

The Abject Woman in Sarah Daniels' *Ripen Our Darkness*

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ABSTRACT: Over the centuries, women have been marginalised by the patriarchal society. They are associated with some societal roles that are expected only from women such as motherhood, affection, and housework. For this reason, acting against the social expectations is considered as a threat by patriarchy. Thus, these nonconformist women are expelled or labelled as the abject which is theory of Julia Kristeva. Notwithstanding, many of the women play writers such as Sarah Daniels has succeeded in displaying the realities of these women who are in effort to come into existence in this restricted world. This article will discuss Sarah Daniels' *Ripen Our Darkness* protagonist, Mary who is abjected by the male characters in the play and who attempts to raise her voice and resist all the challenges posed by male authority. Consequently, she could not succeed in maintaining this resistance to the end of the play and this article will show that she completely becomes the abject figure.

KEYWORDS: abjection, abject, identity, formation, marginalisation, Julia Kristeva.

INTRODUCTION

A human is always engaged in a struggle with themselves throughout a lifetime. This struggle is their courage, their passion, fear and sometimes it could be their dreams. However, alongside these, there is a struggle with the outside, society. Women are the individuals who give the two struggles in parallel across a lifetime. Every woman is born with expectations, rules, and responsibilities that society imposes on. For this reason, the struggle of each woman is the same. What every woman desires is not to be the other, nor the one who is shaped by the oppression of society, but to be authentic albeit all challenges. This matter, women's identity is the most severe critique of the postmodern era. In fact, questioning this is a beginning for being a voice for women who are neglected and throughout the years and this is the way not only comprehending a gender but also the essence of human being. Along with prominent feminists such as Judith Butler and Simone de Beauvoir, also Julia Kristeva deals with this matter. In one of her articles, she states the following on this subject: "women, "we" seem to feel that they are the casualties, that they have been left out of the sociosymbolic contract, of language as the fundamental social bond" (Kristeva, 1981, p.24).) Since women's identity has been regarded problematic and nonconformist from the beginning, they are known to have been cast aside in society. In line with this referred point, the purpose of this article is to examine life and personal experiences of the protagonist of the play, Mary within the context of Kristeva's abjection theory. By examining the implications of this matter, this article examines *Ripen Our Darkness* (1981) within Julia Kristeva's abjection theory which explains the situation of abject women in society. By so doing, this study simultaneously aims to show that the silenced voices of these women have to be raised in contemporary society through academic works. Thereby, using theatre as a vehicle as a means of raising their voices against oppression.

LITERARY CONTEXT

After the Second World War, the western world just began to recover from the devastating impacts of it. In the immediate post-war years, most countries including Britain entered a recovery process that initiated a variety of reforms in political, cultural, social structures, and societal gender roles. Women who wanted to move away from the chaos of the war, participated in the sphere of employment. In *Contemporary Western European Feminism (1992)* Gisela Kaplan explains the difficulties that women faced at that time as follows: "Women were now welcome to participate in the labour market an 'invitation' that was qualitatively different from the conscription of women into to war work. During World War II every adult citizen was required or forced to support the war effort, but then released from such imposed duty once the war had ended: The post-war economic boom and rapid rise of living standards in some countries gave women's work a different image. 'Getting 'back to normal' after the first post-war decade was over should presumably have meant a return to traditional roles. Yet those many women who were widowed or without partners had no way of returning to traditional roles. They raised children whose role models were provided by the single-parent households, by women who managed the lives of their children very adequately" (Kaplan, 1992, p.12). As a result of this, the turbulence of women's roles started to be questioned and the Second Feminist Wave appeared in the late 1960s. This movement was created by the women who underwent considerable tribulations during the war. With the emergence of the movement, social norms, values, and gender

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inequalities were profoundly questioned. The underlying purpose was to raise their voices to the whole world and break down the rigid beliefs of patriarchal society about gender equalities. In so doing, it was manifested that the social hardships of women are not individual, they are the products of patriarchal society. Thus, they created this slogan: "The personal is political" (Carol Hanisch, 1970, 76).

In line with this rebellion, turning the issues of domestic labour, womanhood, violence, and gender inequalities into collective concerns was achieved to some extent. What triggered them to take action was being marginalized and ignored by the patriarchal world. Hereby, the second wave movement appeared. The forerunners of this feminism movement attempted to raise awareness about how they unite against these inequalities. Hanisch who is one of the forerunners offers some ideas for this issue. She claims women must come together and share their personal experiences. The purpose is not to provide a solution to their issue, but to provide self-consciousness showing they are not alone, and this fight is not being given alone. Besides, women should ask the question of why. They must ground their motives in a theory. Hanisch claims the following: Now we see all these things as what we call personal solutionary." Many of the actions taken by action groups have been along these lines. The women who did the anti-woman stuff at the Miss America Pageant were the ones who were screaming for action without theory" (1970, p.77). In the referred quotation, she criticises actions done solitary and without theory. If women proceed along a way planned before, their movements will be transformational.

The second wave feminism together with political field made a profound impact on literary narratives as well. The atmosphere of those years was so chaotic that the influence of these problems and uprising on writers was inevitable. Women writers living in this period made their anger, sadness, and injustices visible through bringing to the stage and depicting on their oeuvre. Sarah Daniels was one of these playwrights hammering at the disempowerment and silencing of women in society. Her literary works holds "the personal is political." As Hanisch stated in her article, Daniels also believes that the problems of women in their lives cannot be fixed with therapy. For this reason, women's psychological problems such as trauma, violence, mental breakdown are the central topic in her plays and the voices of women protagonists in her play are universalized to address the audience who are the bearers of the hierarchy.

KRISTEVA'S ABJECTION THEORY: Julia Kristeva, Bulgarian-French theorist explores how the subject formation correlates with the language and society. Her works presents an authentic perspective to subject formation, marginalisation, and language. She is inspired by Lacan's language theory when she writes her significant books, Powers of Horror, Revolution in Poetic Language and Desire in Language. However, she has brought novelty to his theory by developing the concept of semiotic order. She bases the process of becoming a subject upon the concepts of symbolic and semiotic and she integrates the concept of abjection with them. The abject, for Kristeva, is something trapped between the two orders and at the same time something both repressed and expelled. Thanks to the notions that she names as semiotic, symbolic and abjection, it is telling in comprehending how a person's language is shaped through culture and society and it is repressed by social norms. Within this framework, based on Kristeva's theory, the process of becoming a subject could be interpreted as a development which is uneven and as a challenging journey.

At the very heart of this perspective is the concept of semiotic order. The semiotic order is the period beginning before the birth of individual. In this period, the person or the baby perceives oneself as connected to the mother's body and meaning is structured through impulses, bodily reactions, and rhythmic sounds, so a boundary of the symbolic order is not drawn. "The oral and anal drives, both of which are oriented and structured around the mother's body" (1984, Revolution in Poetic Language, p.27). The baby who does not come to the realization that he/she is different from the mother, engages in communication through drives or rhythm which is related to the unconsciousness. Rather than meaning, the semiotic merely creates drives and impulses. However, it is possible that a linguistic phoneme could come closer to the semiotic order through repetitions. "A phoneme, as distinctive element of meaning, belongs to language as symbolic. But this same phoneme is involved in rhythmic, intonational repetitions; it thereby tends towards autonomy from meaning so as to maintain itself in a semiotic disposition near the instinctual drives' body; it is a sonorous distinctiveness, which therefore is no longer either a phoneme or a part of the symbolic system..." (Kristeva, 2024, p.136). To Kristevan understanding, the effect of this semiotic order reflects the subject formation as well. The subject in this order is not stable, it is always in transformation as a result of its position between semiotic and symbolic order. Çameli argues that Kristeva situates the subject within the semiotic order which resists the patriarchy: "Kristeva regards as the ultimate root of the language of the symbolic and of the process of identity construction in her research pertaining to the link between language and subjectivity" (Çameli, 2024, p.6).

Even though the semiotic introduces a resistance sphere towards the symbolic order, this does not fully suffice to become a subject. Thus, the subject detaches from the mother in order to attain the subjectivity. Kristeva names this realization as castration. "The discovery of castration, however, detaches the subject from his dependence on the mother" (Kristeva, 1984, p.47). She is influenced by Lacan's symbolic order concept, so it possesses the features of it. Prohibitions, social and cultural norms, authoritarian figures are the part of the symbolic order. Moya Llyod states that it is both the realm of grammar and social order. "The realm of language understood as a rule-governed system, of grammar and syntax and what Kristeva refers to as "propositions" and "positions." In a more general sense it is also the realm of social order and law. It is, in psychoanalytic terms, post-oedipal, that is,

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it relates to a time when the mother/baby dyad is separated and the child becomes conscious of itself as an individuated, linguistic being" (Llyod, 2006, p.138-139). Unlike the semiotic, the symbolic exerts pressure on the subject to ensure its consistency. Accordingly, the features of the semiotic such as bodily drives are attempted to be repressed. However, one truth never changes: the semiotic maintains to reveal itself.

From the perspective of Kristevan understanding, language goes between semiotic and symbolic, so it does not remain constant on the one side. Sometimes, structures in language are formed with repetitions and interruptions which push it to the semiotic from the symbolic. Kristeva underlines it as follows: "The subject is always both semiotic and symbolic, no signifying system he produces can be either "exclusively" semiotic or "exclusively" symbolic and is instead necessarily marked by an indebtedness to both" (Kristeva, 1984, p.24). That is to say, language could not be a part of one system, it always bears the traces of both orders.

Kristeva creates the concept of semiotic chora by inspiring from Plato's concept of chora and employs this concept to explain the intersection point of semiotic and symbolic order. The semiotic chora is the space where drives appear. It is the place where a person is before becoming a subject. Within sounds and bodily drives, this space does not remain the same, it is in a continuous transformation. "The semiotic chora is no more than the place where the subject is both generated and negated, the place where his unity succumbs before the process of charges and stases that produce him. We shall call this process of charges and stases a negativity to distinguish it from negation, which is the act of a judging subject" (Kristeva, 1984, p.28). This definition being addressed not only clarifies the theory, but it also sheds light on how it becomes manifested on literary narratives. It is more evident in the narratives that a person loses unity or unclear boundary between the person and society. The space, chora could be observed in some narratives. In these narratives, the language is mostly broken and lack of coherence. Instead, silence and bodily reactions prevail. Thus, the structure of language in chora renders the subject ambiguous which puts it to the state of abject. These narratives could be examples to display the subject's liminal experience on the stage and create an area where the concepts of chora and abjection intertwine.

The concept of abjection plays a profound role in explaining the subject's in-betweenness: neither in semiotic nor in symbolic order. The subject is unable to get away from the abject because it is a thing belonging to a person. However, the subject needs to distance itself to individualize by entering into the symbolic order. I expel it. But since the food is not an "other" for "me," who am only, in their desire, I expel myself, I spit myself out, I abject myself within the same motion through which "I" claim to establish myself" (1982, p.3). Kristeva simplifies the definition of the abject by associating it with corpse, blood, death, and mother. It is so paradoxical that these markers are both something belonging to our nature and something that destroys the order. but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules" (Kristeva, 1982, p.4). For this reason, the abjection is the eruption of the semiotic which includes drives and meaningless sounds. When the symbolic attempts to repress all drives, all come out as the form of abject. The abject is edged with the sublime. It is not the same moment on the journey, but the same subject and speech bring them into being" (1982, p.11).

The experience of women affiliates with the notion of abject. The body of women and women themselves are both blessed and positioned as abject. This causes a feeling of not belonging anywhere, neither semiotic nor symbolic so women are identified with the semiotic which destroys language and threatens the symbolic order. In this respect, women named as an abject character is a figure who bears the marks of semiotic drives and the situation of being marginalised by the symbolic order. The abject character comes into fragmented and the boundary between the subject and the others becomes uncertain, so these figures are considered as the bearer of the bodily drives that belong to the semiotic order. All the symptoms revealing in the semiotic such as traumas, repressed reactions and desires manifest themselves in the journey of the abject character through silences, disruptions and repetitions. "The abject confronts us, on the one hand, with those fragile Let us enter, for a moment, into that Freudian aporia called states where man strays on the territories of *animal*. Thus, by primal repression. Curious primacy, where what is repressed way of abjection, primitive societies have marked out a precise area of their culture in order to remove it from the threatening world of animals or animalism, which were imagined as representatives of sex and murder" (Kristeva, 1982, p.12-13).

Consequently, her theory draws forth that the identity is an unstable, inconsistent, and repressed construct. Moreover, the relationship among the semiotic, symbolic, and abject enable to examine the process of identity formation through cultural and social constructs. Mary's story about asserting her identity in the patriarchal world is a prominent example of this. Even though the society oppresses her to internalize norms and brings her to the abject position, she is in a constant effort to speak out. She faces with oppressive social norms to claim her identity. Consequently, these impositions cause to be mentally fragmented and as a result of this, drives her to suicide. These push her identity out of normal and make her abject.

ABJECTED IDENTITY OF THE RESISTANT WOMAN IN RIPEN OUR DARKNESS:

Ripen Our Darkness includes women characters who deal with social norms in their daily lives. Nevertheless, Mary who is the central female character in the play clearly portrays the turbulent process of a wronged woman in society and the other female figure in the play contributes to develop the identity of Mary. She is an oppressed married woman. During the early stages of the play, Mary is committed to David, the husband, and her children. As Simone de Beauvoir mentions, marriage is "a respectable institution with a simple business deal where the woman is treated like a thing" (Beauvoir, 2011 p. 465). Even so, in order to be accepted in

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community, it is regarded as necessary because they are seen incomplete without a patriarchal symbol, a man. In the play, she attempts to adhere to the expectations from a married woman, yet this too much adaptation gives rise to disruptions and causes some breaks because women's identity is treated like an unimportant thing. The breaks are hidden behind apparently insignificant statements and speeches. In the first scene of the play, Mary and David wake up into a chaotic day which is full of Mary's absentmindedness. She is mocked by her husband for simple things like arranging the underwear drawer, forgetting to change the cooker. The reason is that the expectation from a traditional woman is to "perpetuating the immutable species, she assures the even rhythm of the days and the permanence of the home she guards with locked doors" (Beauvoir, 2011, p.455). However, this abstractedness and the mistakes she makes are criticized in a joking manner. "I find things never seem so insurmountable if they're made into a list. For example, it will be easier to sort out the underwear drawer more than once in three decades, eh? Ha ha" (Sarah Daniels, 1981 p.2). Drawing from his attitude, it could be said that Mary is seen as something that has only domestic duties and when she does not serve the purpose, she is seemed annoying and irritating which is a threat for their traditional life. Therefore, she is forced to be proper and tidy which is related to patriarchal order. However, this attention deficit which causes a mess and disorganization transforms her into a person who moves away the symbolic order and they are indicatives of her descending into the abject that is the symbol of dirtiness and burnout. Consequently, at the first part of the play, it is seen that Mary starts to be abjectified by her husband. He is in an effort to suppress and draw her into the symbolic order.

While she is drawn into the order, the cracks in her identity become visible in some of her feature like language. The cracks represent her resistance against restricted norms. Mary gradually reveals this from the beginning of the play. After David kindly criticizes passive-aggressively for her faults, she abruptly brings up nuclear war: "David: I should hope so. Well, no matter, it's of very little consequence now. What I meant to say is, perhaps when you have a minute you could enlighten me as to the whereabouts of my trousers. Mary: (not listening). I wonder how many minutes' silence we'll have to observe after nuclear war ..." This disconnection from the topic displays her passion to be seen. From the beginning, the couple only talks about the mistakes she makes and every time she tries to explain herself, her husband cut her short and does not allow her to finish. This off-topic sentence implies she can think and speak even about intellectual issues. In fact, she initiates a small-scale revolt towards a man. Her behaviour bears the impact of semiotic to the symbolic order, language. This threat which disrupts the symbolic order is repressed by her husband's labelling of Mary's thought as "macabre." The husband realizes the possibility of her deviation from the traditional woman figure and undermines and treats her identity as abject by associating her thought with something annoying and dreadful.

In the later stages of the play, it is seen that Mary faces ill-treatment by her male children which makes her abject. Their attitude and the way they talk with their mother resemble an infant's relationship with semiotic and symbolic order. The child recalls the obligation of separating from the mother to be independent, so it attempts to marginalise the abject or the mother from area. As Kristeva puts it "in pursuing a reluctant struggle against what, having been the mother, will turn into an abject. Repelling, rejecting; repelling itself, rejecting itself. Abj-jecting" (Kristeva, 1984, p.13). One of her sons, Paul speaks disrespectfully when she asks for cleaning his own dirt: "Mary: Perhaps next time you could wash up after yourself. Paul: (already halfway through the door). Shut up, will you? You old bag" (Daniels, 1981, p.11). From the male figures' point of view, she is just only a thing that has no importance of what she feels or thinks. He just considers her as something that makes noise. Irrespective of what she says, she holds no significance for him like abjection which must be silenced and removed. Beside of invisibility of her identity, her motherhood is damaged as well. However, they are aware of the need for her. Both the children and husband are unable to do anything without her. Griffin comments on that, saying, "David's reliance on Mary to know where everything is in fact resembles that of a child: he is the archetypal image of the man as the additional child in the (petit) bourgeois household who is unable, because unwilling, to take on any responsibilities for what are defined as domestic chores" (Gabriele Griffin, 2000, 197). This implies both the attachment to the abjection and trapped women into a stereotypical type which performs the duty, however, no identity she has.

In the aftermath of these events, the first oral manifestation occurs as follows: "Mary: Oh. (She continues writing.) Tell Paul – no slugs in the bedroom. Two extra for lunch. Peel more potatoes. More sausages, to make the chicken go further. (Pause.) Why does my life seem like a half-finished jigsaw while everybody else seems to have completed their pictures? What did he mean about Anna? Dear God, if our lives are predestined what's the point of prayer? (Pause.) Even if they are not, what's the point?" (Daniels, 1981, p.13). Firstly, it is evident that the thoughts are fragmented. Her mundane thoughts spiral into a monologue about her existence. That is, language begins to lose its unity and transgresses the boundary of the symbolic order, so her thoughts are in the state of abject. These thoughts display that she is not someone defined only by typical women features such as organising everything or feeding the household, she could feel, think, and question. She questions her life journey and ponders why her life is incomplete while the life of others seems going well. This implies she is different from other people, and she does not experience a sense of wholeness which causes her to be expelled from the order. This puts her into the state of abjection. She feels like an outsider different from the others who comply with social norms.

As her identity's marginalisation from the order becomes pronounced, her attempts to assert her identity reveal over time. During the monopoly scene in the play, even though she takes part in the game, she cannot play it actively due to the burden of tasks like serving tea to the guests who are Daphne and Roger. In fact, the game is more than a simple activity, it is the embodiment of symbolic order. It is directed and controlled by male figures, and it renders women passive except Daphne, however she strives to

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align with the patriarchal rules in order not to be an outsider. Mary is supposed to be around the game. And yet, she is disregarded in the game and not allowed to participate in conversations actively, her husband purchases her properties and belittles her. This situation could be compared to the abjection. The fact that she is overlooked, neglected and necessary for merely housework deviate her from subjectivity and bring her closer to the abject figure. She needs to be there, but she has a minor role in the community. "Mary: Oh, dear. Well, it looks as though I'm cleared out. David: Wait a minute now, let's see. If you mortgage the stations and the gas works, plus the cash ...Mary: It's hardly worth it. I'll make a start on the washing-up. David: Mary, you have no sense of competition. Mary: But, dear, I...David: Oh well, a cup of tea would be nice, while you're up" (Daniels, 1981, p.20). Each time she tries to speak, she is silenced by the patriarchal autocracy and pushed to the symbolic order because as a woman who has the semiotic language, she is not allowed to break the symbolic order. As a result of this, being distracted and detached become frequent in the following stages. "Mary: resumes pouring the tea, without noticing that she is pouring it into the sugar basin. David: My dear, are you aware that you are pouring tea into the sugar basin? Mary: (flustered and embarrassed). Tut, oh silly me" (Daniels, 1981, p.22). This frequency is the implication of decaying the identity because the identity could not construct meaning and her identity gets lost.

Nevertheless, her fight against the patriarchy maintains. She expresses her anger by harming the game token which is a tank. This anger is a manifestation of a harmless rebellion. It represents the things she could not utter because what she thinks or feels are disregarded by her husband and Roger, but it is ironic in a way that the token holds greater value than her existence. It has been lost during the stage, however after David asks where the item is, Mary finds it while clearing up the game. "Slowly Mary clears up the game of Monopoly. When she has finished she finds the missing tank, but does not immediately put it into the box with the rest of the game. Instead she picks up a rolling pin from the washing-up and strikes the tank with it. Mary (with aggression). The (Bang.) Church (Bang.) Army (Bang.) drives (Bang.) you (Bang.) barny! (Bang.)" (1981, p.23). This statement could be seen as a turning point which pent-up emotions erupt. The Church Army referring to the religious community legitimises male authority and stereotypes women as submissive and silent. Beside of that, it could be considered to symbolise her husband who works for the church, which means the representative of the symbolic order. This aggressive act breaks her silence and confronts her with the abjection. She externalizes what has been repressed up to that point and challenges with the patriarchal symbols. Kelly Oliver who is an author and explores Kristeva's works in her book titled as *Colonization of Psychic Space* (2004) states that women are positioned as the "scapegoat" in society. They are judged guilty as a result of their actions, so they are marginalized. Therefore, this causes them to feel anger. And they could acquire subjectivity when expressing anger outward creatively. "Anger and aggression redirected outward or sublimated into creative expression can renew agency and self-esteem" (Oliver, 2004, p.94). Drawing on this assertion, she manifests her anger and rebellion by striking the tank with a rolling pin which is tool women use for making food and becomes a tool for resistance. In this way, she initiates the process of becoming a self.

Due to her absent-mindedness, her husband believes and makes Daphne and Roger believe that she struggles with mental health issues, so Roger and David determine she needs to a religious retreat called as Mother's Union. From Kristeva's perspective, such kinds of institutions are established to purify the defilement which is associated with all the things destroy symbolic order like women and their bodies. She claims that women are seen as "an asymmetrical, irrational, wily, uncontrollable power" (Kristeva, 1984, p.70). That is, they are suppressed by placing them into the symbolic order. Since Mary's current state is seemed anormal by her husband, he aims to keep her abject identity under control with this way. "Defilement is what is jettisoned from the "symbolic system." It is what escapes that social rationality, that logical order on which a social aggregate is based, which then becomes differentiated from a temporary agglomeration of individuals and, in short, constitutes a classification, system or a structure" (Kristeva, 1984, p.65). It could be inferred that her identity does not fit into the expectations of society, she is pushed into the abject position both in society and her family, so she is forced to participate in the religious event to pigeonhole her into prespecified roles.

The retreat includes some rituals such as the service of Holy Communion and confession rituals for the purpose of purification. During this stage, it is seen that the retreat is mostly governed by the voice of patriarchy. The priest uses women's surname when calling them under the guise of preventing "temptation in the way of their vow of silence" (Daniels, 1981, p.27). Even if it is shown as a religious rule, their purpose is to prevent their subjectivity and surname associated with male people imposes them a male identity on them. However, despite all the impositions by the patriarchy, in her monologue she initiates to question the things she finds hard to put into the words and ponders her life which means she attempts to get away from passivity. Although it is impossible to avoid of the abject, she confronts and counteract it. She also asks for the God to show a sign with a sentence in the Bible. This self-reflection is the indicative of the effort for the shift to the subjectivity. She does not want to comply with the abjection, so these questions are the medium for attaining the identity. "Mary : (to herself). In all the time we've been married this is the first time I've spent a week away from David. I even had the last three children at home. I wonder if time on my own is what I need to find what is missing from my life. (Pause.) I wonder why I have always said 'not very well' instead of 'period'? And why ... What am I saying? I am not here to indulge myself in obscene fantasies ... Dear God, if you want me to recommit my life to your service please give me another, more appropriate sign. (She opens her Bible, then looks up.) But this is definitely the last chance you're getting. Otherwise there are going to be some drastic changes in this servant's life. She shuts her eyes, puts her finger on a passage, then reads it aloud. 'Go thou and do likewise'" (Daniels, p.27).

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In the following scenes of the play, Mary gradually begins to challenge the conventional expectations of society to jettison the abject. Her reactions toward the authority are found unexpected, so she is tried to push back to the abject position repeatedly. First, her husband David expects that she has returned recovered from the retreat. She is supposed to revert to her old habits such as getting everything ready for family members. However, she ignores this pressure coming from the symbolic order, the husband and softly rejects the expectations imposed by gender roles. "David: Would you please bring them in from the garden and I'll be prepared to turn a blind eye. Mary: David, you are about to hear something which has never been uttered in this kitchen before. David: Which happens to be what? Mary: (firmly). Do – it – yourself" (Daniels, p.36). This is a silent scream against the patriarchy. She attempts to draw the line, in other words, attempts to expel the abject that are imposed gender roles. However, this rebellion does not provide a complete emancipation from the abjection. She strikes an attitude, but what she says does not produce a meaning and she could both be rejected, however could not be entirely excluded. This resembles the definition of the abject, "neither a subject nor an object" (Kristeva, 1982, p.1). She fails to maintain this resistant attitude. She fluctuates between critical and obedient attitude. The reason is that in the following part, she finally agrees to meet with the psychiatrist David arranges the meeting to make sure of her mental condition. It shows her firm stance is overridden.

The session with Marshall who is the psychiatrist leads her to a tragic end. He speaks with Mary in a language aligning with the symbolic order. It is characterized by many psychological terms and rationality which is devoid of emotion and intuition. He bases her behaviour on diagnosis. "Marshall: (pause). Were you aware that you wanted to cannibalise your son's penis? Mary: I beg your pardon? Marshall: Your husband told me that when your youngest son – Paul, is that right? Mary: That's right. Marshall: When he quite innocently asked, 'How long's dinner?', you snapped back, 'Four inches, it's a sausage'. Were you aware that you wanted to undermine his sexuality and render him impotent by alluding to the fact that his penis was four inches long and edible?" "MARY. I don't know quite how to say this, but I think perhaps you should see a doctor." The joke that Mary made is interpreted as a pathological symptom by him. Because he is a product of a symbolic order, he has difficulty understanding the semiotic language and he sees it as a threat. For this reason, she is marginalised as mental, and this marginalization degrades her into the abject which cannot be categorized and defined. Consequently, all these challenges – her invisibility, consistent disregard and pressure pave the way for the utmost abjection, death. She commits suicide by putting her head into the oven and leave a message to her husband like this: Mary: Dear David, your dinner and my head are in the oven. Henceforth, she becomes a complete abject.

CONCLUSION

Taking into accounts the key points presented in the article, Daniels' *Ripen Our Darkness* shows women's challenges explicitly, so it could be regarded as an intriguing play to unearth the realities about women's lives. Daniel's writing style used in the play and the reflection of women figure make her oeuvre versatile. When Mary, the woman protagonist in the play is exposed to oppression and silencing by the patriarchal order, Daniel aims to display how women's emotions and labour are devalued and how they are silenced by the systematic force. The challenges Mary deals with such as being marginalised, silenced and her reactions toward hardships like feeling anger and also her silent rebellion abjectify her. Moreover, all these events prove that the her journey of resistance is not a personal tragedy, it is a universal problem that criticises the patriarchy. As a result, even though the woman character does not succeed in raising her voice at the end of the play, this article aims to raise their voices and make her identity visible for modern readers.

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