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Deconstructing Binaries in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

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Dedication

To my parents

To my brothers and sisters each by his name

To my former colleagues in Hamma Lakhdar university

To my colleagues in Mohammed Kheider university

To all my friends, especially Arthur Morgan

And to everyone who is reading this work

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Abstract

Lord of the Flies is a novel that was written in a context that makes it limited to a narrow pool of interpretations. Being written after the war makes it perceived as an allegory of the political situation of the world. Hence, its meanings are often taken from the same pool. This thesis takes the task of pointing at the possibility of other understanding of the novel's events. It attempts to make the events understood within the novel itself and neglect the historical and political context. The main question raised in this research is "How fragile is the structure of the novel when put under the scope of Deconstruction?" The thesis approaches the question with the assumption that no work has an absolute meaning, and that the reader is the axis of the structure of any novel, the reader is the one who assigns meaning to what the author has written. In order to approach the question and conduct the investigation, the dissertation carries a descriptive study of the novel as it focuses on its themes; especially the conflicting ones, in order to draw more attention to the complications of the novel and to open a window to a vast sea of interpretations of the novel. Moreover, it also focuses on the symbols and how they are seen differently by characters of the novel and through the events. The novel is constructed on conflicting themes such as civilization and savagery, reason and passion, good and evil...etc. By bridging the gap between the opposites, each theme gets deprived from its preassigned meaning and the structure of the novel gets compromised and the reader gets the role of getting his own interpretation of the novel.

Key words: Deconstruction, Différance, Binary oppositions, Evil, Good.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Overview

Understanding the human experience, the intricacies of our reality, and how we interact to one another has been a fundamental aspect of human intellectual and cultural history for a long time. Literature challenges us to critically analyze our worldviews and preconceptions by inviting us to interact with language, symbolism, and story structure. Literature is fundamentally a window into the complexity of our social, cultural, and psychological environments and a reflection of the human condition. In this context, the investigation of literary works from diverse viewpoints becomes vital, as it deepens our awareness of the intricacies of human experience, while offering a chance to generate fresh insights and interpretations of the text. As a result, since its release in 1954, William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* has been the focus of academic study. Literary critics, psychologists, and philosophers have all expressed interest in it because of its examination of the human mind and the conflict between civilized society and barbarism.

In William Golding's famous novel *Lord of the Flies*, a group of youngsters are left alone on a barren island where they must fend for themselves without adult supervision. The schoolboys gradually create their own society, replete with a hierarchy, laws, and rituals, as they strive to retain their sense of order in the face of a hostile environment. This society initially appears to run very smoothly, with the guys collaborating and helping one another to satisfy their needs. Yet as time passes, tensions increase and the guys' social order starts to disintegrate. Violence breaks out as factions emerge, allegiances change, and a dramatic and deadly end results. Themes of power, authority, and human nature are explored throughout the book by

Golding, who also raises challenging queries about the structure of society and the place of the individual within it.

Purpose of the Study

One way to interpret *Lord of the Flies* is through the lens of deconstruction, a theoretical approach to literary analysis that challenges stable meanings and opens up new possibilities for interpretation. At its core, deconstruction is concerned with the ways in which language and other cultural systems create and reinforce binary oppositions - that is, pairs of opposing concepts that are often seen as mutually exclusive (such as good/evil, male/female, or nature/culture). By breaking down these oppositions and revealing their underlying assumptions, deconstruction seeks to show that they are not fixed or natural, but rather the products of specific historical and cultural contexts. In the case of *Lord of the Flies*, deconstruction can help us to see the novel in a new light, by challenging traditional interpretations and offering new insights into its themes and motifs. Specifically, this research project aims to explore how the meaning is constructed through symbols and the emphasis on their static meaning creates some binary oppositions that lead to a single meaning that has to be understood from the novel. The destabilization of those symbols and the deconstruction of the binary oppositions challenges traditional readings of the novel and opens up new possibilities for interpretation.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to contribute to the field of literary studies by offering a new perspective on *Lord of the Flies*. Through a deconstructive analysis of the novel's language and symbolism, this study will shed light on the ways in which binary oppositions operate in the text, and how these oppositions can be subverted and reconfigured to create new meanings. By doing so, this research will not only contribute to our understanding of *Lord of the Flies*, but will also demonstrate the value of deconstruction as a method of literary

analysis that can help us to see familiar texts in a new light. Furthermore, this study will highlight the relevance of deconstruction as a critical framework for understanding the complexities of human experience and the ways in which meaning is constructed and negotiated in society.

Main Questions

The problem addressed in this study is the stability of meaning in literature and how it can be challenged through the deconstruction of the main structure of the work. Specifically, this study will examine the use of language and symbolism in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* to demonstrate how binary oppositions such as civilization/savagery, reason/passion, and good/evil are constructed throughout the text. By analyzing these oppositions, this study seeks to challenge stable meanings and opens up new possibilities for interpretation, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the complex nature of language and meaning in literature. To achieve the aim of the study, this research is built upon two main questions:

- 1- How fragile is the structure of the novel in the face of the deconstruction process?
- 2- How can the symbols be used to destabilize the meaning of the novel?

Methodology

The study would adopt the descriptive approach in order to fulfil its aim, the deconstruction study requires a focused observation of the component of the novel and an accurate vision on the plot, themes, setting, characters, and most importantly symbols. The descriptive study would grant the reader of the research a full view on the work under study. This dissertation approaches its questions with the assumption that no work is exclusive to one preassigned meaning. Moreover, the assumption that the conflicting themes of the novel are

constructed within it and not a background knowledge that the reader has from his interaction with his society.

Literature Review

Lord of the Flies has attracted the attention of readers through generations and it is still being the subject of many scholars. The continuity of the significance of the study on the novel is dependable to a point on the theory of deconstruction. The deconstructive study maintains a stream of meanings that reflect the reader other than the author; resulting in what Roland Barthes named "The Death of the Author". Barthes emphasized that as a book is composed of quotations that may reflect several meanings that are blended together, the construction of meaning should not be rigorously constrained by the author's intended meaning (Barthes and Howard). Accordingly, the majority of scholars agree that the novel possesses unique literary value in that Golding demonstrates exceptional employment of symbolism and plot and character devices. Additionally, the novel is one of the most renowned allegorical novels as the author incorporates underlying humanistic meaning in the development of characters and objects, setting and action.

Structure of the Study

This dissertation is structured into three main chapters. Chapter one provides a theoretical framework that draws upon the key concepts and principles of deconstruction, binary oppositions, and the use of language and symbolism in literature and it ends with a synopsis of the novel to give the reader an idea about the work dealt with. The chapter is divided into several sections, each of which explores a specific aspect of these concepts and how they relate to the analysis of literary texts. The second chapter takes the symbolism in the novel and analyze them using the theory of *différance*. The chapter aims to deprive the symbols of their static meaning

created in a context that has no relation to neither the context of the novel nor the setting. It paves the way for the process of the deconstruction of the binary oppositions. Finally, chapter three provides a critical analysis of the implications of the binary oppositions in *Lord of the Flies* and deconstructs them, drawing on the theoretical framework established in chapter one. This chapter discusses the statement and construction of the binary oppositions that are responsible for shaping the universal meaning that the reader gets basing on his prior knowledge and the traditional principles that shape the human understanding.

**Chapter one: General
Overview of Deconstruction
and the Novel *Lord of the
Flies***

Introduction

Studying literary works has been to an extent limited to the analysis of the work itself; the study of the components of a work such as the themes, the devices, and the characters...etc. was a prioritized aim of the studies. Accordingly, the post-structuralist movement emerged and aimed at changing the scope and the focus of literary criticism. Among the major theories of the post-structuralist movement is the theory of deconstruction. Since the knowledge on the theory is a prerequisite to absorb this study, this chapter gives an overview on Jacques Derrida's theory and the way it deals with literary works. Additionally, it would present some of the key terms that are related to the theory of deconstruction. This theoretical framework also tackles a crucial part of the study which is symbolism and its role in creating meaning in literature. The chapter ends with an overview on the novel that is the case of this study; William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.

1.1 Overview of Deconstruction Literary Theory

Deconstruction is a literary theory originated in the late 20th century and was developed by the philosopher Jacques Derrida. The theory seeks to challenge the traditional notion of binary oppositions, such as presence/absence and speech/writing, in literature and language.

Deconstruction argues that these binary oppositions are not absolute and fixed, but rather unstable and contingent, and that meaning is always deferred or postponed (Caputo 12). The goal of deconstruction is to uncover the ways in which language and literature perpetuate power relations, and to demonstrate that these power relations are not natural or inevitable, but are produced through cultural and historical processes. Over time, deconstruction has evolved and

developed, and it is now seen as a major critical approach in fields such as literary studies, cultural studies, and philosophy (Mambrol).

Deconstruction has been developed by a number of philosophers and literary theorists since it was introduced by Jacques Derrida in the mid-1960s. Derrida's idea of the instability of language and meaning, led to the development of deconstruction as a method for examining texts in order to reveal the power dynamics that underlie them. Some of the other key figures associated with deconstruction include Paul de Man, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and J. Hillis Miller. These thinkers have contributed to the development of the theory by exploring its implications for literary interpretation, political activism, and the critique of Western metaphysics. Their work has had a significant impact on the field of literary criticism and has shaped the way that scholars approach the analysis of texts and the examination of cultural power structures.

The aforementioned thinkers and others, had set the stage for the process of deconstruction with a set of principles that guide the scholar to conduct the study on a literary text. The first basic principle is the rejection of binary oppositions, which are pairs of concepts that are considered to be polar opposites, such as good and evil, civilization and savagery, or truth and falsehood (Kates 12). Deconstructionists argue that these binary oppositions are not as clear-cut as they appear, but rather that they are inherently unstable and dependent on each other for their meaning. This idea challenges the idea that there is a single, objective truth or reality, and instead argues that meaning is always subjective and dependent on the particular context in which it is produced (Norris 143).

Moreover, among the tenets of Deconstruction, is the emphasis on textuality, or the idea that meaning is produced through language and other forms of representation. Deconstructionists

argue that the meaning of a text is not simply a direct representation of the world, but rather that it is always shaped by the cultural, historical, and ideological contexts in which it is produced. This idea emphasizes the importance of examining the ways in which power and meaning are constructed through language (Shah and Abahussain 177).

The third basic principle of Deconstruction is the concept of *différance*, a term coined by Jacques Derrida to describe the way that meaning is always deferred, or postponed, in language. *Différance* refers to the idea that meaning is never fully present in a text, but is always dependent on other meanings, both within the text itself and in the broader cultural context. This idea challenges the idea of a fixed, stable, and objective meaning, and instead argues that meaning is always open to interpretation and always in a state of flux. By examining the ways in which meaning is constructed through language and representation, Deconstructionists aim to uncover the hidden power structures and cultural narratives that shape our understanding of the world (Atkins 17).

Deconstruction has been widely applied to literary texts, and it has proved to be an effective tool for interpreting and analyzing literature. One of the main applications of Deconstruction in literature is its ability to reveal the complex and often contradictory nature of literary texts. Deconstruction emphasizes the importance of analyzing the ways in which literary texts subvert and challenge dominant cultural narratives and power structures. By focusing on the textuality of literary works and the ways in which meaning is produced through language, Deconstruction allows for a more nuanced and critical reading of literature (Mambrol). Moreover, Deconstruction highlights the importance of the reader's role in the creation of meaning, and it encourages readers to question their own assumptions and biases in the interpretation of literary works (Shah and Abahussain 176). Overall, Deconstruction offers a

valuable and unique perspective on literature that challenges traditional modes of interpretation and encourages a more critical and self-reflexive approach to reading.

Deconstruction is a complex theory that utilizes various terms to examine literature and language. Différance is a fundamental concept in deconstruction, which refers to the way that meaning is always deferred or postponed in language. This idea challenges the notion of a fixed, stable, and objective meaning and argues that meaning is always open to interpretation and always in a state of flux. Another important term in deconstruction is “The Trace”. It refers to the unrepresentable and undecidable aspects of language and meaning. The trace is what remains of meaning after its presence has passed, and it is characterized by a kind of absence or difference. It is the mark or sign of what was once present, but is now gone (Norris 36). This means that language is never fully transparent, and that there are always gaps, inconsistencies, and contradictions in any text. Among the key terms in Deconstruction is Logocentrism, a term coined by Derrida, refers to the belief in the Western philosophical tradition that meaning and truth can be found in a fixed and stable center, often associated with speech or reason. Another significant set of terms in deconstruction includes hegemony, subversion, and iterability. Hegemony, according to Antonio Gramsci, refers to the social, cultural, and political domination of one group over another. (Gramsci 170) Hegemonic structures create and maintain power imbalances, which can be subverted through acts of resistance and subversion. Hegemony according to Gramsci is not exclusive to the supremacy of a social group using physical power, but it is also the consensual submission of a group of people who were dominated. This control; if wanted to last long, Gramsci argues that it requires the two power that he call “Force and Consent” (Mambrol).

Hegemony in literature is the theory that there is a set of meanings that can be referred to as governing or prevailing within a specific culture. Hegemony has been used to describe the process of creating, sustaining, and reproducing this dominant set of ideologies, practices, and meanings. Hegemony, according to Gramsci, whose use of the term in cultural studies, denotes a scenario in which a "historical bloc" of ruling class factions exercises social leadership over the inferior classes through a combination of coercion and, more significantly, consent (Mambrol).

Another term in the theory of deconstruction is subversion. It is a technique or literary device used to question or undermine conventional or established standards, expectations, customs, or ideas. It is purposefully departing from or upsetting the expectations of the reader or audience, frequently with the goal of surprising, inspiring thought, or criticizing social, political, or cultural structures (Atkins 116). This literary technique often involves creating plot twists, unexpected outcomes, or unconventional characterizations that defy readers' expectations. Through subversion, authors can explore alternative perspectives, challenge dominant narratives, or expose hidden truths. It can be a powerful tool for social commentary, political critique, or deconstruction of established literary tropes.

Finally, the term of iterability refers to a text's ability to be repeated, distributed, and recontextualized in different ways. It is the property that enables a literary work to be read and understood differently by various audiences and in various circumstances. According to Derrida, iterability challenges the idea of a single, authoritative interpretation of a text. Instead, it recognizes that meaning is contingent and subject to change. Iterability allows a text to be adapted, appropriated, and transformed, making it relevant and applicable across different historical periods, cultures, and literary traditions (Farrell 53).

1.2 Binary oppositions and their role in literature

Binary oppositions are a key concept in literature and critical theory that refer to the way in which two opposing concepts or ideas are presented as mutually exclusive and foundational. This binary mode of thinking creates a framework for understanding and interpreting the world, with one term in the opposition always being privileged over the other. Examples of binary oppositions in literature include good and evil, man and woman, reason and emotion, and civilization and nature. The opposition between these concepts is often used to create meaning in the text, and the way in which they are presented can shape the reader's understanding of the work (Derrida xxviii).

The use of binary oppositions in literature is not simply a matter of presenting two contrasting ideas. Rather, these oppositions are often used to create a hierarchy of meaning, with one term being privileged over the other. For example, in many works of literature, reason is privileged over emotion, with the former being seen as more valuable and important (Shapiro 429). This privileging of one term over the other can have important implications for the interpretation of the work. Additionally, binary oppositions are not always fixed and stable. They can be subverted or deconstructed, with the boundaries between the opposing concepts being blurred or destabilized. This process of deconstruction is a key aspect of poststructuralist and deconstructionist literary theory (Bergmans).

Binary oppositions have played a significant role in literary theory since the early 20th century. Russian Formalism, a movement that emerged in Russia in the early 1910s, is credited with pioneering the use of binary oppositions in literary analysis. They believed that literature was a system of signs that conveyed meaning through the interplay of binary oppositions.

According to Formalists, the way in which these oppositions were used by writers created a unique literary style that distinguished one work from another. The Formalist concept of binary oppositions was later adopted and developed by the structuralist movement, which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. Structuralists believed that literature was a system of signs that could be analyzed using the methods of linguistics (Derrida 8).

The significance of binary oppositions in literary theory resides in the fact that they have allowed scholars to analyze how literary works convey meaning. They allow readers to understand the complexities of the relationships between characters, themes, and motifs in a literary work. Binary oppositions have also played a crucial role in deconstruction, which is concerned with revealing the inherent contradictions in language and the way in which language shapes our understanding of the world (Derrida 6). By deconstructing binary oppositions, deconstructionists aim to reveal the instability and ambiguity that underpins language and meaning. The significance of binary oppositions in literary theory, therefore, lies in their ability to reveal the complex relationships between language, meaning, and the world, and to question the stability and certainty of meaning itself.

The purpose of the use of binary oppositions in literature is to create conflicts, highlight contrasts, and explore multiple themes. These oppositions are often used to highlight differences between characters, ideas, or themes within a work. One of the most common examples of binary oppositions in literature is the theme of good versus evil, where characters are pitted against each other to showcase the stark differences between their moral compasses. This can be noticed in the novel which is the case study of this research *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding. The boys struggle to maintain their morality and resist the temptation to give in to their darker impulses. Moreover, it can also be noticed in William Shakespeare's play "Macbeth," where the main

character Macbeth is contrasted with his foil, Banquo, who represents the opposite of Macbeth's ambition and ruthlessness (Linstead 40).

The existence of binary oppositions is not limited between good versus evil, but they are also found in many other themes. For example, in *Lord of the Flies*, one of the most prominent binary oppositions is between civilization and savagery. The boys' attempts to maintain a sense of order and civilization on the island are constantly threatened by their primal instincts and the lure of savagery. Another example of the diversity of themes of binary oppositions can be found in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. The contrast between wealth and poverty is a recurring binary opposition. The novel explores the stark differences between the extravagant lifestyle of the wealthy and the struggles of those in poverty.

Binary oppositions can be eminently useful in analyzing literature because they can help us identify and understand the themes and symbolism present in a text. By examining the binary oppositions in a work of literature, we can gain a deeper understanding of the underlying tensions and conflicts that drive the narrative forward. For example, in *Lord of the Flies*, the opposition between civilization and savagery is a key theme that runs throughout the novel. By examining the binary opposition between these two concepts, we can see how the novel explores the tension between the desire for order and the pull of our more primitive instincts. The conflict between these two opposing forces drives the narrative forward and provides insight into the human condition (Linstead 34).

Additionally, binary oppositions can be important for understanding the symbolism present in a text. Often, the binary pairs in a work of literature are deeply connected to the symbols and motifs that appear throughout the narrative. By examining these connections, we can gain a deeper understanding of the symbolic meaning of the text. For example, in *Lord of the*

Flies, the opposition between light and dark is a key binary pair that is closely linked to the novel's exploration of the nature of good and evil. The boys' descent into savagery is mirrored by the increasing darkness that descends over the island, while the arrival of the naval officer at the end of the novel is accompanied by a return to light. By examining these connections, we can gain a deeper understanding of the symbolic meaning of the text and the themes that the author is exploring (Derrida 32).

While binary oppositions can be a useful tool for analyzing literature, it's important to recognize their limitations and potential problems. For example, some works of literature may resist being easily categorized into binary oppositions, and attempting to force them into these categories can limit their interpretation and potential meanings. Additionally, the use of binary oppositions can be criticized for oversimplifying complex themes and ideas within a text, reducing them to two opposing categories that don't fully capture the nuances and complexities of the work.

Furthermore, binary oppositions can reinforce dominant ideologies and power structures, particularly when the oppositions are created by those in power. This can lead to the marginalization and exclusion of perspectives that don't fit neatly into the established categories, and can limit the possibilities for meaning-making and interpretation. As such, it's important to approach binary oppositions with a critical eye and to be open to alternative readings that challenge these oppositions and provide a more nuanced understanding of the text (Linstead 52).

1.3 Language and Symbolism in Literature

The relationship between language and meaning has been a central concern for linguists and literary theorists for decades. At the heart of this relationship is the question of how meaning

is constructed through language. Some of the key figures who have contributed to this discussion include Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Barthes, and Jacques Derrida (Linstead 47).

Saussure's linguistic theory emphasized the arbitrary nature of the sign, that is, the idea that the relationship between the signifier (the word or sound) and the signified (the concept or meaning) is not inherently logical or necessary. Rather, it is established by convention within a language community. According to Saussure, meaning is created through the system of differences between words within a language (Boris). For example, the meaning of the word "cat" is not inherent in the sounds "c-a-t," but rather is established through its difference from other words in the language, such as "dog" or "rat."

Building on Saussure's ideas, Barthes argued that meaning in literature is not fixed, but rather is contingent on the reader's interpretation. He proposed the concept of the "death of the author," meaning that the author's intended meaning is irrelevant to the reader's experience of the text. Instead, meaning is created through the reader's interaction with the text, and is shaped by their own experiences, culture, and ideology (Boris).

Derrida, a key figure in the development of deconstruction theory, emphasized the instability of meaning in language. He argued that there is always a gap, or "difference," between the signifier and the signified, and that this gap is the site of the play of meaning. Derrida coined the term "différance" to describe this play of difference, and suggested that meaning is not fixed, but is always subject to change and reinterpretation (Linstead 51).

On the other hand, symbolism in literature refers to the use of objects, events, or characters to represent abstract ideas or concepts. Symbolism can be used to convey complex ideas in a way that is more subtle and nuanced than straightforward language. The use of

symbols can help to enhance the meaning of a text by providing layers of meaning and depth that would not be possible through literal language alone. For example, in William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*, the conch shell is used as a symbol of order and civilization. As long as the boys hold the conch, they are able to maintain a sense of order and structure in their society. However, as the boys become more savage and violent, the conch loses its power and is eventually destroyed, symbolizing the breakdown of order and the triumph of chaos.

The role of symbolism in literature has been a subject of much debate among literary theorists. Some argue that symbols are arbitrary and can be interpreted in a wide variety of ways, while others suggest that symbols have inherent meaning and can be deciphered through careful analysis of the text. Regardless of one's stance on the issue, it is clear that the use of symbols can greatly enhance the meaning and impact of a literary work.

Writers use language and symbolism in literature to create an atmosphere that enhances the reader's experience of the story. The use of descriptive language and figurative language can evoke emotions and create sensory experiences, making the story more vivid and memorable. In *Lord of the Flies*, William Golding uses vivid and detailed descriptions of the island and its surroundings to create a sense of isolation and danger. The use of symbolism can also help to develop characters and advance the plot by conveying deeper meanings and themes. In the novel, the conch shell is a symbol of civilization and order, representing the boys' desire for structure and rules. The use of this symbol in the story helps to develop the characters and their motivations and also advances the plot by showing the conflict between the desire for order and the pull towards chaos and savagery. Similarly, the use of the "beast" as a symbol of fear and primal instinct helps to convey the novel's themes of the inherent darkness in human nature and

the struggle between civilization and savagery. Overall, the use of language and symbolism in literature is a powerful tool for writers to create a rich and meaningful experience for the reader.

Symbols are often deeply embedded within a text, and their significance can be difficult to fully understand without a thorough understanding of the context in which they are used. For example, the use of a rose as a symbol in a novel may hold a different meaning depending on whether it is presented in the context of a romantic gesture or as part of a funeral wreath. The same symbol can also hold different meanings in different cultural or historical contexts (Elbom).

The interpretation of symbols also requires an understanding of the broader themes and motifs of a text. The use of a particular symbol may be linked to a recurring theme, and its meaning may be enhanced by its repetition throughout the text. A good example to understand the point can be seen in the use of fire as a symbol in *Lord of the Flies*. It is linked to the theme of destruction and the loss of civilization, as it represents the destructive forces of human nature that threaten to overcome the boys' attempts to maintain order and civility.

In order to fully understand the significance of symbols in literature, it is necessary to consider the larger context of the work, including its historical, cultural, and literary influences. This can involve analyzing the author's biography, examining the literary traditions to which the text belongs, and understanding the social and political context in which it was written. Through this process, readers can gain a deeper appreciation of the symbols used in a work, and how they contribute to the overall meaning and significance of the text.

One aspect of language and literary interpretation that should be taken into consideration while dealing with symbols is the potential for ambiguity in language and symbolism. Words and

symbols can have multiple meanings and interpretations depending on the context in which they are used. As such, authors can intentionally use ambiguous language and symbolism to open up multiple interpretations of their texts. This can lead to a richer and more complex reading experience for the audience, as they are encouraged to actively engage with the text and form their own interpretations (Derrida 104).

In the novel "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, the green light is a well-known instance of ambiguity in symbolism. The green light can stand in for a variety of things, such as Gatsby's yearning for his ex-lover, his ambition for fame and fortune, or even the American Dream itself (Heseltine 134). Fitzgerald portrays Gatsby's character and the issues of the book in a deep and nuanced way by employing this symbol in an ambiguous way.

However, the potential for ambiguity can also lead to confusion and misinterpretation. Without a clear understanding of the context and intent of the author, readers may form incorrect or incomplete interpretations of the text. Therefore, it is important to approach literature with a critical eye and consider multiple possible interpretations before settling on a single reading. Additionally, it is important for authors to be aware of the potential for misinterpretation and to use language and symbolism in a deliberate and careful manner.

1.4 Summary of the Plot and Context

Lord of the Flies, the first novel of William Golding, describes that a group of children, trapped on a desert island, have gradually divided into two parties. The one represents civilization, reason and salvation, The other represents primitivity and wilderness (Xu and Zou 32).

1.4.1 Summary and Setting

One of William Golding's works, *Lord of the Flies*, features a group of schoolboys who are stranded on a desert island and have progressively split into two parties. The one symbolizes progress, reason, and salvation, while the other stands for primitiveness and the wilderness. As a result, the latter side triumphs over the former, and the island's civilization is destroyed (Shah and Abahussain 182). In his masterpiece, Golding deftly leads his readers into this shallow pit of comprehension through the exploits of a group of boys who find themselves shipwrecked after an accident the specifics of which are withheld from the reader. Only children make it out of this accident, and when they do, they discover a world without rules, regulations, or social conventions on an island without adults. But it won't be long before they start making their own rules to govern their brand-new civilization. As social beings and members of communities with rules and regulations, they swiftly adapted the structure of the adult world to construct their own environment of the boy's world (XU and ZOU 32).

However, the initial flurry of organization fades quickly. Without grownups, the majority of the boys prefer to play and sleep instead of doing their tasks and helping to establish the desired civilization. Rumors of a terrifying monster lurking in the trees cause dread at night. Jack disputes Ralph's claim that monsters don't exist. His popularity grows as a result of his assurances that his hunters will identify and eliminate the monster (Somers).

The rescue of the boys occurs ironically because of a fire that was not set on the intention of being rescued and taken back to civilization, but aiming to get rid of the last remains of it. Jack orders his hunter to bring him Ralph to kill him. But Ralph finds out through SamnEric and flees to the woods. Jack uses the weapon that was early in the novel used for maintaining hope

and to get rescued. Ralph keeps running for his life until he falls before a naval officer who eventually rescues the children.

1.4.2 Characters:

The characters of the novel are of a major significance for the process of deconstruction, for their role in assigning meaning to different elements of the novel and creating the conflicting themes. Each major element in the novel is represented and supported by a character or a group of character. In the midst of all the characters of the novel, there are three main ones that are stand out in all events; Ralph, Piggy, and Jack.

1.4.2.1 Ralph:

The protagonist of the story is Ralph, who is certain, composed, and physically fit. Both the beginning and the end of *Lord of the Flies* focus on the character of Ralph. Throughout the story, the reader follows the journey of Ralph. He has fair hair, is described as “attractive” and has a degree of natural charisma (“Ralph in *Lord of the Flies*”). He can blow the conch at will and moves around the island with ease. He naturally takes charge of the group because of his appealing appearance and athletic prowess, and he does it without hesitation. Ralph is a sensible character. As soon as the boys arrive on the island, he takes off his school uniform, recognizing that it is unsuitable for the hot, tropical weather. He is also pragmatic, showing no hesitation over this symbolic loss of their former lifestyle. In this way, he differs greatly from some of the other boys, who cling to scraps of their former lives (Somers).

1.4.2.2 Piggy:

The second character the reader encounters in the book is Piggy, an overweight, awkward boy who has experienced bullying in the past. Although Piggy lacks much physical strength, he is clever and well-read. He is the embodiment of intelligence and intellect. Piggy was the one to suggest the use of the conch and he was the one who suggested that Ralph should gather the scattered potential survivors of the plane crash (Li and Wu 120).

Piggy joins Ralph's team right away and sticks by him during the entire tough journey. But rather than coming from genuine friendship, Piggy's allegiance is more a result of his realization that he is helpless on his own. Piggy only has any power or agency through Ralph, and when Ralph's influence over the other guys weakens, so does Piggy's (Somers).

Piggy's value resides in his glasses, the significance of those glasses is represented when the boys used them to start the fire. Also, it is noticeable when the Jack's hunters steal them leaving piggy physically less capable and compromising his intellect. The death of Piggy along with his glasses being shattered by the boulder, also gives an idea about how complementary were Piggy and his glasses to each other (Somers).

1.4.2.3 Jack:

Jack is the antagonist of the novel. He is Ralph's rival for authority on the island. Jack, who is described as being belligerent and unpleasant, feels that he should be the Chief and resents Ralph's easy access to power and popularity. He is swiftly established as Ralph and Piggy's adversary, and as soon as they gain power, he starts to undermine it (Somers). Jack's appearance is always connected with darkness and shadows, and his irate, furious eyes show

what's going through his thoughts. He states that he hunts for meat right at the beginning of the story (Li and Wu).

Jack finally starts his own breakaway gang and quickly rises to the position of a brutal tyrant. By the book's conclusion, he is ordering the torturing of other boys and even attempting to plan Ralph's murder. While trying to murder Ralph, he set the woods on fire jeopardizing the whole island. Being driven by wickedness, Jack is a despicable guy whose negative traits progressively worsen as the plot develops (“Jack in *Lord of the Flies*”).

1.5 Conclusion:

Regardless to how much the meaning is clear and how straight forward the language of a literary work is, the possibility of several interpretations is always present. The static fixed understanding of language and literary works is the result of the social construction of language. The theory of deconstruction came to challenge the presumptions on language and open the door for other potential meanings of works. Among the traditionally constructed elements that result in single understanding of some works are symbols. Societal norms and standards made it a requirement for the reader to have knowledge on symbols or else he will not get the right meaning. When the reader understands the work differently than the assigned one, it would be called misinterpretation.

**Chapter Two: Différance and
The Prominent Symbols in the
Novel**

2.1 Introduction:

In William Golding's seminal novel, *Lord of the Flies*, symbols hold a profound significance, reflecting the complexities of human nature, the fragility of societal structures, and the struggle between order and chaos. These symbols are not fixed in their meaning but undergo dynamic transformations, influenced by the perspectives and experiences of different characters as the narrative unfolds. This chapter examines the interplay of symbols—fire, conch, Beast, and Piggy's Glasses—and their multifaceted interpretations through the lens of *différance*, as proposed by philosopher Jacques Derrida.

This chapter examines the shifting interpretations and symbolic meanings of fire, conch, Beast, and children's laughter in *Lord of the Flies* through the lens of *différance*. By analyzing the divergent perspectives held by different characters and the evolving significance assigned to each symbol. The aim of the chapter is to illuminate the profound implications embedded within the narrative. Through this exploration, we deepen our understanding of the intricate symbolism in *Lord of the Flies* and its capacity to reflect the complexities of human nature, power dynamics, and the delicate balance between order and chaos. In addition, it targets to destabilize the structure of the prominent oppositions in the novel and pave the way to the deconstruction of those oppositions.

2.2 Différance :

Différance, a Derridean concept, is a play on the words "difference" and "deferment," and it refers to the property of language by which meaning is generated because a word differs from other words in a signifying system, while at the same time meaning is inevitably and infinitely

deferred or postponed, is constantly under erasure, and can only be glimpsed through "aporias" or deadlocks in understanding. (Mambrol)

When a deconstructive reading is performed, *différance* compromises a text's cohesion and unity. As a result, meaning is scattered throughout the text and is only discernible in traces, in the never-ending web of connotation. One signifier leads to a signified, which in turn becomes a signifier for another signified, and so forth in the free play of meanings (Mansfield 32).

The idea that meaning is not immediately accessible or apparent in any particular sign or word is at the core of the theory of *différance*. Instead, a set of signs' distinctions and relationships are used to create meaning. Words acquire meaning by distinguishing themselves from other words in the language. For instance, "light" has meaning because it differs from "dark," and "good" has meaning because it is opposed to "bad." As a result, meaning develops through the interaction and comparison of many signifiers (Raj 22).

Moreover, *différance* challenges the concept of presence, which assumes that meaning can be directly present and fully graspable. Derrida argues that the very idea of presence is dependent on the play of difference. When we encounter a sign, we are always aware of its difference from other signs, its absence or lack, and the possibility of alternative meanings (Raj 23). The presence of a sign is therefore constituted by the absence and difference of other signs, making presence a constantly shifting and unstable phenomenon.

In other words, when applying *différance*, the researcher sees the novel as a puzzle, each symbol is a puzzle piece. They have different shapes and meanings, normally, each piece has one place to fit in and they were put together to form the whole picture. But puzzle pieces can be arranged in a different way to form a different meaning of the picture, if the puzzle is an image

of a dog chasing a butterfly, one can rearrange the pieces to look like the dog is running from a butterfly. Just the way the pieces can change the meaning of the picture when rearranged, their meaning can be shifted when put in another place or seen from a different angle. The same way with the symbols; their meaning can shift when seen from a different perspective or put in different circumstances, thus creating the significance of the theory of différance hence the process of deconstructing the work

2.3 Différance and The Symbolic Meaning of The Fire:

The signal fire in its context in the novel is a tool that is used for one purpose; alerting the passing ships that there are people on the island that need to be rescued. "There's another thing. We can help them to find us. If a ship comes near the island they may not notice us. So we must make smoke on top of the mountain. We must make a fire" (Golding 46). The boys assigned the fire its primary task; which is to make the ships notice them. The fire was given much significance since it was the schoolboys' tool to be rescued ("*Lord of the Flies* Symbolism."). Also, the fire was the thing that united the schoolboys and made them work together to build it. The building of the fire was a chance for the little schoolboys to have fun while working hard as they were gathering wood and taking it to the top of the mountain.

The boys first saw the fire as a survival mechanism in the beginning of the book, and Ralph insists that they put their responsibilities for maintaining the fire ahead of hunting or other activities (White). The fire, however, assumes a variety of metaphorical meanings and interpretations as the book goes on. The fire is a metaphor for reason and civilization for certain characters, like Piggy, while it serves as a weapon for power and control for others, like Jack, over the other boys.

The sign of the fire is never static or fixed through the lens of différance; rather, it is continuously changing and developing as the story goes on. It can be interpreted and reinterpreted, and it takes on the characteristics of the context and circumstances in which it is used. For instance, the fire takes on a new significance as a symbol of wasted opportunity and dashed hope when it is left to die out and a passing ship fails to see the boys. The fire also has a new significance as a symbol of destruction and violence when it is later utilized as a weapon by Jack and his supporters.

Additionally, it is possible to interpret the fire's emblem as representing the conflicts and tensions that exist amongst the characters as they try to survive on the island. It symbolizes their desire for rescue as well as their concern over remaining stranded on the island forever. The fire serves as a source of inspiration and a way for some characters, like Ralph, to stay connected to society. While others, like Jack, saw the fire as a method to exert dominance and control over the other schoolboys, as well as a way to rebel against civilization and give in to their instinctual urges.

Among the main characters' view of the fire, one can notice how Ralph perceives it. The boys' hope for rescue is symbolized by the fire, which Ralph views as an essential instrument for their survival. Ralph shows his dedication to keeping the fire going and uses it to draw passing ships and planes throughout the entire book (Li and Wu 119). The importance of the fire is recognized by Ralph as long as he got elected as a leader. He thinks that if they can keep the fire going, the smoke from the fire will draw passing ships and planes, and they will be saved. Ralph is also aware of the psychological significance of the fire for the boys, which symbolizes their desire to return to society and their family. As he states at his first gathering with the boys, "We've

got to have special people for looking after the fire. Any day there may be a ship out there" (Golding 51).

Furthermore, différence can be noticed in Ralph's own view of the fire. The events of the story test Ralph's understanding of the symbol as well, as the children's actions become more aggressive and destructive. The boys' dedication to keeping the fire burning becomes less and less significant to them as they slide into savagery, and their hope for rescue decreases. As he realizes that the other schoolboys' prospects of being saved are decreasing with each passing day, Ralph grows more and more frustrated with their actions. And start getting the symbol of the fire as nothing more than a fire on the mountain with its potential to burn everything into ashes.

Other characters on the other hand, such as Jack, have a different perception of the signal fire. For Jack, the fire takes on a different meaning than for other characters, and its significance shifts over time. Initially, Jack sees the fire as a tool for practicality and survival, much like Ralph and the other boys. However, as the novel progresses, Jack's view of the fire becomes more complicated. He begins to see it as a symbol of power and control, and as a means of exerting his authority over the other boys. As he becomes increasingly focused on hunting and the thrill of the hunt, his view of the fire shifts from its practical function as a signal for rescue to a tool for asserting his dominance. When taken from the lens of différence, throughout the course of the book, Jack's view of the fire never remains consistent or static but rather changes and develops. The fire, which stands for his capacity to exert control over the schoolboys and their behavior, he sees as a way to demonstrate his leadership. And when the fire dies out because of his own negligence, the fire started to mean to him an embarrassment and a humiliation.

Later on, as the story progresses and the character of Jack develops and he gets more focused on hunting and killing, and as he was devoting his existence on the island, Jack starts enjoying his life on the island more and his desire of being rescued starts fading. The breaking from the constraints made by Ralph and the boys to control their existence made him prefer to stay on the island and continue to follow his wild impulses and reject any action to get rescued. Hence, the fire by the late chapters of the novel, loses its meaning entirely in Jack's view (Sarkar).

Piggy and Simon being the characters that are the wisest characters in the novel, to them, the fire has a different meaning (Li and Wu 120). The significance to them is more than just it being the source of hope as Ralph and other boys see, or a sign and a tool for asserting dominance like Jack sees. The meaning of the fire linked to Piggy and Simon can be perceived as a source of life. The warmth and the light of the fire meant a new civilization being built. When the boys used Piggy's glasses to lit the fire for the first time, it took the meaning that the schoolboys have the ability of taming nature, and the ability to adapt and manage their own way to live even if they do not get rescued. The fire was as significant as water, used in every aspect of the boys' existence on the island. However soon enough, the image of the fire started getting blurred and its meaning shifting in Piggy and Simon's perspective as it became a hazard and the schoolboys started using it as a weapon to fight each other and cause destruction around the island until Simon died during a ritual where the boys engage in a savage dance around the fire.

2.4 Différance and The Symbolic Meaning of The Conch:

The conch in *Lord of the Flies* has an overall role that can be perceived as an agent of civilization. It was used to manage the schoolboys' meetings. The significance of the conch

appeared in the first time. The existence of the conch meant that the boys' meetings are well organized and not a chaos where everyone is talking and no one is listening (Sarkar). This appears in the boys' first meeting where the ground rules were set:

"And another thing. We can't have everybody talking at once.

We'll have to have 'Hands up' like at school."

He held the conch before his face and glanced round the mouth.

"Then I'll give him the conch."

"Conch?"

"That's what this shell's called. I'll give the conch to the next person to speak. He can hold it when he's speaking" (Golding 39)

This overall role and meaning of the conch, derives through characters and through events; which makes the reader get different ideas of it throughout the novel.

From Ralph's eyes, the conch derives in meaning each time. When he first saw it, he did not know what was it. When Piggy told him what was it and what can it do, he got excited and he understood that it "was interesting and pretty and a worthy plaything" (Golding 17). The conch to Ralph was a toy that he can blow in and it would produce a sound. The conch's meaning started getting into Ralph's mind after Piggy suggested that it can be used to call the other boys. In spite of its significance residing in its ability to produce sounds, the conch to Ralph gained another meaning and function. The schoolboys cannot speak unless they are

holding the conch, and it gives them immunity from being interrupted; except by Ralph himself. This idea of requiring the boy to hold the conch in order to speak, and the immunity of interruption to anyone holding it, implies that the conch means civilization and order. However, the exclusive ability of Ralph to interrupt the boy speaking even while holding the conch means that Ralph sees it as a sign of authority.

As his understanding of their situation evolves and the vision get clearer, Ralph's perception of the conch starts shifting. Ralph understands that although the conch is a potent symbol, it has its limitations and cannot ensure their safety or survival. Ralph continues to cling to the conch despite his growing dissatisfaction with it because he sees it as a representation of his power and leadership and because it is one of the few things that still link them to their civilized past (Sarkar).

Jack on the other hand, has a different view of the conch. As he was first introduced in the novel and when he heard it first, he misrecognized it, "Where's the man with the trumpet?". The being itself is misidentified; Jack relied on the sound produced by the conch. The index that serves as a signifier is overlapped in meaning with other signified, the sound produced served as a signifier; which is evidence of what's being represented. Jack's view of the conch from that point is opposite to the one of Ralph although they seem alike.

While both Ralph and Jack see it as a mean to establish order on the island, Jack's meaning of order through the conch is control. And as the novel progresses, Jack starts to understand that the conch is a threat to his rule. He recognizes the conch as his enemy and that constrains his freedom and power. The reflection of the conch from Jack's view, is his desire to escape from the civilized world he used to live in (Al-Saidi).

The symbol of the conch to Piggy was seen from the wisdom rationality glasses, his wisdom in perceiving the conch was even before they fell in the island, "A conch he called it. He used to blow it and then his mum would come" (Golding 17). Piggy recognized the practical function of the conch even while he was not in a life-or-death situation, it was when he was in his hometown. So, when Ralph found it, Piggy tried to give implement the idea that it is used to call people in Ralph's mind; which he managed to do successfully, and Ralph admitted it when he told Piggy: "That was what you meant, didn't you? That's why you got the conch out of the water?" (Golding 18)

The conch to Piggy is a shell that lost its main function. Originally a shell is a defensive instrument that is existing to save the sea slugs and other sea creatures. Piggy suggested to use it to call other schoolboys. Hence, the meaning of the shell as a defensive instrument is no longer dominant because new differences and distinctions are being made in its usage. Additionally, the island does not have only one shell that Ralph found (Xu and Zou 33). There are more shells and probably Ralph saw more even when he found "The Conch". But the difference between the other shells and the conch is –in addition to how attractive and unusual it looks– that it can be used to produce a sound to attract attention. The difference between the same objects made the point of the symbol of the conch and also changed its name. The conch was given its name by Piggy because it is different than other shells.

2.5 Différance and The Symbolic Meaning of The Beast:

The mythical creature that terrorizes all the boys stands in for the innate savagery that all people possess. The boys are afraid of the beast, as the boys grow more savage, their belief in the beast grows stronger. By the end of the novel, the boys are leaving it sacrifices and treating it as

a god. The reader can note that the boys' activity is what pulls the beast into being, therefore the more brutally the boys' actions, the more real the beast seems to become. When the boys kill Simon, the beast's meaning changes from being just a fictional creature they created to being the boys themselves (White). The savages who killed Simon were in animal-like state when they were committing their malicious crime; the savages dropped their spears and "leapt on to the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore. There were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws" (Golding 187) This description shows how the boys got rid of the tools used by humans such as spears, and attacked the "beast" unarmed; only with their teeth and claws. This description made the beast shift from a being that existed on the island, to a group of the boys.

Additionally, in spite of him being the rational character and being the one who discovered the truth about the beast, Simon did believe in the existence of the beast and went with the boys on the mission of finding it. Thus, the being of the beast was real in Simon's view. However, the lack of evidence and the absence of a concrete material to define the signifier of the "beast", made Simon question the whole idea (Li and Wu 121). Later on, as he was searching, he got too thirsty and exhausted, he started hallucinating that the pig's head is talking to him. The hallucination was more of a truth being uncovered to Simon by his own clear mind than just a view made by his own imagination. The pig told Simon that he is the beast and he is not something they can kill or hunt, but it lives in their hearts.

Simon's interaction with the pig made him realize that they were seeking something that does not exist in real life, but lives within them. Then he climbed the mountain and found the dead parachutist up on the mountain and realized that the dead body was mistaken as the beast the whole time. Simons decides to go and the other schoolboys about the truth he uncovered. As he goes to them during their feast, the boys see him and mistaken him for the beast and kill him

with their bare hands and their teeth. The existence of the beast was undermined and proven to be wrong by Simon. However, the beast itself as a symbol shifted from the mysterious creature to the boys themselves. Simon killed the idea of the beast but the death of the beast occurred for a short time then got reincarnated and took its final form as the darkness in the schoolboys' hearts.

The beast within Ralph and other boys of his followers, did not appear as fast as the other savages' beast. Ralph throughout the story was maintaining and taking control over his inner conflict between good and evil. The beast feeds on the evil within the boys; the eviler the boy is, the easier for the beast in him to emerge. Thus, Ralph influenced his follower who were getting less throughout the novel to maintain the good and civilized behaviors in order to survive on the island and to stay stronger in the face of any danger lurking in the shadows.

Contrarily, Jack convinced the boys that if they wanted to survive against the beast, they should be merciless and killers that never miss. The evil within Jack and his followers was embraced because Jack convinced them with fear that the beast is a creature which is capable to kill them all if they stay weak and obey the restraints of civilization. To Jack, only by breaking away from civilization the boys would kill the beast. But it shows later that it was the way to make it stronger and stronger. The full form of the beast was achieved by killing Simon which they thought was actually the beast (Al-Saidi 131).

Ultimately, the beast was growing throughout the novel. It was more than just a creature that lurked around the island, nor a dead parachutist on the mountain, nor a head of a pig. The beast existed within every one of the boys and existed throughout the novel. But the other images in which the beast was described; were a part of the beast. The darkness that resides within the boys, was being reflected around the island and growing gradually.

2.6 Différance and The Symbolic Meaning of Piggy's Glasses:

Whether in literature or in daily life, the sight of someone with spectacles would give the first impression of intellectuality and wisdom. This image is rooted deeply in history, where glasses were mostly for those who pursue knowledge and investigate for the satisfaction of the human inquiry. The glasses when they are being presented as a crucial element in literature. Mostly they symbolize that the character is well knowledgeable and intelligent (Amoako). However, in the case of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy's glasses meant not only the wisdom and rationality of the character, but also symbolized other elements and portrayed a development in other characters ("Piggy's Glasses").

Piggy as he was first introduced early in the novel, the glasses took a significant share of the description. The importance was given to the spectacles in describing Piggy implies the role they would play in the progress of the novel. Unlike the usual focus on the traditional meaning of the symbol, the spectacles when approached from the angle of deconstruction and through the lens of différance, can give the reader deeper and different meanings at once. From a practical viewpoint, Piggy's glasses allow him to rectify his vision. They aid in the stranded boys' survival efforts and allow him to see properly and navigate the island. The boys' propensity for spontaneous and instinctive conduct is contrasted with Piggy's intelligence, reason, and logical thinking, which are highlighted by his dependence on his glasses. Nevertheless, that meaning is not stable, it is constantly shifting and at some points it gets a meaning that contradicts with previous ones.

First, Piggy is considered as the voice of reason and wisdom. Throughout his existence on the island, Piggy is always clinging to his spectacles; which implies the symbolic meaning of the

glasses as the stream of wisdom and intellectuality (Li and Wu 120). Later on, when the fire was being built, the boys could not light the fire through the primal way of friction. Thus, Jack “snatched the glasses off his face” (Golding 49). The use of the glasses to light the fire grants the symbol of the glasses the meaning of hope of being rescued. Moreover, despite being the wise character, and the glasses being the symbol of reason, Piggy’s reaction when Jack snatched his glasses, emphasizes the meaning of Piggy’s specs. “Mind out! Give 'em back! I can hardly see!” (Golding 49). Piggy for once when his glasses were detached from him, he lost all reason and logic and prioritized his eyes over the opportunity of being rescued.

Additionally, the meaning of the glasses in their practical simple meaning as a vision correction device did not stand still in the novel. The specs were Piggy’s eyes to see the world, but as they were used to light the fire; that is used to notify the world that there are people to be rescued on the island, the glasses became the world’s eyes to see Piggy and the other boys. The two meanings go in parallel with each other, Piggy needs the glasses to see the world, but it is not impossible to see without them, same for the world, it needed the glasses but it was not impossible to find them without the specs.

Piggy’s specs have a different meaning from Jack’s perception. As his evil self urges him to seek control over the boys, he sees Piggy as an obstacle in that path. The plan Jack took to steal the leadership from Ralph is through fear and the schoolboys’ emotions. But Piggy’s wisdom and rationality stands in his way. Hence, Jack starts to see them as a weapon that can be used against Piggy to pursue his destructive desire. Later when Jack took SamnEric hunting with him and let the fire die causing for a ship passing to not notice them, Ralph and Jack got into an argument and Piggy intervened so Jack seized the opportunity and “smacked Piggy's head. Piggy's glasses flew off and tinkled on the rocks” (Golding 85). This action by Jack caused one

side of the glasses to break. During the fight Jack could have hit Ralph and compromise his leadership by insulting him and make the schoolboys believe he is not strong enough to be their leader. But he did not choose to do that, he chose to hit Piggy instead, indicating that the fight with power is not as complicated as the fight with intellectuality. So, Jack broke one side of the glasses, by doing that, Jack was not targeting to strike piggy's sight, he was aiming at his insight.

The glasses turned into a weapon against the traditional civilization after it was the window to peak at it. Jack realized that while the conch is a symbol of power, the true power lies in Piggy's glasses—the group's only means of starting a fire. Jack has the support of most of the boys, so he conducts a raid on Ralph and his remaining allies in order to steal Piggy's glasses. Ralph stands up for piggy and goes to retrieve the conch and piggy's glasses. A fight erupts between Jack and Ralph. The conflict got intense and the boys were fighting each other, then Roger; one of Jack's followers intentionally pushed a boulder and it rolled down and hit piggy who was holding the conch. the boulder killed Piggy and smashed the conch and his spectacles (Somers). This event was the coup de grace that ended the existence of civilization, intellectuality or reason. The glasses that were seen as the savior of the schoolboys turned into the destroyer of the last glimmer of hope.

The static and stereotypical meaning of the glasses was compromised in the novel to the point that the symbol can contradict itself in the matter of meaning. The shifting in the meaning of the spectacles plays a crucial role in manipulating the meaning of the novel and creates a several possible interpretations of the work.

2.7 Conclusion:

Ultimately, through the lens of *différance*; the theory developed by Derrida, the meaning of symbols is not created along with it, but given to it by the context and through some circumstances that define its meaning. There is no stable meaning that a reader can have about a symbol as a background before paying close attention to the events and setting in which the symbol is used. Thus, the meaning is never stable or static, each reader can have his own understanding. In the cases talked about above, the meaning of each symbol differs from the perspective of different characters and some symbols' meaning shifts in itself without relying to how a particular character view it. Such idea contributes in breaking the traditional structure of a work and revives it by making it capable to get built upon a new interpretation. New insights can be taken and new experiences can float to the surface through it.

This chapter, dealt with the symbols from the lens of *différance* to shake the structure of the language and make the symbols that created the novel in its sense less important. The symbols that created some walls that should be neither climbed nor broken, were wrecked by *différance* which set the stage for the deconstruction of the binary oppositions that were created by the meaning the reader had as a background and which are created by humans.

Chapter Three: Binary Oppositions in

Lord of the Flies

Introduction

The theme of binary oppositions is a central element in William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*, and it pervades the entire narrative. This chapter will focus on some of the main binary oppositions in *Lord of the Flies*: civilization versus savagery, good versus evil, nature versus nurture, and reason versus passion. We will explore how Golding constructs these oppositions and how they interact with each other in the novel. We will examine the ways in which the characters, symbols, and themes embody these dichotomies, and we will discuss the broader implications of these oppositions for the human condition. By analyzing the binary oppositions in *Lord of the Flies*, we can gain a deeper understanding of the novel's message and themes. We will see how Golding uses these oppositions to explore the limitations of human nature, the fragility of social structures, and the complexities of morality. We will also examine how these oppositions challenge our assumptions about the world and ourselves and how they invite us to question our own values and beliefs. Ultimately, this chapter will demonstrate how the binary oppositions in *Lord of the Flies* contribute to the novel's enduring relevance and significance.

3.1 Civilization vs. Savagery

“Order and Chaos” is a conflict that exists in humans and is a feature of the human nature. This clash is addressed in William Golding’s novel *Lord of the Flies* in the schoolboys’ struggle between maintaining order and enjoying themselves and live in a fun chaos. The indicators used to deal with the opposition and the way they are manipulated in order to make the two opposites overlap, emphasize the idea that meaning is not final and it is constantly changing according to the context and the events in which it exists. *Lord of the Flies* confronts and

challenges our presumptions about the meaning of both civilization and savagery (Xu and Zou 34).

With the introduction of the two major characters, Ralph and Jack, the dichotomy between civilization and savagery is established early on in the book. Jack portrays the more primitive and barbaric instincts that are present in human nature, whereas Ralph represents the powers of civilization, order, and reason. It is immediately apparent that these two diametrically opposed forces will clash as they compete for control over the other schoolboys on the island.

Golding uses a range of indicators to construct the opposing forces of civilization and savagery. The indicators of civilization are associated with order, structure, and control. These include the rules and regulations that Ralph establishes, such as the need for a signal fire and a system of rotating watches to ensure the safety of the group. The boys' hygiene and cleanliness also become a sign of their desire to maintain a civilized society, with Ralph's insistence on maintaining basic cleanliness standards and the boys' efforts to create shelters and build infrastructure. To elaborate further, the idea of using the conch to call other children suggested by Piggy, was a gesture towards civilization. Gathering children to plan a lifestyle and a strategy to collectively work to survive in the isolated island in itself indicates the civilized features of Ralph as well as Piggy. Furthermore, after the children played and had fun, they started thinking about a plan to establish order and manage their existence in the island "We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages. We're English, and the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things" (Golding 52). The opposition of Civilization and Savagery starts fading in since this speech by Jack. Jack drew the attention to the information that if the rules are not obeyed and not followed by the boys, they will decline into a savage society.

Additionally, the rule of the conch; that says that in order to speak, the boy should have the conch (Al-Saidi 129). "That's what this shell's called. I'll give the conch to the next person to speak. He can hold it when he's speaking... and he won't be interrupted, except by me"(Golding 39). By this rule Ralph established an institution that is like a parliament; which in the modern world is an image of highest levels of civilization. Also, the cooperation of every one of the boys to build and do their work indicates how civilized they are and how.

Moreover, among the main indicator of the theme of civilization is the character of Ralph, He was a navy officer's son. Additionally, he was well-educated and competent enough to lead. He used a conch, a sign of authority, to call other schoolboys together during his time living on the island. He arranged for Jack to take some schoolboys on a hunting trip to solve the food problem, and he led other schoolboys in the construction of many shelters out of tree trunks and grasses to solve the habitation issue. He always made an attempt to create rules that would keep their life on the desert island in order. He was in charge of setting up and upholding the civilized standards on the island, and every one of his actions was a shadow of the laws and customs of civilized society. Additionally, he argued that the fire should be kept to solicit assistance from the outside world, demonstrating his fervent desire to return to the civilized world (XU and ZOU 33-34).

In contrast, the indicators of savagery are associated with the loss of control, the breakdown of social structures, and the return to a more primal, instinctual state. It starts appearing when the hunters led by Jack start painting their faces. After they fail to catch a pig, they start thinking what had gone wrong in the process and they decide that they need to cover their faces to hide their identity and blend in with their surroundings. Golding describes it in chapter 4 when Jack saw the reflection of his painted face and his disguised identity:

He knelt, holding the shell of water. A rounded patch of sunlight fell on his face and a brightness appeared in the depths of the water. He looked in astonishment, no longer at himself but at an awesome stranger. He spilt the water and leapt to his feet, laughing excitedly. Beside the pool his sinewy body held up a mask that drew their eyes and appalled them. He began to dance and his laughter became a bloodthirsty snarling. He capered toward Bill, and the mask was a thing on its own, behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness (Golding 75).

This passage shows that the painted faces were to the boys a mask that not only hid them from the preys but also from their own conscience. Marking the beginning of the boys' violent and bloodthirsty phase (Southern).

Another major indicator of savagery in the novel is the hunters' ritual and violent slaughter of a sow and decapitating and placing its head on a sharpened stake in the jungle as an offering to the beast:

Jack held up the head and jammed the soft throat down on the pointed end of the stick which pierced through into the mouth. He stood back and the head hung there, a little blood dribbling down the stick (Golding 168).

The above quotation describes how the boys did not only kill a pig, but they also put it on a stake. In addition to that savage behavior, the reason behind it tells that the decline was steep. Because the boys put the decapitated head on a stake as an offering to “the beast” (Al-Saidi 131).

Overall, the binary opposition of civilization versus savagery is a crucial element of the novel, highlighting the struggle between order and chaos that exists within human nature. Golding's use of indicators to construct these opposing forces serves to highlight the fragility of social structures and the ease with which they can be dismantled when human beings are stripped of their cultural and social identity. Through this opposition, the novel challenges our assumptions about the nature of humanity and questions the viability of civilization in the face of extreme circumstances.

A crucial aspect of *Lord of the Flies'* structure is the way the binary oppositions are addressed, and how the opposites overlap. While the indicators of savagery are designed to represent chaos, violence, and irrationality, the indicators of civilization are constructed to represent order, structure, and rationality. But as the story goes on, it becomes more noticeable that these signs are not as distinct as they first seem.

One of the main ways in which the indicators of civilization and savagery interact with each other is through the characters themselves. The boys on the island are not purely civilized or savage, but rather a complex mix of both. For example, Ralph represents the forces of civilization, but he is also capable of violence and savagery, as shown in his participation in the killing of Simon. Conversely, Jack represents the forces of savagery, but he also has moments of rationality and order, such as his organization of the hunting party.

Among the main cases where the indicators of civilization and barbarism overlap and take one another's features is in clothing. The boys' intent to wear clothes and maintain their civilized characteristics as civilized British schoolboys, keeps standing throughout the story, however, the way they keep that civilized behavior of covering themselves goes on the wrong direction as their clothes get tattered and dirty. The covering took a wrong turn as the story goes and the boys no longer cover their bodies only but also cover their faces with clay, this act can be considered savage from the first glance; however, the covering is a necessary solution for the hunter to fulfill their mission agreed on at the beginning of the novel.

Moreover, the fire marks a thin line between the two opposites. It was first built in order to keep hope for the children to be rescued. The way every one of the boys contributed in building the fire was an indicator of the boys civilized intent. However, as the story progresses, the fire turns to a mean of destruction and chaos as it kept getting out of control. Eventually, it killed one of the boys "The boy with the birthmark". But the way the boys reacted to that shows early on in the novel that the decline of the boys' morals is inevitable. The way he was just forgotten by everyone alarms the reader of what is coming later on in the novel. In spite of the destruction the fire made, eventually it fulfilled its purpose as a signal fire to alert the passing ships that there are people who need rescue in the island.

Furthermore, the shift of leadership blurs the line between civilization and savagery. At the beginning of the story, Ralph called for a meeting with all the boys in the island and did not call himself a leader by force, he agreed on a boy's suggestion to have a vote. When Jack looked displeased by the result, Ralph made a suggestion:

Ralph looked at him, eager to offer something.

"The choir belongs to you, of course."

"They could be the army—"

"Or hunters—"

"They could be—"

The suffusion drained away from Jack's face. Ralph waved again for silence.

"Jack's in charge of the choir. They can be—what do you want them to be?"

"Hunters" (Golding 26).

Ralph did not try to impose anything on Jack after he became chief; instead, he made a suggestion that Jack also can be a leader of his own group and wanted him to get the task they want. But as the story progresses, Ralph and Jack's characteristics invert. And by the end of the story only just a few littluns are left with Ralph and Jack have all the rest (Al-Saidid 130).

Another way in which the indicators of civilization and savagery interact is through the symbols and objects in the novel. The conch, for example, represents civilization and order, but it is ultimately destroyed by the forces of savagery. The signal fire, which represents the boys' hope of being rescued and returning to civilization, is also repeatedly allowed to go out by the boys, indicating their descent into savagery.

Overall, the construction and interaction of the indicators of civilization and savagery in *Lord of the Flies* is a complex and nuanced exploration of the limitations of binary oppositions.

By blurring the boundaries between these two concepts, the novel challenges readers to reconsider their own assumptions about what it means to be civilized or savage.

3.2 Good vs. Evil

The binary opposition of good versus evil is a central theme in *Lord of the Flies*, as it represents the struggle between order and chaos, and morality and immorality. The novel explores the idea that evil is not just an external force, but rather a fundamental part of human nature that can emerge under certain circumstances. Through the characters of Ralph and Jack, the novel demonstrates how good and evil can coexist within the same person, and how the struggle between them can shape the individual and the group.

Ralph and Jack, respectively, are the two exemplars of good and evil in the novel *Lord of the Flies*. Jack personifies evilness, while Ralph personifies righteousness. They have diverse viewpoints, are completely opposed to one another, and are like opposing poles occupying completely opposite positions. They first get along well and grow to loathe each other as a result of their differences in beliefs and behaviors. The real story begins with the election to choose the leader, and Ralph wins with a majority of the votes. During the voting session, majority of the boys choose Ralph as their chief, thinking he could make a perfect leader and also will plan for their rescue. Hence Jack and on Ralph's suggestion chose that the choir would be the hunters and he would be their leader:

Ralph looked at him, eager to offer something.

"The choir belongs to you, of course."

"They could be the army—"

"Or hunters—"

"They could be—"

The suffusion drained away from Jack's face. Ralph waved again for silence.

"Jack's in charge of the choir. They can be—what do you want them to be?"

"Hunters" (Golding 26).

This dialogue between Ralph and Jack was a piece offering to prevent any clash between the boys on their early days on the island. It demonstrates the good in Ralph and his moral values. Since he had the power to rule over Jack, but he chose to make him a coleader.

Being the embodiment of goodness, Ralph is coerced into taking on the role of a leader. He accepts it, and it quickly becomes clear that Ralph is genuinely concerned about the welfare of everyone he must look after. The fire and his perspective on it are among the most important things that demonstrate how he seeks only the best for everyone and feels responsible for them. Ralph views it as a crucial component of his plan to be the best leader for everyone, and that is clear from this quote, "The fire is the most important thing on the island. How can we ever be rescued except by luck, if we don't keep a fire going? Is a fire too much for us to make?" (Golding 96). The fire was set by him a priority for its significance in the ultimate responsibility Ralph charged himself with; which is the rescue of the schoolboys.

Furthermore, good in the novel is represented in Simon. In his own unique manner, Simon reflects a kind of natural, spiritual human kindness that is as fundamental as Jack's wickedness and firmly rooted in nature. The moment civilization is no longer around to enforce moral behavior upon them, the other boys give it up. They lack morality at birth, but the adult world, with its prospect of penalty for wrongdoing, has trained them to behave decently. As demonstrated when they take part in the hunt-dance, even Ralph and Piggy, who appear to be civilized, are the results of social training (Xu and Zou 34). The way Simon was died represents the way dies is familiar to the reader as it represents the way saints die. Simon went checking and investigating more on the "Air beast", and he managed to get what it was as he found the dead parachutist in the forest on the mountain and as he went down to bring the full truth, he was mistakenly recognized as the beast and got beaten to death by the boys during their hunting ritual.

On the other hand, Jack embodied the evil side in the story. As early as he first was introduced in the novel. The description of him creates an evil aura around him (George and Raju 176). This passage presents the aura created around Jack Merridew:

"Within the diamond haze of the beach something dark was fumbling along...The creature was a party of boys...Their bodies, from throat to ankle, were hidden by black cloaks...The boy who controlled them was dressed in the same way..."

(Golding 21)

The black dresses that he and his followers were wearing exposed the darkness of his heart. The roughness of his behavior as soon as he approached the platform on which Ralph was

standing made it clear that he was haughty and arrogant and that he believed in dominating others.

The evil in Jack appeared often throughout the novel and his evil behavior appears with his eager to display his power with the knife in the least provocation. The use of the knife in every situation was Jack's way to assert dominance through fear. When he could not kill the first pig he tried to hunt when he first went exploring the forest with Ralph and Piggy, he "snatched from behind him a sizable sheath-knife and clouted it into a trunk." (Golding 27). Jack did that to intimidate Ralph and Piggy and to challenge them to oppose to any of his actions.

Roger is the other personification of evil. Through his cruel and sadistic treatment of the other boys on the island, he serves as a symbol of evil. Roger is portrayed as a menacing character from the start of the book, and as the plot develops, he acts with ever-greater brutality (George and Raju). His sense of evilness and love for tormenting others reveals the darkness and the vile side of him, "Roger gathered a handful of stones and began to throw them. Yet there was a space round Henry, perhaps six yards in diameter, into which he dare not throw" (Golding 73). When he throws stones at Henry on the beach and just misses him, he demonstrates that he enjoys the suffering and pain of others. In addition to taking part in Piggy's murder, Roger also shows a complete lack of empathy and a readiness to hurt other people. In a way, Roger represents the unkindness and immoral side of human nature, and his deeds show how terrible unbridled brutality and violence can be.

In spite of the gap between good and evil one can notice at the first glance at the novel, it can be hard for the reader to distinguish what is good and what is evil after a closer reading. The plot of the story is based on schoolboys, and schoolboys are known for their purity and kindness and lack of darkness. However, Golding portrays the innocence of schoolboys in the acts and

behaviors that the reader would consider Evil. In the life of unsupervised children there is no good or evil. Every act has a consequence; be it positive or negative consequence. The that the boys have not crossed in their life lead to different places that without the advice of the adults and the guidelines built by society, the kid would not consider the moral side of it.

Moreover, even the characters that represent evil most in the novel, appear struggling with the clash of the opposing forces inside them. Jack, who is the bloodthirsty character and who loves hunting and killing, early in the story fails to kill a pig that could be the easiest of the targets he hunted throughout the novel. He missed the shot because his innocent soul could not allow him kill the pig and was not ready for the image of blood. On the other hand, Roger; the one who relentlessly pushed a rock large enough that it killed Piggy, and his action was intentional, appeared in the early chapters throwing stones at Henry, however, he was throwing and making sure the stones do not hit him (AL-Saidi 131). “Yet there was a space round Henry, perhaps six yards in diameter, into which he dare not throw” (Golding 73). Trying not to hit Henry with any of the stones expresses the good side of Roger who is an embodiment of evil.

As the novel progresses, the line between good and evil becomes increasingly blurred. Ralph, who initially represents order and morality, begins to succumb to the pressure of the group and becomes more violent and aggressive. Meanwhile, Jack becomes increasingly authoritarian and sadistic, using fear and violence to control the other boys. The struggle between good and evil reaches its climax in the final chapters of the novel, where the boys engage in a brutal battle that results in the deaths of several characters.

Overall, the binary opposition of good versus evil in *Lord of the Flies* is significant as it highlights the inherent duality of human nature and the constant struggle between our rational and irrational impulses. Through the characters of Ralph and Jack, the novel explores the

consequences of giving in to our darker instincts and the importance of maintaining a moral compass in times of crisis.

3.3 Nature vs. Nurture

One of the most important themes of *Lord of the Flies* is the contrast between nature and nurture. The book investigates whether experiences and environment have more of an impact on human behavior than innate biological elements. The story is fundamentally a study of how people react to various circumstances and how much nature and nurture have an impact on how they behave. The battle between Ralph and Jack centers on the nature vs nurture contradiction, which also serves as the book's overarching topic. Also, the novel itself is a field for the clash between the behaviors and principles that the boys have acquired in their civilized homeland, and the primal instincts they were forced to embrace during their adventure on the isolated island.

The schoolboys are thrown into an entirely new environment throughout the novel, free of the customary societal norms and limitations. Their ability to survive in a dangerous and primitive environment will be constantly put to the test. The boys' struggles with their basic instincts and the fresh experiences that mold their conduct are revealed as the narrative goes on. Ralph tries to build a more civilized society based on cooperation and mutual respect, while some, like Jack, give in to their primitive inclinations and embrace violence and barbarism.

The boys' outward appearance and actions also exhibit the nature vs. nurture contradiction. For example, as they stay on the island longer, they lose their clothing and start to seem more primitive. Additionally, they start to act more violently and aggressively, showing that their surroundings are having an impact on their innate tendencies. However, the boys' efforts to

keep some semblance of civilization and order also imply that they are able to rise above their instinctual tendencies and build a more just and equitable society.

The opposition of nature vs. nurture in the novel can be seen as the combination of the two previously discussed oppositions, in addition to other. The decline into savagery represents the boys return to their natural instincts. The boys' behaviors that indicate the uncivilized side, can also indicate the natural instincts of the humans. The painted faces and the odor that comes with it reflect that the civilized way cannot be helpful to the schoolboys to hunt and eat. Instead, they have to blend with nature in order to hide their human civilized selves and be hard to sense by the preys.

Nature in the novel also can be noticed in the schoolboys' fear of the beast. Fear is a fundamental and crucial feature of humans. The absence of adults and the lack of means to protect the boys and maintain their sense of safety made them start imagining things and greater power that is pursuing them to kill them. "He still says he saw the beastie. It came and went away again an' came back and wanted to eat him—" (Golding 43). The beast was first introduced by one of the littluns. The absence of an adult to demolish what the kid had seen made the situation go the wrong way. The beast became like a hysteria and other boys started seeing it too. And it became not only a "snakie" but also a sea beast and air beast. The nature of humans makes them when in tough situations create imaginary threats and believe in them.

On the other hand, nurture in the novel appears in the situation of the boys and the pursue to maintain a civilized society. Ralph's first suggestion to cooperate to create an environment that is suitable for them to stay alive until rescue arrives. The laws and regulations put by Ralph and agreed on by the rest of the boys are among the indicator that present the norms and principles of

society the boys learned in their home. The exposure to such rules made the boys in spite of their age, seek to establish a constitution to rule their existence on the island.

Furthermore, the evil side of the boys, can be seen as a feature acquired from the islands hostile setting, the scarcity of food, and isolation from society. This situation forced the children to show a more violent behaviors towards nature and towards each other. The evil in the boys appears as a consequence of the fragility of the civilization principles known by them. The island makes the schoolboys seek fun more than order. Roger in his hobby of tormenting others, when he was throwing stones at Henry, there was a space around Henry he did not dare to throw, because he was still following the regulations given to him by the society he lived in.

Roger gathered a handful of stones and began to throw them.

Yet there was a space round Henry, perhaps six yards in diameter, into which he dare not throw. Here, invisible yet strong, was the taboo of the old life. Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and the law. Roger's arm was conditioned by a civilization that knew nothing of him and was in ruins (Golding 73-74).

The laws and rules fed to Roger by his society restrained him from throwing the stones near Henry.

The novel presents the nature and nurture opposition and makes it hard for the reader to distinguish between them. The events of the novel mainly provoke the reader to question whether the boys were savage by nature and their society nurtured them to be civilized or they are civilized by nature and the hostile environment of the island turned them into savages. Starting

with the destruction of the society Ralph and the boys attempted to establish, the reader can notice that the schoolboys already had the standards and rules that control any civilized society. However, it does not necessarily mean that the boys are civilized by nature. As some argue that the human behaves according to its surroundings, if he grows in a wild environment, he needs to adapt with it in order for him to manage to live and survive.

Moreover, the chaos to which the story turns to; can be perceived as the outcome that appeared after the schoolboys fully got rid of the civilization they were taught at home, the schoolboys turned back to their nature which is savagery, evil, and chaos. However, the kid's adaption with the island comes from the lessons they got taught by its hard circumstances. The painted faces were a lesson Jack learned after he missed the pig because he was easily noticeable. The schoolboys started getting rid of their human odor and started blending with nature even in the sense of their odor.

Overall, the binary opposition between nature and nurture in *Lord of the Flies* is not a clear-cut dichotomy, but rather a complex interplay of various factors that contribute to the boys' behavior and eventual fate on the island.

3.4 Reason vs. Passion

In *Lord of the Flies*, the binary opposition of reason vs. passion serves to illustrate the struggle between logical reasoning and emotional impulses. Numerous characters in the book represent various facets of this opposition, and their interactions with one another highlight the complexities of reason and passion.

Characters like Ralph, Piggy, and Simon, who stress logical thought and problem-solving, are examples of how reason is embodied. They want to establish a set of laws and a form of government that serves the interests of everyone on the island because they think it is crucial to preserve peace and security there. Particularly Ralph demonstrates a strong dedication to the ideals of democracy, fairness, and justice and makes an effort to persuade the other boys to follow them. He understands the significance of the conch, a representation of civilized order, and utilizes it to call the meetings so that the schoolboys can talk about their issues and come to a consensus. Piggy, who has a plethora of knowledge and intelligence and frequently serves as Ralph's advisor, also plays a significant part in expressing reason. He strives to apply science and reason to the boys' predicament on the island because he believes in their strength.

The use of logic and critical thinking was the first event that occurred in the novel. When Ralph and Piggy found the conch, the impulse to use it as a toy and start playing with it did not dominate the two boys. Instead, Piggy thought of the most useful thing this shell can be put in, he suggested that as it makes a loud sound, the conch can be used to find any other survivors from the plane crash. "We can use this to call the others. Have a meeting. They'll come when they hear us—" (Golding 18). Piggy's neglect of the pleasurable use of the shell and prioritizing using it as a mean to gather all the survivors shows the critical thinking and the use of reason in the novel.

Also, after the schoolboys gathered, the absence of adults could indicate that the place was a perfect field where the schoolboys play and do whatever they want without any ethical consequences and without being punished for doing wrong things. It was like the boys got rid of the restraints put on them by adults—whether it is at home or school— however, the boys did not pay much attention to that. Instead, they knew that the absence of the rules and restraints would

make the situation hard and savage. Hence, they agreed to establish rules and order to manage their existence until rescue comes. The boys prioritized reason over their impulses as schoolboys to play infinitely. Ralph did not get rid of the rules that he experienced back home, “"And another thing. We can't have everybody talking at once. We'll have to have 'Hands up' like at school" (Golding 39). This rule by Ralph indicates that he thought about the “Hands up” rule and knew its significance so he applied it in their situation despite not being in school. Additionally, Ralph’s reasonable thinking is seen in his idea of the signal fire, he knew that the only thing can be noticeable for ships is smoke. If the fire is big enough, the plumes of smoke can be easily noticeable by the passing ships.

In addition, Piggy is the character that represents wisdom and reason, he constantly reminds the others of the grownup world they have left behind because he is full of ideas and opinions. He frequently refers to what his aunt would say or do. Piggy places great trust in the capabilities of science and technology and uses these to explain the situation they are in (“Piggy in *Lord of the Flies* - Characters -”).

"Life," said Piggy expansively, "is scientific, that's what it is.

In a year or two when the war's over they'll be traveling to Mars and back. I know there isn't no beast—not with claws and all that, I mean—but I know there isn't no fear, either." (Golding 100)

Some of the boys think that there is a beast coming after them, but Piggy being the pragmatic person he is, he tries to give rational explanations to the kid’s fear to dismiss it. Simon in addition to Piggy, as the events progress, realizes that the only thing the boys would fear is

each other because of the savage nature they turned to. He eventually understands that the beast is not real in spite of him believing in its existence throughout the novel.

On the other side, characters like Jack, Roger, and the hunters represent passion because they put their immediate needs and instincts before reason. They are drawn to violence, aggression, and dominance and use fighting, hunting, and torture to sate these urges. In particular, Jack has a deep desire for control and power and develops an obsession with hunting and killing pigs. He disobeys Ralph's guidance and founds his own tribe where he can exercise his power and enjoy his violent passion. In a same vein, Roger grows more ruthless and sadistic as he enjoys terrorizing and tormenting the weaker boys. The hunters, in general, are portrayed as being driven by their primal instincts and impulses, and they are depicted as being increasingly savage and bloodthirsty as the novel progresses.

Reason vs passion, is presented throughout the novel as a clash in which the distinction between the two opposites is hard. The indicators of the both opposites repeatedly interwind and take each other's' features. The overlap can be noticed in the schoolboys' contradicting behaviors that sometimes are based on reason and other times based on pure emotions and the schoolboys' impulses. For example, Simon was the one who introduced the name Lord of the Flies, he gave the name to the pig head given as an offering to the beast. Simon started hallucinating that the pig head was talking to him and he believed that the pig spoke to him ("Simon in *Lord of the Flies* - Characters –"). The fear that has taken over Simon made him believe in the spiritual behaviors and embraces them. However, Simon was an embodiment of reason and prioritizing the mind over emotions and passion.

The death of Simon blurred the line between reason and passion more. The action that Simon took to go and investigate the mountain for the Air beast shows the side of reason and the

rational thinking in the novel. After he investigated and found out that the air beast is just a parachutist that fell to his death on the mountain, he went down to the schoolboys to tell them the truth he had uncovered, the boys thought he was the beast so they started beating him until they killed him. This scene draws a clear line between rationality and following emotions. However, the scene further blurred the line rather than drew it. Because the schoolboys took an oath to kill the beast. And since no one was going up the mountain and they knew that the beast was somewhere in the forest up the mountain, the view of Simon coming from where the beast was assumed to be put all the pieces together and the boys assumed it was the beast. So them killing Simon can be considered as a well calculated action. Hence, the murder of Simon was not an act out of fear or emotions, rather a fruitful work that has a flaw that made it look savage and irrational.

Overall, the binary opposition of reason vs passion in *Lord of the Flies* highlights the tension between rational thinking and emotional impulses, and shows how this conflict can lead to violence, chaos, and destruction. The characters' interactions with each other illustrate the complexities of reason and passion, and the blurred boundaries between them.

conclusion

In conclusion, the concept of binary oppositions serves as a powerful tool for analyzing literary works, and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding is a prime example of this. The four binary oppositions of civilization versus savagery, good versus evil, nature versus nurture, and reason versus passion provide a lens through which to explore the novel's central themes and motifs. Through the use of characters, symbols, and events, Golding expertly constructs and

deconstructs these oppositions, challenging readers to reconsider their assumptions about human nature and the society we have created.

The opposition of civilization versus savagery is established early on in the novel and permeates the entire narrative, highlighting the struggle between order and chaos. The opposition of good versus evil is explored through the characters' actions and their internal struggles. The opposition of nature versus nurture is seen in the way the boys adapt to their new environment and in the tension between their innate tendencies and the societal norms they were taught. The opposition of reason versus passion is demonstrated through the characters' decisions and their motivations.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

In his first Novel, William Golding managed to create a social commentary that at its first years managed to portray the horror of the war and the manipulation that leads and comes along with it. The allegorical nature of the novel makes it an ideal object for deconstruction that was developed by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida. The main feature of allegories is to not mean what is written exactly and also to have hidden meanings. However, societies and philosophy take those works and assign them to a single interpretation that the reader should be bound to be limited to that meaning.

The theory of deconstruction came to undermine that rule and to make literary works an open sea of meanings that are not created by the writer nor the critics, but by the reader himself. Therefore, the conducted study of the novel took the task of addressing the structure of meaning that was built upon the rules of symbolism as well as the context in which the novel was written, and deconstructing that literary entity. The dissertation attempted to dive deeper in the novel and focus on clashes that are not only physical and between humans, but also philosophical conflicts such as civilization vs savagery, good vs evil, reason vs passion.

In the process of deconstructing the novel, the current study attempted to address the symbols of the novel through the lens of *différance*. This process takes the puzzle of the story and put it in another manner in which the image has another meaning while keeping the same components of it. By doing so, the binary oppositions that are the core of the novel, get deprived of their static position and the meaning starts getting fluid making the opposites complement each other instead of clash with each other.

The first opposition tackled in this study is the civilization vs savagery opposition. The study addressed the way in which the civilization was a way to hinder the boys' fun. The boys for once finding themselves free from the restrictions the adults put on them was quickly interrupted by the rules that they at first all agreed upon. The savagery that erupted in the story was not a sudden rebellious reaction from some of the boys, it was carefully built by the restrictions that were put upon them by themselves. Thus, savagery was not in a conflict with civilization, but it was the other aglet of the same lace as civilization.

The second opposition is the good vs. evil. The issue surpasses being a matter of themes in literature, it is a long-lasting philosophical matter. The clash seen mainly between Ralph and Jack as it was chaotic and random. Jack was already living his dream as he achieved the evilness he was seeking and he was enjoying it. The issue resides in the reaction of Ralph that was the one trying to fight the wickedness of Jack and the plague that he brought and was spreading to all children. By the end when the naval officer arrived, he could not in any way distinguish which one is the good and which one is the evil. They all looked the same, dirty, savage, and monster like. This emphasizes what Friedrich Nietzsche said about good and evil: "He who fights with monsters should be careful lest he thereby become a monster. And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee" (87). Nietzsche states that trying to fight or stand against an enemy with only consistency and without a plan to manage the fight, would make the person turn into the thing he sought to destroy.

Nature vs. Nurture is among the prominent conflicts in the novel. This dissertation attempted to blur the line between what is innate and what is learned and gained by the schoolboys. This is among the most complicated themes and issues dealt with in the novel. The boys when they gathered and found out that there are no adults, they immediately got rid of their

innate nature as children and started to embrace the features they have been observing in their homeland. However, their seeking survival is among the innate natures in all humans, making the sacrifices no matter how painful it is and no matter how joyful the other path is, is the nature of the human species. In addition, the decline to evil became a question whether the boys returned to their nature which is evil or the boys were nurtured by the environment that made them let their dark side bloom and take over.

The last clash analyzed by the dissertation is the conflict between reason and passion. The characters of the novel are a group of boys that the majority of which are under the age of 8. Their being boys is a logical indicator of the lack of reason and critical thinking. However, the boys show some wise ideas and reasonable plan to manage their existence on the island. The signal fire, the conch, the shelters...etc. are among the wise procedures of the boys. But, within the reasonable plan, resides a flaw that makes it seem wrong when the boys follow their passion and start act like the children they are. The rules established are suppressing the schoolboys' spirit and passion about playing around especially with the absence of the adult rules, it also suppresses their right of fear and hallucination and nightmares. The fire needs someone to keep it so some boys have to stay by the fire all the time. Schoolboys get bored and need to play; which happened in the novel and it can be perceived as wrong when the boys go follow their passion.

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is a novel that has a static meaning assigned to it by the societal norms mainly and also the context it was written in. This study has aimed at deconstructing the structure of the novel. Moreover, it has managed to answer the main questions by investigating the implications and the complications that lie within the novel in the sense of conflicts and perception of different elements and events thereof. Hence, it has opened a vast sea in which every reader can sail and fetch a new meaning from it.

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ملخص

رواية سيد الذباب هي رواية كتبت في سياق يجعل تأويل معانيها محدودا في معانٍ يمكن اعتبارها سطحية وتتجاهل مكونات مهمة للقصة. ما يجعلها كذلك هو حقيقة انها كتبت في فترة ما بعد الحرب العالمية، ومعروف عن الكُتاب في تلك الفترة أن أغلبهم كانوا يكتبون من أجل وصف احوال الحرب والرعب الذي عاشوه في ذلك الوقت. تهدف هذه الأطروحة الى التغلغل اعمق في بنية رواية سيد الذباب من أجل ايجاد ما خفي من المعاني وما يمكن للقارئ أن يستنبط منها. وتتمحور هذه الدراسة حول السؤال: "ألى أي مدى تعتبر بنية الرواية هشة إذا ما تمت دراستها عبر نظرية التفكيك؟" والفرضيات الموضوعية لهذا السؤال هي أنه لا يوجد عمل ادبي يمكن ان يفهم فقط عن طريق اسقاطه على قوانين واعراف وضعت مسبقا، وأن القارئ هو محور العمل وهو من يعطي الرواية معناها. ومن أجل التحقق وتحقيق هدفها، وعن طريق القيام بدراسة وصفية؛ تركز الأطروحة على الثنائيات المتضادة والتي غالبا ما تتكون بفعل القوانين الاجتماعية والاعراف؛ كما تميل هذه الثنائيات إلى تفضيل واحد من الضدين على الثاني مما يؤدي الى تشكيل معنى واحد في ذهن القارئ. في ختام هذه الاطروحة سيجد القارئ نفسه امام باب جديد لفهم هذه الرواية؛ باب لا يقود الى معنى واحد ولكن لمعان عديدة يوجدها القارئ بنفسه عن طريق فهم مختلف الشخصيات والاحداث في رواية سيد الذباب أو غيرها من الروايات المختلفة.