

Study of Jack's Barbarization in *Lord of the Flies* with Freud's Tripartite Model of Human Psyche

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Lord of the Flies is the masterpiece of British writer William Golding who won the Nobel Prize for Literature. This work takes children as the protagonists and shows the theme of the barbarism of human nature. Based on Freud's Tripartite Model of Human Psyche, this study analyzes the personality characteristics of Jack in psychological perspective, reveals the different states reflected in the realm of id, ego and superego, and thus stresses the restraining effect of social rules and civilization on the barbarism of human nature.

Keywords: *Lord of the Flies*, tripartite model of human psyche, barbarization

Introduction

William Golding is an English writer in the 20th century. His experiences as a teacher and as a Navy soldier contributed a lot to his most popular work *Lord of the Flies*, which was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1983.

Lord of the Flies is an allegory. It is a story which happens in future world. There is a group of children who were stranded on an uninhabited island because of an aircraft accident when retreated from atomic war. Without adult supervisors, they form their own rule and work together for living. However, it quickly descends into violence and they divide into two groups. The civilized man is led by Ralph, the uncivilized by Jack. Finally, members of civilized group, Simon and Piggy, are killed by the other group.

This article focuses on characteristics of Jack. It takes advantage of Freud's Tripartite Model of Human Psyche to explore how the id, the ego and the superego work in his mind, and then to find the cause of his barbarization.

Literature Review

The study of *Lord of the Flies* has lasting 60 years since it had published in 1954. In these studies, researchers mainly focus on its theme, such as the loss of civilization, evil of human nature and dehumanization. Li Yuhua (1999) discusses evil of human nature by comparing *Lord of the Flies* with *The Coral Land*, and suggests that the death of Piggy and Simon represent the loss of two kinds of civilization, one is spiritual and the other is material. Zhang Helong (2002) studies the discussion of *Lord of the Flies* in China, and concludes that this work is widely accepted by researchers as a masterpiece that reveals the evil of human nature because

it is closely related to the traditional cultural context and the ideological context in China. Xiao Mingwen (2018) analyzes the implied meaning of food in the perspective of society, culture and politics. In this way, the author reveals the conflict between the civilized and the savage. Chen Yanxu (2019) focuses on banality of evil in this work and its irony to Englishness. The author stresses the universality of evil, and holds the view that even children are born to be evil. According to this, the idealized image of English is destroyed. Research of theme is the earliest and most in-depth study of *Lord of the Flies*.

There are also many studies interpret symbolic meanings of images and archetype of figures in this work. John F. Fitzgerald and John R. Kayser (1992) makes a comparison between *Lord of the Flies* and the Egyptian myth of Osiris and Set-Typhon. Li Yuan (2008) states that the symbolic system of this novel plays a vital role in transition and connection between the fictionality of the text and the reconstruction of the theme. Xu Ming (2000) declares that the symbols in this book are always meaningful and thought-provoking, and they are constantly changing with the development of the storyline. Hu Lei (2000) analyzes the archetype of figures with Greek mythology, and each of the main characters is replaced by a mythology figure. In addition to archetype in Greek mythology, Zhou (2000) also interprets its archetype in Bible. For example, Simon is the prophet and the island is the lost paradise. These studies dig deeper into the theme by revealing its implied meanings.

Given that all the figures in this work are men, the absence of women is also studied. Bernard F. Dick (1987) is the one who proposed question about the absence of women. Besides, Patrick Reilly (1988) also notices it and points out that the absence of women is a kind of literary tradition. In China, Wang Weixing (2006) regards this work as a modern fiction aimed at subverting Phallocentrism. He also thinks its overall structure, from the establishment of Phallus culture to the fear and division of men under the temptation and challenge of women, and then to the collapse of Phallus culture, presents the characteristics of female writing. Yu and Zhu (2007) explain the rationality of women's absence with the tradition of desert island literature and the need of the theme. These studies believe that their failure of constructing a civilized society proves the necessity and importance of women's presence.

Besides, psychological criticism and ecocriticism are also popular research perspective to this work (Wang, 2005; Wang, 2009).

Freud's Tripartite Model of Human Psyche

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, originated the concepts of the id, the ego and the superego. These elements work together to create complex human behaviors (Boag, 2014, p. 666).

The id is about man's primitive and instinctive desire, such as hunger, thirst and libido. It operates by pleasure principle which craves only pleasures. It desires instantaneous satisfaction of instinctual drives, ignoring moral and sexual boundaries established by society (Charles, 2004, p. 122). In another word, the id is the irrational and unconscious part of human psyche. It houses the pessimistic side of human nature. The ego develops from the id and represents more rational and logical part of human mind. It is driven by reality principle. The ego regulates the instinctual desires of the id, and creates ways to realize these desires nondestructively. It plays as a guard in human psyche, and desires in the id should get the permission to enter the ego. Therefore, comparing with immediate satisfaction of the id, gratification is delayed in the ego. The

superego is the optimal state. It is ruled by morality principle. Hence, human's behavior is restricted by social rules and morality. It means that if there is conflict between personal desire and social rules, the superego is responsible to suppress the desires.

In light of this, this article has an insight into Jack's human psyche, and analyzes how it influences his barbarization.

Barbarization of Jack

There are four main figures in this work, they are Ralph, Jack, Piggy and Simon. Ralph is a representative of civilization. He is highly motivated to imitate adults and rule the group of children. He has great consciousness to social signs and power. Hence, he is the natural leader at the beginning. However, Jack, an aggressive and radical figure, resents Ralph's authority and refuse to follow his rule. With the ability of living in a wild place, he got the authority of hunting group. Piggy and Simon who are believed to be the representatives of material and spiritual civilization are killed by Jack's group. All the conflicts between Jack and other figures show confrontation between civilization and barbarism.

For these children, adults are the executor of these rules. Therefore, without adults, the binding force of regulations is insufficient. Only the conch which represents as a symbol of democracy and world order will remind them of the importance of civilization. Jack is also a member of the follower of rules and suppressed by them at the beginning. So, when Ralph is elected as the chief, he doesn't directly oppose this result with words or action, but only a blush of mortification shows on his face. This is obviously the contribution of superego, hence, Jack's desire of being the chief is suppressed and he chooses to follow the decision. Also, he is willing to work together with Ralph and other children to survive on this desert island. When they meet the pig for the first time, he hesitates to kill it because his ego and superego still work to stop him from doing such cruel thing. However, actually, his hunger and desire of showing his ability has driven the id to burst out.

When they gather at a platform, Jack suggests to set up an army for hunting pigs, and all his utterance are about hunting. It clearly shows that his desire began to be predominant in his mind. With the expansion of id, he attempts to break the rules. He says "the conch doesn't count on top of the mountain" (Golding, 1954, p. 35), which represents his desire to get rid of these restrictions. Jack is indulged in hunting the pig, and he paints his face with charcoal. As Golding (1954, p. 51) states, "the mask was a thing on its own, behind which Jack his, liberated from shame and self-awareness". When he realizes that there is no more necessity to follow these rules, his id gradually burst out. Therefore, he chooses to hunt pig rather than watch the fire. The pleasure in hunting and killing let Jack loses himself. Moreover, suffering from hunger, all the followers of Ralph turn to Jack, which makes Jack enjoy the gratification of power. Finally, he and his hunting group become increasingly savage and they kill Simon and Piggy without sense of guilt. It means that the id totally conquers the ego and the superego. All the rules, morality and civilization are gone. Then, Jack has completed his barbarization at last.

Conclusion

Golding holds the view that human nature is evil, and only civilization and social rules can suppress its negative effect. The end of this story shows great optimism. There are naval officers come to rescue them,

especially rescue Ralph from the danger and sufferings. Such kind of ending makes this story like a nightmare, and when all men wake up, civilization remains and there are no barbarized children. However, this work also plays as a warning. In another word, we human beings should ponder over the negative side of human nature, and control evil desire in the id, because the barbarization of Jack is just a disastrous result of the id.

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