



**QUEST FOR FEMALE IDENTITY: SHELAGH
DELANEY'S A TASTE OF HONEY AND CARYL
CHURCHILL'S OWNERS**

**2020
MASTER OF ARTS
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

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Master of Arts

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KARABUK

JANUARY/2020

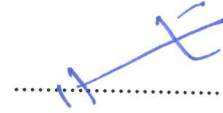
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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Eda ÖZTÜRK titled "Quest for Female Identity: Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* and Caryl Churchill's *Owners*" is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Assoc. Prof. Tavghah Ghulam SAEED



Thesis Advisor, Department of English Language and Literature

This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a Master of Arts thesis. 24.01.2020

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The degree of Master of Arts by the thesis submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

Prof. Dr. Hasan SOLMAZ



Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

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Signature :



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I would like to present my thanks to my supervisor Associate Professor Tavghah Ghulam Saeed for her encouraging attitude and endless support during the process of this thesis. I am grateful to her for always being a guiding light and helping me to deal with the difficulties I have faced warmheartedly.

I would also like to thank Associate Professor Harith Ismail Turki, who has given me spiritual support during my graduate studies and helped this thesis to be completed.

I owe my gratitude to my dear sisters Aslı Öztürk and Esin Hayırcı, who have always been a source of strength for me not only in this process but throughout my whole life.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Murat Karakaş for standing by me in every stage of this thesis and giving constructive feedback.

It is also significant to thank my parents for their support and patience.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to all the oppressed and subjugated women around the world.

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to analyse Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* and Caryl Churchill's *Owners* from a feminist point of view. The plays were written mostly under the influence of the second wave feminist movement and thus they are explored taking account the fact that they include the key points of the movement. Simone de Beauvoir's ideas on women are paid attention while discussing the plays as she is one of the most significant feminists of the time.

Both playwrights put distinctive female characters in the center of their plays and approach male dominance in a variety of ways. The first chapter deals with a short history of modern feminism along with focusing specifically on second wave feminism and Simone de Beauvoir. Chapter II presents the feminist elements of Shelagh Delaney's play and examines the different aspects of womanhood. Chapter III interrogates the socially determined roles of woman and impact of patriarchy in Caryl Churchill's *Owners*. As a result of this thesis, one can comprehend that the playwrights shed light on the problems of women and display them in these plays.

Keywords: Woman, feminism, patriarchy, Shelagh Delaney, Caryl Churchill.

ÖZ (ABSTRACT IN TURKISH)

Bu tez, Shelagh Delaney'in *A Taste of Honey* ve Caryl Churchill'in *Owners* oyunlarını feminist bir bakış açısıyla analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Oyunlar çoğunlukla ikinci dalga feminist hareketinin etkisi altında yazılmıştır ve hareketin kilit noktalarını içerdikleri gerçeği göz önüne alınarak incelenmektedir. Zamanın en önemli feministlerinden biri olması nedeniyle, Simone de Beauvoir'in kadınlar hakkındaki fikirleri, oyunları tartışırken dikkate alınmaktadır.

Her iki oyun yazarı da oyunlarının merkezine kendine özgü kadın karakterleri koymakta ve erkek egemenliğine çeşitli şekillerde yaklaşmaktadır. İlk bölüm, özellikle ikinci dalga feminizme ve Simone de Beauvoir'e odaklanmanın yanı sıra, modern feminizmin kısa bir tarihi ile ilgilidir. II. Bölüm, Shelagh Delaney'nin oyununun feminist unsurlarını sunar ve kadınlığın farklı yönlerini inceler. III. Bölüm, Caryl Churchill'in *Owners* oyununda, kadının toplumsal olarak belirlenmiş rollerini ve ataerkilliği sorgulamaktadır. Bu tezin bir sonucu olarak, oyun yazarlarının kadınların sorunlarına ışık tuttuğu ve onları oyunlarında sergilediği anlaşılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler (Keywords in Turkish): Kadın, feminizm, ataerklilik, Shelagh Delaney, Caryl Churchill.

ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

Title of the Thesis	Quest for Female Identity: Shelagh Delaney's A Taste of Honey and Caryl Churchill's Owners
Author of the Thesis	Eda ÖZTÜRK
Supervisor of the Thesis	Assoc. Prof. Tavghah Ghulam SAEED
Status of the Thesis	Master's Degree
Date of the Thesis	26.12.2019
Field of the Thesis	English Literature
Place of the Thesis	KBU/LEE
Total Page Number	106
Keywords	Woman, feminism, patriarchy, Shelagh Delaney, Caryl Churchill

ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ (in Turkish)

Tezin Adı	Shelagh Delaney'nin A Taste of Honey ve Caryl Churchill'in Owners Oyunlarında Kadının Kimlik Arayışı
Tezin Yazarı	Eda ÖZTÜRK
Tezin Danışmanı	Doç. Dr. Tavghah Ghulam SAEED
Tezin Derecesi	Yüksek Lisans
Tezin Tarihi	26.12.2019
Tezin Alanı	İngiliz Edebiyatı
Tezin Yeri	KBU/LEE
Tezin Sayfa Sayısı	106
Anahtar Kelimeler	Kadın, feminizm, ataerklilik, Shelagh Delaney, Caryl Churchill.

ABBREVIATIONS

Etc.	: Ve benzeri gibi
ed.	: Baskı
Ed. by	: Editör
p./pp.	: Sayfa/sayfalar
Vol.	: Sayı
Vs.	: Karşı



SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis aims to analyse Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* and Caryl Churchill's *Owners*, which revolve around the subject of female identity, from a feminist point of view.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this thesis is to reveal elements that are related to women in Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* and Caryl Churchill's *Owners*. This thesis also aims at displaying that both playwrights deal with women characters who are different from the usual traditional woman perception. They explore female identity in conjunction with the patriarchal system and its effects on women.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The term feminism is historically defined by significant articles and related sections of books by giving examples from the writers who are interested in feminism and feminist drama. The plays of the playwrights are analysed from a feminist point of view mostly based on Simone de Beauvoir's philosophy and ideas. By applying feminist theory to the plays, the individuality, unconventionality, marginality of female and effect of male-dominance are explored in view of the conditions of Britain during the time periods the plays were staged.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH

PROBLEM

A Taste of Honey and *Owners* present woman characters who do not conform with the social and cultural norms of the time. The playwrights also put emphasize on the impact of patriarchy while focusing on the difficulties these characters have to cope with.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

As the time periods of the plays are close to each other and they correspond to the time period of the second wave feminism, they are discovered in view of the movement's main ideas. However, these specific concepts and viewpoints may not be applied to every literary work which deals with the female identity.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. History of Modern Feminism

Feminism, as the term of the movement, was not being used until the end of 19th century and since its emergence it was a debatable issue according to Europe historians. One can think of Charles Fourier as the pioneer of the French word “féminisme”; however, it is still not certain. It started to be used in France in the last decade of 19th century and mainly became the equivalent word for women’s freedom. The terms spread through Atlantic to Argentina and North America, although they were not being employed in the United States earlier than the first decade of 20th century. After that, they started to be used by the proposers and opposers as well as the witnesses of their hardships just like the other “ism” concepts of the 19th century. A lot of people employed the terms controversially in that everyone meant a different concept as nowadays. Additionally, they usually meant women’s equity rather than women’s obtaining the equivalent equity to freedom of men. The referring is exquisite; however, it is a significant difference. Feminism-related terms implied women-oriented ideas in that they referred to the idea of attacking men’s freedom (Offen, 1988, 126-128).

After the early 20th century, the phrases ‘women’s rights’, ‘women movement’ and ‘women’s movement’ were usually being mentioned. While the term ‘feminism’ began to be widely used in Europe, women still tended to call themselves as suffragists instead of feminists. In the US, women partly employed the term ‘feminism’ as they wanted to put emphasize on the right to vote and obtaining the equivalent rights to those of men. ‘Feminism’ sounded better as it referred to a wide concept which includes the relations of genders and domestic issues (Hannam, 2006, 4-5).

As Offen states, while people had still difficulty in defining feminism, this was combined with the question of how to call the movement as the French academics put forward the terms. In the sources of French, which are related to women, it was obvious that academics who specialized in literature and history suggested the terms. They were not very adaptable for that age; however, the scholars employed them with an extreme unconstraint by seldomly digging the meaning of the concept and defining

them. Written resources on the words, which are related to the past eras such as the early 1600s when Renaissance movement was its peak, came forth in 1910s (129-130).

Only after 1900's, employing 'feminist' as a term and specifying its sense became possible. The term was employed by an increasing number of women who participated in a wide range of organizations to encourage women's improvement years before the US employed the word. One of the women's socialist organizations that formed in Paris, Second International, employed the term 'bourgeois feminism' for their other platforms except for socialist platform in a sarcastic way. Their main concern was not to draw attention to having the same rights as those of men or to distinct perspective to femaleness. Instead, they set their minds on to create a reformation in society and change in financial system (Moses, 2012, 764-765).

The women who contributed to the shaping of this movement knew that they were forming something new and putting their stamps on earth. They made their studies go further from generation to generation. Therefore, they composed works which are about history, biographies of other women and their own life stories. These works include the basic features and goals of today's feminism (Hannam, 7).

Women, who supported their rights to vote gave weight to the idea of having equivalent rights with men; however, after the beginning of the 20th century their main concern altered. The governors and people who were the voice of societies gave importance to maternity and significance of child births considering next generations. Supporters of right to vote put emphasize on these matters while putting forward their own ideas. According to them, women should stand by their fellows and children since they have the features of motherhood and familial ability. The aim was to accomplish an ethical reform of nations. Women who did not support their rights to vote agreed with feminists to some extent. They were worried about women's silence in a patriarchal governmental environment. However, they were afraid that women would use this power on different issues. Consequently, they established The Women's Anti-Suffrage League in London in 1908. They sharply claimed that women should continue to take care of their families and carry out their domestic responsibilities since their role in raising future generations properly and Britain's royal fate were significant. As they participated in social service and encouraged others to do feminine

duties, they worked with reasonable women who supported opposite ideas but with a mild attitude in spite of both groups' disagreement on social issues (56-59).

These changes were not apparent evidence that women, especially after the World War II, underwent an extensive transformation in terms of their financial and social condition. Governments were worried that they would experience an imbalance among society, therefore, they gave importance to conventional models of genders. Governments' family policies were closely related to the fact that it was man who supplied money other needs of a family. Additionally, printed media of the time tended to portray a woman type whose responsibilities are fulfilling the household and giving all her time and effort to her husband and kids. Thus, 1950s was the time of 'housewife' who dedicates herself to such work. Because of the governments' traditional attitude towards women, it became more and more challenging to defend their rights and assert new ideas for feminists. However, they did not give up and tried to make their voice be heard. They kept on asking for reforms for both their professional and domestic lives by doing researches on labor unions, governmental parties and their own formations. Meanwhile, significant writings which provided new perspectives to the argument emerged. One of them was an important book named *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir (134-136).

According to Beauvoir, women had always problems with clarifying their individuality since there was a common view that women were the subordinate gender while men took all the credit. It was not women who chose their place and features with their own free will, instead, it was society who provided a role for them. Beauvoir also stated that "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman since a woman's destiny is imposed upon her by her teachers and her society" (De Beauvoir, 1953, 315).

Two different portraits of women did not correspond with each other; in that, one of them was the ideal housewife at home while the other was the image of real life women. Women of new generation did not feel as satisfied as their mothers in terms of family life since they had the chance of continuing their education to a higher level. Meanwhile, wives increasingly started to become employees. However, the problem was that they were not paid as much as men and they were not offered full-time jobs. This led to controversy among society and governments did research on places of

employment about imbalanced payment of the genders. Therefore, they made laws and regulations about women's financial status in labor force (Hannam, 136).

In Britain, 1950s was the decade of entangled relations and ambiguous individuality of sexes both in family and business life. Femaleness began to be less attributed to the domestic responsibilities and women took part in workplaces as well as men while maleness experienced alteration. This change broke the common values and norms of proletariat in general. There were also other changes in workplaces such as financial stability and vanishing of money problems as well as characteristics of genders (Brooke, 2001, 774).

Despite the fundamental change in ideology of the decade, family was still seen as the most significant unit of society. While the troubles of the two devastating wars were still being felt, with the help of financial comfort and affluence of British society, people were hopeful for the future and they believed solutions would be found for the remaining troubles. The decade was the time when class and gender distinctions came to an end, in other words, these kinds of conflicts took a backseat. The effects of the wars were still going on, the country was trying to rebuild itself and cold war broke out. Therefore, the focus shifted to compromising areas rather than the disagreement between classes and sexes. It was obvious from the common saying of the time 'we've never had it so good' that the belief in improving and renewing the society was on its way. However, this was not the real condition of the society since the purpose was to be seen as united and confident. The philosophy of the decade was to put emphasize on settlement, being hopeful for the future and financial development, however, in reality, permanence of class distinction, inadequacy and imbalance still existed and were being ignored. Sociologists looked for a way out of these troubles such as poverty, since it was a serious issue. Therefore, a radical change in ideas of the society should have been done (British Feminist History Group, 1979, 49).

The ideology and written works of both feminists and antagonists of feminism claim that women's primary responsibility is to remunerate motherhood and to be a wife, that is, other duties should not push it into the background. The ideology gave weight to the fact that women have duties at home and workplace, however, the former one is always more significant and in the first place. Their job in the labour force was thought to be their less important duty since they were usually part-time workers in

order to provide full-time service for their kids and husband. They had some problems while they carried out their responsibilities at home and in workplace in cooperation, which was thought to have a solution. Women gained equal rights to some extent, still there was a common perception that they were dissimilar to men. In the 1950s, the basis of the understanding about women was 'equal but different'. Genders had separate domains, women possessed the specific characteristics concerning to society and it was thought to be impossible for men to provide them. Genders belonging to different domains was not a brand-new ideology, nonetheless the circumstances of the decade were entirely different, which made the re-emergence of the ideology different as well. Women should not have felt the need of resembling men since their spheres were separate. The young women of the decade could fulfil their duties in terms of both proper motherhood and as employees in their workplace without getting any help for their responsibilities at home. That is why, there is no doubt that these women's reflection in the literature is the reflection of bourgeoisie class (50).

1.2. Second Wave Feminism

The previous section of this chapter focuses on the emergence of modern feminist movement, which is called first wave feminism, and the movement's condition in Britain in the 1950s. While the first wave concentrates on women's right of suffrage, their political position and struggle of having equal rights; second wave feminism is about equality concerning other problems. 1950s paved the way for second wave feminism and underpinned its main concerns. This new approach to feminism began in the early 1960s and lasted through the end of 1980s. It did not leave the issues of first wave feminism behind, especially the right of vote in the USA and UK. Second wave feminism has kept on its presence, in that, it did not disappear after third wave feminism emerged. It deals with the other types of inequity, while first wave feminism's primary interest was suffrage. One of the famous feminist writers, Carol Hanisch created the motto 'The Personal is Political' for the new wave. The first wave feminism caused awareness about women's political rights, however, what second wave added to this ideology is that it connected governmental issues with women's social and cultural position. It tried to help women perceive their individuality from a political point of view and suggests that women's personal and domestic problems result from genderist authorities' attitude. It put emphasize on the

issues related with women's lives at home, their marital problems, domestic violence, workplace problems as well as political inequalities (Laxmidevi, 2018, 42).

Feminists were not always organized enough to reconcile about their needs and purposes. However, government supported and put emphasize on feminism, therefore, feminists in Britain continued connections with the labour movement and trade union. The new motto 'Sisterhood is Powerful' helped them to ignore their dissimilarities and they realized that the movement is universal with same features. The independent women organizations were not the most effective groups in the emergence of Women's Liberation Movement. Since they were not tied in with political parties of the time, they did not accept power structures and political figures. Women of these organizations gathered and talked about their own stories. They started to be aware of their condition and take matters into their own hands as the term 'consciousness raising' suggests. While they shared the hardships of their own lives, they realized that problems were similar to each other and the reason was society's attitude (Hannam, 141).

The consciousness raising among women helped them to be organized and step into action all together. These actions could be both sudden, unintentional actions such as singing songs, dancing, joyful representations of unity and organized occasions like staging a sit-in, protests and marches. The purpose of all these actions was to make women understand specific principles of feminism and this changed their perceptions to themselves. They were expected to distinguish their individuality from the position in which society put them. Another subject which feminists tried to constitute consciousness was that in advertisements, companies implemented sales techniques through which women's bodies were used and ideal body perception was imposed. Thus, women were encouraged to buy products which were believed to make them look more beautiful by spending large amounts of money. This led to raise in women's interest in the ideal body and operations, which caused eating disorders. The effort of looking more pretty, sexuality and marital subjects were thought to be private before the emergence of second wave feminism. Nonetheless, these matters were attributed to the political issues with this new wave of feminist movement. Sexual issues such as women's private desires, defining sexual identity and intimate pleasures along with making an end of discrimination against lesbians were focused on. With the significant

help of consciousness raising, the slogan 'The Personal is Political' were put into practice, in that, women were expected to reevaluate their positions in their families, work places, marriages and inner selves. They came to realize that they had independent and unique personalities without regarding a variety of domestic responsibilities (142).

Their marital life was seen as the point where their suppression began. Along with the customary requests such as gender equality in workplaces in terms of salary and other areas of discrimination, they asked for payment for household, childcare facilities and guidance for birth control. Women's Liberation Movement put emphasize on the rights about giving birth, abortion and birth control. Women tried to persuade governments to legislate for abortion in order to assure that they could decide if they would give birth or they would end pregnancy on demand. These campaigns were conducted in the large part of Europe and North America after the ideology of second wave feminism spread in the 1970s. This matter brought a lot of women from different social, cultural and economic background together since it was one common issue which they brought about a significant change (143).

Most of the campaigns managed to draw attention and make alteration, however, they failed to satisfy the demands of women who were willing to take action on their own lives. Feminists discussed and conveyed their ideas by writing on the newspapers, magazines, newsletters and printed press that was specifically concerning women, for instance, *Virago* in Britain was one of them. Education played a crucial role for feminists to fight against the traditional ideas on gender roles and common descriptions of femininity. As they took place in higher education, they came to realize that academic units did not care about women and male domination was still there. They asked for new courses about women's studies in order to learn about lives of women and examined the ways that information was conveyed up to that time. Thus, they managed to change the essence of academic units. These new courses were significant to define the effort of Women's Liberation Movement in terms of politics. The studies included a significant research concerning the women texts of the past such as *Hidden From Story* (1973) by Sheila Rowbotham and *The Majority Finds Its Past* (1979) by Gerda Lerner in order to understand women's former political activism.

The more they dug the ground of past actions in which women took part, the more they raised questions about their place and its revisability (144).

The effects of Women's Liberation Movement went on through the late 1970s. However, feminists looked for new ways to get an answer for their demands before the 20th century came to an end. The feminist activist and author of the famous book *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), Elaine Showalter proposes that feminists who want to make women lives better in terms of childcare and health issues must get help from political and financial power to achieve their goals. Feminists had been arguing about what way was the best to make progress and the similar concerns and issues had been discussed from the mid-nineteenth century. Debate over whether they should be organized as small groups was one of the problems since this allows them to make reform in a secure atmosphere in order to in order to discuss the meaning of being a woman and also raise consciousness. Another option as a strategy to follow was cooperating with men in same organizations to talk about common problems in a mixed-gender environment. One more path to follow was to go through governmental formations in order to move their activism forward, however, second wave feminism was against hierarchal structures at heart by supporting spontaneous and unofficial acting (165-166).

1.3. Simone de Beauvoir's Concept of Women

The main reason why this part is included in this thesis is that De Beauvoir is one of the most influential feminists and philosophers of the second wave feminist movement. She basically focuses on condition of woman, their character, how they are oppressed in a patriarchal society and how they strive for their independence. Since both plays which this thesis concerns have been written under the influence of second wave feminist ideas, De Beauvoir's perception of woman will be mainly applied to both plays together with the other critics. Therefore, her ideas and observations are mentioned in the following part in order to examine her theories closely.

Simone De Beauvoir who was born in Paris in 1908 was interested in philosophy and literature since her puberty. At the age of 21, she began a relationship with Jean-Paul Sartre and they both had great impact on each other's lives in terms of philosophical view. Her works consists of a lot of fiction and non-fiction books and

one of these works, *The Second Sex* (1949) is regarded as the most influential one as it includes the main ideas of the second wave feminist movement. She also presented her political views and she visited lots of places in the World. In 1986, she died in Paris (“Simone de Beauvoir”, 2019).

Beauvoir asks the question of why women accept male dominion and they do not fight with it. Nobody accepts to be the ‘other’ willingly and apparently women are not the agency who name themselves as the secondary. It is the male World who gives the sovereignty and freedom to themselves and regard women as secondary. If the ‘other’ does not take action to position themselves as the ‘one’, the only thing they can do is to get used to this perspective. This situation brings along the question of why women accept the male dominance. The answer is that they do not have common agencies that can help them constitute solidarity, which would lead them fight against the other half of the world. They lack a shared history, experience, past, religion, interest, job etc. They are distributed to separate houses, doing housework under different financial circumstances. They are attached to different males, either father or husband, and that is why they cannot establish a bond with other women. As they do not feel attached to their sisters around the world, it is not easy to create a consciousness of solidarity. The reason of why men and women are divided is that their bodies are different, in that, it is not that an incident occurred between them in the past. They have to come together to form the smallest part of a society and it is not even possible to vanish family unit. Basically, the two sexes are dependent on each other, however, the side which is considered as the ‘other’ is women. Women have always been submissive when it comes to men and both have never shared equal domains. Even in a changing modern world, women seem to be restricted to some extent. In most of the places, women still do not obtain the same legal rights as men. Even if they are given equal rights, customs and traditions that come from ancient times constrain them from stating their ideas. Also, men and women have always got separate economic treatment, in that the former get the best jobs, higher salaries and appreciation. This leads to open the doors of success to men as they have always had better opportunities in the workplaces. Additionally, men are selected for the jobs which are considered as significant for a society. Therefore, positions such as politician or head of a factory have belonged to men. They take the advantage of being praised since children at school are taught men’s historical victories and glory. Even

though women have succeeded in being a part of the world, men are still ruling everything, and they are fully aware of this (Beauvoir, 1956, 17-20).

The fact that women start to take part in some issues upsets men, and they do not want their throne be supplanted. Some of them still fight against this situation. The middle-class fundamentalists regard this as a threat for their traditions and affairs. Moreover, they are afraid of struggling with women power. He was never aware of the fact that he was already given a superior place in a society. They do not only worry about the future of their financial invincibility, but even the humblest ones among them are given the impression by a society that they are superior. (23).

Women are made conscious about their position of the 'other' by men, although they are as free and independent as every individual. Men regard them as objects and women are stuck between their ego which is a part of a human nature and a society's more powerful attitude, which tell them what to do and not to do. Their situation results from this conflict that they have experienced, in that, ego which demands many things naturally has to challenge a condition in which women are regarded as the 'other' and 'inessential' by a society. In addition, Beauvoir states that her ideas do not concern the question of whether women are pleased with their condition or not, instead, the main focus is their situation in terms of freedom (27).

The fact that women cannot be owner of anything is the reason of she cannot be an independent individual since she belongs to either her father or her husband. In patriarchal societies, fathers had right to let his both male and female children be killed, however boys were not sentenced to death under normal circumstances while female children were killed as soon as they are born. Until a girl is mature enough to be a bride, her father has a strict authority over her. After she gets married, her father delivers this authority to her husband. Since women are considered as their husbands' personal belongings or chattels with which they can do whatever they want, the custom of marrying more than one woman is common if a man's financial situation allows him to do so. In addition to this, it is normal for a husband to simply get rid of one of his wives by giving the justification that he does not want her anymore and society is not a safe place for those women. Also, engaging in a sexual relationship before marriage is a taboo. However, in some female-dominated societies women are given the right of behaving as they wish. Those societies do not care much that women must be virgin

before marriage, and they see adultery more mildly. On the other hand, in patriarchal societies women are seen as slaves and that is why a sexual relationship before marriage or unfaithfulness are replied back with dramatic punishments (106-107).

Women and men share separate worlds and it should be emphasized that the world that women constitute is never a free and united one. When one compares the two worlds, it can be seen that women's world is always the oppressed one and their position is secondary. Women's unity is based on a spiritless situation which is their biological form and they do not shape a natural unity which is required for a community of interests. The problem is that they have to form a solidarity in order to constitute an artificial contrary world which is doomed to be ruled by the male dominion. There is a contradiction in their situation, in that, they do not belong to anywhere; neither to their own universe nor men's. Therefore, they remain silent in their place which is not independent and dominated by the other and they can not adapt anywhere peacefully. While they accept everything as they are, they can also reject them and they see that their rejection is followed by a consenting. That is why, their situation is similar to a teenager girl's attitude, but this approach is not something that can be sustained since the important thing for a mature woman is with the realities of life (567).

Women are very aware of the fact that it is the men who make all the decisions and dominate the world. Women think they are not the reason of this since they accept this attitude as it is. They are made to be submissive in front of the world since they are not taught how to fight against this mentality. They have never constituted a group in which one member stands in front of the other members. They are taught to keep their thoughts to themselves as their oppressors are more powerful than them and men are the ones who establish certain values. In this respect, the description 'eternal child' is correct to a limited extent. This can also be correct for employees, black slaves and colonial communities since they admitted all the rule and values set up by others without questioning facts. A large number of women show submissiveness respectfully. They cannot cling to their thoughts and facts of the world since there is a barrier between them and the world. They were not educated enough to solve a mechanical problem, which allowed them to rule a situation. In fact, it was not the main concern for them, and they are not interested in that. The problem is the life itself

since it does not have certain points to be understood, in that, one can comprehend it by obeying its mysterious principles. According to Heidegger, the world is not 'an assemblage of implements' for women since they did not have the chance to make a request and establish their aims accordingly. In this respect, life is something that they cannot conquer and the world which is ruled by fate and baffling whims resist them. They experience one of the most interesting and mysterious natural process in their bodies, which is two cells' transforming into a human body. Nothing can interfere in this process, in that, no machine can make it hurry or suspend it. No human-made object can be a part of this process as it is inside of a woman body and only she can witness the feeling. In addition to this, their experience in a kitchen teaches them to be patient since they have to stay quietly and wait for the dish to be ready. Even though such responsibilities look like the mechanical matters, they are too repetitious and tiresome to teach them the rules of technical matters (568).

Even though patriarchal ideology suggests that women do not analyse an issue fully, they have the capacity and intellectuality to do it. However, they cannot find their way in this complicated universe, in that, they are stuck between mystery and reality. It is unusual for them to think as logically as males do. The reason of this is they are not used to be provided with certain necessities and situations as they are not given that chance to face them. If they had the opportunity, they would definitely accomplish tasks as ingeniously as men do. The problem is that such occasions are very rare for them to improve themselves. Rational thinking does not assist to learn the tricks of household activities and masculine kind of logic is not enough to face with the realities of the matters that women deal with at home. They are far away from the real aspects of the world as they are not affected by those realities and they have nothing but expressions and images which they only keep in their minds. Therefore, even the most controversial issues do not bother them since these things are unreachable for them and they cannot concern themselves to uncover this unsolvable universe. They are made pleased with their obscure ideas, aims, all the abstract and concrete things around them and that is why their minds are absolutely entangled (569).

There are two different formation of obeying something respectfully. One must obey the laws, otherwise, it may result in unpleasant situations and a woman may obey

the world of males, which has no sensible reason. On the condition that she is a member of powerful high class, she wants her position to be firm and that is why she insists on this urge. On the other hand, man is aware of the fact that he can put forward new ideologies, move the ideas forward and advance executions, therefore, he considers history as brilliant. Even the most traditional man acknowledges that development and growth are unavoidable, thus, they reshape their ideas and attitudes based on this evolution. However, a woman does not participate in the formation of the past and it seems not understandable to her. Therefore, she is doubtfully worried about the future and wants to be stick to the moment. When her heroes who are idealized by males around her fall apart, she does not try to replace them by others, instead, she tends to keep and protect the old ones (570).

She feels anxious as she does not trust the male-dominated world she lives in and if she considers the worlds as being on the verge of falling part and ominous, it means that she is not pleased with it. She is conscious of the fact that she experiences foreboding as her intentions do not correspond with her actions and no one receives advice from her on significant issues. She is not given the courage to rebel; thus, she accepts even if it is against her will. All she can do is to complain since she is only allowed to do that. People such as priests, doctors, caseworkers whom a woman unburdens herself know very well that there is always a sense of complaint in her talk. When she gathers with her friends, she talks about the hardships she faces and they all snorter the unfairness of the universe, males and fate. Since a man is an independent individual, he suffers from the consequences of his own decisions if he collapses. However, a woman is surrounded by external subjects and those subjects are cause of her suffering. Because of the male-dominated society, the sense of despair that surrenders her prevents all the cures and this makes it difficult to come up with solutions as her bemoaning keeps going. She does not compromise to leave her sense of powerless anger. When any change is discussed, her favourite expression is “This is the last straw!”. She is acquainted with the fact that her excuses are non-functional, and the real problems are more serious. Therefore, it seems very clear to her that those changes or solutions are not adequate to be remedies for her troubles. She acts as if the whole world is guilty since she is not allowed to contribute to its formation, and it does not take sides with her. It is a common type of behaviour for her to complain about her circumstances even when she is a little girl. She is told lies and consoled with the

expressions that if she resigns her assets to her husband, she will be awarded with much more and that is why she has the sense that she has been defrauded. She accuses the male-dominated universe for this reason. Resentment is an inevitable part of not being able to be a free individual. In this respect, when a woman sacrifices all she has, it is usual for her not to get enough in return (575,576).

As an example of learned behaviour, a woman usually accuses her husband. He is the obvious representative of the male universe and that is why he is responsible for her being defrauded. The patriarchal world allows male to experience more interaction with the world and when something seems to be wrong, it is because of his mistake. After she meets him at home in the evening, due to the suffering and restrictions, she grumbles about her naughty kids, her health, their financial situation and the weather. The reason is that she is willing to make him feel guilty about all these. He has the opportunity to solve his problems, which seems to a woman as unusual since she justifiably thinks that it is not fair (576-577).

Based on Beauvoir's ideas, it can be said that she analyses women in terms of both their character and the level of their freedom. In both plays that this thesis concerns, there are a variety of women characters who experience the similar internal crisis and challenges in their lives. When one takes into consideration that from 1950s to 1970s were the decades when women started to be aware of their power but still could not break their chains completely, it will not be wrong to assert that both plays reflect the dilemma and hardships the real women of the time faced. In the following chapters, the main women characters of the plays will be examined from these aspects.

CHAPTER TWO: SHELAGH DELANEY'S *A TASTE OF HONEY*

Shelagh Delaney was born in Salford, Lancashire, England in 1939. Her first play is *A Taste of Honey* (1959) and she wrote the play when she was just eighteen years old. There were several other playwrights then, however Delaney's play was the one which was exposed to significant criticism. Because of the fact that she is a woman, this criticism was only to a limited degree. Like the other female writers of the time, she did not get enough attention of what she was supposed to do. On the other hand, male contemporaries of the writer have been examined and studied closely. Apparently, critics of the time focused on the facts that Delaney is a female writer and she wrote the play at a very early age. In this respect, they did not take the play's content and messages into consideration. According to J.R Taylor, the play should be analyzed in view of the fact that it is a drama, which means that the written text only is not influential enough without the elements such as acting and a stage (Taylor, 1962, 110).

The decade in which the play is written is a male-governed one and what makes the play unique is that it has the viewpoint of a female writer. While male writers concentrated on male figures by putting them in the center of the plays and attached female characters as side figures to confirm male domination, *A Taste of Honey* deals with female matters and women characters show a significant dominance in the play (Wandor, 2001, 93). Women are not presented as secondary objects and they, especially Jo, are not typical submissive women of the decade. Delaney handles taboo issues such as premarital sex, homosexuality, relationship of a black man and a white woman, mother and daughter issues, which are still not traditional and usual. Also, she focuses on the job and financial issues of women, in that women at the time were not employed for high positions or allowed to study in decent schools as it is mentioned in the introduction chapter.

In an interview with Delaney, she asserts that she thought of writing the play as a novel, however she changed her mind and decided that creating it as a play would be more suitable. She emphasizes that she wanted to break the norms by creating an unusual play, which differs from the typical ones of the 1950s as it presents the realities of women's lives. She stated that: "I had strong ideas about what I wanted to

see in the theatre. We used to object to plays where factory workers come cap in hand and call the boss 'Sir' ." (Kitchin, 1962, 168).

The play does not deal with the political issues, instead its main concern is to handle the personal relationships. However, it still adverts the taboo subjects of the time, which would cause an impact on society. 1950s was the decade when a new kind of drama emerged, known as 'kitchen-sink drama'. Delaney's plays were also regarded as examples of this new kind. Kitchen-sink drama treats the domestic issues which were ignored and not staged much (Wandor, 41).

The 1950s was a time when British drama experienced a dramatic alteration in terms of the plays' themes. With the publication of John Osborne's *Look Back In Anger* (1956), the conventionally established norms were broken. Osborne created a character, Jimmy Porter, who is rebellious and ready for showing his anger all the time. This play caused a great impact and after that a group called 'angry young men' arose although the writers were not connected. After the publication of her successful play *A Taste of Honey*, Shelagh Delaney was considered as one of the pioneers of the angry young men theatre, however the group's name itself arouse a feeling of patriarchy and her writing was not similar to the other writers of the unity. Therefore, it may not be the right label to categorize a writer like Delaney, who has different purposes and concerns (Rathod, 2017, 1).

The plays, which were written in the late 1950s, put emphasize more on the individual, domestic and familial subjects and while they approach these issues, a sense of tiredness is highlighted. This new wave, which was brought to British drama in the 1950s, dealt with senselessness, however there was an exceptional subject; personal relationships. They pointed out that it is the only establishment that would protect one from the insanity of such a 'modern' world. They did not argue common and worldwide issues like Samuel Beckett, who was a great playwright and their contemporary. They did not focus on Beckett's favourite subjects such as existentialism, the condition of the world and looking for a meaning in a meaningless world and did not try to find facts and reasons. Their concern was more about unconventional and controversial issues and they discussed them on a personal level. It does not mean that they simply tackled personal relationships, in that they dealt with them by reconsidering gender relations, marriage, homosexuality etc. Therefore, they

replaced the established and usual matters with the new ones by examining marginalized characters. Their aim was to analyze the society from a deep perspective and reveal its realities with all the desperation and resignation inside (Cascoigne, 1962, 48-55).

The plays that were written under the influence of this new wave gathered under the name of kitchen-sink drama and the name was chosen by critiques and people who wrote reviews about the plays. The reason is that the name drew attention to the distinct features of the new wave plays. They differed from the other plays, which were produced in the early 1950s (Shellard, 2000,70). The earlier generation's plays examined middle class people's fancy houses and staged them. On the other hand, kitchen sink drama's name comes from the fact that the playwrights displayed poor people's houses, which are full of ordinary and plain furniture. The playwrights wanted to show that living conditions in Britain were harsh and only minority of British population could live in fancy houses. As Cornish states that: "Gas stoves, sinks, creaking wooden chairs and bare kitchen tables replaced the earlier fashionable decors with their overstuffed comforts, velvet draperies and stylish paintings" (1985, 7).

Oleg Kerensky argues that stage is "non-representational" and that is why playwrights could use instant alterations of settings (1977, 16). This was one of the new aspects that would bring a breath of fresh air to the British theatre. In addition, there were other changes as well. The playwrights were also experiencing the similar problems with their characters in the plays. They were approaching their own problems as members of the working class who were dealing with financial problems. There were playwrights who graduated from college among them, however Shelagh Delaney chose not to continue her school life (Taylor, 14). She and other playwrights like her who preferred practicing and improving their writing rather than taking part in an educational process. Nonetheless, the playwrights of kitchen sink drama shared something common, which was a significant reason for them to create realistic works. They were the children of working class British families (Cornish; Ketels, 10-11). In this respect, Taylor asserts: "For many years, the West End stage has been a middle class preserve: middle-class writers, more often than not university educated, have written for mainly middle class audiences. But now things are different" (14). Also,

Oberg asserts that: “ She (Delaney) joins the energy of the once vital music-hall to the energy of speech-vocabulary, idiom, and syntax- that is freshly colloquial in ways that middle and upper class English speech is not” (1966, 161). It can be seen that the audience, drama critiques and journalists had not been used to the new themes, style and setting. This can be one of the reasons of why working class had not been interested in going to theatre. With the emergence of kitchen sink drama, they were attracted to the stages since they started to see their own lives on the stage. Art was becoming for society’s sake with the coming of this new wave. The facts of life were impressive and attractive for a society who had been imposed to two-facedness.

Shelagh Delaney’s first play, *A Taste of Honey*, is based on two women characters who are mother and daughter. They are not suitable for the ideal women standards of the decade, in that they are marginalized and different from the submissive women with their strange personalities. The play sets place in England. Helen, the mother, is a careless woman who is not willing to take care of her daughter. She complains about their financial situation. She has a relationship with another man when she is married and Jo is the fruit of this affair. Jo resembles her mother in some aspects, in that she has a premarital sexual affair with a man. After Jo gets pregnant, Helen does not care about Jo and gets married to a rich man, whose name is Peter. But, Jo does not spend her pregnancy period alone. A homosexual college student, Geof, accompanies and looks after her. Helen, in the meantime, occasionally pays visits to Jo and she pretends to have an interest in Jo’s life, however it is obvious that her interest is not real.

2.1. Unconventionality and Individuality of Women

Delaney uses a number of components of otherness in *A Taste of Honey* and these elements do not seem to be suitable for conventional family and society structures. 1950s was the time when class division was obviously reflected on the stage and by the time the emergence of the New Wave, it was not common to see the British working class in theatre plays as mentioned earlier. Delaney uses those elements of otherness in order to bring the marginalized characters and themes into prominence. For instance, Geof is homosexual and an artist, which enables the author the opportunity to use a lot of music and singing and to present homosexuality as a natural aspect of an artistic work. Additionally, *A Taste of Honey* focuses on the lives of

young people, which was unusual prior to the New Wave. Komporaly argues that it was the post-war British playwrights who first put emphasis on the young-woman heroines in their plays (2006, 103). Furthermore, Jo states that she and Geof are communists in a society where the class discrimination is pretty apparent. On the other hand, Peter, who stands for capitalism, can procure most of the things he wants, including Helen. Also, the characters of the play live in northern England, which is closely attributed to the working class people who had been beside the point by the 1950s regarding the plays. The northern part, including Salford, predicates a specific pattern of social and cultural features, which can be interpreted as an attempt to marginalize the characters and show them as separated from the high-class or bourgeoisie people in Britain (Lacey, 1995,78).

Both women in the play are not the examples of traditional submissive women modals of the 1950s. They are masculinised and when masculinity is combined with natural femininity, which results from their sex, it can be said that they have unique personalities separately. According to old feminine mystique, the most important virtue and dedication for women is the achievement of their femininity. The Western cultures underestimated this value and by doing so they have made a big mistake. It suggests that femininity is too nonrational, baffling and coming from the depth of human nature to be examined and explained by science, which is human-made. However, it does not have inferior aspects when compared to human nature; even it may have superior features. Additionally, the old mystique argues that the main reason of why women suffered in the past is that they were jealous of men and imitated them. However, they should have affirmed the roles of genders and been at peace with their essence, which requires being sexually passive, obeying the male dominated universe and maintaining motherly affection (Friedan, 1977, 37). It can be argued that Jo's and Helen's masculinity is a result of their jealousy of men as they do not seem to be willing to accept traditional gender roles.

The fact that Jo is pregnant with a baby which is the fruit of her premarital sexual affair and she does not take action about abortion can be considered as an act of challenging the conventional patterns. Rich proposes that being dedicated about giving birth to a baby when she is not married and not feeling ashamed of this can be seen as an act of resistance against patriarchy. Therefore, Jo's pregnancy is included

intentionally in the play by the writer to imply her rebellious personality. It is a way of expressing herself and an act of revolting for a woman who is made to do so because of her gender (Rich, 1986, 160).

Apparently, Jo does not care about the society's judgemental attitude which they could direct to her without hesitation. However, the society is the first formation to judge and condemn her. As Beauvoir proposes:

One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine (273).

Jo is intent on delivering the baby and turning the page to a new life, although she is aware that there will be a lot of pressure that will cause difficulty regarding her social state. When she talks to Helen, she states: "Do you know, for the first time in my life I feel really important I feel as though I could take care of the whole world" (Delaney, 81). It can be inferred that she feels mentally strong and is ready to face the possible challenges. She does not get pregnant upon her request, therefore it is not the way that she affirms her individuality. On the other hand, her concern is more about her limited freedom that she has as a single and childless woman. Even so, she can not give up her pregnancy and rather than traditionally, she tries to see it from a different point of view.

The unconventional and distinct features of Jo's personality is not only implied but also mentioned clearly by herself that she is not usual. She is aware that her relations with other people including Jimmy, Geof and especially Helen are not the kinds of relationship that everyone could experience in their daily lives. Therefore, she is capable of hiding her feelings well. She avoids being serious and when she is supposed to be serious, she acts and talks sarcastically. It seems that this functions as a self-defence mechanism as she is hurt by both her mother and her lover. Her relationship with Helen plays a significant role in shaping her distinct personality. She is pessimistic about her pregnancy as Helen probably was when she was pregnant with Jo. While talking to Geof, she states:

GEOF: You're feeling a bit depressed, Jo.

JO: I'm feeling nothing.

GEOF: You'll be your usual self soon.

JO: And what is my usual self? My usual self is a very unusual self, Geoffrey Ingram, and don't you forget it. I'm an extraordinary person. There's only one of me like there's only one of you (Delaney, 50).

According to Beauvoir, women who do not make a living of their own are not regarded as independent just because they have suffrage. Even if the society do not exercise influence over them or impose established traditions less on them, they can not be counted as completely free. In other words, they will continue to be servants at home and outside. The most significant element that helps women keep up with men and can provide them complete independence is a decent full-time job. If they get rid of the financial domination of men, they will be able to destroy the basis of their dependence and they will not need men as an intermediate between them and the world (641).

Jo gains her self-confidence only after she is away from the people with whom she experiences troubled relationships. She starts to live with Geof and they live in a peaceful house. Geof takes care of her and supports her emotionally. In addition to this, she finds a job and earns her own money without depending on any men or her mother. This changes the way she speaks, in that while she has been more passive and talks less before moving in with Geof, she becomes more self-confident and speaks determinedly. Her employment and being decisive about delivering the baby can be seen as an effort of freedom.

Even if there are certain actions of Jo which are individualistic and unique, in the universe of womanhood there are collective actions that can be attributed to feminist acts. Jo tells her mother that "she leaves school and she will start a part-time job in a bar" (Delaney, 24). Jo says it directly to Helen even without asking about her opinion, which indicates that she can easily make decisions about her life. It was not usual to start a job in a bar for a woman during the 1950s in Britain. Employment of women was a topical issue and some of British women first met the work life then. Therefore, starting a job with her own will become an example of collective feminist action for women. Accordingly, it can be argued that it is the society and other external factors that have an impact on one's actions. In this respect, Butler states:

As a given temporal duration within the entire performance, "acts" are a shared experience and 'collective action.' Just as within feminist theory the very category of

the personal is expanded to include political structures, so is there a theatrically-based and, indeed, less individually-oriented view of acts that goes some of the way in defusing the criticism of act theory as 'too existentialist'. The act that gender is, the act that embodied agents *are* inasmuch as they dramatically and actively embody and, indeed, *wear* certain cultural significations, is clearly not one's act alone. Surely, there are nuanced and individual ways of *doing* one's gender, but *that* one does it, and that one does it *in accord with* certain sanctions and proscriptions, is clearly not a fully individual matter (525).

As explained earlier, the second wave feminism's slogan is 'The Personal is Political'. In this respect, what Butler means is that some feminist acts are evolved from personal to political in time. Women's employment is one of the most important actions which can be evaluated within the collective acts. Furthermore, along with government, society and cultural norms play a significant role in determining women's actions, which makes those actions shared by most of women who live in a same country. Also, this helps shared movements be accumulative and make a progress eventually in terms of feminist ideas and perceptions.

Delaney does not try to create women characters who can easily be labelled as 'good', 'bad', 'nasty' etc. Helen and Jo embody distinct features which separate them both from each other and the people around them. Delaney attempts to present the struggle of realizing oneself, especially for Jo. She is neither a typical woman of the time nor a fully marginalized and distinct woman in practice. Although she can be angry and rebellious from time to time, she can not make a significant difference in the lives of others and herself. It can be said that it is because she has been dependent on her mother throughout her life and has never been an independent decision-maker. When they first move to house with Helen at the beginning of the play, even if she does not like the house at all, the only thing she can do is to complain about it. However, she can not show any impact in practice since she is not economically independent. What shape Jo's personality and actions are her unhappy life with Helen and exposure of social norms which cause to restrict her life from time to time. Butler states that: "The act that one does, the act that one performs, is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene" (1988, 526). Thus, in the case of Jo, she represents distinctive characteristic features which are very related and also contrast to the circumstances of the time. Delaney attempts to present each character with its own separate personal colours. She introduces them neither by glorifying

womanhood nor degrading manhood. Although it is not appropriate to disregard social norms for women in the 1950s, she still says:

BOY: You naughty girl!

JO: I may as well be naughty while I've got the chance. I'll probably never see you again. I know it.

BOY: What makes you say that?

JO: I just know it. That's all. But I don't care. Stay with me now, it's enough, it's all I want, and if you do come back I'll still be here.

BOY: You think I'm only after one thing, don't you?

JO: I know you're only after one thing (Delaney, 38-39).

One is not given enough clues about the social relations of Jo and Helen as most of the actions take place at home like the other kitchen sink dramas, besides they do not have guests or friends to invite except for the black sailor and Peter. As both women can not get enough attention and affection from each other, they seek for such satisfactions in male-female relationships. Delaney presents dialogues between both women and those men in order to give an idea about how both women get along with their lovers. Nevertheless, Jo's and Helen's with the people of external world is a question mark at this point. This can be interpreted that both women isolate themselves from the external world on purpose since they are aware of the fact that they are not 'usual' or 'conventional'. This awareness leads to a disconnection regarding the social relations, especially for Jo. Her life, which she spends either at work or at home, results in the sense of alienation. It is obvious that she is not concerned about her school, teachers, neighbours etc. The indifference that comes with the hopelessness keeps on being at the highest level until she moves in with Geof. This shows that one's philosophy of life and cultural values are shaped by the established norms of a society. Likewise, if there is a disconnection between the external world and oneself, one has a high possibility of starting to build his/her values independently, in other words, by being less affected by the external factors. As Aslimoska asserts:

Michel Foucault explains interpellation as a process in which we first get to know the cultural values of our society and then we integrate them, or more precisely, we attach them to our personal system of values. We are susceptible to this process from the day of our birth by taking on certain roles that society has prepared for us (Foucault, 1997). Thus, among the numerous socially created roles stands the role of the woman. Society has constructed a role of fragility and obedience, reserved for the female sex and the

role of endurance and domination, reserved for the male sex. Foucault clarifies that power comes through knowledge, and men, knowing they dominate in all public spheres, have managed to create a reality that suits them and which women have begun to accept as natural law. That is mainly why most of the nineteenth-century women submissively and readily accept the imposed social role and fit into the image that men created for them, whereas the tiny percent of women who deny the social pattern that is supposed to shape their behaviour are considered “rebellious” (2017, 74).

As an adjective ‘rebellious’ is mentioned to describe women, who do not revolt in action; in that they, who do not fit into the cultural pattern, and they constitute only the minority of the society. Even if they do not rebel as a unified and organized community, their unconventional personality and inner world are adequate to be called as ‘rebellious’ as mentioned in the introduction chapter. Women impersonate certain roles such as an ideal wife and a perfect mother and they are expected to accept them without hesitating. Once the minority of women start to recognize their unique sexual identity, they become aware of the fact that they do not have to behave as ideal women as it is the society who regulate those rules and values. Regarding *A Taste of Honey*, Helen and Jo develop an attitude through which they ignore established norms. Jo is a fruit of extramarital affair and she herself gets pregnant as a result of another extramarital affair. Helen works at a bar, which causes her to be considered as ‘unpleasant’ by the society. To be one of the members of ‘tiny percent women’ can be associated with their being conscious of individuality. Jo, for instance, denies that she resembles Helen in terms of personality characters. She claims that there is only one of her, like there is only one of Geof (Delaney, 50). Thus, it can be argued that the feeling of isolation and alienation resulting from the marginality of those women can result in a situation where women can construct social and ethical values and live independently relatively when they are compared to the majority of women by being less affected by the social and cultural patterns. While women are expected to be sensitive and emotional especially when they are pregnant, Jo states:

JO: The colour’s wrong. [*Suddenly and violently flinging the doll to the ground.*] I’ll bash it’s brains out. I’ll kill it. I don’t want his baby, Geof. I don’t want to be a mother. I don’t want to be a woman.

GEOF: Don’t say that, Jo.

JO: I’ll kill it when it comes, Geoff, I’ll kill it.

GEOF: Do you want me to go out and find that chap and bring him back? Is that what you want?

JO: I don't want that. I don't want any man. (Delaney, 75).

Taking into consideration that *A Taste of Honey* has been written through the emergence of second wave feminist movement, there still existed the problem of women's individuality. In spite of the fact that Jo is Helen's daughter and Jo is raised by her biological mother, they differentiate from each other in lots of ways. It can be argued that Delaney tries to draw attention to the unique personalities and sexual identities of both women. As Kristeva puts forward, dividing women into groups does not work once the concept of feminism has been truly and decently adapted by the society (Oliver, 1993). Even if Helen and Jo are marginalized and unconventional when compared to image of traditional woman of the time, the content of their marginality is not the same as each other. Both of them construct their own ethical values and vision of life that consist of separate features. Their uniqueness has also other unique aspects that make them special and different. At this point, the question of what different and unique mean in the context of feminism can be raised. Here, the meaning of different personality and sexual identity is not the opposite of traditional and/or ordinary. If one sees it in this way, it leads to the problem of categorizing women as traditional and not traditional or different. The word 'different' refers to the individual, cultural, physical, sexual and mental characteristics pattern of every female. In relation to this, Jo and Helen have difficulty in understanding and according with each other's ethical values since their personalities are not identical like every individual women. In this respect, instead of considering Jo and Helen as members of a category or group, Delaney uncovers the identity differentiation of the mother and daughter.

The perception of individual identity differences in the context of feminism is barely adapted by the society. To call women 'marginal', 'different' or 'other' in general causes the danger of categorizing them in a conventional feminist way. More importantly, it brings about the problem of considering passive and oppressed women because of the patriarchal system to be ordinary or normal. If women's duties are seen as being at home, not to revolt against patriarchy or not being able to experience and enjoy their individual identity pattern, it leads to the continuation of male world's dominance. Therefore, the misconception of regarding a 'normal' woman's pattern to be traditional is a part of patriarchal ideology system. Additionally, in male's world, there does not exist a perception of ordinary men or they do not have to obey the rules

of the opposite sex. They do not even need to hide their sexual lives as they know that the burden of sexual identity and the issues about it are discussed in the context of women. The female world is disambiguated in that it becomes open to the different kinds of judgemental attitude in time. This leads to the vulnerability of female universe and rising against this ideology turns out more difficult for them. However, if a woman tends to show traditional features by her nature, even her passivity or 'normality' for the society has separate uniqueness from other conventional females.

Delaney puts emphasize on the distinct identities and individuality of both women in *A Taste of Honey*. The feminist movement, which starts with the motivation of suffrage and the problems of only one gender, has been dismantled in the way that feminists have come to the realization of a woman's own identity and individuality through the emergence of the second wave feminist movement as mentioned in the introduction chapter. Jo and Helen, as the fictional characters of post-war British drama, are acquainted with the fact that they are responsible only for their individual ideas and actions. Helen, for instance, gets married to Peter without paying attention to the opinions and financial condition of Jo and leaves her alone in poverty as an unsurprising consequence of her decision. Jo blames her by stating that: "After all you are my mother! You're a bit late remembering that, aren't you? You walked through that door with that man and didn't give me a second thought" (Delaney, 64). On the other hand, Jo has a child out of wedlock and while she is pregnant, she lives with Geof who is her homosexual accompanier. In this regard, it can be inferred that the unconventional acts can be represented in a lot of ways depending on an unconventional woman's own decisions. They can be presented not only as actions but also as ideas and speeches as well in that, in the first act of the play even though Jo does not do a specific defiant action, one can get the sense that she has a marginal and rebellious personality through her harsh discourse. Within this context, Scharff asserts that:

In addition, processes of individualization create a climate in which structural inequalities are regarded as individual problems. Exploring feminist consciousness in 10 white middle-class women in Britain, Rich (2005) found that individual achievement is believed to be sufficient to overcome social constraints. These empirical observations resonate with broader sociological arguments about individualization (Beck, 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1995; Giddens, 1991) and more critical perspectives on processes of individualization in particular (Bauman, 2000, 2001; McRobbie, 2009). Writing about the contemporary era, Bauman argues that

'Individualization is a fate, not a choice' and that refusal to participate in the 'individualizing game is emphatically *not* on the agenda' (Bauman, 2000: 34; emphasis in original). 'Everything . . .', he states, 'is now down to the individual' (Bauman, 2000: 62); the conditions in which individuals live, their experiences and narratives undergo a relentless process of individualization. Discussing *The Aftermath of Feminism*, McRobbie (2009: 16) draws on Bauman's arguments to develop the concept of 'female individualization'. Examining young women's repudiation of feminism, she claims that feminism has been replaced with 'aggressive individualism' (McRobbie, 2009: 5) (2011, 121).

The aggressive individualism mentioned above, refers to the strong defiant acts that are peculiar to every individual woman's own life. The aggressiveness can be presented in a lot of ways that one of them does not resemble another woman's act or thought. Women's individual experiences did not use to differ from one another so much before the modernist age since individualism did not have an impact on people's lives. Therefore, feminist movement started with the demand of suffrage which brought women together on a social and cultural basis, yet it was not enough to seek for the other rights which are related with their personal lives although it was an effective way to start. The second wave feminist movement's slogan is 'Personal is Political' as stated earlier and this spirit has been reflected in the feminist literary works of the time like *A Taste of Honey*. Jo and Helen do not seem to be as submissive and traditional females contrary to the usual housewives of the 1950s and they exhibit behaviours that do not fit in social and cultural norms in the context of feminism. However, the point that needs to be emphasized here is that those behaviours and actions are not the same as each other in that, the understanding of the 'personal' is laid stress on the play. The common point of the two women is that they are careless regarding the cultural and social patterns of the society, however their individual defiant decisions and actions show the features of marginality in separate ways. While Helen gets excited for the reason that she marries Peter, Jo does not seem to be into romantic love:

GEOF: Do you wish he was still here?

JO: Not really. I think I've had enough. I'm sick of love. That's why I'm letting you stay here. You won't start anything.

GEOF: No, I don't suppose I will.

JO: You'd better not. I hate love.

GEOF: Do you, Jo?

JO: Yes, I do. (Delaney, 53)

The beginning of the first modernist age enabled society's welfare and different kinds of institutions including education and this leads to more freedom of people, in

that they have more chance to make a living. As a result, young female individuals start to be able to get out of the societies where there are certain gender and identity roles. Because of the fact that there do not exist sharp social patterns and rules through the late modernity, individuals start to build their own set of rules. As a result of this, writing diaries, planning their careers and making decisions more independently become popular since the old structures dismantle slowly (McRobbie, 2009, 19). In relation with this, after Jo and Helen start to live in separate houses, Jo feels more independent to make decisions which would have a crucial impact on her life. She constructs her own mindset and plans including how she will make a living after she delivers her baby. The sense of individuality and independence is presented in a dialogue with Geof:

JO: What's age got to do with it? Anyway, I'm not working for much longer. I'm not having everybody staring at me.

GEOF: How are you going to manage then?

JO: There's no need for you to worry about it.

GEOF: Somebody's got to. Anyway, I like you.

JO: I like you, too.

GEOF: Your mother should know.

JO: Why?

GEOF: Well, she's your mother. Do you know her address?

JO: No. She was supposed to be marrying some man. They live in a big, white house somewhere (Delaney, 50).

Individuals, especially females, are expected to make a proper life for themselves as they have the opportunity with the impact of late modernist age. Women become more involuntary regarding most of the areas of life, in that they make their own choices in marital life and they deal with their work life without getting any support. For instance, they begin to change their jobs independently as being stick to a specific job for a lifetime places them in stable and unchangeable roles and identities (McRobbie, 19). The feminist discussions which are related to individuality are intertwined with the literary works of post-war or secondary modernist time. In *A Taste of Honey*, Jo stands for the concept of individualism as she does not seem to interfere with anybody's life and she does not like being controlled by anybody else as well. Her dialogue with Geof above reveals her overall perspective on life since she thinks that neither Geof nor Helen must be interested in her decisions even though one of them is her mother and the other is her flatmate. On the other hand, Jo states that she does not know where her mother lives, which is a sign of a young woman's worrying about only herself. The conversation is in the matter of work life which is at the heart

of second wave feminism and the discussions of individuality. It can be argued that Jo wants to feel independent on the subject of her work life since she needs to be active rather than being taken care of or submissive regarding the financial matters. Furthermore, she even claims that she is a communist:

HELEN: She'd be better off working than living off you like a little bloodsucker.

GEOF: She doesn't live off me.

JO: No, we share everything, see! We're communists too.

HELEN: That's his influence I suppose.

JO: Get out of here. I won't go out if I don't want to. It's nothing to do with you. Get back to your fancy man or your husband, or whatever you like to call him. (Delaney, 62).

The terms individualism and collectivism denote how much interrelated people are in societies. Collectivism refers to the one's dependence on his/her society and the society's dependence on the one, which means that collectivist people give more importance to the social norms and conventional patterns and figures of authority or community models exercise more power over them by controlling and evaluating their actions. According to the cross-cultural studies, collectivist people care more about the collective patterns than individualist people do. Individualist members of a society are less connected to each other and every member is expected to take an interest in themselves or their closest family members. On the other hand, collectivism represents the members of a society where they grow up together with an emotional state of connectedness. In this way, a member can feel safer and protected by the others and they show their loyalty towards them in return (Arora & Singhai & Patel, 2011, 321). In a traditional context, individualism is defined as "the habit or principle of being independent and self-reliant: self-centred feeling or conduct; egoism" (Jewell & Abate, 2001, 28).

People who present the features of individualism place emphasis on liberty, freedom and individual sociability while others who support collectivistic phenomenon are inclined to endorse unity of a group, safety, responsibilities, tasks, liabilities, conformity and individualized relationships. Collectivist members of a society are attached to each other with a variety of bonding. Furthermore, collectivist people tend to spend their time in few restricted groups such as family and circle of friends.

Because of the fact that members of these groups alter very rarely, collectivist people are intolerant regarding people who are out of the circles and they prefer sticking to individuals of their groups. However, even the individuals of a specific cultural pattern have different attitudes in the context of individualism-collectivism as there are significant factors such as gender, racial, etymological differences and the level of a community's modernization. Gender-centred hypothesis suggests that the attitude difference between genders is expected since the way of raising young girls and boys, the school environment and their means of socializing are distinctive. Therefore, it can be inferred that traditions, social norms and values are significant in determining the actions of the different genders. The distinctive attitudes of male and female depend on the gender stereotypes that are defined by the society, gender roles and autonomy figures. All these factors have a significant impact on how a young male or female presents his/her identity in the context of gender roles. Various studies indicate that males tend to be more individualistic while females constitute most of the followers of collectivistic approach (Arora & Singhai & Patel, 322). In *A Taste of Honey*, Delaney points out the word 'self' and individuality of both women:

HELEN: That's the way you do things. If you see something you want, take it. That's my daughter for you. If you spent half as much time on me as you do on them fiddling bits of greenery I'd be a damn side better off. Go and see if that kettle's boiling.

JO: See yourself. I've got to find somewhere for my bulbs.

HELEN: See yourself! Do everything yourself. That's what happens. You bring 'em up and they turn round and talk to you like that. I would never have dared to talk to my mother like that when I was her age. She'd have knocked me into the middle of next week [...] (Delaney, 11-12)

It can be argued that both Jo and Helen can be considered as the followers of individualistic approach, which is the starting point of where their marginality and unconventionality are based on. As it is suggested, it is more common that female individuals are inclined to be collectivists however, Jo and Helen present overly individualistic features such as looking after only themselves, not caring about the social norms and cultural patterns and doing independent and individual initiative actions. Therefore, are different and marginal women contrary to the most of the female individuals of the time who are oppressed by the male dominant society and become submissive as a result.

2.2. Motherhood

In *A Taste of Honey* central figures are women and it pushes men into the background, from which it can be inferred that it differs from the other plays of the time (Wandor, 61). *A Taste of Honey* does not mainly put emphasize on men's feelings, lives and relations, instead it presents them in relation to women characters. Thus, it is apparent that they do not have leading roles in the play. Thanks to Delaney's gender, a new perception was brought to British theatre, which is a woman's point of view. Jo and Helen are courageous enough to ask questions about their roles as women. Also, they do not seem to be totally fit ideal woman and ideal mother stereotypes and they change the conventional definition of gender roles. When Jo tells her plans about both having the baby and getting a job, Helen asks her who is going to look after the baby when Jo is out at work. Jo states that it is only her business and she can do anything when she sets her mind to it (Delaney, 80). Birmingham Feminist History Group suggests that government was working on the issues about women in the 1950s, some of which resulted in legislation. Some conferences which regarded the familial matters were held. This indicates that significant changes were to be made and one of them was about women's condition in the workforce as there was a steady increase in married women who took part in labour. The effort for improving the country after the war included women's employment. Although many people believed that it was temporary and would change soon, the tendency remained same to some extent (49). This can be interpreted that Delaney, together with the government, managed to break the established norm which suggests that a woman must experience motherhood to reach fulfilment and not get involved in world of work in order to be a proper mother.

Women's significance in shaping the social and cultural structure of the next generations can not be underestimated. However, it is difficult to observe the process at first hand for women due to the fact that they can not take place in politics decently in a male-dominated world. Yuval-Davis suggests that reproduction of nations is possible only with the biological, cultural and symbolic contributions of women (1997, 2). Bearing a child is seen as a responsibility of a woman but not as an individual, a wife or a worker, instead it is seen as a fulfilment that must be achieved in order to continue the reproduction of nations (22). It is women who expand nations by

delivering children and this potential has been managed by others in order to prevent harmful factors from penetrating into societies. Along with producing children physically, women play a significant role in protecting and maintaining the cultural patterns of nations since they help their children be parts of them. Also, they function as holders of a nation's identity and integrity both on individual and a people-to-people level (116). In spite of their important role in reproduction of nations, their place in society was usually quite changeful since they were excluded from the political issues of a nation. Therefore, they were regarded as objects and not allowed to be subjects. While men were self, women were considered to be the others. Also, it was men who made decisions on how women should symbolize the nation. They aphorized about the behaviour, clothing, attitude etc. of women and wanted them to be adopted by them.

Men played a crucial role in determining what the definition of motherhood is. Rich argues that regarding the written literary works, women could not have the chance of writing about motherhood much throughout history and that is why most of the works which discuss the theme of motherhood were written from the male point of view (1986, 61-62). In this respect, Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* can be seen as one of the pioneer works which deal with the theme of motherhood.

With the male viewpoint, male writers came up with stereotyped ideas and predictions about womanhood and motherhood, but they could only assume them as they did not deal with the matters at first hand. This caused motherhood to look hollow and insignificant. Rich proposes that the institution of motherhood derived from the patriarchal ideas and perspective, thus it does not reflect the real aspects of motherhood. The patriarchal system suggests that women are expected to show self sacrifice and ignore their individually distinctive intellectuality to be proper mothers (41-43). As this idea was imposed by the society for a long time, people considered it as normal. According to patriarchal ideology, this was acceptable on the condition that a child is born when mother and father are married. If the child does not take the name of her/his father, she/he was considered to be illegitimate. Rich suggests that patriarchal ideas could be kept alive with the help of motherhood and heterosexuality which could be seen as aphorisms as they were unquestionable institutions. However, there were occasional situations where marginalised people experience 'alternate life-style' (43). One of the examples of an alternate motherhood is showed by Helen:

JO: What day was I born?

HELEN: I don't know.

JO: You should remember such an important event.

HELEN: I've always done my best to forget that.

JO: How old was I when your husband threw you out?

HELEN: Change the subject. When I think of her father and my husband it makes me wonder why I ever bothered, it does really. (Delaney, 28)

The controversial aspect of motherhood is that a mother is either judged or valued depending on her mothering skills. There is a common view that mothers must be emotionally strong, which eventually causes either transcending or criticizing women. In one sense, there is a type of mother who fulfils her responsibilities properly in order to gratify her children even if their demands are not sensible as the mother is always ready to dedicate her life to them. On the other hand, there exist some mothers who choose not to fully accomplish their motherly duties which are predetermined by the society. The feminist viewpoint suggests that not ideal women are judged because of the patriarchal oppression. The preconceived ideas can only be untangled by destroying patriarchal system. Also, every mother has a choice of being an ideal mother, in that it is her will. However, providing a fully proper life for children is considered to be mothers' responsibility despite the fact that the society dominates and manages their way of mothering. Therefore, this viewpoint proposes that while raising children, it is the mother who takes all the responsibility, which means that her way of mothering is the most crucial factor in shaping the children's lives. As the society expects unreasonable flawlessness from the mothers, women are accused of the flaws of their children. Considering women as purely perfect rejects their right of self differentiation (Chodorow & Contratto, 1982, 55-67). In this respect, *A Taste of Honey* denies this viewpoint which derived from the stereotypes based on patriarchy. Instead, it presents women as separate and imperfect individuals who try to survive in their own worlds and under different circumstances like every human being. Helen reveals a portrayal of careless mother, she does not pay any attention to Jo and together with Peter, she acts as if Jo was their servant:

PETER: Do what your mother tells you.

JO: Ordering me about like a servant! [*She goes.* PETER *makes another pass at* HELEN.] The kettle's not boiling. I suppose she hasn't told you about me.

PETER: Christ!

HELEN: Go and lay the table.

JO: No.

HELEN: Well, do something. Turn yourself into a bloody termite and crawl into the wall or something, but make yourself scarce.

PETER: Get rid of her. (Delaney, 16-17)

Women are valued by what degree they can reach the level of ideal motherhood. Correspondingly, women who simply did not want to bear children were regarded as unusual and a threat to the country since they were not willing to contribute to the population and in parallel with this power of their nations, and ready to face up to the difficulties afterwards (Rich, 169). Therefore, women are placed in a very controversial position, in that there are a lot of stereotyped assumptions which are related to womanhood and motherhood, but they have a very little influence on construction of these ideas. For instance, the idea which proposes that every woman should be a mother is an assumption which is supported by the patriarchal societies. In this respect, the conception which suggests that a woman should be the ultimate decision maker as far as her body is concerned has resulted in a sense of panic (30). The main reason of this is that it could cause redefining of womanhood which is an institution defined by men. In addition to this, it could create potential problems for the national identity whose process of shaping has taken many years.

Helen's and Jo's attitude to familial relations and motherhood is different from the society's. Delaney puts emphasize the fact that every woman does not have to find maternal instincts in her heart and delivering a child is not the most significant aspect of motherhood in that emotional bonding is more important than being pregnant with her baby. Delaney indicates that familial unity is not only about giving birth to children and living under the same roof. Members of a family should take care of each other regarding both physical and emotional needs. As Beauvoir states: "Enforced maternity brings into the world wretched infants, whom their parents will be unable to support and who will become the victims of public care or 'child martyrs'" (468). Jo does not end up in public care or child martyr, however it is apparent that she has been in need of care and support since her childhood. Although Helen tries to move away the image of the improper mother from time to time, it is obvious that the person she

pretends to be is not the real Helen. She fails at fulfilling the role of a traditional mother:

Helen: Anybody at home? Well, I'm back. You see, I couldn't stay away, could I? There's some flowers for you Jo. The barrows are smothered in them. Oh! How I carried that lot from the bus stop I'll never know. The old place looks a bit more cheerful, doesn't it? I say, there's a nice homely smell. Have you been doing a bit of baking? I'll tell you one thing, it's a lovely day for flitting (Delaney, 77)

If one takes the traditional familial roles into consideration, Helen is the one who is supposed to bake at home. Instead, she gets married to a coarse man and moves to another house, while leaving her daughter alone. She pays a visit to Jo's and Geof's house, which is her former residency, and she notices a 'nice homely smell'. The reason of why she noticed the smell is that the house was untidy and dirty when Jo and Helen lived there together as Helen was careless towards her daughter and their home. Noticeably, she does not accomplish the role of a proper mother even though she sometimes tries to persuade others that she does. In addition to this, Helen states that she thinks of giving up sex and men (18). However, she ends up getting married to Peter, which can be interpreted that even though she does not fit in the social norms, she has to follow the conventional familial structure and eventually be a part of it. The most obvious reason of why she gets married is that she is fed up with being broke and her dull life that she spends with Jo. She seeks for enjoyment and excitement in order to colour her life. That is why she gets married to Peter along with the financial reasons (Keyssar, 1984, 39). There are other reasons too, in that the socially established norm, which suggests that a woman is doomed to get married eventually, was very common at that time. As Beauvoir states: "Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society. It is still true that most women are married, or have been, or plan to be, or suffer from not being" (415). In this respect, no matter how marginal Helen can be, she gets married for economic and emotional reasons. Delaney points out the fact that British women begin to change and go out of the social standards, but still it is a transitional period and they are still not fully independent and self-confident.

Helen tries to draw attention to the age disparity between Peter and her. She states: "Listen, love. I'm old enough to be your mother." Peter answers: "Now you know I like this mother and son relationship" (Delaney, 18). The dialogue between

Helen and Peter indicates that their relationship has resemblance to a mother and son relation. Peter even mentions that this kind of relationship appeals to him. Later in the play Peter refers to Oedipus (65), who is a character from a Greek myth. According to the myth, Oedipus marries his mother by accident and involves in a husband and wife relationship. Sigmund Freud names his Oedipus complex theory after this myth. Freud's theory suggests that a male, at very young ages has a sense of sexual desire for his mother, which goes on until male reaches a certain psychological maturity. After he becomes mentally grown up, he is able to address his feelings towards other women around him (Freud, 1899, 202). Peter substitutes his need of maternal love with another kind of love, which he tries to find in his relation with Helen. It seems that he experiences complicated mother issues and reveals that in this way. On the other hand, Helen states that she does not think that he liberates maternal instincts in her (Delaney, 18). However, she acts like she wants to dominate Peter like a mother does for her male child. She rejects his questions and requests with a sharp and simple 'no'. As Beauvoir asserts:

Freud holds that the relation between mother is the one of the least ambivalence; but the fact is that in maternity, as in marriage and love affair, woman takes an equivocal attitude towards masculine transcendence. If her experience in marriage or in love has made her hostile to man, it will give her satisfaction to domineer over the male reduced to his childish form; she will threaten the arrogant sex in an ironical and unceremonious fashion. Sometimes, for example, she will frighten the child by threatening that the mark of his maleness will be cut off unless he behaves. Even if she is humbler, more gentle, and respects in her son the hero of the future, she is forced to reduce him to his present, immanent reality in order to make him really hers: just as she treats her husband as a child, so she treats her child as a baby (495).

While Peter and Helen hug, Helen tells Peter that Jo is jealous when she sees her mother's being affectionate with somebody. Jo says that Helen has never been affectionate with her (Delaney, 19). While Helen can sometimes be affectionate with Peter, she does not present the same attitude towards her daughter. Since Helen's past relationships result in failure, she tends to act motherly towards Peter and dominate him as if he is her child. It seems that her experiences make her hostile to men and therefore she aspires to psychologically satisfy herself in this way. This can be interpreted that Helen directs her love to Peter, whom she regards as her male child even if she asserts the contrary. In this respect, it can be argued that Delaney attempts to draw attention to a controversial issue of the time. A male's sexual feeling towards his mother was a shameful and disputable matter when one takes the decade that the

play was written into consideration even if Freud put forward the theory as a scientist. Thus, the conventional relation of a husband and wife is reversed and it can be regarded as an attempt to go beyond the social borders.

The play focuses on the concept that each individual is only responsible for himself/herself. They are emotionally fragmented and they do not believe in the unity of a family. It also suggests the idea that family unity is doomed to come to an end eventually no matter how much it is built on conventional ideological patterns. The concept of being the cause of one's good or bad ending is mentioned and implied in the play. As Helen states: "Anyway, it's your life, ruin it your own way. It's a waste of time interfering with other people, don't you think so? It takes me all my time to look after myself, I know that" (13). It seems that both Helen and Jo have this mentality since they do not feel obliged to care about anyone else. Helen even uses the phrase 'other people' as the object of the sentence also referring her daughter. The sense of individualism reaches its highest level and they do not expect anything from others as family is just a burden for them. They do not believe in the power of a family's emotional bonding. Accordingly, they also do not want to be the person who is asked for help or emotional support.

Helen says that she has never declared to be a responsible mother and therefore she does not feel compelled to be a decent one. Jo insists on remaining isolated and she is not willing to get in contact with others. She only acts nicely when she interacts with Geof, who is a helpful and moderate person. Likewise, Peter is as careless as Helen, which indicates that they compose a good match and thus Helen does not need to think of him and do something useful for him. Apparently, she would not be a part of a relationship which requires virtues like being considerate and naive. It is the same even in their mother-daughter relationship:

PETER: She'll be all right, won't she? At her age.

HELEN: We can't take her with us. We will be, if you'll not take exception to the phrase, on our honeymoon. Unless we change our minds.

PETER: I'm not having her with us.

HELEN: She can stay here then. Come on. I'm hungry.

JO: So am I.

HELEN: There's plenty of food in the kitchen.

JO: You should prepare my meals like a proper mother.

HELEN: Have I ever laid claim to being a proper mother? If you're too idle to cook your own meals you'll just have to cut food out of your diet altogether. That should help you lose a bit of weight, if nothing else. (Delaney, 34-35)

For Helen, the individuality peaks in her relationship with her daughter. When she feels that she could make benefit of the men whom she has love affairs, the degree of her selfishness lowers. Men can provide her entertainment and money, while Jo is a totally burden for her. The conventional mother-daughter relationship is supposed to provide love for both females. This kind of relationship does not fit in Helen's personality since in a conventional mother-daughter relationship, it is the mother who is supposed to make self-sacrifice most of the time. Instead, Helen prefers relationships based on mutual interests. This can be seen in Jo's speech when she talks about her relationship with Helen:

Jo: You've got nice hands, hard. You know I used to try and hold my mother's hands, but she always used to pull them away from me. So silly really. She had so much love for everyone else, but none for me. (Delaney,72)

Jo's speech presents their situation clearly since she directly states that she does not want to be a mother because of her ruined relationship with Helen. Delaney puts emphasize on the fact that every woman does not have to aspire to be a mother. If a woman has a baby in opposition to her desire, it may cause a serious problem for the children when they decide to be parents later. As Wandor suggests, Delaney concentrates on that Jo is pregnant with a baby, which she does not want. The playwright benefits from her female understanding in order to present the effects of this pregnancy on Jo. It is a requirement for her to mention this since she is a woman, too (144).

Delaney handles this problem at a time when having a baby and looking after it properly were regarded as the most crucial tasks for women. In this respect, Bruley argues that in 1950s most of the young girls were raised as people who have no vision and ideology at all. The education system was based on this mission and girls were educated accordingly. The state implemented a policy which proposed that girls had education to be citizens and education does not mean that they would work later. This means that they were expected to be ready for being mothers soon after they finish school (1999, 127).

Helen and Jo become not only physically separated but also estranged emotionally when Helen gets married. While they live together, Jo's concern about ending up like Helen rises. She is afraid of resembling her as Helen is not the type of woman who Jo wants to be. Rich puts forward the term "matrophobia" for this kind of concern (235-236). Matrophobia refers to the psychological situation that the daughter avoids depending on her mother and establishing emotional bonds with her. The mother tries to fit in the social norms and does not revolt against them. Therefore, daughter is worried about being like her mother and keeps her distance by not showing affection for her. For the case of *A Taste of Honey*, however, Helen is not an ordinary mother who imposes traditional ideas about womanhood and motherhood on her daughter. Therefore, Jo's lack of love and affection is not caused by the fact that Helen sticks to the social norms and traditions. On the contrary, the main reason is that she does not have such characteristics and she never forces Jo to adapt herself to the ideal woman role. Therefore, both women have difficulty in establishing a mutual relation with each other and other people around them. Jo speaks of that she does not want to be like Helen in a conversation with her as follows:

JO: Anyway I'm not getting married like you did.

HELEN: Oh!

JO: I'm too young and beautiful for that.

HELEN: Listen to it! Still we all have funny ideas at that age, don't we – makes no difference though, we all end up same way sooner or later. Anyway, tell me about this dream you had (Delaney, 12).

Taylor argues that Delaney does not really break the socially established norms of motherhood. Helen and Jo do not adopt the conventional attitude towards motherhood, however they end up being mothers either this way or that way. Motherhood is regarded as a biological necessity, but it does not content them and they do not have any other motive to be mothers (1993, 19). Although both women tend to underline that womanhood and motherhood are different, they end up assuming that motherhood is a requirement of being a woman (Komporalý, 2007, 30). Nonetheless, they change the conventional role of motherhood by adding their personal perspectives to it and seeing it from their marginal point of view. They are imposed to the idea that it is their destiny to give birth to children only because of their gender, but they are self-confident enough to personally redefine the meaning of being a mother. When one

approaches the play from the viewpoint of the current time, it is true that the play does not fully deal with the socially acceptable norms. However, considering the 1950s, it can be said that the play defies most of the established stereotypes of the time.

2.3. Marriage and Sexuality

The subject of marriage was very significant in women's lives during the time period that the play was written since wives were considered as the connective factor for the families that had been broken during the war. Marriage was the main issue of the time, therefore people were inclined to get married at a very young age (Lewis, 1992, 5). The ideas that revolve around the concept of domesticity were the primary reason of the fact that women were attributed to the notions of motherhood and wifery. 1950's was the time when the marriage institution "alone permi[t] a woman to keep her social dignity intact" (Beauvoir, 327). While a woman consolidates her social status, self-respect and financial affluence that her husband enables, the woman serves the man and he took his pleasure (420). In other words, Beauvoir explains the situation as "marriages are financial alliances, and each household operates as an economic entity much like a corporation" (36). In this respect, women provide sexual and household services for men and they get economic steadiness and social nobility in return. Thus, what a man wants is the sexual pleasure and other sorts of benefits such as homemade food and a clean house; and he pays for these benefits by financially taking care of his family. A man does not need to get married at a very young age since he is already able to be an autonomous individual thanks to his financially independent condition. However, if a woman chooses not to get married, she can not be considered as a full individual or ideal woman as this means that she can not function completely and be productive regarding the matters of household or giving birth to a child. Therefore, a woman tries to find a decent husband with a proper and well-paid job in order to be a socially acceptable individual. Accordingly, as Beauvoir asserts:

Marriage has always been a very different thing for man and for woman. The two sexes are necessary to each other, but this necessity has never brought about a condition of reciprocity between them; women, as we have seen, have never constituted a caste making exchanges and contracts with the male caste upon a footing of equality. A man is socially an independent and complete individual; he is regarded first of all as a producer whose existence is justified by the work he does for the group: we have seen why it is that the reproductive and domestic role to which woman is

confined has not guaranteed her an equal dignity. Certainly the male needs her; in some primitive groups it may happen that the bachelor, unable to manage his existence by himself, becomes a kind of outcast; in agricultural societies a woman co-worker is essential to the peasant; and for most men it is of advantage to unload certain drudgery upon a mate; the individual wants a regular sexual life and posterity, and the State requires him to contribute to its perpetuation (415-416).

Kristeva argues that in the context of feminism it is significant to emphasize that women may have to employ the specific identity conceptions such as 'feminine' or 'woman' as they need to be unified in order to make a voice. There is a close relationship between a woman's independency and the issues regarding identity politics. It is unnecessary to stick to the matter of identity as the important point is to think about the aspects that are beyond this problem. Every woman must be considered as a distinct individual in terms of sexual identity instead of as a group consisting of stereotyped women as she tends to believe in multiple sexualities. In this respect, Kristeva asserts that "I have the deep conviction that every person has a very particular sexuality" (Oliver, 1993, 97).

It is possible to reject perceptions of feminism that only revolve around the words 'woman' or 'feminine'. Kristeva denies that there exists a specific feminine self. Additionally, she does not believe in the movements of feminism which are based on specific norms of feminine identity since they lead to the destruction and ignorance of every individual woman's unique differences. She even puts forward that the problem can be solved by despising femininity. There does not exist a definite concept of womanhood, in that one should only use that word in order to defend the rights of abortion and contraceptive pills (98).

"Nerd" feminism can be dangerous in the way that it is in the tendency to collect different women, who have a wide variety of personalities and sexual identities, under stereotyped categories. Feminism should re-evaluate its value by considering its power and redefine this conservative attitude in its identity. Feminist women movements should be demanding in order to attract attention to distinctiveness of individual women and create awareness to put emphasize on sexual differences. It can be claimed that every human being is born with their unmatched sexuality. During the emergence period of feminism, the consciousness of unity and solidarity was useful and got things done. Nevertheless, this consciousness caused problems since it is

considered as a conception that tries to similarize individual women likewise it has already been done for the globalized male universe (98).

Oliver suggests that Kristeva agrees with Butler regarding the issue of multiple sexual identities. With her work *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler encourages feminists to point out the matter of sex/gender distinction. According to her, there are a wide variety of sexes and sexed bodies. She suggests that feminist movements should function with a significant consciousness that does not involve the fixed norms of femininity, woman or even female. Butler has an ally in Foucault in the way that the understanding of definiteness restricts feminism as a concept, however it should embody and multiply all the gender identities (99).

Women did not have a choice of taking part in any of sexual activities that did not involve her husband since they maintained their lives with the financial help of males. Therefore, it was only the husband who deserved her sexual service as he literally paid for it. In this regard, this traditional perspective which was accepted in the past by conservative countries is challenged in *A Taste of Honey*, in that Helen has an extramarital sexual relationship when she is married. That is why, it can be argued that a conventional taboo is confounded by Delaney. Helen emancipates herself from the social and ethical norms since she leaves her religious husband and satisfy her sexual needs with a villager (Chandrika, 1993, 57). She states that she makes love to a village idiot since her husband was a Puritan and he did not want to take part in any sexual activities with him (Delaney, 43). Accordingly, Helen does not present a sign of conformity regarding the concept of traditional marriage since she cheats on her husband.

Helen gets married to Peter mostly because she wants to feel secure financially as she and Jo struggle to make a living. According to Millet, a woman gets married or has a relationship solely on the condition that she feels “romantic love” for a man (1970, 37). Only if a woman experiences the feeling of love for a man, she can get married to him or have a sexual relationship with him. However, Helen considers her marriage as a means of making a living, which can be interpreted as a case of lack of romantic love. The traditional marriage institution is destructed by Helen since it is not a ‘corporation’ for her as Beauvoir states, in that she solely pays attention to her own

benefits. Helen's attitude towards marriage institution is clear from her conversation with Jo:

JO: What are you marrying him for?

HELEN: He's got a wallet full of reasons (Delaney, 34).

It can be argued that Helen does not get married to Peter in order to satisfy her emotional side or feeling dignified by him. Therefore, she shows her individualist and selfish personality in addition to being an unconventional woman who breaks the two established norms of marriage. She commits adultery and gets married only for financial reasons as two defiant acts.

1950s was the time when having a sexual relationship without getting married was not common and sex could be a subject only within a context of marriage institution as it was seen as a taboo for women. It "is a fault, a fall, a defeat, a weakness; she should defend her virtue [...] if she 'yields' she is scorned" (Beauvoir, 369). Women were expected to remain chaste or they had to be a part of marriage institution, which was the only reason accepted by the society, to have a sexual relationship. Sex was considered "either as procreative sex or as (undesirable) perversion" (Smart, 1996, 40). As well as being married, another 'excuse' which was seen as a justified reason for having a sexual relationship was to have deep romantic feelings for a man. Additionally, a woman is 'allowed' to participate in any sexual activity in order to give birth and thus she is blessed with the title of 'mother' and she provides another benefit for her husband, which is having a child. Because of these reasons, woman became the passive party regarding her marital life and man had the position of being 'taker', that is he was the active party (Beauvoir, 423). As a result, it was not appropriate for women to talk about their sexual desires or sexual life (Irigaray, 1991, 125). That is why, the 1950s was a decade when women were considered as the submissive party regarding sexual relationships and they thought that sex could only be taken advantage of men. Women's main concern was to satisfy them and they regarded sex as just a means of giving birth.

A Taste of Honey subverted the established frame of mind about marriage and sexuality, which is explained above, since Helen and Jo experience sexual activities that do not conform the norms of the decade. Both of them have sex neither for giving

birth to a child nor for the reason that they are completely in love with those men and they have sex without paying attention to the norms of marriage institution. Helen is a woman who is 'sexually active' (Lacey, 94). When she talks to Jo about her sexual experiences, she discusses the issue in a way that is completely unromantic and insensitive. She has sex in order to satisfy her sexual desires and this was not a reason that the society could accept as lust was allowable only for men in the 1950s. She states that "It was the first time and though you can enjoy the second, the third and even the fourth time, there's no time like the first, it's always there" (Delaney, 44). It can be inferred that Helen considers sexual activities as a means of having fun and she enjoys it. Helen plays the 'active' role in sexual activities like a man, which goes against with the defined sexual roles as mentioned above. Also, while she talks about her ex-lover, she asserts that "It wasn't his nose I was interested in" (Delaney, 11). She does not hesitate to articulate how she sees these kinds of relationship and it is also outside the marriage bond. Consequently, Helen's perspective of sexual activities and gender roles do not conform with the established sexual norms of the 1950s.

Jo's perspective of sexuality has resemblance to her mother's. Her emancipated sexual behaviour is revealed in her relationship with her black boyfriend Jimmy who is aware that Jo is an unconventional woman:

BOY: Afraid someone'll see us?

JO: I don't care.

BOY: Say that again.

JO: I don't care.

BOY: You mean it too. You're the first girl I've met who really didn't care. Listen, I'm going to ask you something. I'm a man of a few words. Will you marry me?

JO: Well, I'm a girl of a few words. I won't marry you but you've talked me into it (Delaney, 22-23).

As well as Jo's careless and marginal attitude, Delaney also points out another subject which is the use of language in the context of gender roles. 'A man of a few words' is an idiom which means "a person who doesn't say more than they have to, but doesn't say less than they need to" (<https://www.urbandictionary.com>). This is generally used with the word 'man' which can also refer to 'human being'. However, Jo changes the idiom and she replaces 'man' with 'girl'. Hence, Delaney does not only

challenge the established norms and ideas of the decade, but she also attempts to defy the stereotyped use of language in the context of gender roles.

Jo is not concerned with the social rules and stereotypes and thus she is “uninhibited and sexually liberated” and both women’s attitude can be seen as a “challenge to conventional morality” (Innes, 1992, 449). Nevertheless, they differ from each other in a way that their motives for having sex do not seem to be the same. While Helen enjoys having sex and she does not establish any emotional bond with her partner, Jo experiences her first sexual encounter when Helen leaves her alone and that is why Jo is in need of attention in order to compensate for her mother’s absence. Jo responds to Helen’s inconsiderately getting married by having sex with a man whom she barely knows. Helen gets married to Peter without caring about her daughter and thus Jo “feels abandoned and seeks the affection she can not find in her mother” (Canlı, 1995, 93).

In spite of the fact that Jo does not conform the social norms because of her sexual affair with Jimmy, she still attributes an emotional meaning to this affair and for this reason she can not be considered as sexually liberated as Helen. Her sexual affair, which is outside of the boundary of marriage institution and Helen’s several adultery incidents go against with the mindset on sex of the 1950s. Therefore, it can be concluded that Delaney defies the built and stereotyped ideas of the decade.

Delaney defies established norms that society adopts not only from one aspect, but only she includes another controversial issue in her play. Jimmy, with whom Jo has a sexual and emotional affair, is a black sailor. Since there are a lot of external factors constituted by the society, which suggests that different races should stay away from each other, it becomes arduous to establish or continue to an existing different-race relationship (Carroll & Wolde, 1996, 286). A black man, who suffers from the race discrimination, is not expected to hang out with a white woman because of the social norms. Thus, the play “breaks a number of racial and sexual taboos: Jo’s lover is a black sailor. It is precisely such socially marginal and ‘a-typical’ characters [...]” (Lacey, 94). Both the society and the government highlighted traditional social values and they were worried about the possible corruption of the society. They encouraged people to stick to the conventional norms and values which do not include premarital sex and of a black man and a white woman. Accordingly, “an interracial couple creates

a political and emotional reaction, fostered by black consciousness and white racism, which makes it different from a normal love affair” (Blicksilver, 1987-1988, 81). In the beginning of the 20th century, interracial relations were not seen as appropriate, especially for the cases where the woman is white and the man is black. In this respect, the attitude of Britain towards interracial relations is explained as:

Racial mixing and mixedness were not uncommon in Britain before mass immigration in the 1950s very visibly placed the issue of interraciality into the mainstream. Made up primarily of black sailors who had settled and raised families with local white women, Crown Street was known locally as ‘Draughtboard Alley’, due to the number of black and white families who lived alongside each other. [...] The relationships of white British women and men of colour, and the children produced from such unions, occurring on domestic shores, however, was an issue that impossible to gloss over so easily. The relationships between the white working classes with people of colour and the production of mixed-race children was seen as destabilishing the power of white Britishness at a time when it desperately needed protecting; moreover, white working-class women in particular were singled out –as always- for the significant role they were playing in upsetting the racial order. The concerns and discontent expressed the likes of local officials and the press at the immorality of white women partnering men of colour in dockside areas [...] (Caballero, 2019, 4, 7).

The premarital sexual affair between Jo and Jimmy is resulted in Jo’s pregnancy and contraception is not allowed to be applied by unmarried women during the 1950s. Thus, women who are unmarried and lived during the decade like Jo were not permitted to use “possible ways of controlling, or even ‘mastering’ being a mother ‘by choice’” (Irigaray, 130). Women of that time could not be the decision-maker regarding their own bodies and they had to give birth even if they did not want it in some cases. They did not have the possibility to end their pregnancies since abortion was illegal during the decade. The circumstances were the same for Helen and Jo and for them, it can be argued that “enforced maternity brings to the world wretched infants, whom their parents will be unable to support [...]” (Beauvoir, 468).

Moreover, women were afraid of being judged by their community if they gave birth to an unwanted child. They saw abortion as a shameful act because of the ideas and norms that were imposed by the society. For the case of Jo: “few distressful situations are more pitiable than that of an isolated young girl, without money, who finds herself driven to a ‘criminal’ act in order to undo a ‘mistake’ that her group considers unpardonable” (470). Therefore, she has no other choice than giving birth to her unwanted child. Accordingly, since both options, abortion and contraception, were not legal, Helen’s and Jo’s pregnancies cause serious consequences. As Helen gets

divorced because of her pregnancy, she has to deal with financial problems. Also, as she does not want to give birth to Jo, she is unwilling to take care of her and establish an emotional bond with her. In addition to these, both women have to suffer from their isolation from the society while trying to cope with their financially unbalanced condition. In this regard, Delaney draws attention to the possible consequences of unwanted pregnancies, which were caused by the policies that restrict options of abortion and contraception.

Delaney points out the matter of divorce which is another controversial issue of the decade. In the 1950s, since marriage bond was significant, divorce was not considered as a phenomenon which should be respected. It was the primary reason of why family members are broken away and caused loose connections. It was seen as a failure of the marriage institution which was the keystone of a respectable community. Moreover, one of the significant reasons to justify divorce was that one of the partners had to be blamed for having an extramarital sexual or emotional affair. Marriage institution meant that one could take part in a sexual affair only with their spouse and “prenuptial unchastity on the part of the woman was a reason generally recognized where divorce [was] allowed at all” (Lafollette, 1988, 547). This is reflected in Helen’s case as she is divorced by her husband on account of the fact that she commits adultery and this results in her having financial difficulties. Helen’s case can be reckoned as an example of women’s problems regarding the matter of divorce in the 1950s since divorce was a problematic issue in view of the fact that husbands were the primary financial providers of the families. Therefore, women tended to remain married even if they were cheated on by their husbands as they were worried about the possible financial destituteness. It was natural to label a woman as immoral when she got divorced as it meant that she probably committed adultery and she would continue her life as a socially dishonourable woman. Consequently, divorce was not seen as a preferable act since it was a troublesome process and it caused serious financial and social effects for women.

Delaney includes another disputable subject in the play, in that she introduces a homosexual character, Geof. A couple of years before *A Taste of Honey* was performed, three men named Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, Michael Pitt-Rivers and Peter Wildeblood were imprisoned as they committed unpleasant acts with other young men,

even though this happened in exclusive properties by gaining those men's consent (Sinfield, 1999, 236). This can be taken as an example proving that the government was very concerned about the matter of homosexuality. Although it was considered as a social matter rather than something accursed, the attitude towards homosexuality was still adversative (237). As the unity of family and marriage institution were the backbones of a proper community, the effect of homosexuality was seen as a significant factor that would eventually lead to the corruption of the nation. Moreover, it could limit the reproduction of the nation dramatically, which was an important problem in the sense of the future of the country since there existed concerns about it especially during the post-war period.

It is necessary to point out the strong relationship between theatre and sexuality since theatre has affected how people perceive different sexual identities, therefore, theatre as an institution has dealt with censorship, particularly when plays that include the theme of sexuality have been staged. Censorship causes to constitute a well-accepted national perception regarding the subject of sexuality. People who support censorship affirmed that it is significant not to lose morality and purpose of censorship was to protect and maintain the existing conventional norms (Sinfield, 14). Even though when the play has been staged, it has faced with censorship, the text of it exhibits a more positive attitude towards the subject of homosexuality than the general approach to it, which could prove that it could maintain its existence without causing to corruption of the unity of family.

Delaney deals with homosexuality with a more favourable manner than most of the other modern British playwrights of the decade. Moreover, her play was the first one to discuss the working-class homosexuality among other contemporary British plays. However, Delaney still treats homosexuality from a hesitant point of view (De Jongh, 1992, 92). *A Taste of Honey* can be seen as the starting point of "revolt against the conventional forms of a relationship and for a personal liberation" (93). The time period in which the play was written and performed was nearly impossible to deliberate over homosexuality transparently, but it somehow supported a more flexible and mild perception towards various types of sexualities.

As discussed earlier, the unity of family was significant during the 1950s since it was believed to prevent corruption and contribute to reproduction of the nations.

Particularly the conventional form of the family and marriage institution have been “a main container of the dominant sex/gender order, the central social agency for the making of young femininities and masculinities and a central institution for the affirmation of gender difference (Haywood & Ghail, 2003, 59). The concept of family and its great influence caused to define the gender roles sharply, which can be interpreted that it did not allow homosexuality to be discussed in its context. As the government and society did their best to determine and define gender roles in terms of family, the effect of homosexuality was assumed to damage family and accordingly deteriorate the social structure. If family’s one of the main purposes was to define specific sexual identities, homosexuality would not serve this purpose since it would devastate family, and thus it had to be prevented from affecting society in a negative way. Therefore, homosexuality had to be introduced to the public very carefully.

Nowadays, the conventional concept of family has changed as divorce rates has risen there are more single mothers and fathers. Therefore, the family unit is challenged and more factors have been added to the denotation of family concept (Haywood & Ghail, 59). On the other hand, in the 1950s, the way unity of a family was represented in public was very fragile and inflexible, thus homosexuality was not expected to be included in these sharp limitations. Delaney dares to put a homosexual character in the center of the play and so she presents that homosexuality does not have to be damaging for family, on the contrary the influence of Geof is quite opposite. Helen, for instance, causes destructive effects on Jo, however Geof treats Jo affectionately and thoughtfully. Delaney shows that a biological mother can be more harmful and psychologically destructive than a caring homosexual person for a young woman, especially for Jo who tries to tolerate critical incidents.

Delaney does not directly delivers that Geof is a homosexual individual because of the restrictions for theatre institution, instead she uses several clues, which help to understand that he is homosexual. Geof is depicted as a sentimental homosexual, who does not show any masculine features. Also, while Helen and Jo avoid doing housework and cooking, Geof takes care of the household, which was a task generally attributed to women. He is even more concerned about Jo’s pregnancy than Helen and makes an effort to make Jo feel comfortable. Geof’s lack of masculine features indicates that he is a homosexual (Lacey, 94). Even though his sexual identity

is not directly mentioned, Delaney indirectly implies his homosexuality. One can encounter several implications which denote Geof's sexual identity. Jo states that he is like big sister to her (Delaney, 54). Also, while the two talk about pregnancy and motherhood, she addresses Geof's compassionate personality:

GEOF: I thought you'd change. Motherhood is supposed to come natural to women.

JO: It comes natural to you Geoffrey Ingram. You'd make somebody a wonderful wife (55).

Jo implies that she detects Geof's sexual identity, yet she does not remark it openly. She connotes that it is impossible for Geof to get married and have a 'wife' since she uses the modal verb 'would'. Moreover, when Jo asks Geof why he has left his former apartment, Geof seems reluctant to answer her questions as he is unwilling to reveal his sexual identity confessedly:

JO: I've been wondering why you were so anxious to see me home. You didn't fancy sleeping under the arches, did you? Why did your landlady throw you out, Geoffrey? I'll let you stay here if you tell me.

GEOF: I was behind with the rent.

JO: That's a lie for a start.

GEOF: I don't tell lies.

JO: Come on, let's have some truth. Who did she find you with? Your girl friend? It wasn't a man, was it? (47)

Jo can be quite indifferent and tactless from time to time, but her personality and discourse soften when she communicates with Geof. She is grateful for the presence of Geof as otherwise she seems to know that she would feel alone and helpless. Therefore, she does not force Geof to answer her questions since she refrains from that he could leave the house one day. Jo is aware that Geof's homosexuality makes him affectionate and emotional and thus she enjoys his company as a young woman who is not taken care of her biological mother. She feels the need to replace Helen's absence and lack of motherly love with Geof's affection. In this respect, *A Taste of Honey* employs a positive attitude towards homosexuality and Geof's sexual identity contributes to the marginality of the play.

Peter, to whom Helen gets married for financial reasons stands for the patriarchal system of the society since he does not hesitate to imply his aggressive and

conventional ideas on homosexuality. He uses offensive statements when he addresses Geof:

PETER: Shut your mouth, bubble belly! Before I shut it for you. Hey! [To GEOF.] Mary, come here. Did I ever tell you about the chappie who married his mother by mistake? (Delaney, 65)

PETER: Well, is anybody coming for a few drinks? You staying with the ladies, Jezebel? (66)

PETER: And what you do, Cuddles? Don't worry, I know this district. Look at Helen, isn't she a game old bird? (66)

PETER: And don't bring that little fruitcake parcel either! [Mumbles.] I can't stand the sight of him. Can't stand 'em at any price. (68)

As it can be understood from the examples above, Peter dares to insult Geof only because he is a homosexual person. Moreover, he remarks those offensive statements when he has just met with Geof. Peter is not concerned about Geof's personality and thus he humiliates him with a manner which is triggered by prejudice. As the conventional patriarchal ideas suggest, a man can have the right to do whatever he wants especially for the situations where femininity is included. Peter considers himself as the leader of that group since the other two are women and Geof is not counted as a man within the patriarchal framework. He is portrayed as a type of man who enjoys making fun of with others' frailties since he also calls Jo "bubble belly" (65). It can be inferred that Geof's pattern of behaviour easily reveals that he is homosexual and he can not fit in to the community of 'proper manhood' as Peter identifies his sexual identity quite quickly. Helen also discriminates Geof by remarking hateful statements. She says to Jo: "Oh, I know you've got this pensified little freak to lean on, but what good will that to you?" (63). Similarly, she feels uncomfortable and irritated due to the presence of Geof at home and she states: "Come here. How long is he going to stick around here. Bloody little pansy..." (79). She also questions Jo about why she does not try to find 'more like a man' (79). Peter and Helen seem to believe that since Geof shows quite feminine characteristics, he is not worth to be respected and valued. However, Jo presents a more open-minded attitude and even finds Geof's lack of masculinity comfortable and secure for herself.

1950s was a decade when Helen and Peter's views on homosexuality was quite dominant in society, while Jo stands for the opposite point of view. Although Jo can be

insensitive and rude to Geof sometimes, she cares about him and does not want him to go away. As a matter of fact, she can relate her situation to Geof's as both of them can be regarded as marginal in separate ways. Jo approaches Geof's distinctiveness with a positive attitude most of the time, as she is aware of the fact that she herself is different and thus isolated to some extent. Therefore, she does not judge, discriminate or otherize Geof and considers their distinctiveness as something favourable:

JO: And what is my usual self? My usual self is a very unusual self, Geoffrey Ingram, and don't you forget it. I'm an extraordinary person. There's only one of me like there's only one of you.

GEOF: We're unique!

JO: Young.

GEOF: Unrivalled!

JO: Smashing!

GEOF: We're bloody marvellous! (50-51)

Jo knows that her situation is not something that would be dignified and respected in the 1950s. Her condition can be defined as "the pregnant an unmarried teenage girl, regarded in the 1950s as an emblem of flagrant immorality, finds common cause with the epitome of supposed degeneracy" (De Jongh, 92). Jo realizes that Geof is an alienated person whom the society would not approve and since she is a pregnant unmarried young woman, she experiences the same difficulties too. Although Jo employs a positive attitude towards homosexuality, she confesses that she thought homosexuality was something odd before Geof came into her life. She states: "I used to think you were such an interesting, immoral character before I knew you" (Delaney, 72). Even though she thought he is immoral, Jo gives a chance to know Geof, which is a sign of her constructive posture. Delaney shows that the dominant view on homosexuality can be challenged as there could be people like Jo, who does not judge others for their different sexual identities.

Jo and Geof do not have a sort of superficial friendship, which is solely based on spending time outside together and lack of intimacy, instead they share a home where they can find understanding and consolation. Geof is replaced with Helen by Jo, as he performs a role of a selfless mother much better than Helen and thus Jo appreciates him more than she does Helen (De Jongh, 92). Accordingly, Jo is not the

only 'taker' in this relationship since Geof also feels grateful for Jo's companionship. Moreover, after Jo gives birth to her baby, Geof is supposed to get a more respectable status in the society as it means family and credence. De Jongh argues that "Geof is being both applauded and mocked, as if Jo can not fathom or approve the reasons for which a man can assume a supposedly female role" (92-93). According to this statement, Jo is not at peace with Geof's lack of masculinity, however Jo approaches to him in the same way she approaches to her real mother in the first place. At the beginning of their friendship, Jo acts with deliberation towards Geof and she somehow tries to offend him as she used to do to Helen. Since Jo and Helen can not establish a proper mother-daughter relationship, Jo assumes that her relationship with Geof, whom she sees as a mother figure, would be the same. However, Geof tends to show sincere motherly behaviour to her and thus she is convinced that he would not treat her as Helen used to do. Jo is not used to get enough attention and be loved, that is why she feels inevitably confused about how to react to such fair treatment. Jo attempts to push Geof's personal limits in order to test him as she wants to be sure that he would not leave her unlike Helen. Nonetheless, they eventually manage to build a relationship, in which there exist harmony and mutual commitment with the help of Geof's affectionate and selfless attitude.

As a result, Delaney does not criticise the central issues rigorously or provide solutions for them, instead she calls out her audience to ask questions about the prevalent traditional ideas of the time. She questions the conventional form of motherhood and thus she enables one to think on a different and contradistinctive relationship of a mother and daughter. It is presented that maternity can have a variety of forms which were not seen as conformable. Also, she shows that every family does not have to be within the traditional boundaries as the members may not be able to establish emotional and affectionate bonds. Stereotyped gender roles are challenged, in that 'womanhood' and 'manhood' can not be defined only by the dominant views of a society. Homosexuality is approached with a mild attitude and this can be considered as one of the most revolting aspects of the play since there still exist a number of people who have to fight against any kind of discrimination such as race, sexual identity, gender etc. The play breaks the norms of conventional womanhood with two marginal women, Helen and Jo, who try to survive within the framework of absolute truths. It is pointed out that patriarchy can be destructive for women by portraying a

character like Peter, who is disruptive and selfish. Consequently, Delaney attempts to query the established social patterns of the 1950s and thus she paves the way for more discussions on them.



CHAPTER THREE: CARYL CHURCHILL'S OWNERS

Caryl Churchill was born in London in 1938 and she was the only child of her middle-class parents. Her father was working as a cartoonist and her mother was a model “who occasionally worked as a film extra” (Hiley, 1990, 14). Churchill had a prosperous life during when she was provided an opportunity of decent education by her hardworking parents. She lived with her parents for seven years in Canada and studied at Trafalgar School in Montreal between 1948 and 1955. After graduating, she went back to England and enrolled in Lady Margaret Hall College at Oxford University in 1956. She graduated from Oxford University in 1960 and married David Harter in 1961. This marriage was the triggering point of her way to theatre stages of London and thus she started a carrier as a playwright (Keyssar, 78). Due to her husband’s job, Churchill had to leave the center of London for the suburbs and she gave birth to three children. She became almost a housewife there and went through a number of miscarriages (Itzin, 1987, 279).

Churchill did not give up writing and she produced the following plays for the radio broadcast: *The Ants* (1962), *Lovesick* (1966), *Identical Twins* (1968), *Abortive* (1971), *Not...not...not...not...not enough oxygen* (1971), *Schreber's Nervous Illness* (1972), and *Henry's Past* (1972). While writing these plays mentioned, she was worried about “the corrupting power of ownership – of human beings as well as of property” (Keyssar, 79). Churchill states that her main concern was not to promote any specific ideology at that time, these plays were written with a motive that was caused by painful personal experiences and rage (Itzin, 279). She was able to start to get over her unpleasant experiences and established a political consciousness in herself, with the influence of which she wrote her first staged play *Owners*. In this play, Churchill deals with the inequality between men and women in mostly economic and political areas, which she also experienced in her personal life (Keyssar, 80). It seems that she was not content with her life until she started her serious professional carrier with the staging of *Owners* at the Royal Court Upstairs in 1972. In an interview with Itzin, she explains how she felt at that time as:

I didn't really feel a part of what was happening in the sixties. During that time I felt isolated. I had small children and was having miscarriages. It was an extremely solitary life. What politicised me was being discontent with my own way of life – of being a barrister's wife and just being at home with small children (279).

Owners centers around an overly ambitious woman character, Marion who was mentally ill and hospitalized for some time as implied in the play. Although she was formerly a housewife, she turned into a dedicated property-developer owing to her successful managing skills. Possessing is the main theme of the play, that is the more Marion possesses properties, the less her husband Clegg, who stands for patriarchy, is able to 'possess' her. Worsely, who is Marion's assistant, helps her with the business and he constantly tries to kill himself by cutting his wrists. Marion and Worsely are interested in buying a specific building where Lisa and her indifferent husband Alec live. They try to persuade them to sell the apartment with a variety of offers. Lisa is a pregnant woman and Marion and Clegg do not have a child, Marion plans to take the baby from her after she gives birth and she succeeds in her plan. Clegg's patriarchal attitude is so dominant and full of hatred that he keeps on making a plan in order to kill Marion, however he is not able to do it. Worsely knows about his plans but he does not warn Marion about taking caution. Marion is so driven by the influence of capitalism that she lacks humanistic approach, unlike Lisa who is naive and not capable enough. Churchill expresses how she was inspired for writing *Owners*:

I was in an old woman's flat when a young man offering her money to move came round – he was my first image of Worsely and one of the starting points of the play. Another was wanting one character with the active, achieving attitude of 'Onward Christian Soldiers', the other the 'sitting quietly, doing nothing' of the Zen poem. The active one had to be a woman, the passive one a man, for their attitudes to show up clearly as what they believed rather than as conventional male and female behaviour. So Marion and Alec developed from that train of thought. I'd read Figs' *Patriarchal Attitudes* not long before, which may have affected the character of Clegg, and had recently reread Orton's *Sloane*, which may have done something to the style (1985, 4).

As the play was written and staged in 1972, the British women's condition and impact of feminist ideas on theatre will be explained in order to take a look at the atmosphere of the time. Women's Liberation Movement gained speed as women factory workers were demanding for equal payment and thus they started a campaign. The first Women's Liberation Conference was held in the early 1970s with the participation of over 600 women. A National Women's Coordinating Committee was constituted in order to claim equal education, employment and payment opportunities for women (Hannam, 140). With the influence of second wave feminism in Western Europe, minimum one million women became activists and the movement gained nearly 12 million supporters by the late 1970s. The movement enabled certain kinds of legislation which help women improve their standards regarding employment, wages,

education and legalization of abortion. One of the developments was that women established independent organizations rather than relying on only political and social ones in order to support their rights. Health centers for women raised consciousness among them about their own bodies and sexuality while rape crisis centers were useful for helping them who were victims. The first refuge was formed in 1972 in order to stand by mistreated women. 1970s were significant in a way that circumstances under which woman as a subject was discussed improved, and developments paved the way for rising their courage for thinking and acting differently (155). Moreover, the employment rate of married women who were under the age of 60 increased dramatically in the UK, from around 50 per cent to 60 per cent by the early 1980s. This was a progressive raise since the end of Second World War as nearly one third of married women were employed before the war broke out (Gomulka & Stern, 1990, 171). The wage of husbands increased around 10 per cent and the household income which refers to the income neither husband nor wife provides, rose over 20 per cent. It can be inferred that both husband and wife's and other sources of income dramatically showed an increase. Rising income of the husband and rising income that is provided by somewhere else do not seem to lower the women's enthusiasm to work, on the contrary studies indicate that women's employment rate gradually rose during the decade (176).

If 1960s and 70s are compared in terms of the number of woman workers in the area of theatre, any comprehensive study can be found, however it is certain that the number of woman workers in male-dominant areas such as directing and writing increased. Also, there were more plays which center around women experiences and which were the products of women's creativity. Young and conscious audience began to be interested in theatre stages, through which they could be a part of fundamental change in theatre area in the 1970s. The radical improvement began with the year 1968 when people experienced changes on cultural level too. During the 1960s, there was a struggle to rule out theatre censorship, however it was not until 1968 that it brought to a successful conclusion. After the censorship had officially been abolished, theatre did not have to obey any longer, that is playwrights felt more independent to write on a variety of subjects and the way of representation was diversified. In this respect, it became easier to react political ideologies and conflicts of the time. With the decision of Lord Chamberlain in the 1960s, erotic heterosexuality scenes, indications to

homosexuality, especially for the male, and obscene language were removed from the stage, but towards the beginning of the 1970s, a new feminist-activist ambiance occurred it corresponded to a more liberal and experimental environment for theatre representations (Wandor, 1984, 76).

The year of 1968 had a significant influence on theatre as it changed the ideological background of it. The new wave suggested that art should be for society's sake and accordingly theatre should not only be for middle class, it should take place in the neighbourhoods or workplaces of lay people. It should present the lives and conflicts of them in order to support their rights. The former ideologies of theatre were conservative and that is why the new atmosphere should be made reformist by using new patterns. Even though the conventional forms are used, they should be adapted to the correct manifestations of main principles. However, among socialist people, "this was translated into a mixture of naturalistic telling-it-like-it-is (derived from TV naturalism), entertaining songs (often pastiche, but also rock) and bold visual imagery (the capitalist always wore a top hat)" (77). Once the feminist styles of theatre became subjective, the same perception was adopted. In 1970 and 1971, marches were organized in order to protest Miss World contest and thus the consumerist point of view, which was executed to take advantage of femininity was disordered. These marches involved street theatre, making fun of with the exaggerated feminine look and raised questions about the financial aspect of this 'only look' promotion. Also, agitprop plays attracted attention to the struggles of working-class women, sexual discrimination, and male domination in the family. This feminist propaganda mirrored the concerns and excitement caused by the unification of radical feminism and reconsidered Marxist studies. Theatre was reshaped as a rough and enthusing area followed by deliberations after the plays were staged.

On the other hand, this collective approach led to a problem although theatre was not under the influence of middle class as much as it was before. Socialists attempted to equalize every aspect of the theatre together with the impact of feminist propaganda, that is they similarized subjects, styles, and forms. New groups who wrote and acted in their own theatre plays emerged, which made this new atmosphere be similar to the conventional theatre. There was a common perception that anyone who was working in theatre industry could do anything related to it, however this caused

the underrating of certain talents. The new wave of feminist theatre was not interested in criticizing itself, instead it focused on adopting different styles in order to promote its own views in an exciting way (77). As a result of these changes, two categories of feminist playwrights emerged: firstly, there was a “new generation (not always young) of women many of whom are either undeveloped in the craft or writing or simply throw off easy television-influenced sit-com type plays, or inadequately structured social realism”. The second group consisted of successful playwrights in real terms like Pam Gems and Caryl Churchill, who are more famous, older, internalized, and well-known (86).

3.1. Rejection of Patriarchal Gender Roles

The ideology of patriarchy provides concrete superiorities for men while restricting women’s actions and roles and confirms their conformity by imposing specific gender roles. Before recent feminist movements emerged, ‘patriarchy’ as a term was being used. Since the beginning of the 1970s, the ideology has been redefined in order to examine the underlying reasons and circumstances of the male domination. Patriarchal ideas referred to the dominance of father, as the authority of the house and in the late 1960s, feminist movements used the term in order to describe constant ascendancy of the male and subordination of the female (Ullah & Naz, 2017, 33). In *Owners*, Clegg’s patriarchal ideas reach the level of misogyny and thus he never gives up the idea of killing Marion throughout the play. His perception of gender roles is very rigid and he believes that a woman can never be superior to a man from any aspect:

WORSELY: You could get another shop better placed. Wouldn’t Marion buy you a shop?

CLEGG: I don’t let her buy me a drink. I was going to be big myself, you don’t seem to realize. That was my intention as a young man (Churchill, 1985, 9).

The two sexes have distinctive biological features which are considered to form their patterns of behaviour and establish specific roles for them. These roles are defined in almost every society, which tends to attribute cultural meaning to both sexes, that is the biological distinctions are not enough for them. Biological differences are usually regarded as interrelated with certain social and psychological features. Therefore, a woman is expected to present feminine characteristics and accordingly a

man is expected to behave in a masculine way. To put it in another way, either a man or a woman is supposed to perform certain characteristics which are formed and settled by cultural norms, however these norms differ from each other as each culture's expectations are different. Recent gender studies have indicated that while sex is a biological determinant of a person, gender is not related to physical characteristics, in that it is mostly shaped by social and cultural norms. In other words, the two terms get in a vicious circle as it seems that they can not be separated thoroughly. Once difference of gender between the two sexes is constituted, it is considered as the presentation of biological distinctions that establish the demand for gender roles. The vicious circle never ends, that is biological differences are used to constitute gender differences which are employed to describe biological differences which, again, need gender differences to be determined. Although gender refers to the physical characteristics and sexual identity of a person, the main factors which establish the gender difference are social and cultural understandings or misunderstandings. For most of the cultural norms of societies, these determined gender roles create plenty of disadvantageous conditions for women (Kochuthara, 2011, 435).

Churchill presents how women are landed with difficult responsibilities particularly for the marriage institution. While Alec is not concerned about the future of their marriage, Lisa worries about the possible problems that she would face in the case that they broke up. The role of 'raising children' is seen as one of the primary roles women and thus they usually have to work and raise their children at the same time even if their husbands are supposed to be also responsible for looking after them. Even though Lisa expresses her concerns and fears, Alec seems to be indifferent about his family:

ALEC: Yes, you must leave me if you want to.

LISA: I always hate it when you say that because what you mean is you want to leave me.

ALEC: No, if I wanted to I would.

LISA: Yes, you would, wouldn't you. You wouldn't worry about us at all. You wouldn't wonder how I'd bring up the kids. I can't go on working with a little baby you know. You'd go away and forget all about us (Churchill, 14).

In the societies where patriarchal ideas and norms are adopted, women are dominated by political, social and economic establishments, which also result in their political, social and economic subordination in their societies. The family union, the primary unity of the society, maintains patriarchy where father is the authority of the house “and controls the productive and reproductive resources, labor force, and capacities on the notions of superiority and inferiority, which is learnt in the gender role socialization.” Also, patriarchy is attributed to the concept of ‘power’ by radical feminists, and they regard it as the primary reason of oppression of the female and domination of the male. Patriarchal norms regard men as the superior sex, an ideology which has a historical background, and these norms are still adopted in order to perpetuate their power and authority over women. Millet suggests that patriarchal societies predominate and patriarchy starts in the family unit, resulting in the male domination on other levels of the society (1970). Such an ideology suggests that most of the masculine practices must be operated by the male, which causes to the victimization of the female. The patriarchal norms do not separate sex from gender and regard that biological structure of women justifies the reason of their subordination (Ullah & Naz, 33-34). Accordingly, Clegg considers that a woman should do her best in order to ‘keep’ a man, as a woman can not survive without him. His misogyny is so obvious that any woman, no matter she is his wife or customer etc. deserves to be humiliated by the male. The way he represents his hatred to all women around him seems to be a consequence of his feeling of inferiority due to Marion’s unusual power. Moreover, he speaks to the women around him in an obviously cunning way. While he acts like a kind and pleasant-spoken shop owner in front of his female customer, the moment the customer leaves, he reveals his true personality:

CLEGG: Lovely day dear. Been sitting in the park in the sun? I know you ladies. Twelfe ounces of mince. And what else? Some nice rump steak dear? You don’t keep a man with mince. No? Twenty p, thank you very much. Bye-bye dear, mind how you go.

[She goes.]

Old cow (Churchill, 7).

There is a significant matter which weakens the rigid norms of patriarchy, that is the more women become financially independent, the more they have the authority to produce an effect on social and economic systems. As Beauvoir suggests, economic

empowerment of women has been distressing the maintainability of the marriage institution. Modern understanding of marriage refers to getting together of two independent individuals whose responsibilities are personal and also mutual. It is like a contract and having a sexual relationship with anyone else violates the agreement. Both parties have the right to divorce one another under the same circumstances. With these changes in the perception of marriage institution, women's function is not only to give birth anymore, that is the reproductive function has become more optional, rather than women's obligation for their families and societies (415).

One of the worst impacts of the patriarchal ideology is the sexual oppression of women. The second wave feminist movement lays stress on the idea that men tend to exploit women sexually as there is a common belief that women's bodies are possessed by their husbands, fathers or other male dominated authorities in their communities. This belief that evolves around the idea of 'possession' stresses women out even more, since they are already physically and psychologically subjugated. Their bodies are seen as something on which men are supposed to exercise their power insensibly (Kara, 2017, 2450). Clegg commits adultery and engages in a sexual relationship with Lisa, who is an old friend of Marion and him. Lisa, compared to Marion, is more submissive and ineffective, which gives Clegg the opportunity to take advantage of and dominate her sexually. While they are in bed, Clegg implies that she should be sexually passive as it is how a woman is supposed to be:

CLEGG: I didn't say you could get up. You won't be suitable unless you lie flat, did you know that, very feminine and do just as you're told. On your back and underneath is where I like to see a lady. And a man on top. Right on top of the world. Because I know what you ladies like. You like what I give you. I didn't say you mustn't move at all. But just in response (Churchill, 54).

The position in the society and interrelation with other people determine one's social status in the social structure. Socio-economic status is represented mainly by gender roles. Patriarchy stimulates men's prepotency in the social system, financial opportunities manage and handicap women to reach to acquire an equal or superior socio-economic status. Women's social and economic emancipation is mostly related to making decisions and executing their practices. There is a strong interrelation between the authority of women and their chance to decide on health, education, giving birth and the communities in which they live (Ullah & Naz, 46). In the play,

Marion is presented as an independent woman who has clawed her way up to a high socio-economic status. It is implied that she earns more than Clegg, which is a serious problem for him. Moreover, when Clegg closes his butcher shop and starts to look after Lisa's baby, the only financial provider of the household becomes Marion. According to Clegg, the male should be the financial provider and thus he is very upset because of his desperate situation. On the other hand, Marion is aware of the fact that thanks to her socio-economic position, she is able to exercise her power over Clegg, which can be seen as a revenge for the past. She despises the butcher shop clearly, although a workplace is very significant and even sacred for a male as it is the main source where he gets his 'power'. However, Marion thinks that it must be closed while she talks about her big success which deserves to be honoured:

CLEGG: Congratulations my love.

MARION: We shall celebrate. It stinks in here, Clegg. Does it always? No wonder you've no customers. Throw it all away. Shut the shop. Whatever's that you're clutching, Worsely? Meat? You won't want it, you'll eat out with us. Chuck it in the bin. What about the rest of it, Clegg? Will you pay the dustman to take it away? I think I'm turning into a vegetarian (Churchill, 12).

In Western countries during the 1970s, sex is the most important factor in the social hierarchy, and contrary to the common belief, sex has an impact upon settling gender roles. Therefore, it can be argued that in Western countries, people are concerned about the expectations that derive from the certain gender roles. According to psychiatrists, a big part of the sense of security is provided by remaining in the comfort zone of gender roles, that is if we go beyond these boundaries, our mental health is believed to be get into danger (Oakley, 1972, 150). In this respect, determined gender roles are challenged in *Owners*, as it somehow reverses the gender roles of a married couple. Although Marion is biologically female, she plays the role of head of the household and also a strict decision-maker. Moreover, while Clegg is a typical patriarchal male, he ironically has to perform the established role of a woman. Thus, as Butler argues, gender is not directly related to the biological factors:

Gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gender (BUTLER, 1988, 519).

Sex roles have been included in the woman sociology by influencing a variety of studies and researches. The male and female behavioural attitudes were analyzed and some hypothesis were put forward in order to analyze behavioural differences. Conceptions of sex and gender were differentiated from each other and it was concluded that while sex connotes the difference of some parts of male and female bodies, gender refers to the culturally determined identity through which people introduce themselves to their community. Since this approach and methods of the researches were not traditional, a number of sources such as mass media, language, popular culture were practiced in order to expand the approach. The behavioural differences of the two sexes revealed the inequality between them as well. Therefore, researchers suggested that not only the sociological background must be taken into consideration, but also power inequality of the male and female should be examined (Flora, 1982, 554). The inequality of the two sexes is the main reason of patriarchal ideology, and also patriarchal ideology is responsible for the inequality, as it has been the cause of it in the first place. It is true that gender is determined by the socio-cultural factors, however no matter what kind of gender pattern a woman adopts, she is still seen as subordinate because of her sex. Gender is not attached importance when the subject is woman as they already face with discrimination and prejudice due to the biological factors. Therefore, patriarchy upholds the idea that the male ‘possesses’ the female, which is one of the main points of *Owners*. Clegg is surprised that Marion does not care about him, as he thinks she belongs to him like a property:

WORSELY: A house the same. Your own. You knock the floor out if you like. That’s what it’s for. A car the same. You drive how you like. Within a reasonable speed limit. My flesh and blood the same.

CLEGG: A wife the same.

WORSELY: A wife is a person.

CLEGG: First and foremost a wife. One flesh. Marion leaves me (Churchill, 35).

In most of the communities women’s status is evaluated by three main canons. The first one is a woman’s efficiency of reproductive functions and biological completeness. The second one refers to a woman’s participation in and authority on significant issues such as properly paid employment, education, family planning and property. The last canon is women’s networks. Researchers work on cross-cultural and historical studies in order to exemplify the kinds of communities by using these three

canons as determinants (Flora, 556). Accordingly, 1970s was a decade when women recently started to be effective and reformist in the areas mentioned above. If Marion is judged by the three criteria, it can be argued that she succeeds in the third and especially the second one. She buys and sells properties to make a living, which irritates Clegg. Also, she has a network through her assistant Worsely and her job in general. She celebrates her success, eats out with Clegg and Worsely and even takes them to a strip club. Considering the time period the play was first performed, they can not be considered as conformable with the perception and condition of marriage institution. Her socio-economic status poses hazard regarding the family unit and husband-wife relationship. She defies the gender role that patriarchy determines for women since she is financially independent and has the power to manipulate and manage the people around her. She can be regarded as a woman of a new era regarding the understanding of marriage institution and familial gender roles of the time. As Beauvoir asserts:

Nevertheless, the epoch in which we are living is still, from the feminist point of view, a period of transition. Only a part of the female population is engaged in production, and even those who are belong to a society in which ancient forms and antique values survive. Modern marriage can be understood only in the light of a past that tends to perpetuate itself (Beauvoir, 415).

The word 'to empower' connotes allowing somebody to do something, and deputing or giving power to somebody. The feminist movements paved the way for emphasizing with females by putting emphasize on patriarchal oppression. Therefore, many studies and researches were practised in order to analyze empowerment and also its meaning in feminine sense. The researches on empowerment highlighted the social involvement in general. Social involvement and empowerment were intertwined by using mechanisms such as expanding civil society and participative growth techniques. Regarding feminism, it denoted women's emancipation in a variety of areas such as family, society and economy. Based on these sociological studies on women, Walby, in her work *Theorizing Patriarchy*, defines 'eve empowerment' as "the gradual emancipation of women from the patriarchal mindset, belief system, and behaviour in the six dimensions of patriarchy" (1990, 79). These dimensions are asserted as the household, paid employment, the state, male-on-female violence, sexuality and cultural sphere (Rawat, 2014, 45). In this regard, Marion's emancipation from the patriarchal system seems to be accomplished on all the levels mentioned above. When

Clegg does not earn money and looks after the baby, Marion becomes the 'father' of the household, which can be interpreted as a rejection of traditionally settled gender roles. Also, she makes a living as a result of her own work and struggle, not by depending on her husband and seeing him as the source of livelihood. She does not face with any kind of oppression because of her sex by the state as she has the opportunity to live and work independently without any limitations. As regards to male-on-female violence, she is not exposed to violence by her husband neither physically nor psychologically, and instead, she even tries to dominate him with her determined and self-confident manner. She feels and acts independently in sexual sense, because while she is in the strip club with Clegg and Worsely, she and Worsely kiss. She does not care about Clegg's presence there and thus she does not hesitate to kiss her assistant although a man is expected to kiss a woman in a strip club from the viewpoint of traditional gender roles. All these actions of her indicate that she defies the cultural norms which determine the patriarchal gender roles. She expresses her ambition and long for cruelty that are mostly attributed to a male:

MARION: [...] Every one of you thinks I will give in. Because I'm a woman, is it? I'm meant to be kind. I'm meant to understand a woman's feelings wanting her baby back. I don't. I won't. I can be as terrible as everyone. Soldiers have stuck swords through innocents. I can massacre too. Into the furnace. Why shouldn't I be Genghis Khan? Empires only come by killing. I won't shrink. Not one of you loves me. But he shall grow up to say he does (Churchill, 62).

One of the most significant characteristics of an empowered woman is that her belief in her ability to handle challenging conditions, incidents, and people. Empowerment contains the concept of power within itself. Power, in this instinctual meaning, connotes a fundamental need for survival or a determination to personal self-efficacy. Based on these definitions, power has its roots from a person's motivational attitude. Concordantly, if a person lacks a certain amount of self-determination and/or self-efficacy, s/he will probably suffer from the sense of powerlessness. This type of empowerment is called psychological empowerment which is constituted by the combination of four determinants that are meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Rawat, 46). It seems that Marion obtains her feeling of self-determination from her strong psychological empowerment. Her inner power is constituted after a hospitalization process due to her mental problems, which makes her power more considerable and significant. This power gives courage to defy the patriarchal gender

roles, that is she does not perform any of the stereotypical female roles. She exercises her power mostly over Clegg, she even does not let him oppose her and thus she makes him feel uncomfortable by interrupting the conversation:

MARION: Are you mad, Clegg? Giving him away? Once she's got hands on him he won't be ours any more. You'll lose your little butcher.

CLEGG: I don't want that. We'd have to have a written agreement about his future.

MARION: There are plenty of people to look after babies. He will have a trained nanny.

CLEGG: But Lisa –

MARION: I said he will have a nanny. Are you going against me, Clegg? It was entirely for you I got the baby. I bought him a shop, for you. If you don't like the arrangements you can go. Clear right off. It would be a delight never to see you again (Churchill, 60).

If Marion was a housewife, who spends most of her time at home, looking after the kid and taking care of her husband, she would not probably utter these words so self-confidently. Although 1970s was a decade when the employment rate of women increased and their socio-economic status improved in Britain, these changes were still not accepted and established totally. There still existed a variety of socio-cultural norms and habits dating back to the ancient times. Therefore, considering the time period of the play, Marion's strong personality seems extraordinary to some extent. Her authoritarian and bossy personality pushes her to perform the roles of a male which are regarded to include oppressing, administrating, dominating the situations and people around. She creates her own opportunities and space in order to act, talk, work etc. like a man. She can be counted as a lucky woman since she has the chance to overcome the condition of women in general which has come to a deadlock. As Beauvoir explains:

Hence the paradox of their situation: they belong at one and the same time to the male world and to a sphere in which that world is challenged; shut up in their world, surrounded by the other, they can settle down nowhere in peace. Their docility must always be matched by a refusal, their refusal by an acceptance. In this respect their attitude approaches that of the young girl, but it is more difficult to maintain, because for the adult woman it is not merely a matter of dreaming her life through symbols, but of living it out in actuality (567).

Stereotypes seem to underlie the patriarchal gender roles as by labelling and stigmatizing the sexes, the society provides specific roles for them. Stereotype refers to extensively adopted affiliation between a group of people and certain attributes. It can be favourable, unfavourable or neutral varying by the regarding subject or social group, that is they can be formed as offensive, complimentary or apathetic (Fricker,

2007). However, they are usually associated with negative connotations which cause prejudice, one-sidedness, and disparity. Therefore, the most affected groups are women and poor people who are seen as powerless (Beeghly, 2015, 682).

A stereotype is described as inflexible and mistaken inferences about a specific social group. The inflexibility of it causes to generalize all people of a group and adopting the stereotype very firmly, thus people who settle them disregard that one or more member of the group may not have the same feature as the others. Therefore, a stereotype tends to be wrong most of the time. It is significant to put emphasize that every individual can have different characteristics, that is why standardizing them is not an acceptable way to pass judgement on them. Negative stereotypes can have a variety of inevitable consequences. All of the members of a group are regarded as the same or alike as the individual differences are not taken into consideration. For instance, women are widely considered as weak, but there exist a number of strong women who do not conform the generalization. In addition to this, it causes to compare the whole group to other groups and again, generalizing all the members regardless of their distinctive features (Blum, 2004, 261). In *Owners*, Churchill shows that stereotyping is one of the primary reasons of providing certain gender roles for the male and female. Generalizing women with negative adjectives such as weak, sensitive, soft etc. causes to establish specific roles for them. This leads to the problem of inequality as less important and/or uncomplicated tasks are assigned to them, which results in being positioned as subordinate. Accordingly, patriarchy imposes that women are not trustworthy:

CLEGG: She's told you, has she? She said she wouldn't. Woman's like that. Deceit is second nature. Due to Eve. But I'm too crafty for them by half. I know their ins and outs. You keep her rather short of it I'd say. Unless it was me that specially appealed to her. Yelping for more. I expect she told you. Or did she not bring out that side of it? I keep myself a little in reserve. You never know what else may turn up. I wouldn't want to waste myself on something as second rate as your wife. She was quite useful. A handy receptacle. But quite disposable after. Isn't that your attitude to Marion? (Churchill, 55)

Generalization creates unfairness for the whole group who are judged by stereotypes with which they do not conform. The fact that these stereotypes are usually used for negative connotations makes the situation even worse. Women are often labelled as irrational and sensitive and thus men can have the opportunity to be appointed to reputable and well-paid jobs. Also, the male and female particularly the

latter, are judged by the culturally determined roles that stem from their biological features. As a result, not compromising of the natural gender characteristics with the biological structure causes a major problem particularly for women since they are expected to be submissive and weak because of the stereotypes which restrict them from making decisions, acting, talking, living independently (Fricker, 2007). For the situations when these two conceptions do not match, like Marion, women tend to focus on only their natural gender characteristics and ignore the socio-cultural roles in order to proclaim their individuality freely. She goes against Clegg, and thus patriarchy in general, by ignoring the traditional gender roles that are imposed upon her.

The stereotypical ideas that are mostly disadvantageous for women causes sexual discrimination against them. These ideas revolve around the perception that the male status is superior to that of the female. The patriarchal system this ideology, that is most of the male-dominated structures normalize and standardize it which the society adopts without questioning. The socio-economic opportunities that women are supposed to have under normal circumstances like men, become limited due to the impact of sexual discrimination. Moreover, male-dominated social structures triggered by the patriarchal ideology, make an effort in order to position women as subordinate, making them subjugated by insinuating their ideas and covering the power they exercise over women. Therefore, there is a misconception that women do not face with oppression and they willingly perform their roles which are settled as advantageous for men (Lindsay, 2005). In the play, although Clegg holds rigid patriarchal thoughts particularly regarding Marion, he does not express it clearly when he talks to her. Nonetheless, whenever he engages in a dialogue with Worsely, he refers to his misogynistic attitudes, for instance he often underlines his plans of killing Marion. He tries to cover his real thoughts and ambitions, thus he does not reveal his willingness to oppress the women around him. He intends to impose his ideas on the sly, like the patriarchal social structures which mask the power they exercise over women. He speaks to Worsely about how he can not stand a woman's emancipation:

CLEGG: She can stand on her own two feet which is something I abominate in a woman. Added to which she has what you might call a magnetic personality. We got that out of a machine once on a pier in happier times that said your character. It was so like it made you wonder just what is above. My card said exactly the same as hers, which was a mistake on the part of whoever filled the machine, so I don't know my true character. But she's a magnet all right. I gather round. So do you. You kept

dropping in all the time till she said you could work for her and now you work for her all day and half the night and you still drop in. You're drawn in. What for? Just to be there when she's there. You see? (Churchill, 8).

A woman's status is also determined by the burden that is laid on her by a patriarchal husband, society, social structure etc. about the matter of childcare. Their responsibility of looking after children has restricted their opportunities in the social and economic areas. Most societies are not inclined to assign the tasks of childcare, therefore women feel psychologically under pressure about raising their children mostly on their own, without the help of the father, which brings down their socio-economic status. Many solutions can be found for this problem, for instance, in some societies people employ babysitters to share this responsibility or they get help from their husbands and/or elder relatives who are retired and thus do not have a concern of being in the labor force (Kimmel, 2011, 76). Clegg seems to believe that childcare is supposed to be one of the primary roles of a woman as he states "a man is not expected to stay home and look after a baby" (Churchill, 54). This is also seen as one of the culturally determined gender roles of the female. Clegg implies that since this role should be regarded as inferior or insignificant, a woman is expected to fulfil it. Patriarchy affirms that the male is supposed to undertake more important assignments which are thought to be too much for the female. However, Churchill revolts against this established gender role by giving the responsibility of child rearing to a patriarchal character. Clegg thinks "even a woman can do it" (54). On the other hand, ironically, he ends up staying at home and looking after the baby while Marion becomes the financial provider of the household, a gender role which Clegg considers as suitable for men.

Boys usually obtain their masculinity by impersonating men around them and keeping away from any kind of feminine behaviour. On the other hand, girls tend to establish their feminine identity by impersonation rather than rejection of femininity over which boys exercise control. Girls are disposed to see their mothers as role models and since these role models are concrete, it makes the process of identification easier (Kimmel, 158).

Children do not automatically develop gender roles and identities from their parents, instead they relate to them in a number of different ways. Basically, it is known that a boy or girl emulates the parent from whom s/he learns how to behave.

Not only the child impersonates the personal characteristics of the parent, but also s/he obtains the features of the same gender, first unknowingly and then deliberately. Both impersonation and identification allude to the inclination for an individual to imitate the activities, frames of mind and reactions showed by real or representative models (Oakley, 1972, 179). In this context, it can be argued that for a male, patriarchy can be easily developed at a young age by imitating the father. The child observes his father's attitudes towards his mother and other women around, and thus he imitates the patriarchal behaviours of the father. In *Owners*, Clegg's willingness to dominate the women around majorly results from the identification with his father:

CLEGG: Apart from the physical weakness a lady has a squeamishness which is very proper in the fair sex but shameful in a man. We were taught to look up to my father. My mother literally worshipped him. I've seen her on her knees. And he would raise her up, very gracious. She knew how to give a man the right support. He had his chair. The tea was hot on the table when he came in. We never made a sound (Churchill, 9).

Providing certain gender roles for the male and female penetrates into the society that is why the male and female are positioned in the conditions that have an impact on their perspectives and activities. Women's actions differed from those of men because of their conditions, not their freewill. The male and female accomplish their socially determined responsibilities and improve their social involvement fundamentally. However, women's sources and opportunities were limited when compared to men's, which caused to dealing with obstacles in the process of practicing their interests. The unequal sources and opportunities resulted in a change in women's areas of interest and roles. Women were positioned after men in the social hierarchy because of their limited resources. They historically had less resources, inferior socio-economic status, and fewer financial opportunities. Moreover, they had to cope with the cultural restrictions. Therefore, women could not have the chance to enhance their conditions individually by engaging in direct arguments with men. Accordingly, women had to put up with the possible outcomes of a marginal lifestyle by setting up a home with a limited income or enrolling in a denomination in order to keep away from dependency on their husbands, fathers etc. They needed to look for new chances or take part in collective actions in order to accomplish more (Jackson, 1998, 176).

Marion does not have to choose neither setting up a home nor joining a denomination, instead she continues to live with her husband by oppressing him as if

she took revenge on patriarchy, which can be seen as a way of reversing patriarchal gender roles. She has the opportunity to start a new household owing to her financial status, but she seems not to prefer it on purpose to dominate the men around more easily. Clegg complains to Worsely about the fact that Marion makes him feel alone even at the same home all the time. He states that even if she stays in, “as if she is not with him, not his wife, not paying attention” (Churchill, 35). Thus, it can be inferred that Marion deliberately continues to live with him in order to make him psychologically suffer, likewise she used to do formerly. Marion distresses him by fulfilling ‘his role’, as he sees, that is why as a conventional male, who fiercely defends the male-dominated system, he can not stand her rejection of the traditional female role.

People respond to the alteration in traditional gender roles by holding the aspects of the determined gender role of the opposite sex. People try out the other sex’s roles by paying attention to the possible advantages and disadvantages. At this point, inequality connotes that women tend to take their chances in order to fulfil a male role, yet men are not interested in accomplishing any kind of duty that is regarded as women’s responsibility. It is not surprising that women are inclined to make an effort so as to be employed in a high position while men are not willing to take care of children. According to the researches, although women long for men’s helping child rearing, during the time period of 1980s and 1990s, the participation of men in child rearing activities increased only 20 per cent and thus it is still limited. While some men enjoy these activities, they are mostly liable to consider it as a source of load (Jackson, 180). The socio-culturally settled gender roles impose the idea that as child rearing is an activity that does not require high intellectuality and intelligence, it is supposed to be fulfilled by women. On the contrary, child rearing is a task that can be performed by both sexes. If one of the parents works and the other stays at home, the latter can fulfil the task regardless of sex in order to share the work load. Because of his fixed ideas about the gender roles of the male and female, Clegg looks down on child rearing and implies that a male is not expected to perform the task. He and Lisa make plans behind Marion’s back in order to give the baby back to Lisa, Clegg seems to be willing to get rid of the duty of child rearing:

LISA: I’ll take him. You can say I took him and you couldn’t stop me. She’ll believe that. And it’s true.

CLEGG: She'd have the police. Or she might commit a crime. She's very near some edge just now and I wouldn't want to push her off. In a mental sense. I don't trust her in a hospital, she takes advantage of the facilities. So just wait, I know a better way. A real winner. I'll admit I do get fed up with him though he is as nice a bit of little baby as you'll see. Turns the scales now at fifteen pounds, and I'm the one fattened him up and no one else. But when I start working again I'll have more important things to think about. A man can't be expected to stay home and look after a baby. He can do it of course because it's not difficult. Even a woman can do it easily. But it is a waste of real abilities (Churchill, 54).

The male and female individuals sometimes exclude themselves from the society in order to defy the gender roles and reject them. In most cases, where the male and/or female reject settled gender roles, individuals withdraw from traditionally structured society. This may cause to the emergence of a subculture, for instance some men become outsiders and avoid the obligation of paid employment, which results in the outgrowth of an uncommon stereotype. Nevertheless, the individual rejections of conventional gender roles that are not supported by an improved socio-economic status are likely to have a short-term impact on the others as they can not encourage people to impersonate and emulate (Jackson, 181). In this respect, it can be argued that since Marion's individual rejection of patriarchal gender roles is corroborated by her high socio-economic status, it is likely to have a more effective and lasting influence on the others. As a matter of fact, none of the characters in the play, regardless of their sex, dares to question and judge her actions since the influence of her status is reflected on her pattern of behaviour. Each of the other characters seems to be aware of the fact that they have an inferior status compared to Marion's, and thus they do not attempt to stand up her. As a consequence, she is able to maintain her dominance on others since she socially and particularly economically keeps more power than them.

Social role theory suggests that the actions of the male and female vary and they try to fit in the gender role that has been ascertained for them. The specific gender roles have their roots from the physical differences of the male and female, which are considered as defining the abilities of two sexes' separately, in that one sex is believed to function more effectively than the other in certain areas of life. As mentioned earlier, there are stereotypes determining the gender roles and these stereotypes can be divided into two categories: descriptive and prescriptive. Descriptive ones refer to the ideas on the real features of the male and female, while prescriptive ones mean the society's beliefs on the capabilities of the two sexes. According to the social role

theory, communion and agency play a significant role regarding the gender roles. Communal ideas tend to define gender roles for women based on characteristics of personality such as tender, mild, helpful, selfless, merciful etc. However, agentic features are mostly concerned with the roles of a male, including being challenging, unfriendly, authoritative, self-governing and so on (Eagly, 1987). The bigger the gap between descriptive and prescriptive norms get, the more difficult the situation becomes especially for the female. When the society's expectations do not match with the real abilities of a woman's real abilities and characteristics, she is usually torn between two choices. The first one is that she ignores and/or gives up her capabilities so as not to position herself as marginal in the social area and thus she chooses to conform to the expectations. The second choice is that she disregards the socio-cultural norms and acts in a way that reflects her true characteristics. It seems that Marion chooses the latter since she takes notice of neither the patriarchy's norms nor the determined gender roles. She asserts that she can be as cruel as Genghis Khan, implying that she holds mercilessness by nature, which is seen as something unusual for a woman.

Women are inclined to bear the difficulties better than men and it is seen as something admirable. They have the capability of putting up with physical pain better compared to men, and moreover they are able to remain resilient when they are faced with challenging conditions. On the other hand, men are liable to flare up under tough circumstances. Therefore, women differ from them with their ability to maintain a steady determination with passive endurance. They can cope with the hardships such as poverty and mischance in a calmer manner than their husbands, in that they obey the duration of incidents and situations. If they are determined to continue their persistence, they can overcome despite hard conditions. It is important to put emphasize that a woman's power must never be underestimated. Their rapprochement with difficult conditions evolves into patience in time as they accept everything and everyone as they are without judging them (Beauvoir, 571). Correspondingly, Marion, after being hospitalized for her mental problems, reinforces her struggle and patience in order to make her own way, she states: "I was never a lazy girl, Marion tries hard. I work like a dog. Most women are fleas but I'm the dog" (Churchill, 30). It is clear that she is not a type of person who gives in easily, even if she deals with health issues.

As a consequence, most societies tend to impose certain gender roles and they create socio-cultural norms in order to make sure that people think they have to adopt these roles. The stereotypes that help settle gender roles vary from one society to another. Nevertheless, for some of them, these roles are based on the patriarchal ideology that subjugate women and make an effort to dominate them. In these societies, it is thought that biological features are the key point to identify and assign the roles to the sexes. However, the terms sex and gender are different, that is while sex refers to biological features, gender is the individual sexual identity of a person. There are two sexes, male and female, yet there exist a variety of gender identities which a person establishes beginning from childhood. In this regard, although Marion is a female, she disregards the roles of a female by rejecting the traditionally constituted patriarchal gender roles. She does not conform to the female gender roles and also she performs the roles of a male, which upsets her husband, Clegg. As he can not dominate and exercise control over her, Clegg holds a misogynistic attitude as a typical patriarchal male. Ultimately, Churchill demonstrates not only the historical long for male-domination, but also a self-determined woman who rejects the female role owing to her socio-economic status. She swaps the roles of the two sexes and shows that there do not exist any certain gender roles any more in the changing world.

3.2. Binary Portrayals of the Female

Middle class women began to take part in employment as a result of increasing industrialism, trade, consumerism and in this way they had the opportunity to join public life. Once they started to earn money, the economic gap between the middle and lower class women became bigger. Even though this development had a great impact on the position of women in the patriarchal society, there still existed people who did not support the improvement of women. Those who were not willing to corroborate these changes did not only consist of men, but some women also did not uphold the alteration. There was an attitude from both the male's and female's sphere, which suggested that women were insufficient to have a job in the patriarchal working life. It was very clear that the reason of why men did not want women in employment was their feeling of superiority to them. On the other hand, women have always been inclined to consider other women as their competitors regardless of the type of their relationship with them. The dichotomy of superior-inferior between two women is

portrayed by Churchill in *Owners*. While Marion is a self-dependent, self-sufficient, and competent woman, Lisa tends to depend on her husband and seems to lack as much self-confidence as Marion. Lisa is represented as a warm character in general terms although she sometimes mentions trenchant words. She reveals her emotional outburst and cries, while Marion stays emotionally stiff and cold:

LISA: I can't stop crying.

MARION: Cry then for God's sake. Nobody's stopping you.

LISA: I may not earn as much as you. But I'm not worth nothing.

MARION: Nobody said you were not worth nothing.

LISA: I'm sorry Marion, it's the pills. There's nothing wrong with me (Churchill, 41).

The origin of the concept of 'empowerment' comes from the philosophical viewpoint that attaches importance to the ideas of the oppressed and from the upright improvement model of the 1970s. This has become one of the most mentioned concept in the international area with the help of effective institutions. The feminists and radical activists have contributed to the proliferation of the concept and defined it as a complex procedure of vertical alteration. According to them, it is a transformation which allows to raise consciousness among women and poor people, either personally or collectively, regarding the reasons of oppression discriminating them and in order to constitute qualifications to change economic and social institutions positively (Calves, 2009, 13). Since women are regarded as inferior and weak, they are seen as one of the groups who need empowerment most. In this respect, Marion does her best in order to actualize her individuality as a woman. It can be argued that she proceeds effectively by taking into consideration the 'vertical transformation' connotation of empowerment as she starts from the bottom and it takes time to make progress for her. During the 1970s, women's employment rate showed increase and thus there was a perception among some women that the initial condition is to get a qualification and be employed in order to be respected in the social structure. It is presented in the play that Marion has had mental problems formerly and she is hospitalized for some time. Clegg states that doctors have recommended her to be "a good wife" as they believe that "she'd be happier and more sane" in that way (Churchill, 10). Accordingly, there still existed a great number of people who thought as the same as Clegg in the 1970s. Therefore, it seems that Marion realizes that she has to be self-dependent and, to some extent, cruel

in order to survive in the unmerciful social structure. She asserts how she places emphasis on her self-improvement to avoid dependence on her husband:

MARION: If you wanted it to be some use you should have concentrated on one thing and got a qualification. I got on in the end in my own way. I always said I wasn't the butcher's wife. You could have done something even greater (Churchill, 29).

The play presents a destructive atmosphere with the death will in an uncommon way. It consists of interesting characters who are isolated and alienated from the society and their intention is to exercise psychological or economic power over others by frustratingly controlling them. Marion, as the central character of the play, is portrayed as a woman who is drunk with power, oppresses her husband and goes against the others. The play's gloomy portrayal is enriched with its implications as it demonstrates a certain hierarchy based on the fact that everything is related to possessing or being possessed. The depiction of Marion is disturbing to some extent as she seems to formalize "male fears of female sexual power" (Wandor, 2005, 170). Her obsession with the idea of possession has a great impact on the others who are dependent on her in some way except for Alec, as a totally apathetic character. She does not only long for possess things and/or people, but she also tries to prevent others from keeping their possessions, for instance she advises Clegg to close his butcher's shop and what is more she insists on keeping the baby whose biological mother is Lisa. Consequently, it can be argued that the power and obsessions that Marion holds is the key point of the play. She takes advantage of her socio-economic power in order to manipulate others and it can be understood that she is very proud of her struggle that she keeps on maintaining to achieve goals she has wished for a long time. As women have historically made an effort harder than men to accomplish what they aim, they are usually pleased with the consequences even if they are not major outcomes:

When she is productive, active, she regains her transcendence; in her projects she concretely affirms her status as subject; in connection with the aims she pursues, with the money and the rights she takes possession of, she makes trial of and senses her responsibility. Many women are aware of these advantages even among those in very modest positions. I heard a charwoman declare, while scrubbing a stone floor of an hotel lobby: 'I never asked anybody for anything; I succeeded all by myself.' She was as proud of her self-sufficiency as a Rockefeller. It is not to be supposed, however, that the mere combination of the right to vote and a job constitutes a complete emancipation: working, today, is not liberty. The social structure has not been much modified by the changes in woman's condition; this world, always belonging to men, still retains the form they have given it (Beauvoir, 641).

The play revolves around capitalism especially with the character of Marion by rejecting the common perception which suggests women's motherly intuitions prevent trade logic from interfering in private affairs and by showing how the ambition of possessing and annihilation can be destructive for relationships. The underlying motives of Marion for dealing with these matters are complicated and not completely transparent. She tries to take back Alec with whom she formerly has had a love affair; she applies psychological pressure on Lisa on all occasions; she makes Clegg look after the baby of whom she is not the mother; and she is persistent on keeping the baby since everyone else wants it too. When Lisa begs her in order to get her baby back, Marion takes a firm stand: "I will keep what's mine. The more you want it, the more it's worth keeping" (Churchill, 62). Clearly, Marion is not concerned about the baby in actual fact, that is her only wish is to possess it. One of the significant incidents in the plot is that Marion does not take notice of the baby's disappearing (Aston & Diamond, 2009, 36-37). In the case of Marion's being male, her assertive oppression would be highly respected by both the other characters of the play and audience. On the other hand, if Alec were a female, he would be regarded as an ordinary woman, without any mental problems with his lack of combativeness and domesticity (Keyssar, 1983, 206).

Marion is portrayed not only as socio-economically independent, but also sexually liberated. As Beauvoir argues, women who consume their energy to solve problems, who are responsible, and aware of the fact that it is difficult to fight against the world's competition, call for satisfying their sexual needs like men. Also, they can demand to experience "sexual adventures" in order to derive pleasure from recreation. Women's sexual liberty can not be revealed in some social communities by them, since if they do they jeopardize their career and status or they need to show a distressing hypocrisy. If women accomplish to build up a high post, then the society tends to ignore their sexually-liberated actions, however in small districts the tolerance of the society is lower (647). Marion seems to disregard the society's, along with her husband's, possible judgemental reactions to her. They go to a strip club to celebrate Marion's work performance, she and Worsely kiss while Clegg can not keep his eyes off the strippers. Marion's sexually liberated behaviour can result from two reasons: in big cities like London, as Beauvoir suggests, the society is more ready to pass over women's sexually inappropriate action if they are in the work force and establish a high status. The other factor is that Marion considers herself too superior and self-

dependent to care about others' opinions about her. She upholds such a power, both psychologically and economically, that she expects others to be under her control in every aspect.

The term 'identity' is commonly used in cultural and literary context just like the term 'self', however the latter is more indefinite. As a matter of fact, identity has come in a platitude as it is not defined clearly. Identity is conflicting as it has two opposite meanings; it connotes sameness and difference at the same time. Furthermore, when the term is used for the female, it inevitably becomes even more confusing (Gardiner, 1981, 347). Heilburn approaches the female identity and literature from a different point and defines this matter clearly. She argues that women who hold socio-economic power are "male-identified", however it is a failing "for a woman to take her identity from her man". Women are unable to shape a self since they "need never undergo an identity crisis", and what is more they usually have to give up their identity because "the price of wifhood is abandonment of self" (1993, 103-178). In this respect, as a male-identified woman, Marion has a significant impact on the people around her, however she does not try to keep up with her husband's status. Her self-efficiency can not be regarded as a failure as she does not take her identity from other by impersonating them. Although her identity is similar to a male's, she reaches to this point by experiencing an identity crisis and changing her life despite the oppositions of the others, not by competing with men around her. On the other hand, Heilburn's ideas seem to be applicable to the case of Lisa who fails to form an identity for the reason that she pays the price for motherhood and wifhood. There exists a little chance that she endures an identity crisis and ends up forming a strong self. She adheres to her family so much that she is unaware of her identity and individuality. Hence, because of her lack of power and ineffective identity, she can not get her baby back from Marion, instead she cries and asks her husband to take the baby. Consequently, Marion and Lisa, as a male-identified and female-identified woman respectively, have distinctive features in terms of the concept of self.

From a certain point of view, the play accomplishedly presents female authority with Marion's combativeness which can be the consequence of her childlessness, in that the sense of failure as a woman. The play is vague and confusable as Churchill challenges the typical female role with Marion who has a reputable socio-

economic status. However, her power arises from her possessions, her being owner of properties, which increases her position in the social hierarchy. This transforms her into a figurative male as she oppresses her husband while the only thing he can do is planning to murder her (Wandor, 1986, 170). She pursues her aims and is passionate about them, but with an aggressive, masculine attitude. She seems to believe in the power of struggling no matter what the conclusions will be and under any circumstances. She is capable of doing anything that takes her to success even if her actions are damaging for the others. Thus, her identity mostly consists of her motivation for endeavor, she tells Alec how important is to fight in life:

MARION: But I want to hold on. Everything I was taught – be clean, be quick, be top, be best, you may not succeed Marion, but what matters is to try your hardest. To push on. Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war. That was my favourite song when I was seven. Fight the good fight. Where's your fight? I know the bible stories aren't true but that makes their meaning matter most. God gave him dominion over every beast of the field and fowl of the air. Gave the land to him and to his seed forever. Doesn't evolution say the same? Keep on, get better, be best. Onward. Fight. How did man get to the moon? (Churchill, 30).

Chodorow suggests that the way of girls' personalities form is distinctive. At the early stage, girls constitute their sexual identity in a positive way by impersonating their mother whom they constitute a mutual consolidation. Then, when they grow up and become mothers themselves, they must re-establish a mother-child relationship satisfyingly, so women build up some potentials such as looking after children properly, dependence and understanding more effortlessly compared to men and they are not intimidated by these features as much as men. On the other hand, qualities such as liberty and self-sufficiency are generally difficult to reach for women. They tend to present their identity through collective engagements, unity and harmony with other people are attached importance and concepts of 'self', 'identity' continue to be adaptable throughout their lives (Gardiner, 352). In *Owners*, Lisa can be seen as a woman who is unable to establish an inflexible identity. She places importance to her social relationships as well as social structures like marriage institution. It can be predicted that her mother has abandoned her identity formerly too, since Lisa expresses the mindset of her mother as: "My mum always said not to take on and they'd soon be back. And it's quite true, nothing ever lasted. Because men know their hearts where they belong" (Churchill, 24). She also says that the most important thing for her is to be with her husband and sons (19). Unlike Marion, she cares about what

other people think about her and thus she does not go beyond the social boundaries. She prefers to remain actionless and expresses herself in a passive way instead of making an actual move. Therefore, considering Lisa's relationship with her mother and her own family, she can not attain masculine qualities such as independency and self-efficiency.

True self-esteem, which is secure and well established, depends on how valuable a person sees himself/herself. Also, it does not change based on the fulfilment of certain accomplishments and does not ask for constant approval. Deci & Ryan argue that a person can build up true self esteem when he/she determines his/her actions which conform with their true self instead of taking action by considering the socially determined norms or inner based requirements. Individuals decide on their actions and settle their aims completely because they attach importance for their true self. Moreover, while they shape their social relationships with others, exchange of sympathy, involvement, and discernment are put emphasized on. True and contingent high self-esteem are different from each other. As they suggest, "contingent self-esteem refers to feelings about oneself that result from – indeed, are dependent on matching some standard of excellence or living up to some interpersonal or intrapsychic expectations" (1985, 32).

Individuals who do not have true self-esteem but contingent high self-esteem give weight to specific accomplishments and care about how they are evaluated by other people around them. They place emphasis on where they are positioned in the social hierarchy, for instance they are concerned about how good they are regarding their occupations. Other people's opinions about them are very significant, for instance they are usually worried about if others like them or not. They tend to designate short-term goals and set appraising standards in order to maintain their feeling of self-esteem (Kernis, 2003, 8). In this regard, it can be argued that Marion does not establish true self-esteem as she depends on her achievements to feel secure, which is a sign of contingent high self-esteem. She constructs her self-esteem through her success and social engagements, in that by controlling them economically and psychologically she constructs her self. Although she disregards how she is seen in other people's eyes, she still defines her identity based on other characters' reactions. Physical appearance is significant to her since she believes that she presents her identity and creates a social

image through her look. She is concerned about looking young, owning properties and making other people depend upon her. It can be suggested that if her properties, people at her service, and social relationships were taken from her, she would not seem as self-confident as she actually is. On the other hand, Lisa seems to lack both types of self-esteem since neither she is able to create a true self to build up true self-esteem nor she has the required means such as strong social engagements, achievements, a high position to develop contingent high self-esteem. Marion reveals her materialistic approach, which she upholds to define her identity in a conversation with Worsely:

WORSELY: I hate bangs. I'm so sorry. I do apologise.

MARION: I was throwing the dress away in any case. I hate old clothes. I love to throw them away. And get new ones.

WORSELY: That doesn't look old.

MARION: Old enough.

WORSELY: You don't look old.

MARION: I should hope not. You're no good at flattery, Worsely, but luckily I'm too vain to mind (Churchill, 21).

According to the ambivalent sexism theory, there exist two elements of sexism in most of the societies: hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism upholds an antagonistic attitude towards male-identified women who do not accept male-dominance and try to oppress men by attaining power. In other words, it is inclined to attack women who do not conform to the traditional female roles. It regards women as unable to make significant decisions, sensitive, effortlessly handled, weak, and powerless while hostile sexism criticize women on several counts, benevolent sexism upholds a more positive viewpoint towards them who are considered more sensitive but less combative. Benevolent sexism can be seen as more elusive and suggests that women should be protected and approached with understanding by the reason of their lower status. It supports conventional roles of the female and places women in secondary roles instead of the main ones (Zotos & Tsihla, 2014, 448). Both types of sexism have handicaps from different aspects and they put forward that women are inferior, which is something they have in common. In *Owners*, neither Marion nor Lisa meet the expectations of these approaches as both of them criticize women in general by seeing them subordinate. Hostile sexism targets women like Marion who is male-identified and has an independent and combative personality. According to the hostile

sexism, Marion's qualifications are likely to threaten men's superiority and thus she is not regarded the ideal woman. On the other hand, Lisa sets a good example for hostile sexism with her ineffective attitude. She thinks that her husband and sons are what matter in life, which can be thought as a conventional mindset. Benevolent sexism adopts a viewpoint of positive discrimination that highlights the idea that women are inferior like hostile sexism. From this viewpoint, Lisa can be approached with sympathy as well as Marion's strength. It is suggested both women can not be criticized as they have always secondary roles. Consequently, the society demands women to conform to specific roles and it does not matter, either a traditional or independent woman she is, women are condemned to be judged as long as they are perceived a subordinate.

As a matter of fact, Lisa can not be counted as a completely conventional, obedient, and submissive woman as she also shows challenging behaviours from time to time at least. She makes an effort to persuade Marion and Clegg to give her son back, although it does not bear fruit. She fights against Marion and Clegg's insensibility and thus she can not be disregarded as a cliché. Keyssar argues that "but if Lisa is initially the female counterpart to Clegg's malebeast, Alec is the antithesis not only of Marion but of any available male types" (204). If Lisa and Clegg were matched in the play, they would be a couple who complete each other. Clegg would be able to hold his masculine power as he wishes, while Lisa would leave the important decisions to him contently and she would not deal with the problems on her own. Therefore, it can be argued that Churchill reverses the ideal matches in order to display the distinctive characteristics of the characters, especially females, more transparently. Alec, as a completely indifferent male, would be a suitable partner for Marion, who sees people as her possessions and thus he would be one of her properties as she asks for. He could take care of the household and fulfil the domestic duties, while Marion would increase the number of her properties.

Instead of pursuing adventures and/or success, Lisa prefers sticking to her monotonous schedule to feel secure. She knows that she is not willing to compete with anybody with more power like Marion and thus she chooses to remain actionless. The most important thing she is concerned about is to continue her usual life without any intervention from external world. As long as there are not any problems with the

domestic order, she thinks that she is safe with her sons and husband. Even if Alec is completely dispassionate and indifferent, the presence of a husband at home is a valid reason for the feeling of settlement from her viewpoint. She struggles to come together with her baby as he is a part of her domestic life and she engages in a sexual relationship with Clegg as a price. When there is a problem with family or household, women like Lisa are ready to strain every nerve no matter what the cost is. As Beauvoir argues:

It is easy to see why woman clings to routine; time has for her no element of novelty, it is not a creative flow; because she is doomed to repetition, she sees in the future only a duplication of the past. If one knows the word and the formula, duration allies itself with the powers of fecundity – but this is itself subject to the rhythm of the months, the seasons; the cycle of each pregnancy, each flowering, exactly reproduces the one that preceded. In this play of cyclical phenomena the sole effect of time is a slow deterioration: it wears out the furniture and clothes as it ruins the face; the reproductive powers are gradually destroyed by the passing of the years. Thus woman puts no trust in this relentless force for destruction (BEAUVOIR, 569).

In most of the societies, based on the competence and warmth attributes, there exist two associations that create variable preconceptions. One of them is sympathized group usually consisting of conventional women and elderly people. They are considered as warm but incapable and people tend to pity them. The other one is envied group who show capability and are often cold. Unconventional woman and marginal entrepreneurs belong to this group (Fiske, 2012, 33). The former group arouses a feeling of mercy as they often seem to need help because of their poor conditions. On the other hand, latter group include individuals whom people aspire and take as role models since they are successful, ambitious, and combative. Lisa can be regarded as a member of the former group as a traditional woman to large extent. She gives warm and/or emotional reactions when she faces with a challenging situation. She conforms to ‘warm but incompetent’ type with her sensitive personality. Marion lacks the sense of sympathy and she is more individualist than Lisa. Therefore, she can be seen as one of the members ‘competent but cold’ group. She cares about her success at work, properties, and benefits while showing no interest for anybody’s problems. While Lisa tries to express her feelings, Marion continues to stay rather indifferent:

LISA: I can’t stop crying.

MARION: What about?

LISA: I don’t know.

MARION: Then it doesn't matter. So long as you're not sad about anything. I should just cry.

LISA: It's the pills they give me.

MARION: There's plenty of tissues.

LISA: You never cry.

MARION: Not over nothing, no.

LISA: I'm getting worse and worse. I want to get better, Marion.

MARION: Home soon (Churchill, 40-41).

As suggested earlier, hostile sexism criticizes unconventional women who intimidate male dominance from a number of aspects. Women who are in the workforce, engage in trade, and intellectual females are assumed to steal men's role in the society. Homosexual and vamp women ignore the familiarity of heterosexual relationship, and also feminists question the power of men. These women pose a threat as they are competent but not warm-hearted. While hostile sexism suggest that this kind of women are dangerous, benevolent sexism support women who adopt traditional values, cooperation, and authority relations. This group of women consists of housewives, assistants, and usual ones who are regarded as warm-hearted but dull. The two kinds of sexism constitute a mutual opposition, in that one of them considers women as weak and incompetent while the other views them qualified but cold. Benevolent sexism protects submissive women by providing help for them, however this leads to the perception that they are subordinate. Benevolent sexist approach imposes the idea that women are supposed to be aided by men. This causes to self-doubt for women and thus they underestimate their abilities and depreciate their public presentation. Benevolent sexism tries to make women unaware of their recognition of it and to reduce the level of opposition of them. The protective attitude of this sexism cause women to disregard their experience, in that they are not conscious of benevolent sexism's damage in spite of its obvious harmful effects (Fiske, 37-38). In the play, Lisa is also one of these women who reject the idea that they can deal with any problem, since she is persuaded by the patriarchal structures that she needs a male partner to overcome anything challenging. As long as she does not see herself as a strong, self-sufficient individual, she continues to expect Alec, who does not meet her expectations and thus disappoints her most of the time, to stand by her even if it is an insignificant matter like calling the police:

ALEC: If you have the police you've all the bother. You may not get anything back. I don't want them catching somebody for me.

LISA: If we'd come in when he was still here, you wouldn't have grabbed him.

ALEC: No.

LISA: If we'd found him murdering the boys you'd have stood there.

[Pause.]

I'm going to get the police.

[Pause.]

I can't get the police if you won't. Please Alec.

ALEC: You can if you want (Churchill, 13).

As a result, Churchill focuses on two women characters in order to demonstrate how they struggle just because of the fact that they are females. Neither of them surpasses the other, that is Churchill shows that competition between the two women is nonsense and unnecessary as it is the patriarchal world, which pushes the females to this competitive environment. Nothing happens to Clegg at the end of the play and he is not affected by any negative situations, which infers that patriarchy remains the same, it only changes its forms. While both women make effort to get what they want, either it is a baby or a property, they become hostile to one another, however feminism asks for solidarity among women. The contrast between Marion and Lisa indicates that every woman is a unique individual, each one of them has a distinctive identity. On the other hand, if they become united for a specific purpose while accepting their differences, they will be able to revolt against the patriarchal system. Although Marion and Lisa have quite different personalities, the common point between them is that they do not seem to have healthy psychological states. What Churchill presents with the binary portrayals of these women is that no matter how powerful, talented, ambitious or; on the contrary, submissive, ineffective she is, a woman has to encounter with the problem of patriarchy as it can be understood by both women's troublesome interactions with Clegg. Also, Churchill points out that the higher socio-economic status a woman holds, the more power she attains in the social hierarchy as it can be seen in the case of Marion.

CONCLUSION

Modern feminism, as a historical movement, has changed its form rather a lot over the last century, that is it started with suffrage and still continues as the third wave feminism. During this long period, the movement began to be used as a theory in literature, influenced many writers and became the subject of literary works. The two plays, Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* and Caryl Churchill's *Owners*, which coincide with approximately the mid of last century, are the subject of this thesis and feminist theory is applied to these plays. With the emergence of second wave feminism, the statement "The Personal is Political" became popular among feminists, which means that women's personal actions are determined by their conditions in politics and thus by the patriarchal structures. Simone de Beauvoir, in her influential non-fictional book *The Second Sex* (1949), basically argues that matters that are related to femininity are commonly shaped with the influence of the patriarchal society. Social and cultural norms determine gender roles especially for women who have to deal with the male domination. Also, she deals with motherhood in her book, suggesting that due to the limited contraception and abortion rights of the time, women are constrained to give birth to unwanted babies, resulting in maternal problems as well as troublesome familial issues.

Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* (1958) and Caryl Churchill's *Owners* (1972) are heavily influenced by the second wave feminism, putting female characters at the center. Delaney, with the mother-daughter characters Helen and Jo, strikingly reveals both the individuality of the woman and the issue of motherhood. Helen and Jo do not conform to the stereotypes of women known as traditional femininity, revealing their distinct personal traits and marginalities separately. While exhibiting these differences, they find it difficult to balance the relationship between them and this makes them and their relationship extraordinary. On the other hand, the economic difficulties they experience cause them to break apart emotionally and become individualistic.

Both women are not very interested in the rules imposed by society and are aware that they are unusual, so it is possible to see them to some extent as excluded from society. The mother-daughter, who experiences the disadvantages of being a

woman, is not psychologically very healthy for these reasons. They also do not conform to the traditional type of women in terms of their sexual freedom and the way they experience sexuality. Both mother and daughter become pregnant from extramarital affairs, and this is not very acceptable in 1950s Britain. Although Jo doesn't want to resemble her mother and says she doesn't love her, she experiences events parallel to that of Helen. Helen, just like Jo, gets unintentionally and unwillingly pregnant, but she has no choice but to have a child. For this reason, Helen instinctively blames Jo for what she's been through, and doesn't approach her with the usual altruistic mother attitude. At the same time, Helen becomes pregnant with Jo while she is married to another man, which can be seen as Delaney's rejection of social and cultural rules imposed on women. Their free attitude towards sexuality is one of the many features that make these women different from other women of the period. In addition, Delaney emphasizes the importance of women's economic independence, just as Beauvoir does. Overwhelmed by her inadequate financial situation, Helen marries Peter, a patriarchal, drunk and rude man, and leaves Jo alone. From a feminist point of view, it can be argued that women suffer from the bad conditions they are in, which are often resulted in marrying and as a result they have to endure their husbands, whom they do not really want. Unlike Helen, Jo does not succumb to the attractiveness of material comfort, is determined to raise her child by her own means, and has no demands from the black sailor, the child's biological father. In this respect, Jo can be said to take a more feminist approach than his mother, because she believes that she can take care of both her child and herself.

Delaney, on the other hand, delves deeply into the issue of motherhood and reverses the roles defined by the society. Helen's attitude towards Jo is far from the traditional definition of motherhood, and by her selfish attitudes she shows that she is not a compassionate mother. In connection with this, Jo also states that, after becoming pregnant, she is not willing to have a baby and does not like babies. Because of his own mother's indifference, the concept of motherhood for Jo has much more controversial and unusual meaning. Delaney emphasizes that there is no single definition of the concepts of femininity and motherhood and reveals the importance of the individuality of women.

Another issue Delaney touches on is homosexuality, which she deals with in a

way that is intertwined with motherhood. Jo's friend Geof is a homosexual and performs the maternity roles more extensively than Helen. This pleases Jo because Geof doesn't make Jo feel her biological mother's absence, and in return, doesn't reflect his homosexuality to the community because he lives with a woman. In this context, Delaney reveals that the concept of motherhood is basically and not simply associated with biological motherhood, and that it is impossible for every mother to be a perfect mother. At the same time, homosexual Geof's attitude towards women seems to be much more humane than patriarchal and heterosexual Peter. With *A Taste of Honey*, Delaney reversed many of the well-known conceptions of femininity and attracted attention in the 1950s England.

Caryl Churchill's first staged play *Owners* was performed in 1972 at the Royal Court Theatre London. In this play, Churchill rejects traditional gender roles and emphasizes the difference between biological sex and gender. Although Marion is biologically female, she certainly does not fulfil the roles of a woman identified by society. With a very ambitious and controlling personality structure, she tries to manipulate the people around her and constantly owns property. Clegg, on the other hand, plans to kill his wife Marion and continually makes misogynistic discourses. Clegg, who represents the patriarchy, can not bear the success of any woman, including his wife. However, Marion is in control and this is enough to infuriate Clegg. In this respect, Churchill dramatically reveals the patriarchal thinking and emphasizes what women experience to be successful and happy. Marion grows strong as a property owner, Clegg closes the butcher shop and takes care of the baby at home. It can be concluded that biological sex does not make sense in such cases and that women can be successful in all the work attributed to men. On the other hand, Clegg's dissatisfaction with looking after a baby is an indication of a man's failure to undergo maternal duties, although he underestimates them. Marion and Clegg, which can be seen as symbols of feminism and patriarchy, exhibit roles that are very different from gender roles defined by society. Everything Marion achieved with her ambition contradicts the patriarchal system and, according to Clegg, as a man defending male domination, a woman should only fulfil her feminine duties.

Like Helen and Jo in *A Taste of Honey*, Marion is sexually free, because she kisses her assistant Worsely without hesitation and offers Alec a relationship. Marion,

who has a good socio-economic status, and Lisa, a more obedient, traditional woman, form two different portraits of female. While Marion is motivated by her desire to have everything, including Lisa's baby, Lisa is only concerned about not losing the material and spiritual values she has. Lisa says she is not as strong and tough as Marion, and she has a sexual relationship with Clegg to get her baby back. Experiencing all the disadvantages of being obedient and insecure, Lisa, by engaging in a sexual relationship with Clegg, tries to turn being a woman into advantage. Through these two different female characters, Churchill demonstrates that each woman fulfills her own unique roles and the individuality of the woman. To conclude, Churchill demonstrates that gender roles defined by society are not actually related to biological sex and that women may have very different behaviours and attitudes. Considering the periods in which these two plays were written, it is concluded that they are beyond their time and they reveal both the freedom and individuality of women together with the effects of male-dominated society on women's lives.

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