INDOCILE BODIES IN *LORD OF THE FLIES*[*]

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ÖZ

Foucault'nun "uysal bedenler"ini yorumlayan Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, haklı olarak "normatif standarttan en çok ayrılanların en fazla bağımlı olduğunu" öne sürer. Bu kural *Lord of the Flies*'da Simon, Piggy ve mor bir doğum lekesi taşıyan küçük bir çocuk için de geçerlidir. Simon'ın epilepsisi, Piggy'nin astımı, şişmanlığı ve miyopluğu, ve küçük çocuğun yüzündeki doğum lekesi onları adadaki toplumda damgalar. Aslında onlar Foucaultcu "norm"a yani gelişimle ilgili "modern toplum yasası"na karşı gelirler. "Patolojik bedenler"e sahip olduklarından disiplin altına alınamazlar. Bu yüzden adada ortadan kaldırılan yegâne insanlar, onlardır.

Hem demokratik liderliği temsil eden Ralph hem de zorba liderliği temsil eden Jack, "sistematik yaratma, özdeşleşme, sınıflandırmayı kolaylaş"tıran ve her türlü anomaliyi kontrol altına alan "normalleştirme teknolojilerini" kullanarak toplumu yönetmeye çalışmaktadır. Bu nedenle damgalanmış çocuklar ötekilerden ayrılır. Bu çalışma, Nobel ödüllü William Golding'in *Lord of the Flies*'ını engellilik üzerine Foucaultcu sosyokültürel bakış açısına göre çözümlemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

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ABSTRACT

While commenting on Foucault's "docile bodies" Rosemarie Garland-Thomson rightly asserts, "Those who most depart from the normative standard are most subordinated." This rule is also valid for Simon, Piggy and a small boy with a mulberry-coloured birthmark in *Lord of the Flies*. Simon's epilepsy, Piggy's asthma, fatness and shortsightedness, and that small boy's birthmark on his face make them stigmatized in the society on the island. They are in fact against the Foucauldian "norm" namely "law of the modern society" for improvement. They cannot be disciplined as they have "pathological bodies". That is why they are the unique people eliminated on the island. Both Ralph, representative of the democratic leadership, and Jack, that of the tyrannical one, try to govern the society by using "technologies of normalization facilitat[ing] the systematic creation, identification, classification" and controlling anomalies of any kind. Therefore, the stigmatized boys are divided from others. The study aims at analysing *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, Nobel Prize winner, from a Foucauldian socio-cultural perspective on disability.

Keywords: Disability, socio-cultural perspective, Michel Foucault, normalization, abled-bodies.

چکیده

رُزماری گارلند – تامسون در مورد کتاب "*بدن های سازگار*" اثر فائوکلت، چنین اظهار نظر می کند: افرادی که با استانداردهای معمول فاصله زیادی دارند، نسبت به بقیه انسان ها به زندگی وابسته تر می باشند. این قانون در رمان *لرد آف فایلز* ؛ سیمون،پیگی و حتی کودک کوچکی که لکه بنفش مادرزادی روی به پوست خود دارد را در بر میگرد.بیماری صرع سیمون،چاقی و بیماری آسم و بیماری تنفسی پیگی و لکه ی مادرزادی روی صورت کودک آنها را در میان جمعیت جزیره انگشت به نما می کند. این افراد در مقابل نظرات ایده آل فائوکلت "که به ظاهر قانونی برای جوامع مدرن است" مخالف می باشند. نمی توان این اشخاص را به دلیل دارا بودن مشکلات جسمی و پاتولوژیکی، در قائده نظم

وقوانین گنجاند. به همین دلیل در جوامع تنها انسان هایی که با انتخاب طبیعی حذف می شوند همین افراد می باشند.

رالف به عنوان نماینده ای از قشر دموکراتیک و جک نیز به عنوان نماینده بخش استبدادی با ایجاد یک سیستم اصولی و قانونمند،آسان کردن رده بندی و کنترل هر نوع غیر عادی بودن و با به کار گیری تکنولوژی نرمال سازی در حال تلاش برای اداره ی جامعه با این روش ها می باشند. به همین دلیل این کودکان نشاندار ازکودکان دیگر جدا می شوند.

کلید واژه ها: فائوکلت، بدن های سازگار، نرمال سازی.

INTRODUCTION

Art and literature are indispensable elements to life. It is impossible to think about life without art and literature. Therefore, art and literature are very influential at creating individuals having capacity to solve their problems without being subjugated to others. However, on the other side of the coin literature is full of striking figures of disability who are doomed to depend on the aid of the others. Because of this reason, maybe, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson asserts that "The discursive construct of the disabled figure, informed more by received attitudes than by people's actual experience of disability, circulates in culture and finds a home within the conventions and codes of literary representation" (1997:9). It is unavoidable because as Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss and David Serlin assert "disability encompasses a broad range of bodily, cognitive, and sensory differences and capacities" (2015:30), which are mostly related to body. Anne Marie Mol claims body is not singular entity or substance but rather multiple one. Body is not limited to the skin, on the contrary it "extends and connects to other bodies, human and nonhuman, to practices, techniques, technologies and objects which produce different kinds of bodies and different ways, arguably, of enacting what it means to be human." (Blackman 2008:1) Thus, body is not something one has, instead "the focus shifts to what bodies can *do*, what bodies could *become*, what practices enable and coordinate the *doing* of particular kinds of bodies, and what this makes possible in terms of our approach to questions about life, humanness, culture, power, technology and

subjectivity" (Blackman 2008:1). Thus the change in the perception of body particularly in the second half of the 20th century has been brilliantly given through literature.

BIOPOLITICS, NORMALIZATION TECHNIQUES AND *LORD OF THE FLIES*

In this context, we should refer to biopolitics and normalization techniques of Foucault whose work 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 (Anders 2013). Second is Foucault's theorization of the modern social fields regarding "bio-politics" in *The History of Sexuality vol. 1: An Introduction* (1978). He coined the term "bio-power" to discuss what he observed as the principal system of social control in modern Western society: "… there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of 'bio-power'" (Foucault 1978:140). Foucault uses 'biopolitics' to define the means by which sovereignty was substituted with a concern about the health of populations, with "an entire series of interventions and regulatory controls: a biopolitics of the population" (1978:139). Foucauldian biopolitics, as Thomas Lemke puts it in *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, "signals a break in the order of politics" (2011:5) quoting Foucault's remarks in *The History of Sexuality*: "the entry of phenomena peculiar to the life of the human species into the order of knowledge and power, into the sphere of political techniques" (1978:141-142). Lemke goes on to comment on biopolitics as:

> Foucault's concept of biopolitics assumes the dissociation and abstraction of life from its concrete physical bearers. The objects of biopolitics are not singular human beings but their biological features measured and aggregated on the level of populations. This procedure makes it possible to define norms, establish standards, and determine average values. As a result, "life" has become an independent, objective, and measurable factor, as well as a collective reality that can be

> epistemologically and practically separated from concrete living beings and the singularity of individual experience. (2011:5)

The appearance of the biopolitics localizes power in systems of knowledge and social tools. This new dynamic 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 labour power: "This bio-power was without question an indispensable element in the development of capitalism" (Foucault 1978: 140-141). In Jeffrey Nealon's words, "societies of control extend and intensify the tactics of discipline and bio-power by linking training and surveillance to ever-more-minute realms of everyday life, they also give birth to a whole new form" (2008:68). 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.

In his thought-provoking masterpiece, *Lord of the Flies*, William Golding creates such a society. In this seemingly simple tale of schoolboys marooned on an island, *Lord of the Flies* (*LF*) we are invited to think about intriguing relation between individual and institutions, civilization, political responsibilities, religion, the western imperialism, environmental concern and the temporarily abled and the disabled.

Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison* said that the new systematic medicine (started in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries) assumed a "normalizing gaze" (1995:184) of the body, and defined new borders of the "normal" and the "abnormal". *The History of Sexuality* he asserts 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'" (1978: 54). 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", Foucault's presents the term "dividing practices", a kind of "objectivizing of the subject": "The subject is either divided inside himself or divided from other. This process objectivizes him. Examples are the mad and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the criminals and the 'good boys'." (1982: 777-778). This term denotes 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" (Davis 2006:186). Technologies of normalization enable the systematic formation, identification, classification, and control of social anomalies by which some subjects can be divided from others. As Anne Waldschmidt asserts "normality is concomitant with 'deviation,' which will always be produced so long as people with and without disabilities strive for normality and for a life in the heart of society. … freedom and normality have their drawbacks, their 'social costs,' and their victims." (2010:192).

In this respect in *Lord of the Flies* we see 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." (*LF*:64). The society is first divided according to their physical appearance and power. The bigger ones are more powerful and the little ones should obey them. As Garland-Thomson rightly asserts "Those who most depart from the normative standard are most subordinated" (1997:40). Again for her "pathologizing cultural 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" (Garland-Thomson 1997:77-78). 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'" (Garland-Thomson 1997:78). 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" (Garland-Thomson 1997:114).

In the novel we have different kinds of disability: The little boy one side of whose face is "blotted out by a mulberry-coloured birthmark" (*LF*:38) first speaks about "the beast". Piggy is near-sighted, fat, asthmatic, unable to swim, and a whimpering mama's boy. Simon is an epileptic boy. He occasionally has seizures and, unlike Piggy, lacks the words to express what he perceives. Undermined, ridiculed and belittled they are doomed to be eliminated in the society. Through disciplinary techniques, which are internalized by individuals, the kinds of bodies that society needs are produced: Ralph the democratic leader and Jack the despotic one, both of them are physically strong, decisive and attractive. The children try to imitate them and follow their rules. In the first part of the novel Ralph and in the second Jack are determined as norm. Individuals, namely the littluns themselves are tools of power since power is inserted in the norms and discourses that are part of practices, behaviours and relations of their everyday lives. The discourse of power produces new forms of knowledge, which are not objective. This produced knowledge affects and controls individual's behaviour and bodies, as Foucault points out in *Discipline and Punish*: "We should admit rather that power produces knowledge ... that 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" (1995: 27)

In this context nobody on the island in *Lord of the Flies* cares for what the birth-marked boy 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" (*LF*:39). Piggy's good ideas mean nothing for the rest and Simon's insight about the nature of the beast is not taken seriously (*LF*:97). They are considered as "abnormal", "deviant". Thus through the process of normalization, power separates those who fail outside the norm as deviant. Consequently, power makes the norms seem moral and right and creates the desire to conform to these norms. When Jack and his hunters steal Piggy's glasses and make him completely blind Piggy without knowing that his moral is not applicable to this kind of society summons as:

> 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! (*LF*:189)

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. Therefore, Ralph and Piggy are very eager to participate to the dance of the hunters who will eventually murder Simon during the performance: "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" (*LF*:167).

Bio-power "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" (Foucault 1994:130). Eventually the discourse of Jack, who first is the symbol of religion, music and then totalitarian politics, justifies the ability of the privileged (the abled) to preserve power and control over the disabled in the production of prosperity, rules and services. That is why, he is treated like a king and he can punish everybody around him without any reason (*LF*:176). The members of the society are first inculcated into a set of practices and now have to actually actively participate (Blackman 2008:25). 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 (Blackman 2008:30). Jack's followers turn to be hunters or soldiers as he invokes to their pleasure loving side (*LF*:166-167). His discourse has a parallelism with that of the officer that appears as a *deus ex machine* at the end (*LF*:222).

Docile or disciplined body refers to the one as malleable, as an unfinished entity that can be sculpted, moulded, altered and transformed (Blackman 2008:134). The members of the society on the island become docile bodies easily shaped through Jack's strategy of power. They are regulated by military exercises such as painting their faces, hunting every day, dividing the head of the killed pig, placing the head on a stick and

offer it to the Lord of the Flies. As Foucault asserts in *Discipline and Punish* docile body –created in the modern age– is a body "that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (1995:136). Concealed disciplinary practices (with the aim of naturalization) allow subjects to act so as to constrain them. In the words of John Rajchman, "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" (Tremain 2006:186).

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" (1978:139). On the island even Ralph, an average boy with average capacities, who seems to be opposite of Jack wants to be part of them. In one of hunting scene he is "full of fright and apprehension and pride. 'I him him! The spear stuck in—'" (124) or "'I hit him,'" said Ralph indignantly. 'I hit him with my spear, I wounded him.'" (125) He also wants to participate in hunting, to be a hunter as Jack is.

CONCLUSION

Apart from the protagonist, Ralph and the antagonist, Jack, the very few people are the keystones in the development of the action in the novel, namely the birth-marked boy, Piggy and Simon. 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. The weak and the different, the deviant are doomed to fail as they are not malleable through disciplinary practices, and their physical, sensory and cognitive differences are regarded as nonintegrable. The fact that these boys have no chance to be docile, thus their deaths are inevitable can enable readers to think more critically about conventional perceptions of disability and normality. Literature and art can be the antidote to these perceptions dividing people mercilessly.

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