

Alienation and Power in Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child*

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Abstract

In her novel "The Fifth Child", Doris Lessing illustrates the rigidity of a patriarchal society. The analysis of masculinity in this study shows that society as a whole, in addition to its criminal subcultures, are maintained by the masculine law and order, which encourages prejudice against those who do not fit into the norms of society, believe in authoritarian social

systems, and favor rational solutions to moral judgments. Therefore, Lessing has fostered the complexities of social relationships between husband and wife from various socioeconomic strata in terms of a crippled child, Ben. Her unbiased insight into the thinking of society's underprivileged women as well as those who represent the oppressive established society sheds light on various aspects of patriarchy. For this purpose, the current study intends to investigate Lessing's treatment of women's alienation and power. It aims to look at psychological conflicts, social alienation, and social status and power through the art of characterization and plot construction.

Keywords: Alienation, Power, Lessing, psychoanalysis.

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1. Introduction

Lessing has promoted societal structures and norms that women in conventional families must adhere to, such as the conflicts between marriage and love, motherhood and work, the alienation of a single professional woman, and the hollowness of marriage. Her works depict women challenging the injustice of conventional power. She focuses her feminist views on the interaction between men and women, which she regards as a devastating estrangement in women's ideas and beliefs. Moreover, her works reflect the socioeconomic situation of women as well as their estrangement as they pursue careers and take on duties that are traditionally ascribed to males. Lessing has provided a sketch of relationships between men and women, marriage, careers, love, motherhood, and other aspects of patriarchal society (Hossain, 2018, p.23).

Women have been presented by the author in a variety of psycho-social problems and from a variety of male-versus-female viewpoints. Lessing has shown how societal pressures influence women's actions and goals, showing how they are seen as contemporary women seeking independence, identity, and power. Some of her characters who moved beyond their romantic dependency on men as a "fictitious vehicle" of achieving a sense of self and liberation from a male perspective have inspired her readers to research arguments concerning social and psychological conflicts, both her own and those of characters, and she has inspired readers to do the same (p.24). Lessing has presented the ruptured psyche of the protagonist which happens only because of societal norms. Her novel is a complex exploration of multiple interrelated social and psychological conflicts, as these are anxiously enforced and progressively transgressed.

Lessing's works reveal a recurring preoccupation with a female protagonist's struggle to accept her gender identity. The protagonist's antagonism to a woman rather than any particular male or group of men is what creates the primary tension in this conflict. This "woman is "the mother". The phrase "the mother" most clearly refers to the fictitious figure who plays the part of the protagonist's mother, but it may also apply to any other older woman from the mother's generation who acts as an example or role model for the younger woman. Nevertheless, the word "the mother" relates to the protagonist's urge to resemble her mother. Consequently, the conflict includes psychological and social issues.

Lessing often uses strong female characters who are trying to forge new identities for themselves in a changing society. This study makes the case that Lessing portrays characters in conflict with other women more often than with any male. This "woman" is "the mother". It is the younger woman's responsibility to fight the urge to adopt her mother's restricted, domesticated lifestyle. Lessing keeps keeping a critical eye on the conventional structures of motherhood and marriage. The theme of socio-psychological alienation and power has been given its first extensive examination through the art of characterization and plot construction.

2. Psychological Conflicts

Psychoanalysis, as defined by the Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), is "a method of medical treatment for those suffering from nervous disorders" (1952, p.342). All of what is currently known as "talk" psychotherapy comes from this. According to James Mann, psychoanalysis as a theory teaches people about mental functioning and human behavior. "Its lessons are equally applicable in the conduct of any kind of psychotherapy" (Mann, 1973, p. xi). Freud also used his observations to develop a psychoanalytic theory of psychology that stresses the significance of the unconscious in all mental functioning (Greenson, 1967, p.34). Furthermore, psychoanalysis proposed new methods of interpreting, among other things, childhood, family relationships, love, hatred, and the conflicting feelings that make up our daily lives.

While studying psychoanalysis, human conflict cannot be neglected. William Kennedy defines conflict as a "universal phenomenon in human life. Everyone in this world can face various conflicts for very different reasons" (1966, p.28-29). Whereas Dirjosiswono states; "conflict occurs among characters, between a character and his or her environment, or among the thoughts, needs, and emotions of a single character" (1985, p.27). In fact, conflict is always created by characters who play their parts in the literary work in order to influence the reader. Robert Stanton shows that there are two main types of conflict, that is external conflict and internal conflict (1965, p.16). External conflict is a conflict between two people, two groups of people, one person and his surroundings, or even one person and nature (social conflict). Internal conflict, on the other hand, is a conflict between one's own views and those of others, or between one and himself (psychological conflict).

The psychological impacts of conflict on individuals and societies are as profound as they are underappreciated. If attitudes that contribute to the conflict are to be minimized, and it is assumed that psychology influences the attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups, then a new emphasis must be placed on comprehending the socio-psychological conflict and its effects. A psychological conflict occurs when an individual is motivated to engage in two or more mutually exclusive or incompatible tasks. It arises when the overt, verbal, symbolic, or emotional reactions required to achieve one motivation are incompatible with those needed to accomplish another.

The Fifth Child is set in the 1960s and tells the life of David and Harriet Lovatt, a normal couple with traditional family values. Marriage and a large family are valued more than successful careers and sexual independence. As soon as Harriet learns she's expecting their fifth child, Ben, their perfect family life is shattered. Harriet believes her child has a problem and has a difficult pregnancy filled with anger and animosity toward the unborn. The situation worsens after Ben is born, and neither Harriet nor the rest of the family cares for the youngster. Therefore, this work is written from the mother's perspective and concentrates on her connection with Ben. It also goes into extensive description of her motherly emotions and

beliefs, as well as the problems she meets and the criticisms she faces. Nonetheless, the novel was published during a period when abnormal children were stigmatized and their mothers were ostracized by a male-dominated society.

Harriet speculates that in the past, in a society dominated by men, this is how a woman who gives birth to a child with disabilities would be handled. The society regards it as her fault. Therefore, the novel is based upon the perspective of the mother and would like to look into the probable feminist underpinnings, as this is crucial to fully understand the narrative structure and the lack of the role of the father. Lessing's treatment of motherly duty has the unintended consequence of keeping the father, David, in the background and never fully emerging. He has a non-functional connection with Ben, and instead of attempting to mend it, he makes an effort to take care of the remaining children on both a material and emotional level, but he falls short in both areas. The family's division is made worse by this feeling of lost masculinity and identity (Pode, 2010, p.2).

It is intriguing how a novel about a woman who does not fit into traditional norms leaves no room for a man in the same predicament. Harriet expresses herself and conveys her experience in a pitiable manner. David is not given the same opportunity. As a result, there will be an analysis of the various reasons for the parallel between the treatment of the father in the novel *The Fifth Child* and the treatment of mothers in society at the time. As a consequence, David and his responsibilities as a spouse and leader in a patriarchal culture have received special attention from the novelist. She aims to look at how parenting is portrayed and why David feels left out and unable to express himself. In fact, this raises the question: To what extent does David's function as a decision-maker depend on the narrative seen through Harriet's eyes? There is a connection between David's responsibilities as a spouse and a father since the pressures on his and Harriet's marriage affect the family, generating further division. As a result, examining the marriage and its demise will be pertinent to the study of David's development as a father. Lessing demonstrates how David's loss of manhood, as well as his inability to provide for his family and keep them together, affects and changes his behavior as a father. It is possible to connect Harriet's representation to a feminist perspective even if Lessing's novel is not intrinsically feminist despite focused on a woman's point of view. By emphasizing Harriet's motherly position throughout the work, for instance, the reader is made aware of Harriet's past, her life goals, and her every thought and feeling. Here Lessing writes at the beginning of the novella regarding the characters of David and Harriet:

Harriet and David met each other at an office party neither had particularly wanted to go to, and both knew at once that this was what they had been waiting for. Someone conservative, old-fashioned, not to say obsolescent; timid, hard to please: this is what other people called them, but there was no end to the unaffectionate adjectives they earned. They defended (Lessing, 1988, p.7).

The above quotation implies the first meeting between husband and wife and their love and marriage relationship between them.

According to Holmquist, who wrote a few years before *The Fifth Child* was released, there is a new feminist movement that places more emphasis on the "social and psychological pressures experienced by women in the nuclear family" than on "the legal aspect of marriage as [...] the old feminists" did (1980, p. 205). This is precisely what the narrator achieves by relating Harriet's experiences throughout the narrative. She confronts societal pressure since she desires a conventional family, contrary to what her peers anticipate. Because Harriet thinks there is something wrong with Ben, she is constantly questioned by everyone around her, which causes her to experience psychological strain throughout her pregnancy. The novel is permeated with a strong feminist voice, and it is not only the narrator who represents the emerging feminist movement (Pode, 2010, p.3). Holmquist discusses Lessing's treatment of the social status of women of modern times, and uses the statement of Krouse to show her point as follows:

The Feminism of Doris Lessing 1972, [...] discusses whether Doris Lessing can be considered feminist and if so what sort of feminism she represents. Krouse differentiates between explicit and implicit feminism and concludes that Lessing's contribution to literary feminism must be placed within the latter category. According to Krouse, Lessing shows little interest in the discrimination of women in work, education and politics, but she does give thorough analyses, particularly of the destructive influence of the traditional marriage on the female psyche (Holmquist, 1980, p.24).

While studying the events of *The Fifth Child* using Krouse's conclusion as a guide, it is evident that they support her argument. Despite discussing how Ben's birth impacts the entire family, Lessing has concentrated on Harriet's perspective. The reader witnesses the family's demise through her attitude and learns about Harriet's mental state. The remarks of Krouse and Holmquist have supported the feminist interpretation that Harriet's scorn for Ben stems from her traditional marriage and being a member of a nuclear family. This is a result of the stress she experiences when pregnant with Ben and after the family split is discovered. She redirects her dissatisfaction to Ben, despite the fact that it is her traditional lifestyle that is harming her psyche. The novel's core is built around the adoption of a feminist perspective (Pode, 2010, p.3).

David and Harriet, together with their four children, were a happy family until Harriet's pregnancy with Ben and his uncomfortable movements in her womb began. Harriet referred to the embryo as the enemy and asked Dr. Bert to advance the birth date. Ben's burden was terrible. In the meantime, the father of the family was working most of the time, and with the birth of Ben, the gap expanded, but the father was still present for the rest of the children. When they were unable to locate Ben, David committed him to a facility in North London. Harriet's feeling of responsibility captivated her, and one day when she went to visit Ben, she

found him in a terrible condition and wanted to bring him back home, but the families' response was disheartening. Lessing (1988) comments:

With Ben a mound of Blankets in her arms, his face covered, she went into the living room and looked over the law wall to where they all sat around the big table. Luke. Helen. Jane. Little Paul. And David, his face set and angry. And very tired. She remarked, “They were killing him,” and saw that David would not forgive her for saying this in front of the children. All showed fear. She went straight up the stairs to the big bedroom and through it to “the baby’s room,” and put Ben on the bed. He was waking up. And then it began, the fighting, the heaving, the screaming. Again, he was on the floor, rolling around on it; and again he flexed and bent and thrashed, and his eyes were pure hate.

When David first saw Ben, he grew enraged, then stated that he would not forgive her, and then David, and father took his stuff to another room. The distance between the father and Ben began when the father sent Ben to the Institution or even before that when the father ignored Ben as a family member. Now was the moment to get a little further away from Ben and Harriet. Harriet’s affection and motherhood obligation overcame the father’s apparent reason, and David believed that institutions were to blame in such circumstances.

So, the novel is a narrative of 1960s England, a time in which having retarded child resulted in outcasting of mothers as well as the family from society (Sundberg, 2011). In light of this social injustice, the preceding phrase suggests that Ben is anything but silent; rather, he is agitated and agonizing. Lessing’s treatment of feminism reveals how society values male dominance and the mother’s submission to traditional notions of motherhood. Here's what David had to say about Ben's physical characteristics:

He was not a pretty baby. He did not look like a baby at all. He had a heavy-shouldered hunched 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. He opened his eyes and looked straight up into his mother’s face. They were focused greeny-yellow eyes, like lumps of soapstone (Lessing, 1988, p.60).

Harriet is alone in suffering conditions of life with Ben, and the father disappears from life by taking extra jobs and sometimes by not coming home. Because of the conditions, Ben’s siblings were scattered when they were a teenager and the emotional relationship between them was not formed; they preferred to be away from the family and Ben. “He’s a funny little chap,” David wonders aloud (Lessing, 1988, p. 47); “[h]e’s like a troll, or a goblin or something (p.49),” worries Harriet. She names him instantly:

“We are going to call him Ben,”
said Harriet. “Are we?” said David.

“Yes, it suits him.” (p.50)

When Ben was born, he seems to be a troll or a goblin, meaning that he falls victim to a crippled appearance. Lessing (1988) writes:

In the last year, Ben was five, Luke and Helen announced they wanted to go to boarding school. They were thirteen and eleven. Of course, this went against everything Harriet and David believed in. They said this; said, too, that they could not afford it. But again, the parents had to face how much the children understood, how they discussed and planned—and then acted. Luke had already written to Grandfather James, Helen to Grandmother Molly.

Luke went to James’s home and Helen to Molly’s, and later Jane wanted to live with Dorothy. It seems that other than a lack of emotional relationship between parents and children, there is no sense of affection between the children since they simply decide to leave the family and each other. James and Molly are sufficiently rich to pay the expenses of these children. Therefore, 13 or 14 years after Harriet and David’s marriage their family was scattered and their utopian future was demolished. They remained with Paul whose temper had changed gradually so they sent him to a psychoanalyst for treatment and he habited to the psychoanalyst life and children. After going to school, Ben along with his friends becomes a group, a criminal one—Ben Lovatt’s Group. His irritations, coming with friends at night, sleeping in Lovatt’s home, behaving as they wished, were sufficient reasons for David to drop them out of the house. Now David and Harriet are alone after 15 years of struggling to lead a happy life, and they decide to sell their house to move to a smaller house. All family members maintained their lifestyle, just like David when he was a child and his parents separated and he lived sometimes with his father and some other times with his mother. It seems that children were unconsciously affected by their father's life. The absent father in Ben’s life and absent mother in other children’s life dissolved the family. Unconscious social forces for outcasting retarded children result in the production of criminal groups like Ben’s group. Such slow-minded individuals with considerable physical power can easily reach whatever evil-doing they wish. Therefore, individuals such as Ben are the product of their society and their passive and unlettered parents (Pormouzeh & Shabrang, 2016, pp.4-5).

Lessing’s *The Fifth Child* is a faithful presentation of a failure in identity development; the novel dramatizes how the subconscious’s dreams and fancies can damage or fatally stop the identity-building process. According to Jones in the *New York Review of Books*, the novel is “a horror story of maternity and the nightmare of social collapse” (1988, p.30), blending dreaming, imagination, and a feeling of feminine identity that is threatened and on the verge of extinction. Here in this novel, both protagonists, like Harriet and David, fail to build their own identities. A deeper examination of the novel's multilayered portrayal of identity as a type of difficult self-creation will enable us to recognize its central place in Lessing's canon (Sharma, 2015, p.3).

Despite the fact that a novel that emphasizes the viewpoint of a woman does not always qualify as a feminist novel, Harriet's portrayal might be linked to a feminist viewpoint. For instance, readers learn about Harriet's background, her life ambitions, and every thought and feeling via the narrator concentrating on her progress. Writing a few years prior to the publication of *The Fifth Child*, Holmquist (1980, p. 205) states that there is a "new feminist movement which focuses on social and psychological pressures experienced by women in the nuclear family, rather than the legal aspect of marriage as [...] the old feminists did". This is accomplished via the narrator recounting Harriet's experiences. She is subjected to society's pressure since she wants a traditional family rather than what her friends desire. Additionally, she has psychological strain during her pregnancy with Ben as a result of being questioned by others because she worries there may be a problem with the child's disability. Readers witness the family's demise through their own eyes and learn about Harriet's mental state throughout the novel. Harriet, the protagonist, aspires to do a creative act and establish a narrative structure; she wants to create a family that includes both real and imaginary members, moulding her life according to her vision of how she wants it to be. Her identity is formed in two ways: first, she voluntarily carries five children in order to realize her idealized notion of traditional family life and her maternal desires. Her family seems to represent what she has encountered in dreams, nightmares, and fantasy, which indicates that she has a very strong sense of imagination. In fact, Ben's dependency on his mother will force her into a strictly maternal role when her imagination threatens to escape her control, going against her will and pushing her life to the verge of disaster. This maternal mentality will embody the darkest and most dreadful qualities of parenting (Sharma, 2015, p. 4).

3. Social Alienation

Many psychological, social, literary, and philosophical researches have been conducted on alienation. It is a key subject of the human condition in the modern era. According to Sidney Finkelstein, alienation is "a psychological phenomenon, an internal conflict, a hostility felt towards something seemingly outside oneself which is linked to oneself, a barrier erected which is actually no defence but an impoverishment of oneself" (1965, p.7). Loss of self-identity is what causes alienation. A major theme in contemporary fiction is the fight for the identity of the dispossessed person. Today, man is incapable of understanding the purpose of existence and the importance of his presence in a dangerous world.

"The feeling of being segregated from one's community" is referred to as social isolation (Kalekin-Fishman, 1966, p. 97). The importance of social isolation in the modern society is highlighted by Neal and Collas:

While social isolation is typically experienced as a form of personal stress, its sources are deeply embedded in the social organization of the modern world. With increased isolation

and atomization, much of our daily interactions are with those who are strangers to us and with whom we lack any ongoing social relationships (2004, p.114).

This quotation implies that social alienation is clearly noticed in Harriet as a form of psychological trauma because she falls victim to social restrictions in terms of an abnormal child called Ben. The case we notice in the life of an alienated mother.

To construct a perfect family, the mother must produce a healthy child who can contribute completely to society, and if this is not done, the only unjustified guilt for this failure is placed on women. According to Gamallo (2000, p.113), Harriet's figure, who has Ben "the other" within her, resembles the figures of a country that includes immigrants. There is a metaphorical analogy between a nation/society and a pregnant woman in that each has the other implanted inside them. Because of her strong bond with Ben, Harriet is isolated from both society and other members of her family. The difference between Harriet and her society/family is made clear by the psychological issues that she and Ben are experiencing. Harriet is pregnant at the time, and Ben, her unborn child, torments her from inside (p. 90). Instead of addressing Ben's abnormality, doctors, who stand for institutional authority, say that "it is not abnormal to loathe a child" (Lessing, 1988, p.68), trivializing the problem. They distance themselves from Ben's predicament and jointly analyze Harriet the mother. Given that the mother's link to the monster is fuzzy, she is the basic source of the corruption and contamination of the household, country, and society. The urge to generate healthy and capable children is revealed by society's monstrous child-mother bond.

One day, when she discovers Ben crouching and poised to emerge from a shadowy area of the attic, Harriet uses his name to get over an innate anxiety:

"Ben," she said softly, though her voice shook. "Ben..." [sic] putting into the word her human claim on him, and on this wild dangerous attic where he had gone back into a far-away past that did not know human beings (Lessing, 1988, p.116).

His given name, which serves as a symbol of familial relations, connects him to her and to the remaining members of the race.

Happiness is a shared asset between the group and the individual, as well as a profit for the community. If it is not attained, the mother is held responsible for the collective and individual's inability to pursue mutual happiness. Harriet believes Ben is her punishment for her desire for happiness, although the novel clearly shows that she is not to blame. She is not provided with enough safety nets in the novel. As a result, the process of scapegoating Harriet, the mother, should be regarded as a byproduct, rather than a cause, of this ideological operation (Uematsu, 2014, pp.16-18).

4. Power and Social Status

Social power is a component of social strain and is described as the capacity to establish norms and values that are thought acceptable and desirable without using force or money. Moreover,

social power is the potential for social influence. Social power and social influence are separate and distinct concepts. Social influence is a real change in views, attitudes, behavior, emotions, and so on as a result of another's presence or actions, while social power is just the potential for such a change. Commonly referred to as the influencing agent is the person or entity that exerts influence, whereas the target of influence is the person or entity being tried to exert influence. Because of their social power, influencing agents may utilize it to affect targets.

Lessing's novel *The Fifth Child* exemplifies how a family's social hierarchy affects the relationships of power amongst its members. It should be noted that "Harriet scaled somewhat lower than David" (Lessing, 1988, p.25), which implies that David's parents James and Molly have a greater social position than the Walkers, i.e., Harriet and her mother Dorothy Walker had a higher social standing than Angela and Sarah and their families.

When it comes to their financial condition, James and Jessica, his new wife, are upper-class individuals. James demonstrates his higher social position by taking on financial obligations for his son and daughter-in-law, who reside in an opulent Victorian mansion while leading a very disorderly and modern lifestyle with Jessica. They are both described as superficial personalities who appear to be unattached to England culturally and geographically. They believe that self-realization can be achieved through a materialistic and opulent lifestyle. Their wealth made up for their lack of cultural sophistication, placing them on par with David's mother, Molly, and her new husband, Frederick Burke, who would live simply in Oxford, because Frederick is an academic, Molly, who was an upper-class lady prior to her divorce from James, maintains her status in her relationship with Frederick. David takes after his father in terms of social standing. Even while Harriet feels more emotionally connected to her mother's financial level, this is also what establishes her social position from the outside.

In the novel, it seems that the Walkers, unlike the Lovatts and Burkes, are characterized as ordinary folks. They are uneducated, work in average occupations, and attend ordinary schools. Even though she is, of course, a Lovatt from a socioeconomic perspective, Harriet does not naturally establish herself among the Lovatts as an upper-class lady due to her strong connection with her mother and sisters. The Lovatts and Burkes are at the top of the social status, while the Walkers are at the bottom, illustrating a patriarchal social system, similar to that of real English society in the 1860s, where traditions, social status, and wealth were extremely respected. Dorothy is the most powerful character in the Walker family, followed by Harriet, Harriet's sister Angela, and Sarah and William, who are at the bottom of the Walker social ladder. The Lovatt family, which includes James, Jessica, David, David's sister Deborah, and the Burke family, which includes Molly and Frederick, are then positioned above them all. Molly is the most powerful of the group. She is the one who convinces David and Harriet's ex-husband James to assist them financially. According to the English class system, which is evident in the social interactions inside the Walker clan's domain, if Harriet is assumed to be emotionally a Walker, there is a perpetual struggle between the Lovatts and Burkes on one

hand and the Walkers on the other hand. The novel's narrative technique shows what Harriet and David dare to expect: "Happiness. A happy family. The Lovatts were a happy family. It was what they had chosen and what they deserved" (Lessing, 1988, p. 21). Here Lessing wants to tell her readers about the happiness of a middle-class English society of her times.

Family conflicts influence the power relationships amongst the characters in *The Fifth Child*, and the strong, dominant personalities finally compel everyone to follow their advice to standardize social interaction in David and Harriet's affluent Victorian standards. Dorothy Walker, a strong female working-class character, and Molly Burke, with the help of her husband Frederick Burke and ex-husband James Lovatt, appear to be the ones who establish the social attitudes that eventually become conventional norms within society and community. Molly and Dorothy are the ones who bring up the seriousness of Ben's predicament. *The Fifth Child*, in particular, demonstrates how such people build societal conventions, customs, and attitudes that foster a sense of belonging and force everyone to imagine in the same manner (Sundberg, 2011, pp.26-30).

Harriet's social and psychological problems have therefore been identified. She has become the true scapegoat for both her family and the wider community, who wish to punish her both before and after Ben's birth. Harriet, from an implicit feminist perspective, is subjected to social and psychological constraints as a result of the lifestyle she has chosen. "One of Lessing's themes is that dominating and strong in society are not always men in a biological sense," Sundberg (2011) says, "but women who have acquired traditional qualities can be that as well". As a result of her spouse and other people's views toward her throughout the process of self-construction, Lessing is highly interested in understanding how Harriet's self-undermining process works. Lessing has also acknowledged Harriet's mental anguish as a result of other people's insensitivity to and lack of understanding of her suffering as a wife and mother, and how this has caused the instability of her psyche. Harriet is truly criticized for breaking from her society's accepted rules. As a mother and married woman seeking to live a normal life, she believes that what she has been doing is in line with her own set of beliefs, so she keeps acting in this way. Contrarily, what occurs to her as a mother may occur to any mother. A normal child may be born to a woman at any time. Being the mother of an abnormal child has nothing to do with Harriet. There was no crime committed; it was just terrible luck. Harriet is well aware of this fact, yet she still has to endure pain. Her sorrows have grown as a result of the culture she lives in being so unkind. Her suffering is made worse by the fact that those who are closely linked to the same child, such as his father criticizes her. Despite that fact, she is mistreated by everyone in a masculine society around her where she is capable of standing up for herself and her conviction (Khalaf, 2020, p.2132).

5. Conclusion

So far, Lessing's *The Fifth Child* depicts the story of a traditional, old-fashioned family that clashes with a problematic child who doesn't fit into their idealized view of the world. Harriet and David attempt to mold their little son, Ben, into the kind of family life they want rather than accepting him as he is. Ben, a fifth child born with Down's syndrome, is the focus of Lessing's novel, which also explores the family's societal rejection of him. Despite his physical and mental limitations, Ben nevertheless finds his own methods to whine, scream, and show his disgust and wrath. His peculiarity stems more from the mindsets of individuals who reject and loathe him due to his abnormalities than it does from his physical qualities. Harriet bears some responsibility for how her child is treated by other family members. She doesn't seem to have any kind of heartfelt affection for her kid. She is unable to make herself fully accept her child's deformity. But much to her own and other people's dismay, she decides to retain the kid. Additionally, she plans to take Ben out of the facility and provide him with maternal care, expressing her reluctance to accept the infant's state. She demonstrates her willingness to endure social rejection in return for the kid by saving Ben from the grasp of authorities and social institutions.

In addition to Ben's mother, who is seen as a criminal for giving birth to such a deformed kid, *The Fifth Child* novel illustrates Ben's isolation and frustration. His pals shun him in games, and he is regarded with a sense of dread as if he were a relic of a bygone era or an extraterrestrial from another planet. His father is astonished and appalled at the child's delivery. Ben is mistreated and suffers like an animal in such a society where he faces the complexities of life. In this way, a mother's connection with her kid might be thought of as a maternal bond. A maternal bond may form in situations when the kid is not connected to the mother, such as an adoption, even though it is often linked with pregnancy and delivery. The process of mother-child bonding is affected by both physical and emotional factors. Children with separation anxiety disorders experience worry and anxiety when they are separated from a loved one, often a parent or other caretakers. Not all new mothers develop an instantaneous love for their kids. Instead, the relationship might become stronger with time. Bonds may take many hours, days, weeks, or even months to form.

What is notable is that Harriet recognizes at the end of the novel that she must leave the home in order to free herself from the oppressive past it symbolizes if she wants to continue living. Lessing has perfectly fostered psycho-social alienation through the art of characterization and plot construction.

نامۆبوون و دەسەلات لە رۆمانی مندالی پینجەمی دۆریس لیسینگدا

جوان عادل محمد

بەشی ئینگلیزی، کۆلیژی پەرۆردە، زانکۆی گەرمیان، کەلار، هەریمی کوردستان، عێراق.

پوختە

دۆریس لیسینگ لە رۆمانی مندالی پینجەمدا رەقبوونی کۆمەلگەی پیاوسالاری روون دەکاتەو. شیکاری پیاوسالاری لەم توێژینەو هیه دا نیشان دەدات کە کۆمەلگاکان بە گشتی، هەرۆهە ژێر کۆلتوورە تاوانکارییەکانیان، بە یاسا و ریسای پیاوسالاری پشتگیری دەکری کە بیشوختەیی بەرامبەر کەسانی دیکە پەرۆردە دەکات ، کە لە پیکهاتە ئاساییەکانی کۆمەلگادا جیانی نابیتەو، باوەریان بە سیستەمی کۆمەلایەتی تاکرەو، وچارەسەری عەقلانیان پێ باشتەرە لە بریارە ئەخلاقییەکان. بۆیە لیسینگ ئالۆزییەکانی پەوێندییە کۆمەلایەتیەکانی پەرۆردە کردووە لە نیوان ژن و مێرد لە چینه ئابوورییە کۆمەلایەتیە جیاوازهکان لە رووی مندالیکی پەککەوتە، بێن. تیروانینیکی بیلائیەنی ئەو بۆ بیرکردنەو هە کۆمەلگا' ژنانی کەمدەرامەت و هەرۆهە ئەوانە نوینەرایەتی ستمکاران دەکەن کۆمەلگەی دامەزراو رۆشنایی دەخاتە سەر لایەنە جیاوازهکانی پیاوسالاری. بۆ ئەمە مەبەست، ئەم توێژینەو هیه حەز دەکات لە مامەلە لیسینگ لەگەڵ ژاندا بکۆلیتەو هە لە میانە نامۆبوون و دەسەلات. ئامانجی ئەو هیه سەیری ململانی دەروونییەکان بکات، کۆمەلایەتی نامۆبوون، و پیگە و دەسەلاتی کۆمەلایەتی لە پیگە هونەری کارەکتەر سازی و بنیادانی بلۆتەو.

کلیه وشەکان : نامۆبوون، دەسەلات، لیسینگ، شیکاری دەروونی.

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