

Golding's *Lord of the Flies*: Human Liberation into Savagery

Arjun Dev Bhatta, PhD

Associate Professor

English Department

Tri-Chandra Multiple Campus, TU

Email: abhata44@gmail.com

Abstract

The term 'savagery' cannot have a general and universal definition. However, it refers to the human state of brutality and uncivilization that can be exhibited by individuals or groups anywhere anytime. Golding's *Lord of the Flies* depicts human nature which is inherently savage and evil. This article aims to analyze how the civilized preadolescent school children who have been evacuated on an uninhabited island during the Second World War degenerated from the state of civilization into savagery. I have analyzed savage instincts prevalent specifically in the antagonist Jack and his deadly tribe. It also states that humankind's removal of the rudimentary values signifies their regression into savagery and brutality. Thus, human liberation into savagery as represented by Jack and the other boys of his clan is the focus of this study. Mankind's inherent savagery has been discussed in detail concerning the plot, images, symbols, and characters in this article. This study hopes to bring insight into human behavior and make a harmonious relationship in human society.

Keywords: civilization, evil, liberation, primitivism, savagery

Introduction

William Golding's debut novel *Lord of the Flies* (1954) mainly focuses on deteriorating human civilization, immorality, and the human propensity for evil. The predominant theme of human liberation into savagery Golding makes apparent through a depiction of preadolescent school boys evacuated on an uninhabited island during the Second World War. Thus, the boys become a trope for the post-modern human beings who have indulged in devastating wars, the holocausts, and carnage. The novel focuses on Western ideas about civilization and savagery. It is a critique of "the pervasive beliefs in the superiority of British culture and to the belief that to be British was in some sense the direct opposite of being savage" (Olsen, 2000, p. 2). Although the novel's backdrop concerns Western men and culture, it is an overall crisis the entire universe has been facing. In this regard, Sander (2000) states: "It is not just British boys who reveal their innate depravity, but the whole human race" (p. 597). Human cruelty, yearning for power and hegemony are human incurable maladies that have set the world unrest and a

nightmare. Golding demonstrates this fearful atmosphere in his first published novel *Lord of the Flies*.

Most of Golding's novels deal with humankind's destructive proclivities. He stresses that human beings have inherited primitive traits such as violence, aggression and lust for power, and jealousy, which can neither be controlled nor altered. This unchangeability of human nature destroys the chances of living together in harmony in society. He believes that society's evolution is based on man's nature. In an interview with Jack Biles Golding says, "Society is the product of the people and so society is what men are" (as cited in Biles, 1970, pp. 45-46). In his essay on *Fable* (1965), he presents a beautiful statement regarding the nature of man: "Man produces evil as a bee produces honey" (p. 87). Golding's *Lord of the Flies* seemingly dominates this statement. He believes that "the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual" (as cited in Epstein, 1988, p. 299).

The prime aim of Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is to depict a realistic picture of human nature, society, and the world. Human pride, desire, brutality, and cruelty are incurable diseases deeply ingrained in human veins from which they cannot be immune. He contends that man is prone to destruction and can put social values, culture, and self-image into peril for individual achievement as does Jack in the novel. Golding believes that evil resides in all of us which we can expose anytime anywhere in the absence of restriction and control. Human beings have both good and evil qualities but goodness in man is limited and almost impossible to practice in life. The protagonist Ralph and his friend Piggy dominate and preserve civilizing forces, but the malignant Jack and his righthand Roger's overarching savagery and brutality destroy it and ruthlessly murder the innocent boys Simon and Piggy. So, Golding has shown civilization to be a mere veneer that cracks and splinters under the slightest pressure. Golding has depicted mankind's inherent evil and the human propensity for savagery in his literary masterpiece *Lord of the Flies*.

Discussion

Savagery in particular has taken a derogatory connotation and has been related to violence, cruelty, evil, and darker aspect of human nature. A human state of inherent brutality and animalism can be found in an individual or in group. The savages are a tribe of violent hunters and warriors who lack emotional proximity such as love, compassion, and empathy rather they are capable of endurance and igneous in pursuit of prey and war. Thus, the savages are accredited with exposing the negative passion such as revenge and vengeance along with their fierce nature. As a member of perpetual warfare and ceaseless bloodshed, they adopt a nomadic life and live in isolation where they require no society to share their feelings and emotions. Golding applies this stereotype of savagery in *Lord of the Flies* in which the budding children dramatize the role of a horrific state of prehistoric men who are cruel in nature and engage into warfare.

Golding contemplates civilization and savagery about good, evil, innocence, and cruelty in most of his works. He sees human civilizations are transformative and collapsing due to human selfish activities. Human violence towards nature and other humans in the form of war or invasion are underlying instances of savagery. He conceives humanity itself is intrinsically harmful, unsustainable, and destructive.

Domination, aggression, hegemony, and power exposition are common maladies of present men and nations. These inherent instincts are sources of mankind's reversion to primitivism which Golding exposes in this modern classic novel through the symbolic representation of his characters and images. Golding creates many scenarios, events, and characters to narrate a story of humankind's savage selves in *Lord of the Flies*. He exposes mankind's inherent instincts such as brutality and savagery through a group of preadolescent school boys who have been evacuated on a deserted island during the Great War. Aggression, violence, desire for power, and blood lust are savages' characteristic traits most of the children manifest during their stay on the island.

The boys are generically known as biguns and littluns in terms of their age which ranges from six to twelve years. As the boys have been left on the uninhabited island, they first appear in a state of innocence and have no idea of life, suffering, and violence. They seem confused in the absence of adult supervision and control. However, they succeed in organizing a civilized society based on adult modality even in adverse conditions. Ralph, senior to all, is elected unanimously their chief on account of his fair nature, rationality, and civility. In a team spirit, they initiate communal activities such as building shelters, finding food and water, and making an expedition to explore the uninhabited island. The island is itself an earthly paradise with fresh water, fruits, and wild animals. The boys perform happily the assigned duties based on their capacity. Ralph devises the idea of being rescued by building fire on the mountaintop as a beacon for the passing ship. Piggy's thick glasses are used to make fire. A conch shell they have just found in the lagoon is used to summon assemblies, and taken it as a communicative function, a boy holding the conch has the authority to speak.

But the children forthwith fail to sustain civilization, morality, and polity and degenerated into primitive bloodthirsty savagery. In a state of freedom, they abjure their own created norms and values and turn inimical, violent, and hostile to each other. Jack, a leader of the choir group immediately adopts a primitive life such as hunting, bloodshed, quarrel, and row. His sole interest in blood instigates destruction on the island. As the rules, order, and system turn ineffectual, the boys begin to experience fear, terror, and insecurity. In the deteriorating situation, the initial pig hunting rises to man hunting, as a result, a Christ-like figure Simon and the novel's most logical and intellectual character Piggy are brutally murdered. The fierce Jack and his group set fire to the mountain to smoke Ralph out of the jungle and chase him like an animal. Ralph is saved by the sudden arrival of a naval officer; Ralph weeps over the death of their innocence and his two friends Simon and Piggy. Thus, the children's effort to recreate civilization disintegrates. The life on the island that began with the sound of the shell ends with the evil cry of the hunters.

Golding affirms that savagery is a common disease of all human beings regardless of their age, position, and rank. Human savage nature can be unleashed anytime anywhere when the time is favorable. The boys stranded on the island are free of control and guidance, and, thus, very soon they turn to nature and the wilderness. The boys imitate the life of primitive men who would be almost naked. Ralph pulls off his shirts and paints, kicks his shoes off fiercely, and stands naked. Johnny, who appears first after the sound of the shell, seems almost in a disheveled condition. His face is covered with a sticky mess of fruit and his trousers have been lowered and fall about his ankles.

Similarly, the choir boys enter the island naked and half-naked carrying shorts and shirts, and different garments in their hands.

The boys display their derogatory behavior as soon as they gather first on the island. Ralph, an embodiment of civilization, ridicules and laughs at Piggy's name, his obesity, asthma, and his thick spectacles for pleasure and fun. Jack uses derogatory language and calls Piggy 'fatty', and 'fat slug'; he always intimidates Piggy, never allows him to speak, and shares no meat with him. The littluns giggle when Piggy speaks in the meeting despite his logic, scientific mind, and intellect. The boys' destructive proclivity is observed at the time they make a signal fire on the mountaintop. They go howling and screaming up the mountain acting like a crowd of kids. The signal fire in their first attempt turns into a blaze that destroys not only a living habitation but also a boy with a birthmark on his face. In their extreme excitement, everyone yells: "Snakes! Snakes! Snakes! Look at the Snakes" (Golding, 1954, p. 51) pointing to the burning creepers. The signal fire as a symbol of civilization ironically stands for destruction and remains so throughout the novel. Jack and his cohorts use the fire to blaze the island in order to burn Ralph when he hides to save himself from the fierce Jack's group.

Golding states that man commits crime and violence when he abandons social norms and values. When a man descends from order to chaos, he destroys society, social order and system. Thus, for Golding, society is not wrong in itself; it is human animalism that makes society defective. In this regard, Friedman talks of Golding's teaching: "the defects in human society can be traced back to defects in human nature" (as cited in Bloom, 2008, p. 62). Jack and his choir boys when they first appear on the island, seem almost civilized and disciplined. Jack prefers the application of rules, respects the conch, and engages in creative activities. In the first assembly, he says, "We'll have rules!" "Lots of rules" (Golding, 1954, p. 36). Similarly, he expresses his feelings of English chauvinism and civilized identity as he says, "After all, we're not savages. We're English, and English are best at everything. We've got to the right things" (Golding, 1954, p. 47). But ironically, he descends from order and civilization and creates destruction, fear, and uncertainty on the island. He is very hard to control and the members of his society turn criminal, sadistic, and inhuman.

The chaotic elements of savage men such as a desire for power, lust for blood, anarchy, and jealousy are characteristic traits the children gradually exposed on the island. Jack expresses his dissatisfaction with Ralph's being chief. He arrogantly says, "I ought to be chief . . . because I'm chapter chorister and head boy. I can sing C sharp" (Golding, 1954, p. 23). He aggressively speaks out "Why should I be Jack? I'm Merridew" (Golding, 1954, p. 22) when Piggy takes the boys' name. The desire for power is also prevalent in Ralph. After being elected as a chief, he craves the boys' due respect and obedience to him and his chieftainship.

The extreme desire for supremacy and authority of the two leaders results in eventual conflict and tension, and the clash between them has a tinge of hostility throughout the novel. Their makeshift friendship and fair play end up in hostility and tyranny. Ralph and Jack, chiefs of rival tribes on the island are "two continents of experience and feeling, unable to communicate". And "they looked at each other, baffled, in love and hate" (Golding, 1954, p. 60). The other boys even the littluns expose their

desire for power and control on their own way. The little Henry squatting down on his hams at the lagoon's edge controls the motion of the sea creatures by poking about with a bit of stick. He talks to them, urging them and ordering them. This symbolizes his desire for power. Roger and Maurice, the members of Jack's gang exercise power over the littluns Johnny and Percival. Roger kicks their sand castles decorated with shells, flowers, and stones. Maurice follows laughing and adds to the destruction. He fills Percival's eyes with sand, and Roger gathers a handful of stones and throws them at Henry.

The destruction on the island begins when Jack chooses hunting and rejects the rules and laws they have just formed. Hunting has become a passion for Jack, not a necessity as the island is rich with fruits and other eatable things. Jack, who previously fails to kill a piglet "because of the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into flesh; because of unbearable blood" (Golding, 1954, p. 34), finds extreme pleasure in pig hunting, chanting, and frenzied dancing. The ritualistic dance after each hunting is accompanied by a chorus of "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill her blood" (Golding, 1954, p. 75). When Jack prioritizes hunting, he tempts the other boys to the fun of killing pigs, the flavor of meat, and food. Even Ralph, Piggy, and Simon join the hunting feast because they dribble when they see the roast pig. The boys begin to love hunting more than manual work such as tending the signal fire and building shelters. It is due to Jack the boys lost a rescue opportunity by a ship because he took Samneric, the twins, to hunting while they were tending the fire. When Ralph and Piggy criticize Jack's indifference and savagery, he smacks Piggy's head and breaks one side of his glasses. This provocative episode creates a polarity between Ralph and Jack. Jack's priority for hunting, food, and fun overshadows Ralph's priority for keeping the fire going for whole hours and building shelters for their protection.

The boys' unity and a unilateral society gradually degenerated into groupism and symptoms of animosity come to the surface. Ralph's group tries to defend civilization, rationality, and the common good, whereas Jack's regresses to primitivism where they enjoy killing, eating, and freedom to the detriment of moral rules and laws. Jack and his deadly tribe lose interest in the mechanism of the conch, the signal fire, and the hope of rescue. Jack enacts the same primitive hunting life in which he spends most of the time roaming in the jungle in search of pigs, looking for their trails, and pig droppings. He smears his face with charcoal and mud to camouflage his reality: "The mask was a thing on his own, behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness" (Golding, 1954, p. 69). In his excitement, he looks at his painted face on a coconut shell and laughs excitedly seeing himself as an awesome stranger. The painted faces of the hunters represent "the liberation into savagery" (Golding, 1954, p. 191), an ironic freedom to detachment, intimacy, civility, and respect.

Jack's society resembles the savage stereotype which is war-like, tyrannical, disorderly, and anarchic. The members of the society have a strong desire to avenge, fight, and torture. Jack and his members are engrossed in sharpening the spears and innovating new hunting tactics. Jack uses blood and guts on his face and they perform mock hunting. Piggy assumes the birth of savagery in the boys and critically comments: "What are we? Human? Or animals? Or savage?" (Golding, 1954, p. 99). With the violation of laws and rules, the life of the children on the island has become like Thomas Hobbes' famous phrase "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (as cited in Boyd, 2008,

p. 33). The boys feel starving, stomachaches, and a sort of chronic diarrhea. They have left using the tide-washed stones for lavatory and they defecate everywhere even near the shelters and platform. Like primitive men, they appear filthily dirty with long hair and nails. Their mouth reeks out foul smell, and clothes are worn away stiff with sweat, and their bodies covered with brine. The boys suffer the untold terror of a snake-like thing 'beastie' in the dark. At night they cry in their nightmare. The fear of the 'beastie' becomes a stronghold and grows like cancer in their mind. Simon thinks the 'beastie' is the boys' imagination; it is the 'beast' within us, but he is unarticulated because the boys think him 'batty'.

At this juncture, Jack plays a satanic role as he aggravates more fear showing the possibility of the 'beastie's existence on the island. He manipulates and intimidates the vulnerable boys to enlarge his group. He makes them confident that Ralph is a coward who just sits and advocates the rules and that they are not safe in his society. Jack invites the boys to a feast and provides a carnivalesque enjoyment as leverage to gain power. Thus, the sign of increasing savagery and deterioration in the behavior of the misguided boys is noticed when they turn dissident and intervene in Ralph's meeting making noise, laughing, insulting, and debating. Ralph's agendas are ridiculed and make the assembly ineffectual. Ralph in his confused state of mind speaks, "Things are breaking up. I don't understand why. We began well; we were happy" (Golding, 1954, p. 89).

In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding presents a 'beast' as a central symbol to exhibit the boys' savagery, evil, and bestiality. Sam and Eric first notice the unidentified object with a bulging body, teeth, and claws that hung with dangling limbs on the cliff. The figure bows forward, sinking its head between its knees when the wind dropped. Samneric mistake it for a beast. But it is the dead body of a paratrooper killed in the war. The dead paratrooper appears to be a live ape-like creature that seems to look at them when the wind blows his parachute. The message makes the boys horrified and fearful since their mind has already been preoccupied with the possibility of the beast's existence. Portraying the dead parachutist from the air battle, Golding demonstrates the adult world which is itself war-mongering, brutish, nasty, and violent.

The beast dwells in the mind of the boys and become more apprehensive and terrified. Most of the boys assume the beast remains hidden in the ocean during the day and emerges only at night. But Simon knows that it is the boys' imagination, a mystic figure made up in their minds. Simon says, "What I mean is . . . maybe it's only us "We could be sort of mankind's essential illness" (Golding, 1954 p. 97). For Simon, 'the beast' is not external force, but within the boys themselves. He sees the beat as mankind's inherent evil, "the picture of a human at once heroic and sick" (Golding, 1954, p. 113). All men are sick because their minds and hearts are obsessed with the universal disease of 'Original Sin'; and heroic in their constant struggle with his disease. Thus, the image of the beast and snake-like things Golding presents in the novel illuminate the dark side of human nature such as evil, destruction, and corruption. These evil powers always reside and lurk within us which we cannot escape. Both Ralph and Piggy have similar views of Simon, but the conservative Jack insists on the possibility of the beast's existence and thinks the beast's mysticism can be appeased by ritual and sacrifice. Jack decides to offer a pig's head as an oblation to pacify the beast which is more convincing and reliable for the vulnerable children. For them, Jack is the only a hope to drive away

the beast and fear than Ralph and Piggy. Jack recruits the children into his tribe and participates in mock hunting in which Robert plays the role of a pig, the boys jab him with spears on his back with ritualistic dance and chant, and Robert produces pig-dying noises.

The hunters brutally kill a nursing sow and implant its head on a stick as an offer to the beast which is immediately covered by the buzzing flies. Hence, it is Lord of the Flies. The sow's head poised on a stick is one of the central symbols in the novel. Lord of the Flies is a literal translation of Beelzebub, a 'prince of the Devil in ancient Hebrew, and an incarnation of evil in Judaism and Christianity. Yet the figure refers to the 'Lord of Dung', of human refuse. Both meanings, according to Gindin (1988) "reinforce the pervasive meaning of a symbolic dramatization of inherent human evil. Yet the cluster of symbolic meanings, both humanly and religiously are suggestive of the human condition" (p. 15).

Virginia Tiger (2003) observes the severed pig's head: "It does not represent an evil external to the individual, but rather the corrupt and corrupting consciousness, that every human malaise . . . that objectifies evil rather than recognizing its subjectivity" (p. 43). The image of the half-shut eyes of the sow indicates mankind's infinite destruction of civilized life. Simon encounters the pig's head which converses with him and speaks in the voice of a schoolmaster: "You are a silly little boy" . . . "Just an ignorant, silly little boy". The head further says, "Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill" . . . "I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are what they are?" (Golding, 1954, pp. 157-158).

The fear of the beast brings the boys' dark nature to the surface, as they violently kill Simon when he enters crawling into the mob of Jack's group in the dark to reveal the truth of the beast. They mistake him for the beast. The mass killing of Simon can be taken as an act of supreme cruelty of the savages. The death scene is so pathetic and unbearable to view:

The sticks fell and the mouth of the new circle crunched and screamed. The beast was on its knees in the centre, its arms folded over its face. It was crying out against the abominable noise something about a body on the hill. The beast struggled forward, broke the ring, and fell over the steep edge of the rock to the sand by the water. At once the crowd surged after it, poured down the rock, leapt onto the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore. There were no words, and no movement but the tearing of teeth and claws. (p. 168)

Simon represents goodness in man and truth but falls prey to the brute savages. Kruger (2010) sees Simon as an "analog of Christ, and his holy, sanity, self-sacrificial behavior is the highest and good in human life. He writes: "Simon's murder at the hands of a mob while trying to deliver the reality of 'the beast' echoes the crucifixion that the correspondence seems complete" (p. 167). Simon is seen as both a prophet and a Christ figure. "As a prophet", according to Boyd (2008), "It is his role to awaken men to the truth of their own sinfulness" (p. 17). Golding presents Ralph and Piggy's participation in the lynching of Simon to reveal the fact that all men are inherently sinners and all men have the potential for evil. Piggy exculpates himself from the killing as he explains it is

an accident because he thinks Simon should not have to crawl in the dark. When trying to speak to Samneric about the lynching of Simon, both Ralph and Piggy commonly say: "We were tired. We left early" (Golding, 1954, p. 175). This shows how people hide their sins to prove them innocent.

The death of Simon does not matter great for the hunters. Like the primitive hunters, they are heartless, loveless, and unsympathetic to death. Rather, they are laughing, singing, and lying on the grass holding meat in their hands. Jack, on the other hand, painted and garlanded sits there like an idol cherishing his power. Castle Rock, where Jack's tribe has built a fortress is Jack's stronghold. Like primitive warriors, Robert, Roger, and other children work as sentries holding sharp spheres to alert intruders, external threats, and enemies. Jack threatens and intimidates the children like a cruel dictator and punishes those who raise questions against him. He orders Roger to tie Wilfred for hours and beats him without any reason. Jack goes to raid Ralph's small group with Roger and Maurice painting their faces to steal Piggy's glasses for fire. They collapse Ralph's shelter and beat Eric brutally breaking one of his teeth. Early in the morning, Ralph blows the conch for a meeting, but no savages heed the sound. At this point, Piggy cries, "Why can't they leave us alone? And Ralph comments: "Are we savage or what? (Golding, 1954, p. 188).

The members of Jack's group enact the role of primitive men who lack human emotions such as love, compassion, and sympathy. Roger is sadistic and shadowy. His traits prevail in all human beings Golding explicitly says, "We confront the Roger within us" (as cited in Boyd, 2008, p. 29). At Jack's camp, when Piggy appeals for order, sensitivity, and humanity, Roger brutally kills Piggy with a heavy boulder rolling down the hill. Meanwhile, the brute Jack threatens Ralph: "See? See? That's what you'll get! I meant that? There isn't a tribe for you anymore! The conch is gone" (Golding, 1954, p. 200). He brutally hurls his spear at Ralph's ribs, and forces him to take refuge in the jungle. Jack coerces Samneric into his group making them hostages. Roger seems to be sharpening a stick at both ends to hunt Ralph the next morning.

The initial practice of pig hunting is transformed into man hunting. The mob of hunters searches for Ralph on every corner of the island and sets the island on fire to smoke him out of the covert. The fire, which is initially symbolic to hope and contact with the outside world, becomes a symbol of destruction and hopelessness. Ralph runs toward the seashore and the hunters pursue him with sharp spears and ululation. Ralph staggers to a naval officer who comes due to the bonfire smoke. The naval officer sees the naked boys with masks and weapons and thinks the boys are playing, having 'fun and games': "Jolly good show, like the Coral Island" (Golding, 1954, p. 223). He observes the boys' war and utters the most ironic line in the novel "Fun and game" (Golding, 1954, p. 221). However, the naval officer thinks the kids need a bath, a haircut, a nose wipe, and a good deal of ointment.

The role of the naval officer is ironic itself. He is one of the members of bloodthirsty war-mongering adults who have caused massive deaths by nuclear war. However, the officer is dismayed that a group of British boys should have degenerated into savages who failed "to put up a better show than that" (Golding, 1954, p. 222). The ironic rescue of the protagonist by a naval officer Dickson (1990) claims "reveals that the

chaotic island world is but a small version of a war-torn adult world” (p. 45). In this sense, there is no essential distinction between the world of children and adults; the only difference is the area they cover. The adults’ war occurred in the national and international arena, whereas the boys’ was a limited narrow island. Thus, Friedman observes the naval officer “is neither god, nor a higher morality, nor civilization, but preparing to reenact the age-old saga of man’s inhumanity to man (as cited in Bloom, 2008, p. 68). It is due to the adults’ destructive war that the boys are marooned on the island.

Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* is a seeming dramatization of human evil and savagery. He creates many images and symbols to represent human savagery. The four patterns of images related to excrement, darkness, falling, and animalism are connoted to the human capacity for evil and savagery. The references to dirt, defecation, dung, the conch’s low, farting sound, and pig droppings indicate human corruption. The use of animal imagery throughout the novel reinforces the children’s transformation into savages and sub-humans. The children’s animalism is shown with several animal images. Most of the boys imitate animal nature and act accordingly. The hunters’ nakedness underlines their animalism. Sam and Eric grin and pant at Ralph like dogs. Jack moves on limbs dog-like when tracking the pig; Jack hisses like a snake, during the hunt, and is “less a hunter than a furtive thing, ape-like among the tangle of trees” (Golding, 1954, p.53). Ralph calls him a ‘beast’. Piggy, whose name suggests a pig, sees the boys becoming animals; he says, “We’ll soon be animals anyway (Golding, 1954, p. 101) unless Ralph blows the conch for assembly. Without his glasses, he thinks he will “have to be led like a dog” (Golding, 1954, p.189). When Piggy is killed, his body twitches like a pig” (Golding, 1954, p. 200). Ralph dribbles when he sees meat and gnaws on it “like a wolf” (Golding, 1954, p. 80). When Ralph is driven in the forest, he “launched himself like a cat, stabbed, snarling, with the spear, and the savage doubled up” (Golding, 1954, p. 215). All these animal images applied in the novel are references to the word savage.

Conclusion

The novel depicts a picture of human savagery that brings material and spiritual destruction to the island. Human beings degenerate into savagery when they abandon human and social values such as civilization, rules, laws, and moral and spiritual aspects of life. Golding presents a group of boys who expose their evil and savage instincts in their free unrestricted environment. He observes a man who is naturally instinctive, destructive, and capable of evil. Thus, the novel is an analysis of the inner workings of man - of his moral destruction and its consequences. The world the children reside on the island is a painful microcosm of the adult world. The destruction they bring upon themselves on the island is the widespread destruction initiated by the adults. In this sense, Golding demonstrates the savage adult world in a macrocosm. The adults’ atomic warfare and their excessive love for power are responsible factors for the boys’ descent to the island. However, the boys cannot retain their civilization and immediately regress to the pre-agrarian world which is itself savage and evil. This act of choosing life in their ‘free will’ can be evaluated as human liberation into savagery.

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