively perpetuate anti-black racism". (Amos & Parmar, 1984).

Jean Rhys' work: *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a creative narrative with full of expressions, sailed out with her inner half-identity and tormented life towards British Imperialism. Her represented plot and characters have the ideologies but not the tendencies to absorb the British traits. It is said that the fiction to the prequel of Bronte's *Jane Eyre* is a portrait of a double-minded character; "Both characters, Jane and Antoinette, long for independence and freedom" (Herischian, 2012). Rather Antoinette is a disordered character as on one side, she has a rebellious soul, fighting to achieve her identity from the British, and on the other hand, she represents herself as a perfect English being. In this perplexing phase of mind and existence, how she feels close to a slave and takes Christophine: a black slave, her guide, and friend with motherhood feelings is a researchable question for this writing.

Antoinette expressed her fear of miscegenation, particularly when she observed any male servant kiss her mother. She was gone to provide a more detailed explanation of her hatred for the black servant, and she had directed her rage at Christophine, commenting on and abusing her: "damned black evil from hell" (Rhys, "Wide Sargasso Sea", 86). She reviled everyone coming close to her mother as she is missing the same phase.

At the beginning of the novel, Antoinette does not like Christophine, and the former used to get rid of Christophine; When Christophine sang a song about a white cockroach, Antoinette addresses and taunted her too on her lack of identification, while the Jamaican black community had rejected the latter also. Her designation as the "other" had been questioned at the time, though she was still denied her Englishness. "That's me. That is what they call all of us who were here before their people in Africa sold them to the slave traders. Moreover, I have heard English women call us white niggers. So, between you and I often wonder who I am and where my country is and where do I belong and why was I ever born at all" (Rhys, "Wide Sargasso Sea, 63).

The narrations elaborated by Rhys are helpful to understand how Antoinette is attached to Christophine. 'Dialogism' is a social and theoretical philosophy of

language established by Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin (1895–1975), which would assist to resolve the hypothesis of how an owner can be attached to a slave. Living in a dialogic and community environment entails participating in a discussion; these are connected and in constant communication via numerous mechanisms, one of which is language. Dialogic dialogism, according to Bakhtin, is the process by which meaning and communicated affiliation arise from interactions among the work, the author, and the reader; the contexts in which these elements are placed, particularly social and political variables, also have an impact on them (Dialogism, 1975). According to Bakhtin, the listener produces understanding by responding appropriately to the speaker's speech. As a result, he feels that meaning can only be found within a debate. From this perspective, language is more than just a collection of grammatical patterns. Angela Smith: a professor of Language at the University of Sunderland remarked, "The plot is like the Sargasso Sea, where weeds tangle together and resist being unraveled; stories drift into one another inconclusively." (Literary Theory: Sexuality, 2021)

Bakhtin's Dialogism

Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of dialogism is a framework for understanding language and communication that emphasizes the dynamic and interactive nature of human discourse. Developed in the early to mid-20th century by the Russian philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin, this theory has had a profound influence on various fields, including linguistics, literary theory, and philosophy. In "The Dialogic Imagination" (1981), Bakhtin connected language to dialogue in different aspects:

- **Polyphony:** Bakhtin posited that language is inherently polyphonic, meaning it consists of multiple voices, perspectives, and meanings. These voices are not isolated but engage in continuous dialogue, resulting in a rich tapestry of meaning.
- **Heteroglossia:** Bakhtin introduced the concept of heteroglossia, which refers to the coexistence of diverse and often conflicting linguistic elements within a given discourse. These elements include different dialects, registers, styles, and languages. Heteroglossia reflects the social and cultural diversity of language.
- **Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces:** Bakhtin described the dual forces of centripetal and centrifugal tendencies in language. Centripetal forces seek to unify and stabilize language, often represented by authoritative

discourses or official languages. Centrifugal forces, on the other hand, promote diversity and change, reflecting the influence of various social groups and contexts.

- **Utterance and Speech Genres:** Bakhtin emphasized the importance of the utterance, or individual speech act, as the fundamental unit of communication. He also highlighted the existence of speech genres, which are socially recognized types of utterances with specific communicative purposes.
- **Chronotope:** Bakhtin introduced the concept of chronotope, which refers to the interplay between time and space in literary works. The chronotope influences the narrative's structure, characterization, and thematic elements.
- **Dialogic Imagination:** Bakhtin argued for the primacy of the dialogic imagination, which refers to the capacity to engage with multiple perspectives and voices. This imaginative capacity allows individuals to participate in ongoing, open-ended dialogues with others and with cultural, social, and historical contexts.
- **Carnivalization:** Bakhtin explored the concept of carnivalization, which involves the subversion of established norms and hierarchies through festive, communal celebrations. This concept is often associated with the temporary inversion of social roles and the liberation of suppressed voices.

Bakhtin's dialogism significantly influences academic disciplines like literary theory, linguistics, philosophy, and cultural studies, enhancing understanding of language's democratic nature and the significance of diverse voices. Furthermore, Bakhtin's ideas have been applied to the analysis of literature, film, art, and cultural phenomena, providing scholars with a powerful tool for examining the complexity and richness of human communication. Overall, Bakhtin's theory of dialogism remains a pivotal framework for studying the intricacies of language, culture, and society. It continues to inspire research and critical inquiry across a wide range of academic disciplines.

Methodology

This study uses Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism theory to analyze the portrayal of female slave characters in Jean Rhys' "Wide Sargasso Sea." The research aims to investigate how dialogism influences power dynamics, empathy, and

communication within the mistress-slave relationship. The primary data source will be Jean Rhys' novel, with a qualitative analysis examining dialogic moments and power dynamics. Comparative analysis with other works featuring similar themes of power and dialogue will enrich the study. Ethical considerations will be strictly followed, and the study aims to contribute to the discourse on power dynamics and empathetic communication within literary narratives. The expected outcomes include uncovering nuanced layers of meaning within the mistress-slave relationship and highlighting the pivotal role of dialogue in shaping power dynamics and empathy.

Wide Sargasso Sea – The perspective

An interesting element found in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is the ambivalent affiliation between the owner, Antoinette, and her mother figure, Christophine. Antoinette is unable to get a love-care relationship with her mother: Annette, though the former's mind is seeking fear, identity, love, care, and freedom. The purpose of this article is to dissect the language used in the text, related to this association, as the closeness between these two characters of master and slave.

The novel has written after the emancipation act so it is said that "In the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Rhys tried to show the power of the black Negro as more than the white British or white Negro" (Hague, 2012). "Antoinette was a child born at the end of a country's transformational period. She had to bear the burden of her ancestors' and foremothers' traumas, which resulted in a new type of suffering for her. Her basket had fallen people, a polluted race, a poor family, and a genetic imperfection, thus she was doomed from the start" (Phelps, 2011).

❖ Antoinette and her Mother: Annette

Rhys describes the white women as 'pretty self' ("*Wide Sargasso Sea*", p. 13). Antoinette, the protagonist remarks, "I got used to a solitary life, but my mother still planned and hoped" (*Wide Sargasso Sea*", p. 16). The mother and the daughter both have a depressed relationship; however, Antoinette (daughter) feels the deficiency of her mother's love and wishes to get a friendship with her mother, while Annette (mother) does not admire her daughter, and doubts her identity. Annette engages herself for the sake of a protected patron of a man. Antoinette "experience[s] her mother as a human mirror who will not retreat respectfully into shadow" (Caplan, 193). That is the reason the former feels alienated, even though she sees a dream of

walking alone in a woodland: “I dreamed that I was walking in the forest. I was not alone, but someone who hated me was with me, out of sight. I could hear heavy footsteps coming closer and though it struggled and screamed I could not move. I woke to cry” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 24). Antoinette was dejected because of three ominous dreams: As Maurel said, “This threefold nightmare partakes of the prophetic dimension of *Wide Sargasso Sea*” (140). Dreams of Antoinette disclose her repressed and submissive personality; she mirrors herself in a dominant patriarchal society as suffers from mental distress. In fact, “through her dreams, Antoinette continues her exploitation of the otherness eclipsed by European rationality” (Emery, 48), which intensifies by the behavior of her mother.

“Like her mother, she is suffering a division of the self where she undergoes what she calls the real death, the death of the mind, and becomes blank, doll-like, inhuman, in waiting for the second death, the death of the body” (Mezei, 205). “*Wide Sargasso Sea* shows Antoinette as inhumanly abused in her family as a well social society and shows her search for love” (Herischian, 2012).

“Antoinette: I put my arms around [Annette] and kissed her. She held me so tightly that I could not breathe and I thought ‘It’s not her.’ Then, ‘It must be her.’ ...’ But I am here, I am here,’ I said, and she said, ‘No,’ quietly. Then ‘No no’ very loudly and flung me from her. I fell against the partition and hurt myself” (“*Wide Sargasso Sea*”, p. 29).

Antoinette desires to be close to her mother: Annette, and shares the disheartening relationship with the latter’s demeanor towards her, “I hated this frown and once I touched her forehead trying to smooth it. But she pushed me away, not roughly but calmly, coldly, without a word, as if she decided once and for all that I was useless to her” (“*Wide Sargasso Sea*”, p. 23). When Annette becomes sick and Antoinette goes to ask her, the former (mother) rejects her rather than welcoming her daughter. Annette gets irritated when she observes Antoinette around her, and asks, “Why you bring this child to make trouble, trouble, and trouble? Trouble enough without that” (“*Wide Sargasso Sea*”, p. 48). It is unclear in the text why Annette is a careless mother, so Antoinette feels alienated, realizes her mother is not happy with her existence, and feels embarrassed about her assimilation. “[T]he narrative [of Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is] of a daughter’s cumulative trauma, much of it carried over from her mother’s own traumatic life” (Burrows, 45). Paula Caplan

further elucidates that “the very word mother elicits a wealth of conflicting, ambivalent feelings—protectiveness, a Phelps desire for approval, need for her love versus rage at the terrible damage [a daughter] feel[s] [a mother] has done” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 19).

Antoinette has received careless and offhand behavior from whom she should get protection: from her mother, her mother’s husband, or England, her mother country, not to accept her as her child (Carriere, 2007). She desires to exist a smooth affiliation with her mother, but regrettably, the former has obliteration in relations, destructive marriage, and ironic misfortune. “Antoinette has a relationship with her mother is devoid of warmth ... their relationship is without understanding and much dialogue” (ibid). When Antoinette feels fear to see the nightmare, Annette said, “You were making such a noise. I must go to Pierre (a pet parrot), you’ve frightened him” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 27).

Antoinette said, “She wanted to sit with Pierre or walk where she pleased without being pestered, she wanted peace. I was old enough to look after myself. ‘Oh, let me alone’ she would say, ‘let me alone,’ and after I knew that she talked aloud to herself and I was a little afraid of her” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 18).

Such interaction is a turning point in Antoinette's association with Annette; it marks the end. Gradually, Antoinette gives up trying to find an association with her biological mother, and this move makes a new turn toward the slave.

In the early part of the novel, Antoinette remembered the grimace of her mother, and said, “A frown came between her notice black eyebrows, deep---- it might have been cut with a knife” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 114). However, later on, Rochester mentioned the same remarks to note the repetitive impression of Antoinette’s expression. He said, “The cold light was on her face and I looked back at the sad drop of her lips, the frown between her thick eyebrows, deep as if it had been cut with a knife” (ibid). The text of “Wide Sargasso Sea psychologically vindicates Antoinette and Annette, demonstrating their intelligence, powerful emotions, personal seriousness, and correct instincts” – Bidisha.

❖ **Christophine: A Negro Slave**

“For Britain, blackness was associated with the colonial slaves and their violent uprising in the West Indies against the white English imperial power” (Hague, 2012).

Hate is clear in the fiction, of the white to the black, as Anette indicates the inferiority of the slaves, "I never looked at any strange negro. They hated us. They called us white cockroaches" ... "Go away white cockroach, go away, and go away. No body want you, go away" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 20). The word 'cockroach' connotes 'vermin', which shows the antagonistic relationship in the text. The blacks have to suffer harsh and bitter reactions, particularly slaves, for instance, Christophine has to face some sarcastic remarks from the whites, minute by minute, as "cheating nigger" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 22), "Black devil from Hell" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 122), "an ignorant, obstinate old negro woman" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 102), despite that, she remains attached and loyal to the whites.

Rhys shares the superiority of the English over the slaves. When Antoinette's dress was dirty and she did wear Tia's dress, another slave. Annette scolded Christophine to wear the rough clothes to Antoinette, and said, "My dress was even dirtier than usual" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 23).

Annette is not a loving mother, while the character of Christophine is completely different from Annette's; free from the men's boundaries and implicitly distrusts their motives. Annette does not like Christophine, "it's useful to keep a Martinique obeah woman on the premises," and further says, "She said mockingly, nor meaning it, but soon other people were saying it- and meaning it" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 27). Mr. Mason endorses Annette's remarks and upsurges to say,

"Annette, you imagine enmity which does not exist. Always one extreme on the other. Did not you fly at me like a wild cat when I said nigger. Not nigger, nor even Negro, black people, I must say. You don't like, or even recognize, the good in them" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 29).

While Christophine does not get married, says: "All women, all colors, nothing but fools. Three children I have. One living in this world, each one a different father, but no husband, I thank my God. I keep my money. I don't give it to no worthless man" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 99). Rochester also confronted Christophine, saying, "And yet...why is Christophine such a shady character? It may have something to do with the fact that she was imprisoned for practicing obeah, called voodoo in the French colonies" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 97). Instead of all, Antoinette takes her as a best friend; shares care and love a lot.

❖ **Christophine and Antoinette**

Christophine chastises Annette for her careless behavior towards her daughter: "Christophine told [Annette] loudly that it is shameful. [Antoinette] run wild, she grows up worthless. And nobody cares" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 26). At this point, Christophine demonstrates her concern and her awareness of Antoinette's need for a mother figure in her life. When Annette wanted to leave Jamaica, she was worried only about her son, "I will go and take Pierre with me...It is not safe. It is not safe for Pierre" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 34-5). Victoria Burrows states about the first section of the novel that "bound together by extremely vivid vignettes which are imagistic recollections of the repetitive traumas that define Antoinette's young life" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 43). Rather, on the other hand, Antoinette does not want Christophine to leave though the emancipation act has passed: "Would Christophine go if you told her to? I thought. But I did not say it. I was afraid to say it" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 20).

To care for and learn the lessons of life, a girl still needs a mother figure, and Christophine fills the role for Antoinette. Annette was anxious in her life and rejected Antoinette thoroughly. After such incidents involving Antoinette Annette starts spending "much of [her] time in the kitchen," which remains the center of the home, as well as the living room of Christophine. Christophine plays the role of Antoinette's absent mother: "Christophine stayed with me because she wanted to stay" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 19).

Antoinette has a desire for a close relationship with Christophine, "I started to fan her" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 20). Antoinette is unwilling to admit when Rochester (Antoinette's husband) is pulling her away. Antoinette shares every stiffness of life with Christophine as a friend or mentor, even when the former's husband rejects her though she tries repeatedly to make her husband loved. It is only Christophine who not only gives her guidance for making her life charming but tried practically also with the help of obeah..." ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 106).

After the disturbing relationship between Antoinette and her husband, Christophine instructed Antoinette to go back to England, and said, "Women must have the spunk to live in this wicked world" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 92). Even when Antoinette was going to get married, Christophine forbade her and commented: "A man don't treat you good, pick up your shirt and walk out" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 100), she further said, "Have spunk and do battle for yourself" (ibid).

Every daughter supposes to receive love from her mother because “not to love your mother seems unthinkable at best, inhuman at worst” (Caplan, 18). Paula Caplan further explains that “the very word mother elicits a wealth of conflicting, ambivalent feelings—protectiveness, a desire for approval, need for her love versus rage at the terrible damage [a daughter] feel[s] [a mother] has done (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 19). This is the affection and care of Christophine for Antoinette that the latter said: “I did not love her. I was thirsty for her” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 85). Even to memorize her childhood; Antoinette remarked, “It was Christophine who bought our food from the village and persuaded some girls to help her sweep and wash clothes” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 119).

Dialogue is a way of exchanging ideas and feelings in the Wide Sargasso Sea and a social force that brings people together. Language may instill the same level of fear and mistrust as an actual threat, and it can lead to scandals that devastate people's lives. The novel wrestles with the medium as a product of language, showing the numerous ways in which stories might deliver and receive; “I left a light on the chair by my bed and waited for Christophine, for I liked to see her last thing” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 33).

When Antoinette needs assistance saving her marriage, Christophine tries to take on the role of a nurturing mother. She receives guidance from Christophine such as “Speak to your husband calm and cool...Don't bawl at the man and don't make crazy faces... Do not cry either... Crying no good with him... Speak nice and make him understand” (“Wide Sargasso Sea”, p. 116 & 149). Christophine, Mr. Mason, Aunt Cora, and Richard expressed their love for Antoinette in small ways, but none of them could compare to a mother's love. Because the only love Antoinette had ever known was when she was a child and believed her mother to love her, she had no idea how to build a sustainable adult relationship with her husband.

❖ Linguistic Connotation

The character's language detachment from her native tongue reflects emotional distance from her mother and ancestral legacy, highlighting the profound connection between language, maternal relationships, and ancestral heritage. “Language is also related to this relationship, as often the closeness or distance the character feels to her maternal language is indicative of that to the mother and the ancient past” (Carriere, 37). Rose Kamel discusses in “Before I was set free” for the Creole wife in Wide Sargasso Sea, saying, “Antoinette bears the cultural baggage

accrued from the plutocratic creolization of black women recent in the collective memory of West Indies". Language plays a fundamental role to understand the text and its underpinning meaning to create serenity among the characters. The role of language in the novel is performed by some unexpected and assumed systems for the epistle, utopia Menippean stir, and confession, which Bakhtin talks about in his dialogism theory.

His fundamental prerogative is that dialogue constructs literary canon, though meanings are different in underpinning: "viewed as a finished product" (Haberer, 56). The narrative strategy involved not only the first-person dialogue or point of view but also the references of other characters as original figures; the audience receives the protagonist's thoughts. "In the text, *Wide Sargasso Sea* Antoinette becomes active in the narrated events; however, she has placed herself in the lost world; the secrets are whispered throughout the text, but never fully revealed" (Angela Smith, 22).

The language used by Christophine to Antoinette is styled on an original mode of writing as a sympathetic mother-figure character though the plot adheres to the Black convention of writing. It is also important to say that the narrations of Antoinette are slanted by some questions and filled with informal expressions, "like the black but hates herself to be black" ("*Wide Sargasso Sea*", p. 118,139).

When Antoinette emphasized the "alienated" expression, it was also clear that she was emphasizing the "self." The self-centered inquiries reveal an effort to understand the lives by reading about them in the book. When one considers the significance of writing in her real life: "selflessness attitude," the fictitious record of Antoinette's thoughts seems authentic. To build the most 'truthful' story possible about Antoinette's life, it methodically consults biographical sources. "When I was exhausted I turned away from her and slept, still without a word or a caress. I woke and she was kissing me- a soft light kiss" ("*Wide Sargasso Sea*", p. 85).

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, dialogue is a means of exchanging ideas and feelings and a social force that brings people together. It denotes a character's social status, such as when black people speak in a broken or filthy accent to white people. It can indicate the introduction of a foreign or exotic element, such as when Christophine speaks in patois, a Caribbean dialect of French. In the form of gossip or lies, language can instill the same level of fear and suspicion as a real threat, and it can create

scandals that devastate people's lives. The novel, as a product of language, wrestles with the medium, highlighting the various ways in which stories the writer conveys the 'Relationship between master and the slave'.

On the visit to Christophine's place, Antoinette felt fear: "It was at night that I felt danger" ... she consoles me, "You are safe, I would say. She would like that- to be told' you are safe" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 84). Antoinette relays on Christophine and feels relaxed with her mother figure: "When the former worries or is insecure, it is Christophine who comforts her: "You are safe, I would say to her and I 'shut your eyes. Rest" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 86). These sorts of words win the heart and keep them close throughout the novel.

Antoinette feels secure with Christophine. Antoinette says, "Without Christophine next to her at night the safe feeling left" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 104). This highlights Antoinette's dependency on Christophine: "And why did you do all this?" Each night Antoinette "waited for Christophine, for [she] liked to see her last thing" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 37). This bond between Christophine and Antoinette becomes stable and strong through the dialogues; that is just what the former needs.

There are long pauses at different stages in the conversation delivered by different characters. As Christophine adds, "She should sleep. She must sleep while I work for her — to make her well again. But I don't speak - of all that to you" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 136). At the end of the novel, Antoinette is unable for an open discussion with her husband about her past because of insincere and irresponsible behavior and bad experience of communication with her real mother, but as Bakhtin said; care and sympathy in dialogue with the mother-slave remain stable in communism and dialogism.

Dialogism also points out the narration can be two-dimensional; from the black-and-white perspective; the master and the slave's thoughts can also be interpreted from different angles of mother and daughter relation. *Wide Sargasso Sea* might be seen in this light as a suggestion picked from the variety of voices. It supported Bakhtin's selection of the book as evidence for dialogism's superiority as a genre. The book looks to be a place where discourse can flourish. Antoinette feels stress-free with Christophine as the latter used to comfort her: "Do not be afraid, you are quite safe. We all are quite safe. Just for a moment, I shut my eyes and rested my head against her shoulder" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 36). Antoinette further

expresses, "Yet one day when I was waiting there I was suddenly very much afraid... then Christophine came in smiling and pleased to see me. Nothing alarming ever happened and I forgot or told myself I had forgotten" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 28).

Unlike Wise, on the other hand, the protagonist does not feel comfortable with her real mother, and at that moment, she wants to remain in the company of Christophine: "I was going to see my mother. I had insisted that Christophine must be with me, no one else..." ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 43). the heroine is attached to Christophine from childhood because of the care and love: "And here is Christophine who was my dad, my nurse long ago" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 65). Language is the only way to enter into communication in any relationship, which leads to inter-related discourse. As per Bakhtin's dialogism, "the novel has a completely different relationship to languages from other genres since it constantly experiments with new shapes to display the variety and immediacy of speech diversity" (The Dialogic Imagination, xxix).

Rhys has carefully planned every event that appears in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Throughout the novel, Antoinette feels fear and calls for help from her strong mentor Christophine: she said,

"Oh Christophine, I am so afraid, I said, I do not know why, but so afraid. All the time. Help me" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 105) ... Christophine comforts her and said, "Keep yourself quiet" ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 106). These dialogues make a connection between the two, said Bakhtin; "You hush up and keep yourself quiet. And do not cry. Crying is no good with him. I told you before crying is not good", Christophine said to Antoinette ("Wide Sargasso Sea", p. 135).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the intricate web of relationships portrayed in "*Wide Sargasso Sea*" underscores the profound impact of dialogism in the literary narrative. The interplay between characters, particularly the pivotal dynamic between Antoinette and Christophine, is a poignant exploration of love, dependency, and maternal bonds. Christophine's multifaceted role as both servant and surrogate mother adds a layer of complexity to their connection, illustrating the depth of human relationships in the post-colonial context. Antoinette's reliance on Christophine for security and solace is a testament to the enduring power of genuine human connection. The moments of silence and unspoken understanding between them further emphasize the richness of their dialogue.

As Bakhtin aptly noted, this communion of care and empathy remains a steadfast anchor amidst the turbulence of their surroundings. Thus, the novel serves as a powerful work of fiction and a profound exploration of the enduring human capacity for connection and understanding, even in the face of adversity.

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