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EXTENDED ESSAY

English B

Category 3

Corruption of Morality

How did William Golding portray the corruption of morality in humans through the characters Jack, Ralph, and Piggy in the novel “Lord of The Flies”?

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1 Introduction

Lord of The Flies is a novel written in 1954 by The Nobel Prize Winner poet and writer William Golding. This novel includes the themes of savagery, human norms and morals, animalistic and primitive instincts. The story is about more than a couple of British juveniles who happened to find themselves on an island after a plane evacuation and the process of how they turned themselves into savages. Still, it's also about how this process affected the children's morality. William Golding's "Lord of The Flies" tells the storyline of young boys who find themselves alone on an isolated piece of land. They develop obligations and a system of organization, but without any supervision as civilizing role models, the children eventually become violent and brutal. In the concept of the novel, the boys' descent into chaos suggests that human nature can eventually become savage¹. British author William Golding (1911-1993) wrote the famous novel "The Lord of The Flies" in 1954. Golding was British and has long-lived through World War I and World War II, so it can be seen why he has chosen to write the characters' origin British and the timeline of the novel on an unnamed, inhabited tropical island in the Pacific Ocean during a fictional worldwide war around the 1950s. Because of the writer's background, he can narrate and transfer the war zone theme. Other than that, he has seen the suffocation, massacre, holocaust, and many different relatable terrible sides of humanity; this novel is written as something he is familiar with. The emotions, transitions, character developments, or downgrades are transferred with a typical sense of writing as William Golding can report them with relatable feelings.

Starting with an introduction to the novel and a brief analysis of William Golding's life, effectively write the story with some background information. Afterward, a summary of morality will be given. The concept of morality and the characters' general psychological and moral characteristics will be delivered. After the introduction, Analysis of Morality by Characters, with the subheads: Ralph, Jack, and Piggy, will be given character by character separately. Characters' insights, moral senses, psychologies, and conflicts will be explained with quotes directly taken about the characters. The portrayal of morality in the entire novel is

¹ Jeffrey Somers. Lord of The Flies Summary. William Golding's novel reveals the savagery of human nature. Lord of The Flies Study Guide. ThoughtCo, July 26, 2020.

going to be examined. In the conclusion part of the essay, all the information will be gathered and discussed with reasons.

Morality and norms are not given clear and pure in the novel as William Golding especially emphasizes the subject by writing it, but examines them by behavioral actions of the characters and storyline. Looking at whether the concepts were successfully portrayed as in the storyline, the answer to the following research question will be found: “How did William Golding portray the disappearance of morality in humans through the characters Jack, Ralph, and Piggy in the novel “Lord of The Flies”?”.

1.1 What Is Morality?

Morality refers to standards that enable people to live cooperatively in groups. It is what societies determine to be “right” and “acceptable.”² This statement has been proven to be a correct definition of morality by *David Susan, Ph.* Moral limitations create a barrier from bad to get in and keep the good in a safe place. Morality is not always considered individually but collectively. Morality doesn’t have to be always about physical intentions but psychological too. You consciously know how to think and act morally but perform it physically. Morality is universally known to be a requirement to be a better person, but not following your moral senses can create alternative dystopic actions and events.

Many characters handle many psychological and philosophical concepts such as Machiavellianism, conceptualism, virtue, and deontology. In the image of Machiavellianism, moral indifference is a psychologically characterized view such as personality traits, being manipulative, and acting calmly. Conceptualism is a theory in metaphysics that explains the universality of particulars as conceptual frameworks within the thinking mind.³ Deontological thinking is the confusion that an act with wrong moral ethics can lead to a good outcome. On the other hand, a virtuous person is an example of being consistent and prudent, who always stands behind his moral views and attitudes.

² Amy Morin, LCSW. What Is Morality? November 09, 2020. Verywellmind.com.

³ Neil A. Manson, Robert W Barnard (eds.), *The Bloomsbury Companion to Metaphysics*, Bloomsbury, 2014, p. 95.

Is it possible to measure moral values? This question is highly controversial because, as will be discussed in this essay, morality is an abstract concept. It is an abstract and human-created concept, and the orderly society system has been developed with a targeted structure. The moral values determined are the basic requirements, which psychological and philosophical judgments can interpret. Morality is a significant value generated to protect us from destructive thoughts and attitudes from our environment and ourselves, and it is a necessity for the continuity of our existence.

2 Analysis of Morality by Characters

The Ralph character is the most virtuous among other characters and can protect his humanity the most until the last moment of his life. As per virtue morals, there are certain beliefs, like greatness or commitment to the benefit of all, toward which we ought to endeavor and permit the total improvement of our humankind. These goals are found through insightful reflection on what we can turn into. Virtues are mentalities, manners, or character attributes that empower us to act in ways that foster this potential. They authorize us to seek after the goals we have taken on. Trustworthiness, mental fortitude, sympathy, liberality, constancy, honesty, reasonableness, restraint, and judiciousness are generally instances of virtues. Being ethical is a character who does not lose himself to the deterioration of moral balances psychologically but is physically oppressed throughout the novel's concept. Unlike the other characters, Jack and Piggy weigh right and wrong, advance in the direction of his ethical principles, and prove the unquestionably perfect human psychological characteristic mentioned for the virtue character. As seen in the novel, it is seen that a moral order destroyed by the murder of the virtuous character by the Machiavellian and other children stolen from his character destroys the principles of principle. Therefore, Ralph's position can be explained by generalizing the novel's concept.

The character of Jack has a Machiavellian personality. In Western philosophy, the idea that using any means to achieve the goal is legitimate and valid started with the Italian scholar Machiavelli. The signs of corruption, manifesting as permissible all means to achieve the goal, have caused great destruction and increased the dangers of social disintegration, especially in underdeveloped countries, and they continue to exist. With its psychological characteristics, it is an exemplary character of the deterioration of ethics and morality. Ever since they were stranded on the island with the other children, he has been manipulative and does not give his

best to get what he wants. This psychological state is carried to such dimensions that it extends to taking the life of another individual. The Machiavellian characteristics of this character can be understood by keeping his interests ahead of his relations with others, lying when necessary, deceiving speech, and his speaking style and manipulative attitudes, which are attractive or attractive to those of his surroundings. Machiavellianism is one of the traits in the “Dark Triad.” The other two in the triad are narcissism and psychopathy. “More common in men, it can, however, be an issue for anyone. Even a child.”⁴

On the other hand, the character of Piggy begins to evaluate right and wrong inconsistently due to his lost ethical understanding after a while. It provides the acceptance of the wrongs he has done with the chance that a wrong behavior can lead to the right results. It has created a kind of self-acceptance mechanism from this psychological point of view. From the point of view of a concept that has immersed itself in a world of lies with its deontological mindset. For example, Kant believed ethical actions follow universal moral codes. But, unlike consequentialism, which judges actions by their results, deontology does not require weighing the costs and benefits of a situation.⁵ Deontologists expect us to general guidelines we provide for ourselves. These standards should be as per reason- specifically, they should be legitimately steady and not lead to logical inconsistencies. It’s worth focusing on how deontology is frequently seen unequivocally against consequentialism.⁶ However, the moral inconsistency of Piggy’s character cannot be interpreted based on universal examples because it is a subject that can contain many opinions and interpretations.

Whenever it is taken a gander at cautiously, it tends to be seen that the similitudes are much inclining further toward the surface rather than the distinctions. In the morality dimension, there is a scale of how much did their sanities and ethics have been affected on a percentage because it can be seen that Ralph, Jack, and Piggy have dealt with their moral corruptions differently.

The moral degradation of everyone and their coping with it, their acceptance or coming out-of-the-way ethics have taken place within the changing dynamics. For example, Jack plays a role in a corrupt ethical morality. At the same time, Ralph and Piggy experience the loss and

⁴ Sheri Jacobson, Counselling, Personality Disorders, What is Machiavellianism in Psychology? Harley Therapy Counselling Blog, January 8 2015.

⁵ Ethicssunwrapped, Deontology, University of Texas, 2020.

⁶ Big Thinkers + Explainers. Ethics Explainer: Deontology. The Ethics Center, February 18, 2016.

consequences of their moral principles due to the first moral loss of other individuals. They have become victims of disrupted balances after moral imbalance within their group. The ethical understanding was damaged quickly and brutally without adult domination, and a period was encountered in which psychological, physical, and spiritual health were negatively affected.

The characters have encountered many degenerate outcomes, from murder to emotional wellness miss happening. This can likewise illustrate the mental and actual butcher of the scholarly piece of the present society. Also, these characters show that every individual is inclined to bring to the fore the pleasure and primitiveness they feel and experience in every moment. Satisfaction, which may be impaired by human instinct, gets in the way of ethical rules when they find the moment to be realized. Perhaps it's simply that the repressed desires of today's society are having an explosion as they see the opportune moment to manifest. Although it may provide welfare and comfort for the individual, it gives a moral disadvantage in environmental factors.

2.1 Ralph

Ralph's personality in the novel is the primary hero of the novel. He is first uncovered in the central part. He addresses the administration as an appropriately mingled and humanized young fellow. He is the person who considers excellent good judgment with necessities, for example, a gathering place, the fire, the cottages, giving a few gatherings to endurance, and more open doors required. The crowd of boys has chosen him as their chief.

"There aren't any grown-ups. We shall have to look after ourselves." (Golding, p. 44) Ralph still has a moral attitude initially, is aware of his surroundings, and can make the right decisions for himself and his environment with the increase of his leadership qualities. Being one of the main protagonists in the novel and the loss of moral values throughout the book, he gives the best example of an ethical failure that can be given. They can think clearly about right and wrong and how to behave in this process. The situation to be seen here is that Ralph also contains Piggy's psychological characteristics. He maintains a consistent morality and stands in the way of corruption.

"At last, Ralph stopped. He was shivering. "Piggy." "Uh?" "That was Simon." "You said that before." "Piggy." "Uh?" "That was murder." (Golding, p. 224). Ralph is currently

a top-notch partner to an unscrupulous demonstration. He ignored his prudent, steady, and moral standards. One proof that Ralph is still mentally sound lies in his capacity to acknowledge what is happening. Dissimilar to Piggy, he doesn't look for a reality under off-base and deceptive conduct and can think everything is equal.

Nonetheless, regardless of whether he can shield his human contemplations according to a mental perspective, doesn't it additionally conceal his ethical person by assisting one of the most horrendously terrible all-inclusive moral defilements that with canning be counted? For this situation, his activity given moral defilement blocks Ralph's qualities. Monitoring wrongdoing he has carried out, he embraces the present case. The rise of severity in a climate where he was left so exceptionally uncontrolled as a more youthful kid is maybe something he can't handle. This occasion can be tended to according to numerous points of view. In any case, it doesn't change that it causes colossal moral defilement.

The character of Ralph, in a way, eventually goes through the general psychological and ethical behaviors of all three characters. This connection can be equated with the fluctuations of the moral dimension in the novel as well. It started to find its way again after a heavy degeneration process, starting humanely, indirectly. This analogy also shows that moral values never disappear but can be covered up. It can be viewed from the same philosophical point of view; it does not mean that reality has vanished from the universe because it is not in the middle. It shows that the presented fact is falsifiable if it is seen that a situation can be disproved with proof with the help of observation, experiment, and experience, as in the theory of falsifiability. Likewise, the indication that the moral authority, which cannot be seen in the novel, was not lost with Jack and his friends' crying at the end of the novel, the loss of moral values was a falsifiable fact.

2.2 Piggy

Piggy is the sanest amongst the boys despite his physical deformity and awkward appearance with his suggestions and insights. Although he is the first one who has been bullied initially, he shows courage and hopes towards the other boys and their rescue. He becomes a strong character explicitly from the start with the symbolization of his specs (glasses).

“It was an accident,” blurted Piggy, “that’s what it was. An accident.” His voice shrilled again. “Coming in the dark—he hadn’t no business crawling like that out of the dark. He was batty. He asked for it.” He gesticulated widely again. “It was an accident.” (Golding, p. 225) Piggy eventually gave up his psychological health to deontological recovery due to mental and physical pressures. By causing the death of another child among them, he has reached the end of his psychological limit and tries to offer a deontological perspective as an escape. He tries to connect the falsity of the concept of death to the right reasons. He pushes the limits of his attitude and moral principles. The phenomenon of acceptance, a psychological fact, can be seen that awareness of an event and phenomenon is one of the first steps of psychological acceptance. Self-awareness is the most critical step in applying moral behaviors. In this case, Piggy has withdrawn himself from resorting to any ethical action while he is away from the act of self-acceptance. he accepts in a way but does not want to accept it that much. At such a moment, it can be seen to what extent the moral corruption has reached, as the most virtuous and impartial character in the novel is the one who pushes himself towards corruption the most.

“Piggy’s arms and legs twitched a bit, like a pig after it has been killed.” (Golding, p. 260) The physical nature of Piggy's death can be interpreted to how complex the moral view has become. This situation should be handled in two ways. First of all, the moral corruption is carried to the next level is exemplified by Piggy's death in the novel. The physical and philosophical dimensions of Piggy's death can be matched with the psychological side of this moral corruption.

First of all, it is the death of Piggy, which is the last action taken in these steps in universal moral degradation, and this death is the limit of deterioration. In the process of this story, a murder, which can be considered the greatest crime, has been committed. Plato thought of a crime in antiquity as a disease of the soul. These are passions, pleasure-seeking, and ignorance. For this reason, Plato predicted that the criminal would be cured by enlightening him. Aristotle considers criminals to be enemies of society and argues that they should be punished ruthlessly. Aristotle finds the reasons for committing crimes in social conditions such as poverty and revolution. In addition to social situations, Hippocrates also saw the relationships

between body structure, personality, and crime and created his famous typology.⁷The common values mentioned by the three philosophers at this point are the defense that "crime" and "corruption" are actions that follow a cause. In this case, young children push themselves to such corruption by the impulses of their efforts to grow up alone in an unevolved and non-existent social structure. The pushing of their moral limits can be explained as given. Although the reasons for such events in the novel are not shown clearly, there are much bigger and more distressing reasons underlying them.

The physical dimension of Piggy's death and the biological complexity of the body in Piggy's death is also related to how complex the moral values dimension has become after this action. The physical symptoms show how the universal abstract ethical values become complex throughout the novel. Giving it physically is about the seriousness of the loss of values and how disgusting it has become. For example, if Piggy's corpse was given in decomposition in the novel, it could be said that moral values were in the same hypothetical decay. It instills the idea that it may not take an advanced dimension and corruption.

2.3 Jack

Jack is the main antagonist character in the novel. Jack's personality has been intended to address the detestable and the dark side of human instinct. He is a pioneer type as well, very much like Ralph. However, totally in the discussion, very much like an autocracy sort of authority. The first struggle begins with Jack declining to be a foundation head of Ralph while endeavoring his hunting group of boys. This hunting group and hunting draw out the most terrible in every one of them and Jack, making his base and insidious impulses dominate.

"But Jack was shouting against him. "Bollocks to the rules! We're strong—we hunt! If there's a beast, we'll hunt it down! We'll close in and beat and beat and beat—!" (Golding, p. 120) Jack tries to attract people to his side with manipulative and persuasive speeches, making propaganda, and reaching his goal. As mentioned in the same Machiavellism characteristic, he has a personality that ignores moral values and will do anything for his purpose. Thanks to this situation and features that can convince people, the island has been a pioneer in disturbing the peace and moral corruption. Generally, this situation is interpreted as the fact that children grow

⁷ Öğr. Gör. Abdullah SÜRÜCÜ, Arş. Gör. Coşkun ARSLAN, SUÇA ATILMIŞ ÇOCUKLAR VE PSİKOLOJİSİ, www.kriminoloji.com, 2002.

up in a loveless family, grow up in an environment with the same characteristics, or do not get enough attention and will resort to every way to get that attention. Likewise, Jack argues that he and others are superior to everyone else, that the most remarkable thing is reasoning, and because he thinks that way, these are the most singular and best methods. Anger and resentment accumulated in him as he could not get what he wanted at the beginning of the novel, which the same reasons and interest could also bring about. Even though he was not in an environment where he could learn, he ignored the conscience and ethical values he might have inside him and did not commit to destroying as he intended.

In the same way, Jack's behavioral characteristics and his totalitarian view, in general, can be seen in the past and today, manipulateness to attract people, and dictators such as Hitler gathered the people around him with the same tactics and methods. In this respect, it is inevitable that Jack also carries the characteristics of the moral deprivation of any totalitarian regime.

“They hate you, Ralph. They’re going to do you.” “They’re going to hunt you tomorrow.” (Golding, p. 271). Ralph is warned that he will be killed here because the payoffs of Jack's sociopathy are now more significant. After this scenario, it can be seen that Jack has a sadistic personality disorder. Sadistic personality disorder can be defined as a type of personality disorder in which an affected person exhibits sadistic, cruel, manipulative (using someone else for their benefit), aggressive (aggressive) and degrading behavior towards others⁸. Killing Ralph is also a goal for him, and it is known that he no longer takes pleasure in doing this and does not hesitate to be cruel and oppressive. Jack, this sick obsession is more of a mental disorder than a disease. However, the fact that it is not a disease neither changes the morbid structure of the way of thinking nor does it change that the atmosphere in which one lives destroys its moral values.

3 Conclusion

Ralph, Jack, and Piggy, the three characters mentioned in the novel, represent three psychological and moral conflict states. Ralph is consistent and ethical, Piggy has difficulty accepting and has an ethical dilemma, and Jack is manipulative and totalitarian and

⁸ Translate: Jülide Yapıcı, Source: hxbenefit, Sadist Kişilik Bozukluğu, Psychology/Psychoanalyzes, Libido Magazine, 9 August 2017.

experiencing the latest state of moral degradation. These characters' psychological and personality structures, respectively, continue parallel with the novel's loss of moral value. At the beginning of the novel, the reader is introduced to Ralph, then Piggy, and then Jack shows that the journey of moral value is parallel and related to the order and journeys of the introduced characters. First, the moral elements followed a complex path after the consistent continuing structures and lost credibility and demand due to the murders.

In addition to this, the formation of this psychological structure, its effects, and types can be observed along with parallelism. While the characteristic forms and psychological states create a certain level of order in a regular and crowded world, this kind of space and people have led to many corruptions. The reason for this is that these children were left without a family, without an overseer, from complex to more challenging conditions, their family structure is not fully known, there is no power to teach them moral values, and there is no one to show the truth in their mistakes. How virtuous, consistent or human the children of that age maybe, depending on the conditions they are in, and that they do not reach the age of the brain that can fully comprehend everything are the main foundations of moral corruption. Unless someone tells them, they cannot know the size of the punishment for their mistake and cannot learn from it. Every child has a guilt urge that can overpower himself. These children were also exposed to the consequences of this reality under bad conditions.

It can be argued that children deserve to live in such a situation or encounter it when they return. It does not change that they are thrown into a particular situation and their psychological tendencies. Since the psychological histories of the characters are not given, two cases can be deduced from this. The first is the characteristic change that leads to the loss of Piggy, Ralph, and Jack's ethical values, or that the matures result from the situation in which they were thrown. Or, it is the triggering of action, a thought, which is already in them and waiting to be revealed, under the conditions they are in.

In conclusion, William Golding reported the emotions, transitions, character developments, downgrades, and psychological situations with a relatable concept. Many more philosophic ideas and philosophers' theorems can be adjusted to the storyline, and the character downgrades. Still, Machiavellianism, Deontology, and Virtue ethical and psychological subjects are adjustable and relatable.

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