

Analysis on the Revelation of Human Nature of Lord of the Flies from Freudian Personality Structure Theory

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Abstract

Lord of the Flies, a fictional novel, tells the story of a plane shot down and a group of boys were abandoned on a deserted coral island in a future nuclear war. At first, the children enjoyed a comfortable life without adult supervision and made joint efforts to face the difficulties. But happy times didn't last long, for fearing the so-called "wild animals", they split into two parties, and ended up with the instinctive despotism overwhelming the rational democracy. This article intends to use Freud's personality structure theory to analyze the main characters in Lord of the Flies. Through the analysis of Jack and Roger's increasingly stronger id, Ralph and Piggy's weak ego and Simon's disappearance of superego, it reflects the continuous development and change of human nature's good and evil in the novel. It reveals that with the weakness of civilization and democracy, the evil side of human society is in a dominant position. It is hoped that human beings can seriously reflect on the evil side of their own human nature and find a way to redeem the neglected good.

Keywords

Freud; Personality Structure Theory; Lord of the Flies; Human Nature.

1. Introduction

Lord of the Flies is William Golding's most famous and representative work. The study of *Lord of the Flies* has many literary reviews at home and abroad. These reviews mostly study Lord of the Flies from the perspectives of the good and evil of human nature, narrative structure, female criticism, myth prototype, symbolic techniques, etc. In recent years, many scholars are keen to study *Lord of the Flies* from a psychological perspective, especially Freud's psychoanalysis. I intend to analyze the good and evil of human nature of the main characters in the novel from Freud's personality structure theory. Through the analysis of the good and evil in the main characters' human nature, it reveals the dark and evil side of human heart. More importantly, it enables us to better understand ourselves, reflect on ourselves and improve ourselves through the revelation of human nature.

Freud believed that the complete personality structure is composed of three parts: id, ego and superego. The id is the most primitive instinct of human beings, which represents the innate desire and comes from the most basic needs. The ego follows the principle of pleasure and is not influenced by moral factors. Moreover, it always tends to obtain pleasure and avoid harm. The id is between the ego and the superego, following the principle of reality and regulates the ego and superego according to the principle of reality. It achieves self-protection by means of perceiving external stimuli and controlling instinctive needs. It protects the individual from harm while seeking the satisfaction of the ego. Freud saw the superego as part of self-development resulting from the parent's influence on the child over time. The child recognizes the behaviors, rules and morals enforced by the parents and reproduces them to shape his or her own behavior and personality. This personality always strives for perfection and cannot violate the bottom line in anything.

2. Jack and Roger--Ego Gives Way to Id

It is Jack's group that finally causes many disasters on the island. They are wild, cruel and aggressive, does whatever just as their pleasure. But at first their ego can effectively restrain irrational id impulse, and their id is gradually increasing.

When Jack first arrived on the island, Jack took the lead in proposing: We should think of a way and how we can be saved. At this time, Jack paid close attention to the problem of everyone's salvation, gave advice for the survival of the group and was willing to work for the well-being of the group. He accepts the result of election and cooperates with Ralph to make a fire just because the moral rules he acquires from the school and society has controlled his true mind and repressed his desire temporarily. His original nature id, without enough stimulation outside, has not been released completely at this moment. It is not difficult to see that Jack also showed ego at first. He can resign himself to the restraint of the moral rules from the very beginning. There is a description in the novel that Roger collected a stone behind a palm tree and tried to throw it at Henry, but there was a range of about six yards in diameter around Henry, and Roger didn't dare to throw the stone into it. It can be seen that Roger's heart is still restricted by social rules. Obviously, even when Roger came to an island without adult supervision, his heart was still restricted by civilization, and he was still afraid to hurt Henry with small stones.

Later, with the development of the plot, the id impulse became more and more powerful on Jack and Roger. The ego could not control the id at all, and the evil side completely defeated the final kindness.

Jack has red hair, ugliness face and the vicious eyes which are symbol of evil. They no longer felt shame and self-awareness. When hunting, he paints his face, hiding from this mask, he liberates himself from shame and self-consciousness, and he tries to hide the rules of civilized society as well. The original bestiality in his subconscious is waking up. He obsessed with hunting and ignore the very important task for survive: maintain the fire which is the only opportunity for being rescued and the symbol of civilization. Ignorance of fire is just the ignorance of the civilization. Although Jack is uneasy about making the fire go out, his restlessness is replaced by the excitement after hunting quickly. By this time, id's desire has already inflated in Jack's heart, conch shell has started to lose deterrent force in the civilized society, and Ralph's tedious talk has lost the strength as well. He desires of blood, conquest, and wildness in id urges Jack to put his evil idea in the motion. He paints his hunters' faces white, red and green, occupies the castle rock as his shelter and lords it over everyone in his tribe. He makes himself a king and his shelter a so-called paradise in his mind.

What is even more shocking is that on a stormy night, they killed Simon unconsciously. Roger also cruelly pushed down a big stone to crush the young piggy, who had lost his glasses and blurred vision, and smashed his brains to pieces. In order to hunt down Ralph, Jack even fires the island and hunts Ralph to gain the absolute dominance. He degenerates into a chief of savages and a true "beast" eventually. Without the sense of shame and morality, he handles affairs by his dominant power willfully, punishes and executes anyone who hinders him.

3. Ralph and Piggy--The Declining of Ego

Ralph is a representative of the middle class in England. He has received a good education and the concept of democracy has already penetrated into his marrow. Because of his calm demeanor, attractive appearance and conch that gathered the scattered children together, Ralph defeated rival Jack to become the leader of the children in the democratic election. After he was elected leader, he began to explore the terrain and work out a rescue plan. He always put the first priority of rescue. He suggested lighting a signal fire to attract the attention of

passing ships. On the island, most boys are concerned with having fun, while Ralph goes about building huts and thinks the ways to be rescued. He emphasizes the importance of maintaining a signal fire, decides that one can speak at the meeting only with the conch shell, let the boys bring water from the stream and leave in the coconut shells under fresh leaves, and chooses those rocks right along beyond the bathing-pool as a lavatory so that tide can clean the place up. That is the initial establishment of a series of rules and regulations. On this basis, Ralph's power and influence over the other boys are firm at the beginning, and he represents the order in the civilized society.

If Ralph is the represent of the ego in this novel, Piggy can be said the vindicator of ego. Piggy is Ralph 's most loyal ally and the only boy with glasses on the island. It is Piggy who support Ralph all the time until the end of his life. Piggy as Ralph's first partner also mentioned Ralph how to do and how to lead. Piggy grew up with aunt and came from a poor family, but this did not prevent him from worshipping science for reason. He advises there should be rules on the island. Jack set up his own leader. Many children turned their backs on Ralph and joined Jack's hunting team. However, the young pig never gave up on Ralph. He constantly encouraged Ralph and gave him advice. When the boys thought that there were wild animals on the top of the mountain and they dared not continue to light the fire on it and had to let the signal fire go out, Ralph fell into deep despair. It was also Piggy who wisely proposed to transfer the signal fire between the water pool and the platform below the mountain to rekindle the fire of hope.

4. Simon--The Fading of the Superego

Simon whose natural goodness is opposed to the evil nature of Jack and the imposed morality of civilization of Ralph and Piggy can represent superego to some extent. Unlike all the other boys, Simon is the only person who has a clear understanding to the circumstances surrounding him. He can foresee things beyond the surface. It is Simon who predicts that Ralph will be rescued and he maybe has an unfortunate fate. It is Simon who realizes firstly that maybe the beast is the human himself. This is the first time in the novel when Simon points out that the beast is not an external force but a component of human instinct.

When encountering the bloody, fly-covered head of the sow, Simon has a terrible illusion and faints. It seems that the head is talking to him and the voice is from the lord of the flies who tells Simon that he can never escape from him because he exists in everyone's heart and the tragic ending of him. Although Simon falls into the dark mouth of the sow which symbols the darkness, greed, ignorance of human nature, he regains his consciousness quickly and braces himself up. After waking up, he goes to the mountain and sees the corpse of the parachutist. By this time, Simon realizes that the true beast does not exist externally but within every boy's inner heart. He intends to reveal the truth to eliminate the fear of the boys to the beast, but unfortunately, he dies in the chaotic revelry held by the knuckleheaded boys.

Undoubtedly, the death of Simon is a tragedy for his death has not been able to awaken the children from ignorance and the slaughter. Simon's death symbols the superego on the island vanish.

5. Conclusion

From the analysis above, the reader can see clearly how the boys get back to savages and find out the deep reasons which cause the boys to lose their identity. Simon was the only character who can represent the superego on the island. He finally died in the children's hand which meant the finally shinning superego died. Piggy and Ralph can both represent the ego even they two behaved differently. After the death of Simon and Piggy, there was only id left on the island. According to Freud, the id ignores the rules and obey the inner joy. So, in the end when there existed only id in the heart of children, Id pushed the disaster which went as the rule. From

the story, we can easily conclude if there exists only id in our life, huge disasters will be caused. It sounds the alarm for human civilization and human nature. We can conclude that when the social constrains go off, the deep id tends to come to the surface to dominate human nature. The darkness of heart is revealed little by little. One tends to lose his identity and thus goes back to the savages. So, we must pay more attention to the balanced development of the id, ego, and superego to make sure they will be educated in the right way.

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