

**The Autistics in the Crip Theory:  
A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems**

---

**The Autistics in the Crip Theory:  
A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems**

Dina Helmy Ahmed Shalaby

English department, Faculty of Arts, Menofiya University.

[dandash\\_1982@yahoo.com](mailto:dandash_1982@yahoo.com)

**Abstract**

This study explores the classifications of the autistics, and their different reactions to the normal people's stigmatization, and marginalization. According to the crip theory, the autistics suffer from abnormal symptoms which make them always look strange. Thus, they have been generally viewed by the normal people as abnormal, and "mentally retarded". Also, they have been always socially forbidden from having their rights as well as the normal. In fact, these symptoms are not supposed to exclude the autistics from the normal society. Maybe they make the autistics look different but certainly not mentally retarded, or less than those who describe themselves as normal. In this study, and through two models of the autistic poetry, the reader can see two contradictory autistic reactions to the normal society's stigmatization, and marginalization. "Against All Odds" (1993) by the English poet David Miedzianik (1956- ) portrays the desperate reaction of "the normal autistic" poet who has been viewed by the normal people as mentally retarded. On the other hand "A Simple Cup" (2010) by the Indian poet Tito Mukhopadhyay (1989- ) neatly weaves the challenging reaction of "the authentic autistic" poet who refuses to cure his autism, and insists instead on keeping his strange symptoms which make him happy.

**Keywords:** mentally retarded- normal autistic- authentic autistic- marginalization- stigmatization.

According to the crip theory, the normal mainstream around the world has created what has been called as the "compulsory system of ablebodieness." (Mcruer 2) It is a strict cultural system which severely differentiates between the normal, or the physically, and neurologically able bodied humans, and the abnormal who might have physical, or neurological disabilities. By this

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

uncompromising, and inflexible differentiating system, the normal people have been guaranteed a superiority over the abnormal. Also, those who have been described by this system as abnormal have been stigmatized, and marginalized. That is probably why people who suffer from "autism" have been excluded from their homes, and forbidden from having similar rights in comparison with the normal. Also, they all have been persistently, and mistakenly described by most of the normal people as being "mentally retarded" (Grinker 215) or "rain men."<sup>1</sup> (Baker 229)

Though some autistics really suffer from mental retardation (Asperger 74), they are not all mentally retarded. Probably the strange, and hard to explain behavior which all of the autistics suffer from is responsible for such general, and mistaken description. Unlike most of the normal people, the autistics generally avoid social communication with others (Fitzgerald 44). Also, they "do not seem to comprehend what others are saying to them or, indeed what is going on around them." (Frith 3) Further, they have an abnormal "auditory hypersensitivity" (Baker 229), and a "failure to see whole" pictures (Barnbaum 5). Furthermore, the autistics suffer from having strange "repetitive routines such as rocking, flapping hands...insisting on taking particular routes around the house, demanding to have certain foods [and]fascination with [very ordinary and familiar] objects" (Mckenna 409) which usually do not interest the normal people.

In spite of the fact that the autistics "cannot stop" (Cimera 21) these symptoms, yet some of them have succeeded in modifying some of these symptoms in order to look "normal or near normal" (Frith 22), and thus not stigmatized, and marginalized by the mainstream. Since they have been children, these autistics who can be described as the "normal autistics", have been viewed by the mainstream who certainly uphold the ideology of the compulsory system of ablebodieness, as mentally retarded who need to be cured. Temple Grandin<sup>2</sup> narrates in her autobiography that she has been: "given the label "brain- damaged" when she was a child (42) Though these autistics including Grandin, and others like her are not really mentally retarded, it seems that they have extensively wanted to be treated like the normal. Therefore, they accept the intervention of their families who work hard in order to modify their strange symptoms which make them look like the mentally retarded, and help them instead have a behaviour which resembles the normal people. Through some "educational programmes" which they have been enrolled in by their normal families, these

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

autistics have become "less autistic" (Grandin 98), and closer to normality. It is true that these programmes have helped them to fulfill quite good modification of some of their symptoms, but they have not changed them completely, or made them completely normal because generally even with the modification of some autistic symptoms, there are other symptoms which resist modification. Unfortunately, there are few people including the families, and friends of these autistics who have appreciated the extent of the normality which these autistics have reached. The majority of the normal people, on the other hand, have refused to accept these autistics who they call the "superficial normal autistics" (Frith 22), and insist on treating them as mentally retarded, and marginalizing them. Probably this massive refusal, and humiliating treatment are what has driven the "normal autistics" sometimes to feel a devastating sense of despair. They become desperate from their being not viewed as normal by the mainstream. In fact, that sense of despair has forced the normal autistics sometimes to extremely doubt their mental abilities, and really begin to view themselves as mentally retarded, and sometimes return back to some of their strange symptoms which they have earlier modified.

If most of the people who belong to the normal societies claim that the normal autistics will remain superficial normal, and mentally retarded who must be marginalized, then what about the other autistics who refuse to modify their autistic symptoms, and to submit to their mainstream's compulsory system of ablebodiedness? These autistics who can be described as the "authentic autistics" have been similarly treated as mentally retarded, and marginalized. Unlike the normal autistics, these autistics have never attempted to imitate the normal people because they believe that though they are different, they are still normal. That is probably why the authentic autistics have a different reaction to the stigmatization, and marginalization of the normal majority. In contradiction to the normal autistics, the authentic autistics have challenged the normal mainstream. That is why they declare that they are "fine as they are" (Osteen 299) and refuse to modify their symptoms. Indeed, they believe that the normal people's attempts to change or cure them "deny them the respect they deserve" as normal human beings. (Barnbaum 11) Also, the authentic autistics have insisted on keeping, and showing up their autistic symptoms which certainly satisfy them, and make them happy.

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

It seems that the authentic autistics particularly have been right in their belief that basically there is no differences between the autistics, and the normal as the compulsory system of ablebodiensness assumes. Nothing proves this fact more than the autistic poems which all resemble the normal people`s poetry. According to Ilona Roth: " the autistic poets used all the poetic techniques that the non-autistic poets used." (161) It is true that sometimes they have "used them to a lesser extent", and that they differently write poetry which "reflects extensively on themselves"(Roth 161), or their relationship with others, and are not concerned with the philosophical, political, or fantastical topics which interest the normal poets (Roth 155), but this does not make their poetry different from the normal people`s poetry. (Roth 161)

In "Against All Odds" (1993) by David Miedzianik(1956- ), the normal autistic poet portrays his extremely miserable life. In fact his success to resemble the normal which his mother used to praise, has not been appreciated by the majority of the normal people who keep viewing him as a mentally retarded, and marginalize him. That is why he has felt an extreme sense of despair. His mother used to soften this feeling before but her death makes him suffer alone. Probably this is what makes Miedzianik not only extensively feel despair, but also sometimes really begin to view himself as mentally retarded, and return back to his autistic symptoms which he has earlier modified.

Through this poem which could be described as having not many poetic techniques, David Miedzianik has managed to make the reader pay attention to his trauma as a normal autistic. From the first stanza he has magnificently portrayed the rapid, and tragic shift in his feelings from satisfaction, and happiness to a tormenting sense of despair, and doubt. Last week, and before his mother passed away, Miedzianik has been very happy because he thought that he has finally succeeded in becoming a normal autistic by modifying his strange autistic inability to make social communication with others. Probably, this prominent success from his viewpoint is what has enabled him to be hosted on a programme called "against all odds". He says proudly in the first line of this poem: "I was on this TV programme last week/ It was called Against All Odds." It appears from the title of this programme that "against all odds" is a programme which probably hosts those who could exceptionally go against their "odds", or against a huge problem which certainly disturbs their life, and makes them suffer. It seems that the poet has been convinced that he is one of those exceptional people. By

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

becoming able to make social communication with others, he has certainly gone against his "odd" autistic symptoms, and become a normal autistic. That is why his showing up in that programme has meant a lot to him, and to his mother who has urgently wanted him to become like the normal.

Apparently, Miedzianik has been mistaken because after his being hosted on that programme, his mother who used to support him has passed away, and that has made him face the normal society's stigmatization, and marginalization alone. No one really has appreciated his intriguing attempt to modify his autistic symptoms, and to resemble the normal. They have all considered his inability to completely cure his autism a proof of his mental retardation. That is why he feels that now his "odds" or his autistic symptoms which he could not cure will make his life become worse: "Right now the odds are against me since my mum died."

As a matter of fact, Miedzianik could not cure his being always looking to the others as if he does not comprehend what goes on around him. This is what his aunt Doris who recently came from Canada to stay with him after his mother's death, has felt. As a normal, Doris has considered Miedzianik's apparent "odd", a proof of his mental retardation. Thus, she has arrogantly advised him not to draw out his money from the bank unless he becomes sure that he really needs to buy something: "She told me not to draw out of the bank unless I really have to." Though the poet knows what he really needs, and that makes him able to determine when to draw out money from the bank, his being viewed by Doris as mentally retarded has made him feel despair, and begin to doubt his mental abilities. That is certainly what has made Miedzianik in the next day, doubt that he has paid his money in what he really needs: "Today I drew £ 10 out of bank to buy some writing stuff/ I also bought some food with this money too/ It'll be months before I know what best to do." Through these three lines which include a rhymed couplet in the last two lines, the poet tells his reader that even if he paid his money in having food, and some writing stuff which he really needs, he doubts that these are his real needs, and that is why he still need months in order to know the best thing he can do with his money.

David Miedzianik ends the first stanza, and every other stanza in this poem with this refrain: "Well they put me on a programme called Against All Odds/ Right now everything gets me down and life's a sod." Through this refrain, the poet describes the rapid shift of his feelings which has terribly turned his life to a

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

nightmare. Earlier, he has felt temporal happiness because of his success to become a normal autistic, and his being hosted on TV. Later, after his becoming alone without his mother who used to soften his sense of despair, and because of his inability to completely look normal in the eyes of Doris, and others like her, he has felt a permanent torturing sense of despair.

It seems that Doris has not been the only person who considered Miedzianik's false inability to comprehend what goes on around him a proof of his mental retardation. As well as Doris who had to return back to Canada, in the second stanza, the poet realizes that the social security in his home treats him as a superficial normal autistic, and a mentally retarded person who certainly does not know when, and how to use the money he gets from them. That is probably why when he has asked for more money to run his house after the death of his mother, Miedzianik expected their refusal: "The social security won't give me any more money to run the house." Surely, he is not mentally retarded as the social security members believe because how could he realize that the social security's refusal of his demand is part of the majority's marginalization of him as an autistic if he is really a mentally retarded? That is probably why the social security attempts to make him terribly feel that giving money to a mentally retarded like him is a "big deal", or a very serious matter which needs writing an appeal: "Mind you, they might do if they accept my appeal/ The social security are trying to make it all seem like a big deal." It seems that the poet is very desperate. This is what the readers could feel especially through this rhymed couplet where he asks them directly to pay attention to the social security's stigmatization, and marginalization which force him to write an appeal in order to have more money.

Maybe because she is a child, she could not be part of that terrible stigmatization, and marginalization of Miedzianik. Kate, the four years old child, and the friend of the poet considers the poet a very normal adult so when his mother passed away, she has asked Miedzianik a very expected childlike question. She asked him: "when will your mother be alive again?" Although David Miedzianik knows quiet good that all who pass away including his mother won't come back to life again, he did not answer her question. Apparently, Miedzianik who clearly understands everything which goes on around him including the fact of death unlike what the normal society expects, believes that telling a childlike Kate that dead people won't come back might hurt her so he: "didn't want to upset her" by telling her the truth.

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

Unlike Kate the child who has viewed the poet as normal, the other normal adults have not got a similar impression. The normal audience who David Miedzianik has expected receiving letters from them after his being hosted on TV, have been like Doris and the social security. They have all viewed him as a mentally retarded, and that is why he has not received any letter from them. He got only few letters from the people who quiet know him, and his mother: " Up to now I've not got many letters from the programme/ A few people that knew me or my mum have written, though." Apparently, this massive refusal of the normal autistic poet has not shocked him. This is exactly " the way it goes" as he says. He expects nothing more from the normal majority. The reader can feel the sense of despair in the poet`s words as he has failed to make himself look normal in the eyes of the normal audience of his programme.

Earlier, it has gone the same way, and people used to treat him as superficial normal autistic. Maybe he has not felt a similar sense of extreme despair before because his mother has been still alive, and he has not been alone in his house. That is to say she has been always there to soften any sense of despair which he could feel. In the fourth stanza, he asks his reader again to pay attention to what he feels now after his mother has passed away. His feeling of extreme despair is not only a reaction to the society`s stigmatization, and marginalization, but also it is a natural outcome of his feeling of boredom after he has become alone in his house: " Mind you it`s a bore, in the house by yourself most of the day."

Sometimes, and especially after his mother has been diagnosed with Parkinson disease, he liked his being alone, and never felt boredom. It seems that this terrible disease which Miedzianik sometimes could not bear as he says: "I couldn`t stand my mum`s Parkinson Disease" has forced him to fall in many troubles with his mother. For some an unknown reason, these troubles have needed sometimes the involvement of the police. It seems that Richard, the policeman, and the poet`s neighbour has been involved in the investigations about these troubles, and that is why he has been responsible for writing reports about them. Usually these reports are saved on computers in files but after some time, and especially if there is no convictions, these files are supposed to be removed in order to be replaced by other files for other people. Part of the normal people`s stigmatization, and marginalization of the autistics has been in their humiliating attempt to mock them exploiting their false inability to comprehend what goes on around them. That is why Richard who supposes that the poet is truly a person

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

who must be unable to comprehend what goes on around him, attempts to convince Miedzianik when he suddenly met him one day that not all of his stored reports on the police` computers are going to be removed, and that according to Miedzianik only " a bit of trouble with my mum might now be off my file." Indeed, Richard has been wrong in his assumptions because the poet is not a mentally retarded, and surely he has been able to realize that what Richard has told him is false, and not true. According to David Miedzianik, there are two reasons which prove that Richard lies: " I don`t think they`ve got room on their computers to keep things forever/ It also costs a lot of money to store things on computers too." Although Miedzianik is completely aware that Richard is only attempting to mock him, his being generally treated as a mentally retarded by a normal person like Richard has made him feel despair, and begin to doubt his mental abilities. That is why after he has proved to the readers that he is absolutely a normal person who is quiet sure that Richard lies, he strangely returns to tell them that he is not sure that the police will remove the reports related to his trouble with his mother, and that he hopes that the policemen would fairly treat him, and really take off these reports from his file: " If they`ve took it off, they`ll be giving me a fair do."

Certainly, this is what seems that David Miedzianik is longing for in the fifth, and last stanza. He is striving for having a fair treatment from the normal people. In other words he wants to be treated fairly as a normal person not as a mentally retarded. Apparently, this has been impossible because basically his claimed mental retardation does not allow him to have a job. For some people, making programmes on TV is a good job which brings money. This is what most normal people have confirmed to Miedzianik: " Most people tell me that they did a good job of the TV programme." The social worker who is coming to his house in order to determine whether he needs more money, or not seems to " like the programme" and that is why he has advised Miedzianik to keep showing up on TV, and consider it a job which gets money. In fact Miedzianik believes that the social worker only views him as a mentally retarded, and that is why he believes that the poet does not deserve a real job, and that his being hosted on TV is very enough for a strange autistic person like him.

The social worker`s attempt to marginalize the poet by advising him to accept his being hosted on TV as a job, and not having a real job makes Miedzianik suffer again from despair. Maybe this last attempt of marginalization of David Miedzianik is what makes him desperately return back to one of his autistic



## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

symptoms which he has earlier succeeded in modifying. He has returned to have a certain routine in having food. He returns to eat only potatoes daily. It is only Jean who has attempted to save Miedzianik, and make him hope that one day people will view him as a normal. It seems that she knows him, and his mother, and probably she has witnessed the modification of his autistic symptoms, and his turning to become normal. This is definitely what makes her act differently. When she visited him in his house, and noticed his strange daily routine in having food, she has advised him to stop this unhealthy habit. Jean, unlike most of the normal people, views Miedzianik as a normal person who would certainly understand that having potatoes daily is an unhealthy nutritional habit which would make him ill, and also an autistic symptom which he should modify in order to resemble the normal. That is why Jean reminds Miedzianik of his mother who certainly would not be happy now if she knows that he has returned back to have potatoes daily: " Jean...told me off for living off potatoes/ She told me I'd make myself ill if I didn't eat properly/ She said my mum wouldn't have like to see me living off potatoes." Probably Jean's advice is what has helped the poet to finally return back to his aspired normality. Thus, he has begun to find logical excuses to modify his autistic routine. Miedzianik has suddenly thought that he is very fat, and that he should return to his normal weight, and that eating potatoes daily would not help him so it is better to listen to Jean, and to stop having potatoes: " Anyway I'm too fat, I could do with losing a bit of weight."

Apparently, David Miedzianik has again determined to go back to his intriguing normality even if it is superficial in the eyes of the normal people, and that is what makes him hope for having a real job instead of depending on the money which comes from the social security, and the state: " If I could find a job it would be better than living on the state." In fact, it is impossible to have a job in his normal society which keeps marginalizing him. That is why the poem ends with Miedzianik's refrain. This refrain again portrays the poet's being torn between his temporary happy normality which has allowed him to be hosted on TV, and his somehow permanent sense of despair from his being only viewed as an autistic by most of the normal people, and consequently not being able to have a job.

In contradiction to David Miedzianik who has attempted to imitate the normal, the authentic autistic poet, Tito Mukhopadhyay (1989- ) has never attempted to imitate the normal people because he believes that he is already

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

normal. Like Miedzianik, the normal mainstream stigmatizes, and marginalizes Mukhopadhyay but he has challenged them, and refused to cure his symptoms. Also, he has insisted on keeping his strange autistic symptoms which certainly satisfy him, and make him happier.

Through his free verse poem "A Simple Cup" (2010), the poet brilliantly sketches his autistic fascination with a cup which lies on the shelf in his kitchen. In fact, Mukhopadhyay cannot stop observing this cup repetitively, and daily. In the first stanza, he portrays how everyone around him has noticed, and refused his fascination with that cup. That is why they have attempted to cure this strange behaviour which could make him easily viewed as a mentally retarded. In fact, the poet has challenged the mainstream, and refused to be cured from his obsession with that cup. He has clearly declared in the first line that: "Nothing could make him stop thinking about it."(Mukhopadhyay)

Indeed, the poet's fascination with that cup cannot be explained. For the normal people who might see this cup, it is just an ordinary cup. It has "outside patches of colors- orange and yellow, randomly marked here and there", and a very ordinary "inside white", and usually a cup like this does not interest any person. Though this might be true for the normal people, it is not for an authentic autistic person like the poet who has been taken by this cup's outside to the extent that he has praised its craftsman who seems to be someone who likes orange, and yellow colours, and that is why he has thought of "entertaining his vision with orange and yellow creation" which he has drawn on this cup.

The reader can notice that the poet is fascinated with this cup, and observes it repetitively because there is somekind of resemblance between him, and that cup. Just like the cup's white inside which every cup enjoys, like the poet's normality which he believes that he certainly enjoys even if the normal people consider him abnormal. In spite of the fact of his being normal, yet generally his strange autistic symptoms make him look different, and mentally retarded from the outside especially to the mainstream. His outside is exactly like the randomly coloured outside of the cup which makes it look unusual, and strange.

Unlike Miedzianik who has felt despair because of the stigmatization, and marginalization of the normal people who have never appreciated his incomplete cure of his "different outside", Mukhopadhyay has not felt that horrible feeling,

## The Autistics in the Crip Theory:

### A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems

---

and never attempted to cure his "different outside". Instead, the poet has challenged the normal people not only by his refusal to be cured, but also by his insistence on keeping his strange, and daily repetitive autistic observance of the cup. It seems in the second stanza that his insistence on this daily routine satisfies him. Like the cup which "lived on the kitchen shelf like a smile watching all the food preparation", the poet lives happily with his autistic fascination with the cup, and keeps observing it. Here in order to indicate the cup's sense of satisfaction, and happiness with its outside random colours which resemble the poet's autistic outside, the poet has used a simile, and compared his cup to a smile. Also, in that same line, there is a personification of the cup. It seems that the poet has used this personification in order to make the reader become sure from the resemblance between him, and the cup. Like the poet who lives marginalized, yet insists on his autistic daily observance of the cup which makes him happy, like the cup which "lives" on the kitchen shelf, and "watches" the food preparation.

As a matter of fact, the normal people have never known the secret of the authentic autistic poet's sense of satisfaction, and happiness with his strange autistic routine which makes him repeatedly observe the cup. They have always wondered how could the poet feel such happiness though he is viewed by the majority as a mentally retarded. Likewise, the randomly coloured cup seems happy, and smiles, and nobody knows the secret. Its randomly coloured outside makes it only fit to be used for serving tea, and nothing else, and in spite of its being used to serve only one drink, it is still happy. The poet wonders: " who knows what the smile was about? / No one fed it anything but tea". Again, the poet has used another personification in order to make the reader become sure from the resemblance between him, and the cup. He has compared the cup to a baby who smiles though he/she is only fed tea which is absolutely not his/her favourite drink. This marvelous personification probably echoes the normal society's stigmatization, and marginalization of all of the autistics including the poet, and even the normal autistics like Miedzianik. Like the cup which has to serve only "the black coloured tea", the autistics have only to bear the society's torturing stigmatization, and marginalization.

Again in the third stanza, the poet challenges the majority, and repeats that he refuses the normal people's attempt to cure him, and that he will keep his autistic routine which satisfies him, and makes him happy. That is to say he will

keep his fascination with that cup, and will repetitively observe, and stare at it as he states in the first stanza: " Nothing could stop me from staring at its smile, its orange and yellow, randomly patched smile." Notably, the poet here has not only repeated an idea, which he has already portrayed in the first stanza by using the same words (orange, yellow, randomly patched), but also he has used a personification which conveys similar meaning to the meaning expressed in the simile in the second stanza. He compares the cup which smiles because of its random colours to a person who might be the poet who is completely happy with his strange autistic observance of the cup. In fact, that repetition of a similar idea, and words, and that using of a personification which conveys a similar meaning is intended. It does not only confirm the poet`s refusal of the normal people`s attempt to cure him, or his insistence on keeping his autistic routine which makes him happy. It seems that the poet`s obsession with the repetitive routine is reflected in his style of writing, and that is why he keeps repeating words, and ideas as he repeats observing the cup.

Apparently, the poet`s obsession with this cup which makes Tito Mukhopadhyay " never want to leave the kitchen" won`t stop even if this cup has suddenly, and without any reason disappeared from the kitchen. In the fourth stanza, the poet confirms to his reader that he won`t forget this cup. Although it is not on the shelf of the kitchen anymore, it will remain in his mind, and memory: " The cup, white on the inside, patches of yellow and orange on the outside, turned into a memory." Again in this line the poet has intended to repeat the same words in order to confirm to the reader his insistence on thinking about this cup which has become a memory. Also, this repetition is intended as part of the autistic poet`s style of writing.

How could Mukhopadhyay forget this cup? How could he forget the only thing which resembles him? Maybe his inability to forget this cup is what makes it never remain silent, and passive in his memory. It has " returned one dream to begin this poem." Through that personification which Mukhopadhyay has used to begin the fifth stanza, the reader becomes sure from one fact which is that the cup does not only resemble the poet, it is certainly a symbol of the poet himself, and that is why it has written this poem. Also, it will write other poems. It seems that this cup has become a source of inspiration for the poet. That is why he has begun to imagine that his memory has turned to become a real cup which he has begun

## **The Autistics in the Crip Theory:**

### **A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems**

---

to repeatedly fill, and empty with his life story: " I began of filling and emptying that cup of memory in orange and yellow patches with my story." In that line and through a metaphor, the poet compares his memory which is filled, and emptied with his life story in order to write poetry to a cup which is repeatedly filled, and emptied with drinks. Again in this line the poet repeats similar words for the same purpose.

### **Conclusion**

Mainly, crip theory examines the compulsory system of ablebodiensess`stigmatization, and marginalization of the physical, and neurological abnormal people. The autistics have been included under the umbrella of the neurological abnormality because of their symptoms which make them look strange, and sometimes mentally retarded. It is true that they are not all mentally retarded but most of the normal people could not realize this fact, and that is why all of the autistics have suffered from being stigmatized, described as mentally retarded, and marginalized. In his poem "Against All Odds", the "normal autistic" poet David Miedzianik who has attempted to resemble the normal people, portrays an agitating sense of despair, and many other terrible feelings which he has passed through because of his being stigmatized, described as mentally retarded, and marginalized by the majority who refuse his attempt to become normal, and finally to give him a job. Quiet different is the "authentic autistic" poet Tito Mukhopadhyay, who though has been similarly treated as mentally retarded and marginalized, yet he has a different reaction. In his poem "A Simple Cup", Tito Mukhopadhyay challenges the mainstream, and refuses to be cured from his disorder which he has not considered an abnormality. Also, he insists on keeping, and showing up his strange autistic obsession with the cup which reflects his autistic identity, and makes him happy.

### **Notes**

- <sup>1</sup>- Rain man is an American movie (1988) which portrays a savant autistic who has very strange behaviour. The title has been used later by the public to give the impression that the autistics are mentally retarded.
- <sup>2</sup>- Temple Grandin is an autistic American scientist. She has been one of the first autistics who have documented her experience and life style as an autistic.

**The Autistics in the Crip Theory:  
A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems**

---

**List of works cited**

- Asperger, Hans. "Autistic Psychopathy in Childhood." *Autism and Asperger Syndrome*. Ed, Uta Frith. London: Cambridge, 1991, Print.
- Baker, Anthony. "Recognizing Jake: Contending with Formulaic and Spectacularized Representation of Autism in Film." *Autism and Representation*. Ed, Mark Osteen. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Barnbaum, Deborah. *The Ethics of Autism: Among Them But No of Them*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008. Print.
- Cimera, Robert. *Making Autism a Gift: Inspiring Children to Believe in Themselves and Lead Happy, Fulfilling Lives*. Lanham: A Rowman, and Littlefield Education Book, 2007. Print.
- Fitzgerald, Michael. *Autism and Creativity: Is There a Link Between Autism in Men and Exceptional Ability?* Hove: Bruner-Routledge, 2004. Print.
- Frith, Uta. "Asperger and his Syndrome." *Autism and Asperger Syndrome*. Ed, Uta Frith. London: Cambridge, 1991, Print.
- Grandin, Temple. *Thinking in Pictures and Other Reports from My Life with Autism*. New York: Doubleday, 1995. Print.
- Grinker, Roy. *Unstrange Minds: Remapping the World of Autism*. New York: Basic Books, 2007. Print.

**The Autistics in the Crip Theory:  
A Comparative Study on Selected Autistic Poems**

---

Mckenna, P.J. *Schizophrenia and Related Syndromes*. London: Routledge, 2007. Print.

McRuer, Robert. *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability*. New York: New York University Press, 2006. Print.

Miedzianik, David. Now All I've Got Left Is Myself. <http://web.archive.org>. Online.

Mukhopadhyay, Tito. Five Poems by Tito Rajashi Mukhopadhyay. *Disability Studies Quartely*, vol 3, no 1 (2010). <http://dsq-sds.org/article/view>. Online.

Osteen, Mark. "Conclusion: Toward an Empathetic Scholarship." *Autism and Representation*. Ed, Mark Osteen. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.

Roth, Ilona. "Imagination and the Awareness of Self in Autistic Spectrum Poets." *Autism and Representation*. Ed, Mark Osteen. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.

## التَّوَحُّدِيُّونَ فِي نَظَرِيَّةِ الإِعَاقَةِ:

### دراسه مقارنة على نصوص شعرية مختارة للشعر التَّوَحُّدِيُّ

#### المُلخَص

تتناول هذه الدراسة الانماط المختلفة للمصابين بالتوحد وكذلك ردود أفعالهم المختلفة تجاه عملية التهميش والإهانة الدائمة والصادرة ممن يصفون أنفسهم بغالبية البشر الطبيعيين. طبقاً لنظرية الإعاقة يعاني التوحديون من العديد من الأعراض الغريبة، وبالتالي يمارس البشر الطبيعيون عليهم ضغوطاً شديدة، ويظهر ذلك من خلال تهميشهم الدائم، ونعتهم بالتأخر العقلي. والحقيقة أن هذه الأعراض قد تجعل التوحديين بالفعل أناساً مختلفين عن الغالبية العظمى من البشر ولكنها لا تجعلهم مصابين بالتأخر العقلي. من خلال هذه الدراسة يستطيع القارئ التمييز بين نمطين من المصابين بالتوحد: الأول هو "التوحد الطبيعي" والذي تمثله قصيدة "ضد المؤلف" لدايفيد ميدزينيك وتتناول هذه القصيدة المأساة التي يعيشها الشاعر التوحدى نظراً لإحساسه باليأس وفقدان الأمل من المجتمع الذي دائماً ما يتعامل معه على أنه يعاني من التأخر العقلي، ولم يستطع تقبله بالرغم من انخراطه الكامل في المجتمع، ونجاحه إلي حد ما في علاج بعض أعراض التوحد بحيث أصبح شبيهاً إلي حد كبير بالإنسان الطبيعي. من ناحية أخرى تتناول هذه الدراسة قصيدة "الكوب" للشاعر التوحدى تينو ميخوبادهي، والتي تتناول شخصية "التوحدى الاصلي" من خلال الشاعر الذي رفض بشكل قاطع مجازاة المجتمع وعلاج أعراضه الغريبة، وبالرغم من ذلك فهو يشعر بالسعادة، ومصرّاً على الاحتفاظ بكل سماته التوحديّة التي تجعله هو الآخر عرضة للإهانة والتهميش.

*الكلمات الرئيسية:* منخلف عقلياً، توحدى طبيعى، توحدى اصلي، التهميش، وصمه