

## Civilization and Savagery in *Lord of the Flies*

“Lord of the Flies” is a novel that describes changes in a group of schoolboys who survived in an isolated island due to plane crash. The main theme of this novel is **civilization and savagery**. **Civilization** shows order and leadership while savagery represents the desire of power. William Golding who is the author of this novel wisely reflected human natural instinct savagery and loss of civilization of society in this novel through the groups of the schoolboys. Ralph, the protagonist and main character in this novel represent civilization who wants to have a proper system and leave the island. On the contrary, Jack who wants to use power to command and leads other represented savagery in this novel. There is conflict between these two characters due to their different mindset and represented values of society. The writer clearly shows that when human civilization suddenly disappeared, savagery will slowly leads human acts. Human naturally tends to reflect savagery although living in a civilization world.

Ralph represents civilization in this novel and determines to live by rules and live peacefully. He is the one who gather the boys and has been elected to be their chief due to his charismatic outlook. At first, he tries to reconstruct the structure of society in the island which mirrors the civilization in England with the conch which represents civilization. He allocates work in order. For instant, Jack and his group are responsible for hunting and others have to build the huts. He knows that they need to live by themselves, and claim that “There aren’t any grown-ups. We shall have a look after ourselves” (Golding 43). Ralph uses his authority to establish rules, protect the good of the group, and enforce the moral and ethical codes of the English society the boys were raised in (“Golding”). Besides, he also ensures that the fire is lighted. This is due to reason that the fire is the symbol of hope and the only way for them to connect with civilization. The signal fire becomes a barometer of the boys’ connection to civilization (“Theme”). The conflict between Ralph and Jack, civilization and savagery started when Jack and his tribe did not carry their duty on the signal of fire which result them to loss a valuable opportunity to leave the island. Ralph shows his anger towards Jack and said, “I was talking about smoke! Don’t you want to be rescue? All you can talk about is pig, pig, pig!” (Golding 68). Ralph also strongly believes that the “beastie” does not exist. He believe that the little boy vision of beast only appear in his dream. He tries to convince the young children that the beast only exists in other bigger places like Africa. Civilization has forced him to act rationally and state that “there isn’t a in the forest. How could there be? What would a beast eat?” (Golding

104) Civilization exists to suppress the beast and savagery arises when civilization stops suppressing the beast: it's the beast unleashed ("Lord of the Flies").

Jack who is antagonist in this novel represented savagery. He is the one who advocate one's desires are far outweigh than others value. He wants to use power to enforce other to follow him and leads team. He is the one who nominates himself as the leader in the election. He prefer hunting than building up huts or looking after the signal of the fire due to his natural instinct which is savage, cruel and barbaric. He uses the excuse that "But we want meat!" (Golding 68) to cover his own savagery. Jack and his tribe also camouflage themselves with clay and he always having a sharp knife with him. Jack's initial desire is to kill pigs to demonstrate his bravery (Golding). This clearly shows that he is savage and the bloodlust inside him has driven him to hunt for pig. For instance, he and his tribe involve in a frenzy dance and sing "Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Kill the pig! Bash him in!" (Golding 142). Jack also cruel towards Piggy and those younger boys. He laughed at Piggy at first and even punches him when Piggy tries to correct his action. He also grabs Piggy's eyeglasses violently. He uses the existence of beast to reclaim his authority and his savagery. He commands those little boys to handle and live with their fears. "Fear can't hurt you any more than a dream. There aren't any beasts to be afraid of on this island.... Serve you right if something did get you, you useless lot of cry-babies!" (Golding 103). Jack also proclaims that Ralph is a coward and not suitable to be a chief and them in front of the boys during the meeting. He also emphasize that if there is a beast, he and his follows will hunt it to brain wash those little boys that he has the power.

Human natural inherently evil, it is a basic state of human. The Arthur of this novel tries to express that government can't really control ones action and thinking because there always will be a driving force inside human psyche which is savagery, the natural primal state. Golding implies that the instinct of savagery is far more primal and fundamental to the human psyche than the instinct of civilization ("Theme"). This can be seen obviously through this novel. Jack and his tribe who come from a civilize world become savage, violent, and cruel at the end due to their desire and bloodlust. They feel excited in the process of hunting the pig and they feel satisfy and enjoy killing life. The longer they away from civilization, the more they act savage and even killed their partners. For example, at first Jack who come from a civilize world not dare to kill a pig but as time pass, his savage started to growth without the rules, order, and moral. Piggy has died due to Jack savagery "The rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand

white fragments and ceased to exist” (Golding 222). Some of the boys are determined to leave the island but at the end they follow Jack because they are scared of the beast that actually is savagery that lurks inside them. As time past, the equality between civilization and savagery on the island will change. This can be reflected by the boys’ outlook which their hair becomes more longer and wearing old cloth “hair much too long, tangled here and there, knotted round a dead leaf or twig; clothes, worn away, stiff like his own with sweat, put on, not for decorum or comfort but out of custom; the skin of the body scurfy with brine” (Golding 136).

Golding uses those boys to portray that human naturally tend to reflect savagery although living in a civilization world. The reason for Golding to choose a group of young boys because their mindset haven’t grown up and pure. Human natural side is savagery but mankind seen can’t face the truth about their inner desires and sins. Hence a system is important to lead human to the right way but can’t fully control them due to their primal psyche.