

From Captivity to Liberation: Women's Metamorphosis Through Self- Awareness in Sarah Daniels 'The Devil's Gateway

DR. ÖĞR. ÜYESİ CÜNEYT ÖZATA*- GÜZİN ŞARMAN**

Abstract

The years beginning with 1960 witnessed several alterations in the thoughts of the women identified as 'second-wave' feminists with regard to both social and political perspectives, which was led by the influence of women's movements. The women of that period directed their attention more to such matters like discrimination, gender, inequality, and violence whereas they were still interested in domestic issues. Women's new interests were fundamental sources of the works of such prominent feminist playwrights like Sarah Daniels displaying tendencies towards second-wave feminism. In this study, one of the debatable plays of her, *The Devil's Gateway* (1983) is analysed in terms of the gradual transformation of the female characters through self-awareness, regarding their positions in both domestic and public domain as well. In the light of the background of Daniels' period, with hermeneutic analysis and feminist criticism, the study also aims to observe triggering factors for the women's awakening in detail from the very beginning to the end of the play. The evaluations of the study are revealed in the conclusion part.

Key Words: Sarah Daniels, *The Devil's Gateway*, Feminism, Transformation, Self-Awareness

ESARETTEN ÖZGÜRLÜĞE: SARAH DANIELS'İN THE DEVIL'S GATEWAY OYUNUNDA ÖZ FARKINDALIK ÇERÇEVESİNDE KADINLARIN DEĞİŞİMİ

Öz

1960'la başlayan yıllar, kadın hareketlerinin etkisi altında 'ikinci dalga' feministler olarak bilinen kadınların hem sosyal hem de siyasi bakış açılarına göre düşüncelerinde çeşitli değişikliklere şahitlik etmiştir. O dönemin kadınları ev içi meselelere hala ilgi duyarken dikkatlerini ayrımcılık, cinsiyet, eşitsizlik ve şiddet gibi konulara daha fazla yöneltmişlerdir. Kadınların bu yeni ilgi alanları ikinci dalga feminizm akımı içerisinde yer alan Sarah Daniels gibi önemli feminist yazarların eserleri için temel kaynaklardı. Bu çalışmada Daniels'ın tartışmalı eserlerinden biri olan *The Devil's Gateway* (1983) hem evde hem de kamusal alandaki konumlarını göz önünde bulundurarak kadın karakterlerin farkındalık çerçevesinde aşamalı değişimlerini incelenmektedir. Ayrıca bu çalışma Daniels'ın döneminin temeli ışığında, yorumlayıcı analiz ve feminist eleştiri aracılığıyla oyunun başından sonuna kadar kadınların uyanışını tetikleyen etmenleri ayrıntılı bir şekilde gözlemlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın bulguları sonuç kısmında verilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sarah Daniels, *The Devil's Gateway*, Feminizm, Değişim, Öz farkındalık

* Ordu Üniversitesi, cuneyt.ozata@hotmail.com, orcid: 0000-0002-9179-9537

** Ordu Üniversitesi, guzin.srmn@gmail.com, orcid: 0000-0001-6306-0324

INTRODUCTION

A high number of campaigns were conducted by a group of women from 1960 on, leaving their mark on the foundation of a new feminist perspective triggered by the Women's Liberation Movement. Being in the pursuit of better and greater rights than the ones having been provided to them until those years, these women found themselves in a hard struggle and attempt to be the owner of as much a strong position in society as men. Theirs was indeed a search for liberation and independence from the centuries-old hegemony and oppression of men under the patriarchal system. Besides this initiative, however, they focused on such issues as domestic field, gender, and sexuality until the 1970s and 1980s. These years "saw the efflorescence of women's self-discovery, at a time when new identities and a new consciousness were developed amongst women" (Kaplan 1992, p. xx). It was through the campaigns and efforts of the Women's Liberation Movement as a trigger for such an action that the consciousness-raising and feminist theory emerged. Through "the consciousness-raising paradigm of the Liberation Movement" (Aston, 1995, p. 63), women had a chance to share their opinions in groups while telling their own stories to one another. In other words, this new term entitled as 'consciousness raising' (Aston, 1995; Keyssar, 1984; Morrisy, 1994 & Wandor, 1986) enabled women to voice their inner thoughts and feelings as well as to support their 'comrades'. In her book *Modern Dramatists Feminist Theatre*, Keyssar (1984) presents women's objectives through the consciousness-raising process:

Their goal was to raise each other's consciousness of the plight of women by sharing stories of oppression and private struggle for autonomy and self-confidence. These were, as they came to be called, support groups, gatherings of women who had wished to support each other's struggle for self-respect (pp. 14-15).

Viewed from another perspective, it was a new consciousness level, as far as women were concerned, which paved the way for the recognition of themselves and the belief in their own potential to the highest degree while also valuing their own perspectives. To be more precise, Farganis' book on feminism discusses that "consciousness raising is a way of allowing women to trust in their own perception, their own inner voice, their own autobiographical self" (1994, p. 19). This argument by Farganis makes it a must to make an account of the feminist theory concomitant with the Women's Liberation Movement. Placing particular emphasis on gender equality, feminist theory is the theoretical side of feminism intent on examining patriarchy, discrimination, women's social roles, objectification of their bodies, and oppression as well. As women stepped into the political sphere in protests to speak out their problems, what used to be seen as 'personal' beforehand started to be considered 'political' in their eyes. Basically, within the scope of feminist theory "there is some existing identity, understood through the category of women, who not only initiate feminist interests and goals within discourse, but constitute the subject for whom political representation is pursued" (Butler 1999, p. 3). In other words, as one of the most famous slogans of the Women's Liberation Movement, 'the personal is political' finds a place in feminist theory in the sense of women's political perspectives towards their problems. Farganis, in this respect, refers to feminist theory in his work: "Feminist theory has advanced a patent epistemological and discursive challenge by placing gender front and centre, integrating women into the discourses of social and political theory, and bringing women's need into the public policy sphere" (1994, p. 16).

However, the diversity of new subject matters dealt with by women such as gender inequality results in a split in opinions, contributing to the emergence of such 'feminisms' (Wan Yahya, 2010) consisting of cultural, liberal, socialist, and radical theories. Despite their distinctive standpoints to-

wards feminism, these theories strike a balance in the target that women ought to have equal rights with men. In addition, according to Michelene Wandor, they all hunt for an alteration in both domestic and social roles of women while also raising their voice against male dominance (1986, p. 133). In the light of a variety of feminist perspectives, women embark upon more serious matters pervading through every layers of society such as violence, child abuse, and rape. Subsequently, these theories lay groundwork for contemporary women's playwriting with feminist leanings in such a way to place unspoken and unmentioned issues in the minds of feminist playwrights quite "interested in how far deep underlying political systems can be confronted" (Morrissy, 1994, p. 17). In parallel with this statement, in the article *Female Bonding in Sarah Daniels' The Devil's Gateway*, Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya argues that women playwriting in the contemporary era changed its focus on woman's position in the domestic sphere into much more critical topics such as sexual harassment, murders, pornography and control over the body (2010, pp. 228-229). Similarly, Susan Basnett's article *The Politics of Location* identifies women playwriting after 1970 that:

...women's theatre began to shift away from its initial socialist agenda to an exploration of broader debates about gender and sexuality. The subjects of women's performances also changed. From plays looking at motherhood, wages for housework, equal pay, exploitation of women in the workplace, and a general emphasis on women's work, attention shifted to more personal explorations of incest, domestic violence, and then to questions of sexual identity and preference (2000, p. 73).

Renowned as one of the leading and remarkable playwrights in the 1980s, Daniels is included in 'second wave' feminism of which she has some points throughout her writing career. An analysis of her plays results in the inference that Daniels makes use of a number of feminist theories like radical feminism in the hope of reflecting the experiences of women within a male-governed, or patriarchal, society, despite being highly criticized by theatre critics for her manifestations in the plays. However, her lesbian identity, which is taken as another ground for any critique of her and her art, fails to overshadow her radical reflection. What she aims to discover in her drama is often the radical politics under the influence of male hegemony, and this is what her critics oppose and censure in her art (Aston, 2003, p. 39). Although her radical leanings uncover their existence through her plays, some of which have a more obvious reflection, her real intention is, indeed, to mirror social and political happenings within society as well as their echo at home. In the same vein, Daniels' radical perspective is interpreted in Pamela Bakker's thesis *A Critical Analysis of the Plays of Sarah Daniels*: "While the radical position does surface more prominently in some of her plays than others, it is important to recognize that it is more a reflection of ideas floating around in society at the time of writing than a deliberate attempt by the playwright to disseminate feminist theory" (1996, p. 4).

As she approaches the women's problems in a provocative way in her plays, she appears to prove a request for a new layout in the societal domain. In Carlson's opinion, she not only discusses the social transformation in her works but also hopes to restore a kind of renewed social order (1989). She demands and insists on a change through which women can be emancipated from their captivity on one hand and appear in social positions generally seated by men on the other. Further, as for the subject matters making up the core of her works, the multifaceted abuse of women and the oppression of patriarchal system on them may be two central headings. Through the portrayal of her female characters, she intentionally endeavors to focus on the repressive power of institutions managed by the patriarchal system as well as the social identity of women, using such themes as rape, homosexuality, child abuse, prostitution, and multi-directional violence (Wan Yahya, 2009, p. 1). She also points out, by means of her plays, the need for capitalist order to be overthrown, depression of

women to be ended and murderers of women to be punished. To clarify, her theatre is “characterised by a feminist anger; a kind of polemical anger that cried out at the injustices of a man-made world” (Aston, 2003, p. 46). Daniels’ focal point in writing such plays seems, therefore, to voice out the scream and outcry of the oppressed women in a world dominated and owned by the supremacy of men over women. More to the point, she has no hesitation about making a touch on the political events like nuclear armament in the world, which is one of the issues severely criticized about her plays. Her reply to these critiques is just that what she writes is the truth, not a lie or fallacy:

Some plays are more political than others, but within a context of challenging a status quo and putting forward ideas or ideology that have a different perspective, then my work is political. I do want my plays to be challenging. A play, to me, should be relevant to today’s society; that’s part of why I think you write plays. It should tell a story and it should also challenge (qtd. in Stephenson & Langridge, 1997, p. 4).

Notably, the local, national or global problems that she chooses to write about and deal with in her plays form the basis of her works, one of which is *The Devil’s Gateway*. In this early play, she leads female characters into the processes of self-awareness and self-realization. As the second play of Daniels, *The Devil’s Gateway* was first staged at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs in 1983. Considered to be an insightful study of the contemporary period from women’s perspective, the play places the women’s position in public and domestic sphere in the centre and focus of her play, also emphasizing and illustrating their growing awareness of themselves and others in their society. Favouring radical perspective in the play, Daniels creates her female characters as those who can raise their own consciousness of and voice against patriarchal power while restoring the relation between them. Not unlike in her other plays, the playwright intends “to sound the cry of women’s voices, to break the silence too often characteristic of women’s place in drama” (Keyssar, 1984, p. 3) through the journey of women in this play. Simultaneously, taking men from the centre, Daniels settles the women in complicated relations in such a manner to urge them to seek for collaboration. That is to say, the dominant power shifts from men to women in a different setting built by the playwright (Wan Yahya, 2010, p. 230). The unification of women, despite seemingly having different characters and motives for their actions, occupies Daniels’ central purpose, which is to prove women’s power against patriarchy. In this point, Griffin’s paper on the plays of Daniels claims “women’s support of each other as a critical element in achieving change is one key to Daniels’s representation of women’s plight under patriarchy” (2000, p. 199).

Considering a variety of research in literature, there are several studies conducted on the play *The Devil’s Gateway*. They basically discuss general subject matters such as oppression, unification, and solidarity of women and political action (Bakker, 1996), women’s resistance (Griffin, 2000), consciousness-raising (Wan Yahya, Termizi & Rahman, 2009), self-realization (Wan Yahya, 2009), female bonding (Wan Yahya, 2010) and lesbian identity. (Bartleet, 2010).

To begin with, Bakker (1996) analyzes the plays of Sarah Daniels in detail. In the analysis of *The Devil’s Gateway*, the writer directs her attention to men’s oppression captivating women in a text-based and non-prescriptive approach. However, the study alleges that this captivity is rooted not only in male power, but also in women’s self-oppression to limit themselves. The play also makes a political comment and emphasis on the liberation movement of female characters. The study concludes that only when solidarity or unification is maintained, can women be competent at and successful in breaking away with male oppression.

In the following years, Griffin (2000) studies the resistance of women to free themselves through the analysis of female characters in *The Devil’s Gateway*. The study concludes that women turn into

more active and resistant individuals to overcome the oppression imposed by the male members of their society.

Later, in 2009, Wan Yahya, Termizi and Rahman explore the raising of consciousness while directing their focus on the relationships among women in the play. As a result, the study draws such a conclusion that through their awakening and self-realization, women finally restore the broken relations between themselves, thus becoming aware of their own power. Suggesting the only way to shatter the patriarchal structure as women's alliance or consolidation, the study points out that female characters set up a woman-based association to revolt against man-based oppression and dominance.

In the same year, Wan Yahya (2009) examines the mother-daughter relationship and self-realization of women in another study. The researcher emphasizes the gradual change in women's consciousness towards the end of the play. The study indicates in its conclusion part that women transform into more active after gathering to stand against male power. Like the famous political slogan of Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* "Workers of the world, unite!", Daniels seems to invite the women in this play; "Women of the world, unite!". Expectedly, this invitation to unite is against man and patriarchy.

One year later, Wan Yahya (2010) explores the relationship of women with one another. This study touches upon women's struggle to free themselves from the shackles and domination of men. In a way akin to the findings of her study with Termizi and Rahman in 2009, the writer reveals in the conclusion part that women, which are alienated from one another at the beginning of the play, find the only solution for their problems in solidarity and unification through their struggle with male hegemony.

Finally, Bartleet (2010) examines the lesbian identity and relationship of Linda and Fiona with other characters. The researcher alleges that Daniels draws a contrast between lesbian and heterosexual domestic life. It is also suggested in the conclusion part that this contrast creates something like women's alienation from one another.

As far as the abovementioned studies are concerned, the researchers generally argue that the oppression of women, the relationship between them, their growing awareness, alliance, and lesbian identity are the subjects largely dealt in *The Devil's Gateway*. However, their lack of focus on the transformation of women in detail with regard to the female characters' gradual change in thought and action stands in conflict with their touch on the subject. What makes this study original is, therefore, its analysis of the transformation of women and triggering factors from the very beginning to the end of the play, thus filling this gap in literature. Further, no studies have been conducted on this play over the recent years. Herewith, the central aim is to study the play from a more contemporary stance. Through the hermeneutic analysis of the play, which is based on feminist criticism, the study attempts to analyze the transformation of the female characters throughout the play, the triggering points to enhance their awareness and their influence on one another during this awareness stage.

The Devil's Gateway is explicitly a mirror to the passive conditions of women in the contemporary era. The play begins with Daniel's shaping her play which revolves around the female characters trapped in their own prisons either consciously or unconsciously, thereby decentring the male characters on the stage. Notwithstanding the fact that each female character struggles for different manifestations of oppression such as violence and fear about lesbian identity, the common point they agree on is to revolt against all these repressive factors. Waiting for an incentive, they undergo a process whereby they gain self-awareness and thus make a sort of move at the end. Daniels takes an international step to lead the way for women, and for this purpose she puts her female characters on the centre in such a manner to shed light on their lives. As for the male characters, they "are peripheral

or secondary to the central action" (Bakker, 1996, p. 7) in a female-centred play, as stated by Jim, the husband of Betty and the only male character showing up on the stage. Although the women are the leading figures in *The Devil's Gateway* after such plays of theatre history in which they have been treated, portrayed, and drawn as secondary or insignificant and ineffective characters, most of them are still confined to housework in a domestic setting, which has been regarded by men as the only or most important, or even sacred, duty for women to fulfil. To exemplify, Betty, the protagonist of the play, satirizes her domestic role in a sarcastic way by saying "Sometimes I feel like a washing-up machine on legs" (Daniels, 1983, p. 78). Similarly, Bakker draws attention to her role at home, stating that she "is portrayed initially as a downtrodden domestic servant – tied to a condescending, autocratic husband" (1996, p. 25). However, much as she seems to agree on or submit to domestic work, she is already aware of her submissive position even at the beginning of the play. The very fact that Jim imposes some duties on her in the house – as if they were Betty's obligation – drives her to question her situation, thereby speaking to him acerbically:

Jim You hovered in here today, Bet?

Betty You know full well that I do the hovering on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Jim Even so it's looking a bit grubby.

Betty Maybe if we all concentrated on getting the food from our plate into our mouths instead of studying what was on the carpet we wouldn't have time to drop it there in the first place (Daniels, 1983, p. 81).

Quite conscious of Jim's oppressive and compelling force, Betty counters his directions to some extent. Unlike Betty, who is not and should not be deemed as completely passive in the first scene, Daniels introduces another female character by representing her unawareness of her suffering. Carol, depicted as distant to her mother Betty, pretends to be happy in her so-called secure and comfortable living with an abusive husband, Darrel who bullies her. In fact, "she defends Darrel's abusive behaviour as normal and glorifies her newly-acquired bourgeois status over her mother's working-class way of life" (Wan Yahya, 2010, p. 239). Utterly dissatisfied with the way she lives in her parents' house before marriage due to a strong feeling of shame towards her working-class family, she embraces and rejoices in materialistic values after marrying a wealthy man. Seeming to have lost her personality and character upon marrying that rich man, Carol cannot realize in any way that she has a mind of her own and then she always repeats what her husband tells; "Darrel says *Crossroads* is bad television" (Daniels, 1983, p. 81). Darrel holds a control mechanism over her personality, thus dispossessing Carol of the right and ability to make her own decisions. In a similar vein, whereas Bakker mentions "not only does Carol lose herself in servicing her husband and emulating his lifestyle, but she also loses contact with her mother" (1996, p. 27), Wan Yahya interprets her condition in this way; "Carol separates herself from her mother through binding herself to a male figure, Darrel" (2010, p. 243). In other words, upon distancing herself from her old living, she strives to adopt a new identity: a happy and wealthy woman.

Throughout the play, Daniels appears to present a community composed of women that prefer to leave their children and husbands behind in Greenham Common, where they strongly raise their voice against nuclear armament. In this way, not only does Daniels criticize the personal and domestic problems of women under men, but she also fills her play with the idea of political action, which is because she is aware of the true nature of 'the personal is political'. Betty's first encounter with this community in the first scene is concomitant with her awakening to whatever happens inside and outside the house. This is made possible by Tim's referring to the women within that community. However, Tim's reference to those women as a "bunch of lunatics" (Daniels, 1983, p. 86) results in

Betty's enquiry into nuclear armament and defence of this community. In return, she becomes the target of Jim's rage, as can be presented in his statement; "You silly born bitch. How stupid can you get-know all, know nothing" (Daniels, 1983, p. 86). Betty is noticeably described as the object "of verbal bullying by men, the 'mildest' form of abuse" (Griffin, 2000, p. 200). The offensive language directed at Betty manifests Jim's show of strength, whereby he manages to demolish her identity constructed once more by male power. This attests to the fact that the language used by men towards a woman is a means of defining her identity (Morrissy, 1994, p. 60).

Besides, Betty's quest for a meaning and/or purpose in her own life is echoed in her conversation with Enid, who is a close friend and neighbour to her. It appears in their dialogue that Enid is also another victim of the patriarchal system, especially of a bullying husband figure. She is like Betty in that both are portrayed as domestic captives, while she is unlike her in that she appears less conscious of the poor situation in which she is. She confesses to be and remain helpless against her husband's abusive treatment towards her, attributing to her fate as if it was predetermined by God. Her "reluctant but imposed" preference to keep silent and reactionless about all that befalls her is embodied in the remark that "the female voice is also trapped in a female body which faces the threat of male violence" (Wan Yahya, Rahman & Zainal, 2010, p. 30). When Betty does the ironing, which is one of the domestic duties imposed on her as on all women, she acts like an agent to attract attention to the movement of Greenham women in the first dialogue between her and Enid by asking her opinion. She also expresses her gratitude to them. However, the response that Betty receives from Enid seems to surprise her as she does not expect it:

Enid Do you want to know something, Betty, I'm glad, I'm really glad. They are all running scared with about as much direction as a chicken with its head cut off. Where were they when we were fighting for our kids' lives? If this is the only thing that threatens their lives then I'm glad.

Betty Enid don't be so bitter. They might have had it rough and all.

Enid Oh yeah, well I ain't joining in because I ain't protesting next to some posh woman so he can make sure her cut glass and Capo da Monte flowerpots are still intact (Daniels, 1983, p. 102).

Strangely enough, Enid takes a prejudiced attitude towards the women in Greenham Common, seemingly based on the class distinction as the root of skirmishes and dissidence between women. What makes the situation stranger is that Enid, though a member of a working-class family, approaches the actions of those women in the community with suspicion and disbelief, whereas this community functions as the reflection of women's movements in which there are effective protests against capitalism and bourgeois class. Keyssar, in this point, cites "women in these movements embraced the 'new left' emphasis on community and challenged bourgeois family structure along with racism, poverty, imperialism, and nuclear armament" (1984, p. 12). In this way, Enid proves to be the voice of criticism targeting at the class discrimination, more apparently to the bourgeois' way of life. Also, it is a need to signify the function of this 'Greenham Common', which carries political issues into the domestic sphere, thus politicising the play (Bakker, 1996, p. 22). Another strategy put forward by Daniels is to place her female characters in families with broken ties. Betty fails in communicating well with her mother Ivy in a way similar to her fragmented tie with Carol. However, the way Betty delivers the details to her mother about the conversation with Enid is an indicative of her support for Greenham community:

Betty Enid reckons they was all worried about their china.

Ivy What does Enid know? She's never met them.

Betty I think she thought they were worried about their nice lives, so they could go back and still have homes.

Ivy If they was worried about their lives they'd build a fall-out-shelter. Anyhow they've left their homes – daft twit Enid is – (Daniels, 1983, p. 104).

Ivy, as can be indicated in this dialogue and some more others, appears to act as an agent in the process whereby Betty gains consciousness through her inner quest. To do so, she uses humour “as a political weapon” (Bakker, 1996, p. 5) in serious matters and seems to take life lightly or not to take it seriously, but on the other hand, she appears on occasions to be criticizing the realm of false policies such as nuclear war in her era. According to Jo Anna Isaac, in parallel, “women have a special purchase on laughter as a strategy of liberation” (1996, p. 14). However, despite the harmonious relation and reconciliation of Ivy and Betty on the issue of Greenham community, the reason why they have a fragmented bond is that Ivy has once slept with Betty's old fiancé. What is interesting at this point is that Betty still admires her mother's intellect and outspoken nature in the face of this psychologically devastating experience. Likewise, Wan Yahya and her colleagues interpret Betty's circumstance as follows: “Betty has a narcissistic need for her mother, who possesses the characteristics that she lacks. An apparently submissive woman who seems ignorant and housebound, Betty needs the strong character of her outgoing and confident mother to complete her lack” (2009, p. 87).

Moreover, Daniels puts the questioning of lesbian identity into the play through the presentation of a lesbian couple, Fiona and Linda who is the daughter of Enid. Already conscious of women's conditions in their period, they have a secret interest in and support for Greenham community, which can be taken as tantamount to admitting that they have a high level of consciousness from the beginning of the play onward. On the other hand, it seems rather challenging for them to reveal their identity to a society environed by homophobic views. That is, “coming out to the public is the most important stage in which lesbians (or homosexuals) assert their identity and practise their sexuality despite social prejudice” (Wan Yahya, 2005, p. 72). In drawing this couple, Daniels attempts to point to the fact that lesbians suffer from drawbacks and/or hesitations accompanied by anxiety and fear of isolation in making their lesbian identity and political views public to others:

Fiona You didn't go up there with that badge on I hope.

Linda Unlike some I could mention I don't have two personas you know. If it's okay to go and holds hands down Greenham Common, then it's okay to hold hands up in the Mile End Road far as I'm concerned... (Daniels, 1983, p. 108).

What Linda prefers here is akin to the experience of Betty with Carol, who is offended by her mother's blind and unconditional commitment to her abusive father, and as a result of her preference, Linda remains aloof, and finally gets alienated, from her mother's contrived marriage and then she finds peace in living with Fiona. To Bakker, “Linda feels not only unsafe when visiting her parents, but resentful of Enid's unthinking resignation to a man who has tyrannised both of them” (Bakker, 1996, p. 27). In fact, it could be deduced that hers is a choice imposed indirectly on her by her uneasy life with the parents, whereupon she embarks on a quest to find peace at the expense of abandoning her family. Through her lesbian relationship, she reshapes her mother-daughter bond of which she lacks in her relationship with Enid (Wan Yahya, 2010, p. 245). Fiona, on the other side, plays an active role in the enlightenment of Betty when she goes to her house as a social worker. This results in the fact that a new shape is given to the way Betty thinks of and treats Greenham Common. She “becomes an agent of illumination for Betty (and others) and, in so doing, widens the horizons of her political inquiry” (Bakker, 1996, p. 29).

The following scenes show the gradual transformation of Betty into a woman more aware of

her dull and unsatisfactory life. Stuck in between her domestic sphere imposed by her family/parents and her personal sphere, she craves for doing something for herself indeed as indicated in her statement; "Sometimes I don't feel I've done nothing with my life" (Daniels, 1983, p. 116). Also, her dialogues with Enid serve to trigger an effect both on revolutionizing her life and on changing Enid's settled ideas. She, thus, embraces a sense of courage after her talks with Enid and Fiona and alters her communication way with Jim, thereby speaking out her mind more overtly by declaring "I just want something that matters to me" (Daniels, 1983, p. 127). In contrast with Betty, Enid resists any change in her mind domineered by her husband Bob. Falling, or 'pushed', into the habit of justifying all the actions of men towards her, she seems to be the embodiment of female subjection. This becomes more apparent in her dialogue with Betty in Scene Six:

Betty Hasn't made much difference except now the toast pop sup automatically burnt.

Enid How can you be so ungrateful?

Betty I don't mean to be. I've tried talking to him, Enid, half these gadgets frighten me.

Enid But he's trying, Betty. Gawd if I start saying I'm unhappy to my Bob he'd say count meself lucky or I will give yer something to be unhappy about (Daniels, 1983, pp. 128-129).

Towards the end of the play, Betty's mind is oriented towards more serious matters such as questioning what 'patriarchy' means; it appears to her as a term that provokes her to take an action. In the process of her research assisted by Enid's collecting news about Greenham Common, she is irritated by Jim's remarks on the meaning of hierarchy parallel to patriarchy; "Hierarchy is like boss at the top" (Daniels, 1983, p. 136). Captured by a sort of exasperation towards this discrimination, she grows more and more willing to overcome her oppression in the presence of a great enemy, that is, patriarchy. Likewise, Bakker makes an explanation of this term as a wicked enemy with the aim of hindering women's ties to each other as well as their coming together (1996, p. 24). It is because women's unification appears to be a great danger for male hegemony that it is a must to prevent it for men to be able to maintain their dominion over women. This is the reason why Daniels proposes 'matriarchy' "as a strategy against and alternative to patriarchy" (Bakker, 1996, p. 23) by gathering women to rebel. Female characters, thus, display more awareness and consciousness of their multi-dimensional oppression. Ivy can be taken as an example of this transformation in that she, though generally introduced as a humorous woman in the early parts of the play, turns into a speaker of more serious and political issues towards the end of the play, as can be seen in her monologue;

Women became strong. We had to be. We ran the country and when it was over we could see the way things were going and that it was a bit late for us but we invested our dreams and hopes and plans in our daughters, only to see them evaporate like pee in the lift on a hot day. Having kids is important, but having a washing-machine, a television and a car became more important. And a husband with a steady job was set up as number one main aim. Bloody silly values for a country what was supposed to be embarking on freedom, that's all I can say. The war's so bloody boring because what did it change for the better? For us, seems like sod all (Daniels, 1983, p. 149).

Ivy's statement about the past and now arises from a wish for a better world for the next generation. A mention of Griffin's analysis of older female characters in the works of Daniels may be of use for a better understanding of this point; "it is the older...who acts as a support to the younger woman who has been able or is trying to live a life different from that of the previous generation of women" (2000, p. 199). As the critic of her era with which she is highly unsatisfied, she fantasizes about the downfall of man-driven and capitalist order which shows hunger for war.

In the last scene, Daniels succeeds in bringing women together, a purpose which she follows

throughout the play. Blatantly being against the patriarchal system, the playwright seeks “to create a sense of ‘sisterhood’, of the unity and relatedness of all women” (Wan Yahya, 2009, p. 60). Betty, the protagonist who is most apparently the triggered and triggering figure in the play, is depicted as a woman of complete consciousness ready to take radical steps such as leaving home to join Greenham community. Through her self-realization, she inspires other women to question their positions as well as to be supportive of one another (Wan Yahya, 2010, p. 250). Aided and encouraged by her growing awareness, she also sheds light on the liberation of other women such as Enid, a newly radical figure who stabs her husband and leaves home as well. Abused by Darrel, Carol also gives a similar decision to accompany Betty on her way to Greenham Common. Ivy, not surprisingly, supports her daughter and granddaughter through their new journey. She turns into a more serious woman the voice of which becomes more critical upon the happenings and events in the society. Through her outspokenness, she plays a significant role in illuminating Betty. Besides her, Linda and Fiona function in the play as agents to raise the consciousness of Betty, Enid and Carol, thereby accomplishing their mission in the end. All the characters make their own way in their spiritual journey from passiveness to activeness, playing roles to influence one another through some triggering points such as the title of ‘Greenham Common’ or ‘patriarchy’.

CONCLUSION

With the second-wave feminism, women endeavor to have powerful positions in society both verbally and physically. Women’s anger about inequality, class-gender discrimination, and oppression accompanied by violence and abuse becomes the material of several feminist playwrights who tend to criticize the violent actions of politics. Sarah Daniels, identified as a radical feminist, is one of these playwrights and attempts to reflect the real circumstances in the domestic and public domain. The second play of her, *The Devil’s Gateway*, is a kind of representation of her era in terms of its focus on passive women restrained in both domestic settings and inner selves due to oppression of the patriarchal system. The female characters in the play are formerly described as repressed figures without self-autonomy and self-awareness. As the play proceeds; however, it turns out that they gradually become self-autonomous and self-aware about their potential and identity while influencing and liberating themselves. They somehow shatter the boundaries between one another to create a strong bond of which they are in need for a long time. Through self-realization and liberation movements, they support their ‘comrades’ to wake themselves against the dominant power, namely patriarchy. It is also revealed in the play that in the way of unification, they act as a kind of triggering figures to enlighten one another, whereas some compelling terms such as patriarchy arouse their curiosity. A journey of the women starting from the recognition of oppression, which is articulated to others, ends in a struggle with this oppression and female unity (Griffin, 2000, p. 198) in *The Devil’s Gateway*. Within the scope of feminist criticism, considering the place of women in this century, it can be deduced that nothing has changed since Daniels’ times. Not only does her play set light to Daniels’ period when women were seen secondary to men, but also reflects the present conditions of women still regarded as inferior, passive, and dependent in today’s world.

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