

Crippled Identity: Disability Narratives and Identity Development in Firdaus Kanga's Trying to Grow and Anosh Irani's the Cripple and His Talismans

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Abstract

This paper aims to juxtapose the novels Trying to Grow by Firdaus Kanga and The Cripple and His Talismans by Anosh Irani through the lens of the developmental trajectory of the disability identity theory model, where individuals with impairments experience distinct stages of identity development through passive awareness, realisation, and acceptance. The identity model structure focuses on the factors, both physical and psychological, observing the development of their quest for identity. By doing so, it also shed light on the stigmatised and 'abnormal' characters who fight against various forms of social exclusion and the constant struggles to deal with the impairments, thereby highlighting the characters' underlying desire for 'abled-identity' or 'normality.' In his 1991 book "Trying to Grow," Firdaus Kanga investigates the extent to which individuals are affected by the societal stigmas that are connected with having a disability. On the other hand, the protagonist of Anosh Irani's 2004 novel The Cripple and His Talismans, which was published, is also given the name Cripple. The book demonstrates how Cripple copes with his own limitations despite the usual preconceptions that society has about what members of society who have impairments are capable of. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to unravel this contemporary, emancipatory rhetoric of disability as a result of the privileges associated with their gender and class status within the context of Indian society, as well as the various stages of grief through which they rebuild their identities so that they can fit in with society.

Keywords: Identity development, disability, social exclusion, abled- identity, societal stigmas, social model, medical model.

Introduction

Disability studies, as an academic discipline, has witnessed a profound metamorphosis in its comprehension and portrayal of disability. Historically, from the Renaissance through to the 19th century, the dominant lens through which disability was viewed was the medical model. Herein, impairments were deemed individual deficits or pathologies demanding correction, cure, or even eliciting pity. This viewpoint is illuminated in literature from the Renaissance age, most notably in characters such as Shakespeare's Richard III. His physical deformity was not just a mark of his villainy but was deeply interwoven with his moral degradation—a reflection of the era's interpretation of disability as either divine punishment or moral failing (Davis, 1995). As Lennard J. Davis posits in "Enforcing Normalcy," disability

has historically been a fluctuating concept, often dictated by societal norms and prejudices. The oscillation between what was deemed 'normal' and 'abnormal' was foundational in shaping cultural perceptions of disability (Davis, 1995). The rich landscape of Indian English literature offers an insightful parallel. Historically, the subcontinent's perception of disability, not unlike the global perspective, oscillated between various models, including the predominant medical model, which perceived disability as an individual flaw requiring intervention (Ghai, 2002). Literary works such as Mulk Raj Anand's "Untouchable" (1935) might not directly address disability but serve as critiques of societal structures that can be contextualized within disability studies, particularly in the realm of societal "othering" and systemic exclusion. Mitchell and Snyder (2000) have often emphasized narrative prosthesis, the dependence of literary narratives on disability as a device, which can be witnessed in various forms throughout literature. By the latter half of the 20th century, and especially with the rise of social model thinking propagated by scholars like Oliver (1990), Indian English literature began to exhibit more intricate portrayals of disability. Arundhati Roy's "The God of Small Things" (1997) offers a poignant portrayal of Velutha, who, marginalized by caste and physical disability, becomes emblematic of the complex interplay between societal structures and impairment. As Tom Shakespeare notes, disability can often intersect with other forms of identity, complicating its experience and societal perception (Shakespeare, 2006). The maturation of Indian English literature further presented narratives like Salman Rushdie's "Midnight's Children" (1981). The protagonist, Saleem Sinai, with his pronounced nasal deformity, encapsulates the duality of disability as both a unique ability (telepathy) and a source of societal marginalization. This duality reflects the complex relationship between disability and societal norms, aptly capturing the post-independence tumult of India. In tracing the representations of disability from mere medical anomalies to intricate socio-cultural constructs, both globally and within the Indian literary framework, we discern the shifting sands of disability perception and the continued relevance of disability studies.

Chapter-2: Firdaus Kanga's Trying to Grow: Brittle Identity

Trying to Grow by Firdaus Kanga tells the story of a young Parsee child named Daryus Kotwal, nicknamed Brit Kotwal, who suffers from osteogenesis imperfecta. During the 1970s, the novel takes place in Bombay, India, post-independence. The novel's semi-autobiographical origin, as well as the fact that it borrows substantially from the author's own life experiences, is clear from the very beginning. On the one hand, Firdaus Kanga uses the issue of disability to focus our attention on his story, while on the other, he makes observations about the Parsee community. As Western civilization, and the British in particular, became more prevalent, so did the Parsee community. The Parsee people were farmers in India before the British came and colonised the country, but once the British arrived, they adopted Western ways and became a thriving urban population. Here Firdaus Kanga expresses that though the shift from Medical model of disability to the social model of disability was encouraged in India, Sam and Sera were consistent with their efforts to "cure" Brit. As for them the disability was just a disease which can be cured. As in the third chapter of the novel, Doctor says, "Your boy is born with bones brittle as glass. The ones in his legs are delicate as test tubes; I doubt he'll ever walk. He'll probably be toothless, too; his teeth will break as soon as he bites into anything hard" (Kanga 28). To which Sera responds, "Then he must use a wheelchair". Both Sam and Sera had their own way to support Brit. Sam portrayed as the typical Indian father. He was constantly trying to help Brit to lead as normal life as possible. Sam being a highly educated man was deliberately choosing the superstitious path for the cure. On the other hand, Sera was very practical woman who believed in science and was being cautious which helped her creating a perfect

household to support the needs of Brit. Though the identity of Dayrus (Brit) was already imposed on him by Dolly. In Chapter 4, after Sera and Sam announces the baby's name Daryus. Dolly replies, "Doesn't seem right for this baby. I'm going to call him- I'm going to call him Brit! That's short for brittle!". (Kanga 30) Here the identity of the boy is determined by the disability he was born with. As Brit was born with the disease, his course of identity development is different from the Cripple from *The Cripple and His Talisman*. As in this novel, Brit does not go through the stages of grief or loss from the very beginning but encounters them while growing from teenage to adulthood. Characters like, Dolly-his sister, Tina-his cousin, Madame Manekshaw (a Parsee lady)- his tutor, Cyrus, Amy and many other. As the mode of narration of the novel is first person, the narrative is not linear and jumps from one fragment of memory to another leading the trajectory to form a non-linear development.

Brit expresses his opinion on disability in chapter four, saying that the sight of "handicapped people" frightens him, marking the beginning of the "Acceptance Phase" of his identity formation. "Whenever I saw them, I wondered if I seemed as ugly and pathetic. With no personal experience or knowledge to draw from, he could only form an opinion based on the general public's perception of people with disabilities. Tina, his cousin, helps him come to terms with his situation because she, too, has a hearing impairment. Brit and Tina were close, and they communicated with each other through sign language, which the rest of the world either didn't understand or just offered sympathy for. Brit's confidence grew thanks to his tutor, a wealthy Parsee woman named Madame Manekshaw, who, like Tina, treated him like a regular boy. While preparing Brit for the Champion School entrance exam, Madame Manekshaw also gave him life advice. His acceptance of his disability was aided by his interactions with Tina and Madame Manekshaw.

In Chapter 12, the "Relationship Phase" began when Brit became close to Cyrus, Defrage's cousin's son who had moved in with her. Brit's view of the world and his attitude towards "normal" people shifted the moment Cyrus entered his life and home. To prevent Defrage from catching a glimpse of his legs, Brit turned his chair as Cyrus entered Sam and Sera's home. Defrage quickly interjects, "We call him Brit," when Cyrus inquires as to the boy's name. His nickname is "Brit" because his bones are so fragile. Cyrus had a completely different outlook on Brit, and that's why Brit likes him. Cyrus was the third non-family member after Tina and Madame Manekshaw on whom Brit came to rely. Brit was able to more easily find his safe space, where he could explore his identity without fear of prejudice, after moving from the Acceptance phase to the Relationship phase. Relationship dynamics begin to shift in Chapter 18. Dolly's revelation of Brit's long-repressed homosexuality. Because of his frequent interactions with Dayrus, who has the "perfect body," Brit has a hard time determining his sexual orientation. He becomes sexually attracted to Dayrus because he fantasises about having a "perfect body" like Dayrus's. For him it was more like, "better to be stared at as homosexual rather than handicapped!" (Kanga 188). Cyrus starts avoiding Brit after an incident in Chapter 16 where he believes he has hurt her. Twelve days have passed since they last spoke, and when they do, Brit's emotions are front and centre. Brit kisses Cyrus and he kisses him back but suddenly Brit realises; "Somehow it felt all wrong as if I had clasped the wrong partner in the dark" (Kang 169). Cyrus admits that he has always been aware of Brit's attraction to him and has always wanted to test it out. Brit is asked by Cyrus if he is gay; Cyrus follows up by saying he isn't sure. He also asks Brit why he likes and wants him, to which he responds; "You're tall, I'm four feet nothing, you've got muscles in your thighs when I've got matchsticks, you've a voice like hot chocolate-You've got a swimmer's chest; I've got a pigeon-chest. Girls love your body; they don't look at mine except to shudder" (Kanga 170-171). Brit's sexual identity was clarified after meeting Amy, Dayrus' girlfriend. Amy and Brit

see The French Lieutenant's Woman for the first time without anyone else in Chapter 21. Cyrus brings them to the theatre and says he'll pick them up when the film's over. Brit's focus is divided, with one eye on Amy and the other on the screen. During the intermission, when the house lights are on, Brit gets a lot of attention. An innocent question from a young child: "Papa, why is this uncle so small?" (Kanga 224) which enrages Brit and an argument sparks off. Amy immediately steps in to defend Brit, insulting the man's father. Normally Brit dislikes being on the defensive, but he's feeling good and has developed feelings for Amy. Brit and Cyrus attend Amy's party the following day, where he meets both Amy and her mother. Brit goes to the bathroom and, suddenly, Amy comes up from behind and offers to help him. Amy says it was love at first sight for her and Brit admits she felt the same way while they were both in the toilet. Brit's sexuality was a key part of his identity that he hadn't yet discovered.

The Third Phase, Adoption Phase, happened right after the confession of love between Amy and Brit. Amy drops Brit at his home. Sera goes berserk after Brit tells her that Amy is his girlfriend and says, "You are not going to have any girlfriend. Not Amy, not Freny, not Hilloo, not—" (Kanga 247). Sera is convinced that no one is going to marry Brit because of his condition and, eventually, it is going to break his heart. But after Brit says "Let me love Amy. Maybe it isn't fair asking you to go on supporting me—but I want to live like everyone else, feel the things they do—" (Kanga 249). Here, Brit accepted the fact of that being disabled will affect the life of not only his but his partner too but still wanted to continue his relationship with Amy as this was the only way for him to lead a "normal" life like "regular" people. Though in chapter 23, there is an incident when Amy kisses Brit which creates quite a scene as people start talking about them, which leaves Amy in tears. A lot of prejudiced and stereotypical perceptions come to light, through this incident as someone says: "Maybe something is wrong with her inside, we can't see it. That's why she has to marry this cripple. She can't find anyone else" (Kanga 253). Here again, Brit realizes that his identity has somehow merged with his partner and is functioning as one. In the Third Phase, Brit adapts the changes in his life both personal and social and accept Amy and his new relationship. In the last phase, the Fifth Phase, is about being an active member in the community and having a social life like a "regular" person. In chapter 25, Brit's first novel gets published and he goes out with Amy to celebrate. In the last chapter of the novel, not only Brit established himself as a writer. He also gained the confidence from people in the society that he can lead his life without anyone's support which was the case in the beginning of the novel. In the end, Brit looks at himself in the mirror in the lift, he realises that something has changed: for the first time, he looks into the mirror and does not despise himself and the novel ends with Brit thinking, "I liked the way I looked" (Kanga 280). This signals his acceptance of himself and his disability.

Brit Kotwal also undergoes a complex journey of identity development that can be analysed through the stages of Lacan's psychoanalytic theory. The first stage of Lacan's theory is the Imaginary stage, which takes place during infancy and early childhood. In this stage, the child forms its first understanding of itself and the world through its senses and its relationship with its primary caregiver. The child's sense of self is based on its physical experiences and its perception of the caregiver's response to its needs. Brit's experience of this stage is complicated by his disability. He is born with brittle bone disease, which makes his bones weak and fragile. This condition affects his physical interactions with the world, limiting his mobility and requiring him to use a wheelchair. As a result, his interactions with his primary caregiver, his mother, are different from those of a non-disabled child. Brit's physical limitations shape his perceptions of the world and his sense of self. He is acutely aware of his difference from other children and feels a sense of shame and isolation as a result. This is compounded by his mother's

overprotectiveness, which leads her to discourage him from exploring his environment or taking risks. Brit's sense of self is therefore formed in relation to his disability and his mother's response to it. He feels trapped and powerless, and his self-image is dominated by his disability.

The second stage of Lacan's theory is the Symbolic stage, which takes place during early childhood and is characterized by the development of language and the ability to understand symbols and cultural norms. In this stage, the child learns to see itself as a separate individual with its own desires and interests, and to navigate social relationships and norms. Brit's experience of this stage is also complicated by his disability. His physical limitations make it difficult for him to participate in typical childhood activities, such as sports or outdoor play, which are often the basis for socialization and identity formation. Brit's symbolic development is therefore shaped by his disability and his social context. He becomes adept at using language and his intellect to compensate for his physical limitations, developing a sharp wit and a love of books and learning. However, he also feels a sense of alienation from his peers and a sense of inadequacy in relation to dominant cultural norms of masculinity and physical ability. He struggles to find a sense of belonging and identity that feels authentic to him.

The third stage of Lacan's theory is the Real stage, which represents the realm of the unconscious and the unrepresentable. In this stage, the individual confronts the limitations of language and symbolic representation and experiences a sense of fragmentation and incompleteness. Brit's experience of this stage is marked by his confrontation with his disability and his sense of mortality. He experiences intense physical pain and undergoes multiple surgeries, which bring him face to face with the reality of his body's limitations and his own mortality. Brit's confrontation with the Real is also marked by a sense of rebellion and resistance. He refuses to accept the limitations placed on him by his disability and his social context, and instead seeks to assert his own agency and identity. He becomes a writer and performer, using his wit and intellect to challenge dominant cultural norms and create a space for himself as a disabled individual.

Chapter-3: Anosh Irani's The Cripple and His Talisman:

A Quest for an 'Arm'

The novel is divided into seventeen chapters. Each chapter is filled with multiple symbolisms and magic realism. As the novel deals with a disabled character struggling to find his identity in the society. He begins his journey from being unnamed. In the Second chapter, where the journey of the narrator to find his hand begins which ironically lead to finding his identity exposes him to the society in an unconventional way due to his disability. The novel is in the first-person narrative, making the novel more connected to the reader. In the first chapter, "The In-Charge", The Cripple, named given to him by the author symbolizing his disability tells about the psychological condition during the early stage of the disability which was caused to him by an accident. He says, "I try not to think of my disability. At times it makes me so rabid that I want to rip my other arm off. I then realize that I do not have an arm to pull the other one off. This angers me even more". (Irani 6). Here the protagonist is in the constant flux of emotions where he is unable to accept the fact that he is disabled and his life has took a drastic change. In the very same chapter he also expresses how he sees himself. He says, "The moment I lost my arm, two months ago, I felt like a pariah in the company of normal people. After I got out of the hospital, I sold my white-marbled apartment by the sea and moved to one with stone flooring, where flying cockroaches and mosquitoes sang at midnight. I did not speak a word for two whole months. It was as though my arm had done the talking before". (Irani 6). Gura from the slum area, was the first person whom the Cripple acknowledged after the accident. He says, "In my new physical state, I recognized Gura as my equal- a

beggar I could speak to". (Irani 6). Being disabled led the narrator's identity take a shift from a well-educated person from the high-class society to a slum's beggar. He finds solitude talking to a beggar because the narrator not only sympathizes with him more but also Gura act as a mirror where the Cripple sees himself as a person who is been punished by the fate. In the chapter, the Cripple discovers a slum area "the game" where he finds, "women with acid burns, their faces the road map to accident ruins. Woman I cannot look at because I know that only a man can inflict such impairment". (Irani 13) These group (game) of people either suffering from physical deformity or being victim of assault. Here he learns about the Baba Rakhu who is the one who can find him his lost arm and "complete" his body. As the narrator was being disabled by an accident he first experience of grief was in the form of 'Denial'. He refused to accept that he is now disabled and his arm is no longer a part of him. His identity from a "complete-self" to an "incomplete-man" makes him frustrated leading to the second stage of grief, "Anger". In Chapter 3, "The Evil Eye", the Cripple desperately attempts to find put the meaning of behind the clue, the finger which was given to him by a fighter from the "Game" in the slum. Here the third stage of grief surfaces which is 'bargaining', the Cripple bargains with the chicken seller to tell him about the "finger" and Baba Rakhu in exchange of the chickens. "You want to buy all my chickens? He repeats. Even the basket. But only if you give me my next clue". (Irani 33) Soon this stage of bargaining turns in the stage of depression bringing out paranoid behaviour of the narrator. "Each time I nod off, they laugh loudly as if they have never seen a cripple nap before. Perhaps I should tear off one of their legs and see if they find it funny". (Irani 34) Being alone in an isolated house, the Cripple's emotions take drastic turmoil. He is depressed by the fact that he is not able to find any clue leading to his arm. For him, arm is the identity he lost.

The narrator sees the leper's finger as a guide retuning him to his former physicality: "The finger will lead me to my arm - leprous or torn off an ancient tree. It does not matter. It is a lead, and a lead is more than the stump I have" (Irani 38). Physical absence motivates this character to desire normalcy and to replicate its possibility. His desire also exemplifies his attempts to come to terms with a disabled body, even going as far to "Water the finger... so it can grow into an arm" (Irani 50). However illogical, and viscerally humorous, such a process allows the narrator to identify with an altered physicality. According to Davis: "Even a person who is missing a limb or is physically 'different' still has to put on, assume the disabled body and identify with it" (Irani 61). In the process of assuming a "new" body the narrator values even the prospect of his arm more than what isn't there. As the narrator in *The Cripple and His Talismans* "gets used to the absence of his arm" (Irani 135), what motivates this deployment of disability, and what might it signify? His conversation with Baba Rakhu after being asked if he recognizes his former limb provides a partial answer: "But it does nothing. It just hangs there. Exactly. It is your arm. The one you lost. What? All your life it has been good for nothing. So, I took it. You took it? In one clean cut." (Irani 247) Baba states the reason for amputating the narrator's arm was "To cut off his past" (Irani 248). The concept of a limb as a container, or marker of memory allows the concrete to obtain abstract qualities, and vice versa. The identity of the Cripple develops when he shifts from the sea facing building to a "sinking building" (Irani 27). According to him, the social state of a beggar and his is identical. For him accepting his position in social hierarchy is the first step to finding his identity (arm). He search around the slum trying to find Baba Rakhu who runs an illegal business of human organs.

As the narration of the novel is non-linear, the second phase, 'Relationship Phase', occurs when he reminisces about his schoolmate Viren and his parents. Both had a huge impact on his identity development. As the chapter, "The Lost Arm", when the doctor shows him the picture of his left arm. He

recognizes his arm through the burn mark. He says, “the burn had been self-inflicted at age ten.” After witnessing his mother having an affair with a judge. He went to kitchen to boil water. “As I watched the water boil, I thought of Father, and I understood why he never smiled, why he kept cutting himself with the razor blade even though he had finished shaving. I got Father’s razor blade, dipped it in the boiling water and made a deep gasp near the bicep of my left arm. Now father and I shared the same sorrow. But unlike father I did not want to remind myself of Mother each day when I looked in the mirror. So, I used my arm instead of my face”. (Irani 105) His relationship with his mother and his sympathy towards his father brings out a sense of deformed identity which he tried to hide for a long time but after the accident he was free from the “burn mark” and was now free from his past. Another important character in the Relationship Phase is Viren, he was Cripple’s classmate. In school, Cripple bullied Viren for his asthma. In chapter, “Love Lane” Cripple confesses that due to his anger he almost blinded Viren in a class fight. “I hold Viren’s neck so he cannot move and bring the heavy lid down. Miss Moses gets up from her chair. There is a loud scream from Viren. It surprises me and I let go of his neck. He does not move his head. I try to get the desk lid off him but it will not move. It is stuck to his head. I jerked again until I see blood. There is a nail in his eye”. (Irani 99) In chapter, “Viren Hieronymous D’Silva”, Cripple meets with his old classmate and apologized for his deeds in the past. For me moving forward to finding his identity (arm) can only happen after he mend his past. Viren after so many years was still looked pale and diseased. “His hands are long and hairy, and it looks as though his skull has been sucking his face from inside. He looks cancerous”. (Irani 186-187) For Cripple, Viren instantly became an inspiration even after all the jealousy and bad blood in the past. Viren gained success in his career even after having difficulties with his health. This gave Cripple a sense of confidence that he too can gain the same if he finds his identity (arm).

The third Adoption phase and the fourth phase, giving back to community occurred simultaneously in the case of Cripple. From the beginning chapters of the novel, Cripple meets several character with either physical deformity or social deformity. He learns about the “cripple” infrastructure of the society which caged disabled people and took their identity. Cripple who throughout the novel runs madly in search of his arm gains perspective. He sees people suffering from disability and still they are trying to achieve a position in the society from eunuchs to the guy with leprosy who gave Cripple his finger as a talisman which also symbolical points at Cripple himself that all his questions can only be answered by him and his identity is within himself and only, he can find it. The incident with Viren who suffered mentally and physically by Cripple was now leading a successful “complete” life. The Cripple adopts the norms of the disabled people and adjusted himself to their status. From being disgusted from the “leprosy infected finger” to finding a coffin for the finger and strolling all over the slum and the city. In the last chapter, Cripple says, ‘that arm is my past if you attach it, you are giving me back my past and I may return to its ways. Your arm may be lost, but you have begun to regain its wisdom. Then I must leave now. Before I change my mind”. (Irani 227) Here finally, Cripple accepts the fact that he no longer need the arm to continue his journey. He is complete within himself and his identity is no longer deformed or need to be restored because he gained a new identity through his journey. Cripple’s attachment to his past was severed just like his arm. He no longer needs both of them to feel “complete”. The fourth phase occurs when Baba Rakhu offers Cripple to be his apprentice. “When I die, this vast empire of limbs will be yours. You will carry on my work”. (Irani 228). To which Cripple agrees and accepts Baba Rakhu’s offer. He says “The world can be changed not by ending suffering, but by a more judicious distribution of it”. (pg 228) For Cripple, others must get rid of their rotten “misguided limbs”. He finally offers his other arm as a sacrifice

for a greater good he believed was necessary for the society and disabled people. He says, “I must give up this arm as well.... Donate it to someone who deserves it more”. (Irani 229). From searching a missing limb to donating his limb for a greater cause. Cripple rises from his status as a disabled person to a man who can bring change to the society with or without his disability. The barrier formed by discrimination no longer cages him. He is free from all the social constructs and gains an identity not the one he wanted at the beginning of the novel “complete” but “free”.

Also through the three stages of Lacanian psychoanalysis, the Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic, the cripple is able to confront his disability and construct a positive self-image. In the Real stage, the cripple experiences the raw, unfiltered reality of his physical disability. He is faced with the physical limitations and pain that come with his condition, which he cannot deny or ignore. In this stage, the cripple is forced to confront the reality of his situation and come to terms with his disability.

In the Imaginary stage, the cripple begins to construct a self-image that he can feel comfortable with. He begins to imagine what it would be like to live a normal life without his disability, to walk and move freely without the use of crutches. He may even fantasize about being able to perform physical feats that he is not physically capable of doing. In this stage, the cripple creates an idealized self-image that he can aspire to.

In the Symbolic stage, the cripple is able to integrate his Real experiences and his Imaginary self-image into a cohesive identity. He realizes that his disability is a part of who he is, and that he can still live a meaningful and fulfilling life despite his limitations. He no longer feels the need to deny or hide his disability, and instead embraces it as an integral part of his identity. The cripple's journey towards self-acceptance and identity development is a powerful example of how Lacanian psychoanalysis can be used to explore the complexities of disability identity. Through the Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic stages, the cripple is able to confront the reality of his disability, construct a positive self-image, and ultimately accept himself as a complete person. This journey towards self-acceptance and identity development is not easy, but it is ultimately rewarding and empowering for the cripple.

Conclusion

To conclude, the transition of the identity in the text, *Trying To Grow* by Firdaus Kanga and *The Cripple and His Talismans* by Anosh Irani clearly portrays both the characters Brit and Cripple to complete their quest for identity by accepting their “disable-body”. Though the trajectory of identity development is different from the very beginning. In the novel, *Trying to Grow*, Brit experiences different stages of identity development of Anjali J-Forber Pratt and Steven R. Argaon’s paper “A Model of Social and Psychological Identity Development For Postsecondary Students with Physical Disabilities” simultaneously with Elizabeth Kubler Ross, M.D. And David Kessler’s “On Grief and Grieving: Finding the meanings of Grief Through the Five stages of loss” as Brit was born with the disability the process of grief occurs to him with time. But on the other hand, in *The Cripple and His Talismans*, Cripple’s disability is due to an accident. He first faces the stages of loss and then goes through the trajectory of identity development formed by Anjali J Forber Pratt and Steven R. Argaon. Though both the protagonist differs from each other but shares the same perception towards the society. Brit end up being a successful writer in the end and also finds his love. He finally gains his identity in the society, first by discovering his sexuality and then his status in the society as a writer. From a boy suffering from Osteogenesis Imperfecta to a man leading his life like any normal human. Brit successfully completes his journey. Exploring sexuality and desire and asserting an alternative "modern" disability subjectivity is complicated for

handicapped individuals in a sociocultural environment like India due to barriers imposed by gender, caste, class, and economic status. To trace and examine valid assumptions and processes of the development of power connections that strive to rule and oppress the lives of the physically and mentally non-normative is what writings like Kanga's accomplish.

Anosh Irani's novel *The Cripple and His Talismans* is a tangled tale of self-realisation that follows a young protagonist as he searches for his lost limb. It creates a world of black magic, hens with evil eyes, metaphorical lamps, giant, coffin makers and Baba Rakhu. *The Cripple and his Talismans* is a surreal tale set within the folds of a breathing entity called Bombay. It is both imaginative and strikingly visual in its prose, which ties one sentence to another, a chapter to the next and characters with each other. The author plunges deeper into the life of the protagonist, bringing out meanings where none exist. The reader is a silent follower, stealthy at times, frantic at other, who runs after the protagonist, never getting to see his face. It is a story about a man, who is pulled into the world of eunuchs, beggars and magical men with strange agendas. In *The Cripple and His Talismans*, Cripple's quest was to find his missing arm which metaphorically symbolizes his identity. In the beginning, he was struggling to find his place in the society as he continuously compared himself with the beggars and other low-class people of the society who were suppressed by the higher class. In the novel, Cripple breaks the boundaries of the society and frees all the disabled people from the symbolical cage of discrimination and emptiness they faced in their day-to-day life. In the end, the refusal of the left arm after being searched for it throughout the novel portrays Cripple's identity as no longer constricted by his physical deformity. His sacrifice of other arm was a gesture to express that he is free from his past and now he is "complete" inside.

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