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An Archetypal Study of Lord of the Flies

ABSTRACT

The paper concerns studying the archetypes in The Lord of the Flies, the most prominent novel by William Golding. It deals with the conflict between civilisation and savagery through the young boys who find themselves on an isolated island and must adapt to their situation. In all stories, an archetype is a typical pattern, statement, or behaviour. The paper aims to illustrate that violent instinct comes from different external factors and focuses on human intention and instinct. This archetypal study shows how the inherent dark side of human nature can emerge when the constraints of society are removed by clarifying symbols and themes such as civilisation, savagery, and the loss of innocence. The paper focuses on only three characters, Ralph, Jack, and Piggy, and how each one reacts to the other. Each of these characters is analysed according to Carl Jung's archetypal theory.

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دراسة النماذج في رواية سيد الذباب

الخلاصة:

يهتم البحث بدراسة النماذج الأولية في رواية سيد الذباب وهي من أبرز روايات الكاتب ويليام جولدنج. ويتعامل مع الصراع بين الحضارة والوحشية من خلال شخصيات الأولاد الصغار الذين وجدوا أنفسهم في جزيرة معزولة وعليهم التكيف مع الوضع الذي هم فيه. والنموذج الأولي هو نمط أو بيان أو سلوك شائع موجود في جميع القصص. يهدف البحث إلى توضيح أن غريزة العنف تنبع من عوامل خارجية مختلفة، وتركز على نية الإنسان وغريزته. من خلال هذه الدراسة النموذجية، يظهر كيف يمكن أن يظهر الجانب المظلم المتأصل في الطبيعة البشرية عندما تتم إزالة قيود المجتمع من خلال توضيح الرموز والمواضيع مثل الحضارة والوحشية وفقدان البراءة. يركز البحث على ثلاث شخصيات فقط، رالف وجاك وبيكي وكيفية تفاعل كل منهم مع بعضهم البعض ومع الظروف المحيطة. ويتم تحليل كل من هذه الشخصيات وفقاً لنظرية النموذج الأولي لكارل يونج.

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مجلة الدراسات التاريخية والحضارية

Introduction

William Goldings was a British novelist, poet, playwright, and one of the most prominent English language writers. He is interested in adventure, the exotic descriptions and the meeting with pirates. He never wrote about moral stories because he believed

that the British were culturally respectable and educated, so they were the best at everything. *Lord of the Flies* is considered one of the most famous works of modern novel. After World War II, the poem was published after fifteen years the World War II. The novel makes a critical comment about fundamental human nature. It was written after the explosion of the atomic bomb, which clarifies its cruelty and savages on the future of human civilisation. Goldings became obsessed with atom bombs (Halder 2-4).

Goldings discovered himself compelled to explore the darker side of human nature, leading him to pen "*Lord of the Flies*" as a poignant cautionary tale. This novel is a tragic lesson, a reminder of humanity's inherent capacity for evil. Golding encapsulates the essence that humanity's primary adversary is, in fact, humanity itself. While not a groundbreaking concept, it is a crucial reminder that people often need to revisit (bloom 11).

Golding intended to depict the shifting moral landscape of individuals in the aftermath of war. He presented the transformation in morality as something imposed upon individuals rather than an organic outcome of their increasing exposure to the inherent evil and savagery within. The novel's title, derived from the grotesque image of a pig's head mounted on a stick in the glade, underscores the brutality that unfolds. *Lord of the Flies* transports us to a world long marred by failure. Stranded on an isolated island, the English schoolboys are symbolically entangled in the decay preceding their culpability. The novel offers a stark

exploration of the fragility of morality when confronted with the harsh realities of human nature (bloom 11).

At the onset of the narrative, the protagonist Ralph is depicted as "clambering heavily," signalling a departure from innocence. The initial chapters witness a gradual transformation in the boys' innocence, particularly with Jack, the antagonist to Ralph, engaging in increasingly savage actions. Jack's initiation into pig hunting marks a pivotal moment, as he initially hesitates but solemnly vows to kill on subsequent attempts. This descent into savagery is central to exploring the characters' moral convictions (George 9).

This study endeavours to unravel archetypal elements within "Lord of the Flies" to unveil the novel's more profound layers of meaning. The analysis will spotlight the characters' symbolic significance, actions, and overarching narrative structure, primarily focusing on the conflict between civilisation and savagery and the loss of innocence (George 9). The novel is rich in symbols that foreshadow the struggle between good and evil. The frequent use of the word "devil" underscores the pervasive evil that permeates the island. Symbols play a crucial role in interpreting the archetypal elements of the novel, offering insights into the conflict's nuances. Throughout the narrative, Golding skillfully employs archetypes and symbolic elements that resonate with universal human experiences and the collective unconscious. By seamlessly blending these archetypes with the dynamics among the boys on the island, Golding explores the multifaceted nature of human behaviour (Awad 285). Examining these

archetypes will be conducted through the framework of the archetypal theory formulated by Carl Jung.

Methodology and Theory

This paper focuses on the analysis of symbolic elements that have a significant impact on interpreting the themes of the novel. This study follows a qualitative approach to analyse characters. Archetypal will be applied to study the effect of external factors on the behaviour of individuals, the true nature of humanity, and the potential for darkness within us all.

The paper delves into the concept of archetypes, which Carl Gustav Jung, a visionary in psychology and a profound explorer of the human psyche, first introduced. Jung's fascination with the intricacies of the unconscious mind led him to discover archetypal theory. According to Jung, the word "archetype" is an explanatory paraphrase of the Platonic εἶδος (eidos). His theory posits that universal, innate symbols and themes exist in the collective unconscious. Thus, he describes archetypal events (e.g., birth, death, separation from parents, initiation, marriage, the union of opposites, etc.), archetypal figures (e.g., mother, child, father, God, trickster, hero, wise older man, etc.), archetypal symbols (e.g., sun, moon, water, mandala, cross, fish, horse, snake, etc.), and archetypal motifs (e.g., the Apocalypse, the Deluge, the Creation, the night sea journey, etc.) (Papadopoulos 84). While Carl Jung is often credited as one of the primary pioneers of archetypal theory in psychology, other notable thinkers and scholars have contributed to developing and exploring archetypes in different fields. One such figure

is Joseph Campbell, a renowned mythologist and writer who contributed significantly to understanding archetypes, particularly in mythology and storytelling. Joseph Campbell's work, especially his book "The Hero with a Thousand Faces," is highly influential in studying archetypal themes, particularly the Hero's Journey. Campbell identified a typical pattern in the world's myths and stories: a hero embarks on an adventure, faces challenges, undergoes transformation, and returns with newfound wisdom (Campbell 45). Campbell explains that all stories consist of common structural elements of stages found universally in myths, fairy tales, dreams, and movies. These twelve stages comprise the hero's journey (Vogler 1). This hero's journey archetype has become a fundamental concept in the study of storytelling and narrative structure.

While Jung's archetypal theory primarily focused on the psychology of the individual, Joseph Campbell's contributions expanded the understanding of archetypes to encompass cultural, mythological, and narrative contexts. Both Jung and Campbell, in their ways, shed light on the enduring and universal nature of archetypal symbols and motifs, enriching our understanding of the human psyche and the stories we tell to make sense of our lives. The core framework of the thesis is intricately intertwined with Carl Jung's archetypal theory, as expounded in his book "Psychology of the Unconscious." This publication in English occurred one year after the release of the concluding volume of J. G. Frazer's "The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion," which also featured a comprehensive

bibliography for its third edition. This chronological alignment underscores the interplay between Jung's groundbreaking work and the scholarly context of the time .

Discussion

Symbols and the archetypal theory in William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies*

Symbols employed in novels function as powerful literary tools that surpass their literal meanings, introducing layers of interpretation and depth to the storyline. Writers strategically utilise symbols to communicate abstract concepts, emotions, or themes, enhancing the reader's engagement and encouraging profound reflection. These symbols can manifest in various ways, whether as objects, characters, settings, or events, each carrying a symbolic significance beyond its surface representation. Symbolism allows authors to delve into intricate ideas, societal concerns, and the complexities of the human experience with finesse. This approach facilitates a more immersive and contemplative reading experience for audiences as they unravel the symbolic language interwoven into the narrative. The interpretation of symbols is inherently subjective, fostering a universal sense as readers bring their perspectives and experiences to understand these literary elements. Using symbols in novels enhances the narrative's richness, encouraging readers to explore profound meanings and connections beyond the literal plot.

Archetypes and symbolism share a profound interconnection in literature, as both serve as integral components of storytelling that tap into universal themes and collective human experiences. The interplay between archetypes and symbolism allows authors to tap into the collective unconscious, employing familiar symbols that carry cultural, mythological, or psychological weight. In the novel *Lord of the*

Flies, one of the ways of presenting symbolism is through characters. This powerful and nuanced literary technique allows authors to convey deeper layers of meaning, evoke emotions, and explore complex themes within a narrative. Characters, as vessels for symbolism, can embody abstract concepts, represent archetypes, and serve as conduits for broader cultural or philosophical ideas. Authors use different ways of presenting symbols through names, actions, attributes, speech, the journey of the character's transformation, and archetypes, which is the paper's primary focus. Authors often use archetypal characters to symbolise universal themes. For instance, a mentor figure may represent wisdom and guidance, while a trickster character could embody chaos or subversion. These archetypes carry symbolic significance that resonates across cultures and periods.

Carl Jung first used the term “archetype” in his famous essay, *INSTINCT AND THE UNCONSCIOUS*, published in 1919. According to Jung, the term “archetype” was inspired by St Augustine. Archetypes “are typical forms of apprehension.”(Jung, *Instinct And The Unconscious* 23). He adds that the total of the instincts and their

correlates, the archetypes, form the collective unconscious. In the same way that everyone has intuition. Hence, he has archetypes as well. The most compelling proof that archetypes exist can be found in mental disorders marked by the "collective unconscious" invading the conscious mind, which is the case with all paranoid and hallucinogenic psychoses .

Archetypes represent recent additions to the array of literary devices, joining established tools like metaphor, imagery, and symbolism. Beyond functioning as a literary device, archetypes serve as a mechanism for introducing order. Rooted in the unconscious psyche, they manifest in the conscious realm through elements such as "motifs," "primordial images," or simply, "archetypes." In literary terms, an archetype is a recurring symbol or motif in various works, symbolising universal patterns in human nature. The term "archetype" originates from a compound Greek word meaning "origin" and "model." It refers to a concept, person, or object that serves as the prototype for its kind, persistently reappearing in literature. Archetypes serve as literary devices that utilise well-known concepts, figures, or objects to convey rich layers of meaning. Using archetypal images and story patterns encourages readers and viewers to engage ritualistically with fundamental beliefs, fears, and anxieties associated with these archetypes. These features enhance the text's clarity and tap into human nature's deep-seated desires and anxieties (Al-Jaf 1-3). As stated by Carl Jung, " The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its

colour from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear." (5).

In Sir William Gerald Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*, symbols play a crucial role in conveying deeper meanings and exploring the complexities of human nature. William Golding's 1954 novel *Lord of the Flies* revolves around a cluster of young boys stranded on an uninhabited island; despite initially establishing rules and an organisational framework, the absence of adult influence to instil a sense of 'civilisation' results in the gradual emergence of violence and brutality among the children. Within the novel's framework, the depiction of the boys' descent into chaos implies a fundamental savagery inherent in human nature.

In his lifetime, Golding experienced the influence of Freud and Carl Jung, particularly during a literary crisis when he grappled with finding inspiration for impactful writing. Jung was crucial in aiding Golding's recovery from this crisis in 1971. Golding turned to Jungian psychology, engaging with Frieda Fordham's "An Introduction to Jung's Psychology" and Jung's "Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self," and commenced the first volume of the extensive eighteen-volume "Psychiatric Studies." Around early November 1971, Golding intentionally ceased reading Jung, concerned that it was impacting his dreams, and sought to dream his. Nevertheless, he encouraged Ann to read Jung and discuss his theories with him. Despite this brief hiatus, he soon resumed his Jungian studies, as evidenced by his reading of "Man and His Symbols" on April 9, 1972, and revisiting Jung's paper 'The

Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairy Tales' two years later. Golding's journals contain numerous references to Jung and his ideas (Carey 337). The connection between Carl Jung and William Golding is profound, extending beyond a mere academic or literary influence. Jung's concepts, delving into the depths of the human psyche and collective unconscious, resonated with Golding on a personal and creative level. This intellectual symbiosis is evident in Golding's deliberate study of Jung's writings and the recurring references to Jung and his ideas throughout Golding's journals. In essence, Jung's theories became a source of inspiration and a guiding force for Golding during moments of creative turmoil, leaving an indelible mark on his literary journey and contributing significantly to the depth and complexity of his works.

In Jung's appreciation for primitive humanity, he commends the subjective nature of these individuals, suggesting that people should have recognised long ago that myths have a psychological basis. According to Jung, the primitive man's understanding of nature essentially serves as the expression and outward manifestation of an unconscious psychological process. The very unconscious nature of this process explains why, throughout history, individuals have attempted to explain myths through various means but overlooked the psyche. The reason for this oversight lies in the unawareness that the psyche encompasses all the images that have ever given rise to myths. Jung contends that our unconscious mind is an active and experiencing entity with an inner drama, a realisation that the primitive man rediscovers through analogy in

both grand and minute natural processes (Jung, Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious 6).

The narrative commences with two boys attempting to orient themselves in an unfamiliar place. One of them, Ralph, appears composed and slender, while the other, known as Piggy, is stout, short, and wears glasses. As the plot unfolds, Piggy discovers a shell he identifies as a "conch." He gives the shell to Ralph, instructing him to produce a sound by blowing into it. The resonance attracts the attention of other stranded boys on the island, prompting them to gather around Piggy and Ralph. A group of boys, led by their choir leader, Jack, enters the scene. Jack is tall, thin, unattractive, and has blue eyes and red hair. During the boys' introductions, a reserved and reticent boy named Roger quietly reveals his name. Amidst the introductions, one boy faints. After regaining consciousness, the boys inquire about his identity, and he introduces himself as Simon .

While conversing further, they opt to conduct a modest election to determine the leader of their assembly. The contenders for the role are Jack and Ralph. Ralph emerges victorious in the election, establishes regulations, and allocates specific responsibilities to each boy. Ralph grants Jack and his choir the freedom to choose their roles, and Jack decides that he and his cohort will be designated as "hunters".

According to Jung, the hero balances his weakness with the guidance of a mentor who helps him find his aim in life and reach his most significant

potential and enables him to perform the tasks he cannot accomplish unaided (man and his symbols 110). One of the most essential characters in the novel is the short and stout Piggy. From the start, Piggy gives Ralph the "conch", which is the symbol of leadership, something that Ralph is not aware of yet, but Piggy helps him and teaches him how to blow into it, resulting in the beginning of the hero's journey, that is Ralph's journey of heroism. In a way, Piggy is a mentor or guide that guides Ralph to achieve his quest. The group also uses Piggy's glasses to light a fire as a way to be rescued. The glasses symbolise wisdom used to help rescue the group, which means that Piggy not only help the hero but also helps the others find their way back to civilisation. According to Jung, the image of the wise old man can manifest vividly, not only in dreams but also during visionary meditation, known as "active imagination." In certain instances, as seen in India, this archetype can assume the role of a guru. In dreams, the wise older man may take on various forms, such as a magician, doctor, priest, teacher, professor, grandfather, or any authoritative figure. The spirit archetype, embodied as a man, hobgoblin, or animal, typically appears in situations requiring insight, understanding, wise counsel, determination, planning, and other qualities one cannot generate from personal resources alone (Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious 216). In Jungian terms, the wise old man archetype is akin to Jesus Christ, the son of God. This comparison arises from the wise older man's role in providing essential guidance during moments of despair, resembling the way characters in fantasy stories offer advice to the hero on their quest. The depiction of the wise older man

varies widely, encompassing figures like Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings* or a nurturing mother who consoles a child by imparting words of wisdom, assuring that the pain will subside, followed by a comforting kiss to alleviate the discomfort (Bjarnason 17).

As explained by Campbell, the wise old man who exists in fairy tales who assists in his comforting and reassuring words and wisdom, which helps the hero through his adventure, is "the one who appears and points to the magic shining sword that will kill the dragon-terror, tells of the waiting bride and the castle of many treasures, apply healing balm to the almost fatal wounds, and finally dismisses the conqueror into the world of normal life, following the great adventure into the enchanted night" (Campbell 9).

Piggy embodies the archetype of the wise but marginalised figure. His intelligence and rational thinking serve as a source of guidance and insight for Ralph and the rest of the group. As a wise man in a kid's body, he comforts Ralph, points to solutions to consider, and helps him regain confidence in times of stress. The mentor is always by the hero's side, as Piggy affirms, "I was with him when he found the conch. I was with him before anyone else was." (Golding 28). Later on, while exploring, the children point to the existence of a beast, which all the children are now afraid of, and they interpret it differently, explaining that it could be a ghost. This is refuted by Piggy, who believes in logic and tells the others that there is no such thing as ghosts or beasts. Eventually, Jack rebills the rest of the group and Ralph, explaining that if there

is a beast, he and his group shall protect them from it. Chaos erupts, and Ralph tries to regain order, but he feels stressed over the level of loyalty and respect now that Jack promises protection. He tries to give up, but Piggy advise him not to do so, "Blow the conch, Ralph... You got to be tough now. Make 'em do what you want... If you don't blow, we'll soon be animals anyway. I can't see what they're doing but I can hear." (Golding 111). Piggy eventually gets killed as a sign that chaos is left instead of order, and savagery is the new order instead of civilisation .

Piggy plays an essential role in creating the hero persona inside of Ralph. According to the archetypes of Carl Jung, Ralph represents the hero archetype. Ralph needs to be the hero and the representative of good. He possesses the typically light hair associated with virtuous individuals, an appealing visage, and an authentic capacity for leadership. As the biggest and eldest among the boys, he maintains a facial harmony that does not label him as malevolent, with a balanced alignment between his mouth and eyes (Bufkin 51). As Carl Jung explains, the hero's journey is a journey of self-discovery, "The hero's main feat is to overcome the monster of darkness: it is the long-hoped-for and expected triumph of consciousness over the unconscious. Day and light are synonyms for consciousness, night and dark for the unconscious." (Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious 166). According to Carl Jung, the hero archetype represents an individual's journey toward self-discovery, personal growth, and integration of their unconscious aspects. The hero embarks on a quest, facing challenges and

overcoming external and internal obstacles. This journey is often symbolic of the hero's confrontation with their fears, desires, and the collective unconscious .

Jung's persona archetype can be applied to interpret various art forms, such as novels, poetry, and short stories. The conscious mind, the ego, encompasses a person's thoughts, memories, and emotions within their awareness. The ego plays a significant role in shaping one's sense of identity and continuity. It is categorised into four types: innocent, orphan, hero, and caregiver(Wandansari and Yulistiyaniti 29). Ralph's struggle commences when the boys adopt a savage lifestyle, prompting him to confront the dark influence of savagery within both himself and others. He endeavours to resist being consumed by the brutal way of life, asserting a preference for rules to maintain order. Initially propelled into heroism with Piggy's assistance, Ralph gradually assumes leadership over the entire group. Initially instituting a law requiring raised hands for communication, he introduces the "conch" as a symbol of authority. His second directive emphasises the importance of building a fire for rescue.

Meanwhile, Jack contends against the encroaching dominance of savagery, engaging in a personal battle with Ralph's group as they descend into tribal behaviour. The first manifestation of savagery occurs with the breaking of Piggy's glasses, crucial for fire, symbolising their determination to return to civilisation. As tensions rise, Jack challenges the established rules, rebelling against Ralph's leadership and disregarding the protocol of the "conch" for

speaking. When he sees this, Ralph reminds Jack that he is "breaking the rules!" and that "the rules are the only thing we've got!" (Golding 110) Once proud of his English identity, Jack grows dissatisfied with adhering to rules and develops a preference for hunting and killing. When Ralph confronts him about breaking the rules, Jack dismisses them, declaring, "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 110.)

Meanwhile, as Ralph contends with the dark forces symbolised by "savagery," he and others lose themselves in violent tribal mischief, mistakenly believing that they are confronting the beast, exemplifying the destructive consequences of succumbing to the powers of darkness. According to Jung, the Shadow represents the darker aspects of human nature, and the individuation process can be viewed as the psychological maturation experienced by a hero on their journey. Jung sees the encounter with one's Shadow as the initial step in individuation, labelling it the "apprentice-piece" in an individual's development, while the anima is considered the "master-piece." Jung warns about the dangers of not integrating the Shadow into one's personality (Brandt 9).

Ralph grapples with these dark impulses and desires but eventually recognises their moral wrongness. Unlike the rest of the group, he maintains a clear awareness of their actions, stating, "That was murder" (Golding 199), indicating his retention of logical reasoning. Ralph's leadership qualities and

dedication to civilisation can be considered heroic traits. He strives to uphold democracy and unity among the boys, consistently advocating for the common good. However, as the narrative unfolds and the boys succumb to their primal instincts, Ralph confronts significant challenges and moral quandaries.

Every protagonist faces an antagonist poised to witness their downfall, loss of balance, or surrender. In this narrative, the antagonist is Jack, initially a thin, blue-eyed boy who starts as a civilised leader but transforms into a tribal savage, having previously held a leading role as a chorister. Jack embodies the archetype of evil, representing the Shadow figure in literature. According to Jung, the Shadow, symbolised by characters deemed as evil, is an essential element for the hero's existence. Initially adhering to rules, Jack eventually adopts savage tribal behaviour that encourages hunting, killing, and forsaking civilisation .

Despite Ralph acknowledging the killing of Simon as "murder," Jack, on the other hand, justifies Simon's murder. He reminds his tribe that the beast came disguised as Simon, "He came—disguised. He may come again even though we gave him the head of our kill to eat. So watch and be careful." (Golding 197) When Ralph, Piggy, and the twins confront Jack at his shelter, tensions rise. Ralph demands the return of the stolen glasses needed by Piggy, leading to further violence. Roger kills Piggy by dislodging a rock onto his head, shattering the symbolic "conch" into pieces. Jack celebrates Roger's act by shouting at Ralph, "See? See? That's what you will get! I meant that! There isn't a tribe for you any more! The conch is gone—"

(Golding 224). The confrontation escalates as the savages, now bloodthirsty killers, spear Ralph with sharpened weapons, aiming for his ribs and face. Despite escaping, Jack's actions reveal his true and abhorrent desires. Jack symbolises the darker aspects of human nature and the descent into savagery, emerging as the primary antagonist who fully embraces violence and primal instincts, shedding light on the destructive side of humanity.

Conclusion

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* resonates deeply with Carl Jung's theory of archetypes, delving into the collective unconscious and primal aspects of human nature. The characters in the novel embody archetypal figures, representing the eternal struggle between the forces of order and chaos within the human psyche. The analysis focused on three characters only: Ralph, Jack, and Piggy. Ralph, a leader, embodies the hero archetype, attempting to uphold civilisation and unity. Conversely, characters like Jack embody the Shadow archetype, succumbing to the darker instincts and unleashing chaos. On the other hand, Piggy represents the wise older man who helps Ralph in his journey of heroism as he instructs him in times of doubt and fear .

Golding's narrative illustrates the fragility of civilisation and the constant tension between the conscious and unconscious realms. Through the lens of Jungian archetypes, *Lord of the Flies* becomes a profound exploration of the human psyche, a cautionary tale about the consequences of neglecting the darker

aspects of our nature. The novel is a powerful allegory, inviting readers to confront the archetypal forces that shape human behaviour and question the veneer of civilisation in the face of primal instincts .

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