



**A BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH TO
DISABILITY: WILLIAM GOLDING'S *LORD OF THE
FLIES* AND DORIS LESSING'S *THE FIFTH CHILD
AND BEN, IN THE WORLD***

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Prof. Dr. Mukadder ERKAN
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T.C.
ATATÜRK UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
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Atatürk Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim ve Öğretim Uygulama Esaslarının ilgili maddelerine göre hazırlamış olduğum " A Bio-psycho-socio-cultural Approach to Disability:

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ABSTRACT

Ph. D. DISSERTATION

**A BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH TO DISABILITY:
WILLIAM GOLDING’S LORD OF THE FLIES AND DORIS LESSING’S *THE
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This thesis aims to study William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and Doris Lessing’s *The Fifth Child and Ben, in the world* through a biopsychosociocultural approach to disability. Along with studying biological functioning of the impairments it will apply socio- cultural and psychological theories relevant to biopsychosociocultural model of disability to study the disabled characters’ behavior and emotional reactivity. The interdisciplinarity of disability studies has provoked new approaches to study disability in various disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. In humanities and especially literary studies, scholarly interest is focused exclusively on how western culture has understood and represented disability by applying medical and social models of disability. A bio-psycho-socio-cultural approach as a more comprehensive model can be placed somewhere between the social and medical models by adding psychological aspects in a way that it can reflect disabled individuals accurately. Since disability is systematically biopsychosocial in nature, biopsychosociocultural model can give the means by which we can understand and study this truth, and in so doing understand and recognize individuals with disabilities as essential contributing participants of society.

Key Words: disability, bio-psycho-socio-cultural model, disabled, impairment

ÖZET

DOKTORA TEZİ

**ENGELLİLİĞE BİYO-PSİKO-SOSYO-KÜLTÜREL BİR YAKLAŞIM:
WILLIAM GOLDING'İN *SİNEKLERİN TANRISI* VE DORIS LESSING'İN
BEŞİNCİ ÇOCUK VE *BEN, DÜNYADA***

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Bu tez çalışması William Golding'in *Sineklerin Tanrısı* ve Doris Lessing'in *Beşinci Çocuk* ve *Ben, Dünyada* romanlarında engelliliğe biyopsikososyokültürel bir yaklaşımla incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Engellilerin biyolojik işleyişini incelemenin yanı sıra, engelli karakterlerin davranışlarını ve duygusal tepkilerini incelemek için biyopsikososyokültürel engellilik modeliyle ilgili sosyo-kültürel ve psikolojik teorileri uygulayacaktır. Engellilik çalışmalarının disiplinler arası olması, beşerî bilimler ve sosyal bilimlerdeki çeşitli disiplinlerde engelliliği incelemek için yeni yaklaşımları kışkırtmıştır. Beşerî bilimlerde ve özellikle edebi çalışmalarda, akademik ilgi, yalnızca batı kültürünün, engelliliğin tıbbi ve sosyal modellerini uygulayarak engelliliği nasıl anladığı ve temsil ettiği üzerine odaklanır. Daha kapsamlı bir model olan Biyo-psiko-sosyo-kültürel yaklaşım, engelli bireyleri doğru yansıtabilecek şekilde psikolojik boyutlar eklenerek sosyal ve tıbbi modeller arasında bir yere yerleştirilebilir. Engellilik doğası gereği sistematik olarak biyopsikososyal olduğundan, biyopsikososyokültürel modeli bu gerçeği anlayıp inceleyebilmemiz ve böylece engelli bireyleri toplumun temel katılımcıları olarak anlamamız ve tanımamız için araçlar sağlayabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: engellilik, biyopsikososyokültürel model, engelli, bozulma

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET**DOKTORA TEZİ****ENGELLİLİĞE BİYO-PSİKO-SOSYO-KÜLTÜREL BİR YAKLAŞIM:
WILLIAM GOLDING'İN *SİNEKLERİN TANRISI* VE DORIS LESSING'İN
BEŞİNCİ ÇOCUK VE *BEN, DÜNYADA*****Mehri RAZMİ****Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Mukadder ERKAN**

Engellilik, bir kişinin yaşamının birçok yönünü kapsayan karmaşık bir deneyim olarak kabul edilmektedir ve engelli bireyler küresel nüfusun önemli bir bölümünü oluşturmaktadır. Ancak yaşam deneyimlerini daha iyi anlamak için yeterli çalışma yapılmamıştır. Bu çalışmalar, damgalamayla mücadele etmek ve engelliliğin bilincinde olan bir dünya inşa etmek için gereklidir. Beşerî bilimlere, özellikle de edebiyat çalışmaları alanına olan bilimsel ilgi, son zamanlarda Batı kültüründe engelliliğin anlaşılmasını ve tasvirini keşfetmeye adanmıştır. Bu ilgi, edebiyatın engelliliğe yönelik sosyal algıları ve tutumları şekillendirmede önemli bir rol oynadığının kabul edilmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Edebi metinleri inceleyerek akademisyenler, engelliliğin tarih boyunca nasıl inşa edildiğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlar.

Batı kültüründe engelliliği anlamak ve temsil etmek için iki popüler model tıbbi model ve sosyal modeldir. Tıbbi model, engelliliği tıbbın düzeltmeyi amaçladığı bedensel bir kusur olarak görür. Fiziksel farklılıkları bireyin işlevsel sorunları olarak görür ve toplumun rolünü göz ardı eder. Eleştirmenler, bu modelin engelliliğin sosyal yönlerini gözden kaçırdığını ve kurumsallaşmayı haklı çıkaran otoriter bir yaklaşımı desteklediğini öne sürüyor. Bu model, engelli bireyler açısından gerçekçi bir algı sağlamamakta ve onları normal dünyanın dışında bırakmaktadır. Aksine, sosyal model, engelliliğin sadece bireysel yetersizliklerden değil aynı zamanda sosyal engellerden de etkilendiğini kabul eder. Bu engellerin kaldırılması ve kapsayıcı bir toplum yaratılması gerektiğini vurgular. Sosyal model, bireysel bozukluklardan ziyade sosyal yapılara odaklanarak engelli bireyleri güçlendirmeyi ve topluma tam katılımlarını teşvik etmeyi amaçlar.

Sakatlık çalışmaları alanında, engelliliğe kapsamlı ve faydalı bir şekilde yaklaşmak için tıbbi model ile sosyal model arasında bir orta yola ihtiyaç duyulduğu giderek daha fazla kabul görmektedir. Bu orta yol, engelli bireylerin biyolojik ve psikolojik çeşitliliği ile sosyokültürel faktörleri dikkate alan bir yaklaşımla sağlanabilir. Bu yaklaşım, aile ilişkilerinin yanı sıra, bireyin sosyal çevresi içindeki ve dışındaki diğer çeşitli ilişkileri de içermelidir. Bu sistemlerin karmaşık etkileşimi dikkate alınarak hem bireysel deneyimleri hem de daha geniş sosyal bağlamı içeren daha incelikli bir engellilik anlayışı geliştirilebilir. Engelliliğe biyopsikososyokültürel bir yaklaşım, daha kapsamlı bir engellilik anlayışı sunabilir. Engelliliğe yönelik biyopsikososyokültürel yaklaşım, çeşitli analiz düzeylerini incelemeyi içerir. Bu düzeyler, engelliliğin basit tasvirlerinin ötesine geçen biyolojik faktörleri, psikolojik faktörleri ve sosyokültürel faktörleri içerir. Biyolojik faktörler, genetik, kalıtım, fizyoloji, hastalıklar, bozukluklar ve travma gibi biyolojik süreçlerin ve durumların incelenmesini kapsar. Bu faktörler, “kişi davranışı” sistem düzeyini engelli bireyin biyolojik işleyişine bağlar. Psikolojik etmenler, engelli kişinin ve engelli bireylerin karşılaştıkları davranış ve duygusal tepkilerini gözlemlemeye ve incelemeye odaklanır. Bu analiz düzeyi, bireysel deneyimler ile bedensel performans arasındaki bağlantıyı dikkate alır. Sosyokültürel faktörler, engelli birey ile çevresi arasındaki ilişkiyi, özellikle kişiler arası ilişkileri inceler. Bu faktörler, daha geniş sosyal bağlamın engelli kişinin deneyimleri üzerindeki etkisi dikkate alınarak, iki kişilik sistem düzeyinde davranışsal değişkenler olarak incelenebilir. Buna göre, literatürdeki engelliliği incelemek için biyopsikososyokültürel bir model kullanarak, çok çeşitli deneyimleri daha kapsamlı ve özgün bir şekilde tasvir edebiliriz. Bu yaklaşım, biyolojik, psikolojik, sosyal ve kültürel boyutları bütünleştirerek ve engellilik konusunda artan farkındalığı teşvik ederek empatiyi teşvik edebilir.

Bu tez, biyopsikososyal bir yaklaşım benimseyen üç edebi eser olan William Golding’ın yazdığı *Sineklerin Tanrısı* ve Doris Lessing’in *Beşinci Çocuk* ve devamı niteliğindeki *Ben, Dünyada* adlı üç edebi eserde engelliliğin temsilini keşfetmeye çalıştı. Bu araştırma, Piggy, Simon ve Ben’in engelli karakterlerini inceleyerek, engellilik deneyimlerini şekillendiren biyolojik, psikolojik ve sosyal faktörler arasındaki karmaşık ilişkiyi anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, bu kapsamlı çerçeve aracılığıyla engelliliğin çok yönlü boyutlarını göz önünde bulundurarak karakterlerin

kimlikleri, zorlukları ve sosyal etkileşimleri hakkında daha derin içgörüler geliştirmeyi ve sonuçta bu edebi eserlerde engelliliğin daha kapsamlı bir şekilde anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmayı umuyor.

Birinci bölüm, engelliliği kapsamlı bir biyopsikososyal perspektiften incelemek için ilgili psikoanalitik ve sosyokültürel teorileri tanıttı. Bu, seçilen romanlarda sakatlığı incelemek için sonraki bölümlerde daha fazla araştırmanın yolunu açtı. İkinci bölümde, karşılaştıkları zorluklara ve engellerinin sonraki bölümlerde yaşamlarını ve etkileşimlerini nasıl şekillendirdiğine dair daha fazla içgörü sağlamak için engelli karakterler Piggy, Simon ve Ben'deki engelliliği tıbbi bir mercekten analiz ettik. Piggy'nin obezite, solunum sorunları ve miyop gibi çoklu engelleri, gruba katılımını engeller ve engelli bireylerin maruz kaldığı ayrımcılığı ortaya çıkarır. Simon'ın trans benzeri durumlarla karakterize edilen epilepsisi, etkileşimlerini ve başkalarının onu nasıl algıladığını etkiler. Benzer şekilde, Ben'in otizmi, tıbbi yönleri ve sosyal desteğe duyulan ihtiyacı anlamının önemini vurgular. Bu karakterleri tıbbi bir model aracılığıyla incelemek, engellilik anlayışımızı genişletiyor ve kapsayıcılık ihtiyacını vurguluyor. Bununla birlikte, engellerini yalnızca tıbbi koşullara indirgemenin, karşılaştıkları karmaşık gerçekleri göz ardı ettiğini kabul etmek önemlidir. Biyopsikososyokültürel modelin kapsamlı yaklaşımını benimsemek, bu çalışmalarda engelliliğin tam olarak anlaşılmasını sağlamak için psikolojik, sosyal ve kültürel boyutları entegre edebilir.

Üçüncü bölüm, sosyokültürel faktörlere vurgu yaparak Piggy, Simon ve Ben'in engellerine odaklanıyor. Tıbbi yönlerin ötesine geçerek, bu engelli karakterlerin deneyimlerini ve temsillerini sistematik olarak anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Foucault, Agamben, Goffman ve Douglas'ın sosyokültürel teorilerinden yararlanan bu bölüm, sosyal ve kültürel bağlamların engelliliğin inşasını ve algılanmasını nasıl şekillendirdiğini araştırıyor. Foucault'nun biyoiktidar ve biyopolitika kavramları, engelli karakterlerin deneyimlerine ve engelliliğin toplumsal inşasına dair içgörüler sunar. Biyoiktidar, organları kontrol etmek için tıp ve halk sağlığı gibi kurumlar ve teknolojiler aracılığıyla gücün kullanılmasını içerir. Öte yandan biyopolitika, sosyal normlara uyumu zorlamak için kullanılan devlet gücünü ifade eder. Engelli bireyler toplumsal normlardan sapmaları nedeniyle tarihsel olarak bedenlerini yönetmeyi amaçlayan teknolojilerle karşı karşıya kalmışlardır. Golding ve Lessing'in romanları bu temaları

araştırarak engelli bireylere nasıl davranıldığına ve toplumun engelliliğe karşı tutumlarına ışık tutuyor. Ek olarak, bu romanlarda Piggy, Simon ve Ben'in uzlaşmaz bedenlerinin tasviri, disiplinci güç uygulamalarına karşı direnişi ortaya koyuyor ve bu da engelliliği ve engelli bireylerin sosyal muamelesini yeniden düşünmeye ikna edebilir.

Giorgio Agamben'in homo sacer ve istisnai hal kavramı, toplumdaki engelliliğin siyasi sonuçlarını anlamak için güçlü bir çerçeve sunuyor. Sakatlık, dışlanmaya ve biyopolitik kontrole tabi tutulan bir grubun paradigmatic bir örneği olarak görülüyor. Agamben'in şehirden kovulmuş ve tüm hakları reddedilmiş bir kişiyi ifade eden homo sacer kavramı, engelli karakterlerin yaşamlarına uygulanır. Çıplak hayatın siyasi haklardan yoksun bırakıldığı homo sacer'in yaşadığı istisnai durum, engelli karakterlerin deneyimleriyle yankılanıyor. Bu karakterleri homo sacer çerçevesinde incelemek, marjinalleşmelerine katkıda bulunan toplumsal tutumları ortaya çıkarır. Piggy, Simon ve Ben, sosyal normlardan saptıklarında zulme ve dışlanmaya maruz kalan homo sacer figürleri olarak görülüyor. Ötekileştirilmeleri sadece farklılıklarından değil, aynı zamanda engelliliği istenmeyen bir şey olarak gören toplumsal yapılardan da kaynaklanmaktadır. Engelli karakterler, fırsatlardan ve sosyal etkileşimlerden dışlanmışlık hissine neden olan farklı muamele gördüklerinin farkındalığını yaşarlar.

Erving Goffman'ın damgalama teorisi, engelliliğin istenmeyen ve anormal özelliklerine sahip bireylerin damgalanmasını analiz etmek için bir araç sunar. Sakatlık, Goffman'ın çerçevesinde fiziksel şekil bozuklukları ve karakter kusurları kategorilerine girer. Literatürdeki engelliliği damgalama teorisi aracılığıyla inceleyerek, Golding ve Lessing'in konuyla nasıl ilgilendikleri ve bu tasvirlerin sosyal normları nasıl güçlendirdiği veya bunlara nasıl meydan okuduğu araştırılabilir. Romanları, toplumlarında damgalanma ile karşı karşıya kalan engelli karakterleri tasvir ederek, damgalanan ve damgalayanlar arasındaki ilişkiyi ve izolasyon ve düşük benlik saygısı gibi olumsuz sonuçları vurgular. Bu eserlerdeki engelli karakterler, engelli insanlara karşı daha fazla anlayış ve empati ihtiyacını ortaya koyan hem içsel hem de dışsal damgalanma yaşarlar. Goffman'ın içgörüsü bize, toplumun bireyleri kategorize etmede ve her kategoriye belirli nitelikler atfetmede önemli bir rol oynadığını hatırlatır. Bu tutumlara meydan okuyarak daha adil bir gelecek geliştirilebilir.

Sakatlık çalışmaları alanında, Mary Douglas'ın "pislik" kavramı, engelli bireylerin nasıl algılandığını ve bu tutumların onların sosyal ayrımcılığına nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu anlamak için yararlı bir temel sağlar. "Pislik" fikri, yerleşik kültürel normlardan herhangi bir sapmayı kapsar ve sosyal normlara uymayan unsurları reddetmeyi içerir. Douglas, belirli bir kümeye uymayan veya farklı şekillerde yorumlanmayan, anormal veya belirsiz olan şeylerin 'yersiz' olarak kabul edilebileceğine inanır. Bu anlayış, genellikle anomali olarak görülen ve belirsizliği bünyesinde barındıran engelli bireylerin Batı toplumu ve kültüründe nasıl damgalanabileceğine, kirli veya istenmeyen olarak algılanabileceğine ışık tutmaktadır. Golding ve Lessing'in romanlarında engelliliğin ve farklılığın ele alınışı, engelli bireyleri dışlayan ve marjinalleştiren toplumsal eğilimlerin derin bir yansımasını sağlar. Bu edebi eserler, genellikle empati pahasına uyumluluğa öncelik veren bir toplumun eleştirisi olarak hizmet ediyor.

Bu çalışmanın dördüncü bölümünde Freud, Lacan ve Kristeva'nın psikoanalitik teorilerini uygulamak, deneyimlerinin psikolojik yönlerine önemli bir vurgu yaparak Piggy, Simon ve Ben'in yetersizliklerine odaklanıyor. Bölümde tartışıldığı gibi psikanaliz, engelliliğin psikolojik yönlerini keşfederek, engelli bireylerin deneyimlerine ve sosyal tutumlara ışık tutarak edebi engellilik araştırmalarına katkıda bulunabilir. Bu bakış açısı, edebiyatın engelliliğin sosyal inşasını şekillendiren engelli varsayımlarına nasıl meydan okuduğunun veya bunları nasıl vurguladığının eleştirel bir analizini sağlar. Aynı zamanda, engelleyici bir kültür oluşturan bilinçaltı inançları ve savunma mekanizmalarını anlamamıza yardımcı olur. Freud, Lacan ve Kristeva'nın psikoanalitik teorilerini *Sineklerin Tanrısı*, *Beşinci Çocuk* ve *Ben Dünyada* gibi romanlara uygulamak, okuyucuların engellilik deneyimlerine ve bunları şekillendirmede sosyal faktörlerin rolüne ilişkin anlayışlarını güçlendirir.

Freud'un iğdiş edilme kaygısı kavramı hem engelli bireyler hem de onlara tanık olanlar için engelliliğe verilen psikolojik tepkiyi anlamada çok önemli bir rol oynar. Sakatlık, öz-değerin azalmasına neden olan ve narsisistik davranış gibi savunma mekanizmalarını tetikleyen bir iğdiş biçimi olarak algılanabilir. Bu psikolojik dinamikler benlik saygısını etkiler ve bireylerin engelliliğe nasıl tepki verdiğini etkiler. Ödipal sorunlar, engellilikle karşı karşıya kalınan kaygıya da katkıda bulunabilir. William Golding ve Doris Lessing'in romanlarını incelemek, engelli bir kültürün

psikolojik karmaşıklıklarına dair daha kapsamlı bir anlayış sunar. Her iki yazar da engellilikle yüz yüze kalındığında ortaya çıkan korku ve kaygıları resmediyor. Esrarengiz unsur, engelli karakterlerin engellilikle karşılaştıklarında yaşadıkları rahatsızlığa katkıda bulunur. Bu romanlarda engelliliği incelemek için uygulanan Freudcu yaklaşımlar, engellilik ile insan ruhu arasındaki ilişkinin daha iyi anlaşılmasını sağlamaya çalışır.

Lacancı psikanalizin uygulanması, edebi metinlerdeki engelli ve engelli karakterler arasındaki karmaşık bağlantının keşfedilmesine olanak tanır. Lacan'ın sembolik düzen ve ayna aşaması kavramları, engelli karakterlerin sosyal bağlamlarındaki deneyimlerine dair değerli algılar önerir. Lacancı bir yaklaşım, engelliliğin yalnızca fiziksel bir durum olmadığını, aynı zamanda dil ve kültürel sembollerle şekillenen sembolik bir temsil olduğunu kabul ederek, engelliliğin sosyal ve kültürel normlardan nasıl etkilendiğini netleştirmeye yardımcı olur. Engelli karakterlerin kimlik oluşumunu Lacan'ın imgesel ve simgesel aşamaları üzerinden inceleyen bu çalışma, engelli kültürünün gelişimini anlamaya odaklanmıştır. Sakatlığı incelerken, 'İdeal-I' kavramı, engelli karakterlerin elde etmeye çalıştığı, idealize edilmiş sağlam vücutlu olma imajını ifade eder. Bu arayış, sosyal normlara uymaya çalışırken algılanan sınırlamalarında gezinirken iç çatışma yaratabilir. Sonuç olarak, yetersizlik duyguları yaşarlar. Ayrıca engelli karakterler, bozulan ayna evresini hatırlatarak engelliler için rahatsızlık ve huzursuzluk yaratır. Sembolik düzen, sakat bedenlerin geleneksel görünüm ve işlev beklentilerini bozan deneyimlerini tam olarak kapsamakta başarısız olur. Bu bozulma hem engelli hem de engelli olmayan karakterlerde kaygı uyandırır ve Simgesel düzenin çeşitli deneyimleri kuşatma konusundaki sınırlamalarına işaret eder. Bu çalışma, Golding ve Lessing'in romanlarındaki engelli karakterler üzerindeki hayali ve sembolik aşamaların etkisini analiz ederek, Sembolik düzenin sınırlılıklarına dair bir keşif sunmaya çalıştı. Geleneksel aile yapıları ve sosyal normlarla temsil edilen bu romanlar, okuyucuları Simgesel düzenin dayattığı sınırlamalara meydan okumaya ve bunları sorgulamaya teşvik edebilir. Bu sosyal yapıların hem engelli hem de engelli bireylerin deneyimleri ve ilişkileri üzerindeki etkisinin yeniden değerlendirilmesini teşvik edebilirler.

Julia Kristeva'nın iğrenme kavramı, sakatlar ve engelli bedenler bağlamında uygulandığında, engelli bireylerin marjinalleştirilmesini ve engelliler ile engelliler

arasındaki zorlayıcı ilişkiyi açıklayabilir. İğrenmeyi sakatlıkla bağlantılı olarak keşfederek, sosyal tutumların ve yapıların engelli kültürün kalıcılığına nasıl katkıda bulunduğu dair önemli bir kavrayış elde edilebilir. Golding ve Lessing'in romanlarındaki engelli karakterler, başkalarında endişe veya korku yaratan özne ve nesne arasında beklenen sınırların ötesinde var olarak geleneksel 'benlik' anlayışına meydan okur. Sembolik düzeni bozarlar ve karmaşık duygu ve tepkilere yol açan farklılığın somut yönleriyle başkalarını karşı karşıya getirirler. Toplumun bu kaygıya tepkisi, engelli bedenlerin dışlanması güçlendiren politikaların yaratılmasıyla sonuçlanabilir. Engelli ve engelli olmayan arasındaki etkileşimler, engelli karakterlerin deneyimlerini şekillendirir ve benlik algılarını etkiler. Bu romanlarda bu etkileşimi keşfetmek, engelliliğin psikolojik yönlerini ve engelli bireylerin kimliklerini oluşturma ve sürdürmede karşılaştıkları zorlukları örneklemeye çalışır.

Son olarak, engellilik biyolojik, psikolojik ve sosyokültürel boyutları kapsayan çok yönlü bir deneyimdir. Biyopsikososyokültürel bir yaklaşımı benimseyen bu çalışma, literatürdeki engelli karakterlerin deneyimlerini şekillendirmede bu faktörlerin karmaşık etkileşimine ışık tutmaya çalıştı. Tıbbi, sosyal ve psikoanalitik teoriler gibi çeşitli teorik çerçevelerin uygulanması, sakatlığın temsili ve inşasına ilişkin değerli sezgiler sağladı. Bu içgörüler sosyal normlara meydan okuyabilir, güç dinamiklerini sorgulayabilir ve yeteneklerine veya görünümüne bakılmaksızın tüm bireylerin çeşitliliğine ve değerine değer veren daha kapsayıcı ve kabul eden bir toplumu savunabilir. Bu tez, seçili edebi eserler olan *Sineklerin Tanrısı*, *Beşinci Çocuk* ve *Ben, Dünyada* incelenmesi yoluyla, engelliliğin temsilini birden fazla perspektiften araştırarak karakterlerin kimlikleri, zorlukları ve toplumsal sorunları hakkında kapsamlı bir anlayış sunuyor. Engelliliğin biyolojik, psikolojik, sosyal ve kültürel boyutlarını bütünlleştirerek, engelliliğin literatürde daha gerçekçi bir tasvirine katkıda bulunmayı, kapsayıcılığı, empatiyi ve sosyal dönüşümü teşvik etmeyi amaçladı.

İleriye dönük olarak, engelli birey ve çevresi arasındaki karşılıklı bağlantıları kabul eden bütüncül bir şekilde engellilikle ilgilenmeye devam etmek, gelecekteki araştırmalar ve sosyal söylem için çok önemlidir. Farkındalık yaratarak, engelliliğe meydan okuyarak ve çeşitliliği kucaklayarak engelli bireylere değer veren ve onlara saygı duyan bir toplum oluşturabiliriz. Sürekli araştırma ve diyalog yoluyla, engellilik

anlayışımızı genişletebilir ve engelli bireylerin çeşitli deneyimlerinin gerçekten bilincinde olan bir dünya yaratmaya çalışabiliriz.



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PREFACE

I would like to thank my advisor Prof. Mukadder ERKAN, who supported me during my studies in Turkey and the process of writing my thesis which was coincided with the most challenging period in my life. Her encouragement, feedback, and support have been instrumental and I am deeply grateful for her mentorship.

This thesis is dedicated to the cherished memory of Prof. Ahmet BEŞE, a respected member of the jury, whose recent passing has left a profound void in our hearts and minds. I am thankful to the jury members Prof. Mehmet TAKKAÇ, Asst. Prof. Mehmet Başak Uysal, Assoc. Prof. Seda ARIKAN, and Assoc. Prof. Fatime Gül KOÇSOY for their endurance and contributions. I also appreciate the assistance of all members of the English Language and Literature Department at Atatürk University, who were always there for me with patience and empathy.

I am also obliged to my family, especially my late father whose spirit is beside me no matter where I am, my dear mother and also my kind and caring brothers, who supported and helped me during all stages of my life.

And finally, this study is dedicated, as a tribute to the power of literature to challenge, transform, and inspire our understanding of disability and disabled individuals, and to promote a more inclusive and accepting society. This dedication stands as a testament to the enduring impact of literary studies in broadening our horizons, fostering compassion, and nurturing a collective vision for a world where every individual is valued and celebrated.

Erzurum-2023

Mehri RAZMI

INTRODUCTION

According to World Health Organization [WHO]'s 2011- report on disability, “about 15% of the world’s population lives with some form of disability, of whom 2-4% experience significant difficulties in functioning. The global disability prevalence is higher than previous WHO estimates, which date from the 1970s and suggested a figure of around 10%”¹. Apart from innate disabilities, the number of deaths from diseases has dropped significantly thanks to advances in medicine, biotechnology and so on. That is to say, some survive with numerous kinds of acquired disabilities in their bodies and have to live with them incessantly. According to UN convention on rights of persons with disabilities, “in countries with life expectancies over 70 years, individuals spend on average about 8 years, or 11.5 per cent of their life span, living with disabilities”². Hence, disabilities that are expected to affect individuals during old age have increased. Besides, researches indicate that “persons with disabilities are more likely to be victims of violence or rape, according to a 2004 British study, and less likely to obtain police intervention, legal protection or preventive care”³.

Persons with disabilities have been burdened and suppressed for centuries perhaps more than any other marginal group. According to Lennard J. Davis, disabled people have been “isolated, incarcerated, observed, written about, operated on, instructed, implanted, regulated, treated, institutionalized, and controlled to a degree probably unequal to that experienced by any other minority group”⁴.

Consequently, studying disability in various disciplines within the humanities and social sciences has been of growing interest. The interdisciplinary and/or multi-disciplinary area of disability studies is generally concerned with how disability is defined and represented in the society. It helps us to understand disability in modern-day culture and appreciate disability associated with the arts, literature & media.

¹ WHO, World report on disability, 2011, Retrieved 26 June 2018, from www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report/en/

² WHO.

³ UN (CRPD), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006. Retrieved 26 June 2018, from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

⁴ Lennard J. Davis, *The Disability Studies Reader*, Routledge, New York 2013, xv.

Disability: Definitions and Historical Perspectives

Disabilities have been a part of humanity since the beginning of time. There are several definitions attributed to disability that can be instable and even contrary since disability includes a wide range of physical and cognitive variances. Moreover, disabled bodies have been conditioned by a variety of responses all the way through history. There is a limited literature in the history of disability to trace the progress and development of views concerning individuals with disabilities, though.

The Greeks considered the sick as ‘inferior’, as Plato in his Republic suggests putting them away in “mysterious unknown places.”⁵ In medieval England, some considered disability as a penance for sins; others supposed that people with disability suffer on earth to go to heaven in their life after death. According to early Christian doctrine, “disease is neither a disgrace nor a punishment for sin but, on the contrary, a means of purification and a way of grace.”⁶ On the other hand, sixteenth century Christians, Luther and John Calvin, designated that the persons with mental and physical disabilities were possessed and controlled by ‘evil spirits’ that must be exorcised.⁷

Since sixteenth century the word ‘disability’ has been in the English Language and the first definition according to Adams et al dates back to 1549 in the Oxford English Dictionary as “a physical or mental condition that limits a person’s movements, senses, or activities [or] the fact, or state of having such a condition.”⁸ The term used to cover a wide range of disabilities from injuries and impairments to inability in paying debts or even worshipping God. Several conditions – “like autism or chronic fatigue syndrome”- were unknown and sometimes were perceived as unavoidable realities.⁹ The terms ‘monstrosity’- with supernatural implications - in the early modern period and ‘deformity’ - with the implication of falling from divinity into moral and physical malformation - in the classical period along with the terms ‘cripple’ – mobility -

⁵ Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss and David Serlin, *Keywords for Disability Studies*, New York UP, New York 2015, 30.

⁶ Adams et al., 30.

⁷ Adams et al., 30.

⁸ Adams et al., 31.

⁹ Adams et al., 31.

impairments - and ‘invalid’ – various medical inabilities from injuries to disease - were commonly used.¹⁰

In the eighteenth century disabled people commonly lived in their own homes with their families and groups. If they could not support themselves financially, they received aid from the better-off. However, the idea that people with disabilities should live in special institutions, was growing in this period.

Nineteenth century social Darwinism was against helping the underprivileged and disabled, as they believed that the protection of ‘the unfit’ is against the natural selection of the ‘best’ and ‘fittest’.¹¹ Disabled people were moved from their groups into workhouses and asylums. During this period “the modern conception of disability emerged as a by-product of the concept of normalcy. [...] with the development of statistical science and the bell curve, human ability came to be understood as a continuum, with disability and disabled people occupying the extreme and inferior end of the spectrum”.¹² This is reflected in the vocabulary terms used in the industrialized world of late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: ‘slow’, ‘retarded’, ‘in a state of arrested development’, ‘feeble-minded’, ‘handicapped’.¹³

With the returning of soldiers who were disabled in World War I, there started a challenge against considering disabled people as a burden. On the other hand, eugenics was a widespread theory all over the world at the time. In 1937, Frederick Osborn offered his social philosophy that fortified more reproduction of people with positive eugenics and less reproduction and even sterilization of people with negative or less positive eugenics. Disabled people were considered as a threat to the health of the society so there was an attempt to eliminate physical and mental variances completely, with the intention of building a stronger society.¹⁴

By the end of Second World War in 1945, the horrors of the mass killing of people with disability in Germany had remained in the minds. Nevertheless, the pre-war

¹⁰Adams et al., 32.

¹¹ Chomba Wa Muniyi, “Past and Present Perceptions Towards Disability: A Historical Perspective”, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 32(2), 9 April 2012, Retrived 30 October 2019, from <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v32i2.3197>

¹² Adams et al., 32.

¹³ Adams et al., 32-33.

¹⁴ Frederick Osborn, “Development of a Eugenic Philosophy”, *American Sociological Review*, 2(3), 389–97, 3, June 1937, 389, Retrived, 7 December 2019, from <https://doi.org/10.2307/2084871>.

theories of eugenics were not popular anymore. After the Second World War, with an increase in the number of the individuals who had become disabled, disabled people drummed up support for equal rights and inclusion in society and several campaigning disability donations and charities formed in the 1940s and 50s. In the 1960s and 70s, encouraged by the civil rights movement in the USA, people with disabilities started to act against discrimination until the Disability Discrimination Act was passed in 1995.

Table 1. Historical Perspectives on People with Disabilities¹⁵

Time Period	Values of the Period	Treatment of the Person
Ancient Greece	Emphasis on fitness/wholeness	Left to die
Medieval	Emphasis on rationality	Put to death
Colonial	Emphasis on appropriateness	Put to death
1850's	Everyone is educable	Taught in small residential schools
1870's	People with disabilities need to be protected	Segregated facilities
1880's	Are to be pitied and seen as objects of charity	Given bare essentials and protected
Alarm Period	Seen as a menace	Castrated and segregated
1916	Stress on IQ and standardized testing	Labeled as "low functioning"
1920-1960	Persons with Disabilities do not belong and are sick	Treated as patients; put in institutions; out of sight out of mind
1960's	Parent movement stresses reform and change	Movement to equalize and view as members of community
1970's	Outrage at injustice. Access to education through Public Laws	Dehumanized
1980's-90's	Integration	Treated as Clients and consumers. Mainstreaming
1990's	Americans with Disabilities Act	Open doors and some open minds
1990 – 2000	Focus on community inclusion and relationships	Seen as "one of us" Inclusive Classrooms NIMBY

Source: The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program 304-5

¹⁵ The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center, The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 304-5, Retrieved, 7 December 2019, from <http://www.pacwcbt.pitt.edu/>

Although disability has now become the preferred term, the meaning of disability has become more confusing and unstable as it has developed to include “new categories of experience and perception as well as phenomena once labeled by other terms, those meanings have simultaneously been challenged by scholars and activists.”¹⁶ Additionally, the acronym TAB (temporarily abled body) is usually given to the non-disabled indicating the fluid identity of disability considering the fact that it can possibly occur to any person at any time and age.¹⁷

According to the first and second definitional prongs of ADA, with the focus on the body, disability is “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment.”¹⁸ The third prong of the ADA, focuses on social attitudes by adding “being regarded as having such an impairment”¹⁹ to the previous definition. As stated by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008), “disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal bases with others.”²⁰ This definition concentrates more on disability’s social scope rather than individual body.

Impairment, which is often used as a synonym for disability, is a “euphemism, deemed more appropriate than terms like handicapped or deformed.”²¹ According to 1976 The Fundamental Principles of Disability by the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS), “Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments, by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society.”²² Barnes puts on a clear distinction between the words ‘disability’ and ‘impairment’ by quoting from 1981 DPI definitions: “Impairment is a

¹⁶ Adams et al., 34.

¹⁷ Adams et al., 30.

¹⁸ ADA AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2008, PL 110-325 (S 3406) September 25, 2008, Retrieved 7 December 2019, from <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/adaaa.cfm>

¹⁹ Practical Law Company, Thomson Reuters, 2008, Retrieved 7 December 2019, from <http://us.practicallaw.com/2-502-0488>

²⁰ UN (CRPD)

²¹ Adams, 306.

²² UPIAS, “Fundamental Principles of Disability” (1976), London: Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation, Electronically Scanned and Reformatted from the Original Document by Mark Priestley, in Consultation with Vic Finkelstein and Ken Davis, October 1997, 4. Retrived, 10 March 2019, from <https://disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/library/UPIAS-fundamental-principles.pdf>

physical, mental or sensory functional limitation within the individual” while “Disability is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers.”²³ Believing that the word disability is connected to “western ideas about individuality, autonomy, and bodily integrity”²⁴, the term ‘debility’, which means “political, social, or pecuniary weakness”²⁵, is offered by some scholars.

Disability Studies

Based on the voice of the disabled people emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, disability studies is currently accepted as an academic discipline. The interdisciplinary and/or multi-disciplinary area of disability Studies is generally concerned with how disability is defined and represented in the society. In the vein of women’s studies or African American studies, it considers the disabled as a marginal group. The focus is on the way in which disability is built (culturally, economically, politically, etc.). As Rosemarie Garland-Thomson defines: “Critical disability studies or interdisciplinary disability studies is a relatively new field in the academic world. It is a field that looks at and considers and builds knowledge around disability in new ways.”²⁶ She states that previously disability has only been studies in the medicine, so, “what critical disability studies does is that it thinks about disability in a very broad cultural, social and political context.”²⁷ Lennard J. Davis believes that disability studies is both an “academic field of inquiry” and “an area of political activity.”²⁸ To him, the process of collecting knowledge held by disability community is opposed to the knowledge which is written about that community by “normal” and this process is considered to include political actions concerning “the classroom, the workplace, the courts, the legislature, the media, and so on.”²⁹ Another important point that Davis puts is that disability has been treated as “eccentric, therapeutically oriented, out-of-the-

²³ Colin Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination: A Case for Anti-discrimination Legislation*, Hurst in Association with the British Council of Organizations of Disabled People, London 1994, 2.

²⁴ Adams, 42.

²⁵ Adams, 42.

²⁶ Emory University, “Rosemarie Garland-Thomson on the importance of having a public voice”, YouTube. 3July 2013, Retrieved 19 March 2019, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptzT2w24e4M&t=16s>

²⁷ Emory University.

²⁸ Davis, xv.

²⁹ Davis, xv.

mainstream, and certainly not representative of the human condition- not as race, class, or gender seem representative of that condition.”³⁰ Thus, disability studies needs to claim a space to defend its assertions. In its most comprehensive application, disability studies “aims to challenge the received in its most simple form – the body – and its most complex form – the construction of the body.”³¹

Three features have been essential to the development of the disability studies according to Watsons et al are: considering the disabled people as an underprivileged population, seeing them as a minority group, and the reconstruction of disability as a social instead of a medical problem.³² The main focus of the early disability scholars was conceiving disabled people as ‘a disadvantaged group’; while economic concerns and ‘materialist analyses’ was the focus of the first wave disability studies. Immediately it attracted feminist studies scholars and later it went beyond economic concerns “by critically unpacking structures of ableism, normalcy and construction of disabled people as categorically other.”³³ At present, critical disability studies (CDS) not only studies the nature of disability, but also studies issues of identity and agency as well.

As stated by Margrit Shildrick, CDS’s aim is “both to extend into new territory the existing achievements of more modernist paradigms like the social model, and where necessary to productively critique the limitations of such models.”³⁴ She believes that CDS must determinedly involve all the academic disciplines from feminism, postmodernism, queer theory, critical race theory or phenomenology of the body and psychoanalysis. For her, Disability studies must deconstruct the classifications that outline disabled people as different from the ‘normal’.³⁵ The interdisciplinarity of disability studies has provoked new approaches to study disability in various disciplines within the humanities and social sciences (e.g. literary studies, cultural studies, art history, media studies, anthropology, political science, sociology, philosophy, postcolonial studies, theology, feminist studies, etc.). As Davis believes, disability studies will bring about some grand cohesive ‘theory of the body’, which can pull

³⁰ Davis, xv.

³¹ Davis, xvii.

³² Nick Watson, Alan Roulstone and Carol Thomas. *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies*, Routledge 2012, New York, 3.

³³ Watson, 4.

³⁴ Margrit Shildrick, “Critical Disability Studies: Rethinking the Conventions for the Age of Postmodernity” in *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies*, Routledge, New York 2012, 32.

³⁵ Shildrick, 33.

together “the differences implied in gender, nationality, ethnicity, race, and sexual preferences.”³⁶ From the time when disability studies entered the field of humanities in the early 1990s, it is significantly concerned with the policies of representation, and generating knowledge about the histories, experiences and cultures of people who have been categorized as disabled.

Disability and Culture

Disability is “defined by society and is given meaning by culture”³⁷ and the dominant culture’s acknowledgement of the disabled person will define the accessibility and quality of vital services they receive to have a standard life. Within the dominant culture and values held by it, the disabled bodies’ identities are imposed by the able bodies which would define how the disabled people would feel about themselves and their disability. As Snyder et al state, in our collective cultural consciousness, “the disabled body is imagined not as the universal consequence of living an embodied life but rather as an alien condition.”³⁸ Since all of us are going to die but not everybody is going to be disabled, people are afraid of disability more than death. We distance ourselves from it because we are influenced by “late-capitalist culture’s relentless attempt to standardize and stabilize the body.”³⁹ Above and beyond, Western thoughts on disability “are formed in the context of a centralist state that imposes a universal code through legislation.”⁴⁰ Hence, in cultural representations disability is seen as an “absolute state of otherness” hostile to “a standard, normative body.”⁴¹

Alternatively, as Rosemarie Garland Thomson believes, disability studies in the humanities can bring a different perception of disabled people and people who recognize themselves as non-disabled “by analyzing and bringing forward things such as how the distinctiveness of disability which is fundamental to the human condition

³⁶ Davis, xviii.

³⁷ Michael Eskay, Samantha Gardner, and Suzgo Nyirenda. “CULTURE AND DISABILITY.” *Disabilities and Culture*, Loyola University, Chicago 1998, Retrived, 08 May 2016, from <https://twren.sites.luc.edu/phil389&elps423/c&d.htm>

³⁸ Sharon L. Snyder, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*, Modern Language Association of America, New York 2002, 2.

³⁹ Snyder et al., 2.

⁴⁰ Benedicte Ingstad and Susan Reynolds Whyte, *Disability and Culture*, University of California, Berkeley 1995, 8.

⁴¹ Snyder et al., 2.

can for example create art.”⁴² So much work has been done to create disability culture and disability art and as a result “the difference that we think of disability can create artistic and cultural innovations that we might not ordinarily be able to bring forward from what we might call the standardized non-disabled body.”⁴³ In short, disability studies views disability within a larger ableist culture and studies how it is represented in the mainstream society and how it may be conceived with regard to other. It can also discuss if disability (as identity) is adequate to identify a culture and if it is so, what the limitations of that culture might be.

Disability and Literature

Literature is abound with disability images and concepts and our greatest canonical literature contain disabled characters: from Polyphemus, Oedipus, Richard III, Roger Chillingworth, Victor Quasimodo, Captain Ahab, Bertha Mason and Rochester, Benji Compson, Elsie, to Eva Peace.⁴⁴ There are also several authors who had disabilities that inspired and influenced their works. In spite of this presence, disability has an invisible and unnoticed place in the study of literature and has long been outside the scope of critical analysis. In the words of David Bolt, “the English departments did not draw on the discipline of disability studies in the way it drew on those of gender, Marxist, psychoanalytical, and post-colonial studies.”⁴⁵ Disability in literature has been overlooked by the humanities and thus requires more enquiry. Although we accept literature as fictitious, its prevalent effects on social behavior cannot be ignored. If literature, has constitutive force on social reality, thus the recognition and investigation of literature as a cultural force is vital to the study of disability as well.

Without a doubt, “disability has been used throughout history as a crutch upon which literary narratives lean for their representational power, disruptive potential, and analytical insight.”⁴⁶ This has resulted in negative and restrictive representations of disability in literature. Likewise, some works have intended to provoke the reader’s pity

⁴² Emory University, “Rosemarie Garland-Thomson on the importance of having a public voice”, YouTube. (2013, July 3), Retrieved 16 January 2022 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptzT2w24e4M&t=16s>

⁴³ Emory University.

⁴⁴ Snyder et al., 1.

⁴⁵ David Bolt, “Literary Disability Studies: The Long Awaited Response”, *Inaugural Conference of the Cultural Disability Studies Research Network*, Liverpool John Moores University, May 26, 2007, 3.

⁴⁶ Davis, 224.

and sentimentality. In the conventional sense, disabled characters hold great importance in contributing to the moral growth of other characters or serving as symbols within literature.⁴⁷ Conventionally, literary disabled characters were often used metaphorically as symbols of evil, or even as figures of pity. Disability studies in literature began by distinguishing negative pictures of disability in literary works. The well-known examples are disabled characters in *Richard III*, *Moby Dick*, and *A Christmas Carol* that contain the “murderous, hunchbacked king, Richard III ... the obsessive, one-legged captain, Ahab... and the sentimental, hobbling urchin, Tiny Tim.”⁴⁸ As Frank Bowe states: “Our memories of these and other characters often become indelible, impervious to any experiences we may have with disabled individuals in real life. Somewhere in the back of our minds we associate disabilities with sin, evil, and danger.”⁴⁹ Pulled out of the community and treated as ‘Other’, disabled characters are rarely regarded as human beings, capable of feelings like any other individual. This portrayal of disability in Literature reflects the discrimination that disabled individuals face in the society. Yet, disability Studies tries to challenge the representations of disabled individuals in culture and literature. Thus, literary study of disabilities can bring disabled individuals into the mainstream society and improve their self-esteem.

Currently, literary scholars have focused on the importance of accurate portrayals of individuals with disabilities. Literary critics such as David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder are doing the kind of work feminists did in the 1960s and 1970s, which is rereading the canon from a fresh perspective. This view considers disability as a problem not limited in individual bodies and minds but a problem created by society. Mitchell and Snyder believe that with “narrative prosthesis”, the “incomplete body” can return to “the invisible status of a normative essence.”⁵⁰ Narrative prosthesis focuses on “disability within a literary domain while keeping watch on its social context.”⁵¹ Contemporary authors are also reconsidering the ways to apply disability as a literary device to enable the readers to re-consider their view of what it means to be

⁴⁷ Tina Taylor Dyches and MaryAnne Prater, *Developmental Disability in Children's Literature: Issues and Annotated Bibliography* Reston, The Council for Exceptional Children, VA 2000.

⁴⁸ David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse*, U of Michigan, Ann Arbor 2001. 17.

⁴⁹ Frank Bowe, *Handicapping America: Barriers to Disabled People*, Harper and Row, New York 1978, 109.

⁵⁰ Mitchell and Snyder, 8.

⁵¹ Mitchell and Snyder, 9.

abled/disabled. As David Bolt believes, “the literary disability studies movement will turn the critical absence into a pause; it will chase the specter of disability away and introduce a real presence in the English departments of the British academy.”⁵² It is the time for literary and cultural critics to begin to go beyond disability as a simple metaphor. “The goal is not to destroy the books we have loved, but to question what has been learned from them and how they have influenced understandings.”⁵³ Disability should be linked to the critical medium we use to study literary works.

Theoretical Approaches to Disability

In the humanities and especially literary studies, scholarly interest is focused exclusively on how western culture has understood and represented disability. As western culture has used three models to represent and understand disability: (1) the symbolic (or moral) model (2) the medical (or individual) model (3) the social (or cultural) model.

The Symbolic Model

The symbolic model, or the moral model of disability, was the predominant view in ancient times. It goes back to ancient Greeks and Israelites. According to this view disability is a sign of a “moral flaws of an individual or his or her progenitors”⁵⁴ and divine disfavor as punishment by divinity. That is to say, the physical variance is perceived as a metaphor for ethical, supernatural, or divine variance. Disability in this model, is viewed as “a disadvantageous state, usually a visibly impairment, visited upon individuals and their families as retribution.”⁵⁵ The physical characteristic as G. Thomas Couser argues, is supposed to be “transparent and often predetermined in its significance. (OR, a sign of some “gift.” The valence can be positive as well as negative.) The remedy, if any, may lie in salvation or redemption.”⁵⁶ This model also deals with ‘the gift of prophecy’ which is “the tradition of the blind seer or blind

⁵² Bolt, 3.

⁵³ Joanna C. Rankin, *The Role of Literature in the Context of Disability*, York University, 2009, 26.

⁵⁴ Kristjana Kristiansen, Simo Vehmas, and Tom Shakespeare. *Arguing about Disability: Philosophical Perspectives*, Routledge, London 2009, 2.

⁵⁵ Kristiansen et al., 2.

⁵⁶ Thomas Couser, “Three Paradigms of Disability.” Academia.edu- Share Research. 11 Dec. 2015. Retrieved 18 December 2019, from https://www.academia.edu/2306082/Three_paradigms_of_disability

prophet who access to cosmic knowledge.”⁵⁷ A good example of this would be Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.

The Medical Model

The scientific revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries gave way to the medical model of disability. Advances in the science and especially in the field of biology, led to the medicalization and scientific understanding of the human body and consequently developments in treatment and prevention of disease. Accordingly, disability was defined in medical terms and “reduced to an individual’s physiological or mental deficiencies.”⁵⁸ Consistent with the medical model, disability is ‘a defect’ or ‘deficit’ in the body that medicine tries to fix or “compensate for through rehabilitation or the fitting of prostheses.”⁵⁹ Disability is located amongst other singularities like “alcoholism, homosexuality and criminality.”⁶⁰ During this era disabled people were even put on freak shows. According to scholars, the medical model is a biased view that ascribe the body’s deficit either to “bad luck (accidents), or to inadequate health practices (smoking, bad diet), or to genes.”⁶¹ Samuel Johnson’s *The Life of Pope* (1781) can be considered as one of the earliest examples in this era. Alexander Pope was a hunchback and Samuel Johnson, interestingly, was also physically impaired. As stated by Deutsch, Johnson lists Pope’s several disabilities in *The Life of Pope*, by applying “excessive literary effort.”⁶² Samuel Johnson is one of the first readers who linked Alexander Pope’s work to his physical body⁶³. In his *The Life*, Johnson harshly gives a detailed description of Pope’s disabled body in order to link Pop’s ‘polished art’ to his abnormal body.⁶⁴

The Social (or Cultural) Model

Since the late 1960s, with the criticism of medical model, a new paradigm was introduced to the study of disability which was called the social model. Works of Vic

⁵⁷ Couser.

⁵⁸ Kristiansen et al., 2.

⁵⁹ Couser.

⁶⁰ Kristiansen et al., 2.

⁶¹ Kristiansen et al., 2.

⁶² Helen Deutsch, “The Author as Monster: The Case of Dr. Johnson.” in *“Defects”: Engendering the Modern Body*, (Ed.), by Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum, U of Michigan P, Ann Arbor 2000, 178.

⁶³ Deutsch, 178.

⁶⁴ Deutsch, 178.

Finkelstein, Colin Barnes and Mike Oliver gave academic credibility to the social model. According to this model disability is a social and cultural construct, like race and gender that must “not be addressed in the individual body but in the body politic, which may require rehabilitation in the form of legislation, modification of the physical environment, and so on, so as to ensure equality of access and opportunity.”⁶⁵ This model finds disability in society or culture in general, and “urges political and cultural remedies such as access and an end to discrimination.”⁶⁶ When obstacles – both physical disabling obstacles and also disabling attitudes based on prejudice - are removed, people with disabilities can enjoy independency and equality in society, and can have control over their lives. The definition of disability in the British social model in UPIAS document is as follows:

In our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society. To understand this it is necessary to grasp the distinction between the physical impairment and the social situation, called ‘disability’, of people with such impairment. Thus, we define impairment as lacking all or part of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body and disability as the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organization which takes little or no account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities.⁶⁷

That is, the way in which society is organized initiates disability, not a person’s impairment. In other words, disability can be explained best with regard to the dominant ideological hegemony of the society. The British social model comments upon the critical distinction between impairment and disability and that people with disability are an oppressed social group. According to this view, disability is a socio-political construction, and significantly is culturally produced. Accordingly, it tries to explore the ways of eliminating barriers that limit the lives of disabled people.

The Problems with the Medical and Social Models

As mentioned, in the medical model, disability is a defect or weakness in the body that medicine tries to fix or recompense it. The physical incongruity is only considered

⁶⁵ Couser.

⁶⁶ Couser.

⁶⁷ Michael Oliver, *Understanding Disability: From Theory to Practice*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire 1996, 22.

as a functional problem for the individual. The fact that it locates disability only within individual bodies and excludes society, has been debated among critics. This model enforces an authoritarian approach to solve the problem (i.e. cure) which offers justification for institutionalization and discrimination. The medical model considers the individual with a disability as sick and exempt from the normal responsibilities of society such as education, employment, etc. Hence medical doctors have been considered as the main authorities in the field who study what is wrong with the individuals, not what they need. This justifies the view that the disabled have a distinguishing problem that makes them dissimilar to normal people. As a result, people with disabilities are separated from the rest of society, becoming the victims of pity, fear, crime, etc. Therefore, the medical model does not suggest a realistic perception from the perspective of the disabled themselves and excludes them from the normal world. On the other hand, the social model detached the biological and social features of disability. What is problematic in this model according to Gregory Castle is that the “biological phenomenon is given over to authority of the medical gaze.”⁶⁸ The social model creates a “discursive category (disability), the social model apportioned a purely discursive responsibility to the state, but left the actual material disability (impairment) in the hands of biomedical establishment.”⁶⁹ In fact, it denies the relationship between disability and impairment. Therefore, in the social model, “impairment neither equals disability nor causes it.”⁷⁰ The somatic turn has allowed a progress in outside the restrictions of the social model and medical model by evoking the body in the social discussion and by interpreting the concept of disability in a less abstract way.⁷¹ Tom Shakespeare believes that that society is not the only reason of the challenges encountered by disabled people. He states that:

The social model so strongly disowns individual and medical approaches, that it risks implying that impairment is not a problem. Whereas other socio-political accounts of disability have developed the important insight that people with impairments are disabled by society as well as by their bodies, the social model suggests that people are disabled by society not by their bodies. Rather than simply opposing medicalization, it can be interpreted as rejecting medical prevention, rehabilitation, or cure of impairment [...] For individuals with static impairments, which do not degenerate or cause medical complications, it may be possible to

⁶⁸ Gregory Castle, *The Literary Theory Handbook*, John Wiley, Hoboken, NJ 2013, 291.

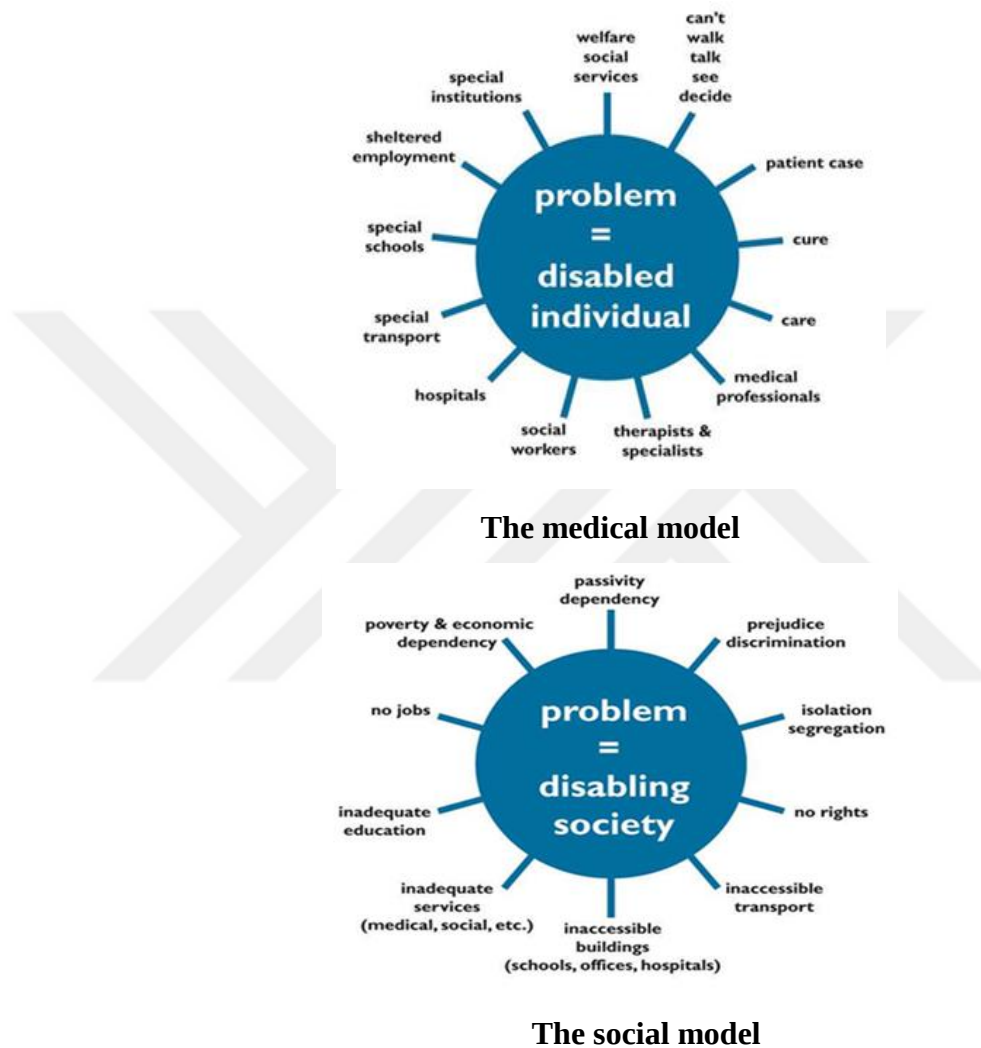
⁶⁹ Castle, 291.

⁷⁰ Castle, 291.

⁷¹ Castle, 293.

regard disability as entirely socially created. For those who have degenerative conditions that may cause premature death, or any condition that involves pain and discomfort, it is harder to ignore the negative aspects of impairment.⁷²

Table 2. Medical Model vs. Social Model⁷³



Source: *The handicap International*

That is, the emphasis of the social model on society seems to suggest that impairment does not exist. Although it aims to eliminate the barriers of the society for disabled people, it actually ignores the physical and psychological effects of disability on the person. Shakespeare and Watson refer to Paul Abberley's suggestion that a

⁷² Tom Shakespeare, "The Social Model of Disability", Davis, Lennard J. *The Disability Studies Reader*, Routledge, New York 2006, 200.

⁷³ The handicap International, Retrieved 10 December 2019, from <http://www.making-prsp-inclusive.org/en/6-disability/61-what-is-disability/611-the-four-models.htm>

barrier-free utopia, where all disabled people can be employed, is not possible since impairment makes it impossible for some to work.⁷⁴ They claim that social model as a modernist theory of disability cannot be a beneficial or possible goal since it offers “an overarching meta-analysis covering all dimensions of every disabled person’s experience”. For them, disability is a post-modern concept, since “it is so complex, so variable, so contingent, [and] so situated.”⁷⁵ Consequently, disability is not reduced to a singular identity: “it is a multiplicity, a plurality.”⁷⁶ As Shakespeare and Watson believe, an acceptable theory of disability would embrace “all the dimensions of disabled people’s experiences: bodily, psychological, cultural, social, political, rather than claiming that disability is either medical or social.”⁷⁷ It seems that the existence of a middle ground between the medical model and the social model is necessary to approach disability in a beneficial and comprehensive way.

The Biomedical Model and the Systems Theory in Medicine

The dominant model in medicine now is the ‘biomedical’ model, which is the use of the ‘classical factor-analytic approach’ that has described Western science for centuries in medical research and practice.⁷⁸ Critics believe that this dependency on science is “at the expense of the humanity of the patient”⁷⁹ since it does not take into account “the patient and his attributes as a person, [and] a human being”⁸⁰. However, the physician in his everyday practice, gathers the data and the testing plan on the basis of how the object of his study (the patient) behaves and what he tells about himself and reports his life, which is considered as a human relationship with both behavioral and psychological forms. The ‘reductionism’ and ‘mind-body dualism’ of the model needs that the data “must first be reduced to physico-chemical terms before they can have

⁷⁴ Tom Shakespeare and Nicholas Watson, “The Social Model of Disability: An Outdated Ideology?”, *Research in Social Science and Disability*, Volume 2, 2002, 9-28.

⁷⁵ Shakespeare and Watson, 19.

⁷⁶ Shakespeare and Watson, 19.

⁷⁷ Shakespeare and Watson, 19.

⁷⁸ Richard M. Frankel, Timothy E. Quill and Susan H. McDaniel, *The Biopsychosocial Approach: Past, Present, and Future*, U of Rochester, Rochester, NY 2003, 2.

⁷⁹ Frankel et al., 3.

⁸⁰ George L. Engel, *The Clinical Application of the Biopsychosocial Model*, *Am. J. Psychiatry*; 137 (5), 1980, 536.

meaning.”⁸¹ Therefore, “the very essence of medical practice perforce remains ‘art’ and beyond the reach of science”⁸²

According to Weiss, systems theory is based on “the commonsense observation that nature is ordered as a hierarchically arranged continuum, with its more complex, larger units, super- a part of higher systems: both a whole and a part (e.g. System cell is a component of systems tissue ordinate to the less complex, smaller units.”⁸³ In systems theory, each system is simultaneously and organ and person. Person and two-person are components of family and community).

Every system is influenced by its environment (nothing exists independently). According to this system, recognition of the patient by name, age, gender, profession, and residence classifies other systems of which he is a part, which at the same time are part of his environment. In medicine, the physician has to select one system level to focus (study), which is always a person, (i.e., a patient). However, the systems features of each part of this system (patient) must also be considered. The reductionism in the biomedical model has contributed to the common public view that medicine applies an objective (impersonal) method that deals with the understanding of the disease, not the patient.

Biopsychosocial Model in Medicine: A Paradigmatic Shift

Western culture for centuries, has divided science and art. In 1959, the philosopher C.P. Snow stated that “Literary intellectuals [are] at one pole – at the other scientists.... between the two a gulf of mutual incomprehension- sometimes ... hostility and dislike, but most of all a lack of understanding.”⁸⁴ In opposition to this dominant view in western philosophy, literary criticism, neuroscience, .., George Engel, an American physician, published a paper entitled “The Need for a New Medical Model: A Challenge for Biomedicine” in 1977 and suggested that actions at the biological, psychological, and social level are interconnected and that these interactions influence the process and results of medical care. His paper was as against the reductionism of the biomedical model. He developed much more widely how systems theory offers a

⁸¹ Frankel et al., 3.

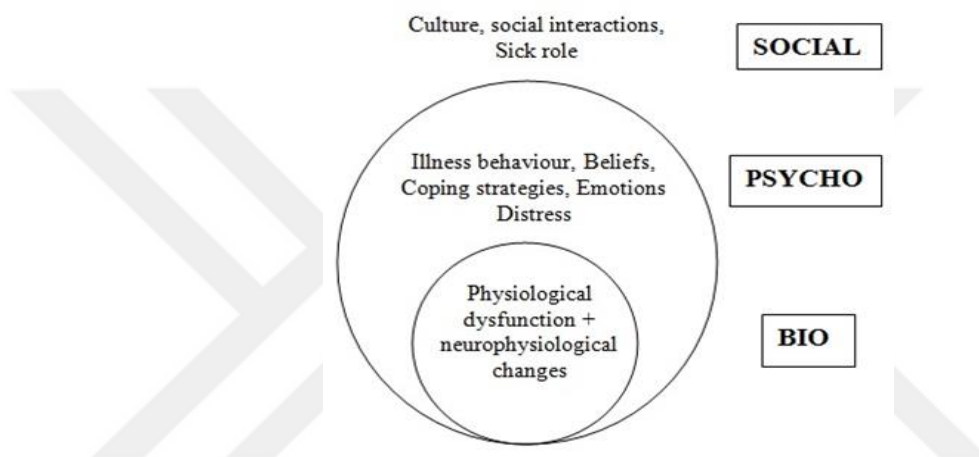
⁸² Frankel et al., 3.

⁸³ Frankel et al., 4.

⁸⁴ Frankel et al., 22.

suitable background for the biopsychosocial approach. It was “as a kind of addendum, on the General Systems Theory Perspective.”⁸⁵ As he argues, consistent with systems theory, all levels of organization are connected to each other in a hierarchal relationship and change in one causes change in the others.⁸⁶ In the field of medicine, systems theory offers a theoretical approach which is appropriate both for the suggested biopsychosocial perception of disease and for studying disease and also medical care as interconnected processes.⁸⁷

Table 3. Biopsychosocial Model



According to Engel, there are two hierarchies: the individual (person) is the top level of “the organismic hierarchy” and simultaneously the bottom element of “the social hierarchy”. He moves through both “organismic” and the “social” hierarchy in his nine diagrams that show multiple system level working for the patient. With the help of these diagrams, one can conceive how events or situations at system levels above patient (person), may influence him/her and lower level systems.⁸⁸ In medicine, the biopsychosocial model is constructed to consider the missing scopes of the biomedical model. As a “paradigmatic shift” the biopsychosocial perception implicates “an appreciation that disease and illness do not manifest themselves only in terms of pathophysiology”.⁸⁹ Disease may concurrently affect several different levels of

⁸⁵ Frankel et al., 220.

⁸⁶ Frankel et al., 220.

⁸⁷ Frankel et al., 220.

⁸⁸ Frankel et al., 22.

⁸⁹ Frankel et al., 23.

operative system, from cells to organs to person to family to society. Thus, BPS offers a comprehensive study of manifold levels of functioning, as well as the effect of the doctor-patient relationship. In BPS model, all aspects of care from diagnosis to treatment rest on “an appreciation of both linear and nonlinear processes associated with disease and illnesses.”⁹⁰

Engel familiarized the physicians with handling psychological material as a typical and essential part of medical practice. Before 1977, mental conditions were usually considered to be separate from the domain of most physicians. They were placed in the sphere of psychiatrists and psychologists who were following psychological dominant explanatory model that was under the influence of Freud, and also the behaviorists. Accordingly, the biological and psychological were divided from each other, by physician and by the model, even in the practice of medicine. For Engel it was “a great scientific advantage that the clinician is a participant observer in obtaining data from the communication of patients about their inner experience.”⁹¹

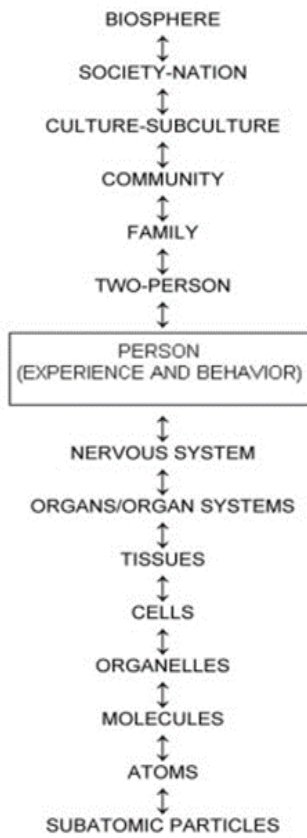
BPS model also embraces interactive and sociocultural issues in theorizing disease. Since “the presentation of symptoms such as pain varies by gender, race, and ethnic origin”,⁹² those doctors who consider the effects of culture on the appearance of symptoms are able to realize and treat the patients’ symptoms correctly. For instance, in the treatment of depression as a mental disorder, a physician who takes into account these associations and is able to manage the depression as a risk factor for chronic disease can be more effective than a physician who embraces a biomedical view.⁹³ Since Biopsychosocial approach offers the option of relating biological action with psychological and social procedures in an expressive way, a growing knowledge and medical literature has developed about the BPS model suggesting that it is connected to progressive biomedical, psychological, and social results. Thus far, in medicine, BPS model has underlined the significance of psychosocial scopes and humanism while increasing the scientific accurateness (the biomedical model).

⁹⁰ Frankel et al., 24.

⁹¹ Frankel et al., 227.

⁹² Frankel et al., 24.

⁹³ Frankel et al., 86.

Table 4. George Engel's hierarchy of natural systems**ENGEL'S SYSTEMS OF HIERARCHY
(LEVELS OF ORGANIZATION)**

CHAPTER ONE

A BIO-SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH TO DISABILITY IN LITERATURE

Each of the medical and social models of disability leaves some features of disability out, the medical model disregards the social features, and as an alternate, the social model rejects that disability has any connection with medicine. Whereas both models have been beneficial, since both of them overlook fundamental features of disability, both eventually cannot offer a precise picture of disability. Both models can be one-dimensional and make things seem clear cut. Indeed, each model does not have adequate regard for the other, and both models do not have adequate regard for the social aspects of psychological conditions. Disability can be fully comprehended as long as a social reality is imagined to exist, and likewise a significant attitude on the disabled person's psychological world. In fact, a more comprehensive model can be placed somewhere between the social and medical models by adding psychological aspects in a way that it can reflect disabled people accurately. A model that can take the best from the two models and come to a more precise and accurate representation of disability.

As mentioned, the BPS model has effective clarifying and curative power for numerous medical disorders as it grows the sphere of contributing aspects and also treatment possibilities beyond the limits of the biological. Accordingly, in studying disability, we can apply a BPS model that considers contributions from biological, psychological, and social domains, and tries to understand the relative effect of each, along with the effect of their relations upon one another. We can conclude that disability, is systematically biopsychosocial in nature and BPS model can give the means by which we can understand and study this truth, and in so doing understand and recognize people with disabilities as essential contributing participants of society.

In disability studies, system's thinking seems to be more necessary than ever before. BPS model can comprise the biological as well as psychological diversity of the disabled subject in the framework of fluid relational systems (in the family and further numerous forms of other relationships inside and outside the systems). Levels of analysis in the bio-psycho-sociocultural approach to disability would be as follows:

a) Biological Factors: The information including biological processes and conditions (e.g. genetics and heredity, physiology, illnesses and disorders, trauma, etc.) that connect the system level of “person behavior” to biological functioning of the disabled person, are studied.

b) Psychological Factors: The disabled person’s behavior and emotional reactivity are observed and studied. Behavioral observations in infancy can be followed developmentally into the subject’s adulthood. (In systems relations, individual experience and bodily performance are linked).

c) Sociocultural Factors: Relationship between the subject and the environment (the interpersonal relationships) can be studied as a behavioral variable at the two-person system level.

1.1. PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES RELEVANT TO BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIOCULTURAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

1.1.1. Freud, Lacan and Kristeva: Encounter between Disabled and Nondisabled

Psychoanalysis can best study the disabled bodies. Freud’s psychic realm and Lacan’s Imaginary order, through concepts of castration and the phallus and Kristeva’s explanation of the encounter between disabled and nondisabled bodies can provide a theoretical lens through which we can analyze the representation of disability in literary texts.

Freud has written very little about disability separately, however some of his concepts can be useful in understanding disability. His theory of psychosomatic illness seems to be very essential in the study of disability. In this theory, “a psychopathological flaw is given corporeal form as a symptom, thereby establishing the notion that people succumb to disease or disability because they feel guilty about past actions or repressed desires.”⁹⁴ Freud’s initial understanding of the psychical structure of the mind (the Id, the Ego, and the Super Ego) provides a plan of opposing tensions in the mind where the burdens of the social world are in conflict with libido and conscience to define the mental and physical health of the person. He analyzes the

⁹⁴ Albrecht L. Gary, *Encyclopedia of Disability*, Sage Publications Thousand Oaks, CA 2006, 743.

drives that “represent the physical demands of the psyche”⁹⁵ and explain the two opposing drives: “eros” and “destructive (death)” drive.⁹⁶ At the core of these drives there is a desire to exploit pleasure and diminish unpleasure, on the base of which Freud describes narcissism (the love of self). It is “the libidinal correlative of the egoism of the self-preservation instinct, an element of which is rightly attributed to every living creature.”⁹⁷ The subject creates an ‘ideal ego’ within himself and his narcissism is transferred onto this new ideal ego which is obsessed with perfection.⁹⁸ As the essential concept of Oedipus complex, Freud introduces ‘castration anxiety,’ (literal and symbolic castration) as the crucial psychic event that develops a person’s primary narcissism, which is the essential concept of the Oedipus complex. The child realizes that he cannot struggle with the power of the father. Likewise, confronting the disabled body, the abled-body returns to the moment of loss to understand the disabled body and questions its own weakness. Uneasiness for disabled-bodies is inevitable when the abled-body realizes his/her potentiality to become disabled and at the same time rejoices his/her present wholeness. As Preston argues, “the confrontation with disability operates in the same way; whereas the female body stands as evidence that castration is possible, the disabled body sits as proof of bodily fragility, acting not just as declaration that breakage can occur but also as threat that it may occur.”⁹⁹

Freud ties castration phantasies to other activities too, for instance, “...the threatened object can be displaced (the blinding of Oedipus, extraction of teeth, etc.); the act may be distorted or replaced by other types of attack upon the wholeness of the body (accidents, syphilis, surgical operations) or even of the mind (madness as the result of masturbation).”¹⁰⁰ As seen, there is a connection between impairment (as a threat to wholeness) and castration. In the words of Laplanche and Pontails, between

⁹⁵ Sigmund Freud, “An Outline of Psychoanalysis” *The Penguin Freud Reader*, (Ed.), by Adam Phillips, Penguin, London 2006, 4.

⁹⁶ Freud, 5.

⁹⁷ Sigmund Freud, “On the Introduction of Narcissism”, In *The Penguin Freud Reader*, (Ed.), by Adam Phillips, Penguin, London 2006, 358.

⁹⁸ Joseph Sandler, Ethel Person and Peter Fonagy, *Freud’s “On Narcissism”: An Introduction*, Yale U Press, New Haven 1991, 380.

⁹⁹ Jeffrey M. Preston, *Fantasizing Disability: Representation of loss and limitation in Popular Television and Film*, The University of Western Ontario, 2014, 30.

¹⁰⁰ Preston, 30.

“the primacy of the phallus and the narcissistic wound”.¹⁰¹ In short, disability provokes “the same fears and anxieties as being castrated”.¹⁰² To explain this anxiety one can refer to Freud’s “the uncanny” which is a kind of anxiety that is not a normal fear, but rather a menacing uneasiness. He defines it as “species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar”.¹⁰³ It was ‘once well known’, ‘repressed’ or ‘surmounted’ desires returned back from the unconscious. “The uncanny element in the recurrence of the same thing can be derived from infantile psychology....In the unconscious mind we can recognize the dominance of a compulsion to repeat, which proceeds from instinctual impulses. This compulsion probably depends on the essential nature of the drives themselves....”¹⁰⁴ He connects the uncanny with castration anxiety and explains that a “particularly strong and obscure emotion is aroused by the threat of losing the sexual organ, and that it is this emotion that first gives such resonance to the idea of losing other organs”.¹⁰⁵ Hence, encountering disability is an uncanny experience for the abled-bodies which was repressed once at childhood.

Lacan later picks up the concept of the ideal ego and develops the concept of “ideal I” and the moment of its creation which occurs in “the mirror stage”.¹⁰⁶ In the mirror stage the subject tries to unify its fragmented body into a whole which is evidently unachievable. Lacan proposes that “we actively repress our awareness of our own vulnerability because the anxiety threatens our attempt to attain this ideal I, the gestalt of mastery and supremacy over the flesh.”¹⁰⁷ Indeed, encounters with disability can threaten this ‘ideal I’ and can awaken the unconscious anxiety and remind the abled body of its weakness. Thus, disability becomes “symbolically equivalent of this early helplessness and therefore represents our radical human vulnerability, the impossibility

¹⁰¹ Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis. *The Language of Psychoanalysis*. Karnac Books, London 2006, 57.

¹⁰² Preston, 30.

¹⁰³ Sigmund Freud, “The Uncanny”, (Trans.), by David McLintock, Penguin Books, London 2003, [1919], 124.

¹⁰⁴ Freud, 145.

¹⁰⁵ Freud, 140.

¹⁰⁶ Jacques Lacan, “Seminar VIII: Transference”, 10th session, 1 February 1961, 12, Retrieved 14 June 2018, from <http://users.clas.ufl.edu/burt/Lacan%20Seminars%20pdfs/THE-SEMINAR-OF-JACQUES-LACAN-VIII-Draft-21.pdf>

¹⁰⁷ Preston, 27.

of the dream of fully realizing a narcissistic wholeness”.¹⁰⁸ This causes the construction of disabled characters, “marking them as childlike and naïve, embodying the very fear of the normate producer”.¹⁰⁹ Anxiety of bodily harm (castration) is considered as an important part of the anxieties that threaten the bodily wholeness. To Lacan castration is “the symbolic lack of an imaginary object”.¹¹⁰ It is anything that stops us from identifying with the phallus. Disability can remind the abled subject of ‘the object petit a’ that presents a symbolic embodiment of the lack that must be attributed to the Other, and consequently fill the gap in the symbolic order. Thus, disability can be considered as a symbolic substitute for castration that explains the construction of disabled bodies as deficient.

As Davis argues, in Lacanian terms, the realm of the Real is “where the fragmented body is found because it is the body that precedes the ruse of identity and wholeness”.¹¹¹ Thus, the society’s norms are based on illusion in which the separations “whole/incomplete”, and “able/disabled” conceal the fantasized whole being which is indeed “a developmental fiction”.¹¹²

Freud and Lacan’s work on narcissism and castration prepare us with a framework to understand Kristeva’s claim that “the disabled body does violence upon the normate subject, causing a narcissistic identity wound”.¹¹³ She primarily studies the effect of disability on non-disabled bodies. Encounter with disability (both the real and potential loss) that reminds the phallic loss and castration, causes anxiety. Kristeva pinpoints this encounter as resulting in a “narcissistic identity wound”¹¹⁴ for the non-disabled body. As Preston explains, the source of this wounding is “the realization that the normate’s subject position—i.e. the condition of being ‘non-disabled’—is a fiction and that their bodies are susceptible to the same type of injuries and degeneration”.¹¹⁵ According to Kristeva, the disabled body causes “a threat of physical or psychological death, fear of collapse, and, beyond that, the anxiety of seeing the very borders of the human species

¹⁰⁸ Preston, 27.

¹⁰⁹ Preston, 27.

¹¹⁰ Lorenzo Chiesa, *Subjectivity and Otherness: A Philosophical Reading of Lacan*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA 2007. 80.

¹¹¹ Lenard J. Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*, Verso, London 1995, 141.

¹¹² Joanne Morra and Marquard Smith. *Visual Culture: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*, Routledge, London 2006. 346.

¹¹³ Preston, 33.

¹¹⁴ Julia Kristeva, *Hatred and Forgiveness*, Columbia University Press, New York 2010, 29.

¹¹⁵ Preston, 22.

explode”.¹¹⁶ Preston interprets this representations “as a defensive fantasy that has been generated to neutralize these fears, to effectively repress the castration anxiety that disability opens. The result is disavowal, a rejection of disability”¹¹⁷ and discrimination. Kristeva considers this condition as capable of leading the society to the essential values of “proximity and solidarity” and also to “revitalize the age old feminine capacity to care for psychical and physical life, making it a political act, a political philosophy”.¹¹⁸ Abled-bodies repress the fact that they are vulnerable to different disease and disabilities and this causes an anxiety that leads to collision with disabled bodies. Abled-bodies unconsciously keep themselves separate and distinct from the disabled bodies. This denies the fact the disabled bodies (as the others) are reflections of them. Nonetheless Kristeva believes this reveals the idea that “we are all disabled”.¹¹⁹

Furthermore, Kristeva’s concept of Abjection which is often used to define the conditions of marginalized groups, can be applied to describe the condition of disabled people as well. The term ‘abject’, binary in nature, is a form of uncanny in conception. There is an absolute confusion and connection between Kristeva’s ‘abject’ and Freud’s ‘the uncanny’ in the sense that both are recognized frightening but crucially important and productive. Kristeva argues that abjection is a psychic defense against a massive and life threatening attack of uncanniness. In “Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection”, she defines the abject as “the not-I”; that causes disgust for some certain foods, dead body, and even persons whom one connects with death.¹²⁰ She develops this definition of the abject by arguing that the significance of abjection lies in its role as an operation through which we continually distinguish ourselves as individuals. According to this logic, one’s identity depends on what he precisely is not. Kristeva thus introduces a dynamism into the concept of identity—a dynamism that depends on a subject’s ability to recognize and reject the abject—that gets articulated and rearticulated through the self’s interaction with an abject Other. Thus, Abjection, as Kristeva defines is “one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate

¹¹⁶ Kristeva, 29.

¹¹⁷ Preston. 22.

¹¹⁸ Kristeva, 33-34.

¹¹⁹ Kristeva, 44.

¹²⁰ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, (Trans.), by Leon S. Roudiez, Columbia UP, New York 1982, 2.

from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable”.¹²¹

This can be seen in the way abled bodies look at disabled bodies. Disabled body, by being similar to the abled body and at the same time different from it, is a body by whom the abject exists, and the abled body’s reaction to this abjection is ignoring or rejecting it. This rejection, as Frances puts, reveals through the “refusal to make eye contact”¹²² or recognize and accept the existence of the disabled body.

1.2. SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORIES RELEVANT TO BIO-PSYCHOSOCIOCULTURAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

1.2.1. Michel Foucault’s “Biopolitics”, “Technologies of Normalization” and “Docile Bodies”

Michel Foucault’s biopolitics and ‘normalization techniques’ of Foucault has proved principally significant in exploring new paths of development in the field of disability studies. Abram Anders gives two reasons for the relevance of Foucault’s work to contemporary disability studies. First, his “theorization of the body as a thoroughly and inexorably politicized space”, since he takes on to “expose a body totally imprinted by history and by the process of history’s destruction of the body”.¹²³ Second is Foucault’s theorization of the modern social fields regarding “bio-politics” in *The History of Sexuality*.¹²⁴ He coined the term ‘biopower’ to discuss what he observed as the principal system of social control in modern Western society.

Foucault uses ‘biopolitics’ to define the means by which sovereignty was substituted with a concern about the health of populations. The appearance of the biopolitics localizes power in systems of knowledge and social tools. This new dynamic

¹²¹ Kristeva, 1.

¹²² Jane Frances, “Damaged or Unusual Bodies: Staring, or Seeing and Feeling”, *Journal of Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*, 9(4), 2014, 200. Retrived, 14 June 2018, from https://www.academia.edu/11756777/Body_Movement_and_Dance_in_Psychotherapy_An_International_Journal_for_Theory_Research_and_Practice_Damaged_or_unusual_bodies_Staring_or_seeing_and_feeling

¹²³ Abram Anders, “Foucault and ‘the Right to Life’: From Technologies of Normalization to Societies of Control”, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 33(3), 23 May 2013, Retrived, 13 June 2018, from <https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/3340/3268>

¹²⁴ Anders.

power functions at the biological and organic level and is essential in the creation of a capitalist society which depends on the body to deliver labor power. In Jeffrey Nealon's words, "societies of control extend and intensify the tactics of discipline and biopower by linking training and surveillance to ever-more-minute realms of everyday life, they also give birth to a whole new form".¹²⁵ Bio-power functions on the bodies and controls them by self-disciplinary practices they adopt. It applies a system to form a scientific knowledge which produces a norm and normality discourse. Willingly individuals regulate themselves by voluntarily conforming to these norms through self-disciplinary practices of the body.

Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* claims that the new systematic medicine (started in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries) assumed a normalizing gaze of the body, and defined new borders of the 'normal' and the 'abnormal'. As he states, medicine demanded "to ensure the physical vigour and the moral cleanliness of the social body; it promised to eliminate defective individuals, degenerate and bastardized populations. In the name of biological and historical urgency, it justified the racism of the state...It grounded them in 'truth'".¹²⁶ This normalizing gaze of medicine became a means of measuring the bodily and mental dimensions beside homogenous norms. In Foucault's view the norm plays a fundamental role in the appearance, legitimation, production, and spread of modern power. Techniques of normalization bring individual bodies and populations into conformity with specific social norms. Bio-power is the planned effort of current forms of power/knowledge to comprehensively manage the life problems of the individuals and populations.

In 'The Subject and Power'(1982), Foucault presented the term 'dividing practices' to denote types of management that "combine a scientific discourse with practices of segregation and social exclusion in order to categorize, classify, distribute and manipulate subjects who are initially drawn from a rather undifferentiated mass of people".¹²⁷ Technologies of normalization enable the systematic formation, identification, classification, and control of social anomalies by which some subjects can be divided from others. For Rosemarie Garland Thomson, "pathologizing cultural

¹²⁵ Jeffrey T Nealon, *Foucault Beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications Since 1984*, Stanford UP, Stanford, CA 2008, 68.

¹²⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Pantheon, New York 1977, 54.

¹²⁷ Lennard J. Davis, *The Disability Studies Reader*. Routledge, New York 2006, 186.

and corporeal others” started with the rationality of the Enlightenment and “if science justifies dominant power relations, it also legitimates the dominant body, which is both the maker of cultural power and the ticket of admission into that power”.¹²⁸ Scientists in the 19th century applied hierarchical physical classifications by replacing “God’s great chain of being into Darwin’s and creating the idea of the norm, what Foucault calls ‘the new law of modern society’”¹²⁹. Thus, Foucault’s theory of the 18th century shift to a modern, rational perception of the body and also the conception of the norm, typify bodies with differences (disabilities) as deviant. Accordingly, the “normal/abnormal dichotomy of the modern mind limits the explanation of differences to pathology”.¹³⁰ The discourse of power produces new forms of knowledge which are not objective. This produced knowledge affects and controls individual’s behavior and bodies: “... power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations”.¹³¹ Hence, power produces knowledge, and creates a desire to adapt to the norms that this knowledge produces and individuals desire to conform to these norms by self-surveillance.

As Foucault defines, biopower “is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word “subject”: subject to someone else by control and dependence and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge”.¹³² The members of the society first are inculcated into a set of practices and now have to actually actively participate.¹³³ The body is a target of power and is established by power relations (internalized self-control power) that want it to be submissive and docile. The body becomes inert and the mind becomes the target and object of disciplinary power.¹³⁴

Docile or disciplined body refers to the one “as malleable, as an unfinished entity that can be sculpted, molded, altered and transformed”.¹³⁵ As Foucault asserts docile

¹²⁸ Garland-Thomson, 77-78.

¹²⁹ Garland-Thomson, 78.

¹³⁰ Garland-Thomson, 114.

¹³¹ Foucault, 27.

¹³² Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, P. Rabinow (Ed.), *Power –Essential Works of Foucault Vol. III*, by The New Press, New York 1997, 331.

¹³³ Lisa Blackman, *The Body: The Key Concepts*, Berg, Oxford 2008, 25.

¹³⁴ Blackman, 30.

¹³⁵ Blackman, 134.

body – created in the modern age- is a body “that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved”.¹³⁶ Concealed disciplinary practices (with the aim of naturalization) allow subjects to act so as to constrain them. The “great complex idea of normality” becomes “the means through which to identify subjects and make them identify themselves in ways that make them governable”.¹³⁷ For Foucault, with the construction of ‘docile bodies’ (submissive, dominated, and productive individuals) political order can be kept. The state controls and disciplines all aspects of life through its “many institutions” and creates bodies adapted to be ruled and works “to discipline the body, optimize its capabilities, extort its forces, increase its usefulness and docility, and integrate it into systems of efficient and economic controls.”¹³⁸ Thus, docility is attained through the actions of discipline as a way of monitoring the positions and actions of the body.

As discussed, Foucault theorizes the body as an inevitably politicized space. His concepts of biopower, technologies of normalization and docile body, can be studied in detail as a protest against the system of power/knowledge (societies of control) that make disability a socially and politically marginalized identity.

1.2.2. Giorgio Agamben’s “homo sacer” and “states of exception”

Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben’s theory could be applied to study the social exclusion of disabled people. As discussed earlier, Foucauldian approaches are useful to understand the technologies of power which separate the normal from the abnormal. As a student of Foucault, Agamben focuses on the suspension of law and construction of states of exceptions. As the normalcy/deviance dichotomy is central in Foucauldian analyses, the Sovereign/homo sacer dichotomy has a central place for Agamben. He utilizes homo sacer to explain the crucial role of the bare life in modern politics. Moreover, his concept of “exception,” has been essential in literary /cultural studies, philosophy and political science.

¹³⁶ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 136.

¹³⁷ Shelley Tremain, *Foucault and the Government of Disability*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 2005, 6.

¹³⁸ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction*, (trans.), by Robert Hurley, Vintage. New York 1980, 139.

Homo sacer, which is the Latin word for “the sacred man” or “the accursed man” in Roman law, is a person expelled from the society that could be killed by anyone, but not possibly sacrificed in a religious ritual.¹³⁹ Agamben discusses the nature of sovereign power and construction of bare life and uses homo sacer to study politics and global conflicts. He describes homo sacer as somebody whose “entire existence is reduced to a bare life stripped of every right by virtue of the fact that anyone can kill him without committing homicide.”¹⁴⁰ Actually, homo sacer “is not simply outside the law and indifferent to it, but who has instead been abandoned by the law.”¹⁴¹ Homo sacer is “exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable.”¹⁴² This state signifies a state of exception in which homo sacer is “bare life, *zoē*, stripped of political rights and located outside the polis (city).”¹⁴³ Thus, homo sacer has biological life but is abandoned politically. This abandonment separates political beings (citizens, *bios*) from bare life (biological bodies, *zoē*) and puts the biological life “within the realm of power.”¹⁴⁴ The “spatial and psychic zones of exception”¹⁴⁵ are the apparent examples of this abandonment. Agamben determines that although the procedures of Germany were dangerous, the idea of “the camp” is the essential paradigm of western society in biopolitics.¹⁴⁶

Donna Reeve in “Bipolitics and bare life: Does the impaired body provide contemporary examples of homo sacer?” uses Agamben’s homo sacer figure on a less broad way to specify ideas about its applicability for some contemporary cases of disability.¹⁴⁷ For her the prenatal diagnosis and selective abortion are parts of a normative system of what is considered as a livable life, and a givable death. She gives the example of normal fetuses which the law protects after the twenty fourth week and impaired fetuses (which creates a state of exception) that can be killed on vague justifications. She adds that the states of exception involve institutional care and

¹³⁹ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, (trans.), by Heller-Roazen, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA 1998, 72.

¹⁴⁰ Agamben, 183.

¹⁴¹ Kristiansen, 9.

¹⁴² Agamben, 28.

¹⁴³ Kristiansen, 204.

¹⁴⁴ Kristiansen, 204.

¹⁴⁵ Kristiansen, 204.

¹⁴⁶ Kristiansen, 188.

¹⁴⁷ Donna Reeve, “Bipolitics and Bare Life: Does the Impaired Body Provide Contemporary Examples of Homo Sacer?” In *Arguing About Disability: Philosophical Perspectives*, (Eds.), by Kristjana Kristiansen, Simo Vehmas and Tom Shakespeare, Routledge, London 2009, 203-14.

prescribed psychiatric hospitalization where disabled people's rights is denied. Like terrorists, they are often perceived as dangerous to the society. In view of that, homo sacer can be considered as a metaphor for the disabled figure, towards whom the professionals and people act as sovereign.¹⁴⁸ Reeve uses Agamben's concept of "psychic state of exception" to explore the ways in which others act as sovereign towards the disabled individual. She explores the issue of prescribed psychiatric hospitalization of disabled people to show that Agamben's concepts of states of exception have relevance to the experience of people with disabilities in the society. As she argues, due to longer life expectancies in Western societies more and more people would be capable of being disabled. As uncertainty and difference of the post-structural era are essential concerns in modern social theory of the body, "taken-for-granted non-impaired body"¹⁴⁹ would be a mistake.

1.2.3. Erving Goffman's notion of 'Stigma' and 'spoiled identity'

Sociologist Erving Goffman's stigma theory, can be applied to study the relationship between social views and the self-concepts of disabled people. He directly addresses disability and otherness in his 1963 analysis: "Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity." For Goffman, a person with disability would be "reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one."¹⁵⁰ Accordingly, stigmatization would cause negative self-definitions. Thus, it is not the impairment that stands for the difference but rather it is the interaction between that person with impairment and others who evaluate that impairment in a negative way. As follows, disabled individuals who are devalued and rejected, are labeled as stigmatized and the normal who dehumanize and depersonalize them, as stigmatizers.

Social stigma can arise from opinion and judgment of several attributes from race, gender, wealth to physical and social disabilities. These attributes are different according to geopolitical and sociopolitical contexts of each society. Similar to feminist theory, stigma theory can provide a terminology to place disability in social contexts. As Garland-Thomson explains, terms like 'otherness' or 'alterity' which abound in

¹⁴⁸ Reeve, 203-14.

¹⁴⁹ Reeve, 214.

¹⁵⁰ Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Prentice Hall, 1963, 3.

literary criticism, have limits to describe marginalized identities since they are nouns. However, “the term stigma taken by Goffman from the Greek practice of branding or making slaves and criminals and from Christian notions about the wounds of saints, can take many grammatical forms to match the component stands of a complex social process.”¹⁵¹ Goffman defines stigma as “an attribute, behavior, or reputation which is socially discrediting in a particular way: it causes an individual to be mentally classified by others in an undesirable, rejected stereotype rather than in an accepted, normal one.”¹⁵² He describes stigma as a sort of gap between ‘virtual social identity’ and ‘actual social identity’:

Society establishes the means of categorizing persons and the complement of attributes felt to be ordinary and natural for members of each of these categories. [...] When a stranger comes into our presence, then, first appearances are likely to enable us to anticipate his category and attributes, his “social identity” [...] We lean on these anticipations that we have, transforming them into normative expectations, into righteously presented demands. [...] It is [when an active question arises as to whether these demands will be filled] that we are likely to realize that all along we had been making certain assumptions as to what the individual before us ought to be. [These assumed demands and the character we impute to the individual will be called] virtual social identity. The category and attributes he could in fact be proved to possess will be called his actual social identity.¹⁵³

As mentioned, Goffman defines stigma as the phenomenon by which an individual with an attribute (which gives him/her an actual social identity) that is disgraced by his/her society, is excluded because of that attribute. Then he categorizes three different forms of social stigma: 1. Stigmas of physical or social disability (such as obesity), deformity (such as scars), or anomaly 2. Stigmas of deviations in individual behaviors such as addiction, dishonesty, mental disorders, etc. 3. “Tribal Stigmas” of race, nationality, religion, ethnicity or gender.¹⁵⁴ He also divides the individual’s relation to a stigma into two groups: 1. “the own” which are those who share his stigma by virtue of this defined and define themselves as his own kind” 2. “the wise” who are “normal but whose special situation has made them intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic with it, and who find themselves accorded a measure of acceptance, a measure of courtesy membership in the clan.”¹⁵⁵ Goffman

¹⁵¹ Garland-Thomson, 30.

¹⁵² Goffman, 2.

¹⁵³ Goffman, 2.

¹⁵⁴ Goffman, 4.

¹⁵⁵ Goffman, 28.

argues that stigma not only affects the experiences of the bearer of the negative difference (the own), it also affects close family members and people around (the wise).¹⁵⁶

Stigma theory, as Garland-Thomson states, can replace “the problem of disability from the body of the disabled person to the social framing of that body.”¹⁵⁷ As stigma and stigmatization describe the “distinctions among people, their physical traits, what is done to them, who does it, and what it means,”¹⁵⁸ it can be a proper approach to study the conditions of people who are considered as abnormal by society and are continuously struggling to adjust their social identities. It can analyze disabled peoples’ feelings about themselves and their interactions with the normal and the strategies that they use to cope with the rejection of the normal and the images of themselves that they project to the normal (others).

1.2.4. Mary Douglas’s Concept of “Dirt”

Mary Douglas’ “dirt” concept can study the ways in which society responds to disability as an anomalous cultural category. Douglas in *Purity and Danger* explores the meaning of ‘dirt’ in different contexts. Through readings of several rituals and rites, religion, and standards of living, Douglas concludes that anything which is considered out of place is regarded as dirt. In this way, she challenges Western ideas of dirt and indicates that social history and the context is important in defining what is considered as dirt. She tracks Lord Chesterfield’s description of dirt as “matter out of place”¹⁵⁹; for example, shoes are considered dirty if you put them on the table. As she declares:

Dirt then is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements. This idea of dirt takes us straight into the field of symbolism and promises a link-up with more obviously symbolic systems of purity.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Goffman, 28.

¹⁵⁷ Garland-Thomson, 32.

¹⁵⁸ Garland-Thomson, 31.

¹⁵⁹ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Routledge, 1984, 36.

¹⁶⁰ Douglas, 36-37.

Thus, anything that escapes categorization, can disrupt our sense of order, and become dangerous, polluting and taboo.¹⁶¹ Julia Kristeva mentions the influence of Douglas's fundamental work in elaborating her theory of abjection.¹⁶² Commenting on Douglas's concept, Sibley says that "...the idea of dirt [is] as a signifier of imperfection and inferiority, the reference point being the white, often male, physically and mentally able person."¹⁶³ Subsequently, Douglas's model can be vividly applied to individuals with disabilities as they turn out to be outcasts that society needs ritualistic purifications performed on them.

The notion of "dirt" extends beyond physical matter and encompasses social practices and behaviors as well. It encompasses any actions that defy cultural norms and values, encompassing both physical and non-physical aspects. This can encompass actions such as transgressing social norms, breaching moral codes, or indulging in taboo behaviors. Furthermore, apart from establishing the boundaries of cleanliness, the concept of dirt also serves to uphold social norms and values. Society uses the concept of "dirt" to stigmatize behaviors and bodily conditions, enforcing moral codes and regulating behavior. In the context of disability, this concept helps analyze how societies construct ideas of normalcy and deviance. Disabilities are often considered "dirty" as they deviate from social norms that results in stigmatization and exclusion. Understanding these social perceptions of dirt and purity enables challenging harmful attitudes towards disability.

This approach can also be extended to other forms of marginalization and, including race, gender, and sexual orientation. Garland-Thomson similarly connects disability to the metaphor of dirt, noting that disabilities effectively function as social dirt. She mentions Mary Douglas's five categories of society's respond to disability as: "dichotomization", "elimination", "segregation", "labeling it dangerous", and "incorporating the category into ritual"¹⁶⁴. She states that "imagining anomaly and the grotesque as agents capable of reconstituting cultural discourses suggests the possibility of interpreting both dirt and disability not as discomforting abnormalities or intolerable

¹⁶¹ Douglas, 56-57.

¹⁶² Kristeva, 65-7.

¹⁶³ David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West*, London: New York 1995, 14.

¹⁶⁴ Garland-Thomson, 38.

ambiguities, but rather as the entitled bearers of a fresh view of reality.¹⁶⁵” Thus, Mary Douglas’s work can be really helpful in understanding the prejudice against abnormality (difference) and hostility against the disabled body in the Western culture and society.

As seen, the present chapter provided an introductory exploration into the application of psychoanalytical theories, including those of Freud, Lacan, and Kristeva, alongside sociocultural theories put forth by Foucault, Agamben, Goffman, and Douglas, to examine disability from a comprehensive biopsychosocial perspective. By drawing upon these diverse theoretical frameworks, we can gain a multidimensional understanding of disability that transcends mere medical perspectives. This integrated approach stresses the interplay between biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors in shaping social constructions of disability. It sets the stage for subsequent chapters to delve deeper into these theories and their implications for redefining disability and fostering a more fair society. Through the lens of these theoretical perspectives, this study will try to embark on a journey toward transformative insights and a broader appreciation of the diverse lived experiences of disabled individuals.

¹⁶⁵ Garland-Thomson, 38.

CHAPTER TWO

MEDICAL APPROACH TO DISABILITY IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S *LORD OF THE FLIES* AND DORIS LESSING'S *THE FIFTH CHILD AND BEN, IN THE WORLD*

As biomedical view in medical model of disability associates a disability diagnosis to a person's body/mind, it assumes that this disability may decrease the person's quality of life and therefore aims at reducing or correcting it with medical interference. This chapter is going to study the disabilities of the characters in William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* and Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child* and *Ben, in the World* from a (bio) medical perspective. It is important to note that medical (clinical) views are diverse and involve individualized approaches to collect information. In this chapter medical (clinical) diagnoses needs to be done so that the multidisciplinary method applied in this study can explain the biopsychosocial foundations of the characters' disabilities and their functioning. Accordingly, in *Lord of the flies*, Piggy will be studied for his three major disabling impairments which are asthma, obesity and shortsightedness, and Simon for his epilepsy. In *The Fifth Child* and its sequel, *Ben, in the World*, Ben will be studied for his intellectual disability (ADS).

2.1. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DISABILITIES

2.1.1. Asthma

There is no comprehensively approved definition of asthma. It generally refers to "inflammation in the lungs, increased responsiveness of the airways, and reversibility of the airflow obstruction"¹⁶⁶. This airflow obstruction causes the common symptoms of shortness of breath. In epidemiological studies, the future risk of asthma has been proved to rely on factors before or shortly after birth.¹⁶⁷ It contains a variety of disorders that show different clinical and pathological characteristics. A clinical diagnosis of asthma usually relies on a mixture of history of typical symptoms such as "cough,

¹⁶⁶ John Rees and Dipak Kanabar. *ABC of Asthma*, Malden, Mass, BMJ Books/Blackwell Pub, 2006, 1.

¹⁶⁷ Rees and Kanabar, 2.

wheeze, dyspnea, and chest tightness”¹⁶⁸ . The symptoms are different from person to person, and they might also differ over time. According to the International Consensus Report on the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma:

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the airway in which many cells play a role, in particular mast cells, eosinophils, and T lymphocytes. In susceptible individuals this inflammation causes recurrent episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and cough particularly at night and or in the early morning. These symptoms are usually associated with widespread but variable airflow limitation that is at least partly reversible either spontaneously or with treatment. The inflammation also causes an associated increase in airway responsiveness to a variety of stimuli.¹⁶⁹

More than 50% of asthma cases are seen before the age of 10 and depending on the severity of the illness, it can lead to more absences from school which in turn effects educational achievement of children even those with above average intelligence.¹⁷⁰ There is also a male (2:1) preponderance of asthma in young children that change to a female preponderance by maturity.¹⁷¹

Asthma may develop from a combination of genetic factors and early-life exposure to “allergic stimuli” and pollutants that amplify a “Th2 immune response”¹⁷². Cycles of chronic inflammation that cause exacerbations can be initiated by allergens, viruses, pollutants, diet, and stress.¹⁷³ An “asthma gene” has not been discovered but studies have shown hereditary factors as causes of asthma.¹⁷⁴ According to the current view asthma is possibly “caused by a complex interaction between a ‘susceptible’ individual and certain environmental conditions”¹⁷⁵. The complex relationship between heredity and environmental factors is not completely understood and it is under research. In general, “an awareness of breathing, an uncomfortable feeling of breathing, chest pressure or discomfort, wheezing or noisy breathing, labored breathing, cough, mucus production, and breathlessness with exertion”¹⁷⁶ and “waking from sleep with

¹⁶⁸ Rees and Kanabar, 46.

¹⁶⁹ Rees and Kanabar, 46.

¹⁷⁰ Rees and Kanabar, 47.

¹⁷¹ Claudia S. Plottel, *100 Questions & Answers about Asthma*. Boston, Jones and Bartlett, 2005, 147.

¹⁷² Rees and Kanabar, 48.

¹⁷³ Plottel, 48.

¹⁷⁴ Plottel, 9.

¹⁷⁵ Plottel, 11.

¹⁷⁶ Plottel, 11.

uncomfortable breathing or wheezing”¹⁷⁷ are the most common symptoms seen in asthmatic individuals.

2.1.2. Obesity

There are a lot of definitions for obesity, but in medical terms obesity is an excess of body adipose or fat tissue that is allied by health problems.¹⁷⁸ The definition of obesity might seem simple but issues concerning obesity are complex. It can cause several disease and also physical, social and psychological problems. There are different views about obesity in different societies and cultures. In medical context it is related to “excessive body fat”¹⁷⁹. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which is a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and also the American Academy of Pediatrics, suggest BMI as an indicator of obesity/overweight.¹⁸⁰ Individuals with a BMI of more than 95% are classified as obese or “overweight” by CDC.¹⁸¹

In medical approach, the concern is about the health issues that usually go with obesity, not about how an individual with obesity looks. Medical conditions that are common among obese or overweight teens include: Arthritis, Blount’s disease, breathing problems, Fatty liver, Gallstones, Type 2 diabetes, Hypertension, Increased blood lipid levels, including high cholesterol and Triglycerides, Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), Sleeping problems, Slipped capital femoral epiphyses (SCFE).¹⁸²

There are so many factors that can cause obesity but cultural, behavioral, environmental, metabolic, hormonal, genetic and hereditary factors are among the common ones. The causes for obesity are complex and largely depend on the environment/culture in which individual lives.¹⁸³ They are named as “obesogenic environments”¹⁸⁴ which are environments that encourage an inactive life and eating more than necessary.

¹⁷⁷ Plottel, 11.

¹⁷⁸ Nicolas Stettler and Susan Shelly, *Living with Obesity*, Infobase Publishing, 2010, 1.

¹⁷⁹ Stettler and Shelly, 2.

¹⁸⁰ Stettler and Shelly, 2.

¹⁸¹ Stettler and Shelly, 3.

¹⁸² Stettler and Shelly, 5.

¹⁸³ Stettler and Shelly, 15.

¹⁸⁴ Stettler and Shelly, 23.

2.1.3. Asthma- Obesity Combination in Piggy

According to recent studies, there might be a connection between childhood obesity and childhood asthma. The studies have revealed that children with obesity were more likely to have asthma symptoms, since it increases the risk of respiratory tract inflammation that causes respiratory flow obstruction.¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, research is being done to determine if there is a common genetic link between the two disorders. The relationship between obesity and asthma is controversial. One theory says that asthma leads to obesity since it causes an inactive lifestyle. Asthmatic individuals usually avoid exercise believing it is not good for their condition. So, they gain weight because of their sedentary routine. On the other hand, another theory suggests that obesity is the cause of asthma, since it leads to “changes in the lungs and airways”¹⁸⁶. A third and more recent theory is based on data from laboratory animals that has found “that there could be an association between obesity and asthma on one hand, and abnormal blood levels of leptin and even ghrelin on the other”.¹⁸⁷

Airway inflammation is reported to be common between obesity and asthma by many studies. According to the studies, fat cells produce leptin and adiponectin that cause airway inflammation in reaction to the environmental triggers. There are other agents that cause inflammation like leukocytes and “mediators such as cytokines and TNF alpha”¹⁸⁸. In brief, the most common explanation for asthma development in obese individuals is that excess weight causes shallow breathing which results in the reduction of lung volume. Reduced lung volume causes narrowing of airways which in turn results in a change in the muscle function of the airway. This leads to augmented reaction with “bronchodilator administration”¹⁸⁹.

In Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy’s asthma might be linked to his obesity. There is no direct reference to the cultural and environmental conditions in which Piggy was raised. However, the reader gets to know that he belongs to the lower class of the society. When Ralph boasts about his father, Piggy has none. His parents are dead, and his speech is ungrammatical. He lived with his aunt who had a sweet shop and was the

¹⁸⁵ Rees and Kanabar, 49.

¹⁸⁶ Plottel, 146.

¹⁸⁷ Plottel, 146.

¹⁸⁸ Kathleen Keller, *Encyclopedia of Obesity*, Sage, Los Angeles, Calif., London 2008. 61.

¹⁸⁹ Keller, 61.

scholarship boy to the private school. In the first chapter, Piggy, is introduced as fat and asthmatic: “He was shorter than the fair boy and very fat”¹⁹⁰. Before the reader gets to know his name (nickname), he is referred to as “the fat boy” by the author: “the fat boy looked startled”, “the fat boy hurried after him”,¹⁹¹ “the fat boy waited to be asked”¹⁹². He has difficulty in breathing and running: He suffered from “breathing hard”¹⁹³; he could not catch his breath and troubled by running, “he speared the sweat from his cheek”¹⁹⁴, he reveals his asthma problem to the fair boy (Ralph): “My auntie told me not to run...on account of my asthma”¹⁹⁵. Piggy claims to be the only boy in his school with asthma. He also cannot swim; he can only sit up to his neck in the water. Since swimming can trigger airway inflammation, he has always been warned about swimming: He says, “I can’t swim. I wasn’t allowed. My asthma ___”¹⁹⁶. When Ralph was swimming, he “sat on the rocky ledge, and watched Ralph’s green and white body enviously”¹⁹⁷. Ralph persuaded him to ‘half swim’ and “he tip-toed down the sandy side of the pool and sat there up to his neck in water, smiling proudly at Ralph”¹⁹⁸. Later, when they found a conch, Piggy knew how to get the shell sound, but because of his asthma he could not blow into it: “My auntie wouldn’t let me blow on account of my asthma. He said you blew from down here”¹⁹⁹. He showed the way to Ralph and he “hit the shell with air from diaphragm”²⁰⁰.

Exercise-induced asthma or Exercise-induced bronchoconstriction (EIB) occurs during physical labor and causes a narrowing of the airway. It is seen in 40% to 90% of asthmatic individuals and about 20% of individuals without asthma. Although physical exercise and activities are an important part of a healthy lifestyle, asthmatic individuals usually avoid it because of breathlessness symptoms like wheezing (a whistling when you breathe).²⁰¹ Throughout the novel Piggy seems to avoid labor as much as he can

¹⁹⁰ Golding, 7.

¹⁹¹ Golding, 8

¹⁹² Golding, 9.

¹⁹³ Golding, 9.

¹⁹⁴ Golding, 9.

¹⁹⁵ Golding, 9.

¹⁹⁶ Golding, 13.

¹⁹⁷ Golding, 13.

¹⁹⁸ Golding, 13.

¹⁹⁹ Golding, 17.

²⁰⁰ Golding, 18.

²⁰¹ Marie Gerow and Paul J. Bruner. “Exercise Induced Asthma”, *PubMed, StatPearls Publishing*, August 8, Retrieved, 10 December 2022, from www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557554/.

and whenever he is involved in it, he suffers the severe symptoms of breathlessness. He is physically disabled due to his weight and has “a certain disinclination to manual labour”²⁰². Because of his obesity he continuously had to pull himself: “Piggy hauled himself up, carrying most of his clothes under his arm”²⁰³. He usually sits “giving no help”²⁰⁴. He says, “if I pull logs about, I get my asthma bad.”²⁰⁵

In chapter two, when the boys are busy making a fire, Piggy, disabled by his asthma, is very slow to climb to the place where the wood is piled up: “And the small boys who had reached the top came sliding till everyone but Piggy was busy”.²⁰⁶ In chapter four, slow-moving Piggy was very far when Ralph needed his glasses to lit the woods in order to draw the attention of the ship that could rescue them: “Piggy was only just visible, stumbling up from the beach”²⁰⁷; “They had to watch piggy crawling nearer and the ship sinking under the horizon”.²⁰⁸ He was the last to arrive to hill-top and when he reached the top, he was “out of breath and whimpering.”²⁰⁹

During asthma attack symptoms get worse to the point that the person can have serious trouble in breathing. Depending on the severity of person’s condition, an asthma attack can cause severe complications and if it is not managed it can be fatal. According to research, in some individuals with asthma, emotions can be a trigger to asthma attacks, and in others asthma attacks can cause emotional reactions.²¹⁰ Emotions such as anger, crying and surprise can lead to symptoms. Stress is also a trigger for many people with asthma. Furthermore, Asthma and anxiety are strictly related, and when someone has an asthma attack often panic and anxiety can occur too.²¹¹ Piggy’s first asthma attack happens when the fire spreads out in chapter two and it is revealed that the littleun with the birthmark on his face has burnt alive in the fire. It left Piggy gasping in an asthma attack caused by terror: “Something strange was happening to

²⁰² Golding, 70

²⁰³ Golding, 15.

²⁰⁴ Golding, 35.

²⁰⁵ Golding, 179.

²⁰⁶ Golding, 43.

²⁰⁷ Golding, 73.

²⁰⁸ Golding, 73.

²⁰⁹ Golding, 74.

²¹⁰ “How Emotions Can Contribute to Asthma Flare-Ups”, *Asthma Australia*, 2 Mar. 2021, Retrieved, 12 December 2022, from asthma.org.au/blog/how-emotions-can-contribute-to-asthma-flare-ups/.

²¹¹ “How Emotions Can Contribute to Asthma Flare-Ups.”

Piggy, for he was gasping for breath.”²¹² The attack was so severe that he “fell against a rock and clutched it with both hands”²¹³. Piggy had the second attack of asthma (because of terror) in chapter six: “piggy let out his breath with a gasp, reached for it again and failed. He lay against a log, his mouth gasping, blue shadows creeping round his lips”²¹⁴. He suffered another attack in chapter ten: “Something brushed against the back of the shelter. Piggy kept still for a moment, then he had his asthma”²¹⁵; His “gasps were once more audible”²¹⁶.

2.1.4. Visual Impairment

Any “deviation from normal vision”²¹⁷ in individuals is considered a visual impairment. There are different types of visual impairments, and they vary from minor to complete loss of vision. Severe visual impairment is defined as “the inability to read ordinary newsprint even with the aid of glasses.”²¹⁸ And the term blindness is used when the deviation causes complete loss of vision. One of the most common types of eye disorders is refractive errors which occur when “changes in the cornea, aqueous humor, lens, or vitreous humor prevent proper bending of light rays to converge on the retina”²¹⁹ and are grouped as Myopia (nearsightedness), hyperopia (farsightedness), astigmatism, presbyopia. They can occur at any age and are diagnosed by eye examinations “that measures eye movements and the size of the pupils and their ability to react to light”²²⁰. Refractive errors are generally cured with the help of corrective lenses in the form of eyeglasses and contact lenses which are individually prescribed.

²¹² Golding, 51.

²¹³ Golding, 51.

²¹⁴ Golding, 112.

²¹⁵ Golding, 184.

²¹⁶ Golding, 184.

²¹⁷ Donna Falvo, *Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Chronic Illness and Disability*, Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2005, 126.

²¹⁸ Falvo, 126.

²¹⁹ Falvo, 126.

²²⁰ Falvo, 133.

2.1.4.1. Myopia: Piggy's Visual Impairment

Myopia or nearsightedness is caused by “elongation of the eyeball so that light rays focus on a point in front of the retina”²²¹. Those with myopia have decent visual sharpness just for nearby objects but not for objects afar. Myopia is categorized into three types: low, moderate and high.²²² According to the WHO Report myopia is “a condition in which the refractive error (spherical equivalent) is ≤ -0.50 diopter (D) in either eye” and high myopia is defined as “a condition in which the objective refractive error (spherical equivalent) is ≤ -5.00 D in either eye”.²²³ A main cause of blindness in the world is degenerative or pathologic myopia (PM) which is defined as “an eye with a refractive error of greater than -6.0 diopter that is accompanied by characteristic degenerative changes in the sclera, choroid, and retinal pigment epithelium (RPE) associated with decreased vision”²²⁴.

The reader learns about Piggy's shortsightedness in the first chapter. He “looked up through thick spectacles”²²⁵ and asked Ralph: “Where's the man with the megaphone?”²²⁶ This was his first question, since he could not see well in spite of wearing thick glasses. He indicated this problem a lot: “Piggy was looking in the right direction now. It don't look much”²²⁷; “I know I can't see very much”²²⁸. It can be considered as a symptom of high myopia which is considered as a high degree of myopic refractive error. Myopia normally starts in childhood and develops during the school years. The causes of myopia are not fully understood but genetics and some environmental factors might have a key role. Piggy mentions that he has been wearing glasses since he was “three years old”²²⁹ and in chapter eleven, Golding specifically uses the term myopia to refer to Piggy's shortsightedness: “Piggy sat expressionless

²²¹ Falvo, 126.

²²² Kyoko Ohno-Matsui. *Atlas of Pathologic Myopia*, Singapore, Springer, 2020,4.

²²³ Institute WHO-BHV, The Impact of Myopia and High Myopia Report of the Joint World Health Organization- Brien Holden Vision Institute Global Scientific Meeting on Myopia, Retrieved, 14 December 2022, from https://www.visionuk.org.uk/download/WHO_Report_Myopia_2016.pdf.2016.

²²⁴ Cynthia A. Toth. Sally S. Ong., *Handbook of Pediatric Retinal Oct and the Eye-Brain Connection*. Elsevier Philadelphia, Pa 2020, 267.

²²⁵ Golding, 7.

²²⁶ Golding, 7.

²²⁷ Golding, 72.

²²⁸ Golding, 72.

²²⁹ Golding, 9.

behind the luminous wall of his myopia.”²³⁰ However, when the boys use his specs as ‘burning glasses’ to focus the sun rays in order to make a fire, it seems that Golding has made a careless error here since the glasses used to correct short-sightedness cannot concentrate the light; they disperse it. Piggy seems to be very dependent on his specs and he constantly cleared the ‘flashing glasses’ and wiped and adjusted them on his nose²³¹. His glasses had made “a deep, pink “V” on the bridge”²³² of his nose. He ‘squinted’²³³ without his glasses. When his glasses flew off and tinkled on the rocks “Piggy cried out in terror: My specs!”²³⁴ Once he found that one of the lenses is broken, he alleged that he has lost an eye: “Now I only got one eye.”²³⁵ Even Ralph believes that technically he cannot do anything with one eye.²³⁶ In Chapter ten when his glasses are stolen he virtually becomes blind and disabled. He could hardly see and was sad and hopeless: “they blinded me”.²³⁷ He “was helped to his food and found some by touch”.²³⁸

2.1.5. Epilepsy

Epilepsy which is a chronic disorder of the nervous system is “a symptom of an underlying neurological condition in which neurons in the brain create abnormal electrical discharges that cause seizures (temporary loss of control over certain body functions)”²³⁹. It can be seen at any age and can be caused by numerous conditions, for instance head injury and stroke. When no clear cause is identified, it is considered as idiopathic. Serious conditions such as meningitis, diabetic coma, hypoxia, and so on can all cause temporary disturbed brain function resulting in a seizure.²⁴⁰ The symptoms vary from muscle spasms to complete loss of consciousness. They can happen regularly or rarely and can last from seconds to minutes. Between seizures most individuals

²³⁰ Golding, 187.

²³¹ Golding, 9, 11, 71, 111.

²³² Golding, 11.

²³³ Golding, 71.

²³⁴ Golding, 78.

²³⁵ Golding, 78.

²³⁶ Golding, 111.

²³⁷ Golding, 187.

²³⁸ Golding, 190.

²³⁹ Falvo, 60.

²⁴⁰ Falvo, 60.

function normally.²⁴¹ What is more, epileptic seizures can produce hallucinations. The terms aura and aura epileptica, which are also called ictal hallucinations, represent “an ictal manifestation of an epileptic seizure that manifests itself in the form of a sensory (i.e., hallucinatory), psycho-sensory, and/or experiential symptom”.²⁴² They can occur separately or as a “warning symptom” prior to a “paroxysmal neurological” event like a migraine attack or an epileptic seizure. They normally last for seconds or minutes.²⁴³ According to Karl Jaspers, German psychiatrist and philosopher, “During [an aura] the outer world disappears; the inner experiences become overpowering, consciousness narrows and in this restricted state it can yet have a moment of high illumination.”²⁴⁴

2.1.5.1. Epilepsy in Simon

When Simon, who is one of the choir boys, fainted and “flopped on his face in the sand”²⁴⁵, the reader thinks it might be from the heat, but realizes that it is commonplace for the boy, and he suffers from frequent seizures typical of epilepsy. His peer choir boys say that: “He is always throwing a faint ... He did in Gib; and Addis; and at matins over the precentor.”²⁴⁶ As mentioned, between seizures most individuals look and function normally: “Now that the parlor of his faint was over, he was a skinny, vivid, little boy, with a glance coming up from under a hut of straight hair that hung down, black and coarse”.²⁴⁷

In chapter eight Simon experiences an epileptic fit which seems to be triggered by the heat and a feeling of thirst: “he was thirsty, and then very thirsty”²⁴⁸. This time the fit is displayed as aura an epileptica or ictal hallucination which is a warning symptom before an epileptic seizure: “what was real seemed illusive and without definition” to him²⁴⁹. He had witnessed the kill of a pig and as he looks at the pig’s head, he starts a hallucinatory conversation with the pig. He hears the voice of the Lord of the Flies who warns him that everything is bad, and he must run away: “run away, said the head

²⁴¹ Falvo, 61.

²⁴² Jan Dirk Blom, *A Dictionary of Hallucinations*, New York, Ny, Springer-Verlag New York, 2010, 49.

²⁴³ Blom, 49.

²⁴⁴ Blom, 49.

²⁴⁵ Golding, 22.

²⁴⁶ Golding, 22.

²⁴⁷ Golding, 25.

²⁴⁸ Golding, 146.

²⁴⁹ Golding, 152.

silently, go back to the others. It was a joke really_ why should you bother? You were just wrong, that's all. A little headache, something you ate, perhaps. Go back, child, said the head silently"²⁵⁰. Then he felt a pulsing: "In Simon's right temple a pulse began to beat on the brain".²⁵¹ His "half-shut eyes were dim"²⁵² and his tongue was swollen. His body was 'arched', 'stiff' and shaking.²⁵³ In his hallucination Simon hears a schoolmaster's voice and sees a ballooning head: "Simon's head wobbled. His eyes were half-closed as though he were imitating the obese thing on the stick. He knew that one of his times was coming on. The Lord of Flies was expanding like a balloon"²⁵⁴. He fell, lost consciousness, and had a nosebleed²⁵⁵. Then he fell into a deep sleep until the evening: "With the running of the blood Simon's fit passed into the weariness of sleep"²⁵⁶.

2.1.6. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ADS)

Conditions which involve stereotypical behavior or impairment in development fields such as social interaction and verbal/nonverbal communication are called pervasive developmental disorders. The most common pervasive developmental disorders are autism and Asperger's disorder. According to American Psychiatric Association, "autism (autistic disorder) is a disorder of brain function that has a broad range of behavioral consequences, including impairment in reciprocal social interaction and impairment in verbal and nonverbal communication (American Psychiatric Association, 2000)"²⁵⁷. Since its first description in 1943, there has been a solid increase in autism occurrences.²⁵⁸

Several symptoms such as repetitive mannerism, strong obsession with a limited area of interest, absence of spontaneous play or shared pleasure with others, self-abusive behavior, violence (aggression), hyperactivity, hypersensitivity to physical stimuli and cognitive skills impairment (intellectual capacity) are seen in this disorder with different

²⁵⁰ Golding, 152.

²⁵¹ Golding, 152.

²⁵² Golding, 151.

²⁵³ Golding, 158.

²⁵⁴ Golding, 158.

²⁵⁵ Golding, 158.

²⁵⁶ Golding, 160.

²⁵⁷ Falvo, 178.

²⁵⁸ Falvo, 178.

severity. In many cases their mental retardation is also identified. The symptoms are revealed from birth usually before the age of 3; however, some early symptoms are subtle and cannot be diagnosed until they are visible later. There is no treatment for autism and medications can control some of the symptoms. Some symptoms might improve when the child develops; most of them keep a degree of dependence in adult years, though.²⁵⁹

Autism is a heterogeneous disorder and clinicians, and researchers describe it by using a spectrum approach to study autism on a continuum²⁶⁰. A continuum is “a progression of values, in these case symptoms, which ranges from low, or few symptoms, to high, or many symptoms. Someone on the low end of the autism spectrum will have few symptoms of the disorder, whereas someone on the other end of the continuum will have severe autism.”²⁶¹ According to the severity of the individuals’ illness they can be put in the low, middle or high end of the spectrum. The reasons of the growing number of autism are complex and there are several myths about the illness, causes and cure of autism. In order to comprehend autism, a critical approach needs to be taken. Since individuals with mental disorders might show different signs and symptoms. Delayed speech and impaired social skills are the most important symptoms. Some might rock their bodies back and forth for several hours; others might be withdrawn or concentrate on something.²⁶²

There are three factors that can increase the chances of developing autism in a child. First, boys are three to four times more likely to develop autism than girls according to the statistics.²⁶³ Second, it runs in the families and third, there are some genetic conditions that occur along with autism. It is usually parents who first notice the symptoms and signs of autism in their children. Autism was considered as a kind of juvenile schizophrenia without a cure up until the mid-twentieth century Early theoreticians accused parents (particularly mothers) for the children’s autistic behaviors (until 1980s and 1990s).²⁶⁴

²⁵⁹ Falvo, 178-179.

²⁶⁰ Heather Barnett, *Autism. Facts On File*, 2009, 10.

²⁶¹ Barnett, 10.

²⁶² Barnett, 10.

²⁶³ Barnett, 31.

²⁶⁴ Barnett, 31.

Autism can be divided into two groups: idiopathic (with unknown causes) and genetic or environmental. Only 15 percent of the autistic individuals are diagnosed with the genetic or environmental autism, the rest has idiopathic autism. Exposure to German measles (rubella) and thalidomide are eminent causes of environmental autism. During 1950s a drug called Thalidomide was developed and prescribed to pregnant women around the world for morning sickness. However, it caused severe deformities and developmental problems like autism in thousands of babies.²⁶⁵ According to the research, the development of the disorder in some individuals with autism is not related to family history.²⁶⁶

2.1.6.1. Autism in Ben: *The Fifth Child*

Ben, in Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child* is a mentally disabled character. He is physically atypical, but most significantly is an autistic child. If a spectrum approach were used to study his autism on a continuum, his autism would likely fall on the high end. Ben's autism is not likely to be idiopathic; it appears that Ben's condition could be produced by maternal drug use. According to research, women prescribed and treated with antidepressants during their pregnancies are more prone to develop neurodevelopmental problems like autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The findings support "an increased risk of ASD in children of mothers exposed to SSRIs during pregnancy; however, the causality remains to be confirmed"²⁶⁷. Ben's mother, Harriet was a healthy young woman: "In fact, all her features were strong and good, and she was solidly built"²⁶⁸. She distrusts contraceptives (the Pill)²⁶⁹ and is determined to give birth to six or eight children. However, during his fifth pregnancy she uses several sedatives. She had 'morning sickness'²⁷⁰ in her earlier pregnancies and they were not considered as easy pregnancies: "Nothing seriously wrong, but she had been sick a lot,

²⁶⁵ Barnett, 37.

²⁶⁶ Barnett, 40.

²⁶⁷ Kenneth K.C. Man, et al., "Exposure to Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors during Pregnancy and Risk of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Children: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Observational Studies", *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, vol. 49, Feb. 2015, 82–89, 10.1016/j.neubiorev.2014, Retrieved, 15 December 2022, from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0149763414003248>.

²⁶⁸ Lessing, 8.

²⁶⁹ Lessing, 15.

²⁷⁰ Lessing, 18.

slept badly from indigestion”²⁷¹ Her doctor had wanted her to give birth in hospital but “she had been adamant”²⁷². Her pregnancies had continued to be “uncomfortable and full of minor problems- nothing serious, but she was tired”²⁷³. After the fourth child, she and her husband decide to give it a break but to their dismay Harriet was pregnant again: “they had been careful, particularly so because of their determination not to have any more children for a while”²⁷⁴. The fifth pregnancy was really a difficult one; she was ‘frantic’ and ‘exhausted’: “she lost her temper; she burst into tears”²⁷⁵. When she was three months pregnant, she could feel “a tapping in her belly”²⁷⁶; it was “unlike anything she had known before”²⁷⁷. She was frequently seen as “lying down, her hands pressed into her stomach, tears running down her face, moaning from some pain she would not specify”²⁷⁸. She went to Dr. Brett, because she could not sleep and rest when she was nearly five months pregnant. The doctor believed that the baby was “large for five months, but not abnormally so”²⁷⁹. He prescribed her ‘a sedative’. The sedative did not seem to help much so “she begged tranquillizers from friends, and from her sisters”²⁸⁰ because she was afraid of asking the doctor. Then again “the foetus was quiet for about an hour after she dosed herself”²⁸¹, and then “she would cry out in pain”²⁸². She tried to escape the pain by working around the house for hours: “By breakfast time she might have already worked for three of four hours”²⁸³. When she was in the seventh month, she seemed to be better but “this was because of the amount of drugs she took”²⁸⁴. For some hours it was quiet and when it came awake, “she took another dose”²⁸⁵ and addressed the fetus in her womb and said: “Now you shut up or I’ll take another pill.”²⁸⁶ At eight months, she was so exhausted that she went to Dr. Brett and

²⁷¹ Lessing, 23.

²⁷² Lessing, 23.

²⁷³ Lessing, 30.

²⁷⁴ Lessing, 40.

²⁷⁵ Lessing, 41.

²⁷⁶ Lessing, 45.

²⁷⁷ Lessing, 45.

²⁷⁸ Lessing, 48.

²⁷⁹ Lessing, 9.

²⁸⁰ Lessing, 49.

²⁸¹ Lessing, 49.

²⁸² Lessing, 49.

²⁸³ Lessing, 51.

²⁸⁴ Lessing, 52.

²⁸⁵ Lessing, 53.

²⁸⁶ Lessing, 53.

“asked him to induce the baby”²⁸⁷. The doctor said she was “utterly worn out. Bone tired”²⁸⁸ and “wrote her a prescription for more sedatives”²⁸⁹. A month earlier the pain started, and this time Harriet insisted to deliver in the hospital to the surprise of everyone.

Some studies have reported that children with autism might have outside-the-norm physical features. A study has stated that almost 20 percent of autistic children have significant physical anomalies with anomalous embryologic growth.²⁹⁰ However, the occurrence of physical anomalies is neither definite nor dependent to the autism diagnosis. Another study has categorized autism into two groups depending on the presence of physical anomalies: Complex and essential. In complex autism a significant number of physical anomalies or microcephaly are present, however in the essential autism there is not any abnormal morphogenesis.²⁹¹ In *The fifth child*, the newly born baby has outside-the-norm physical features. He was said to be a healthy boy by the nurse and the doctor, although he seemed to be different: “He was muscular, yellowish, long”²⁹². He was eleven pounds while his other siblings were not more than seven pounds. He also had “a heavy-shouldered hunched look, [...] his forehead sloped from his eyes to his crown”²⁹³.

As Lessing states, Ben “had not cried since he was born.”²⁹⁴ The fact that Ben did not cry can be considered as the first failure in communication, since crying is the way infants communicate with the environment and express their needs. Delayed speech and impaired social skills, the major symptoms of ASD became obvious in Ben as he grew: “Ben was over a year old now. He had not said a word yet, but in other ways he was more normal”²⁹⁵. When he was about three years old, he suddenly talked one day: “He did not say, Mummy, or Daddy, or his own name. He said, I want cake”²⁹⁶ He started to

²⁸⁷ Lessing, 58.

²⁸⁸ Lessing, 59.

²⁸⁹ Lessing, 59.

²⁹⁰ Judith. H Miles, and Richard. J. Hillman. “Value of a Clinical Morphology Examination in Autism”, *American Journal of Medical Genetics*, 91(4), 10 Apr. 2000, 245–253, Retrieved 2 February 2022, from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/10766977/>.

²⁹¹ Miles, and Hillman.

²⁹² Lessing, 60.

²⁹³ Lessing, 60.

²⁹⁴ Lessing, 61.

²⁹⁵ Lessing, 75.

²⁹⁶ Lessing, 83.

announce his needs: “I want that. Give me that. Go for a walk now”²⁹⁷. He was using sentences, however, “his voice was heavy and uncertain, each word separate, as if his brain were a lumber-house of ideas and objects, and he had to identify each other”²⁹⁸. He had difficulty in language acquisition and language use; he repeated his siblings. In his teens, when he was with his gang, he did not speak much: “when he did say something, it was never much more than Yes, or No. take this! Get that! Give me ...”²⁹⁹

Another typical sign of autism is Hyperactivity. Since Ben started walking, he was always on his feet, and needed to be watched all the time and when he was locked in his room he started screaming and bellowing uncontrollably. Harriet took him to Dr. Brett to examine him and the doctor said, “he was physically in order”³⁰⁰ and normal for eighteen months. He believed Ben was a hyperactive child. He was against drugging the child and believed his delay in talking was normal.

Ben did not comprehend the social interactions around him and did not show any affections or feelings to anybody around him which is the most common characteristics of autistic children. From the first days of his life Ben seemed to ignore his mother: “Nothing in his touch or his look ever seemed to say, this is my mother”³⁰¹. He could not be socialized; he learned by copying others: “He seemed to know that he ought to be like them. He would stand, head lowered, watching how everyone talked, and laughed ... his eyes were on one face, then another”³⁰². He also has problem in understanding facial expressions of people around him. Among his siblings, he watched Luck and Helen constantly and studied the way they moved, acted, ate and then copied them, but he ignored Paul (the fourth child) completely. When they watched television, he crouched near them and looked at the screen and their faces, to copy their reactions: “If they laughed, then, a moment later, he contributed a loud, hard, unnatural-sounding laugh.”³⁰³ When Ben was in the institution, he had forgotten the basic social skills that he had learned with difficulty at home. Even his dad could not go near him; if he did, he

²⁹⁷ Lessing, 83.

²⁹⁸ Lessing, 83.

²⁹⁹ Lessing, 146.

³⁰⁰ Lessing, 77.

³⁰¹ Lessing, 73

³⁰² Lessing, 75.

³⁰³ Lessing, 83.

would freeze and back away “and, if he came too close, snarling”³⁰⁴. John, who was a paid worker, was the only person he was attracted to. John treated him “in a rough-and-ready way, as if Ben were indeed a puppy that needed training”³⁰⁵.

Cognitive skills impairment is also seen in Ben. At school he was a difficult child: “He wasn’t learning anything”³⁰⁶. Nobody could understand what he was thinking about or even how he felt: “Those cold inhuman eyes ... What did he see? People assumed he saw what they did, that he saw a human world. But perhaps his senses accommodated quiet different facts, data. How could anyone know? What was he thinking? How did he see himself?”³⁰⁷ At home Harriet played games like ‘snakes-and ladders’ and ‘ludo’ with Paul, while Ben watching; but when she asked Ben to try, “he could not get the hang of the games.”³⁰⁸ She compared Paul (who was a year older than Ben) with Ben: “Paul was thinking, feeling. But Ben – she had to try to guess.”³⁰⁹ She could not understand “what he wanted, what he felt.”³¹⁰ When he was 11 years old, he was not “an academic child [...] He could hardly read and write, more than his name. He still tried to fit in, to copy others.”³¹¹ When he was five, he knew some basic facts about traffic lights or shutting the door: “Traffic lights green-go. Traffic lights red-stop.’ Or, ‘half a plate of chips, half price big plate of chips.’ Or, ‘Shut the door, because it is cold.’ He would singsong these truths”³¹². Ben watched the television programs but “He did not seem to like one programme more than another. He did not understand that some programmes were for children, and others for grown-ups”³¹³, however, he could not tell the story of the film.

Absence of spontaneous play or shared pleasure with others is another symptom of autism seen in Ben. Harriet was trying to understand what Ben was feeling and thinking but she failed all the time. She tried to play with him, show him pictures and

³⁰⁴ Lessing, 109.

³⁰⁵ Lessing, 110.

³⁰⁶ Lessing, 128.

³⁰⁷ Lessing, 132.

³⁰⁸ Lessing, 138.

³⁰⁹ Lessing, 138.

³¹⁰ Lessing, 140.

³¹¹ Lessing, 144.

³¹² Lessing, 118.

³¹³ Lessing, 139.

sang him rhymes but “ben did not seem to connect with the toys, or the blocks”³¹⁴. He just stared at pictures but could not get the point of it.

Violence, another typical characteristic of children with autism is evident in Ben. He used to follow the dog in their house: “Wherever the dog was, Ben followed. He did not pet it or stroke it: he stood staring”³¹⁵. Soon it was inferred that the dog was strangled to death, although “officially the dog’s death remained a mystery.”³¹⁶ The old grey cat was also killed in the same way.³¹⁷ At age six, when he started school, his schoolteacher said “He’s a good little chap. He tries so hard.”³¹⁸ He was trying hard, but he did not seem “to fit in with the others.”³¹⁹ and he could not keep still for long. Once, Ben broke a bigger girl’s arm and he did not seem to be sorry about what he had done: “you might even think he doesn’t know he did it. But at that age-he is six, afterall – he should know what he is doing”.³²⁰

Traditionally parents (especially mothers) were considered as responsible for autism in their children. According to Refrigerator mother hypothesis (theory) (also known as Bettelheim’s theory of autism), the origin of autism was the lack of maternal (figurative) warmth. The theory was embraced during 1950s and was unchallenged until the mid-1960s. It was driven from a 1949 paper by Leo Kanner. As stated by Kanner,

Most of the patients were exposed from the beginning to parental coldness, obsessiveness, and a mechanical type of attention to material needs only. They were the objects of observation and experiment conducted with an eye on fractional performance rather than with genuine warmth and enjoyment. They were kept neatly in refrigerators [emphasis added] which did not defrost.³²¹

Dr. Brett had told Harriet that it was not abnormal to dislike a child because he believed that “there’s obviously nothing much wrong with him”³²². When Harriet took ben to London to Dr. Gilly, he claimed that the problem was not with Ben, but with her: “You don’t like him very much”³²³ said the doctor to Harriet. According to the doctor Ben

³¹⁴ Lessing, 82.

³¹⁵ Lessing, 75.

³¹⁶ Lessing, 76.

³¹⁷ Lessing, 76.

³¹⁸ Lessing, 118.

³¹⁹ Lessing, 120.

³²⁰ Lessing, 121.

³²¹ Leo Kanner, *Childhood Psychosis: New Studies and New Insights*, V.H. Winston & Sons, Washington, DC 1973, 61.

³²² Lessing, 67.

³²³ Lessing, 124.

was “within the range of normality”³²⁴ and as a slow child he could catch up later. He wrote a prescription for ‘a really strong sedative’ because Harriet asked for. She gave Ben a dose of it every morning and sent him to school and hoped it would keep him “damped down”³²⁵ at school.

2.1.6.2. Autism in Ben: *Ben, in the World*

The sequel *Ben, in the World* starts a few years after the events in *The Fifth Child* and continues Ben’s story. He is eighteen years old but looks to be in his 30s. He is introduced as a “short, stout, or at least heavily built man”³²⁶. Some symptoms of autism might improve when the child develops through years; but most of the individuals with autism keep a degree of dependence in adult years. Ben acted childish, but “looked middle-aged, with those lines around his eyes.”³²⁷ Rita, a prostitute who cared for him believed that he was “like a three-year-old”.³²⁸ However, he was concerned about “his personal cleanliness and liked his clothes neat”.³²⁹ He was hardly communicative, and when he was with people, he listened to conversations “as a child does when the talk does not concern him”.³³⁰ He needed looking after almost all the time. Teresa also knew she was dealing with a child; she “felt he was a child she was looking at, who was expecting tomorrow’s promised marvels”.³³¹ She “knew that this was a child she was holding, or at least a child’s misery”.³³² Alex in relation to Ben “was thinking, this is like looking after a child”.³³³ Richard could not understand what Ben thought but he knew Ben could not manage by himself. Ben just did whatever he told him: Ben was in the habit of obeying Richard”.³³⁴ When Richard left him he was panicked like a lost child: “the knowledge of his aloneness was beating into him. You are alone, you are

³²⁴ Lessing, 125.

³²⁵ Lessing, 128.

³²⁶ Lessing, 1.

³²⁷ Lessing, 13.

³²⁸ Lessing, 45.

³²⁹ Lessing, 17.

³³⁰ Lessing, 164.

³³¹ Lessing, 171.

³³² Lessing, 99.

³³³ Lessing, 86.

³³⁴ Lessing, 75.

alone. He felt danger everywhere and he was right. He had been protected by Richard, and now he was not”.³³⁵

Cognitive skills impairment continues in Ben in *Ben, in the World*. He could not read and interpret even the simplest of situations. He did not even remember when he was born; his mother wrote the following in a piece of paper and gave to him three years earlier when he left home:

“Your name is Ben Lovatt.

Your mother’s name is Harriet Lovatt.

Your father’s name is David Lovatt.

You have four brothers and sisters, Luke, Helen, Jane, and Paul. They are older than you.

You are fifteen years old.

You were born

Your home address is”.³³⁶

The old woman whom he was living with for a short while wrote her address on a piece of paper and gave it to Ben to keep with him: “Mrs Ellen Biggs II Mimosa House Halley Street, London SE6”.³³⁷ He could not drive a car but he just “wanted to go on sitting there playing at being a driver”.³³⁸ He knew money, but he could not handle it: “He had learned that hard lesson. Without money you did not eat.”³³⁹ He told Ellen that people took his money: “they stole everything”.³⁴⁰ He could not get the wage where he worked. When his wage was given to him, a peer worker took it from him and ran off: “He had worked a full week for nothing”.³⁴¹ And the other week in his envelope was “half the Money that was due him”.³⁴² If he continued working there “he could expect one or all of them to take his money, and the foreman to cheat him”.³⁴³

³³⁵ Lessing, 77.

³³⁶ Lessing, 23.

³³⁷ Lessing, 10.

³³⁸ Lessing, 48.

³³⁹ Lessing, 8.

³⁴⁰ Lessing, 13.

³⁴¹ Lessing, 29.

³⁴² Lessing, 29.

³⁴³ Lessing, 30.

Hypersensitivity to physical stimuli is also a common symptom between individuals with autism. Whereas touch is a key part of many social skills for most people, autistic individuals usually avoid common touch because they experience hypersensitivity of touch. Rita “knew how unpredictably Ben reacted to being touched”.³⁴⁴ When Alex, the American filmmaker, gave him a welcoming clout, which was a very normal act done to a male friend Ben’s reaction was very aggressive: “He saw those green eyes convulse, boil and rage, and those fists”.³⁴⁵ Alex did not know how close he was to “being crushed in those great arms”.³⁴⁶ When Ben’s blood pressure was being checked by an assistant, “he was grinning”.³⁴⁷ Elsewhere, when the scientist reached out his hand to shake Ben’s, “Ben grinned”.³⁴⁸ However, he let the old woman wash him.³⁴⁹ Teresa also was one of those few people who could touch Ben. She could hug him, “But no one else could touch him”,³⁵⁰ “only Teresa came inside the distance all the others set between them and him. Only Teresa would take his hand, swing it, drop it; squeezing his big shoulders”.³⁵¹ Crowded and noisy places were also not tolerated by him: “A hospital was everything he feared most, full of noise and people, and of danger for him”.³⁵² The lift also “intimidated”³⁵³ him.

Ben was also hypersensitive to extreme light. He did not like to go to cinema because of “the tall lit screen, which hurt his eyes.”³⁵⁴ He did not like movies for the same reason; “they filled his eyes with light, and made him sick.” When he was taken to cinema, he “sat with his eyes closed, opening them in quick desperate attempts to see, but he could not see, the clashing invading light was too much for him”.³⁵⁵ At the beach he always had to “sit in shade”.³⁵⁶ When he was under the Mediterranean sun he “had his eyes shut, even though he wore dark glasses, and he was grinning.”³⁵⁷ In such

³⁴⁴ Lessing, 59

³⁴⁵ Lessing, 84.

³⁴⁶ Lessing, 84.

³⁴⁷ Lessing, 131.

³⁴⁸ Lessing, 123.

³⁴⁹ Lessing, 9.

³⁵⁰ Lessing, 95.

³⁵¹ Lessing, 95.

³⁵² Lessing, 44.

³⁵³ Lessing, 44.

³⁵⁴ Lessing, 48.

³⁵⁵ Lessing, 81.

³⁵⁶ Lessing, 71.

³⁵⁷ Lessing, 84.

conditions associated with anxiety stirred from heightened sensory stimulation Ben had a common reaction which was “a stretched, teeth-showing grin that meant fear”.³⁵⁸

Self-abusive behavior and repetitive mannerism are also seen in individuals with autism. Ben in moments of anxiety and fear hit his head against the wall repeatedly: “they heard a regular thud, thud, thud from next door – from ben’s room”.³⁵⁹ He frequently attempted hurting himself: “he was banging his head on the wall, thud, thud, thud”.³⁶⁰ He also seemed to repeat the same words on going home: “I want to go home, he was repeating, silently, in his head. Home, home”.³⁶¹ “When am I going home?”³⁶², “When can I go home? When is Alex taking me home?”³⁶³ He knew Ellen Biggs was not alive, but that did not stop him from thinking about her “as someone who would welcome him if he arrived at her door”.³⁶⁴ His usual mannerism when interrupted was “rage” and “hiss” and “spat”.³⁶⁵

Ben’s tendency to violence continues in *Ben, in the World*. Thinking of his brother, Paul, still triggers violence in Ben: “Paul; it was Paul, the brother he had hated so terribly that thoughts of killing him once and for ever had filled hours of his childhood”.³⁶⁶ His hunger for raw meat and blood is seen frequently in Ben: “it was a need for meet, and he smelled the rawness of blood, the reek of it.”³⁶⁷ This made him kill a pigeon and eat it: “The blood was dripping from their mouths”.³⁶⁸

Analyzing the disabilities of Piggy and Simon in *Lord of the Flies* and Ben in *The Fifth Child* and its sequel *Ben, in the World* through biological (biomedical) factors provides valuable insights into the portrayal and perception of these disabled characters. In *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy’s multiple disabilities are thoroughly explored, allowing us to evaluate the effects of these disabilities on his social interactions and his struggle for acceptance on the island. His obesity, physical appearance, respiratory condition (asthma), and myopia hinder his full participation in the group’s activities, causing him

³⁵⁸ Lessing, 7.

³⁵⁹ Lessing, 98.

³⁶⁰ Lessing, 98.

³⁶¹ Lessing, 92.

³⁶² Lessing, 104.

³⁶³ Lessing, 124.

³⁶⁴ Lessing, 118.

³⁶⁵ Lessing, 84.

³⁶⁶ Lessing, 24.

³⁶⁷ Lessing, 27.

³⁶⁸ Lessing, 31.

to be disregarded by his peers. By examining his physical limitations, the reader can gain a deeper awareness of the discrimination experienced by individuals with disabilities in society. Simon, another character in *Lord of the Flies*, has epilepsy, a neurological disorder, which is also examined within the medical model. By considering his sudden trance-like states and physical manifestations during seizures, we the reader can comprehend the effects of epilepsy on his interactions with others and the way his condition is perceived by others on the island. Understanding the medical aspects of Simon's epilepsy allows the reader to empathize with his struggles and recognise the need for inclusivity. *The Fifth Child* and its sequel, *Ben, in the World*, focus on Ben's autism as his primary disability. By understanding the medical aspects of Ben's condition, one can develop empathy for the challenges faced by his family and recognize the importance of social support. In short, examining disabled characters in these literary works through a medical perspective broadens our understanding of disability and its impact on individuals and society. It features the necessity for a compassionate and inclusive approach towards people with disabilities, fostering a more equitable society.

It is crucial to acknowledge that reducing these characters' disabilities solely to medical conditions oversimplifies the complex realities they face. Piggy, Simon, and Ben are more than just bodies with impairments; they are fully developed characters with unique perspectives and emotions. The medical perspective alone cannot capture the social exclusion and psychological impact that they encounter, which results in an incomplete understanding of their experiences. Therefore, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding, it is important to adopt the bio-psycho-sociocultural model, which incorporates medical interpretations along with psychological, social, and cultural dimensions of disability.

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH TO DISABILITY IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S *LORD OF THE FLIES* AND DORIS LESSING'S *THE FIFTH CHILD AND BEN,* *IN THE WORLD*

This chapter examines disability in the characters of Piggy, Simon, and Ben in *Lord of the Flies*, *The Fifth Child*, and its sequel, *Ben, in the World*, focusing on sociocultural factors. By shifting the focus beyond the medical aspects and delving into the sociocultural dimensions of disability, this study aims to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences and representations of these disabled characters. Drawing upon sociocultural theories of Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Erving Goffman, and Mary Douglas it will explore how the social and cultural contexts in which these characters are situated influence the construction and perception of disability. Through this lens, the study will clarify the complex relationship between society and disability, ultimately broadening our perspectives on disability and its portrayal in these literary works.

3.1. INDOCILE BODIES IN *LORD OF THE FLIES*, *THE FIFTH CHILD* AND *BEN, IN THE WORLD*

Michel Foucault's concepts of biopower and biopolitics can clarify the experiences of people with disabilities and the ways in which disability is constructed in society. As discussed in the first chapter, biopower refers to the ways in which power is exercised over bodies in modern society. It is focused on managing and controlling individuals at the level of their biological existence through various institutions and technologies like medicine, public health, and social welfare programs. These institutions and technologies manage and control the health of individuals and ensure their conformity to social norms and values. Similarly, biopolitics refers to the use of state power to manage and control the lives of individuals' health and well-being by ensuring their conformity to social norms. It works through different techniques, including surveillance, normalization, and the production of docile bodies. Since disability has historically been seen as a deviation from the normative body, disabled

individuals have been subject to various technologies intended to manage or control their bodies. In *Lord of the Flies*, *The Fifth Child*, and *Ben, in the World*, such societies are represented by William Golding and Doris Lessing. In these novels, readers are invited to contemplate the ways in which the society and/or institutions treat the disabled, and the attitudes of society towards disabled individuals. They provide a valuable lens through which readers can better understand the experiences of disabled people and how society constructs disability.

Normalization is a vital technique of biopolitics that is used to ensure that individuals conform to social norms. This is achieved through the development of standards, the creation of institutions and technologies that promote conformity, and the use of social control and disciplinary techniques. As Lenard Davis argues, it is important to consider the construction of normalcy with the purpose of understanding the ways in which the value of the normative image reverberate in culture rather than focusing on disabled person as an object or subject.³⁶⁹ As the norm plays an important role in the legitimation of modern power, techniques of normalization aim at bringing bodies and individuals into conformity with particular social norms. Foucault's "dividing practices"³⁷⁰ can be depicted in the mentioned novels as disabled characters are presented as objectivized. The scientific discourse categorizes, classifies, and manipulates subjects who are not homogeneous through techniques of normalization. They are divided from others because they do not conform to normality.

In *Lord of the Flies* one can perceive some classification such as the biguns and littluns: "The smaller boys were known now by the generic title of 'littluns'. The decrease in size, from Ralph down, was gradual; and though there was a dubious region inhabited by Simon and Robert and Maurice, nevertheless no one had any difficulty in recognizing biguns at one end and littluns at the other."³⁷¹ The boys are divided according to their physical appearance and physical power. Those who are bigger and stronger are more powerful, and those who are little and physically weak must obey the first group. Different kinds of disability are presented in the novel from the little boy

³⁶⁹ Lenard J. Davis, "Constructing Normalcy: The Bell Curve, the Novel, and the Invention of the Disabled Body in the Nineteenth Century", In L. J. Davis (Ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader*, Routledge, New York 2013, 9-28.

³⁷⁰ Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power", *Critical Inquiry*, 8(4), Summer, 1982, 777-795, Retrieved, 4 June 2020, from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1343197>.

³⁷¹ Foucault, 64.

one side of whose face is “blotted out by a mulberry-coloured birthmark”³⁷² to Piggy who is near-sighted, fat, and asthmatic, and Simon who is epileptic. They are undermined, ridiculed, and belittled and consequently doomed to be eliminated from society. The types of bodies that society needs are produced through disciplinary techniques, which are internalized by individuals. Ralph the democratic leader and Jack the dictatorial one, both are considered as physically strong, decisive, and attractive. The other children try to imitate them and follow the rules they set.

The idea of normalcy is central to the power dynamics at play in *Lord of the Flies*, with the dominant group imposing standards that exclude those who do not fit into them. Biopower functions through normalization and those who deviate from the norm are disqualified and excluded. Piggy’s physical deviation from the norm reinforces the idea that he is different and not part of the dominant group. Accordingly, his intellectual ability is not valuable to the group. He is socially excluded from the dominant group on the island and this exclusion indicates that he is not part of the norm and that his disability makes him less valuable than the other boys. Moreover, the violence that is directed towards Piggy serves to support the idea that he is abnormal and that his disability makes him a target for aggression. This violence also reinforces the power relations at play in the novel, with the dominant group exerting their power over those who are seen as deviant. Simon, who is depicted as having unspecified “fit” or seizure disorder is also treated as an outsider since he does not fully participate in the group’s activities.

The stronger and more aggressive boys attempt to exert power over the weaker and more vulnerable boys, and this can be seen as a form of biopower in which the bodies of individuals are used as a means of exerting control and dominance. This can be seen as a form of normalization, as it reinforces the importance of certain values and behaviors and seeks to shape the behavior and bodies of individuals to conform to these norms and values. Furthermore, the boys use language as a tool of power, as they create new words and meanings to reinforce their social hierarchy. For instance, Jack invents the term “sucks to the littluns” to belittle the younger boys. Ralph in the first part of the novel and Jack in the second part are determined as norm. The littluns can be considered tools of power which are incorporated in the norms and discourses as part of their

³⁷² Foucault, 38.

everyday lives. The discourse of power on the island produces new forms of knowledge that affects and controls individuals' behavior and bodies. Nobody on the island cares for what the boy with a birthmark on his face talks about: "The small boy held out his hands for the conch and the assembly shouted with laughter; at once he snatched back his hands and started to cry"³⁷³; Piggy's practical ideas are worthless for the rest of the boys and Simon's perception about the nature of the beast is not taken seriously since they are both deviant. As reflected in the novel, through the process of normalization, power separates the individuals who are outside the norm. Accordingly, power makes the norms appear as ethical and establishes the desire in individuals to conform to these norms. When Jack and his hunters steal Piggy's glasses and he loses his vision completely, he does not know that his morals and ethics are not valid on the island. He summons:

I'm going to him with this conch in my hands. I'm going to hold it out. Look, I'm goin' to say, you're stronger than I am, and you haven't got asthma. You can see, I'm goin' to say, and with both eyes. But I don't ask for my glasses back, not as a favor. I don't ask you to be a sport, I'll say, not because you're strong, but because what's right's right. Give me my glasses, I'm going to say—you got to!³⁷⁴

Piggy realizes that his morals and ethics hold no value on the island. He confronts Jack, despite his disability, pleading for his glasses to be returned by emphasizing that it is not a favor or a matter of strength but a matter of what is right.

Biopower likewise creates a desire to conform to the norms by self-surveillance. It makes individuals "subject to someone else by control and dependence and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge"³⁷⁵. Ralph and Piggy are excited to join the dance of the hunters who will ultimately kill Simon through the show: "Piggy and Ralph, under the threat of the sky, found themselves eager to take a place in this demented but partly secure society. They were glad to touch the brown backs of the fence that hemmed in the terror and made it governable"³⁷⁶. Jack can be seen as the symbol of religion, music, and totalitarian politics, whose discourse eventually rationalizes the ability of the abled to maintain power and control over the disabled in the production of rules, services etc. He is like a king that can punish everybody around

³⁷³ Golding, 39.

³⁷⁴ Golding, 189.

³⁷⁵ Foucault, 130.

³⁷⁶ Golding, 167.

him without any reason³⁷⁷. The members of the society are initially indoctrinated into a set of practices and then they must participate in the practices. Since the body is the target of power and is formed by power relations (internalized self-control power) to be submissive and docile, it becomes inert, and the mind becomes the target and object of disciplinary power³⁷⁸. Hence, Jack's followers turn to be hunters (soldiers) as he summons their pleasure-loving side³⁷⁹. His discourse has a parallelism with that of the officer that appears as a deus ex machine at the end.³⁸⁰

Docile or disciplined bodies are the ones who are malleable, unfinished entities that can be "sculpted, molded, altered, and transformed"³⁸¹. They are bodies that are subjected to disciplinary techniques and training to become more efficient and productive. The construction of docile bodies is achieved through different disciplinary techniques, including surveillance, punishment, and the production of a hierarchical social order. By the establishment of hierarchies, the stronger and more aggressive boys are seen as more valuable members of the group. The weaker and more vulnerable boys are subjected to physical violence and exclusion to shape their behavior and make them more docile. In the novel, we see that the younger boys are more docile and willing to follow the rules set by the older boys. They are more easily influenced by authority figures and are less likely to challenge the established social hierarchy. The older boys, on the other hand, are more likely to have disciplined bodies, as they have more power and control over the younger boys. They use their authority to enforce their rules and maintain their power. Jack's strategy of power easily shapes the members of the society on the island into docile bodies. They are monitored by military exercises such as painting their faces, daily hunting, cutting the head of the killed pig, placing the head on a stick, and offering it to the Lord of the Flies. As Foucault alleges in *Discipline and Punish* docile body is a body "that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved"³⁸². Thus, disguised disciplinary practices allow subjects to act only to constrain them (with the aim of naturalization). As John Rajchman states, "the great complex idea of normality" becomes "the means through which to identify subjects and

³⁷⁷ Golding, 176.

³⁷⁸ Lisa Blackman, *The Body: The Key Concepts*, Berg, Oxford 2008, 30.

³⁷⁹ Golding, 166-167.

³⁸⁰ Golding, 222.

³⁸¹ Blackman, 134.

³⁸² Foucault, 136.

make them identify themselves in ways that make them governable”³⁸³. Indeed, the only way to keep political order is to construct docile bodies. So, through its various institutions the state controls and disciplines the lives of individuals in all aspects: “to discipline the body, optimize its capabilities, extort its forces, increase its usefulness and docility, and integrate it into systems of efficient and economic controls”³⁸⁴. Even Ralph, who is a normal boy with normal capacities, wants to be part of them (docile bodies). In a hunting scene, he is “full of fright and apprehension and pride. ‘I him him! The spear stuck in—’”³⁸⁵ or “‘I hit him,’” said Ralph indignantly. ‘I hit him with my spear, I wounded him.’”³⁸⁶ He is also eager to join hunting and become a hunter like Jack.

Apart from the protagonist, Ralph and the antagonist, Jack, very few people are the keystones in the development of the action in the novel, namely the birth-marked boy, Piggy and Simon. Piggy and Simon are predominantly portrayed as indocile bodies due to their disabilities and inability to conform to the norms and standards of the dominant group on the island. They are the disabled in different ways whose bodies fail to reach mental and/or bodily ideals of the society. They easily become the target of all sorts of teasing and torment throughout the novel. Although Piggy is subjected to various forms of control to be docile, he resists these attempts, emphasizing his resilience and individuality:

‘Which is better—to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill?’ ‘Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Kill the pig! Bash him in!’ Ralph screamed, a scream of fright and anger and desperation. His voice was thin, needle-sharp and insistent. The bolting horse was plucked, grinding, by a fist invisible and with such force that it flung the rider headlong and turned him over.³⁸⁷

Simon’s resistance leads to the same fate: “Surrounded by a fringe of inquisitive bright creatures, itself a silver shape beneath the steadfast constellations, Simon’s dead body moved out toward the open sea.”³⁸⁸ The weak and the different, the deviant are doomed to fail as they are not malleable through disciplinary practices, and their physical,

³⁸³ Shelley Tremain, “On the Government of Disability: Foucault, Power, and the Subject of Impairment”, ed. Lennard J. Davis, *The Disability Studies Reader*, Routledge, New York 2006, 186.

³⁸⁴ Foucault, 139.

³⁸⁵ Golding, 124.

³⁸⁶ Golding, 125.

³⁸⁷ Golding, 164.

³⁸⁸ Golding, 154.

sensory, and cognitive differences are regarded as nonintegrable. Moreover, their non-conformity with the violent and aggressive behavior of the other boys makes them a target for the other boys' aggression. They are punished by the other boys on the island for their differences from the norm. Physical violence and social exclusion are how this punishment is carried out, further entrenching the power dynamics depicted in the novel and upholding the supremacy of the dominant group over individuals deemed as deviant. The fact that they are not docile and have no chance to be docile poses a danger to the power balance depicted in the novel, resulting in their exclusion from the group and inevitable deaths.

In Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child*, and *Ben in the World*, Ben is seen as abnormal and deviant because of his physical and behavioral differences from the other four siblings, which leads to his exclusion from family, relatives, and society. This is further reinforced by the way institutions treat him. In these institutions, Ben is subjected to medical interventions and treated as a problem that needs to be fixed. An example of "dividing practices" is the way Harriet and David react to Ben's differences, which is the reflection of the way in which society divides individuals based on their ability to conform to established norms. Harriet, giving birth to a different child who "was not a pretty baby"³⁸⁹ and "did not look like a baby at all"³⁹⁰, compares him to her fourth child Paul which is considered normal:

Harriet yearned for this baby, this little child, from whom she had been separated so soon. She loved the look of him, the comical soft little face, with soft blue eyes – like bluebells, she thought- and his soft little limbs ... it was as if she were sliding her hands along them, and then enclosing his feet in her palms. A real baby, a real little child.³⁹¹

Ben is kept in a "cot, so much like a cage"³⁹² most of the time and "they would have to make sure that he was in his room at mealtimes and when the children were downstairs with the adults. Family times, in short"³⁹³. He "was almost always in his room, like a prisoner"³⁹⁴. Another demonstration of "dividing practices" is evident through the relatives and friends of Harriet and David, who alienate Ben and treat him as an outsider

³⁸⁹ Lessing, 60.

³⁹⁰ Lessing, 60.

³⁹¹ Lessing, 62.

³⁹² Lessing, 69.

³⁹³ Lessing, 72.

³⁹⁴ Lessing, 72.

because of his unusual behavior and appearance: “the new baby had of course been offered to everyone to hold, when they asked, but it was painful to see how their faces changed confronting this phenomenon. Ben was always quickly handed back.”³⁹⁵

The Lovatt family can indeed be considered as a microcosm of society. As biopower operates through the control and regulation of individuals’ bodies, behaviors, and even thoughts, Harriet’s fifth pregnancy is perceived as a challenge to the social order and the expectations of the middle-class society in which she resides. Harriet and David’s unconventional choice to have a large family, along with their inability to conform to social expectations regarding nuclear family structure and reproduction, generates anxiety within their community. Dorothy advises them not to have more children: “the aristocracy -yes, they can have children like rabbits, and expect to, but they have the money for it. And poor people can have children, and half of them die and expect to. But people like us in the middle, we have to be careful about the children we have so we can look after them”³⁹⁶. This anxiety stems from the fear that their actions may disrupt the social order that can lead the family to be rejected by their community. The state’s involvement in the family’s affairs exemplifies how biopolitics functions by overseeing population growth and public health management.

Normalization operates as a disciplinary mechanism which can be seen in the way Ben’s family’s attempt to normalize him. Having physical and behavioral differences Ben is difficult to manage. The family’s attempt to conceal Ben from the outside world, and their efforts to normalize him through medical intervention, can be seen as an exercise of power that reinforces social norms and expectations around disability and family structure. Harriet tries hard to make Ben a normal child:

“But for a while she did try hard to make him ordinary. She took him down into the big living-room where all the family were and put him into the play-pen there – until his presence affected people, and they tended to go away. Or she took him to the table in her arms, as she had done with the others – but could not hold him, he was too strong.”³⁹⁷

She dedicates substantial energy and determination towards transforming Ben into what society deems a normal child. Through her relentless efforts, she hopes to help Ben

³⁹⁵ Lessing, 68.

³⁹⁶ Lessing, 23.

³⁹⁷ Lessing, 69.

integrate seamlessly into society, free from the prejudices that often accompany those who deviate from established norms.

Surveillance is a technique of normalization that entails the monitoring and observation of individuals to ensure their compliance with social norms. Ben is constantly watched and monitored by his family and by society. He is seen as abnormal, aggressive, and unpredictable. The family's efforts to manage his behavior involve continuous monitoring, serving to regulate and discipline him which is another method of normalization that utilizes a combination of punishments and rewards to incentivize individuals to adhere to social standards. The Lovatt family and society at large attempt to discipline Ben through punishment and treatment. Their community promotes his fixing or normalizing by suggesting his parents to send him to an institution. Dorothy tells David and Harriet: "you two are going to have to face it. Ben has got to go into an institution"³⁹⁸. The family's fear of Ben's difference and their desire to control him can also be seen as a manifestation of the surveillance function of biopower, which aims to monitor and regulate individual behavior to maintain society's norms.

Bio-power functions on the bodies and controls individuals by self-disciplinary practices they adopt to produce a norm and normality discourse. And willingly individuals adjust themselves by conforming to these norms through self-disciplinary practices of the body. External surveillance strengthens self-surveillance, as individuals become conscious of the watchful eyes of others and strive to conform to their expectations. Ben's difference is surveilled by the community that brings "condemnation, and criticism, and dislike"³⁹⁹ to Lovatt family: "Ben seemed to cause these emotions, bring them forth out of people into the light"⁴⁰⁰. This process of self-surveillance reinforces the power dynamics within society as individuals become their own wardens and police their own behavior to conform to the norms. Harriet and David try to be a normal happy family because non-conformity is frequently met with punishment in the form of exclusion: "it was the worst year of Harriet's life, and she was not able to cai a that people avoided them"⁴⁰¹. Alice, who helps Harriet at home

³⁹⁸ Lessing, 79.

³⁹⁹ Lessing, 72.

⁴⁰⁰ Lessing, 72.

⁴⁰¹ Lessing, 76.

“left, with no suggestion it was because of Ben. But she had told Dorothy, who had told the parents, that Ben gave her the horrors”⁴⁰².

Another technique of establishing normalcy is the formation of a disciplinary space or institution which is represented by the institution where Ben is placed to be disciplined and controlled because of his abnormality and his inability to conform to societal expectations. When Ben resists the attempts of his family, who try to normalize him even with utilizing medications, he becomes a constant reminder of the family’s inability to control their own lives and their failure to fit in with the norms of society. So, they start to question their own values and beliefs. Harriet finds herself “silently addressing Ben: ‘I’m not going to let you destroy us, you won’t destroy me ...’”⁴⁰³. When the community says, “he’s got to go into an institution”⁴⁰⁴, Harriet tries to “find a doctor who says he’s abnormal”⁴⁰⁵. And finally, “Ben’s fate decided”⁴⁰⁶. The medical and social interventions that are used to “treat” Ben can be seen as part of a larger system of power and knowledge that operates through the medical establishment and other institutional structures. Biopower operates through the production of medical and scientific knowledge, which shapes our understanding of disability and shapes the way that individuals with disabilities are treated and perceived by society. Lessing portrays the horrible and inhumane conditions of the institution when Harriet decides to take a visit to Ben:

In the cots were- monsters. While she strode rapidly through the ward to the door at the other end, she was able to see that every bed or cot held a infant or small child in whom the human template had been wrenched out of patterns, sometimes horribly, sometimes slightly. A baby like a comma, great lolling head on a stalk of a body ... then something like a stick insect, enormous bulging eyes among stiff fragilities that were limbs... a small girl all blurred, her flesh guttering and melting- a doll with chalky swollen limbs, its eyes wide and bank, like blue ponds, and its mouth open, showing a swollen little tongue. A lanky boy was skewed, one half of his body sliding from the other. A child seemed at first glance normal, but then Harriet saw there was no back to its head; it was all face, which seemed to scream at her. Rows of freaks, nearly all asleep, and all silent. They were literally drugged out of their minds. Well, nearly silent: there was a dreary sobbing from a cot that had its sides shielded with blankets. The high intermittent screaming,

⁴⁰² Lessing, 72.

⁴⁰³ Lessing, 80.

⁴⁰⁴ Lessing, 87.

⁴⁰⁵ Lessing, 87.

⁴⁰⁶ Lessing, 90.

nearer now, still assaulted her nerves. A smell of excrement, stronger than the disinfectant⁴⁰⁷.

Through vivid descriptions, Lessing captures the wrecked state of the facility, overcrowded rooms, and neglected amenities, emphasizing the lack of personal space. The neglect of basic needs like nutrition, hygiene, and medical care further emphasizes the distressing experiences of the residents. Lessing also portrays the staff as indifferent and overworked, emphasizing the inhumane nature of the institution. Her powerful portrayal emphasizes the urgent need for change and exposes the mistreatment that prevails in institutional settings.

In *Ben, in the World*, society continues to normalize and control Ben's behavior through various techniques. His freedom is curtailed, so he is compelled to exist on the fringes of society, where he faces constant surveillance and control. The novel demonstrates how biopower operates through surveillance, which ultimately leads to the exclusion of Ben who deviates from the norm. His looks and behavior separate him from the rest of the people. He does not have a birth certificate to benefit from social care. He cannot have a decent job and income, and most of the time is misused by others. From the beginning of the novel, Ben is an outsider in society who struggles to fit into social norms. He faces various challenges, including homelessness, poverty, and discrimination. Leaving home at the age of fourteen he became a gang member of older youths in which "they forced him to steal for them, made fun of him, jeered at his posh accent"⁴⁰⁸. When he started working in a farm, he "had never been given a pay-book, and terms and conditions of work had not mentioned"⁴⁰⁹. The farm owner told him: "I'm keeping your wages for you, ben. You know that"⁴¹⁰. Most of the people at work cheated him: when his wage envelope was given to him, "the young man had grabbed it from and run off, grunting and scratching himself and crouching low and bouncing up, and then again: Ben had known this was meant to be a monkey"⁴¹¹. And "He had worked a full week for nothing"⁴¹². And again "at the end of the week in his envelope had been half the money that was due him. He knew that was half what proper builders

⁴⁰⁷ Lessing, 98-99.

⁴⁰⁸ Lessing, 14.

⁴⁰⁹ Lessing, 17.

⁴¹⁰ Lessing, 17.

⁴¹¹ Lessing, 28.

⁴¹² Lessing, 29.

got, real workmen, who were not working illegally; but that half was now half again”⁴¹³. He “would always be cheated”⁴¹⁴; later a man named “Johnston planned to make Ben carry cocaine – ‘A lot, Reet, millions’ – across to Nice, not concealed at all, but in ordinary holdalls, under a layer of clothes”⁴¹⁵. And when he was left alone in France, “Ben had realized that Johnston had lied to him, tricked him, and now had left him helpless here, surrounded by people who made sounds he could not understand”⁴¹⁶. Ellen Biggs, the old lady who cares for him in the beginning of the novel, sends him to his parents to get his birth certificate. She wants him look like ordinary people; “she told him that one of these new clever hairdressers would make him look like a film star... ‘They could make you look so smart, Ben, you’d not know yourself’”⁴¹⁷. Ben’s disability and homeless condition exemplify society’s anxiety with individuals who do not conform to societal norms and expectations. He engages in self-surveillance by attempting to conform to social expectations despite his intellectual and emotional differences: “Ben understood one thing, that if he walked about a place for too long people would start noticing him. He did walk about for as long as he dared, glancing into people’s faces for ‘the look’, and then sat on a bench from where he could see the bench, which he thought of as his mother’s”⁴¹⁸. He recognizes his dissimilarities from others and strives to adopt the societal norms and values as his own to assimilate: “he had wanted to join with them, their jokes, their talk, but did not know how to. He had never understood, for example, why the way he spoke was funnier than the way they did. Their eyes when they looked at him had been grave, wary”⁴¹⁹.

The practice of subjecting individuals to observation and assessment encompasses the utilization of techniques such as medical examinations, psychological testing, and performance evaluations. These methods are employed to monitor and regulate behavior. Ben’s body is subjected to examination since he is not in line with societal norms and expectations and cannot be normalized: “a hospital was everything he feared most, a big building, full of noises and people, and of danger for him. He remembered

⁴¹³ Lessing, 29.

⁴¹⁴ Lessing, 32.

⁴¹⁵ Lessing, 49.

⁴¹⁶ Lessing, 79.

⁴¹⁷ Lessing, 10.

⁴¹⁸ Lessing, 23.

⁴¹⁹ Lessing, 28.

going to doctors with his mother. Every one of them had had *that* look”⁴²⁰. Alex, the American filmmaker “took ben to an oculist to get glasses”⁴²¹, and “the oculist’s idea about ben were nearest to the girl at Reception who said was a failed laboratory experiment”⁴²². When in Brazil, he is taken to an institute to be tested he “allowed the needle to go in and watched as the barrel filled with blood. This scene was not new to him: he had had tests done when he was a child”⁴²³. The personnel of the institute who represented “the educated, clever all-knowing world of modern knowledge”⁴²⁴, “had planned to test the workings of his digestive system, his circulation, his breathing: there were a great many more to do, but the tests on his brain were considered the most important, and Ben shouted, ‘No!’ and began stamping about”⁴²⁵. When he refuses to let the experiments on him continue, he is kidnapped in a violent way and taken to a hidden part of the institute which is known as “the bad place – or ‘The Cages’ which is how most people described it”⁴²⁶:

There was an assault on the door, and two men rushed in, put their arms into his on either side, gagged him while he struggled, and ran him to the lift, and then out of the lift to a car. There they wound up the windows, tied Ben’s wrists, his knees, his ankles, and let him thrash about in the back of the car while they drove fast up into the hills.⁴²⁷

He is kidnapped, institutionalized, and treated as a new discovery that needs to be studied. Through Ben’s experience in the institute, readers can see how institutions are used to enforce conformity and maintain power which often results in the marginalization and stigmatization of disabled individuals, who are treated as less than fully human. ‘The cages’ in which Ben was imprisoned is described as follows:

A low light was burning on the ceiling. In tiers of cages were monkeys, small and large, arranged so that the excrement from the top cages must fall down on the animals below. A bank of rabbits, immobilized at the neck, had chemicals dripping into their eyes. A big mongrel dog, which had been carved open from the shoulder to the hip bone and then clumsily sewn up again, was lying moaning on dirty straw, its backside clogged with excrement. (This dog had been cut open six months before and from time to time the wound was unpicked to see what its organs were doing, it was subjected to this drug or that, and then sewn up again like a hessian

⁴²⁰ Lessing, 44.

⁴²¹ Lessing, 81.

⁴²² Lessing, 81.

⁴²³ Lessing, 132.

⁴²⁴ Lessing, 135.

⁴²⁵ Lessing, 133-134.

⁴²⁶ Lessing, 131.

⁴²⁷ Lessing, 138.

sack. The edges of the wound were in fact partly healed, in crusts, and through them could be glimpsed the palpitating organs.) From the cages monkeys stretched out their hands and their human eyes begged for help.⁴²⁸

Lessing's depiction of the institution is vivid and unsettling. The scene unveils a harrowing environment where animals are subjected to miserable conditions. The anguish of imprisoned creatures is evident as they desperately seek help. This portrayal starkly exposes the institution's inhumane treatment that leaves a haunting impression of the cruelty inflicted within its walls. The professor in charge states that: "this ... specimen could answer questions, important questions, important for science – world science. He could change what we know of the human story."⁴²⁹ However, the efforts to normalize Ben seem to be limited since Ben remains resistant despite the technologies used to manage and regulate his life. He possesses agency and resilience which disrupts societal narrative surrounding the disabled. After his escape from the institute and failure in finding his people, he decides on suicide. Ironically, Alfredo, after Ben's death says: "You can tell him that even an animal has the right to commit suicide"⁴³⁰.

Indocile bodies can be referred to bodies that resist and challenge the disciplinary practices of power. These bodies can show the ways in which power is not absolute, and that there are always ways in which individuals can resist and challenge it. They can disclose new possibilities for social change and transformation. Power is not a fixed entity, but rather a dynamic and shifting set of relationships within a given social context and there are always possibilities for resistance, even if these may be limited or difficult to achieve. As Foucault states, "Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society."⁴³¹ In *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy is quite the opposite of a docile body. He is a character who is constantly questioning and challenging the other boys, mostly their savage behavior and lack of reasoning. His intellectual curiosity and desire for rational order, despite his physical disabilities, show that he is not submissive to the dominant power structure on the island. Despite the challenges he faces, he continues to advocate for rational thought and order. In this

⁴²⁸ Lessing, 146.

⁴²⁹ Lessing, 153.

⁴³⁰ Lessing, 177.

⁴³¹ Michel Foucault, "The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction", *Vintage Books*, 1978, 93.

sense, Piggy's disability strengthens his character and reinforces his determination to resist the chaos and violence that the other boys succumb to. Simon can also be interpreted as an indocile body in the sense that he does not conform to the power structure established by the other boys. He is portrayed as a quiet, introspective character who is in tune with nature and has a deep sense of spirituality. He is not interested in the power struggles or violence that the other boys engage in. Despite being excluded from the group, he acts in ways that are contrary to the dominant power structure. For example, he shows kindness and compassion to the littluns, even when the other boys mistreat them. His refusal to engage in violence or submit to the boys' authority challenges the other boys' assumptions. In *The Fifth Child* and *Ben, in the World*, Ben's disability can also be seen as contributing to his status as an indocile body. He is a disruptive force that cannot be easily controlled, and his behavior challenges the dominant power structures and social norms that define the world around him. His disability sets him apart from the other characters in the two novels and makes it difficult for him to fit in and be accepted by society. The resistance of these indocile bodies comes at a great cost and ultimately leads to their tragic demises. However, Golding and Lessing's portrayal of these indocile bodies can challenge traditional notions of what it means to be human and what it means to be disabled. By drawing attention to the difficulties that the disabled characters face in a world that is not built for them, they invite readers to question their own assumptions about disability and the way that society treats people with disabilities.

3.2. KILLABLE BODIES IN *LORD OF THE FLIES*, *THE FIFTH CHILD* AND *BEN, IN THE WORLD*

The exploration of the politics of exclusion and the concept of "bare life" in contemporary political philosophy owes much to Giorgio Agamben's seminal work *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Within this context, disability serves as a paradigmatic illustration of a group that has been historically subjected to various forms of exclusion and biopolitical regulation. As discussed earlier, Foucauldian approach studies technologies of power which separate the normal from the abnormal. Agamben follows Foucault, but he focuses on the suspension of law, construction of states of exceptions, and the Sovereign/homo sacer dichotomy. He employs the notion of homo

sacer to explain the critical role of the bare life in modern politics. Donna Reeve applies Agamben's concept of Homo Sacer to the lives of disabled people. She draws on his notion of homo sacer which refers to a figure of Roman law in which the person is banned from the city (polis) and is excluded from all rights.⁴³² Homo sacer is an exile and so not only excluded but also denied by the law. Quoting Agamben she states that: "He who has been banned is not, in fact, simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather abandoned by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable."⁴³³ In this zone a state of exception is where homo sacer is bare life (zoe- biological bodies) outside the polis, without political rights. In fact, abandonment distinguishes political beings (citizens, bios) from bare life (biological bodies, zoē). Reeve believes that this idea echoes the experiences of disabled people in modern era. Subsequently, Agamben's critique of sovereignty and the state of exception can offer a powerful framework to understand the political implications of disability. The intersection of disability in the homo sacer concept can allow us to examine how disabled characters are situated within a broader context of exclusion. By analyzing the treatment of disabled characters in *Lord of the Flies*, *The Fifth Child*, and *Ben, in the World*, the reader can achieve a better understanding of the social attitudes that contribute to the creation of the homo sacer figure.

In *Lord of the Flies* the homo sacer concept becomes apparent through the mistreatment of Piggy by the other boys which leads to his exclusion from society on the island. Ralph's revealing of Piggy's real name when he says: "He's not fatty"⁴³⁴, "his real name's Piggy!"⁴³⁵, can be viewed as a means of depriving him of his humanity and reducing him to a label that point out his physical difference. This dynamic intensifies when the boys establish a hierarchy based on physical strength, that results in Piggy's marginalization. Despite being intelligent, Piggy is ignored and silenced within the group. The denial of a voice and political agency experienced by Piggy aligns with the concept of the homo sacer, wherein they are voiceless within society. When Piggy

⁴³² Donna Reeve, "Bipolitics and bare life: Does the Impaired Body Provide Contemporary Examples of Homo Sacer?" In *Arguing About Disability: Philosophical Perspectives*, (Eds.), by Kristjana Kristiansen, Simo Vehmas and Tom Shakespeare, Routledge, London 2009, 1-4.

⁴³³ Reeve, 1-2.

⁴³⁴ Golding, 23.

⁴³⁵ Golding, 23.

struggles for a voice within the group and says: “I got the conch!”, “You let me speak!”⁴³⁶ his attempt to assert himself is ignored by the other boys. Due to his disability, Piggy lacks the same level of protection under the norms as other boys. Thus, his life is devalued compared to the lives of the other boys, which means being subjected to violence without consequence. As a historical pattern of the homo sacer as being killable, he is incriminated by the other boys that target him for their fears. Consequently, Piggy’s life is tragically cut short as he and Ralph ventured towards Jack’s camp, driven by the hope of restoring unity among the boys. Sat on the rocks above, Roger cruelly displaced a boulder, which hit Piggy’s face and sent him over the cliff to his death on the rocks below⁴³⁷. The fatal treatment of Piggy corresponds to the breakdown of humanity on the island which is not just a result of his disability but is also tied to the social and cultural constructions of disability that position disabled individuals as homo sacer.

Simon is also excluded from the group due to his disability. As a homo sacer, he does not have political significance. Throughout the novel, he remains voiceless and unable to exert his wisdom to influence the group’s decisions. They think of him as being “batty” and “mad”⁴³⁸ and his idea about the true nature of the beast is rejected by the boys. He wants to reassure the boys that the beast is not real when he says: “Maybe there is a beast... Maybe it’s only us”⁴³⁹. Accordingly, the boys project their fears onto him and in a violent ritual, they mistake him for the beast and murder him just like a homo sacer who can be lawfully killed.

In Doris Lessing’s *The Fifth Child* and *Ben, in the World*, Ben’s physical and behavioral differences cause him to be excluded from his own family and society. He is abandoned by his own family battling to find a place in the world. He becomes a figure who can be subjected to violence and mistreatment without consequence. In *The Fifth Child*, Ben’s differences make him a source of fear and turmoil among his family and relatives. When he is taken home after birth “the three older children stared down at the new-comer who was so different from them all: of a different substance, so it seemed to

⁴³⁶ Golding, 58.

⁴³⁷ Golding, 141.

⁴³⁸ Golding, 111.

⁴³⁹ Golding, 65.

Harriet”⁴⁴⁰. His family unit falls apart under his presence and he is left isolated: “his presence affected people, and they tended to go away”⁴⁴¹. Ben is not treated by the same norms that apply to his siblings who are all considered normal. He is kept “in his room, like a prisoner”⁴⁴² and “locked into his room each night”⁴⁴³. Harriet stops breastfeeding Ben and “put(s) him on a bottle”⁴⁴⁴ when he is just one month old. His father, “David, the good father, hardly touched him”⁴⁴⁵. Ben is subjected to violence with impunity in the institution that he is sent to just like a homo sacer which features the ways in which disability is constructed as a site of exclusion and violence in society.

Ben’s homo sacer status can further be explored in the sequel, *Ben, in the World*. As Ben grows older and enters society, his homo sacer status strengthens. He is consistently denied basic rights and abused by those around him. Even the members of his gang abuse him: “one night the rival gang found him standing over half a dozen, beat him up, twelve to one, and left him bleeding. His own gang returned to find a couple of their machines gone and were ready to beat him up again but found this apparently slow stupid oaf transformed into a whirling screaming fighting madman”⁴⁴⁶. He is cheated all the time despite struggling to find his place in society, as his difference continues to make him an object of rejection. Ben “was so sad, so lonely, but the dark was his home, night was his place, and people did not look at you so dangerously at night – not, that is, if you weren’t in the same room with them”⁴⁴⁷. As he moves through various social contexts, he continues to encounter different forms of exclusion. He is not a full member of society as he was not of his family. While he is legislatively included in, he is denied full status by the reactions of others who avoid connection with him. Ben’s difference positions him as a figure who is not valued like others, and who can be subjected to violence without punishment. His fellow workers cheat him since he is not protected by the same norms that they are:

The men had stood around, watching, their faces kept expressionless. They had been expecting him to complain, make a fuss, even start a fight; they had had their

⁴⁴⁰ Lessing, 62.

⁴⁴¹ Lessing, 69.

⁴⁴² Lessing, 72.

⁴⁴³ Lessing, 78.

⁴⁴⁴ Lessing, 64.

⁴⁴⁵ Lessing, 69.

⁴⁴⁶ Lessing, 14-15.

⁴⁴⁷ Lessing, 26.

eyes on his big arms and fists. But Ben knew better: he would get the worst of it. He had looked carefully around, from face to face, and had seen them waiting, and had seen, too, that one at least was sorry for him.⁴⁴⁸

It is as if they put him outside the law, a place where he did not exist and could not exist. He needed them but he was outside their world, and they ignored him because they did not know how to deal with him. According to Reeve, “disabled people find themselves dependent on the goodwill of the service providers because, like homo sacer, they cannot rely on the law to fully protect them by ensuring that adjustments made to the environment restore independence and dignity and self-esteem to disabled people”⁴⁴⁹. That is, disabled people cannot rely on the law alone to restore their independence and self-esteem.

“The state of exception”, as conceptualized by Agamben, pertains to a circumstance in which the regular operation of the rule of law is temporarily paused enabling the application of measures typically considered unlawful and against constitutional principles. According to Agamben, “the very essence of politics is intertwined with the possibility of the rule of law becoming suspended in the state of exception”⁴⁵⁰. This state is fully tied to the construction and exercise of sovereignty which has the right to decide when a state of exception is needed. The camp for Agamben is “the space that is opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule”.⁴⁵¹ Reeve utilizes Agamben’s notion of the “psychic state of exception” to explore the dynamics in which individuals without disabilities assume a position of authority over those with disabilities. By examining the practice of imposing forced psychiatric hospitalization on disabled individuals, Reeve draws attention on how Agamben’s concept of states of exception hold significance in the lived experiences of disabled individuals in society.⁴⁵² One can better understand the disadvantaged position of disabled individuals by looking at examples that relate to the idea of homo sacer like cases of forced institutionalization, where disabled people are placed in institutions against their will. In these situations, they experience both physical separation from

⁴⁴⁸ Lessing, 29.

⁴⁴⁹ Reeve, 4.

⁴⁵⁰ Alex Murray, *The Agamben Dictionary*, Edinburgh University Press, 2011, 185.

⁴⁵¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, Stanford CA 1998, 139.

⁴⁵² Reeve, 85.

society and psychological vulnerability. At length, disabled individuals around the world often have their rights violated in these institutions.

In *Lord of the Flies*, the boys' formation of a hierarchy grounded in physical strength and aggression can be viewed as an instance where exceptional measures and exclusionary practices, as described by Agamben in the state of exception, become normalized. In the state of exception which is formed on the island, the normal rules and expectations of society are suspended, and those who are excluded from the group become homo sacer figures who are not protected by the law and who can be subjected to violence. In this state Piggy and Simon are subjected to violence and exclusion and are both eventually murdered by the other boys, supporting their status as homo sacer. The rules established by the group determine that only the individual holding the conch shell has the privilege to speak and be heard during their assemblies. However, it becomes apparent that Piggy, a character who possesses valuable insights, is consistently denied this right due to his disabilities. Despite his intellectual contributions and serious attempts to be heard, Piggy is silenced by the other boys. He endures a series of violent acts imposed upon him due to his disabilities. As the story unfolds, this violence escalates. He becomes a victim of verbal abuse and insults that further marginalize him in this state of exception. Eventually, the mistreatment of Piggy culminates in a devastating act of physical violence in which Roger deliberately hits him to death. Simon, who is depicted as a fragile and epileptic boy prone to seizures, becomes a target of violence too. The violence reaches its peak during a ritual where mistaken for the beast, he is brutally killed by the group. The littluns who are also considered weak and lack political agency and voice within the group are bullied by Jack who calls them as "useless lot of cry-babies!"⁴⁵³ The littlun with a mark on his face who tragically perishes in the fire can be read as a homo sacer figure whose horrific death is not mourned or acknowledged by the other boys except for Piggy: "That little'un that had a mark on his face—where is—he now? I tell you I don't see him."⁴⁵⁴ This echoes the notion of the homo sacer in a state of exception, as an expendable figure, whose life is deemed less valuable than others within the social order.

⁴⁵³ Golding, 75.

⁴⁵⁴ Golding, 46.

In *The Fifth Child*, when Ben enters the Lovatt family, he disrupts the normal functioning of the family unit. His family members confront the challenges and prejudices that arise from having a child with disabilities. Thus, Ben is put in a “state of exception” in which the normal rules do not apply in the family anymore. Almost all the time, “his presence affected people, and they tended to go away”⁴⁵⁵. They made “sure that he was in his room at mealtimes and when the children were downstairs with the adults”⁴⁵⁶. He was excluded from family time and locked “in his room, like a prisoner”⁴⁵⁷. Although Paul was a more difficult child than Ben, he was not excluded because “he was a normal ‘disturbed’ child, not an alien”⁴⁵⁸. The other “state of exception” that can be depicted in the novel is when Ben is institutionalized. In this institute, he is exposed to neglect, which further reinforces his status as homo sacer. The institute had “a long cement-floored passage that had doors with inspection grilles in them all along the wall”⁴⁵⁹ and Ben was kept “naked, inside a strait-jacket”⁴⁶⁰. Harriet finds him in inhumane conditions there: “His pale yellow tongue protruded from his mouth. His flesh was dead white, greenish. Everything – the walls, the floor, and Ben – was smeared with excrement. A pool of dark yellow urine oozed from the pallet which was soaked”⁴⁶¹. The institute is not equipped to handle Ben’s exceptional needs and the staff members are overwhelmed and often use force and harsh discipline to control him. He is subjected to isolation, imprisonment, and physical restraints in this state of exception. The staff members view him as an uncontrollable individual, and drug him continuously. The widespread prevalence of practices such as the routine administration of anti-psychotic medication, the use of restraint, seclusion, and even more concerning methods in these institutions is a distressing reality: “The young man took out his overall pocket, a plastic package containing a syringe, a couple of needles, and some ampules”⁴⁶² and said “you can give him up to four shots a day, no more,” “because he’s so strong, he fights all the time, and so he has to have bigger shots. It kills

⁴⁵⁵ Lessing, 69.

⁴⁵⁶ Lessing, 72.

⁴⁵⁷ Lessing, 72.

⁴⁵⁸ Lessing, 129.

⁴⁵⁹ Lessing, 99.

⁴⁶⁰ Lessing, 99.

⁴⁶¹ Lessing, 99.

⁴⁶² Lessing, 102.

them.”⁴⁶³ The medications used on him “had no brand name on it”⁴⁶⁴. As Harriet “remarked, ‘They were killing him.’”⁴⁶⁵ If he was not saved by Harriet “he would have been dead in a few months. Weeks, probably”.⁴⁶⁶ It is a sobering reality that individuals with disabilities can and, tragically, do lose their lives within such institutions, often without anyone being held accountable for their untimely deaths. Ben’s mistreatment in the institution led to his further deterioration, both physically and mentally. He “had unlearned all the basic social skills that it had been so hard to teach him”⁴⁶⁷. After he is taken home, when at night Harriet “locked the door on him, and bolted it, left him undrugged and hoped he would sleep. He did, but woke, screaming in fear”⁴⁶⁸. Harriet “was going to have to control him through fear”: She told him, “‘if you start all that again, then I’m going to have to put that thing back on you.’ He ground his teeth at her, his eyes blazing. But he was afraid, too”⁴⁶⁹. Ben was also exposed to the larger state of exception that existed within society. At school, according to his teacher: “Ben is really trying very hard. He doesn’t seem to fit in with the others. It’s hard to put one’s finger on it.”⁴⁷⁰ In short, Ben’s family, relatives, and the institution’s treatment of Ben can reveal the general exclusion of people with disabilities, who are often denied basic rights in states of exception.

In *Ben, in the world*, Ben is put in a state of exception by society in which the normal rules do not apply. In such a society, individuals with visible impairments often endure the distressing experience of being subjected to persistent stares, which not only humiliates them but also leaves them in a vulnerable “psychic state of exception.” When sitting on a bench, “a young woman who gave him a glance, but then another, frowned, and went off, looking back at him with that look on her face which Ben knew and expected”⁴⁷¹. Another “old man came to sit on the bench, and he gave ben a long stare, but decided not to bother with what his instincts were telling him”⁴⁷². Elsewhere, “on the pavement a tall rough-looking man took a good sharp look at him, and then looked

⁴⁶³ Lessing, 103.

⁴⁶⁴ Lessing, 104.

⁴⁶⁵ Lessing, 104.

⁴⁶⁶ Lessing, 105.

⁴⁶⁷ Lessing, 108.

⁴⁶⁸ Lessing, 108.

⁴⁶⁹ Lessing, 107.

⁴⁷⁰ Lessing, 120.

⁴⁷¹ Lessing, 4.

⁴⁷² Lessing, 5.

again – people always looked again”⁴⁷³. The consequences of such persistent staring can have profound psychological and emotional impacts. Individuals with evident impairments may internalize the gaze of others that causes anxiety and a diminished sense of self-worth. Ben is aware of people’s staring at him and the look on their faces “that Ben knew only too well”⁴⁷⁴. He disliked being noticed: “it was being noticed, drawing attention on himself- that he mustn’t do”⁴⁷⁵.

When Ben is institutionalized once again in *Ben, in the World*, he is put into a “psychic state of exception,” in which he is reduced to bare life, who does not have any agency and subjectivity. By confining Ben to an institution, society physically separates him from the broader community. This spatial exclusion reflects the homo sacer’s exile in spaces allocated for individuals who are outside the norms of society. That part of institute in which Ben was imprisoned had “nothing to do with Brazil”, it was “under separate international control”⁴⁷⁶. Ben’s image of “kneeling on the floor of his cage, bang-banging his head on the wire”⁴⁷⁷ indicates how his psychological well-being is pathologized which is a reminder of his control by medical and legal authorities. In this state of exception imposed by society, Ben’s agency and decision-making capabilities are overridden: “they both had power,” and “would do something soon to make possession of ben legal. This time it would not be a kidnap: they would have the law behind them: Ben would be arrested on suspicion of something or other”⁴⁷⁸. His voice is completely ignored, leaving him no personal autonomy. This psychological exemption best mirrors the homo sacer’s lack of political agency and voicelessness within the social order. Indeed, forced management of the disabled individuals represents the relationship between the sovereign and homo sacer: “... the sovereign is the one with respect to whom all men are potentially homines sacri”⁴⁷⁹. The decisions made by professionals, politicians, and those in positions of authority, operating as the sovereign, often lead to the exclusion of individuals with disabilities. This exclusion can manifest

⁴⁷³ Lessing, 38.

⁴⁷⁴ Lessing, 1.

⁴⁷⁵ Lessing, 40.

⁴⁷⁶ Lessing, 152.

⁴⁷⁷ Lessing, 146.

⁴⁷⁸ Lessing, 155.

⁴⁷⁹ Agamben, 84.

in various forms, ranging from the confinement of disabled individuals within institutions to the denial of their opportunities to actively contribute to society.

In *Lord of the Flies*, *The Fifth Child*, and *Ben, in the World*, disabled characters' treatment as homo sacer figures reveals the cruelty and exclusionary tendencies that can arise when individuals deviate from social norms. The disabled characters' marginalization is not just a result of their physical and intellectual differences but is also tied to the social and cultural constructions of disability that view disabled individuals as undesirable. The "psychic state of exception" reflects disabled individuals' awareness of being treated differently, leading to a sense of being excluded from the social interactions that others take for granted. Society needs to value diversity and protect the rights of those with disabilities, adopting an environment of acceptance rather than violence and exclusion. As Alex Murray states, "The state of exception, like biopolitics, is part of the structure of the political and must be rendered inoperative"⁴⁸⁰. By altering the legal status of individuals with disabilities, it becomes possible to challenge the barriers that have historically relegated them to the margins of society. Such legal reforms can ensure that people with disabilities are no longer subject to neglect and mistreatment within institutional settings or in wider society. It is crucial to challenge ableism and cultivate a culture that celebrates diversity and recognizes the inherent worth of every individual, regardless of their appearance or abilities.

3.3. STIGMATIZED AND SPOILED BODIES IN *LORD OF THE FLIES*, *THE FIFTH CHILD* AND *BEN, IN THE WORLD*

Erving Goffman's influential work, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, can assist in studying the marginalization of individuals with attributes thought to be undesirable or abnormal. While Goffman himself did not specifically focus on disability in his work, his perceptions can be applied to the subject. Goffman's stigma theory, as introduced in 1963, is a sociological concept that examines the process through which people are marginalized due to certain attributes that are considered abnormal or undesirable.⁴⁸¹ The theory highlights three types of stigma: physical

⁴⁸⁰ Murray, 186.

⁴⁸¹ Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, London, Penguin Books, 1963, 2.

deformities, blemishes of character (deviations in individual behaviors such as addiction, dishonesty, mental disorders, etc.), and tribal stigmas (race, nationality, religion).⁴⁸² Disability can fall under the category of physical deformities and blemishes of character in Goffman's context. By examining disability in literature through Goffman's stigma theory, one can get valuable insights into the ways authors have historically engaged with the topic and how these portrayals may contribute to or challenge social norms. Characters with disabilities in literary works might be depicted as miserable, catastrophic, or weak which perpetuates the stereotype that disabled individuals are unable to live fulfilling lives. Additionally, disabled characters might be portrayed as evil or villainous.

Applying Stigma theory, this study will attempt at revealing the complexity of disability representation in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child* and *Ben, in the World* and its impact on our collective understanding of the experiences of individuals with disabilities. In these works, the characters with disabilities are stigmatized by the society in which they live. The disabled characters who are devalued, can be seen as "stigmatized" and the abled characters who dehumanize the disabled, as "stigmatizers". In the process of stigmatization, individuals with disabilities are perceived as less desirable or weak due to their differences. This reduction in status can lead to stigmatization. As Goffman states:

While the stranger is present before us, evidence can arise of his possessing an attribute that makes him different from others in the category of persons available for him to be, and of a less desirable kind—in the extreme, a person who is quite thoroughly bad, or dangerous, or weak. He is thus reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one.⁴⁸³

That is when we come across a stranger; their difference from others can lead us to perceive them as flawed. This perception causes the able-bodied to view the disabled as someone who is diminished, rather than a complete and normal person. As a result, the perception and judgment of the disabled are influenced causing suspicion or devaluation.

In *Lord of the Flies*, characters with disability become stigmatized and expelled by society, experiencing disgrace and exclusion. Piggy, who is overweight, is

⁴⁸² Goffman, 4.

⁴⁸³ Goffman, 3.

stigmatized for looking fat and different. He is the most physically vulnerable of all the boys on the island with a history of being bullied who dislikes his nickname. His disabilities make him a victim of the other boys' cruelty and bullying. His inability to participate in physical activities and his dependence on his glasses for survival make him vulnerable within the group. No one calls Piggy by his real name – the reader never learns it. Roger sees Piggy as a “bag of fat”.⁴⁸⁴ Piggy stands near Ralph trying to catch his breath because of his “ass-mar”. He explains his asthma to Ralph, “that’s right. Can’t catch my breath. I was the only boy in our school what had asthma, and I’ve been wearing specs since I was three.”⁴⁸⁵ He is an apparent example of an outcast: “I don’t care what they call me, so long as they don’t call me what they used to call me at school... Piggy”⁴⁸⁶. Piggy is often excluded from the other boys’ activities, and his attempts to offer suggestions are often met with ridicule. Jack belittles Piggy and leaves him behind simply because he is different: “You’re no good on a job like this” “All the same- ““We don’t want you,” said Jack flatly, “three’s enough.” ... “I was with him when he found the conch. I was with [Ralph] before anyone was.” ... “You can’t come”.⁴⁸⁷ Other boys (Stigmatizers) see him as weak, unimportant, and inferior, leading to his identity being “spoiled” in the eyes of the group. Stigma can also lead to the dehumanization of stigmatizers as the stigmatizers’ mistreatment of Piggy ultimately leads to his tragic fate and the destruction of society on the island.

Another example of physical fragility is Simon who experiences fainting and random fits. He is an outsider, and his solitary nature, spiritual beliefs, and tendency to faint during stressful situations make him another victim of the other boys’ hostility. Simon is usually considered an oddity by the others. He is “a skinny, vivid little boy, with a glance coming up from under a hut of straight hair that hung down, black and coarse”⁴⁸⁸. He is often seen drifting by himself in a vague and dreamy state. Simon is not understood by the majority, and often is feared and disregarded. He fancies that the head speaks to him in the ‘voice of a schoolmaster’; it scares him and leads him into a seizure. Piggy is mentioned as “fatty”, while Simon as “batty”. Simon predicts his own

⁴⁸⁴ Golding, 198.

⁴⁸⁵ Golding, 9.

⁴⁸⁶ Golding, 9.

⁴⁸⁷ Golding, 24.

⁴⁸⁸ Golding, 24.

death when he tells Ralph that Ralph will “get back all right”⁴⁸⁹, suggesting that only Ralph will be saved. He is mostly differentiated because of his actions since he has a secret place, where he spends time alone. Throughout the novel, boys mess about and disregard him. His spiritual beliefs and visions are also seen as strange and incomprehensible by the other boys. This leads to his stigmatization and exclusion from the group, as well as his eventual death at the hands of the stigmatizers. His death shows how that social norms and stigmatization can lead to violence and cruelty. Indeed, the other boys’ inability to recognize his value as a human being ultimately leads to his tragic fate.

In chapter two of *Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Goffman argues about the role of “stigma symbols.” Stigmatized individuals regularly use symbols as “disidentifiers” so that they can pass as normal. These “covering attempts” can be challenging. When the stigmatized covers the stigma to pass as normal, they avoid close contacts with others, and this leads to self-dislike. Piggy’s glasses are an essential part of him. The reader often notices that “Piggy’s glasses flashed”⁴⁹⁰. When Piggy loses possession of his glasses, he becomes less abled physically. (The glasses turn out to be a stigma symbol rather than a scientific tool.) Indeed, Piggy’s worth is signified by his glasses, which the boys use as a tool to make fire. He is ultimately accepted by the other boys (although reluctantly), when they notice that his glasses can be used to make fire. Piggy also believes that holding the conch gives him the right to be heard (it benefits him.) Without it Piggy literally gets squashed. With it, everyone gets an unbiased chance (it doesn’t matter if he is fat and not athletic, and his voice is important just as much as anyone else’s.) This explains why he protects it when being attacked by Jack and his gang by holding it up and asking, “Which is better—to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill?”⁴⁹¹

In Doris Lessing’s *The Fifth Child*, Ben is born into an affluent family. His physical appearance and behavior immediately make him different from the members of his family. His disability can be categorized both as physical deformities and blemishes of character in Goffman’s framework since he is larger and more muscular than other

⁴⁸⁹ Golding, 111.

⁴⁹⁰ Golding, 1,4.

⁴⁹¹ Golding, 180.

children, and his behavior is often aggressive and unpredictable. He was “eleven pounds”⁴⁹² at birth while his siblings were “not more than seven pounds”⁴⁹³. Lessing describes the newly born Ben as follows:

He was not a pretty baby. He did not look like a baby at all. He had a heavy-shouldered look, as if he were crouching there as he lay. His forehead sloped from his eyes to his crown. His hair grew in an unusual pattern from the double crown where started a wedge or triangle that came low on the forehead, the hair lying forward in a thick yellowish stubble, while the side and back hair grew downwards. His hands were thick and heavy, with pads of muscle in the palms. ... [his eyes] were focused greeny-yellow eyes, like lumps of soapstone.⁴⁹⁴

Ben is described as a remarkable departure from the norm. Lessing focuses on his extraordinary physical attributes, including his exceptional size and strength that surpass the typical expectations for an infant. This depiction sharply contrasts with the conventional image of a vulnerable newborn. Through her vivid portrayal, Lessing evokes a sense of unease and hints at the forthcoming challenges that Ben’s presence will pose to his family.

As Ben grows up, his parents struggle to cope with his behavior and are unable to provide him with the care he needs. He is different from his siblings and is prone to aggressive outbursts. At four months “he was like an angry, hostile little troll”. When he was breast fed, “he resisted, he strove, he fought – and then he turned his head and closed his jaws over her thumb. Not as an ordinary baby will, in the sucking bite that relieves the pain of teething, or explores the possibilities of a mouth, tongue”⁴⁹⁵. Ben’s physical and emotional differences challenge the Lovatts’ expectations of what a normal child should be, and this leads to their rejection of him. As a result, he is subjected to various forms of medical treatment and even institutionalization. As Goffman states, “the tendency for a stigma to spread from the stigmatized individual to his close connections provides a reason why such relations either tend to be avoided or to be terminated, where existing.”⁴⁹⁶ Ben is labelled as “monster”⁴⁹⁷, “little beast”⁴⁹⁸, “a troll,

⁴⁹² Lessing, 60.

⁴⁹³ Lessing, 60.

⁴⁹⁴ Lessing, 60.

⁴⁹⁵ Lessing, 69.

⁴⁹⁶ Lessing, 30.

⁴⁹⁷ Lessing, 58.

⁴⁹⁸ Lessing, 60.

or a goblin or something”⁴⁹⁹, “the nasty little brute”⁵⁰⁰, “dwarf”⁵⁰¹, “freak”⁵⁰², “mongol”⁵⁰³, “hobgoblin”⁵⁰⁴, “Dumbo”⁵⁰⁵, “Dopey”⁵⁰⁶ by the members of family and the community as stigmatizers. Their negative reactions to Ben’s difference indicate how social norms lead to the stigmatization of those who are seen as different. In this way, Lessing’s novel can serve as a commentary on the way that social norms lead to the stigmatization of individuals who do not fit into traditional molds.

In the sequel, *Ben, in the World*, Ben’s identity as a young adult continues to be shaped by the stigma attached to his disabilities. The reader observes Ben’s lack of conventional career or financial stability, and his unusual lifestyle throughout the novel. Others see him as an odd creature and label him as “yeti”⁵⁰⁷, “ape, baboon, pig-man, pongo”⁵⁰⁸, “alien”⁵⁰⁹, “bete and cochon”⁵¹⁰ which leads to his exclusion from mainstream society. Individuals with disabilities often face physical, emotional, and social barriers that make it difficult for them to fully participate in society. As Gofman states, “the stigmatized individual tends to hold the same beliefs about identity that we do; this is a pivotal fact. His deepest feelings about what he is may be his sense of being a ‘normal person,’ a human being like anyone else, a person, therefore, who deserves a fair chance and a fair share⁵¹¹”. Ben wanted to join people “but did not know how to”⁵¹². Through his quest to discover his place in the world, he encounters misuse, which can indicate the susceptibility faced by stigmatized individuals in society. When people persuade him to accept the tests and become a laboratory mouse for research purposes, they tell him:

⁴⁹⁹ Lessing, 61.

⁵⁰⁰ Lessing, 67.

⁵⁰¹ Lessing, 68.

⁵⁰² Lessing, 74.

⁵⁰³ Lessing, 74.

⁵⁰⁴ Lessing, 76.

⁵⁰⁵ Lessing, 134.

⁵⁰⁶ Lessing, 134.

⁵⁰⁷ Lessing, 11.

⁵⁰⁸ Lessing, 28.

⁵⁰⁹ Lessing, 78.

⁵¹⁰ Lessing, 83.

⁵¹¹ Lessing, 7.

⁵¹² Lessing, 28.

‘They want to find out about your people’.

“‘I don’t have any people. I’m not like my family – at home. They are all different from me. I’ve never seen anyone like me.’

‘I’ve seen people like you,’ said Alfredo

But because he was too happy to bear it, and he got up and began a stamping dance around the room, letting out short barking roars which the two observers knew meant that a lifetime’s sorrow was being dissolved away.

‘people like me,’ Ben was chanting, ‘like me, people like Ben.’ And he interrupted his dance to ask, ‘just like me?’

‘Yes, just like you.’

‘Will you take me to them?’⁵¹³

Upon discovering that there are others like him, Ben’s reaction is one of immense joy. He becomes so excited and seeks confirmation if they are indeed like him. Assured that they are, his excitement grows, and he eagerly expresses a desire to be taken to them which demonstrates Ben’s deep longing for connection and a sense of belonging among individuals who share his distinct identity. Truly, he is resilient and desires acceptance and a sense of belonging in the world despite the challenges he faces. Ben’s experience of exploitation in the novel provides a commentary on the broader social attitudes and structures that preserve the stigmatization of disabled individuals.

Goffman, in his exploration of stigmatized conditions, introduced the concept of three distinct groups: the “own,” the “wise,” and the “normals.” The “own” refers to individuals who share the stigmatized condition, intimately understanding the challenges and experiences faced by others who carry the same stigma. The “wise” are those who are considered “normal” by social standards, but due to their close association with a stigmatized person, possess knowledge into that person’s condition. Lastly, the “normal” are individuals who do not bear any form of stigma themselves. Goffman argues that, in general, both the “own” and the “wise” groups tend to exhibit greater empathy and understanding towards those who are stigmatized. This empathy arises from personal experiences and close relationships that expose them to the unique struggles faced by stigmatized individuals. Conversely, the “normals,” who lack

⁵¹³ Lessing, 126.

personal connection to stigmatized individuals, may have limited awareness and comprehension of the challenges faced by those who carry such stigmas.⁵¹⁴

In *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy, Simon, and littluns who are the bearers of the negative difference can be categorized as the “own”. Goffman stated that “...in being a member of the [“own”] category, an individual may have an increased probability of coming into contact with any other member, and even forming a relationship”⁵¹⁵. This can explain the kind approach and care Piggy and Simon have towards the littluns. The second group is “the wise” who are “normal but whose special situation has made them intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic with it, and who find themselves accorded a measure of acceptance, a measure of courtesy membership in the clan.”⁵¹⁶ Ralph which is close to piggy can be categorized as the “wise”. He is more sympathetic and thus perceives Piggy’s signs of disability as less dangerous and less discarding compared to “normals.” Stigma not only affects the experiences of “the own,” but it also affects “the wise”. Ralph recognizes that piggy thinks differently and more productively than himself: “Once more that evening Ralph had to adjust his values. Piggy could think. He could go step by step inside that fat head of his, only Piggy was no chief. But Piggy, for all his ludicrous body, had brains.”⁵¹⁷ Piggy is considered Ralph’s advisor. He cannot be the leader since he lacks leadership qualities and has no connection with the other boys. His loyalty comes from his awareness that he is disabled than from real alliance. It seems that he is somewhat jealous of Ralph’s ability to do things that he cannot.

In *The Fifth Child*, John seems to be the only “the wise” figure in Ben’s life. Ben gets attached to him in a short time. He waited for “John to arrive; then followed him around like a puppy. John did not mind Ben at all. He was a big, shaggy, amiable youth, good-natured, patient: he treated Ben in a rough-and-ready way, as if Ben were indeed a puppy that needed training”⁵¹⁸. In the sequel, *Ben, in the world*, Ellen Biggs is one of the few people who can touch Ben: “he let her wash him. He knew this washing was

⁵¹⁴ Goffman, 23-30.

⁵¹⁵ Goffman, 23-24.

⁵¹⁶ Goffman, 28.

⁵¹⁷ Golding, 83.

⁵¹⁸ Lessing, 110.

something he had to do, from time to time”⁵¹⁹. The old woman “enjoyed hearing him laugh: it was like a bark. Long ago she had a dog who barked like that”⁵²⁰. However, she was kind to him as if he was her pet: “she thought that he was like an intelligent dog, always trying to anticipate wants and commands. Not like a cat at all: that was a different kind of sensitivity. And he was not like a monkey, for he was slow and heavy.”⁵²¹ Ben always “remembered the old woman’s, ‘You’re a good boy, Ben.’”⁵²² Even after her death Ben cannot forget her: “Ben knew Ellen Biggs had died, but that did not prevent him from thinking about her, someone who would welcome him if he arrived at her door”⁵²³. Mary is another woman who cares for Ben: “he thought Mary was good to him. She mended his clothes, bought him a new thick jersey for the winter, and gave him plenty of meat to eat”⁵²⁴. Rita, a prostitute who liked Ben, was one of the few people who did not stare at him at first sight, instead “she had smiled at him”⁵²⁵. Ben cannot forget her since “she was kind, she felt for him. But not Johnston: no. He was an enemy”⁵²⁶. Rita “insisted that ben was nice, he was just a bit different from other people, that’s all”⁵²⁷. Rita’s partner Johnston, “did not care what happened to this freak, but Rita was crying”⁵²⁸. In his loneliness Ben remembers these two women’s kindness: “He was thinking of Mrs. Biggs’ room, where he had been happy, looking after her, of Rita, who had been kind, and then of his own home, but as soon as he imagined his mother, he saw, too, that scene where she had sat on the park bench and patted it so that Paul could come and sit by her”⁵²⁹. Teresa, the American filmmaker’s girlfriend is the last “the wise” figure who cares for Ben: “But Teresa, ben knew, was really kind: he could feel she was”⁵³⁰. She says Ben “feels things the way we do”⁵³¹. She is pictured as one who sincerely treats Ben as a normal person:

‘Dear Ben,’ she said often, hugging him, making him want to do what he knew he must not. But no one else touched him. Only Teresa came inside the distance all

⁵¹⁹ Lessing, 9.

⁵²⁰ Lessing, 9.

⁵²¹ Lessing, 12.

⁵²² Lessing, 95.

⁵²³ Lessing, 118.

⁵²⁴ Lessing, 18.

⁵²⁵ Lessing, 36.

⁵²⁶ Lessing, 45.

⁵²⁷ Lessing, 45.

⁵²⁸ Lessing, 45.

⁵²⁹ Lessing, 74.

⁵³⁰ Lessing, 90.

⁵³¹ Lessing, 163.

the others between them and him. Only Teresa would take his hand, swing it, drop it; squeeze his big shoulders and say, 'Oh, your shoulders, what shoulders, Ben,' or put her arm around him as she stood talking to someone.⁵³²

Teresa “knew that this was a child she was holding, or at least a child’s misery”⁵³³. She “had seen everything in her short life of extremes of all kinds, knew very well that this Ben, the unknown, was in a crisis, was undergoing some kind of inner change”⁵³⁴. She strongly believed that Ben has the right to make decisions for his life: “she said aloud, ‘ben must “decide for himself.”’⁵³⁵ She tries to protect him against the people from institute: “She said, ‘He is a person of Britain.’ She did not know the word citizen. ‘You can’t make him do anything.’”⁵³⁶ She understands Ben and shows empathy to him: “Teresa tried to imagine what it was like, believing yourself to be the only person in the world like yourself, knowing you are alone, dependent on chance kindnesses, used but then abandoned – but she couldn’t imagine it, only a panic of emptiness and aloneness that gripped her, making her cold and sick”⁵³⁷. This depicts Teresa’s struggle to connect with Ben’s unique circumstances, leaving her profoundly distressed.

Self-stigmatization refers to the phenomenon wherein an individual becomes cognizant of social stigmatization, accepts the associated stereotypes, and internalizes them by applying them to themselves. Bathje and Marston claim that self-stigmatization is a component of stigmatization and that it exists within the context of public stigma. They define self-stigma as “the process in which a person with a mental health diagnosis becomes aware of public stigma, agrees with those stereotypes, and internalizes them by applying them to the self”⁵³⁸. They state: “there is often an assumption that avoidance of treatment services is related to fear of stigmatization, it is also important to recognize that mental health service providers sometimes contribute to stigmatization.”⁵³⁹ Alison J Gray in “Stigma in psychiatry”, discusses two kinds of stigma: “felt stigma” and “enacted stigma”:

⁵³² Lessing, 95.

⁵³³ Lessing, 99.

⁵³⁴ Lessing, 103.

⁵³⁵ Lessing, 137.

⁵³⁶ Lessing, 137.

⁵³⁷ Lessing, 162.

⁵³⁸ Geoff J Bathje, and Holloway N. Marston, “Self-Stigmatization”, *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology*, 2014, 1714, Retrieved 3 July 2020, from springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-1-4614-5583-7_395, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5583-7_395.

⁵³⁹ Bathje et al., 1714.

Felt stigma (internal stigma or self-stigmatization) refers to the shame and expectation of discrimination that prevents people from talking about their experiences and stops them seeking help. Enacted stigma (external stigma, discrimination) refers to the experience of unfair treatment by others. Felt stigma can be as damaging as enacted stigma since it leads to withdrawal and restriction of social support.⁵⁴⁰

That is felt stigma encompasses the shame and fear of discrimination that individuals experience, causing them to conceal their struggles and avoid seeking assistance. On the other hand, enacted stigma involves being subjected to unfair treatment by others. Both stigmas are harmful, as felt stigma leads to isolation and the refusing of social support.

In *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy's asthma, obesity, and myopia set him apart from the other boys and contribute to his stigmatization. The nicknaming him "Piggy" reflects Goffman's idea of reducing an individual "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one"⁵⁴¹. Piggy is a social outcast who lacks confidence: "'I don't care what they call me,' he said confidentially, 'so long as they don't call me what they used to call me at school.'" Ralph was faintly interested. 'What was that?' The fat boy glanced over his shoulder, then leaned toward Ralph. He whispered. 'They used to call me 'Piggy.'"⁵⁴² He is behaved as an outlet for the other boys: "Immediately, Ralph and the crowd of boys were united and relieved by a storm of laughter. Piggy once more was the center of social derision so that everyone felt cheerful and normal."⁵⁴³ The reader can realize the internalization of stigma (self-stigma) and the shame in Piggy when he is very cowardly in the presence of Jack and others. He does not like Jack, but he accepts that he is a leader. When Jack is absent, he feels like he can finally contribute without being judged: "Piggy was so full of delight and expanding liberty in Jack's departure, so full of pride in his contribution to the good of society that he helped to fetch wood."⁵⁴⁴ Simon's self-stigmatization is fueled by his epileptic attacks and his inability to conform to the group's primitive instincts. The other boys say that: "He is always throwing a faint ... He did in Gib; and Addis; and at matins over the precentor."⁵⁴⁵ Simon's shame caused by his frequent epilepsy attacks makes him to prefer being apart

⁵⁴⁰ Alison J. Gray, "Stigma in Psychiatry", *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 95(2), Feb. 2002, 72–76, Retrieved 2 July 2020, from <https://doi.org/10.1177/014107680209500205>.

⁵⁴¹ Goffman, 3.

⁵⁴² Golding, 5.

⁵⁴³ Golding, 165.

⁵⁴⁴ Golding, 142.

⁵⁴⁵ Golding, 22.

from the other boys on the island, spending time alone in the jungle, where he finds solace and a connection to nature. Consequently, he is expelled by the other boys, who view him as different leading to his tragic death. Piggy and Simon's fate in the novel serves as a metaphor for the vulnerability of those who are stigmatized by society.

In *The Fifth Child*, Ben is born into an ideal family, but his physical deformities and blemishes of character set him apart from his siblings. His family is unable to cope with his disabilities, so they decide to institutionalize him which delivers him further negative feelings about himself. Later when "he had become part of the group of young unemployed, who hung about on pavements, sat around in cafes, sometimes did odd jobs, went to the cinema, rushed about on motorbikes or in borrowed cars"⁵⁴⁶, he "become a pet or a mascot for this group of young men" and "they treated him roughly, it seemed to Harriet, even unkindly, calling him Dopey, Dwarfey, Alien Two, Hobbit, and Gremlin"⁵⁴⁷; "But he was happy", "He was teased and roughed up, but accepted"⁵⁴⁸. Apparently, he had internalized and accepted those negative labels and attitudes of others: "he had taken to calling himself Poor Ben. He had heard someone say this? In the group of young men and their girls, had someone said, 'Poor Ben!' – and he had then known it fitted him? Was this how he thought of himself? If so, this was a window into a Ben concealed from them, and it broke one's heart – broke Harriet's heart, to be accurate"⁵⁴⁹. Lessing conveys Ben's internalized emotions by depicting how he labels himself as "Poor Ben" after overhearing the phrase in a group. This indicates Ben's complex and deeply touching internal struggles that evoke a sense of empathy and grief.

In *Ben, in the World*, Ben feels like an outcast that does not belong. His experiences of rejection from his early life have led to a negative self-image, and he has internalized the negative attitudes of others. As a result, he is self-conscious about his physical appearance and begins to believe that he is a burden to his family. Ben wanted to be invisible, to slip away from the world unnoticed. He avoids drawing attention to himself, which reflects his sense of being ashamed and stigmatized. When a clerk said that he could not be eighteen, "ben was silent. He was on the alert, every bit of him,

⁵⁴⁶ Lessing, 111.

⁵⁴⁷ Lessing, 113-114.

⁵⁴⁸ Lessing, 114.

⁵⁴⁹ Lessing, 117.

knowing there was danger. He wished he could not come to this place, which could close its walls around him”⁵⁵⁰. When Mary, who has not paid his wage dies, “Ben was going to say something about the money owed to him, but this instincts shouted at him, Danger – and he ran away”⁵⁵¹. He was careful to be “silent and watchful, on his guard”⁵⁵². In public, “he walked about a place for too long people would start noticing him. He did walk about for as long as he dared, glancing into people’s faces for ‘the look’”⁵⁵³. He is insecure about his physical appearance and the way it makes him stand out from others, which means he has internalized society’s negative attitudes about himself.

Literature offers examples of how people with disabilities are stigmatized and how this stigmatization can lead to negative outcomes such as social isolation and low self-esteem. The internal and external stigmatization experienced by characters in *Lord of the Flies* and *Ben in The Fifth Child* and *Ben in the World* emphasize the importance of indorsing greater understanding and empathy towards people with disabilities, and of challenging the social norms and stereotypes that contribute to stigmatization. As Goffman states, “society establishes the means of categorizing persons and the complement of attributes felt to be ordinary and natural for members of each of these categories. Social settings establish the categories of persons likely to be encountered there. The routines of social intercourse in established settings allow us to deal with anticipated others without special attention or thought”⁵⁵⁴. By challenging these attitudes, a more inclusive and accepting society where people with disabilities are valued for their contributions, rather than stigmatized for their differences would be possible.

3.4. BODIES AS “MATER OUT OF PLACE” IN *LORD OF THE FLIES*, *THE FIFTH CHILD* AND *BEN, IN THE WORLD*

In the context of disability studies, Mary Douglas’s concept of “dirt” can be used to explore the ways in which disabled people are often viewed and how these attitudes

⁵⁵⁰ Lessing, 2.

⁵⁵¹ Lessing, 19.

⁵⁵² Lessing, 19.

⁵⁵³ Lessing, 23.

⁵⁵⁴ Goffman, 10-11.

can influence their social exclusion. Moreover, the insights of the disabled body as “matter out of place” can be valuable in comprehending the bias against difference and the antagonism directed towards individuals with disabilities within Western society and culture. According to Douglas, “dirt” is not just a physical substance, but a social and cultural construct that can be used to categorize and marginalize individuals or groups who do not conform to societal norms. Douglas argues that purity is a fundamental concern in every culture and can be achieved by eliminating “dirt.” For Douglas “dirt” encompasses any departure from the established cultural norms, or “the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements”⁵⁵⁵. The commonly known definition of “dirt” as “matter out of place” includes two significant elements. These are “an arrangement of organized relationships” and a violation of that arrangement.⁵⁵⁶ She believes that “system” can be found where there is “dirt” because “dirt” is not an inherent or objective characteristic of something, but a residual category of items that do not fit into the typical classification scheme. It serves as a label for all events that disrupt, or challenge established categories, and it is a relative term as cleanliness is determined in relation to other things.⁵⁵⁷ According to Douglas, things can be considered “out of place” if they are either anomalous or ambiguous. An anomaly is an element that does not conform to a given set or series, while ambiguity refers to something that can be interpreted in two different ways.⁵⁵⁸ Objects or concepts that are anomalous or ambiguous are perceived as unclean because they challenge established classifications and do not fit into them. This directly undermines the social structure, causing such objects or concepts to be viewed as disgusting and potentially dangerous.

Douglas further argues that regardless of the context, anomaly and ambiguity elicit some sort of response, as encountering them creates a sense that a “system of values” has been “violated”⁵⁵⁹. To alleviate the unease that arises from such transgressions, they must be restrained in the first place and, when they do, they are

⁵⁵⁵ Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature*, Columbia University Press, New York 2017, 35.

⁵⁵⁶ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo with a New Preface by the Author*, Routledge, London New York 1966, 44.

⁵⁵⁷ Douglas, 10, 44-45.

⁵⁵⁸ Douglas, 47.

⁵⁵⁹ Douglas, 50.

resolved. This involves “pollution behavior,” a deliberate and inventive process that aims to tidy up dirt and reduce dissonance. She argues that rejecting dirt, “is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to reorganize the environment”⁵⁶⁰, and pollution behavior approves “that the order in external physical events conforms to the structure of ideas”⁵⁶¹. Douglas explains that when transgressions occur, there are various ways to address them. Violations of pollution rules can be “punished by political decree, sometimes by attack on the transgressor, and sometimes by grave or trivial sanctions”.⁵⁶² The act of labeling something as “dirt” serves a crucial function as the negative connotation of the term publicly denounces any contradiction or confusion that has led to the disruption of cherished classifications. As Douglas writes: “when something is classified firmly as anomalous [or ambiguous], the outline of the set of which it is not a member is clarified”⁵⁶³. Labelling something “out of place” (dirty) simultaneously establishes what would be “in place” (clean). Alternatively, it can be said that any system of power inherently involves exclusion of certain elements (or “dirt”) and examining what is rejected or exploited is a way to gain insight into these systems. Douglas’ theory examines how various cultures respond to dirt, and she argues that cultures establish fundamental categories that organize their ideas and values. According to her, “any system of classification must give rise to anomalies, and any given culture must confront events which seem to defy its assumptions”⁵⁶⁴. Failure to address these anomalies could result in a loss of credibility. Based on this premise, Douglas outlines five strategies that cultures use to manage dirt in their society: reducing ambiguity by conveying a total interpretation of the anomaly, avoiding them, eliminating them, labeling them as dangerous, and integrating them into ritual to “enrich meaning or to call attention to other levels of existence”⁵⁶⁵.

In William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, characters with disabilities, explicitly Piggy and Simon are isolated and denounced due to differences which are seen as deviating from the norm by the other boys. As discussed, dirt is not just a physical substance according to Douglas, but a social and cultural construct that can be used to

⁵⁶⁰ Douglas, 2.

⁵⁶¹ Douglas, 53.

⁵⁶² Douglas, 53.

⁵⁶³ Douglas, 47.

⁵⁶⁴ Douglas, 48.

⁵⁶⁵ Douglas, 41.

categorize and marginalize certain individuals or groups. Piggy's disability is often associated with ideas of dirtiness and impurity throughout the novel. The other boys mock him for his asthma, obesity, and shortsightedness which they perceive as defective. The name "Piggy" is used as a derogatory nickname and a way for the other boys to mock and belittle him. Pigs are often attributed with various qualities and characteristics, depending on the context and cultural beliefs. They are often associated with being dirty animals, as they have a reputation for rolling around in mud and other filth. "Pig" is often used as an offensive term to describe someone who is considered dirty, lazy, or gluttonous. It can also be used to insult someone's physical appearance, particularly their weight or body shape. These associations have led to negative connotations with the word "piggy" which is used as an insult. However, the perception of pigs as dirty is largely a cultural construction, and not necessarily a reflection of reality. The attitudes towards Piggy can reflect the social and cultural meanings attached to disability, which often position the disabled as somehow less valuable or less desirable than the non-disabled. In the context of the novel, Piggy's disability marks him as a "matter out of place" and a target for bullying and abuse. It is important to note that these attitudes are not inherent to Piggy or his disability but are instead the result of social and cultural constructions of disability that have been internalized by the other boys on the island. The application of the nickname "Piggy" serves as a means for the rest of the boys to assert their power and dominance over him, and this can emphasize the dangers and adverse effects of group dynamics. Simon, who is a skinny and faint-hearted boy suffering from seizures, is also seen as a "matter out of place" by the other boys due to his physical and mental differences which they interpret as defective. Even his quiet, sensitive nature contrasts with the aggressive behavior of the other boys, making him as different. Moreover, Simon's disability seems to be linked to ideas of spiritual or moral impurity. Since fainting spells and seizures are interpreted by some as evidence of possession by an evil spirit, Simon is sometimes referred to as "batty" or "crazy."⁵⁶⁶ These perspectives are indicative of wider cultural notions regarding disability as a type of deviance or anomaly, which may result in stigmatization and prejudicial treatment.

⁵⁶⁶ Golding, 143.

Doris Lessing's novel *The Fifth Child* provides an excellent example of Douglas' "dirt" concept in action, in the character of Ben. He is born with physical and mental differences that set him apart from his siblings and the rest of society. Anything that escapes categorization can disrupt the sense of order, and become dangerous, polluting and taboo. Hence, throughout the novel, we see how Ben is treated as a "matter out of place" due to these differences. He is described as a "monster" or "freak" by his family and others: "He's like a troll, or a goblin or something"⁵⁶⁷. His disability is portrayed as a deviation from the norm, a sign of his impurity and his family struggles to accept him as a member of the household: "the three older children stared down at the new-comer who was so different from them all: of a different substance, so it seemed to Harriet"⁵⁶⁸. This reaction was "because of his heavy, sallow lumpishness. And then there was this strange head of his, sloping back from the eyebrow ridges"⁵⁶⁹. His behavior is also unusual and often violent. These physical and behavioral differences mark him as "matter out of place" in the eyes of his family: "they would have to make sure that he was in his room at mealtimes and when the children were downstairs with the adults. Family times, in short"⁵⁷⁰. And since he is out of place, according to Luke, they sent "Ben away (to an institution) because he isn't really one of us."⁵⁷¹ Since violations of pollution rules can be punished sometimes by "trivial sanctions": Harriet took Ben back to bed, and said, "'if you start all that again, then I'm going to have to put that thing back on you.' He ground his teeth at her, his eyes blazing. But he was afraid, too. She was going to have to control him through fear"⁵⁷².

In the sequel *Ben, in the World*, Ben is a grown man with disability who is living on his own. Through the novel his disability is still portrayed as a deviation from the norm, a sign of his perceived "dirt" that continues to affect his interactions with society. He is often viewed with suspicion or fear by others and struggles to navigate the social and physical world around him. Likewise, his disability is linked to broader cultural beliefs about disability as a form of abnormality. His physical difference, struggle with communication, and social interaction are often interpreted by others as evidence of his

⁵⁶⁷ Lessing, 61.

⁵⁶⁸ Lessing, 62.

⁵⁶⁹ Lessing, 62.

⁵⁷⁰ Lessing, 72.

⁵⁷¹ Lessing, 93.

⁵⁷² Lessing, 107.

intellectual or moral deficiency, rather than as the result of his disability. He was seen as “a kind of yeti”⁵⁷³ for Matthew “who had scarcely spoken to him except for unkind remarks such as when the old dog died – ‘we don’t need another dog, we’ve got Ben.’”⁵⁷⁴ He is seen as “a matter out of place”, as for the Professor he is a “specimen” that “could answer questions, important questions, important for science – world science”⁵⁷⁵.

What is considered clean or pure is often determined by cultural norms. This can explain how disabled individuals are excluded based on their perceived violation of cultural norms, even if their actions may not necessarily be harmful in themselves. Garland-Thomson mentions Douglas’s five classified strategies that cultures use to manage dirt in their society: “dichotomization”, “elimination”, “segregation”, “labeling it dangerous”, and “incorporating the category into ritual”⁵⁷⁶. To her, only the last one “suggests the possibility of interpreting both dirt and disability not as discomfiting abnormalities or intolerable ambiguities, but rather as the entitled bearers of a fresh view of reality”⁵⁷⁷. People with disabilities often face diverse cultural reactions, but the most prevalent one among them is avoidance, which is frequently implemented through practices like segregation. In the case of mental differences, segregation seems to be the prevailing cultural reaction.

“Dichotomization”, “elimination”, and “segregation” are the major strategies towards the disabled characters in *Lord of the Flies*. Obesity, asthma, and myopia mark Piggy as “impure” so he is frequently mocked and excluded by the other boys. They call him derogatory names and often refuse to listen to him, even though he has valuable insights and ideas. When Piggy first confesses his nickname to Ralph, he asks Ralph not to tell anyone, but Ralph betrays him: “You’re talking too much,” said Jack Merridew. ‘Shut up, Fatty.’ Laughter arose”.⁵⁷⁸ Piggy’s intelligence and rationality are frequently overlooked because he does not conform to the group’s expectations of physical strength and agility. He is constantly excluded from social interactions: “The fat boy waited to be asked his name in turn, but this proffer of acquaintance was not made; the

⁵⁷³ Lessing, 17.

⁵⁷⁴ Lessing, 20.

⁵⁷⁵ Lessing, 153.

⁵⁷⁶ Garland-Thomson, 38.

⁵⁷⁷ Garland-Thomson, 38.

⁵⁷⁸ Golding, 21.

fair boy called Ralph smiled vaguely, stood up, and began to make his way once more toward the lagoon.”⁵⁷⁹ When he tries to talk, he gets disrespect and insult; Jack says: “You’re always scared. Yah—Fatty!”⁵⁸⁰ He is also excluded from hunting activities that marginalize him: “Aren’t I having none then?” The boys laughed at Piggy again. ‘You didn’t hunt.’”⁵⁸¹ Purity does not solely involve removing impurities, but rather it entails complete elimination of dirt. Over the course of history and across different regions people with disabilities have been considered expendable and subjected to violence. This can explain the violence against Piggy and Simon in the novel and their final homicides. The reader can see how the novel features the damaging nature of social norms and the consequences of excluding those who do not fit within these norms.

In *The Fifth Child*, Ben’s family struggles to accept him. They often treat him as a burden and a source of shame. This can be seen in the way his mother at first reacts to his birth and in the siblings’ avoidance of him. Harriet sees herself as a “woman who’d given birth to a freak”⁵⁸². She struggles to accept and integrate him into their family life. During her pregnancy Harriet feels a physical sensation with Ben; a “savage thing inside her”⁵⁸³ which she takes it as an “enemy”⁵⁸⁴ or a “monster”⁵⁸⁵, suggesting a sense of disorder or impurity even before he is born: “this new fetus was poisoning her”⁵⁸⁶. Doctors prescribed sedatives for her “But she thought of it as something to quiet the baby”⁵⁸⁷. David stops connection with the fifth child before he is born:

He had stopped putting his hand on her stomach, in the old companionable way, for he felt there was beyond he could manage with. It was not possible that such a tiny creature could be showing such fearful strength; and yet it did. And nothing he said seemed to reach Harriet, he felt, was possessed. Had gone right away from him, in this battle with the foetus, which he could not share.⁵⁸⁸

He undergoes a transformation in his relationship with Harriet and their unborn child due to the overwhelming strength he perceives in the fetus. Despite his attempts to communicate and connect with Harriet, he feels that his words have no effect, and that

⁵⁷⁹ Golding, 9.

⁵⁸⁰ Golding, 44-45.

⁵⁸¹ Golding, 78.

⁵⁸² Lessing, 74.

⁵⁸³ Lessing, 51.

⁵⁸⁴ Lessing, 51.

⁵⁸⁵ Lessing, 58.

⁵⁸⁶ Lessing, 41.

⁵⁸⁷ Lessing, 49.

⁵⁸⁸ Lessing, 49-50.

Harriet is under the influence of something beyond his comprehension. Harriet “addressed the being crouching in her womb: ‘Now you shut up or I’ll take another pill.’”⁵⁸⁹ She even “fantasized that she took the big kitchen knife, cut open her own stomach, lifted out the child”⁵⁹⁰. When she delivers the baby, “she cried out, ‘Thank God, thank God, it’s over at last!’”⁵⁹¹. Ben’s father’s reaction to him also reflects the family’s perception of him as a “matter out of place” element within their previously harmonious home: “David, the good father, hardly touched him”⁵⁹². When Harriet says, “he’s a little child,’ ..., ‘he’s, our child. ‘No, he’s not,’ said David, finally. ‘Well, he certainly isn’t mine.’”⁵⁹³ Later, Ben is also institutionalized and treated as a “matter out of place”. Society also treats Ben as an outcast and a problem to be solved, rather than as a person deserving of love and care. This is evident in the reactions of relatives and the wider community to Ben. One day when Harriet “came into the kitchen one day and heard her sister Sarah say to a cousin, ‘That Ben gives me the creeps. He’s like a goblin or a dwarf or something. I’d rather have poor Amy any day.’”⁵⁹⁴

Segregation can manifest when disabled individuals disrupt the established social order by not conforming to their expected place in society. This is exemplified by the language used by able-bodied people to degrade those with disabilities. Ben’s differences, both physical and behavioral, disturb the Lovatt family’s established order and beliefs. His family and society’s treatment of him reflects the dichotomization that people with disabilities often experience. As Hugh Raffles depicts, discourses of hygiene, along with new technologies and bureaucratic institutions focused on eradicating disease, shifted towards the eradication of people. As he states:

It was at this time [in 1920s Germany] that the new discourses of hygiene (which brought together eugenics, social Darwinism, political geography, bacteriology, parasitology, and entomology), new technologies of quarantine and delousing, and the development of bureaucratic institutions initially dedicated to the eradication of disease shifted with little friction to the eradication of people. The elimination of disease purified both race and society—by the mid-1930s, one and the same—and,

⁵⁸⁹ Lessing, 53.

⁵⁹⁰ Lessing, 59.

⁵⁹¹ Lessing, 60.

⁵⁹² Lessing, 69.

⁵⁹³ Lessing, 90.

⁵⁹⁴ Lessing, 68.

increasingly, the human victims of disease were seen as indistinguishable from its nonhuman carriers: rats, lice, and other invasive and parasitic ‘vermin.’⁵⁹⁵

This shift resulted in the devaluation of individuals, as they were perceived as invasive and parasitic “vermin.” The pursuit of racial purity and social purification became intertwined with the eradication efforts, stressing the alarming consequences of this ideological shift. In *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, Michel Foucault explores the historical practices of isolating individuals with mental illness. He focuses on how the decline of leprosy in the Western world during the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance contributed to the emergence of new methods of segregation. Previously, leprosariums had been prevalent across Europe as institutions for lepers. However, as leprosy diminished between the 14th and 17th centuries, other marginalized groups, such as destitute vagabonds, criminals, and those deemed mentally unstable, filled the void left by lepers. Once leprosy vanished, empty hospitals started to be filled with people considered “mad.” However, these individuals were not provided with any treatment or care. Instead, they were simply locked away in prisons.⁵⁹⁶ Similarly, Ben is locked in an institute with horrific settings without care: “On the floor, on a green foam-rubber mattress, lay Ben. He was unconscious. He was naked, inside a straitjacket. His pale-yellow tongue protruded from his mouth. His flesh was dead white, greenish. Everything – walls, the floor, and Ben – was smeared with excrement. A pool of dark yellow urine oozed from the pallet which was soaked”⁵⁹⁷.

In *Ben in the World*, Ben, treated as “dirt”, is denied opportunities for personal growth and employment. Ben’s struggle to find employment due to his appearance demonstrates how his perceived impurity and disorder create barriers in his life. He needed money for survival: “he knew money. He had learned that hard lesson. Without money you did not eat”⁵⁹⁸. When finding employments which were not usually decent works, he was almost always cheated: ““They took my money,’ -they stole everything.”⁵⁹⁹ His status as “dirt” poses significant challenges for him in seeking acceptance, love, and a sense of belonging. He consistently encounters the brutal truths

⁵⁹⁵ Hugh Raffles, “Against Purity”, *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 84(1), 2017, 171–182, Retrived 7 October 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.1353/sor.2017.0012>.

⁵⁹⁶ Foucault, 7-10.

⁵⁹⁷ Lessing, 99.

⁵⁹⁸ Lessing, 8.

⁵⁹⁹ Lessing, 13.

of a society that perceives him as a disruptive force to its established norms. His difficulties in finding acceptance and belonging emphasize the subjective nature of social norms and the segregation that they create for individuals who do not fit the normal model. Ultimately, when he is not classified as a normal human, he is caged in an institute and treated like a laboratory mouse: “ben, kneeling on the floor of his cage, bang-banging his head on the wire. He had not been drugged: Professor Stephen wanted him uncontaminated. He was unclothed, this creature who had been clothed since he was born. In the corner of his cage was a pile of dung”⁶⁰⁰. He is treated as a scientific subject, resembling a caged animal, with no clothes on, isolated and kept in unclean conditions.

The treatment of disability and difference in *Lord of the Flies*, *The Fifth Child* and *Ben, in the World* reflects social tendencies to exclude and eliminate individuals with disability. These novels can serve as a critique of a society that values outer appearances over genuine empathy and understanding. Douglas’s concept of dirt can stand as a tool for challenging the toxic attitudes towards disability and disabled individuals. By recognizing that disability is a natural part of human diversity, and that the notion of “dirt” is a socially constructed idea, we can work to shift society’s perceptions of disability and promote a more inclusive environment for the disabled. By doing so, we can also challenge and transform social norms. Disability should not be viewed as a flaw or deviation, but rather as a variation of human experience that should be embraced and celebrated.

This chapter examined the disabilities of Piggy, Simon, and Ben, focusing on sociocultural factors. It drew on theories by Foucault, Agamben, Goffman, and Douglas to understand the construction and perception of disability. The concepts of biopower and biopolitics by Foucault shed light on the experiences of disabled individuals and how society constructs disability. Agamben’s notion of homo sacer reveals the political implications of disability and exclusion. Goffman’s stigma theory explores the marginalization of individuals with undesirable attributes, including disability. Finally, Douglas’s concept of “dirt” helps understand the biases against difference. These theories provide insights into social norms and attitudes and power relations that support the marginalization of disabled individuals.

⁶⁰⁰ Lessing, 146.

CHAPTER FOUR

PSYCHOANALITICAL APPROACH TO DISABILITY IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S *LORD OF THE FLIES* AND DORIS LESSING'S *THE FIFTH CHILD AND BEN, IN THE WORLD*

4.1. DISABLIST CULTURE: ENCOUNTER BETWEEN DISABLED AND NONDISABLED

Literary disability studies aim at exploring representations of disability in literature and the ways in which these representations shape cultural attitudes toward disability. Since psychoanalysis plays a crucial role in the biopsychosocial approach to disability in literature by enriching our understanding of the psychological aspects of disability, it can reveal more about the experiences of individuals with disabilities and the social attitudes about them. This perspective allows for a critical examination of the ways in which literary texts both challenge and reinforce ableist assumptions, and how they contribute to the construction of disability as a social and cultural experience. Moreover, it offers a valuable framework for comprehending the ways in which subconscious beliefs and defense mechanisms within society contribute to the establishment of a disablist culture. According to Woodhill, “social semiotics of disability is a powerful tool in the analysis of the situation and social construction of persons with disabilities”⁶⁰¹. It can display how differences that are acquired earlier by people can establish our conscious and unconscious pictures of being disabled.

Several theories of psychoanalysis can be applied to literary disability studies to extend our understanding of the experiences disabled individuals, as well as the broader social context in which they live. Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, and Julia Kristeva are three key figures in the development of psychoanalytic theory, and their ideas have been influential in the application of disability psychoanalysis in literary disability studies. This chapter will apply psychoanalytic theories of Freud, Lacan and Kristeva to study disability and disablist culture in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child* and *Ben, in the World*. In doing so it aims to provide a broader

⁶⁰¹ Gary Woodhill, “The Social Semiotics of Disability”, In M.H. Rioux and M. Bach (eds), *Disability Is Not Measles: New Research Paradigms in Disability*, Ontario 1994, 219.

context for understanding the experiences of characters with disabilities, and to emphasize the importance of social factors in shaping their psychological development.

4.1.1. Sigmund Freud and the Disablist Culture

While some psychologists and scholars today view Sigmund Freud's ideas as outdated and very simplistic, it is undeniable that his contributions have profoundly shaped the field of psychology and left a lasting impact on literature and cultural studies. Although Freud did not extensively address disability or the disabled body in his writings, some of his concepts can be relevantly applied to understanding attitudes towards disability. Freud introduces the concept of "castration anxiety," both literal and symbolic, as a crucial psychological event within the framework of the Oedipus complex. He first introduced the concept in an article titled "On the Sexual Theories of Children,"⁶⁰² which was published in the same periodical as "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness" in 1908. This article is part of a broader collection of writings where he extensively developed the themes of childhood sexuality and the role of sexuality in the context of civilization's demands. These themes were initially explored in his work *Three Essays* in 1905. Together, these writings provide a comprehensive exploration of the complex interplay between childhood and adult sexuality and the effects of social norms and expectations.

Freud examines the psychosexual development of children and introduces the idea of castration anxiety as a significant factor in the Oedipus complex. The child becomes aware of their inability to contend with the father's authority, and it is during this complex that the child realizes their inability to compete with the power of their father.⁶⁰³ Jeffrey M. Preston in *Fantasizing Disability: Representation of loss and limitation in Popular Television and Film* argues that likewise when confronted with disability, those without disabilities are reminded of their own vulnerability and question their own weaknesses. This uneasiness is inevitable as the able-bodied individual recognizes the potentiality of becoming disabled while also appreciating their current state of wholeness. Like so, there is a link between disability (seen as a threat to

⁶⁰² Sigmund Freud, *On the Sexual Theories of Children*, White Press, 2014.

⁶⁰³ Freud, 9-26.

wholeness) and castration. In essence, disability evokes similar fears and anxieties as those associated with being castrated.⁶⁰⁴

To understand this anxiety, one can look at Freud's concept of 'the uncanny,' which is an unusual type of uneasiness that goes beyond normal fear. Freud describes it as a sense of fear and discomfort arising from something that was once familiar but has become repressed in the unconscious mind.⁶⁰⁵ It involves the return of desires that were once known but have been suppressed. Freud connects the uncanny with castration anxiety and suggests that it stems from a deep fear of losing one's sexual organs. This intense emotion about the threat of losing the sexual organ extends to the idea of losing other body parts as well.⁶⁰⁶ When encountering disability, it triggers an uncanny experience for those without disabilities, as it brings back repressed childhood fears and anxieties. Likewise, the feeling of the uncanny can emerge when an abled body encounters a body or a form that deviates from social standards. In this context, disability challenges social norms regarding the body, that can lead to an uncanny sensation when encountering disabled bodies.

In the context of disability studies Freud's concept of castration anxiety is crucial in understanding both one's response to disability and to individuals with disabilities. Cubbage and Kenneth, who discuss disability in terms of Freudian (drive/libido) theory in "Freud and disability", state that "to the person with a disability, the disability may represent a form of castration; to the able-bodied person, the sight of a person with a disability may evoke the threat of castration."⁶⁰⁷ This perspective underlines the psychological impact of disability on both the individuals experiencing it and those who witness it. It also exemplifies the potential influence of castration anxiety within the broader context of disability and social perceptions. To put in another words, "Narcissistic behavior"⁶⁰⁸ serves as a defense mechanism to protect the ego from various internal and external threats. In this context, a disability would be seen as an

⁶⁰⁴ Jeffrey M. Preston, *Fantasizing Disability: Representation of loss and limitation in Popular Television and Film*, The University of Western Ontario, 2014. 30.

⁶⁰⁵ Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, (Trans.), by David McLintock, Penguin Books, London 2003[1919], 124.

⁶⁰⁶ Freud, 140-145.

⁶⁰⁷ Maxwell Cubbage, and Kenneth Thomas, "Freud and Disability", *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 34(3), 1989, 161–173, <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0091722>. 4 December 2020, Retrieved 24 September 2022, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232540121_Freud_and_disability.

⁶⁰⁸ Cubbage & Thomas, 164.

insult to one's sense of self, resulting in feelings of being diminished. This, in turn, can lead to decreased self-esteem, as well as feelings of guilt and shame. This anxiety might affect how individuals perceive and react to their own disabilities or those of others, affecting both self-concept and social attitudes.⁶⁰⁹ In general, disability can evoke considerable feelings of anxiety resulting from Oedipal issues. As Freud states, "the desire to look is an erotic instinctual activity. The discovery that there is no penis can turn into its opposite, disgust"⁶¹⁰. He suggests that the act of looking at someone's genitals is natural erotic behavior. However, when someone realizes that the person they are observing does not have a penis, it can evoke a strong feeling of repulsion. As Cabbage and Kenneth argue, disability can hold symbolic significance like the absence of a penis. This can create a conflict between the desire to look at others and the desire to be seen by others which is known as "scopophilia and exhibitionism".⁶¹¹ Cabbage and Kenneth also refer to Schilder's theory in 1950, which is about the anxiety that arises when a person's body appears different, and this difference undermines the viewer's own perception of their body image.⁶¹² They also highlight Siller's seven components that constitute attitudes toward individuals with disabilities which are "Interaction strain", "Rejection of intimacy", "Generalized rejection", "Authoritarian-virtuousness", "Inferred emotional consequences", "Distressed identification", and "Imputed functional limitations"⁶¹³. These components together cover various aspects of attitudes towards individuals with disabilities.

In William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, fear arises among the abled-bodied boys when they face Piggy and Simon's disabilities. They may experience fear of vulnerability and loss as they are reminded of their potential for becoming disabled in the struggle for survival on the island. This fear can manifest as castration anxiety, symbolizing a perceived loss of autonomy which is projected onto Piggy and Simon. The boys perceive Piggy as less capable because of his inability to engage in physically demanding activities. They mock him and disgrace him due to his physical appearance

⁶⁰⁹ Cabbage & Thomas, 164.

⁶¹⁰ Sigmund Freud, "Leonardo Da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood", In J. Strachey (Ed. and Trans.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 2, 59-138, London: Hogarth Press, 1957, 96.

⁶¹¹ Cabbage and Thomas, 165.

⁶¹² Cabbage and Thomas, 165.

⁶¹³ Cabbage and Thomas, 166-167.

and disabilities: “‘You’re talking too much,’ said Jack Merridew. ‘Shut up, Fatty!’”⁶¹⁴. This can be seen as an exhibition of castration anxiety, as they fear that associating with Piggy or acknowledging his strengths may threaten their own sense of identity. Piggy’s intellectual character and reliance on reason and logic contrasts his physical disabilities, which further sets him apart from the other boys. Piggy acknowledges that while he does not believe in the existence of a real beast on the island, he recognizes the power of fear itself: “I know there isn’t no beast—not with claws and all that, I mean—but I know there isn’t no fear, either...Unless we get frightened of people”⁶¹⁵. Remarkably, the acknowledgment of this fear by Piggy suggests an understanding of the potential anxieties that may arise when encountering difference and unfamiliarity. Piggy’s realization that the true fear lies in becoming frightened of people best emphasizes the significance of addressing one’s own biases and delusions. Piggy’s disabilities represent a form of symbolic loss that can be linked to castration anxiety, as disability results in a diminished sense of power and control. As the society established on the island breaks down and becomes increasingly violent, the abled boys’ fear of losing power and control intensifies. Jack’s antagonism against Piggy and his determination to destabilize Ralph’s authority can be seen as a manifestation of castration anxiety: “I’m chief,” said Ralph, “because you chose me. And we were going to keep the fire going. Now you run after food— “‘You ran yourself!’” shouted Jack. “Look at that bone in your hands!”⁶¹⁶ Jack’s focus on asserting his own power and control can be interpreted as an expression of his castration anxiety, fearing the loss of his position among the boys. The act of violence against Piggy can be seen as an expression of the boys’ anxiety, as they seek to eliminate the perceived threat to their power represented by Piggy’s rationality. His tragic death can also be understood as a symbolic representation of castration anxiety, as it represents the complete loss of order and logic on the island.

Simon, due to his epileptic attacks, has a solitary nature which makes him different from the other boys. While the other boys are consumed by fear and a desire for power, Simon shows a deeper understanding of the true nature of the “beast” and the underlying darkness within themselves: “Maybe there is a beast... Maybe it’s only

⁶¹⁴ Golding, 23.

⁶¹⁵ Golding, 76.

⁶¹⁶ Golding, 150.

us”⁶¹⁷. His attempts to explain his intuitions to confront the group’s growing savagery are denounced. The boys’ unfriendly reaction to Simon also can be considered as a sign of castration anxiety stemming from fear of losing power and control. In line with Freud, “we can also speak of a living person as uncanny, and we do so when we describe evil intentions to him...The uncanny effect of epilepsy and madness has the same origin”⁶¹⁸. This can further explain the boys’ fear when confronting Simon who suffers from epilepsy. Accordingly, the boys, under the effect of their uncanny feelings towards Simon, project their fears onto him and mistake him for the ‘beast’ during a chaotic dance and violently murder him. Briefly, society’s reaction to disability can reflect a broader response to difference and the unfamiliar.

In *The Fifth Child*, Harriet experiences fear and anxiety about the impact Ben’s disability and difference will have on her family. She believes that Ben is “absolutely not ordinary”⁶¹⁹ as he looks like a “Neanderthal baby”⁶²⁰. She sees herself as “a woman who’d given birth to a freak”⁶²¹ and worries about losing her family’s stability. She finds herself “silently addressing Ben: ‘I’m not going to let you destroy us, you won’t destroy me ...’”⁶²². Harriet’s fear of losing her family’s happiness can be interpreted as her anxiety about losing her sense of control and stability resembling castration anxiety. David also experiences a form of castration anxiety facing Ben’s disability. He struggles to maintain his role as the family’s protector and provider, as Ben’s presence threatens the family’s structure and identity. He “hardly touched him”⁶²³ and says, “Well, he certainly isn’t mine.”⁶²⁴ He does not take Ben’s responsibility: “as far as he was concerned, Ben was Harriet’s responsibility, and his was for the children- the real children”⁶²⁵. Ben’s siblings and relatives also experience a sense of fear facing Ben’s disability, which threatens their sense of normalcy. Their avoidance of Ben and their reluctance to interact with him illustrate this anxiety: “the new baby had of course been offered to everyone to hold, when they asked, but it was painful to see how their faces

⁶¹⁷ Golding, 80.

⁶¹⁸ Golding, 43.

⁶¹⁹ Lessing, 63.

⁶²⁰ Lessing, 65.

⁶²¹ Lessing, 74.

⁶²² Lessing, 80.

⁶²³ Lessing, 69.

⁶²⁴ Lessing, 90.

⁶²⁵ Lessing, 109.

changed confronting this phenomenon. Ben was always quickly handed back”⁶²⁶. Ben’s “presence affected people, and they tended to go away”⁶²⁷. This avoidance is an indication of castration anxiety, as the family members fear the potential loss of their sense of stability.

The able-bodied characters in the sequel *Ben, in the world*, experience fear of loss when threatened with the disabilities of Ben. They may possibly be reminded of their own potential for disability. When a young woman notices Ben, she “gave him a glance, but then another, frowned, and went off, looking back at him with that look on her face which ben knew and expected. She was not afraid of him, but thought that she might be soon; her body was all haste and apprehension, like one escaping. She went into a shop glancing back”⁶²⁸. Here, castration anxiety symbolizes the discomfort that the woman feels when faced with the differences between her and Ben. Her fear of losing a key attribute is projected onto Ben, leading to her negative reaction and continuous glance. Likewise, “an old man came to sit on the bench, and he gave ben a long stare, but decided not to bother with what his instincts were telling him”⁶²⁹. Ben gives the able-bodied a kind of uncanny feeling that can explain castration anxiety: “What was Ben? He slept in his bed, like everyone else, he used his knife and fork, he kept his clothes clean, he liked his beard neat, and his hair cut, and yet he was not like anybody”⁶³⁰. Lessing best pictures Alex’s uncanny feeling towards Ben:

Did their genes linger in his body somewhere? Did Ben and he share genes? Sometimes he thought that of course, yes, but there were moments when he understood how alien ben was to him. Alex was saying quietly to himself that Ben was not human, even if most of the time he behaved like one. And he was not animal. He was a throwback of some kind. If the company of ancient men were only a kind of animal how was it that ben could live the life of human beings – well, for most of the time?⁶³¹

Alex questions whether he and Ben possess common genes, acknowledging the possibility. He quietly responds to himself that Ben is not entirely human, despite his mostly human-like behavior. This signifies his uncanny feelings and his disturbing perception of Ben, which in turn shows the puzzling nature of their relationship.

⁶²⁶ Lessing, 68.

⁶²⁷ Lessing, 69.

⁶²⁸ Lessing, 4.

⁶²⁹ Lessing, 5.

⁶³⁰ Lessing, 69.

⁶³¹ Lessing, 82.

When Teresa tries to imagine herself as being like Ben, she experiences the same uncanny fear: She “tried to imagine what it was like, believing yourself to be the only person in the world like yourself, knowing you are alone, dependent on chance kindnesses, used but then abandoned – but she couldn’t imagine it, only a panic of emptiness and aloneness that gripped her, making her cold and sick”⁶³². When she watches Ben, she experiences an uncanny feeling due to the disruption of expected physical and cognitive functioning. Disabilities challenge the conventional understanding of what is considered ‘normal’, and this deviation can evoke a sense of unfamiliarity.

Another aspect of Freud’s writings that can be applied to the psychology of disability is his concept of Thanatos, which represents the death instinct. As Cubbage and Thomas explain:

Freud’s ideas concerning the existence of aggressive instinct were undergoing metamorphosis until he formulated the dual instinct theory of Thanatos and Eros. Thanatos could be expressed outwardly by aggression or inwardly by aggression towards the self. Noting that many disabilities are caused by industrial or vehicular accidents involving negligence, alcohol use, or danger-seeking behavior, the existence of a self-destructive property of humankind bears consideration. The primary prevention of disability-associated behaviors is well within the domain of the rehabilitation psychologist’s activity⁶³³.

The death instinct can provide insight into the psychological challenges experienced by individuals with disabilities. Specifically, those who fight with feelings of hopelessness may be more prone to the influence of the death instinct. When Ben realizes that his promised people of his kind are just “pictures on the rocks – ancient people did them”⁶³⁴, and that he is “betrayed so dreadfully by these three who called themselves his friends”⁶³⁵ in a moment of despair and hopelessness he commits suicide: “they heard a cry, and a slide of small stones, and silence”⁶³⁶. And they were “pleased that he is dead” and they “don’t have to think about him”⁶³⁷. Awareness about death instinct should urge us to develop interventions that attend not only to the physical needs of individuals with disabilities but also to their psychological health.

⁶³² Lessing, 162.

⁶³³ Cubbage and Thomas, 169.

⁶³⁴ Lessing, 128.

⁶³⁵ Lessing, 176.

⁶³⁶ Lessing, 177.

⁶³⁷ Lessing, 178.

Studying the novels of Golding and Lessing can give a nuanced understanding of the psychological complexities of a disablist culture. Both authors explore themes of power, identity, and the disturbance of established norms through their narratives. By examining disabled characters, the reader can identify the underlying fears that arise when faced with physical or cognitive disabilities. The uncanny element further emphasizes the discomfort experienced when encountering disability, as it challenges familiar notions of the body and disturbs social beliefs. However, the elaborate relationship between disability and the human psyche can be further studied through psychoanalytic approaches, encouraging a profound appreciation for the impact of disability representation in literature and the importance of addressing social attitudes towards difference.

4.1.2. Lacan and the Disablist Culture

Lacanian psychoanalysis when applied to literary works of disability can explore the complex bond between disabled and able-bodied. Lacan's theories of the symbolic order and the mirror stage can present precious intuition into the experiences of characters with disabilities and their broader social context. Since our understanding of disability is shaped by the way that society constructs it through language and other cultural symbols, Lacanian approach to disability can explain how disability is not just a physical state, but also a symbolic representation of social expectations. Examining identity formation of individuals through Lacan's imaginary and symbolic stages can help us better understand the formation of a disablist culture.

During early infancy, we are dependent on others for our needs. As we grow into early childhood, we begin to recognize that we are separate individuals from others. In fact, we rely on others to understand ourselves and how we are perceived. This attraction to and unease about others and their opinions of us continues throughout our lives. Dan Goodley applies Lacanian psychoanalysis to study disability in culture. As he states:

Adulthood is typified by conflicts around idealized versions of whom we should be, and through our relationships with others, including little others (parent, lover, colleague, friend), big others (science, God, truth, masculinity) and demonized others who fail to fit idealized images (which in contemporary society are occupied with black, disabled, feminine, gay – in short the non-normative – Other). Our

selves are dependent on the images and meanings that abound. In the final analysis we are always split from ourselves, the world and the others in it.⁶³⁸

Goodley deems that the phallogentric man/woman binary opposition reflects patriarchal ideology, which necessitates the establishment of strict boundaries to uphold the dominant position and exclude alternative perspectives. This ideology relies on the concept of the phallus as a symbol of power and control that serves as the foundation for many other ideologies. These include “heteronormative, occidental, capitalist, and able”⁶³⁹ beliefs that prioritize and privilege able-bodied individuals. The mirror stage refers to the period “between the age of 6 months and 18 months,”⁶⁴⁰ in which the child enters the imaginary world when an infant first recognizes their own image in a mirror, developing an idealized image of themselves and a coherent identity which is a misrecognition. This idealized self-image, or the “Ideal-I,” serves as an imaginary construct that individuals continuously strive to achieve throughout their lives. As Goodley States:

We produce an image of ourselves because we see others recognizing us. This (mis)perceived wholeness is felt as threatening to the child (she notices that she is often in her mother’s arms, her body is turbulent and dependent rather than whole), so she feels hostile (and directs these feelings out at the ‘me’ and, unavoidably, the ‘other’ – the mother). A recurring trope of psychoanalysis comes to play at this point; the child tries to resolve her anger and ambivalence through jubilantly identifying with both the image of their own me (the whole/unitary image in the mirror) and the other (the mother), each supplying the child with an imaginary sense of mastery: the Ideal-I.⁶⁴¹

In studying disability, the term “Ideal-I” can refer to an idealized image of being able-bodied that a person with a disability may strive to achieve. This pursuit can create an internal conflict as they navigate their perceived limitations while also struggling to meet social norms. As a result, they may experience feelings of inadequacy or a strong inclination to conform to the normative able-bodied standard. Moreover, as Lenard Davis expresses, “the fear of the unwhole body, of the altered body, is kept at bay by the depictions of the whole, systematized body ... the disabled body is a direct imago of the repressed fragmented body. The disabled body causes a kind of hallucination of the

⁶³⁸ Dan Goodley, *Disability Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction*, Sage Pub, London 2011, 124.

⁶³⁹ Goodley, 128.

⁶⁴⁰ Goodley, 125.

⁶⁴¹ Goodley, 125.

mirror phase gone wrong”⁶⁴². The Symbolic order which “appears between 18 months and four years of life”⁶⁴³, represents the realm of language, culture, and social norms, “where we learn to use signifiers (such as ‘I’, ‘you’ and ‘them’) to speak of ourselves and others as separate entities”⁶⁴⁴. In this stage “we are always insecure of our ‘I’-our ontology – and we find ourselves lacking”⁶⁴⁵ since the Real signifies an unattainable, chaotic aspect of existence that cannot be fully grasped or represented by language. Disabled bodies have the potential to disrupt the Symbolic order as their physical or mental differences defy conventional expectations of what a body should look like or how it should function. This disruption can make both disabled and non-disabled people feel anxious because it reveals the Symbolic order’s limitations in representing and including diverse experiences.

In *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy is conscious of his physical limitations and how it separates him from the other boys: “I can’t swim. I wasn’t allowed. My asthma-”⁶⁴⁶. In terms of Lacan’s “mirror stage”, Piggy’s inability to fully participate in the activities of other boys underpins the idealized image of a physically fit and abled boy which he cannot reach. His disabilities impact his self-perception and his perception by others as well. In other words, the other boys’ reactions to his disabilities, besides his own awareness of his weaknesses, contribute to the formation of his identity within the group. Hence, his disabilities cause the other boys ridicule and exclude him: “‘You’re talking too much,’ said Jack Merridew. ‘Shut up, Fatty’”⁶⁴⁷. Accordingly, he internalizes the other boys’ negative views about him, which impacts his sense of self. This suggests the traumatic impact of his disability within society which recalls Lacan’s the Real which is the place of the traumatic unspeakable. Piggy strives to reach the “Ideal-I” and it creates internal conflict within him and his traumatic experience that resists symbolization, cannot be fully integrated into the Symbolic Order. Despite his physical limitations, Piggy’s intelligence contributes valuable visions into the group throughout the novel. His knowledge about the conch shell, scientific reasoning, problem-solving

⁶⁴² Lenard J. Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*, Verso, New York 2014, 134.

⁶⁴³ Dan Goodley, *Disability Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction*, Sage Pub, London 2011, 126.

⁶⁴⁴ Goodley, 126.

⁶⁴⁵ Goodley, 126.

⁶⁴⁶ Golding, 13.

⁶⁴⁷ Golding, 23.

abilities and understanding of social order demonstrates his intellectual capabilities throughout the novel. He is the first to recognize the potential of the conch shell as a symbol of authority and order on the island: “Suddenly Piggy was a-bubble with decorous excitement. “S’right. It’s a shell! I seen one like that before. On someone’s back wall. A conch he called it. He used to blow it and then his mum would come. It’s ever so valuable”⁶⁴⁸. He tells Ralph: “We can use this to call the others. Have a meeting. They’ll come when they hear us”⁶⁴⁹ and Ralph takes credit for the idea. Elsewhere, when the boys debate whether a ‘beast’ exists on the island, Piggy argues that there is no concrete evidence to support its existence. He is the voice of reason which is a reminder of the Symbolic order that promotes rules and structure despite the increasing chaos on the island. However, since the norms of the society on the island prioritize physical ability which is caused by the fear of the “unwhole body,” his intellectual abilities are overlooked. This features the way language can both empower and marginalize individuals, depending on how others perceive them, and the established social order. Lacanian psychoanalysis stresses the importance of the ‘Other,’ which incorporates the social (symbolic) frameworks that shape an individual’s identity. Lacan underscored the significance of language in influencing our perception of ourselves and how we interact with others. This is particularly relevant when examining the relationship between disabled and non-disabled individuals, where language can bear ableist beliefs and reinforce stereotypes and the relegation of certain groups. For example, when the boys use terms like “fatty”⁶⁵⁰ or even his nickname “Piggy” it can contribute to the notion that he is integrally lacking or less valuable than his able-bodied counterparts. This language reflects fundamental social discourses concerning disability and diversity. Briefly, the Symbolic order, encompassing language, culture, and social norms, provides insight into the challenges the boys face in establishing social order and structure on the island where Piggy’s physical limitations and intellectual character differentiate him from the rest of the boys. Piggy’s disabled body can be seen as a symbol of the ‘Other,’ against which the boys establish their identity and exert control. Piggy’s physical weakness and separation from the group influence the boys’ descent into violence and murder when they struggle to assert their dominance over him.

⁶⁴⁸ Golding, 16.

⁶⁴⁹ Golding, 17.

⁶⁵⁰ Golding, 23.

Simon, another disabled character in the novel, experiences a comparable fate. He is portrayed as being more adjusted to his inner self. He exhibits a profound comprehension of the island that goes beyond that of the other boys. Simon spends most of his time in a place of his own in the woods (nature) that nobody knows about. When he is caught in the dark, he tells the boys, “I wanted—to go to a place—a place I know”⁶⁵¹. He believes in the beast, but a beast which is evil inside all of them: “Maybe there is a beast... Maybe it’s only us”⁶⁵². His reinforced sensitivity can be interpreted as an indication of his self-awareness and a deep connection to his unconscious mind. What sets Simon apart is his ability to exist somewhat outside the established social orders created by the other boys, known as the symbolic order. While the other boys adhere to the constraints and expectations of the group, Simon seems to transcend these limitations. He manages to escape the confinement of the symbolic order and accesses a more real part of himself which is symbolized by his encounters with the ‘beast’ on the island, which he ultimately realizes is a manifestation of their own inner viciousness. However, Simon’s separation from the symbolic order and his ability to connect with his authentic self comes at a cost and he becomes an object of misunderstanding and violence by the other boys. His tragic death reflects the destructive consequences of fearing those who exist beyond the confines of social norms.

The family in Frantz Fanon’s words is “the miniature of the nation ... the workshop in which one is trained”⁶⁵³. The Lovatt family in *The Fifth Child* serves as an interesting case study to examine the influence of disablist culture within the context of Lacanian psychoanalysis. By examining the family, the reader can understand how cultural norms and values are inherited and shaped within the family environment. As a fetus Ben is a “savage thing inside”⁶⁵⁴ and a “monster”⁶⁵⁵ for his mother. After birth, the initial perception of Ben, which is based on his physical appearance, contrasts with the idealized image of the perfect child Harriet had imagined: “he was not a pretty baby. He did not look like a baby at all”⁶⁵⁶; “He’s like a troll, or a goblin or something”⁶⁵⁷. She

⁶⁵¹ Golding, 106.

⁶⁵² Golding, 65.

⁶⁵³ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks*, Pluto Press, London 1986, 124.

⁶⁵⁴ Lessing, 51.

⁶⁵⁵ Lessing, 58.

⁶⁵⁶ Lessing, 60.

⁶⁵⁷ Lessing, 61.

thought of herself as “a woman who’d given birth to a freak”⁶⁵⁸. His father “hardly touched him”⁶⁵⁹; David’s difficulty in accepting Ben’s disability is further illustrated when he says, ““Well, he certainly isn’t mine””⁶⁶⁰. His Siblings and other relatives and acquaintances have the same perception of Ben: “the new baby had of course been offered to everyone to hold, when they asked, but it was painful to see how their faces changed confronting this phenomenon. Ben was always quickly handed back”⁶⁶¹. Ben’s presence in the family disrupts the harmony the family had enjoyed before him. His disability becomes a source of trauma for Harriet and her family. Their idealized life before Ben can represent the Imaginary order, where fantasies of a happy family exist. Ben’s arrival in the family, with his disability and the disruption he causes, can be seen as an intrusion of the Real, forcing them to confront the limitations of their idealized family. This suggests the traumatic impact of Ben’s disability within society. The Symbolic Order, which encompasses established social norms and values, exerts a significant influence on how the Lovatt family responds to Ben’s disability and their efforts to make him normal: Harriet “did try hard to make him ordinary. She took him down into the big living-room where all the family were and put him into the play-pen there”⁶⁶². However, “his presence affected people, and they tended to go away”⁶⁶³. The Symbolic Order, with its predetermined ideals of a ‘normal’ family, places expectations on the Lovatt family. They feel compelled to conform to these norms, but this poses challenges in meeting Ben’s distinct needs and managing the disruptions he brings to their routines. They experience feelings of embarrassment and fear of judgment: “Condemnation, and criticism, and dislike: Ben seemed to cause these emotions, bring them forth out of people into the light”⁶⁶⁴. This fear of judgment is to an extent that they decide to send Ben to an institution to hide him from the judging eyes of people. Later Harriet takes Ben back home from the horrific institution as she finds herself grappling with the conflict between her emotional attachment to Ben and the expectations imposed by the symbolic order, which prioritizes conformity to social norms. This struggle emphasizes the challenge of resolving personal connections with the pressures

⁶⁵⁸ Lessing, 74.

⁶⁵⁹ Lessing, 69.

⁶⁶⁰ Lessing, 90.

⁶⁶¹ Lessing, 68.

⁶⁶² Lessing, 69.

⁶⁶³ Lessing, 69.

⁶⁶⁴ Lessing, 72.

of fitting into social norms. In short, the Symbolic Order significantly influences the Lovatt family's reactions and adjustments to Ben's disability. This can indicate how social values shape our views and actions as well as the complex interaction between disability and the established social order.

Language acts as a means for individuals to express their desires, needs, and emotions, as well as to establish connections with others. However, Ben's challenges in communicating result in a sense of isolation and frustration, as his thoughts and emotions remain unexpressed, which adds to his status as an outsider. Ben, displaying common characteristics of autistic children, struggles to grasp social interactions and does not demonstrate affection or emotional responsiveness towards those around him. Ben had not shed a single tear since his birth. This lack of crying can be seen as an initial breakdown in communication, as crying is a primary means through which infants interact with their environment and communicate their needs. Ben encounters challenges in acquiring and using language, as he struggled to develop linguistic skills: "Ben was over a year old now. He had not said a word yet"⁶⁶⁵. Lessing describes his behavior well when Ben tries to imitate others:

So he came out of his little prison and joined them downstairs. He seemed to know that he ought to be like them. He would stand, head lowered, watching how everyone talked, and laughed, sitting around the big table, his eyes were on one face, then another: whomever he was looking at became conscious of that insistent gaze and stopped talking; or turned a back, or a shoulder, so as not to have to see him. He could silence a room full of people just by being there or disperse them: they went off making excuses.⁶⁶⁶

As Ben joins others downstairs, he tries to imitate their behavior, aware of the expectation to conform. Ben's presence can silence a room or cause people to disperse, as they find his presence disconcerting. Lessing captures the distressing impact Ben has on social interactions, underscoring the discomfort and unease he generates among those around him. His language difficulties become apparent through his inclination to echo his siblings' words or phrases that reflect his struggle to independently generate and express his own language. When he grew older, he used few sentences but "his voice was heavy and uncertain, each word separate, as if his brain were a lumber-house

⁶⁶⁵ Lessing, 75.

⁶⁶⁶ Lessing, 75.

of ideas and objects, and he had to identify each other”⁶⁶⁷. As seen, within the context of the mirror stage, Ben’s self-identity, and the perceptions of others towards him are influenced by his physical differences, lack of communication and the reactions he receives from those around him. His differences make it difficult for him to conform to social norms and be accepted by others and this isolates him from the symbolic order.

In the sequel, *Ben, in the World*, the ongoing struggle continues for Ben, as he encounters persistent discrimination from others. Ben’s journey of self-identity intertwines with the influences of the mirror stage and the symbolic order. His inability to effectively communicate contributes to a sense of being different or excluded, reinforcing the impact of his physical differences on his self-perception. He displays limited communication skills and tends to be quiet, often assuming a passive role in social interactions by listening to conversations. He was hardly communicative, and when he was with people, he listened to conversations “as a child does when the talk does not concern him”⁶⁶⁸. The rejection Ben faces have a deep impact on his self-perception, creating complexities in his quest for a unified sense of identity and hindering his ability to form meaningful social connections: “he had wanted to join with them, their jokes, their talk, but did not know how to. He had never understood, for example, why the way he spoke was funnier than the way they did. Their eyes when they looked at him had been grave, wary”⁶⁶⁹. These experiences shape his understanding of himself and pose significant challenges in integrating into society. In the context of mirror stage Ben’s interactions with others reflect a distorted reflection of himself, damaged by experiences of rejection. His differences are frequently depicted using negative and monstrous language that indicates widespread social discourses on disability: “He had visited the zoo, moving from cage to cage looking at beasts whose names he had been called, ape, baboon, pig-man, pongo, yeti. There was no yeti in the zoo, nor a pongo either, and he had wondered about them, for he knew he was looking for something like himself”⁶⁷⁰. These negative encounters shape his perception of himself, complicating his self-image. Ben experience of limitations is due to the constraints imposed by the symbolic order, which hinders his full recognition within

⁶⁶⁷ Lessing, 83.

⁶⁶⁸ Lessing, 164.

⁶⁶⁹ Lessing, 28.

⁶⁷⁰ Lessing, 28.

social structures. This experience of rejection fuels a sense of alienation and leaves him to question his worth and place in the world and to look for his type of people for acceptance and belonging; he is aware of this when he says, “‘I don’t have any people. I’m not like my family – at home. They are all different from me. I’ve never seen anyone like me’”⁶⁷¹ and when he gets a hint of the existence of his own kind, he gets overexcited: “‘people like me,’ Ben was chanting, ‘like me, people like Ben.’ And he interrupted his dance to ask, ‘just like me?’”⁶⁷² Ben’s experiences show the ways in which the Symbolic order can be unfair for those with disabilities.

By examining the impact of the imaginary and symbolic stages on characters with disabilities in William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and Doris Lessing’s *The Fifth Child* and *Ben, in the World*, these novels can be seen as critical examinations of the Symbolic order, symbolized by the traditional family structure and social norms. They invite readers to question and challenge the limitations imposed by the Symbolic order and its role in shaping both disabled and abled individual’s experiences and relationships. By questioning the dominant social values, these novels underline the potential for alternative perspectives within the existing symbolic framework that can develop policies to promote a more inclusive society for individuals with disabilities.

4.1.3. Kristeva and the Disablist Culture

Julia Kristeva exhibits a particular fascination with the manners in which social and cultural mechanisms frame our comprehension of subjectivity. In her 1980 work *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, she defines the abject as our response to witnessing the separation between ourselves and objects, and the physicality of our own mortality.⁶⁷³ Within the realm of disabled and abled bodies, the concept of abjection can play a significant role in marginalization of disabled individuals. It also can explain the multifaceted relationship between the disabled and the predominant abled majority. Through an exploration of Kristeva’s abjection in the context of disablism, we can acquire valuable perspectives on how social attitudes can construct and preserve a disablist culture. Since disabled bodies often challenge the conventional social

⁶⁷¹ Lessing, 126.

⁶⁷² Lessing, 126.

⁶⁷³ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, Columbia University Press, New York 2010, 1.

understanding of the “self,” as they exist outside the expected boundaries between subject and object, their experience can elicit a fear because of their deviation from the norm. Society’s response to this fear can be seen in the creation of policies that reinforce the isolation of disabled bodies.

Kristeva’s work is influenced by Lacan’s model of psychosexual development. She similarly incorporates her own concept of abjection to further explore a particular phenomenon named abjection described as “Our reaction (horror, repulsion) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of distinction between subject and object, self and other, and life and death”⁶⁷⁴. She introduced a distinct developmental stage in her work called the Chora, which corresponds to the period of infancy between 0-6 months. During this stage, infants are immersed in a whirlwind of perceptions, emotions, and needs. In the Chora, there is an absence of clear boundaries between the self, others, and the external world. Kristeva argues that the concept of abjection holds a disturbing power over us because it transports us back to the time when we had yet to develop a sense of self-boundary. The abject disturbs us because it reminds us of a preexisting state, where the distinction between self and other had not yet been formed. This connection to the Chora illustrates how the abject triggers discomfort within us. During Chora, the infant perceives no distinction between itself and its mother. The mother and infant exist as one body, and even after birth, the mother is seen as an extension of the self. The mother’s breast, voice, and gaze fulfill the infant’s needs. However, this phase is short-lived. After the physical separation that occurs during weaning, the infant begins to recognize its own image and eventually acquires language. This process leads to the acknowledgment of both the infant’s individuality and the autonomy of others. These boundaries are crucial for active participation in the social world. Any threat to these boundaries is, in essence, a threat to the self, as they form the foundation upon which our interactions with others are built.⁶⁷⁵ As Kristeva states, “Abjection preserves what existed in the archaism of pre-objectal relationship, in the immemorial violence with which a body becomes separated from another body in order to be (. . . It is) what disturbs identity, system, order.”⁶⁷⁶ She links the abject to the sudden intrusion of the Real into our lives, particularly our rejection of the physicality

⁶⁷⁴ Kristeva, 3.

⁶⁷⁵ Kristeva, 10-25.

⁶⁷⁶ Kristeva, 10.

of death. Our reaction to such repulsive experiences revives a primal, non-verbal response. She emphasizes the distinction between understanding death conceptually and the traumatic encounter with its tangible materiality, which starkly reminds us of our own mortality:

A wound with blood and pus, or the sickly, acrid smell of sweat, of decay, does not signify death. In the presence of signified death—a flat encephalograph, for instance—I would understand, react, or accept. No, as in true theater, without makeup or masks, refuse and corpses show me what I permanently thrust aside in order to live. These body fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death. There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being.⁶⁷⁷

As Kristeva declares, “the corpse, seen without God and outside of science, is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life. Abject.”⁶⁷⁸ The corpse serves as an example of abject, as it plainly demonstrates the collapse of the boundary between subject and object, which is essential for constructing identity and participating in the symbolic order. Kristeva’s abject, which involves encountering and rejecting the repulsive aspects of existence, can be applied to both facing the corpse and facing the disabled body. In both cases, the able-bodied individuals often respond with repulsion due to disabled body’s association with mortality and deviance from the perceived norm. The abject nature of these encounters triggers a primal response that challenges social boundaries. The disabled body, like the corpse, disrupts the symbolic order and confronts us with the materiality of difference which provokes a complex range of emotions. At length, disabled individuals challenge socially constructed boundaries, which triggers a sense of abjection and psychological disturbance in able-bodied individuals. Their very existence blurs the distinctions between life and death in the minds of those who are not disabled reminding their own vulnerability and compelling them to meet their own mortality.

In *Lord of the Flies*, able-bodied boys’ reaction to Piggy’s appearance reflects their attempt to distance themselves from that which is considered as a “radically excluded”⁶⁷⁹ abject that draws them “toward the place where meaning collapses”⁶⁸⁰. When Piggy first introduces himself, the boys directly focus on his weight and

⁶⁷⁷ Kristeva, 3.

⁶⁷⁸ Kristeva, 4.

⁶⁷⁹ Golding, 2.

⁶⁸⁰ Golding, 2.

appearance: “‘You’re talking too much,’ said Jack Merridew. ‘Shut up, Fatty.’”⁶⁸¹. This process of abjection is evident not only in their reactions to Piggy’s physical appearance, but also in their dismissal of his intellectual abilities which can be seen as another way the boys attempt to separate themselves from the abject aspects of disability. His ideas are often overlooked or captured by others. Jack disregards his idea of using the Conch: “‘Conch! Conch!’” shouted Jack. “‘We don’t need the conch anymore. We know who ought to say things. What good did Simon do speaking, or Bill, or Walter? It’s time some people knew they’ve got to keep quiet and leave deciding things to the rest of us.’”⁶⁸² Piggy’s differences threaten the boys’ ideas of what is considered normal. Thus, their bullying of him reflects their desire to assert their power and maintain the boundaries between themselves and the abject which is considered as “Other.” This exclusion stresses the norms of society that shape the perceptions of disability and causes the marginalization of individuals with disabilities. Piggy’s struggle to establish a sense of self in the face of this ‘abjection’ can stress the psychological challenges faced by disabled individuals. When Jack and others steal his glasses, he struggles to understand why he is treated this way:

I’m going to him with this conch in my hands. I’m going to hold it out. Look, I’m goin’ to say, you’re stronger than I am, and you haven’t got asthma. You can see, I’m goin’ to say, and with both eyes. But I don’t ask for my glasses back, not as a favor. I don’t ask you to be a sport, I’ll say, not because you’re strong, but because what’s right’s right. Give me my glasses, I’m going to say—you got to!⁶⁸³

His feelings of obscurity as he faces his own identity and his place within the group show his struggle to accept his own differences, as well as the reactions of those around him. Simon also experiences abjection since he is an introverted, sensitive boy due to his seizures. His differences from the rest of the group create a sense of anxiety (fear), that makes him excluded as an abject figure. When Simon awakens from a disturbing encounter with the Lord of the Flies, he climbs the mountain and discovers that the beast the others feared is the lifeless body of a pilot held together by cords and cloth. He makes a desperate attempt to share his discovery and remind them of who he is. However, he stumbles and falls, and the other boys violently descend upon him. Mistaken for the beast, he is brutally killed, and his body is swept out to the ocean

⁶⁸¹ Golding, 21.

⁶⁸² Golding, 101-102.

⁶⁸³ Golding, 189.

following the dead pilot's: "[S]urrounded by a fringe of inquisitive bright creatures, itself a silver shape beneath the steadfast constellations, Simon's dead body moved out toward the open sea."⁶⁸⁴ The boys' growing violence, culminating in Simon and Piggy's deaths, can be explained as an attempt to eliminate the abject 'Other' that threatens their sense of order.

In *The Fifth Child*, Ben is born with distinct physical and mental disabilities that disrupt the Lovatt family's idealized vision of "a happy family"⁶⁸⁵, forcing them to confront the uncomfortable reality of disability. The constant struggle to preserve the boundaries between the ideal world they constructed, and the abject reality represented by Ben mirrors the wider social conflicts about disability. As the story unfolds, the fragility of these boundaries becomes increasingly apparent. The presence of Ben, with all his differences, acts as a disruptive force that challenges the established order. Ben's existence forces the characters to confront their deeply ingrained fears and the unpleasant truths they have long sought to evade. This struggle indicates the essence of the deep tensions rooted within society when it comes to accepting individuals with disabilities.

Throughout the novel, the reactions to Ben's appearance reflect the attempt to distance oneself from the abject. His mother, Harriet, fights with her love for Ben and her desire to protect him, while also struggling with the fear he incites in her and others. She feels a sense of horror against the "savage thing inside her"⁶⁸⁶ even before his birth and tries to reject him by consuming sedatives during her pregnancy. The horror strengthens upon seeing him after birth: "He's like a troll, or a goblin or something"⁶⁸⁷. To her he looks like a "Neanderthal baby"⁶⁸⁸. This initial perception of Ben, based on his physical appearance, reflects the 'abjection' of his disability and otherness. This abjection is obvious when after a month Harriet stops breast feeding him to "put him on a bottle"⁶⁸⁹ and "David, the good father, hardly touched him"⁶⁹⁰. Ben's aggressive behavior, along with his difficulty in communicating, further reinforces the abject

⁶⁸⁴ Golding, 140.

⁶⁸⁵ Lessing, 28.

⁶⁸⁶ Lessing, 51.

⁶⁸⁷ Lessing, 61.

⁶⁸⁸ Lessing, 65.

⁶⁸⁹ Lessing, 64.

⁶⁹⁰ Lessing, 69.

experience. His differences from his siblings and other children create a sense of unease that makes him excluded from the family unit: “the three older children stared down at the new-comer who was so different from them all: of a different substance, so it seemed to Harriet”⁶⁹¹. When Ben hurt Paul’s arm seriously, he triggered the fear even more: “there would be a long thoughtful stare, puzzled, even anxious; but then came fear, though every-one tried to conceal it. There was horror, too: which is what Harriet felt, more and more”⁶⁹². His siblings were afraid of him and his violent tendencies. They distanced themselves from him as a means of self-preservation: “no one felt like saying to the children, ‘Be careful of Ben.’ But there was no need after the incident with Paul’s arm. the children’s attitude to Ben were already formed: they had discussed Ben and knew what to think about him”⁶⁹³. They were all afraid of him, and if they had a choice, they would prefer not to be with him. Ben gave this sense of anxiety to other relatives as well: Harriet heard one day “her sister Sarah say to a cousin, ‘That Ben gives me the creeps. He’s like a goblin or a dwarf or something. I’d rather have poor Amy any day.’”⁶⁹⁴ He was “offered to everyone to hold, when they asked, but it was painful to see how their faces changed confronting this phenomenon. Ben was always quickly handed back”⁶⁹⁵. Lessing brilliantly sums up the reactions to Ben as an abject figure in one sentence: “Condemnation, and criticism, and dislike: Ben seemed to cause these emotions, bring them forth out of people into the light”⁶⁹⁶. When Ben is placed in an institution, the family’s relief in having him removed from the family environment is evident. When his siblings “were told, Ben had gone to stay with someone. Four pairs of suspicious, apprehensive eyes became suddenly full of relief. Hysterical relief. The children danced about, unable to help themselves, and then pretended it was a game they had thought up then and there”⁶⁹⁷. This can reflect the ‘abjection’ of Ben’s disability and otherness as a means of preserving the family’s sense of normalcy.

In the sequel, *Ben in the World*, Ben’s abject status continues as an adult who encounters various people and situations where his differences continue to create

⁶⁹¹ Lessing, 62.

⁶⁹² Lessing, 70.

⁶⁹³ Lessing, 71.

⁶⁹⁴ Lessing, 68.

⁶⁹⁵ Lessing, 68.

⁶⁹⁶ Lessing, 72.

⁶⁹⁷ Lessing, 92.

distress. The challenges faced by Ben who deviates from social norms are underlined through his struggle to seek acceptance and belonging in a world that perceives him as abject. Ben's different appearance provoke feelings of fear and repulsion, leading others to treat him as the abject 'other': "A young woman who gave him a glance, but then another, frowned, and went off, looking back at him with that look on her face which ben knew and expected. She was not afraid of him, but thought that she might be soon, her body was all haste and apprehension, like one escaping. She went into a shop glancing back"⁶⁹⁸. Ben's physical and behavioral differences challenge the boundaries of what is considered normal and acceptable, causing people give him "long stare(s)"⁶⁹⁹: "Ben understood one thing, that if he walked about a place for too long people would start noticing him"⁷⁰⁰. Society's reaction to Ben's disability and otherness is an apparent example of 'abjection'. His presence makes 'the abled' confront their fears and sore truths they have tried to escape.

Lessing portrays Alex's confrontation and inner conflict well: "Did their genes linger in his body somewhere? Did Ben and he share genes? Sometimes he thought that of course, yes, but there were moments when he understood how alien ben was to him. Alex was saying quietly to himself that Ben was not human, even if most of the time he behaved like one"⁷⁰¹. Ben is also aware of his difference from Alex: "Alex's legs were hidden inside his jeans, but ben knew that his own legs were like tree trunks in comparison, filling trouser legs. That face there: compared to his own it was so small and so fine; the chest visible in the carelessly closed shirt had little hair on it. They were so similar, this Alex and he, and yet so different"⁷⁰². His inability to integrate into the larger community features the social norms that construct disability as abject: "one said that he had been in a mental hospital, he was a rich person, and had been sent here with a minder. Another said he was obviously a heavyweight wrestler. A third believed some experiment had gone wrong in a laboratory, and said ben gave her the creeps"⁷⁰³. He struggles to establish a sense of self in the face of this 'abjection', but he realizes that people lie to him, mock him, trick him, and leave him helpless all the time: "he had

⁶⁹⁸ Lessing, 4.

⁶⁹⁹ Lessing, 5

⁷⁰⁰ Lessing, 23.

⁷⁰¹ Lessing, 82.

⁷⁰² Lessing, 89.

⁷⁰³ Lessing, 79.

wanted to join with them, their jokes, their talk, but did not know how to. He had never understood, for example, why the way he spoke was funnier than the way they did. Their eyes when they looked at him had been grave, wary”⁷⁰⁴. His identity as a mentally and physically disabled person is profoundly affected by the abjection he experiences. Most of the time “in his sleep Ben ran from enemies”⁷⁰⁵ as he is rejected and treated as the ‘other,’ he struggles to construct a stable sense of self by navigating his own identity by looking for his own kind of people and desiring for the acceptance that society does not provide him. Yet he never finds his people and a place he can call home: “he understood that he was not going home, but somewhere in that mind of his that was always wrestling with itself to remain in control, to understand, he was telling himself that he had been promised he would go home, and that he had been betrayed”⁷⁰⁶.

Kristeva’s abjection in relation to disablism, can give insights into the ways in which social attitudes cause the extension of a disablist culture. In the context of Golding and Lessing’s novels, disabled characters navigate the boundaries between their own identities and the able-bodied society that surrounds them and the ways in which other characters interact with them shape the experiences of disabled characters and contribute to their sense of self-identity. This probe can shed more light on the psychological dimensions of disability and the challenges faced by disabled individuals in constructing and maintaining a sense of self. In addition, it can shed light on the inclination of politics to conceal disabled individuals that renders them to be invisible and excluded from public awareness. This tendency can be attributed to the fact that disabled bodies often defy and blur the conventional boundaries between life and death, as well as the established categories distinguishing humans from nonhuman entities dictated by societal norms. Consequently, encountering disabled bodies triggers an inherent psychological discomfort within able-bodied individuals, as they disrupt fixed notions and social values. Nevertheless, it is crucial to undertake a critical examination and actively question the policies that causes the isolation of disabled bodies. By acknowledging the diverse experiences and valuable contributions of disabled individuals, we can develop a society that embraces the entirety of human embodiment and transcends the confines imposed by the social construct of the ‘self.’ In doing so, we

⁷⁰⁴ Lessing, 28.

⁷⁰⁵ Lessing, 11.

⁷⁰⁶ Lessing, 85.

can move towards an inclusive society that celebrates diversity and challenges the limitations imposed by narrow definitions of what it means to be human.

This chapter applied psychoanalytic theories of Freud, Lacan, and Kristeva to explore the disabilities of Piggy, Simon, and Ben in Golding and Lessing's novels. It emphasized the psychological aspects of disabled characters' experiences and discussed how psychoanalysis contributes to literary disability studies. The analysis tried to reveal how the mentioned novels challenge or reinforce ableist assumptions and shape the social construction of disability. Freud's concept of castration anxiety helps understand the psychological response to disability, while Lacan's symbolic order and mirror stage reveal the intricate connection between disabled and abled bodies in the studied novels. Kristeva's concept of abjection also explains the marginalization of disabled characters and the complex relationship between disabled and abled bodies. These psychoanalytic approaches enhance our understanding of disability experiences and the role of social factors in shaping them, which in turn bolsters the need for challenging social attitudes towards disability.

CONCLUSION

Disability is recognized as a complex experience that encompasses multiple aspects of a person's life and individuals with disabilities make up a significant portion of the global population. However there have not been sufficient studies to better understanding of their life experiences. These studies are essential to combat stigma, and to construct a world that is conscious of disability. Scholarly interest in the humanities, specifically in the field of literary studies, has recently been devoted to exploring the understanding and portrayal of disability within Western culture. This interest stems from recognition that literature has played a significant role in shaping social perceptions and attitudes towards disability. By examining literary texts scholars aim to uncover the ways in which disability has been constructed throughout history.

Two popular models to comprehend and represent disability in western culture are the medical model, and the social model. The medical model views disability as a bodily defect that medicine aims to fix. It considers physical differences as functional issues for the individual and disregards the role of society. Critics argue that this model overlooks the social aspects of disability and promotes an authoritarian approach that justifies institutionalization. This model fails to provide a realistic perception from the perspective of disabled individuals and excludes them from the normal world. In contrast, the social model recognizes that disability is influenced not only by individual impairments but also by social barriers. It emphasizes the need to remove these barriers and create an inclusive society. By focusing on social structures rather than individual impairments, the social model aims to empower disabled individuals and promote their full participation in society.

In the field of disability studies, it is increasingly recognized that a middle ground between the medical model and the social model is needed to approach disability in a comprehensive and beneficial manner. This middle ground can be achieved through an approach which considers the biological and psychological diversity of disabled individuals as well as sociocultural factors. This approach needs to include family relationships as well as various other relationships within and outside of the individual's social environment. By considering the complex interplay of these systems, a more

nuanced understanding of disability can be developed that incorporates both individual experiences and the broader social context.

A biopsychosociocultural approach to disability can offer a more comprehensive understanding of disability. The biopsychosociocultural approach to disability involves examining various levels of analysis. These levels include biological factors, psychological factors, and sociocultural factors that go beyond simplistic portrayals of disability. Biological factors encompass the study of biological processes and conditions such as genetics, heredity, physiology, illnesses, disorders, and trauma. These factors connect the system level of “person behavior” to the biological functioning of the disabled individual. Psychological factors focus on observing and studying the behavior and emotional reactions of the disabled person and the abled individuals confronting them. This level of analysis considers the link between individual experiences and bodily performance. Sociocultural factors examine the relationship between the disabled individual and their environment, particularly interpersonal relationships. These factors can be studied as behavioral variables at the two-person system level, considering the influence of the broader social context on the disabled person’s experiences. Accordingly, by utilizing a biopsychosociocultural model to examine disability in literature, we can depict a wide range of experiences in a more comprehensive and authentic manner. This approach can encourage empathy by integrating biological, psychological, social, and cultural dimensions and promoting increased awareness on disability.

This thesis worked on exploring the representation of disability in three literary works, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, and *The Fifth Child*, and its sequel *Ben, in the World* by Doris Lessing, adopting a biopsychosociocultural approach. By examining the disabled characters of Piggy, Simon and Ben, this research seeks to understand the complex relationship between biological, psychological, and social factors in shaping their experiences of disability. By considering the multifaceted dimensions of disability through this comprehensive framework, this study hopes to expand deeper insights into the characters’ identities, challenges, and social interactions, ultimately contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of disability in these literary works.

Chapter one introduced relevant psychoanalytical and sociocultural theories to examine disability from a comprehensive biopsychosocial perspective. This paved the way for further exploration in subsequent chapters to study disability in the selected novels. Chapter two analyzed disability in disabled characters Piggy, Simon, and Ben through a medical lens to provide more insights into their challenges and how their disabilities shape their lives and interactions in the following chapters. Piggy's multiple disabilities, such as obesity, respiratory conditions, and myopia, hinder his participation in the group and expose the discrimination faced by individuals with disabilities. Simon's epilepsy, characterized by trance-like states, affects his interactions and how others perceive him. Similarly, Ben's autism features the importance of understanding the medical aspects and the need for social support. Studying these characters through a medical model broadens our understanding of disability and emphasizes the need for inclusivity. However, it is essential to recognize that reducing their disabilities to medical conditions alone overlooks the complex realities they face. Adopting the comprehensive approach of biopsychosociocultural model, can integrate psychological, social, and cultural dimensions to provide a complete understanding of disability in these works.

Chapter three focuses on the disabilities of Piggy, Simon, and Ben with an emphasis on sociocultural factors. By going beyond the medical aspects, it aims to systematically understand the experiences and representations of these disabled characters. Drawing on sociocultural theories of Foucault, Agamben, Goffman, and Douglas, the chapter explores how social and cultural contexts shape the construction and perception of disability. Foucault's concepts of biopower and biopolitics offer insights into the experiences of disabled characters and the social construction of disability. Biopower involves the use of power through institutions and technologies like medicine and public health to control bodies. Biopolitics, on the other hand, refers to state power being employed to enforce conformity to social norms. Disabled individuals have historically faced technologies aimed at managing their bodies due to their deviation from social norms. Golding and Lessing's novels explore these themes, shedding light on how disabled individuals are treated and society's attitudes towards disability. Additionally, the portrayal of indocile bodies of Piggy, Simon, and Ben in

these novels reveals resistance to disciplinary power practices which can persuade a reconsideration of disability and social treatment of disabled individuals.

Giorgio Agamben's concept of *homo sacer* and the state of exception provides a powerful framework for understanding the political implications of disability in society. Disability is seen as a paradigmatic example of a group subjected to exclusion and biopolitical control. Agamben's notion of *homo sacer*, which refers to a person banned from the city and denied all rights, is applied to the lives of disabled characters. The state of exception experienced by *homo sacer*, where bare life is stripped of political rights, resonates with the experiences of disabled characters. Examining these characters within the framework of *homo sacer* reveals social attitudes that contribute to their marginalization. Piggy, Simon, and Ben are treated as *homo sacer* figures, exposed to cruelty and exclusion when deviating from social norms. Their marginalization is not solely due to their differences, but also stems from social constructions that consider disability as unwanted. Disabled characters experience an awareness of being treated differently that causes a sense of exclusion from opportunities and social interactions.

Erving Goffman's stigma theory offers a tool for analyzing the stigmatization of individuals with the undesirable and abnormal attributes of disability. Disability falls under the categories of physical deformities and blemishes of character in Goffman's framework. By examining disability in literature through stigma theory, one can investigate how Golding and Lessing have engaged with the topic and how these portrayals may reinforce or challenge social norms. Their novels depict disabled characters facing stigmatization within their societies, emphasizing the relationship between the stigmatized and the stigmatizers and the negative consequences such as isolation and low self-esteem. The disabled characters in these works experience both internal and external stigmatization, which presents the need for greater understanding and empathy towards people with disabilities. Goffman's insight reminds us that society plays a major role in categorizing individuals and attributing certain qualities to each category. By challenging these attitudes, a more equitable future can be developed.

In the field of disability studies, Mary Douglas's concept of "dirt" provides a useful basis for understanding how disabled individuals are perceived and how these attitudes contribute to their social discrimination. The idea of "dirt" encompasses any

departure from established cultural norms and involves rejecting elements that do not fit into the social norms. Douglas believes that things can be considered “out of place” if they are anomalous or ambiguous when they do not conform to a given set or interpreted in different ways. This understanding sheds light on how disabled individuals, who are often seen as anomalies and embody ambiguity, can be stigmatized, and perceived as unclean or undesirable in Western society and culture. The treatment of disability and difference in novels of Golding and Lessing provides a profound reflection of social tendencies to exclude and marginalize individuals with disabilities. These literary works serve as a critique of a society that prioritizes conformity which is often at the expense of empathy.

Applying psychoanalytic theories of Freud, Lacan, and Kristeva in chapter four of this study focuses on the disabilities of Piggy, Simon, and Ben, placing a significant emphasis on the psychological aspects of their experiences. As discussed in the chapter, psychoanalysis can contribute to literary disability studies by exploring the psychological aspects of disability, shedding light on the experiences of individuals with disabilities and social attitudes. This perspective allows for a critical analysis of how literature challenges or emphasizes ableist assumptions that shape the social construction of disability. It also helps us understand the subconscious beliefs and defense mechanisms that construct a disablist culture. Applying psychoanalytic theories of Freud, Lacan, and Kristeva to novels like *Lord of the Flies*, *The Fifth Child*, and *Ben, in the World* strengthens the readers’ understanding of disability experiences and the role of social factors in shaping them.

Freud’s concept of castration anxiety plays a crucial role in understanding the psychological response to disability, both for individuals with disabilities and those who witness them. Disability can be perceived as a form of castration that causes feelings of diminished self-worth and triggers defense mechanisms like narcissistic behavior. These psychological dynamics affect self-esteem and influence how individuals react to disability. Oedipal issues can also contribute to anxiety facing disability. Studying the novels of William Golding and Doris Lessing offers a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological complexities of a disablist culture. Both authors illustrate the fears and anxieties that arise when confronted with disability. The uncanny element adds to the discomfort experienced by abled-bodied characters when

encountering disability. Freudian approaches applied to study disability in these novels attempts at providing a better understanding of the relationship between disability and the human psyche.

The application of Lacanian psychoanalysis allows for an exploration of the sophisticated connection between disabled and abled characters in literary texts. Lacan's concepts of the symbolic order and the mirror stage suggest valuable perceptions of the experiences of characters with disabilities and in their social context. By recognizing that disability is not solely a physical condition but also a symbolic representation shaped by language and cultural symbols, a Lacanian approach helps clarify how disability is influenced by social and cultural norms. Examining the formation of disabled characters' identity through Lacan's imaginary and symbolic stages this study focused on understanding the development of disablist culture. When examining disability, the concept of the "Ideal-I" refers to an idealized image of being able-bodied that characters with disabilities strive to attain. This pursuit can create internal conflict as they navigate their perceived limitations while also trying to conform to social norms. Consequently, they experience feelings of inadequacy. Moreover, the disabled characters serve as a reminder of the disrupted mirror phase, causing discomfort and unease for abled-bodied. The Symbolic order fails to fully include the experiences of disabled bodies which disrupt conventional expectations of appearance and function. This disruption evokes anxiety in both disabled and non-disabled characters, and indicates the limitations of the Symbolic order in encompassing diverse experiences. By analyzing the influence of the imaginary and symbolic stages on disabled characters in Golding and Lessing's novels this study tried to offer an exploration of the limitations of the Symbolic order. Represented by traditional family structures and social norms, these novels can stimulate readers to challenge and question the limitations imposed by the Symbolic order. They can promote reconsidering the impact of these social constructs on the experiences and relationships of both disabled and abled individuals.

Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection when applied to the context of disabled and abled bodies, can explain the marginalization of disabled individuals and the challenging relationship between the disabled and the abled. By exploring abjection in relation to disablism, one can get a significant comprehension of how social attitudes and structures contribute to the persistence of disablist culture. Disabled characters in

Golding and Lessing's novels challenge the conventional understanding of the "self" by existing beyond expected boundaries between subject and object, which generate anxiety or fear in others. They disrupt the symbolic order and confront others with the tangible aspects of difference that elicit complex emotions and reactions. Society's response to this anxiety can result in the creation of policies that reinforce the exclusion of disabled bodies. The interactions between disabled and non-disabled shape the experiences of the disabled characters and influence their sense of self. Exploring this interaction in these novels tries to illustrate the psychological aspects of disability and the challenges faced by disabled individuals in forming and maintaining their identities.

Finally, disability is a multifaceted experience that encompasses biological, psychological, and sociocultural dimensions. By adopting a biopsychosociocultural approach, this study tried to shed light on the complex interplay of these factors in shaping the experiences of disabled characters in literature. The application of various theoretical frameworks, such as the medical, the social and psychoanalytic theories provided valued intuitions into the representation and construction of disability. These insights can challenge social norms, question power dynamics, and advocate for a more inclusive and accepting society that values the diversity and worth of all individuals, regardless of their abilities or appearance. Through the examination of the selected literary works, *Lord of the Flies*, *The Fifth Child*, and *Ben, in the World*, this thesis explored the representation of disability from multiple perspectives, offering a comprehensive understanding of the characters' identities, challenges, and societal interactions. By integrating the biological, psychological, social, and cultural dimensions of disability, it aimed at contributing to a more realistic portrayal of disability in literature, fostering inclusivity, empathy, and social transformation.

Moving forward, it is crucial for future research and social discourse to continue engaging with disability in a holistic manner that acknowledges the interconnections between the disabled individual and their environment. By raising awareness, challenging ableism, and embracing diversity, we can form a society that values and respects individuals with disabilities. Through continued exploration and dialogue, we can broaden our understanding of disability and work towards creating a world that is truly conscious of the diverse experiences of individuals with disabilities.

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