

Jack's Chaotic Enthronement Victory in Lord of the Flies: Chaos Theory in Golding's Novel

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ABSTRACT

In William Golding's novel, *Lord of the Flies*, while a few British children are taken to safer lands from a destructive war zone, the plane carrying them crashes into a desert island. From then on, the children are all by themselves without any adult, and they have to survive through establishing their own set of rules. While doing so, they use the social constructions in which they have lived in their homeland. Initially, Ralph seems to successfully rule the island through democracy and peace, however, as time unfolds and their living conditions get harsher and harder, Jack and his allies dethrone him with animalistic force by their horrible and evil deeds, resulting in their reign. The former government fails and the latter one becomes victorious by destroying the already existing government on the island. However brutal their methods are, Jack's and his allies' success is well earned, because they have created a perfectly functioning orderly disorder. The article aims to discuss the reason why the dethronement is earned, and the reason for Jack's ultimate success in taking over the control of the island is demonstrated by utilizing chaos theory, which is officially discovered by American scientist Edward Lorenz. With the help of chaos theory, the reader is able to understand why Jack's chaotic government functions successfully for him and his allies.

Keywords: *Lord of the Flies, war, chaos theory, brutality, innate evil.*

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ÖZ

William Golding'in romanı *Lord of The Flies*'da bir grup Britanyalı çocuk, yıkıcı savaş bölgesinden daha güvenli topraklara götürülmek üzereyken, onları taşıyan uçak ıssız bir adaya düşer. Çocuklar başlarında hiçbir yetişkin olmadan tek başlarına kalmışlardır. Bundan sonra, çocuklar kendi kurallarını belirleyerek hayatta kalmak zorundadırlar. Kuralları belirlerken ve düzenli bir şekilde işleyen topluluk kurmaya çalışırken, çocuklar kendi yurtlarında gördükleri toplumsal yapıları kullanırlar. İlk başta, Ralph adayı başarılı bir şekilde demokrasi ve barış ile yürütüyor gibi görünür, fakat zaman geçtikçe ve çocukların adadaki yaşam koşulları daha sert ve daha zor olmaya başladıkça, Jack ve onun yanındaki çocuklar Ralph'ı korkunç ve şeytani eylemlerle kendi krallıklarını kurarak tahtından eder. Bunun sonucunda da adada kurulan ilk yönetim başarısız olur. Onlardan sonra gelen yönetim zaten adada var olan yönetimi yok ederek zafere ulaşır. Bu yolda seçilen yöntemler ne kadar cani olursa olsun, Jack'in ve onun yanındakilerin başarısı hakedilmiş bir başarıdır çünkü onlar adada mükemmel bir şekilde işleyen düzenli bir kaos yaratmışlardır. Bu makale tahttan indirimin kazanılan bir başarı olmasının sebebini tartışmayı hedefler ve Jack'in adanın kontrolünü eline almasını sağlamasındaki başarısını Amerikan bilim adamı Edward Lorenz tarafından resmi olarak keşfedilen kaos teorisini kullanarak gösterir. Kaos teorisinin yardımıyla, okuyucu Jack'in kaotik yönetiminin başarılı bir şekilde işlemesinin sebebini anlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sineklerin Tanrısı, savaş, kaos teorisi, barbarlık, doğuştan şeytanilik

INTRODUCTION

William Golding is a famous British novelist. In addition to his literary works and accomplishments, he is also known to have been a merchant marine during World War II. (Nobel Prizes 2021, n.d.) A writer integrates his point of view and experiences into his work of art, therefore, one cannot oppose the statement that Golding himself did the same in his writings. *Lord of the Flies*, written by William Golding, is a novel taking place on a desert island. After a destructive war, a few British children are rescued to be taken to safer lands from the war zone. Unfortunately, the plane carrying them crashes into a formerly uninhabited island. The children are now in the middle of nowhere. Moreover, they do not have any adults by their sides. They are left with one another, and they establish a new society and set of rules step by step. While inaugurating the new government on the island, two very different leaders emerge. The first leader, Ralph, rules through democracy with the help of his intellectual friend Piggy. Unfortunately, Ralph's reign does not last long. As when difficulties and life threatening

situations emerge, the children on the island lose their temper and calmness, leading to their evil sides such as killing animals, Simon and Piggy brutally. They start to act destructively and use their physical power. Jack, the second leader, takes over the control of the island and rules the inhabitants very successfully through chaos and fear.

The reason Jack can govern the children is through the imposition of fear in a systematic order. He never stops being a leader who is always ready to use physical power when things do not go according to his plan. He and his allies are always ready to use brutality in their actions, regardless of injuring or killing another child. While doing so, man's innate evil helps Jack and his allies rule the island cruelly; however, the innate evil is not the only advantage of Jack. The children came from war zone. War does not conclude with positive effects on humans, instead, it does by torturing an individual's physical and mental health gradually. Regardless of an individual's age, if he has experienced war, he suffers during the process. Consequently, even after war has ended, he carries the burden within him for the rest of his life. Accordingly, these children have experienced the brutality of war in the adult world, and "they [the children on the island] bring a tradition of carnivorous blood-lust, human violence, [and] tribalism . . ." (Levitt, 1969, p. 522) with them. Therefore, Jack and his allies imitate the rules and punishments which are evident in the adult society they come from. With these two advantages, Jack's taking over the government on the island is not mere luck, coincidence, or disruption of Ralph's establishment. His dethroning Ralph must not be seen as pure chaos or a disorder because while governing the island, he has his own systematic and consistent management style. He never reconsiders what he is doing and what he is doing all these deeds for. Moreover, he takes his actions one-step further at a time. In this research article, the reason of Jack's enthronement is actually an orderly disorder, instead of a mere disorder, analyzed and explained through utilizing chaos theory. With the guidance of the theory, a reader's understanding of the notions of chaos and order eminent in the novel is reconstructed and reorganized, because what humans see as a corruption is a notion which inhabits order in its own way.

CHAOS THEORY

To comprehend the theory, the meaning of the word chaos needs to be elaborated. The term "chaos" implies a disruption in an already existing order. It is not welcomed by any existing institutions or constitutions. Moreover, it is seen as a failure of order because "chaos eliminates . . . deterministic predictability" (Brady, 1990, p. 66) in modern physics, which indicates a negative aspect in already-existing rules and systems such as deterministic Newtonian physics.

According to Newton and many other physicists, natural phenomena are explained through reason and consequence. Moreover, those explanations claim to predict the planet and the universe with definite and indisputable knowledge.

Edward Lorenz is recognized as the founder of chaos theory. He discovered that while making calculations for predicting the weather, rounding the numbers with 3-digit rather than 6-digit numbers did not provide the same solutions; indeed, in nonlinear systems, multiplications during iterative processes amplify differences in an exponential manner. (Oestreicher, 2016, p. 215) This recognition brought about an enormous difference in contemplating formerly definite notions since it has been now seen that there is an unpredictable behavior in seemingly simple systems. In consequence, solely from Lorenz's discovery, one can deduct that there is an order within a disorder, which is dynamic and ever-changing. In addition to Lorenz, Mitchell Feigenbaum has also played a vital role in his studies to comprehend chaos theory. He found out that systems that go from ordered states to chaotic states follow a characteristic pattern of period-doubling, (Hayles, 1989, p. 308) which clearly demonstrates the order inherent in disorder. As chaos is not examined as negative destruction or disruption of order, it is explained as another type of functional order. Douglas Hofstadter, a scientist, explains the process of chaos as: "it turns out that an eerie type of chaos can lurk just behind a facade of order- and yet, deep inside the chaos lurks an even eerier type of order." (Brady, 1990, p. 66) In chaos, what can only be seen as a pure disruption inhabits an unorthodox system which helps build the order of chaos itself.

In conclusion, it can be inferred that chaos is not a mere negative disruption that only deconstructs a former order. In contrast, it is a disorder, which contains a systemic order in itself. It is an orderly disorder. Both chaos and order are intertwined with one another. In the novel that is mentioned throughout the article, during Ralph's governing, the chaos initiated by Jack is brutal but still consistent in its order, which makes him ultimately, and inevitably successful because his behavior towards the government which he wants to dethrone is highly congruous from the beginning until the end. Moreover, the children who seem more civilized than Jack, such as Ralph, behave brutally in the specific scenes, which marks the enthronement of a blood lust child as consistent in its own unorthodox system.

THE POWER BEHIND JACK: INNATE EVIL

Humans are believed to have descended from the Garden of Eden because of the original sin, which is moral corruption and disobeying. Until Adam and Eve commit the original sin, they have lived in bliss and grace in the Garden of Eden. However, their lust for the forbidden fruit leads to their downfall. As this act of the first humans is heavily punished, in Christianity, humans are believed to have a tainted nature, which is innate evil. Innate evil element is a great helper for Jack because as it is stated before, in chaos theory, chaos inhabits a consistent element in itself from the start, therefore, we cannot exclude innate evil while discussing

the novel with the help of chaos theory because innate evil is Jack's most powerful weapon to dethrone Ralph since it always continues to exist in Jack and his allies as the disturber of the order.

Innate evil of human nature should be further described to understand why it is one of the elements of how Jack got successful in ruling the community he belongs to. In the Bible, it is clearly stated that "the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth." (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Genesis. 8:21) In other words, men are believed to tend toward evil in their nature since the original sin, which constructs the religious point of view to evil. In addition, Cynthia Weber states that "realists like Hans Morgenthau, for example, argue that the nature of man . . . is fundamentally flawed" (2005, p. 16), in Lord of the Flies' case, the flaw is to act violently and to use catastrophic violence, which clearly demonstrates the "ineradicable threat of historical regression towards barbarism" (Wilson, 2014, p. 147) in regards of dethroning the peaceful and democratic leader on the island. In addition to what she has said earlier, Cynthia Weber actively used Lord of the Flies to show the innate evil of man. She further claims that "the way Golding's novel is often read is as a testimony to the evilness of human nature that comes out in extreme situations. Man is by nature evil." (2005, p. 31) Believing that humans have innate evil, they cannot hide it forever. It is revealed in Lord of the Flies through the boys' deeds. These boys come from a civilized society but "even the rationalists and civilized are not free from this illness [evil]." (Singh, 2015, p. 483) The majority of the community on the island executes horrible deeds, the most brutal of which is to kill their friends.

Nevertheless, one must not ignore the fact that innate evilness is not enough to explain evil deeds on its own. Having been raised in a civilization which is passionate about power is another reason why the boys behave that vile because they have witnessed it in their hometown. The children's hometown is already corrupted because of the war. George and Raju state that it is the defective human nature that makes the defective society, (2015, p. 178) which states that people who are filled with power lust set a bad influence on their offsprings, hence corrupting the society in which they live. Therefore, both innate evil and culture are essential in doing evil deeds in the novel, because also William Golding, "was appalled at what human beings can do to one another, in terms of wartime atrocities. . . and in their being innately evil." (Foster, 2002, p. 7) As an author, Golding's mindset and perception inevitably played a huge role in creating these characters and their deeds on the island. In conclusion, religion and politics played a vital role in both creating and analyzing the characters and their motives in the novel because the author himself clearly states that "as far back as we can go in history we find that the two signs of Man are a capacity to kill and a belief in God." (Biles, 1970, p. 106).

FUNCTION OF CHAOS THEORY AND POSTMODERNISM IN ANALYZING LORD OF THE FLIES

In this research article, the reason behind Jack's victorious enthronement on the island is discussed and examined through the theoretical framework of chaos theory. Chaos theory is of utmost importance while analyzing this novel because the text itself is a postmodern novel.

Modernism should be briefly explained in order to comprehend the difference between modernism and postmodernism. There have been many famous literary theorists who have tried to explain the postmodern theory by constructing an opposition between modernism and postmodernism. The French literary theorist Jean François Lyotard is one of the many. A South-African philosopher and complexity researcher Paul Cilliers stated Lyotard's view of modernism as

Scientific knowledge, he [Lyotard] claims, habitually legitimates itself by appealing to a coherent metadiscourse that performs a general unifying function. Should such a metadiscourse be found, it will be possible to incorporate all forms of knowledge into one grand narrative. This is the dream of modernism. (1998, p. 113)

In this light, the reader can clearly see that modernism claims the importance of one grand narrative, or in other words, one grand truth in science. However, in the following era, postmodernism strives to show people that one centered truth is unacceptable; there are so many paths and directions taken for an aim. Postmodernism addresses the central issue of the rationality of formerly known scientific methodology, which implies the contemplation and criticism of the old systems and rules which have been linear and have seemed to be in order. As science and humanities are closely intertwined, this way of thinking for science is also applied to literature.

The aftermath of World War II and the emergence of postmodernism coincided. Bergen states that people faced the challenge of building lives for themselves and what was left of their families and communities with scarce resources and restricted freedom, and in a climate of distrust and grief. (2016, p. 223) People's point of view on life has changed from then on after having experienced the grotesque atrocities committed during the war. The atrocities shook the ground on which people had stood. As a result, people have started to think much more differently than before, thus "postmodernist thinking justifies an ontology of change, emergence and transformation" (Ströh, 2005, p. 85) After the paradigm shift, people have changed, because "[the French philosopher] Foucault considers the individual not as an autonomous actor, but rather as a microcosm constituted by the tropes and organizing figures characteristic of the episteme." (Hayles, 1989, p. 312) In other words, culture shapes the people in that respect.

Chaos theory and postmodernism share a great link because of their similarity in orderly disorder. As Joel Snell states “chaos theory itself is post-modern because it suggests that the traditional scientific method of discovery needs improvement and that interpretation of results may be flawed” (Chaos Theory and Postmodernism, n.d.) Both chaos theory and postmodernism reject and look down on traditional methods. Moreover, chaos theory and postmodernism flourish under extraordinary conditions. Dennard has suggested that

chaos theory can be understood as the state where a system can no longer sustain a stable pattern of behavior because of an increasingly changing environment, and subsequently causes the system to reorganise itself to adjust to these changes. (1996, p. 498).

The emergence and continuation of postmodernism is highly similar to that of chaos theory. Due to the physical and mental hardships of the war, routines of humanity have changed for good. The postmodern thinking of individuals has reorganised itself to get used to the new dark reality they have entered into. Despair and disbelief in the formerly believed institutions and constructions started lightly, and then it became the reality. Hayles states that she defines “cultural postmodernism as the realization that what has always been thought of as the essential, unvarying components of human experience are not natural facts of life but social constructions.” (1989, p. 265) This realization is similar to Edward Lorenz’s realization of margin of error in measuring natural sciences with definite and long- known materials and methods, which demonstrates the fault of humans in thinking there are essential and unvarying components which would not change in any situation. Both the chaos theory and postmodernism deconstruct the old knowledge about the world, and catapult humanity into a new sort of atmosphere.

In chaos theory, Murphy states that “[the theory] attempts to understand why systems seem to not function in linear, predictable and conventional ways; but when studied from a distance, display patterns and structures (1996, p. 96) Therefore, it can be concluded that what seems to be the chaos has its own way of working, which might be perceived as unorthodox to conventionalists. However, systems are consistent within themselves. Postmodernism and postmodern way of thinking, for example, have derived from the difficulties experienced by the era and war. What started as a slow disbelief and disconnection from the modern era has evolved to the natural way of life, which is highly emphasized in postmodern literary work.

Apart from the link between chaos theory and postmodernism, postmodernism also demonstrates that there is no one in this world who is purely evil or good. The lack of black and white and the existence of the gray area are shown in the novel through Ralph and Jack. Moreover, postmodernism rejects the ultimate single reason and order just like chaos theory. Since there are a number of examples for

the principles of theory in the novel, it lends itself to critical analysis under the light of chaos theory. In the process of utilizing the theory, the elements of innate evil in human nature and the significance of a particular culture on an individual are discussed to find the answer to Jack's success. The order in disorder, the backbone in chaos theory, is very eminent throughout the novel, and it answers how Jack has established his government very successfully.

CONTRIBUTION OF INNATE EVIL AND CULTURE TO JACK'S POWER

Whatever people do, whoever they become, and wherever they go, the evil follows them because it is inside of a man. In *Lord of the Flies*, we encounter the innate evilness of a man throughout the novel. One of the most blatant examples of the innate evil in the novel can be seen during the boar hunting and dancing scene. The boys are dancing wildly, chanting, "Kill the pig! Cut her throat! Bash her in!" (Golding, 1962, p. 63). The reader is surprised to see most of the boys full of lust for the hunt, but what surprised the reader the most is that Ralph is also in the boar hunt in chapter seven. (Golding, 1962, p. 96) He gets excited, and this is what shocks and disturbs the reader, because on that island, after Simon and Piggy, Ralph is the most civilized person. Even a civilized person like him cannot resist the temptation of the thought of a gory hunt. His primitive instincts start to have an effect on his behaviours, and consequently he gets lost in the moment. That example demonstrates that, even while Ralph is the ultimate leader in the first place, there was a disruption in the civilized order, though it is limited to acting instinctively for now. If Jack and his allies are the providers of "chaos" on the island, Ralph is also the part of the orderly disorder, though only instinctively, because he also "gets caught up in the other boys' bloodlust", (Wilson, 2010, p. 3) which demonstrates that he also carries the innate evil within him, though not as dominant as Jack's. Even a boy like Ralph can lose himself for a moment. Ralph's participation in hunting is an excellent example of showing how chaos theory works, because "despite their tension, randomness, and pattern, chaos and order exist in co-dependency." (Farsi, 2017, p. 2) There is chaos and a disruption inside the order in that scene. Even the rationalists and the civilized are not free from this flaw called evil, because it actually lives inside of every human being in the world.

Diving deep into the novel Jack announces himself as the leader of the hunting group, and from then on, the power struggle on the island accelerates because now Jack and his group has the initiative to kill the animals and once woken up, their primal instincts do not stop or cannot be controlled any more. Their instincts go far beyond than killing animals to provide themselves with nutrition they need to survive. Jack, with his allies by his side, tortures other children who are not in his group. Though it may seem totally chaotic, it has order and consistency in itself. Because on the one hand, he is taking down Ralph's established government; on

the other hand, he is doing it systematically through the constant imposition of fear of a so-called beast, torturing, and bullying. Chaos theory begins to have an effect here. Even though it may seem like pure and sudden destruction imposed on the old system, it is coherent and consistent in its own new order. Order and disorder are intertwined in Jack's government style. He breaks the system and constructs a new consistent system in its own frame. Though it may seem to some like he is only destroying the system, he is implementing a new set of system by using a totally new, different, and a brutal order than that of Ralph's. He creates an orderly disorder. With violence, his power is born.

As well as their innate evilness, Jack and his allies are also brutal because of the culture of the adult society to which they belong. There are wars, atrocities, massacres, genocides happening in adults' world; hence, the children have had to adapt to those savageries. The brutality happening on the island is not a mere result of human nature. It also takes its source from so-called civilized culture. In the novel, the most brutal character, Jack himself, utters during one of the earliest scenes that they are not savages, they are English, they must have their own set of rules. (Golding, 1962, p. 33) Actually, he and his allies have managed to have their own set of rules, influenced by British society. "The pestering adult vices such as lust for power, greed, control over others and slavery are at work in the boys" (Giri, 2019, p. 55). Along with his innate evilness, Jack imposed the brutality and the rules which he has witnessed in his own "civilized" culture to the inhabitants of the island. "They [the boys] had brought that civilization, or what fragments of it they could remember, with them." (Spitz, 1970, p. 29) The blame is not only on human nature but also on the already established culture. The mindsets of the children are highly affected by the society in which they lived. Explanation of their deeds in chaos theory through their culture is that their community back in England has been thriving by creating war, a disorder from peace, the new order. Because the war has happened, there becomes an order in disorder which is happening systematically, and the children make use of the reality of the world they come from because they have witnessed the war, the ultimate orderly disorder.

Through their innate evil and using their already established culture, the children establish the new government that initially looked like mere mayhem on the island. The reason for this false assumption of mayhem is that the nature of them and the methods they use are also orderly disorders. Think of an evil individual like Jack, he seems like a person disrupting the order, causing chaos, but actually he is constructing his own truth in a systematic order by continuing his evil deeds, and he is able to do that successfully because his people back home also create orderly disorder in that way. That is the reason why Jack has become victorious in implementing his own rules, his own government. Throughout the novel, he and his allies act in their own systematic chaotic order. Murdering Simon and Piggy,

for example, seems like chaos, but it does involve an order from within. All the atrocities they have committed from the beginning are to create the ultimate order: to be in power and to dethrone Ralph. Therefore, the motivation behind all of their brutality is executed in a systematic order. They do everything to hold the power in their hands. Without approaching this text without chaos theory, Jack's enthronement may seem like extreme chaos; however, with the help of chaos theory, a reader is able to see clearly why he has become very successful in his passion for ruling the island, because chaos theory screams at humanity, saying there is also an order in disorder because with deconstruction brings the new construction.

CONCLUSION

The power struggle and the ultimate enthronement in William Golding's novel, *Lord of the Flies*, cannot be comprehended thoroughly without the help of chaos theory. The most potent reminder about chaos theory is that it "deals with how order irrupts into chaos . . . [and] proposes the idea that "within chaos there is order." (Farsi, 2017, p. 2) Throughout the novel, the reader witnesses the horrible events executed by Jack and his allies. However, the only reason for that is to become victorious in their own method. They have created disorder out of order; nevertheless, they have a systematic order in the chaos and disorder they have created. They dethrone the already established order. Instead, they create their own government. They have bullied their friends, tortured and murdered them with only one motivation in their heads, to become victorious, and they did. They used two things on their behalf, the innate evil of their human nature and what they have seen from their culture. Both of these things are the backbones in their paths to their mission. Innate evil of human nature has been analyzed through chaos theory because the nature of evil is orderly disorder; it corrupts a person just like it happened to Jack by the systematic, consistent order within itself. The savagery culture in the civilization has also been explained through chaos theory. The destruction is executed through the systematic disruption of the already existing order. Moreover, in their new disorder, they have their own successful order. By being a flawed human and using his own culture's barbaric imitations, Jack becomes victorious. He is enthroned.

In conclusion, *Lord of the Flies* is analyzed and examined in this research article in light of chaos theory due to the fact that the theory illuminates the path of understanding why Jack has become successful in the novel. Chaos theory helps us comprehend that Jack's victory is not mere dismay or disastrous chaos, instead, his new order annihilates the former order in a new, systematic, and a functional way. He does all these horrible deeds to become the ultimate leader on the island.

He constructs a new and positively functioning disorder within its own terms because it has its own systematic orders in itself; thus, the latter government functions successfully until the moment that the boys are rescued.

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