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LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ

İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI BİLİM DALI

**EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MOTIVES IN PEOPLE'S
TRANSFORMATION IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S *LORD
OF THE FLIES* AND JOSÉ SARAMAGO'S *BLINDNESS***

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Tezi Hazırlayan
Burçin HASANOĞLU

İstanbul, 2024

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ABSTRACT

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MOTIVES IN PEOPLE'S TRANSFORMATION IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S *LORD OF THE FLIES* AND JOSÉ SARAMAGO'S *BLINDNESS*

It is a clear fact that human being is a complex being in terms of their physical, psychological and mental structure. One of these complexities is whether s/he is essentially good or bad. The idea of whether human being is either inherently good or evil has been debated by philosophers for many centuries, and many theories were put forward. Swiss-born philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau believes that human being is inherently good, while British philosopher Thomas Hobbes believes people are evil. On the other hand, the 19th century philosopher John Stuart Mill and the acclaimed psychologist Sigmund Freud claim that people are just amoral and pleasure-driven beings, which means they avoid danger and pursue the ultimate pleasure. These theories mentioned are well illustrated in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and José Saramago's *Blindness*. In *Lord of the Flies*, a group of British boys, fled from a war by a plane, crashes on an exotic island. Having no adults to help or control them, they become their own guide to survive. Some changes appear in their personality in time due to some internal and external reasons. Almost everyone ends up being little savages. In *Blindness*, a plague of blindness breaks out. Some people transform into savages while some suffer from it. This blindness enables them to see the true nature of humanity. Inspired by these drastic changes in human nature, this thesis aims to analyse the external and internal factors that cause people to transform into savages from modern people.

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ÖZ

WILLIAM GOLDING'İN *SİNEKLERİN TANRISI* VE JOSÉ SARAMAGO'NUN *KÖRLÜK* ESERLERİNDE İNSANLARIN DÖNÜŞÜMLERİNDE ETKİLİ OLAN İÇ VE DIŞ KAYNAKLI MOTİVLER

İnsanoğlunun fiziksel, psikolojik ve zihinsel açıdan karmaşık bir varlık olduğu bir gerçektir. Bu karmaşıklıklardan bir tanesi ise kendisinin özünde iyi ya da kötü olup olmadığıdır. İnsanoğlunun özünde iyi mi yoksa kötü mü olduğuna dair düşüncesi yüzyıllardır felsefecilerin tartışma konusu olmuş ve birçok fikir öne sürülmüştür. İsviçre doğumlu felsefeci Jean-Jacques Rousseau, insanoğlunun doğuştan iyi olduğuna inanırken, İngiliz felsefeci Thomas Hobbes insanların kötü olduğuna inanır. Diğer bir yandan ise 19. yüzyıl felsefecisi John Stuart Mill ve meşhur psikolog Sigmund Freud, insanların ahlaki anlayıştan kopuk fakat zevk odaklı, yani tehlikeden uzak duran ve kendisine nihai zevk veren şeylerin peşine giden canlılar olduklarını iddia eder. Bu bahsi geçen teoriler, William Golding'ın *Sineklerin Tanrısı* ve José Saramago'nun *Körlük* romanlarında gayet iyi betimlenmiştir. *Sineklerin Tanrısı* 'nda savaştan kaçırılan bir grup İngiliz genç, egzotik bir adaya düşer. Kendilerine yardım edecek ya da onları izleyecek yetişkinlere sahip olmadığı için hayatta kalmak adına kendi kendilerinin rehberi olurlar. Zamanla, bazı iç ve dış kaynaklı sebeplerden dolayı kişiliklerinde değişimler baş gösterir. Sonunda neredeyse hepsi birer küçük vahşiye dönüşür. *Körlük* 'te ise, körlük salgını başlar. Bazı insanlar vahşileşirken, bazıları bunların kurbanı olur. Bu körlük, onlara insanoğlunun gerçek yüzünü görmesini sağlar. İlhamını bu sert değişimlerden alan bu tez, William Golding'ın *Sineklerin Tanrısı* ve José Saramago'nun *Körlük* eserlerinde insanların modern insanlardan birer vahşiye dönüşmesine sebep veren iç ve dış faktörleri incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

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GLOSSARY

Binary Opposition: In critical theory, it means a pair of related terms or concepts that are opposite in meaning. Binary opposition is the system by which, in language and thought, two theoretical opposites are strictly defined and set off against one another.

Ethnocentric: Believing that the people, customs, and traditions of your own race or nationality are better than those of other races.

Universality Factor: A factor in psychological therapy in which members in group or individual therapies realize that they are not alone in their feelings, impulses, thoughts, and problem

INTRODUCTION

Human being is considered to be an interesting, central and creative resource of antinomies by nature. Assuming that they are the smartest being amongst all creations, people have always been capable of coming up with definitions of opposites to define themselves. They address themselves with many binary oppositions such as poor and rich, sane and insane, wise and ignorant and more. However, there are two specific binary oppositions that are open to debate when it comes to defining what a human being is in a psychological sense: *civilized* or *savage*. Being civilized or savage is in people's nature; however, there are some questions arisen as to whether people are either civilized or savage solely; or if they both exist in people equally; or in what conditions they tend to merge, and finally what the consequences of being civilized or savage are.

Civilized means having a highly developed system in a country which treats its people fairly, reasonably and politely. In other words, it is the straight opposite of "savage" which is defined as violent and wild. The relationship between these binary oppositions is well described in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and José Saramago's *Blindness*. In both novels, the characters come from a civilized world; however, as the circumstances change such as the environment, the basic needs, the balances in power, and instinctual urges, their personalities and their attitudes go through a drastic change which leaves a life-long, impactful effects in their lives afterwards.

In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding tells the story of a group of English boys whose plane is shot down during a war, and the plane crashes into a tropical island. After the English boys learn that all adults are dead, their instinct becomes their guide which drives them from civilized kids to the little savages of the island. At the beginning, a type of seashell, a conch found by two kids becomes the first symbol of their civilization. They use it to call the boys wandering in the forest to their nature-made parliament circle made from palm tree logs on the beach. The conch helps Ralph, a blonde English boy, to be elected as the leader who paves the way for workload division, highlights the prominence of building shelters and making a fire to survive on the island. Unfortunately, the idea of civilization does not work well for many reasons, since there are young children, whose focus is only to eat, sleep, play and

wander around constantly. They are the little pleasure seekers of the island. On the other hand, there are the older boys who are going through pre-puberty and are not mature enough to understand the importance of making and keeping a fire on. Apart from being naturally irresponsible, there is Jack Merridew, another older British boy who is the leader of the choir. His character has a negatively causative effect on the majority of the boys.

Although Ralph and Jack have similarities in their characters such as being strong leaders, Ralph loses his power to Jack due to his hunger for power and his obsession with hunting. In addition, the idea of hunting simply becomes by far the most enjoyable attraction for the majority. Jack has always been the uncivilized one since the beginning. He only sheds his shell like a cocoon as the environment gets apt for his transformation. His desire for power and hunting transforms him into a real savage both mentally and physically. His transformation becomes complete once he wears the paint mask and covers his last trace of humanity. His personality also has a provoking effect on others. Through the end of their life on the island, they all start to obey and act like Jack. First, the death of one of the littluns, then the murder of Simon by the tribe and finally the Piggy's bloody ending by Roger define how the boys can remain silent and act normal towards all savagery. Clearly and simply, the apathy always rules the island. In addition, the uncivilized self is manifested in every boy through different situations. Piggy, despite being the rational one, is selfish and knows how to avoid being blamed for the Simon's death. Childhood innocence covers the potential savagery in the boys. Consequently, both having fought and badly traumatized, Golding gets inspired to write down his masterpiece to show how people can be the source of savagery and the destruction via wars although they address themselves generously as the uppermost-civilized beings on earth.

On the other hand, in José Saramago's *Blindness*, almost all the main characters suffering from the uncivilized circumstances are adults. Saramago presents the reader with a world with people who are plagued by a kind of blindness. At the beginning of the novel, the first victims of blindness are taken into quarantine and forced to live behind the walls of an old hospital, where they expect to be treated well. However, the government, with their big-brother-seeing eyes, creates divisions in the hospital among the blind people as old blinds, new blinds and those who are contacted with blinds but

not blind yet. Those who become blind first welcome the newcomers in a civilized way. They also plan everything from hygiene to food sharing as possibly as they could. On the other hand, the newcomers ill-treat them. They even go further with their savage intentions by asking more than they need. Once the first comers manage to escape from the hospital, they find out that the government is no longer dominant over them or the whole city. They see that the whole city is no different from the hospital they ran away from. Inside or outside the hospital, it is clear that everyone is blind. On the top of that, they see that everyone loses *more* than their sight. In the novel, it is highlighted that people show their true nature after they lose their ability to see, which is the major sense to survive in this visual-based world, and they start to see and treat the world with their savage eyes. This blindness brings about both victims and criminals within themselves.

The 20th and 21st centuries have witnessed many events such as wars, plagues, protests, natural disasters, overpopulation, poverty, global warming, etc. As a result, all these have paved the way for human beings to show the very opposites of their nature that are being civilized and savage. While technology has declared that people are civilized beings, the absence of prominent needs and the lack of a controlling power make them savages. Once people find or create a suitable environment, they yield to their ancestral traits and instincts. They have no fear of showing the dark side of the moon within that is the savage side of themselves. This shows that people have always had the darkness. While some might choose to remain good, some might follow their *id*, which represents the untamed or savage part of human beings, or some might swing between them according to the current circumstances. By referring to these key features of human beings, in this thesis, I aim to analyze the external and internal reasons that transform people from civilized to savage beings, and their consequences in José Saramago's *Blindness* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.

1. LORD OF THE FLIES

With the advancement of technology, modern city people seek to take a break from their hectic lifestyle, which is full of negativity such as pollution, workload, depression, responsibilities and especially rules of “dos and don’ts”. Living in a world dominated by the adults is the hardest for children since they are mostly fed up with all these restraining rules. Following the mundane rules set by the adults is the biggest setback in their desire to have a care-free lifestyle with so much energy. For that reason, sometimes, all they wish for is to be in a place with no adults limiting their energy. Even though, for teenagers, living free from all limitations and rules seems a good idea for a while, as time passes by this uncontrolled freedom leads them to open the Pandora’s box. William Golding depicts this progressive transformation of the teenage boys in such a realistic way in his best-known novel *Lord of the Flies*.

The novel is about some British boys whose plane crashes on an uncharted island with no adults to guide them while they are being transported during a horrifying war. The concept of war is also a striking detail since although the book is fiction written over some English boys, Golding shares his experience and knowledge about World War II through boys’ savagery on the island. Kelly states, “*Lord of the Flies* was written shortly after World War II when the world was in the conflict between the liberal democracy and totalitarian communism” (2007; as cited in Hasan & Sharif, 2020, p. 126). At the beginning, discovering and spending time on a tropical island with lots of natural beauty and wilderness seem alluring. After the crash, all the boys gather and a boy named Ralph offers to choose a leader who will be responsible for organizing the chores like hunting, making shelters and a fire, which help them to survive until they are rescued. In their journey, the island becomes their new home to discover their true selves. Having no authority to yield to, hunger for power, ancestral fear, over-imagination, and some internal and external factors provoke them to transform into little uncivilized beings from the children of the modern world. Basically, this tropical island, so-called paradise, turns into a hell for boys in preadolescence and their transformation is perfectly crafted into a fictionalized story by William Golding in *Lord of the Flies*.

The story begins with a blonde boy named Ralph coming down from the rocks in his ragged clothes from the crushed plane and his first meeting with a chubby boy

with glasses who will be called as Piggy by everyone on the island. As for their background, they both belong to a group of British boys who are fled to a safer place from a horrifying war. After they find one another on the island, they have the chance to know each other. Their physical appearance and personality are rather different, which leads troubles and conflicts in the course of the novel. Piggy wears a pair of glasses and is less athletic. He is also shorter and chubbier than Ralph. Piggy's appearance is also apt to the description of an endomorph. According to American psychologist Sheldon's theory, people's body types are associated with their personalities, which means through people's body components, human nature can be identified or explained (Kenneth & Matthew, 2013, p. 86). When the theory is taken into consideration, Piggy, who has an endomorphic body type has a relaxed and tolerant personality and needs for affection. In the novel, for instance, he mentions his asthma and his aunt taking care of him. As opposed to him, Ralph seems to have a free-spirited personality with leadership skills, yet this does not have any similarities with Jack Merridew's destructive behaviours. Ralph is both an athletic and competent boy who has the capacity to create a civilized community. He has a mesomorphic body type which is identified with being courageous, loving to take risks and having a desire for ruling with dominance and order. Furthermore, going through preadolescence causes different changes in boys both physically and psychologically. These changes align with their personalities and form their perspectives in the novel along with the environmental factors of the island. When all these elements come together, their personalities begin to transform.

Human beings have always been social beings since ancient times, and have always been in need of staying or keeping up with their own kind, which makes them find a way to reach each other and build up some order in the group. In the novel, this need is symbolically represented by a conch, which bears a significant meaning for the boys. In the first place, the conch found by Ralph and Piggy was once a home to an animal on the island, but now serves for a specific purpose for the boys. At the beginning, its shiny coat, bright colour and size attract the kids. They try to measure its value according to the standards of their modern world and define it as a valuable piece. When they blow it, the sound attracts the kids out of the corners of the wild island. It has a unifying and democratic effect; thus, when it is blown, it means it is

time to have a meeting to discuss the important issues. These discussions are performed to maintain the order and to remind them to work hard to be rescued from the island. However, as days pass, it loses its symbolic value due to its resemblance to the restrictive adult world along with their discovery of their wild side. Being wild and indulging themselves with the freedom and care-free life style of the island will overweigh the importance of following the rules that are a vital part of their rescue.

Another democratic and civilized use of the conch is to elect a chief in the group. In the modern world, they had adults who always controlled, sheltered, fed and organized them, but now, they need the same power-figure who should act in the same way until they are rescued. Accordingly, Ralph speaks up his opinion and says that they ought to have a chief to decide things. The candidates should show their strengths so that they can be elected. Consequently, Jack brings up his singing skill to prove that he has superior features to be elected as the leader; however, his skill is not taken seriously. Then, Roger, the serious-looking boy, advises to have a vote, and Ralph is chosen for some specific reasons. He is attractive and is the finder of the conch, so for the boys, Ralph has the necessary features to be the chief. He looks sympathetic with the white shining conch in his hand. Clearly, although the boys are new to the island, they still carry the traces of the modern world, and they choose Ralph as the chief of their modern selves. However, as they adapt to the wild nature of the island and discover their wild selves, their chief will change accordingly.

In their little community, the boys serve as a model of discriminative and despising modern world. Piggy, for instance, is bullied not only by other boys but also by good-natured Ralph. When they introduce themselves to each other, Piggy insists on not being called as *Piggy* due to his body shape as he suffered plenty from this insult at school; therefore, in this new place with its new community, he wants to be called by *his* name. Although he asks Ralph not to tell other kids, Ralph seems indifferent to his request. It is obvious that Ralph has no empathy towards Piggy. As Piggy tries to get into the pool, it takes time to get accustomed to the water. He complains about the pool's temperature and mentions his auntie who is his only protector. Ralph gets fed up with Piggy's whimsical attitudes and rudely interrupts him by saying, "Suck to your auntie!" (Golding, 2017, p. 8). Their attitude to each other is obviously different due to some reasons. First, Ralph and Piggy are different in term

of their upbringing. Since Ralph's father is a commander in the Navy, he might have a strict and authoritarian personality, hence hard on Ralph while he was a kid. Consequently, Ralph's crude rudeness can be seen as an instance of defence mechanism as the psychotherapist Aparna Balasundaram argues:

Being mean is usually a defence mechanism for children against a deep sense of hurt, sadness, shame, or unfairness. Instead of facing these feelings, they externalize their own pain with angry words and mean actions that hurt others. This way, they don't have to deal with their own negative emotions. (as cited in Rahguram, 2023, para. 3)

Therefore, having a father from military must have resulted in building a rude personality for Ralph. Second reason is that most children lack basic empathy. Dr. Eileen Kennedy-More (2018), who is a US-based psychologist and author, claims that it is possible for kids to be mean due to having "empathy blind spots." According to kids, specific feelings of individuals do not count, so they feel it is okay to be mean to the victim. Also, they justify their meanness by saying that the victim child is "weird" or "annoying" which makes their savage-like behaviour acceptable (para.4). In the novel, Piggy's constant references to his auntie, bringing up his asthma issue constantly and his chubby appearance can justify Ralph's nasty behaviours towards him such as calling him with a nickname, cursing and ignoring him from time to time.

Another significant reference to the psychology of the characters is clothing. The characters' clothes change according to their biggest strengths or weaknesses. For instance, when Piggy and Ralph blow the conch, the boys on the island show up. Although they all are the survivors of the same plane crash, they look different in appearance along with their age. Some boys have torn clothes while some has their trousers lowered or pulled back half-way. This can be interpreted as they either lack manners or they are too young to know the manners, or they naturally look as they are castaways. Yet, the cheerful impression, which is a hint about their characters, on their faces shows that they are docile enough to be controlled. There are some older boys who have a distinctive difference from the other British boys. Their entrance into the sight and their walk with their formal attire give a sense of superiority and power. Even though they also come from the plane crash, their look is still intact and serious compared to the other boys on the island. They still have the discipline to maintain the

formality they had before the crash. The boy called Merridew, or Jack, is the chief with his golden cap badge, and the rest of the group consists of other boys named Maurice, Roger, looking very secretive and silent in nature, Bill, Robert, Harold, Henry, and Simon, suffering from a fainting disorder with a caring personality. Their personality may differ, yet the way they are dressed shows their current mentality and their effects on the new inhabitants of the island.

Since the order in a society is the foundation of peace and safety, it is vital to establish it in the community in order to survive on an island with no supervisions of adults. Therefore, Ralph distributes some responsibilities such as a making a fire, building shelters and finding food. Declaring that he is not in charge of Jack's group, Ralph asks Jack and his group whether they desire to be part of the army or the *hunters*. Jack chooses to be a hunter. His choice can be interpreted as his latent hunger for power. As the definition explains, an army's function is all war-based that "always includes the notion of armed conflict between groups of people organized and trained and paid for killing, wounding and capturing each other" (Eckhardt, 1990, p. 10). Hunting is an action of killing more than protecting. Thus, Jack will be able to satisfy his need for power by being part of the hunters on the island. Another interesting fact about Jack and his group is their signalling resemblance to a creature in the haze of the beach when they show up for the first time. The word creature connotes something living but unknown, secretive and to be feared. It can also be defined as not belonging to a civilized world; it consumes, destroys and acts savagely. Jack, as the chief of the group, shows a strict and demanding attitude. It is clear to see that he lacks sympathy even for a member like Simon who faints in the heating sun. While the other members try to help him by lifting him up, Jack strictly orders them to leave him alone. Another similar character to Jack is Roger, who looks quiet and secretive in a negative way in the group. He does not seem to be a talkative type, yet his behaviours give away his uncivilized personality. His potential to be a savage person grows fully when Jack builds up his own tribe. Inspired by his chief, Jack, Roger also becomes wild and rolls a rock over Piggy and kills him with no mercy.

In the novel, the decision of Ralph, Jack and Simon to go on an expedition to discover the depths of this unknown island can be interpreted as a symbolical discovery of the boys within themselves. The island has a variety of features: the

lagoon, some wild animals, a challenging pink cliff, long forest creepers, the narrow tracks, the mountain, the square top-of which is full of flowers, butterflies and scenic circular horizon of water. Although this description is of the island itself, this exotic place is also very similar to the boys' journey into their own unconscious mind in their preadolescence. In the first place, the island is completely new to them, an absolute terra incognita. There is no one, but themselves to guide them, and they discover who they are without the guidance of an adult or any other interference. Since they are in their preadolescence, they are walking through the wilderness of their unconscious with the chaotic implications, images, ideas and pre-conceived thoughts of the period they go through. As they move forward, they see the extreme features of the place. They climb, plunge through, sweat, yell, cheer, get excited, and frightened: "Wacco, smashing, and whee-aa-oo!...The cause of their pleasure was not obvious" (Golding, 2017, p. 24). Indeed, the source of their sensation is the excitement of the discovery that comes along with their physio-psychological change within. The experience of doing this expedition in this new and wild world is quite different from their modern world. Briefly, whatever is new to them on the island is no different from whatever they keep in the depths of their unconscious mind, like their hidden strengths. Sigmund Freud defines the unconscious mind as "a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that outside of conscious awareness" (Cherry, 2023, para. 1).

Although they survive the plane crash, which is the current trauma they have at the moment, Ralph, Jack and Simon also have their traumas and repressed thoughts from their previous lives. First, Simon is known with his weak body which is his trauma and weakness. However, as he walks in the forest, he is able to use his botanical knowledge about recognizing a plant and its use like a candle bush. He also shows bravery, which is hidden in his unconscious, when he discovers the truth about the monster. What lies in Ralph's unconscious is his strong desires to be rescued. As they walk in the forest, he offers to draw a map to make their exploration easier. Jack, on the other hand, manifests his wild and energetic disposition. As Simon appreciates the attractive smell of the candle bushes, Jack slashes at one with his knife. He despises the plant for not being edible or lighting them. His repressed aggression is apparently dormant in his unconscious and waiting to erupt on this very wild island.

Another symbolic experience in the novel is the time when the three boys come across a piglet. That is a moment when all of them encounter a wild animal for the first time. The reader sees Jack as the only person with a knife, which can be interpreted as he is the one holding the power. When Jack sees the piglet, he pulls out his knife; however, he suddenly stops with a terror. When the piglet runs away, all laugh at him and make him ashamed, so he feels the necessity to explain his hesitation and says: “I was choosing a place, I was just waiting for a moment to decide where to stab him” (Golding, 2017, p. 29). It is clear to see that Jack is still a child, and acts in two minds. He first leans on his innocent childhood self, and then on his covert desire to be wild as his id leads him to be. Certainly, he is ashamed of showing his child-like part of himself when other boys are around. He has a reputation of being strong and authoritarian in his group and he desires to keep it. In addition, taking a life is considered as a big sin. The act of killing takes the innocence away from the person who murders. His stance about killing a living creature clearly indicates that there will be the time when his uncivilized self will wake up and lose his innocence.

In the novel, the meetings are very important, since everyone has a chance to share their thoughts, news and fears about this unknown island which can pave the way for many complicated experiences and emotions for the boys. First, they discuss the *snake-thing*, or the *beast* as little kids, or littluns call. For centuries, the snake has been depicted as both evil and good, in various narratives, oral traditions, and mythologies; therefore, the animal addressed as the snake-thing, or beast has a symbolic importance and has a negative effect on the children. It triggers the fear in young ones, and it provokes some brutal and destructive thoughts in the older ones, specifically in Jack. As a rational person, Ralph tries to convince them that the snake-thing cannot be real, and they exist only in places like tropical areas like Africa or India. Unfortunately, his rational explanations cannot surmount the generic feeling in the group, since fear is a strong feeling. According to Ekman & Friesen (1971, as cited in Salinas et al., 2021, p. 2103), there are six basic emotions called “The Big Six”: happiness, sadness, fear, surprise, anger, and disgust. The feeling of fear cannot be avoided due its primordial existence. The well-known psychiatrist Carl Jung coins the concept called *collective unconscious* and according to that concept, all people share a universal unconscious like mental patterns or memory traces including ancestral

predispositions or archetypes (1928, as cited in Mcleod, 2023, para. 21). The fear is identified with a snake, and it spreads to everyone like a disease. Consequently, Ralph's rational attempts to make them believe that there is no beast on the island fails, and this provokes Jack to move another step forward to his uncivilized self in the rest of the novel.

The balance between good and evil gets broken as the little ones continue to disappear due to lack of care of the older ones. When Ralph, Simon and Jack go up to check on the island, on their return, one little boy claims that they are not alone on the island. He talks about a monster or a creature that he calls the snake-thing. They ignore him and get frantic by the idea of making a signal fire. Unfortunately, this idea causes a bigger disaster because when they make the fire, it gets out of control. They see that tall swathes of creepers caught on fire, and looks like the shape of snakes, which petrifies the little boys much more. At that moment, Piggy realizes that the boy with the mark is missing. The fire becomes the *monster* and eats one of the littluns. Interestingly, neither Ralph nor Jack attempt to look for the traces of the lost boy. Simply, the kid was devoured by a monster-like fire that has fed on the ignorance, savagery and irresponsibility of some half-naked teenagers and easily-provoked littluns. Consequently, the disappearance of the boy with a mark on his face constitutes a significant sign of the fall of the innocence, hence the rise of the savagery on the island.

Once an individual confronts a fearful situation, he either deals with it by fighting or escaping. This is a type of a defence mechanism named as "Fight or Flight," first coined by the physiologist Walter B. Cannon. Cannon observes some physiological changes in animals when they face danger. Brow and Fee (2002) simply explain that "Cannon collected evidence to show that when an animal is strongly aroused, the sympathetic division of its autonomic nervous system combines with the hormone adrenaline to mobilize the animal for an emergency response of 'flight or fight'" (para. 4). When it is applied in the novel in a psychological sense, Jack puts the idea of fighting the beast while Ralph suggests making a fire which will also help them save themselves from the island and reach the civilization without any trouble. In other words, while Jack stands for defending themselves by hunting the beast in a violent way, Ralph chooses to send signal with smoke for their ultimate salvation back to their

modern world. Moreover, excitement coming from making a fire has an archetypal explanation. Fire is a strong element, so it stands for power, excitement and aggression. The human being and fire have a long history to share together. It has been used for cooking, protection, heating and alarming. The fear for the beast is repressed under the excitement of the fire. Although Ralph has the conch to speak and control the crowd, the children find it more exciting to follow Jack, which means Ralph is losing his orderly control over the children to Jack. Briefly, it can be concluded that the idea of making a fire, which is proposed by Ralph, serves as a temporary solution to dam up the fear for the monster.

Piggy, who symbolizes the reason in the novel, gets humiliated more as the story progresses. He has always supported Ralph since they met, but this support is not reciprocal. He can be counted as the co-founder of the civilization on the island due to the conch. Although he is the most valuable individual among the group, he is not appreciated. When the children collect some wood for the fire, they use Piggy's glasses to make a fire. Thus, in a way, Piggy simply becomes the Prometheus, the Greek titan who grants the fire to humans by standing against Zeus. His presence as an individual does not matter for the majority of the children; they disregard him as a person and only care about his glasses to make a fire. Jack finds Piggy's existence and his words totally irritating. Only Simon stands by him and dares to say that they have used his glasses. This common feeling also creates an interesting hatred triangle between Piggy, Jack and Roger. Although Roger manifests a silent character at the beginning of the novel, he transforms into a savage hunter covertly after Jack has his own tribe. Roger lifts Jack's verbal enmity to a higher savagery level and kills Piggy as callous as Jack kills the pigs. In conclusion, it is an unfortunate fact that apathy, ignorance, and violence bring the downfall of Piggy, who portrays the rationalism in flesh and blood.

It is a clear fact that living in a modern world has its own perks, providing a life of comfort. However, for individuals, especially, children who are living under the dominance of adults' world, this lifestyle can be oppressing, hence affects their personality. Consequently, the island becomes the place where these preadolescents are able to let out their repressed selves. Simon, a member of Jack Merridew's prim group, faints due to his illness; therefore, is seen as the weakest member in the group. On the other hand, when he wanders around alone in the forest, he is depicted as a real

admirer of the nature. He is a good-hearted character helping young ones like picking the fruits that are too high for them to reach. From his point of view, the island is depicted as a heaven-like place; thus, the island becomes a place where he can bring out his strong side of personality. His being nice to everyone clearly shows that the goodness in him is not something shaped or built by the society he was born into, but something he was born with and unconditional unlike Ralph's and Piggy's, which makes Simon's goodness different from theirs. In other words, his motivation to be kind is sort of natural while Ralph's and Piggy's sense of morality is imposed by the society they live in (Mogea, 2023, p. 175). Ralph, whose father is an experienced soldier, has a hopeful and responsible character and knows that they need to be rescued by the adults. Until that time, he works quite hard to survive. He spends his time and energy to build shelters and make a signalling fire so that they could go home as soon as possible. Interestingly, he is not carried away by the energy sourcing from his preadolescence unlike Jack whose personality evolves in a darker way. He practices what he learned in adults' world before the crash. He is a responsible and caring boy and is determined to save himself and other boys from the island.

Since there are no adults to shape or control their actions and behaviours on the island, all the children have chance to show their most basic instinctual and repressed behaviours without any external intervention; thus, the island becomes a big experimental laboratory of child socio-behavioural development for the reader. One day, while the littluns Henry, Percival and Johnny are playing by themselves on the beach, the two of the older ones, also known as biguns, Maurice and Roger come back from the fire watching. As they pass through littluns' castles, they kick and ruin them. Only Percival cries as some sand gets in his eye, which makes Maurice run away out of fear of being told off. He knows that his behaviour would receive chastisement by the adults in his *other life*. His reaction is an instance of a classical conditioning of the behaviour. Although in this new world, he wants to behave wild, his being conditioned to be nice is dominant and eventually, he yields to it. For the littluns, interestingly, what makes violence countable is its degree. Percival cries for the sand in his eyes since the pain is unbearable for him, but the other littluns seem indifferent to the destruction of their play. Henry even finds this quite normal and loses his interest there. Roger follows him. When Henry stops, Roger sits down and begins to throw him some

stones; however, he does not dare to hit him. Similar to Maurice, Roger is also conditioned by the invisible law of the *old world*. Later, Henry walks away and finds a tiny pond full of small creatures. He studies them with his childhood curiosity. Since he is bigger than them, he feels excited about controlling and ordering them. Instinctually, he acts as he is treated and likes being a master.

Ralph's and Jack's behaviours are also worth observation in term of what way they are inclined to. Their behaviours change as they realize that they have no one to tell them what to do as before when they were in adults' world, so they start to be the leading power on the island. They both become leaders; however, what shapes their behaviour is their internal motivations and the way they are raised. Ralph's behaviours are more constructive while Jack's are prone to be authoritarian. Jack's bully-like behaviours can be considered as signs of being exposed to some negative situations in the past. Victoria Costello (2016) explains that there many reasons that can make a child a bully: parents' harsh physical punishment, observing modelled aggressive behaviours of adults, watching violent acts on TV, having problems with processing emotions, or inheritance of a serious psychiatric diseases such as conduct disorder. It is obvious that Jack might have a history of them. Thus, the island becomes the best place to show his behaviours just like others.

Jack Merridew is one of the characters whose personality transforms widely like Ralph and other prominent characters; however, what makes his transformation unusually striking is his tendency to be more violent and his effects on other kids. Simply, his personality is prone to an uncivilized one. It is known that when appropriate conditions are provided, people tend to act according to what they desire the most to satisfy their covert urges. Considering this fact, it can be said that human psyche is complicated, and the actions are planned in the mind through mental filters. Before being cast away on the island, Jack was a symbol of British society who supported rules, aggression and dominance with his masculine and draconian dressing at the beginning. He was under the control of his superego shaped by the society. As he leaves the modern world, his power-hungry personality sheds its skin from his sergeant-like appearance to a violent savage hunter of the island. He claims to hunt pigs to provide meat to the kids; however, his intention is more than feeding them.

Indeed, his suppressed instincts lying in his id come to the surface, and he kills like a wild beast in the nature.

The mask that Jack wears for hunting gives him a new identity. Jack has always had a different leadership quality unlike Ralph. Ralph always supports the ultimate rescue plan by making a fire and to be noticed by the adults; on the contrary, Jack has been more into creating his own wild world through hunting, and with no adult intervention, he releases the repressed beast within. When Ralph finds out that Samneric, the twin boys, leaves the fire unattended and they miss a ship, he gets frustrated. He sees them with Jack who is coming back from a hunting session. This time he and his group succeed to hunt a pig and show it off in the most savage way: the bloody head impaled on a stick. Jack looks so happy and proud as he tells how he corners the pig: "...outwitted that living thing and taken away its life like a long satisfying drink" (Golding, 2017, p. 74). His insistence on talking about the blood plainly shows that he is not the boy he used to be. Now, he has a new personality behind his clay-smudged mask, and he leads a pack of hunters who are more excited about the blood than its meat. As Niven (1989) states "Jack represents more completely than anyone else in the novel the theme of 'reversion to savagery' and he finds that behind the disguise of paint and mask, he can assume a more self-confident personality" (p. 48). Thus, the absence of the adult supervision and the nature's stimulating effect on wild-self in human psyche make it possible for Jack to transform, or reverse to uncivilized. Referring to the mask giving a new identity to Jack, it has many purposes throughout the history similar to its revealing effect in the novel. Professor David Isaacs (2021) states, the masks "have been worn for display or for disguise, to woo or to wage war, to hide or to identify, used to protect or to punish" (p. 176). Briefly, he wears a mask of paint to camouflage himself, or to disguise his wild side, and then his character grows to fit it.

On the other hand, although Jack acts like a savage, he is the most supported one on the island. It is a clear fact that children, especially preadolescent boys, tend to care more for short term pleasures like entertainment than long term pleasures like saving money for a long time. Although Ralph's and Piggy's ideas are more rational, the majority has started to stand by Jack who addresses to boys' visceral pleasures. In fact, this is not limited to teenagers; humans in general are pleasure seeking beings.

Yale psychologist Professor Paul Bloom claims “Our response to pleasure is not just to the physical makeup of something; it is about its look, taste, smell or feeling of it, but rather to our beliefs of what it actually is, what its real essence is,” (“The Science behind Pleasure-Seeking”, 2011, para. 10). The same feeling is felt by the boys not only during the hunting of the animal pig for meat for the first time but also for the killing Piggy, a human being. Either killing an animal or as in the novel, killing a person is something that is the part of a curiosity of something new and even forbidden. They are actually mastering a new, negative experience: the act of killing. Furthermore, Jack becomes a key figure in this new experience. The reasons why Jack becomes popular and effective are, on the one hand, due to the fact that the young ones are provoked by the wild nature on the island, and they go through preadolescence. Briefly, while Ralph and Piggy’s adult-like manners puts them off, Jack triggers their savage part in their unconscious.

In the last meeting, Ralph attempts to remind the boys that they are not animals but civilized people. The meat hunted by Jack and his group is appreciated as the meat is something new and delicious. However, the boys are too carried away by this care-free lifestyle, and they start to be estranged from what makes them civilized. Keeping the hygiene, having a good and easy access to water, fire, and - are part of being a civilized human lifestyle. However, the rules and the habits begin to be abandoned by the majority of the boys. Being sorely disappointed of their uncivilized behaviours, Ralph transforms into adulthood more. He observes that boys play by the lagoon, the twins ignore the fire, Jack and his group are carried away by their hunting obsession. Obviously, they ignore their responsibilities and eventually lose their humanity. They do not refill coconut shells with fresh water, but they drink directly from the river like wild animals. Shelters are shoddy and ready to fall down in the first rain. Briefly, the way they behave change more day by day. All these problems are the result of their indolent perspective towards the life in this wild land and can cause a terrible crisis. Furthermore, Ralph does his best to clarify that they cannot continue to live like that anymore since their behaviours will shape their way of thinking as well.

Along with opposite characteristics, Ralph and Jack have both physical and ideological similarities. They both have leadership skills, and they are passionate and strong-willed. However, as the time passes, their intentions shape according to their

priorities and are based on what they desire the most. While Ralph struggles to go back to his previous life, Jack chooses to follow his obsession with leading a group and hunting. Ralph chooses peace, yet Jack prefers violence. Ralph's power comes from his reason, but Jack's power comes from his pride. The rules were made to create order in the group by both, but now Jack uses his violence to destroy the rules. Also, the beast that they discovered together up on the mountain gains different meanings to them. Although many older boys go up to the mountain to identify the beast, they are not able to see it clearly, so they complete the identification of the beast by both their rich imagination and the fear they have grown so far. However, once the boys split into two groups, their attitude towards the beast changes as well. According to Jack, when he was in Ralph's group, the beast was frightening, and he courageously claimed that he could hunt it, but after he riots and founds his tribe, the beast is identified as a hunter like him. He warns them not to disturb the beast. All in all, the existence of the beast is shaped according to their wild imagination and their inner personalities.

In the course of the novel, Jack's pride results in breaking away and making him start a new community, or his tribe on the island. It is an instinctual fact when a group of people come together, they form a community. That community is shaped according to the desires and strengths of the members of the community. The foundation of Jack's tribe is based on his savage character. When Jack demands to be the new chief of the group, he expects some support from the other boys. Being disappointed, he declares to start his own tribe. Although this looks like a defeat on his side, it is a period of time for others to think about this offer. As he leaves, he tells everyone about the advantages of joining his tribe like hunting. Although the boys from his group do not give him the open support, they join him secretly. This moment is an important point for the boys, since they are going through a transition from being good to evil. They are on a dilemma as to which side they should be on. Their *superego* clearly insists on them to stay with Ralph; on the other hand, their *id* eats away at their reason and they satisfy their hunger for the excitement they will have with Jack and his offers. When Jack performs his first successful hunting session with his new members, this hunt becomes not just a regular hunting for meat but a real gratification of his repressed pleasure for killing. He enjoys killing and drawing the blood of a sow, a female pig. Moreover, his fear for the beast transforms, as well. Instead of fearing

the beast, he deifies the beast and offers the head of the sow to the beast by impaling it on a spear. He chooses to honour it as he believes that the beast is also a hunter like them. In conclusion, Jack's new tribe becomes complete with its first savage hunting performance, his energetic and obedient hunters, and a god to worship.

In the novel, apart from being good and evil, neutral human nature is well illustrated through the littluns. While Ralph represents the hypothesis that people are civilized beings thanks to his humane leadership skills and mature thoughts, Jack symbolizes right the opposite with his merciless and violent nature and acts. However, there is another group named the littluns on the island who represents neither good nor evil nature of human beings. They manifest a different nature of humanity. They are always busy within their own worlds. They eat fruit, swim, run excitedly to the meetings by Ralph or cheer up the news of Jack's hunting with their dances. They hardly seem aware of the fact that they are trapped on an island governed by some teenagers who are not capable of taking good care of them. The older ones even put the littluns' lives at risk constantly by ignoring their existence. They are only interested in doing whatever makes them happy without considering the moral or the consequences of their actions. They set an example of a theory called "Utility" or "The Great Happiness". The influential 19th century philosopher John Stuart Mill coined these terms. Mill (1863) holds the idea that "Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure" (para. 2). Consequently, the littluns are not categorized into evil or good; they simply follow the people who give them pleasures like the meat provided by Jack and or the excitement caused by the meetings called by Ralph. They are pleasure-driven and choose not to fear anything like the beast. They simply avoid fear as much as they could.

Simon's death on the island reveals another dirty side of human nature. As Simon goes up to the mountains, he discovers that the beast is not real; it is a dead parachutist who is tangled by the lines of the parachute. He sets the dead body free and rushes to the boys to tell them the reality about their fear. Unfortunately, he becomes the victim of a theatrical representation of the hunt on the beach. Frenzied by the pig killing ritual dance, they attack and kill Simon. In a symbolical sense, Simon has the

resemblance to Jesus Chris. He has a good nature, and he goes through a lot of painful experience. All he wanted was to share the good news like Jesus whose mission was to be the messenger of God. They both suffered and died in their path. Furthermore, with the death of Simon, the goodness within them dies, and the whole community on the island lose its integrity. Although Ralph and Piggy, representing logic and good leadership in the novel, witness Simon's being attacked, they do not attempt to stop the murder hence to save him. On the top of that, Piggy tries to cover this fatal flaw by calling the murder an accident and refuses his participation in this savage murder with a defence mechanism called *rationalism*. He defences himself by stating that Simon should not have crawled out of the forest in the dark. For him, "Simon was batty. He asked for it." (Golding, 2017, p. 173). This time, Piggy uses his ration to avoid his indirect participation of Simon's death, and Ralph must agree to this to survive. As White states (1964) "Golding emphasizes the theme that the evil is inherit in man's nature and that childhood innocence serves only to veil it" (p. 164). Golding clearly explains the relationship between being a child and being evil in the novel. To sum up, every kid on the island is responsible for Simon's death directly or indirectly and what makes them be part of this savagery is not taking the responsibility for Simon's death rightfully.

Through the end of the novel, Jack's pride evolves into the ultimate monstrous level, and he becomes a true living symbol of the seven deadly sins on the island. Jack desires to be a chief; however, the boys decide on Ralph. His *envy* pushes him to show off his leadership skills on being hunters on the island. His *lust* for power drives him to found his own community. He has always been interested in hunting; thus, he has the *sloth* inside not keeping the fire in flames to be rescued as Ralph always insists. His hunting parties are a sign of *gluttony*. He craves for boasting about his hunting skills and feeds his dormant *wrath* with the blood of his hunts. Although Ralph has always agreed to share the fire, he chooses to raid both fire and the Piggy's glasses. His *greed* for power never ceases which results in death of three people in total. His sow hunting passion grows intensively, and he does not hesitate to attempt to kill Ralph. He becomes the real beast of the island behind his mask. Although the mask is expected to hide people's face, it reveals who Jack really is: *the beast of the island*. Moreover, his wrath encourages the potential beast in Roger who has always had a

secretive personality. Roger ends up killing Piggy by rolling a boulder on him. Consequently, the existence of the beast started as a childish fear in the imagination of the littluns and completes its existence in the human form in Jack and his hunters.

The big fire on the island in the final pages of the novel has an ironic importance. The fire has been vital for everyone on the island. Ralph always insisted on having a fire for its smoke and heat. As Jack turns into a savage, he uses the fire to track down and kill Ralph. Ralph was always disappointed by Jack since he never used fire according to Ralph's intention but to cook meat. For Ralph, the fire meant redemption, while for Jack, it meant destruction. The fire made by Jack's tribe to destruct Ralph turns into a life-saving signal for Ralph. A naval officer, assuming that they are playing games and having fun on the island, finds them thanks to the smoke. However, what they were playing was not a game but a bloody battle between the savage and civilized preadolescent British boys, who were being protected from the savagery of the war caused by the men of the *modern* world.

2. BLINDNESS

Humanity has gone through many evolutionary changes since people learned how to stand on their two feet on Earth. Beginning from the drawings on the walls of the caves to the air-conditioned museums, from the invention of the wheel and the discovery of the fire to the luxurious cars, gigantic ships and planes and vast cuisines, human beings have evolved enormously through the eras. All this advancement is the result of aiming for a better version of what has been discovered or invented previously. This situation also has resulted in new definitions in the dictionaries. New discoveries are defined as *modern*, *contemporary* and *civilized* while the old ones are defined as *antique*, *outdated* or *uncivilized*. Interestingly, the definitions of *civilized* and *uncivilized* are subjective rather than objective. To illustrate, aristocrats who portray themselves as *civilized* used to have fox hunting parties as a traditional sport, which is illegal in England, Scotland and Wales today. They used to chase foxes on horses with their trained dogs and would kill the wild beings with their shotguns for pleasure. However, the same community characterizes the African natives as *uncivilized* since they do the same hunting activity with their hand-made spears with no shoes on and almost naked in order to feed themselves and survive. Consequently, it can be concluded that time and ethnocentrism have a major contribution to the definitions of these words. National Geographic Society in the article of Civilizations (2022) states that this term was once ethnocentric, since, for example, for centuries, American Indians were addressed as savages by the European invaders in the 15th century due to American Indians' unfamiliar customs, beliefs and color.

While the constant change in civilizations affects people's way of living, does it ever have an influence on people's behaviours towards each other when circumstances alter? In *Blindness*, Jose Saramago perfectly describes the void of morality and vulgarity through an epidemic of blindness. In the novel, the reader witnesses how a modern society changes from *civilized* to *uncivilized* when individuals become blind one by one. This is called "white blindness" and makes a group of people, who are totally different from each other socially and in character, come together. They have no names: the doctor's wife, the doctor, the girl with dark glasses, the old man with the black eyepatch, the first blind man, the first blind man's wife, the little boy, the car thief and such like. Despite their differences, all the

characters share the same vicious and discriminatory experiences during the epidemic. However, only one character, the doctor's wife, is not stricken by this epidemic. She does not mention this openly; however, she ends up being the one who suffers the most from this blindness.

The most common and the main method for analysing a piece of literary work is to scrutinize the characters, their relationship with the other minor characters and the progress of the events. However, it should not be forgotten that the writer's narrating style is also crucial to get the psychology of the characters, intensity of the plot and the depth of what is to be conveyed to the reader. Saramago, interestingly, neither uses proper names for the characters, nor proper punctuation rules in their conversations. For instance, their speeches and conversations do not end with periods. Instead, sentences between the speeches of characters are separated by commas as in the conversation between the first blind man and the doctor:

The doctor asked him, Has anything like this ever happened to you before, or something similar, No, doctor, I don't even use glasses. And you say it came on all of a sudden, Yes, doctor, Like a light going out, More like a light going on, During the last few days have you felt any difference in your eyesight, No, doctor, Is there, or has there ever been any case of blindness in your family, Among the relatives I've known or have heard discussed, no one, Do you suffer from diabetes, No, doctor, From syphilis, No, doctor. (Saramago, 2017, p. 15)

According to Kevin Cassell (2020), "As the punctuation changes, so too does the tone and, along with that, the context of each sentence" (p. 11). He also adds that punctuation highlights the author's intention. The reader can understand [as if they are listening to] the tone of voice of the author and identify the characters' attitudes to the situation in the work (Cassell, 2020, p. 11). In the novel, the blindness affects everyone equally, and once everyone loses their ability to see, they become dependent on one another, which means no one is superior to each other. I argue that Saramago simply removes the societal and gender-based barriers between the individuals and makes all the *same* by connecting them with commas in the conversations. He also applies the same strategy by not addressing them by their names in the novel because as Jodi Schulz (2017) states: "Using a person's name in conversation creates a culture of respect, recognition and consideration..." (para. 4). In other words, names are the signs

of being civilized and distinguished individuals; however, through Saramago's tone and style, this blindness appears to be stripping off more than their names and their sight from the characters. The characters become nothing but simple objects that are lined like simple nouns just separated by commas in a sentence.

Saramago expresses an interesting part of human nature in the car thief's transformation. In the novel, the first victim of blindness is a man driving in the traffic. While he is waiting at the traffic lights, he suddenly becomes blind. As the crowd gathers to understand what the problem is, a man volunteers to help the blind man, and drives him to his house. As *a good Samaritan*, he offers him to accompany until the blind man's wife arrives; however, the newly-blinded man begins to believe that he should not invite a stranger to his house, especially, when he is completely weak and psychologically exhausted. Unsurprisingly, the thief leaves along with the car keys. The writer clarifies how he brings out his true nature as a thief:

On offering to help the blind man, the man who then stole his car, had not, at that precise moment, had any evil intention, quite the contrary, what he did was nothing more than to obey those feelings of generosity and altruism which, as everyone knows, are the two best traits of human nature and to be found in much more hardened criminals than this one, a simple car-thief without any hope of advancing in his profession, exploited by the real owners of this enterprise, for it is they who take advantage of the needs of the poor. (Saramago, 2017, p. 17)

The reader might think that the thief has always been evil, and his personality results in stealing the car. However, this quote clearly shows that his state of being evil is the consequence of being exploited by higher level thieves who always steal cars as a business. Thus, while he is one of the victims of a superior organization, this unfair fact initiates him to be another abuser of another victim like the first blind man. Basically, in this modern world, there is a hierarchy of many systems such as politics, education, economic, etc. that have a palpable effect on every individual. On the other hand, there is another type of hierarchy which is unspoken but widely impacts the world population: capitalism. This system, as Thompson (2023) states in his article, is criminogenic; the law is controlled by the capitalist elite according to their interests and, finally, their crimes are so costly and enormous that they are not as visible as the

crimes committed by the thief in the novel. Consequently, the thief is at the bottom of this hierarchy which makes him both a victim and a criminal.

Another interesting hypothesis about one's becoming a criminal is *the conditioned reflex* of one's personality and the available circumstance of the crime. It is clear to see that the man who was addressed as the good Samaritan at first ends up being a thief at the end. The author explains this change as a result of a conditioned reflex of personality. To be more precise, the thief is drawn into the idea of stealing the car as if he decides to buy a lottery ticket once he notices a ticket-vendor. He simply buys the ticket to see if he can win or not without caring about what has been set in his fortune. Along with this idea, the first blind man's vulnerable state of being able to be robbed also paves the way to the robbery. As it is mentioned in the novel, according to the sceptics, when human nature is taken into account, the opportunity does not create a thief but helps a person to trigger the thief inside him (Saramago, 2017, p. 17). On the other hand, as Dr. Sinha (2016) claims they believe external forces are the key factor in their crime: "The criminal, or the crime-prone personality, sees events as external forces and connections, not according to his/her or its own or another's feelings, thoughts, or inner forces" (p. 42).

Even though all the natural disasters, including the blindness epidemic in the novel, have equal impacts on every single human being no matter what gender, disability or age, there is one deeply-rooted illness existing since the creation of Adam. This societal disease is called *discrimination*. This unfair treatment sometimes has been protested out loud, sometimes ignored or even addressed as something exaggerated by the opposite gender. Independent from the epidemic in the novel, this gender-based and uncivilized act is obviously the discrimination against women. After the first blind man, there are two more characters who end up blind: the thief and the girl with dark glasses. Both characters symbolize two sins: theft and prostitution. After stealing the car, the thief goes blind, and he fears being caught by the police. Knowing her husband's bad record, when the thief's wife sees that her husband coming home under the police escort, she thinks her husband has been arrested as usual; however, this time, the police come to the house to report that her husband is blind. On the other hand, the blindness strikes the girl with dark glasses while she is making love with her male customer in a hotel room. Realizing that she is blind, she panics, screams, and

finally gets evicted from the hotel by force. The police arrive, but she does not receive the same treatment as the thief does. The police arrive and ask if she has money for the taxi. For such cases, the State does not pay for the transportation since “these women belong to that considerable number who pay no taxes on their immoral earnings” (Saramago, 2017, p. 27). They both become blind, but depending on the crime they commit, they receive completely different treatment. She is openly humiliated by the same police force escorted by.

The doctor experiences the insolence and apathy of the government that is blinded by hierarchy of the system and excessive bureaucracy which is an uncivilized fact about this so-called-civilized system. As soon as the doctor becomes blind, he calls the Ministry of Health as confidential matters like this sudden blindness require immediate action. He fails and says, “This is the stuff we’re made of, half indifference half malice” (Saramago, 2017, p. 32). Although he represents a responsible and logical character in the novel, by saying *we*, he simply supports the idea that human being is evil, especially, when they are acting as a superior organization like a government. Thus, the bureaucracy becomes one of the fundamental obstacles of the modern world, and this damages the reputation of the government in the doctor’s view. Not being able to make the government believe the seriousness of the situation, the blind doctor calls a colleague of his. Thanks to him, an ambulance arrives to take him along with his wife who claims to be blind in the last minute. According to Constitutional Rights Foundation (2001), the famous English philosopher John Locke states the government is responsible for providing security and protection for the God-given natural rights of the people and mutually, people must obey the laws of their ruler; this is a sort of contract. However, in the novel, on the arrival of the quarantine area, the doctor’s wife clearly sees that this is not the case; the government does not seem to treat them in a very expected *civilized* way. It is their misfortune that both are taken to a run-down mental hospital. Let alone blind people, it is not even hygienic and liveable for any sighted people. For the government, as long as they are not able to see, the blinds are tagged as incomplete and dependent, so they do not deserve to be treated humanely. Understanding the situation is very hopeless, the doctor’s wife decides to help them all: “My love, you can’t [ask me to leave], I’m staying to help you and the others who may come here, but don’t tell them I can see” (Saramago, 2017, p. 39). What makes the

doctor's and his wife situation worse is not their physical blindness but the government's turning a blind eye to the urgency of the situation and insensitiveness they show to the blinds.

In the asylum hospital, the reader witnesses the unsympathetic *the-Big-Bad-Brother* attitude towards the blind people. All blind people are scared, lost, and shaken with a gruff voice coming from a loudspeaker fixed above the door. Due to the fear of the unknown epidemic, the government chooses to communicate with a loudspeaker, through which it announces the most inhumane orders, such as shooting the people trying to escape from the building. Apart from being a big bad brother, the government acts like a god who creates people; however, it does not intervene into their lives; consequently, the system might remind the reader Deism. The government simply creates an area for the hopeless blind people, sets the rules and watches how they live no matter what kind of circumstances arise, and how they manage in these unfortunate circumstances: "[T]he internees are responsible for any damage caused by these fires, tenth, in the event of a fire getting out of control, whether accidentally or on purpose, the firemen will not intervene..." (Saramago, 2017, p. 42). Thus, the government brings a group of defenceless blind people together in a limited area with limited options and does not guarantee their safety. Moreover, they are responsible for their own actions even if these result in death.

The first fight in the asylum occurs between the first blind man and the thief. This shows that being hopeful is a vital key to survive in the direst times. Once all the blind people introduce themselves to each other, thief and the first blind man's identity becomes uncovered. They remember that they met before and begin to blame each other. The doctor explains that everyone is the victim here. They simply ignore the real problem that is they are all blind and held in this run-down building completely ignored by the government itself. The thief blames the first blind man for helping him which caused him to contract the blindness, and the first blind man accuses him of taking advantage of his blindness and stealing his car. The thief thinks this blindness will last for a short time, and he will be able to get his revenge for all mishaps caused by the first blind man. The interesting fact about the thief is that he seriously believes he is suffering the consequences of his help, but not being punished by God for his deed. To conclude, the thief's bad character affects his belief about the cause of his

blindness which means one's personality has influence on their belief or perspective when they evaluate the causes or effects of the actions happening around them. As stated in the Bible, "Whoever looks for good will find kindness, but whoever looks for evil will find trouble." (Proverbs 11:27, New Century Version, 2005). Consequently, if this statement is taken into account, he suffers from his corrupted character and his deeds.

As the time passes, more internees arrive: a policeman, a taxi driver, a pharmacist's assistant, a hotel maid and an office worker. The blindness brings out the generic psychology that all people have: the fear for the unknown coming with the blindness. Significantly feeling insecure and intimidated by all the things they have to go through; they gather the strength and start to introduce themselves by calling themselves with *numbers* instead of saying their actual names to the group. The doctor's wife thinks to herself "He [the policeman] didn't give his name, he too knows that names are of no importance here" (Saramago, 2017, p. 57). Interestingly, she notices a similar psychology that all the blinds share here: the feeling of being nothing and desperate for help. They are apparently aware of the fact that without their ability to see, they are completely lost, which means that they have no identity to be taken into consideration. This sense of hopelessness is also guaranteed by the soldiers. They claim that they do a favour for the non-blind population by forcing the blind people to stay inside and not letting them get involved with anything happening in the building. This attitude becomes the biggest punishment for all the blinds.

Another sad experience that all the blind people suffer from is the distribution of food. Along with the psychological burdens due to the blindness, the government somehow acts in an irresponsible way while serving the food to the blind internees. Although there are eleven people, they only send food for five people. On witnessing all the unfairness, the doctor and his wife decide to ask for medicine for the thief, yet the soldiers do not give, because deep inside, the soldier reckons the quarantined people as guilty people rather than the victims of the pandemic. The soldier's behaviour simply "shows just how profoundly the government distrusts their citizens. As if the virus was not enough, the public was portrayed as an additional part of the problem" (Reicher, 2021). To sum up, people like the soldiers or the government dehumanize these victims of blindness rather than helping them.

Both in etymological and philosophical sense, the word *civilization* focuses on the word *civil* which means human. For a government to be civilized, it mainly needs to put the human in its centre, which means it should provide the necessary conditions for civilians to lead a decent life. On the contrary, the government avoids helping its people, watches them suffer in their blindness and shows no empathy for their pain. For example, the thief is the first victim who suffers from this uncivilized government. When the thief lies in excruciating pain from the sore in his leg, he decides to leave the ward with the idea that the soldiers will see his terrible condition and take him to the hospital. His condition is so grim that “he had no feeling in his leg, nothing except the pain, the rest had ceased to belong to him” (Saramago, 2017, p. 68). His physical description aligns with his state of mind and psychology as well. He is simply crippled by the wound, lost in a white sea of blindness, and ignored by the government. When he goes out, the soldier notices of his white face which creates a state of terror. As the American author Andrew Smith says, “People fear what they don't understand”, the fear-smeared soldier releases a load of bullets at close range to the thief. Filled with terror with a loaded rifle ready to be used, the soldier commits his first homicide representing the government which, by law, promises to protect every single citizen without any discrimination. As it is stated in the Holy Qur'an, “If anyone slew a person unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land it would be as if he slew the whole people” (The Holy Qur'an, 5:32); consequently, the government commits its most atrocious and uncivilized offence by this act of homicide. Thus, killing one human in need means to kill all humanity in every sense of the word.

The mental and the physical misery creates an inevitable grim atmosphere in the building. The wounded thief gets murdered by the soldiers in the most uncivilized way while he expects a bit of mercy from the government. The apathy of the soldiers strictly carries on when the doctor's wife advances to the gate to demand a shovel to bury him; however, the soldier states, “There is no such thing here, on your way... Don't bother about any burial, leave it there to rot...” (Saramago, 2017, p. 75). She reminds the soldier that the infection will spread into the air and affect every single person including the soldiers, hence they must bury the dead man. As Professor Mark (2009) explains in his article that marking burials have existed as one of the earliest human activities dating back to 130.000 years; the proper burial of the deceased was

crucial in every ancient culture along with having elaborate rites to emphasise the respect for the dead; however, this ritual is only accomplished by a group of blind people with their limited source. To sum up, under these inhumane conditions, the doctor's wife still struggles to make people in her ward to stay connected with their civilized selves which is led by her good nature and the final remnants of their weakening hope.

As time passes, the treatment of the soldiers gets more inhumane, and even they address the blinds as *beasts*. When the dead body issue is taken into consideration, it can be argued that being alive is grievously no different from the deceased thief lying under the cold ground. Moreover, in the course of the events, food crisis is arisen, and they are not served breakfast properly or in time. When the food starts to be served, the internees rush for food, and the soldiers fear and panic. Consequently, they drop the containers and aim their rifles at them. After the soldiers are done with their shooting, the sergeant comments, "It would have been better to let them die of hunger, when the *beast* dies, the *poison* dies with it" (Saramago, 2017, p. 80). The ignorant and inhumane belief the soldiers have is that the blinds are the actual cause of the blindness, which is not the case. When the doctor was not blind, he had the time to check the blind patients and saw that there was nothing wrong with them physically, but the real reason was unknown. Unfortunately, for the soldiers, the best solution is to exterminate the blinds who are believed to be the source of the problem. It is an inevitable fact that when fear, unlimited power and ignorance combine, people in power believe that they have the ultimate right to make significant decisions about victim-blinds' lives. Thus, the abominable act of shooting the blinds is a simple reaction to what is unknown, which is another type of the blindness the soldiers have. Being impotent in the terrible asylum conditions and blinded by an unknown plague also make the internees to be the victim of a condition named "Broken Windows Theory". According to this theory, Dr. Nicole Washington and Dr. Yalda Safai (2022) state that communities that are significantly neglected are open to more negligence, and this paves the way for any sort of offenses in these areas. When this theory is adapted into the novel, it can be stated that the actions of the army is not monitored rightfully by a superior power, and this encourages them to dehumanize the

hospitalized victims severely in many ways such as not serving food, not helping them with their basic needs and so forth.

Another uncivilized act that the soldiers perform is their strategy on how to control the population of the blind. As time passes, more blinds come into the building; however, the capacity is limited. Due to the influx of newcomers, the soldiers think of a solution: *the culling*. This idea is actually put forward by a colonel. He simply believes that the blinds should be shot like wild, loose animals as soon as they go out of the building since being blind is not different from being dead, and their population is nothing but a problem like unwanted and overgrown rats. It is a patent reality that there is an uneven power balance between the soldiers and the blinds. The blinds are more than *quarantined*; they are *caged* like contaminated animals. They are transferred at the back of a truck, lined, pushed to the building, fed randomly and killed without any consideration. Simply, the blinds become the target of victim blaming, which makes their life more worthless in the eyes of the soldiers, as soldiers believe their treatment is just according their worth. The victim-blaming comes from “the just world hypothesis” by Melvin Lerner. According to the hypothesis, “People have a need to believe that their environment is a just and orderly place where people usually get what they deserve” (Dalbert and Donat, 2015, p. 3). By and large, those who end up being blind are now thought to be suffering the consequences of their corrupted deeds or personalities, which means they deserve this catastrophic experience, inappropriate living conditions and the inhumane treatment by the government.

The contaminated people also show some complex psychological states in the building. They can see, yet they suffer from the same horrendous conditions as the blind ones do. They are no different from the blind ones. They are in the Limbo or Sheol where “the dead people are placed below the surface of the earth, and it is dark and joyless” (Volle, 2023). It seems they are more advantageous compared to the blinds as they are capable to see; however, their eyes do not witness anything good but blood and death. The most catastrophic experience they have had so far is the *legitimate defence* during the food delivery. They can take away the food containers, yet the containers stand near a pile of the dead bodies of the blind people. While the physical urge of hunger is on an extreme level, the sight of the blood pool formed by the dead causes a repulsive answer to their undeniable need to fill their stomachs. In a

place where there is no power or justice to control or make decisions in the most complicated situations, spirituality with some imagination becomes convenient to lean on. The view before the contaminated ones is like that:

They're dead, they can't do any harm, someone remarked, but who can say that this white blindness is not some spiritual malaise, and if we assume this to be the case, then the spirits of those blind casualties have never been as free as they are now, released from their bodies, and therefore free to do whatever they like, above all, to do evil, which, as everyone knows, has always been the easiest thing to do (Saramago, 2017, p. 82).

As they stand there contemplating seriously before the containers and the pile of the dead people, they also try to measure the consequences of taking the food away near them. They are more wrathful and dangerous than ever before because they have been murdered by the soldiers and now their very-much-earned food containers are being taken away from them unfairly. It feels now that the food is haunted by the dead ones. On the other hand, they are conscious of the fact that doing evil is the easiest like taking away the containers from the blind people who died during the food crisis. Concluding from this, fearing the dead is an ancient feeling observed in many civilizations, and now, it is observed here in the hospital perfectly. Puett (2011) states, “Harbouring jealousies and resentments, they [spirits] would be drawn to where they once lived and would send down disasters and misfortunes on their living family members” (p. 226). In conclusion, for now, the contaminated ones’ fear of the dead’s curse outweighs the pain of hunger. A hungry stomach is less dominant than a petrified soul. Being deprived of basic needs, and a ward with full of terror make the contaminated internees go through a painful spiritual and mental journey.

British novelist D.H. Lawrence once said, “What the eye doesn’t see and the mind doesn’t know, doesn’t exist”. However, this is not probable in a place where blinds are cooped up in a run-down hospital with no running water. What makes people superior and civilized is the importance they give to their hygiene. Unfortunately, not having a clean environment for the confined people is a growing problem. First, the hospital is physically insufficient due to its old infrastructure, which paves the way for unhygienic situations. Secondly, the apathy of the government and the army for the confined people is so intense that they provide no humane help to make the conditions

better to live. Experiencing many traumas like having dead people around and scarce food delivery add up to their insolence and degeneration in their modern-people attitude. After experiencing unbearable inhumane and unhygienic conditions caused by the blinds inside, the doctor thinks to himself and says, “There are many ways of becoming an animal, this is just the first of them [the hygiene issues]” (Saramago, 2017, p. 89). He is simply aware of the fact that one’s living in their own waste is the first step to going uncivilized, and he is able to sense that there is a lot to come for the foreseeable future since living in uncivilized conditions bring about the uncivilized selves within people living there.

Without a doubt, being blind is unbearable; however, sometimes being the only seeing person like the doctor’s wife can be the hardest thing for a person among so many needy blind people, so one of the motivations for the wife to survive is to be able to know the time. When one is blind, everything is a vast blankness. Neither time nor place matters for them. Thanks to her sight, the doctor’s wife is able to watch the time. As a matter of fact, time is a fundamental aspect of human existence; it gives people a reasonable meaning and a critical cause to live on this planet. Through time, the integrity of human beings is measured and balanced. Thus, it is one of the essential elements to survive physically, mentally and psychologically. When the doctor’s wife notices that she forgets to wind up the watch, she bursts into convulsive weeping as if a terrible disaster has struck her. Her sentimental reaction to forgetting to wind up the watch becomes the last straw after witnessing so much pain. Losing the track of the time can make her existence meaningless to her. Knowing the time reminds her of her connection with peaceful times before the plague. The time literally represents the *hope* and the *motivation* for going back to those moments of happiness again. Considering the fact that everything is permanent, this blindness experience will disappear as the way it appeared which supports the hope in the novel. Zakay (2014) states that temporal experiences are essential for people to enable them for adaptation and survival; this means it is easier for the person to deal with issues when they are able to judge the duration of the issue (p. 2). In other words, keeping the track of time helps the wife to remain psychologically stable in the course of the plague.

The girl with dark glasses’ remark about the wife when she is in her depressed moment points out an important characteristic in the wife’s personality. The wife’s

altruistic personality resembles Jesus the Savior. The fact that seeing her watch stopped makes her feel hapless and overwhelmed. She breaks into tears. The girl with dark glasses hears her and moves into her direction. She wants to console her for her sudden sadness and says, "If you who are so strong are becoming disheartened, then there really is no salvation for us" (Saramago, 2017, p. 93). The word salvation creates an apt similarity between the doctor's wife and Jesus Himself since she witnessed everything inside the gloomy walls of the hospital: the pain, the death, the filth, the violence and more. All these are too painful to tolerate just like in Jesus' time for Him. He also suffered a lot. He felt desolated, was mortified, humiliated although his strength was God Himself. And the wife's strength is her sight; however, she goes through the pain like any other blind people. Her strong personality has been a real motivating help, so the girl with dark glasses always has faith in her and cares about her like she is a follower of hers. The girl tells her that there are moments of weaknesses and tears often symbolize people's salvation. To sum up, the doctor's wife's tears are not the sign of her weakness but the marching step to their own freedom.

Although the final flux of blind people causes overpopulation in the building, optimism and hope seem the only port in a storm for the blind people, especially for the doctor as a civilized person. For him, the arrival of so many blind people appear to bring many advantages. First, he believes that psychological nature of the ward will change since the ward is completely full, which means that they can establish and maintain stable and lasting relationships with each other without the disturbance of unexpected newcomers. Another advantage is that the authorities standing on guard by the building will be conscious of the fact that there is an obvious increased need for the food, and its preparation, and delivery are an urgent need for the blind internees. Considering the fact that overpopulation will bring its own disadvantages, trying to stay positive and looking on the bright side are necessary to survive in that place.

Being good or bad is a complex phenomenon in human nature. There are some specific conditions are effective to see if people are good or bad, but they are not the deciding factors. In the novel, everyone is the victim of blindness, but it does not mean that everyone is innocent or have a good nature. There are two wards: the good and the bad wards. The first ward is where the doctor and his wife stay. They are the good

ones, and they believe that being blind does not mean living like captive animals, so they do their best to adapt to the state of blindness and maintain the hygiene as possible as they can. They do not leave the place dirty after they eat. Everything is put away in a tidy way or categorized from the dirtiest to the less dirty. The physical motivation is the doctor's wife herself because she simply emphasizes the reality of the conditions they live in. She points out that if they cannot live like human beings, at least, they should avoid living like animals. This mentality becomes the foundation of the happiness they can create by themselves, but the situation is far more different for the other ward. They give the priority to eating; however, they still have their dead friends open in the hall decaying. Their irresponsibility of not burying the dead in time results in an extremely unpleasant stench that affects everyone in the wards. This clearly draws a line between the civilized and the uncivilized ones. For the great philosopher Thomas Hobbes, there is no good or bad because people have purposes and their purpose is to follow the things that are desirable and to stay away from the things that are harmful (as cited in Van Apeldoorn, 2019, p. 71). In short, while the doctor's wife's ward finds goodness in staying hygienic and staying away from the violence, the second ward finds its way of happiness in apathy and being indolent.

It is a fact that communication is the foundation of all human relationship, and through communication, people can express themselves and understand each other. In the novel, the alleviating and unifying impact of communication is brought back by a newcomer: the old man with the black eyepatch. First, he brings the latest news from the outside world. He shares all the possible information about the catastrophic effects of this blindness epidemic outside the walls of the building. On the top of that, he happens to have a small radio which puts a smile on the faces of the internees as it helps them listen to the news about the progress of the pandemic around the world. Along with his radio, which lifts up the motivation in the ward, he also comes up with an idea which creates a bond among the people. He simply asks people to share what they saw last when they went blind. This act of sharing has a therapeutic effect because they recall that they had a life before this blindness, and this séance helps them realize that they share a common problem. Even the girl with dark glasses says in shame, "I was in a hotel room with a man lying top of me...then I had seen everything white" (Saramago, 2017, p. 122), the old man with the black eyepatch repeats her last sentence

about seeing all white not to cause her any embarrassment. He acts so professionally that his supportive stance is very similar to the *universality factor* in group psychotherapy. According to the famous psychiatrists Yalom and Leszcz (2005), universality factor is that the traumatized individuals are not unique or alone in their problems which are similar to the rest of the group, so this should not cause any embarrassment (p. 6). In short, the old man with the black eyepatch creates a safe and judgement-free environment in the midst of these chaotic times temporarily.

What is worse than being blind, kept in quarantine and living in a hygiene-deprived hospital is to be abused by another group of blinds. It is a well-known fact that people who share a common point or have similarities are inclined to form groups to stay strong and survive, yet that is not the case in the asylum although everyone is blind and living under the same severe conditions. The final blinds take away the allocation of food intended for the first ward and demand payment to get the food. That means that there is another front line in this battlefield to fight against. They are forced to do the payment with their valuables such as banknotes and diamonds. Thus, this abandoned asylum building becomes the home to two types of micro societies: the victim blinds and the criminal blinds. The first ward always chooses an orderly life and kindness in their ward while the other final comers choose the violence although they share the same unfavourable living conditions in the building. What makes them the polar opposite is the fact that criminal blinds are more inclined to do evil than to do good. For example, instead of looking for a trash can, people throw their trash away. Professor Zaluski (2022) explains that if conditions are not good or restrictive for truly good acts, and motivation is low or evil, it is easier to act in an evil way (para. 7, 9). Since the food is scarce in the building, the last ward does not choose to share; they do what the best is for themselves but the worst for the other wards, which is stealing people's food in return of valuable objects. Alas, the soldiers react no different from the evil ward. They ignore the cry for help. For them, it is acceptable to witness the blinds' killing each other so that the problem will disappear soon by itself. Two evil forces from inside and outside simply portray the human nature. Saramago also comments on human nature in his interview with Maya Jaggi (2008):

I don't see the veneer of civilisation, but society as it is. With hunger, war, exploitation, we're already in hell. With the collective catastrophe of total

blindness, everything surfaces - positive and negative. It's a portrait of how we are. The crux is who has the power and who doesn't; who controls the food supply and exploits the rest. (para. 7)

Saramago simply emphasises that although people might be even under the same bad conditions, as being blind in the novel, once they have the power and no punishing agent above them, they are naturally inclined to be evil.

McLeod, Ph.D, (2023) states that according to American psychologist Maslow, there is a hierarchy of needs for people, the bottom of which includes air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing and sex (reproduction) (Physiological Needs section). As for sex, it is not considered for survival. It is only necessary for people to sustain generations. When there is violence in sex, it becomes a repulsive act of crime. In the novel, rape and gender discrimination are the worst situations that women have to ever experience to survive. When all the valuables are collected by the hoodlums for food, no money is left to be handed over for the next eating session. However, a new demand arrives from them. They want women. This demeaning demand stirs people and brings up many thoughts. For men, this is a matter of survival, so yielding to this is acceptable for women. However, women, rightfully, feel degraded since they will be the ones who will have to cope with the erotic frenzy of twenty desperate men blinded by their own lust. Voluntarily or without consent, from men's perspective, it is acceptable for women to have sex to get food for the whole ward from those vulgar men while it is out of question if that sex is asked from men to serve for the same intention. For men, masculinity means power and that power comes before even food. As Assoc. Prof. Morgan (as cited in Klein, 2021, para. 21) states in a world of patriarchy, it is a necessity to adopt a masculine gender role for men to keep that power, and part of masculinity is heterosexuality, and in the novel, that power renders the women to be the only victims of the men of both wards.

Due to the government's lacking power and the unbearable hunger force, women have to make a life-and-death decision. This decision will let them either eat enough to survive and live with shame, or die from hunger with dignity. However, some decisions are sacrificial rather than personal like a woman in her fifties who has her mother in the ward and cannot let her die of hunger. The main concern for them is to provide food for everyone to survive. The responsibility of feeding everyone is taken

on by women who are demanded to have sex with the hoodlums whose intentions are more than their so-called manly sexual needs but indeed unleashing the uncivilized creatures they have had all along. The decay in their character is rather apparent. The hoodlums humiliate women verbally and physically while they are with them. Considering the squalid living conditions in the building and the bedraggled appearance they all have, their demand is not about survival but a barbaric offence to the civil nature of humanity. When they have the women in their ward, they control the women by touching them like selecting the best fruit from a basket. As the group leader has the upmost power, he prioritises himself to choose the most attractive women. When he is done with the women, he just sends them away near other men who jostle each other like hyenas around a carcass. What makes human beings different from animals is their cognitive abilities such as being empathetic. Analysing the empathy levels among the men in all wards, it is obvious that being evil is a matter of choice, and all the men are conscious of it. Through this rape, all men and women in the first ward will be able to fill their stomachs with very little food, yet the trauma that the women had from the rape will cause a huge damage in their soul.

The worst example of death is the death of the woman with insomnia whose existence has never been felt until the occurrence of the mass rape ordeal in the ward. Her death represents the darkest side of male hegemony and the feminine solidarity. When the blind hoodlums let go of all the women, only the blind woman suffering from insomnia had to be carried away in the arms of other women, who were already worn-out as well. Whatever they had to go through was beyond physical torture. They were passed from one man to another, humiliated, outraged, mocked derisively, and more. When the torture is over, the women leave the ward of nightmares hand in hand which came about naturally, without planned. This was an instinctual gesture of solidarity of women; a silent way of sharing the feelings and the mistreatment they all had to experience. However, the woman with insomnia lost her power first in her legs and then in her heart. The doctor's wife announces her death: "She is dead" (Saramago, 2017, p. 173). She is the only one seeing the marks of the torture: a dislocated body, legs covered in blood, teeth marks on her shoulder and such like. When she washes the body, her intention is more than cleaning the traces of sperm and blood on her. Although the water is fetid, she means to purify her soul which was beyond everyone's

reach, and she has the consolatory feeling of not burying her but delivering her into the earth purified as the way it should be.

The rape, humiliation and the death of the woman with insomnia are the founding sparks of a new story to be written by the doctor's wife in the asylum. She knows that they are no longer the same women when they left the rapists' ward. They, as women, took the responsibility of feeding everyone by sacrificing their physical, mental and psychological integrity. This trauma has made her transform into a more courageous person than before. She grabs the scissors, and she heads for the ward of the hoodlums. She joins the group of women in terror who are about to be raped by the ruffians. She aims for the leader and stabs him behind his neck. She leads the terrorized women out of the ward in commotion and becomes a heroine for the second time. The doctor's wife's eyes have witnessed a plenty of horrible situations. Not only does she have to watch the victims, but she also becomes the victim herself although she has been able to see. Her story starts as a victim and then goes on as a heroine who avenges first the woman with insomnia and then all the other women who have suffered the most. Although she seems a savage and a murderer, the wife's intention is not out of pleasure but to stop the future deaths and the traumas that women will have. Now, she feels free and content as she used her eyes to make the hoodlums feel what the fear is like, and this is her story of success.

The fire in the novel has a purging effect. After the doctor's wife's ward becomes unable to get food from the hoodlums' ward, and the soldiers stop sending food to the wards, she decides to end this problem. She remembers that she already has a cigarette lighter and furtively goes to the hoodlums' ward, which is fortified with beds to protect themselves. She sets the filthy bed covers on fire. The accumulated dirt, oil and sweat speed up the flames. Interestingly, this time, the filth helps her to cleanse the mess which make the fire flared easily. The fact that having the fire and her intention to use it to eradicate what is befouled there gives her a formidable heroic characteristic. She basically cleanses all the evil which has evolved in the building both as physical befoulment and the corruption in people. Her next logical move is to advance to the gate guarded by the soldiers. To her amazement, the soldiers are gone for being blind, and she drives the other blinds to the exit or freedom just like a

shepherd saving her flock of sheep from a disaster; similar to the Biblical character, the prophet Moses who saves his people from the persecution of the pharaoh of Egypt.

After escaping from the burnt-out building, the blinds guided by the doctor's wife find themselves in a world of chaos dominated by more blinds. Although people like animals have five senses, the other four senses are mostly dominated by their visual sense. For instance, they only touch or smell things after they see them. However, the wife sees that blind people are wondering on the streets smelling the air to sense food just like animals. The city in which they struggle to survive becomes their wildlife habitat. When she leaves her group to find something to eat, she comes across a blind man leading a group of people like a pack of wolves travelling from one place to another with bags in search of food. The man basically summarizes the life in the city. People move around, find a shop or house to plunder for food. If the other blinds come to the same place, they tell them the place is occupied. This type of behaviour becomes the custom of this new blind society. Eventually, this blindness causes people to experience their ancestral survival skills based on using their olfactory and tactile senses, and shows their obstinate and capitalistic mindset of owning a property is not valid any longer.

In her journey, the doctor's wife comes across her own emotional hero: the dog of tears. The wife goes out to find some food. However, the weight of the food bags and losing her way back drain her both physically and psychologically and ends up bursting into tears with despair. When a pack of stray dogs passes by her, only one dog stops and licks her tears away as if he directly knows that she needs some consolation amid this chaos. The dog of tears also has a metaphorical effect. When she arrives home, she sees that everyone is in a deep sleep. When the dog shakes himself splashing around, its shake feels like awakening holy drops from heaven that transforms the stones into people. They wake up like from death. Another humane behaviour of the dog of tears is when the wife finds out the dead people in the basement of the market. The blind people seem to have been trapped and died there, and the stench and the guilt make her vomit and sob convulsively. She and her husband head for a church to lie down; however, it is full of people. The dog of tears proves itself useful again. By growling without malice, it forces people to spare some space for her. Cole (2006) states that the dog's personality is defined as *humane* more than being human-like as

while the wife is the heroic guide for the blind group, it helps the wife like as her hero. The dog recognizes and responds to the wife's suffering selflessly (p. 119). He has clearly the efficacious usefulness of an animal of emotional-support. It gives the necessary comfort that she even cannot have from her own husband.

While the dog of tears shows humanistic traits, the old blind lady living in the girl's apartment is a character showing some animalistic characteristics in the novel. She is the one who hides away when her family members are taken away due to the pandemic. Her survival skills advance after she starts living all alone in her apartment with the garden in the backyard like a heaven in terms of nutrition. The hunger-based effects of blindness and loneliness seem to have affected her both in appearance and mental health. Although her living conditions are not as limited as the doctor's wife's blind group in the asylum, when she opens the door, she looks very emaciated, and the odour in her house is unbearable. Her house is no different from the street. Inside the house, the floor is full of chicken feathers, rabbit skin pieces and blood. First, she cooks the meat in the fire; however, she gets used to raw meat like the stray dogs acting like hyenas on the roads. It seems that she does not bear any humanistic characteristics anymore, and she does not have any social contacts like the doctor's wife's group. That simply proves that it is vital for people to stay connected with other people and not to abandon their basic social human behaviours. The frustration of being blind and bleakness of being old and alone in the apartment transform her to an uncivilized being. However, even an old woman with appearance of an uncivilized being does her final civilized act of kindness. When the group comes back, the doctor's wife encounters the dead body of the old blind woman lying on the street with the house keys of the girl in her hand. If she had chosen to die at home, she would have died unknown and locked in her house, yet she has chosen to die on the street so that, now, the girl with dark glasses is able to enter her own house to find out if her parents are alive or not.

According to Maslow's pyramid, once people's basic needs such as physiological and safety needs are provided, people naturally attempt to continue to satisfy their need for belongingness and love. As people step up in this pyramid, their difference from being primitive becomes more visible since what makes people distinctive is the way they have specific cognitive needs. Thus, the doctor's wife's

house helps everyone to feel like human beings again. The home provides a safe shelter, some food, and a good environment to the people to exchange some conversation like in times before the blindness. It was the doctor's wife who witnessed all the repulsive and animalistic urges, behaviours and emotions the blind people displayed in the asylum. But now, everyone is in a more habitable place like a home where they had a modern life before the pandemic. The positive changes in the people's condition give the feeling that they are evolving from uncivilized back to civilized. Related to this fact, the old man with the eyepatch feels the necessity to question whether the sexual experience they had together with the girl was a conscious act or only an animalistic urge which was triggered by the blindness. At the end of the heated conversation, they both accept the love for each other and decide to be together afterwards.

The period of blindness also becomes a time when everyone shows what they feel for God. When the doctor and his wife go to the church to rest, she notices that the eyes of the human figures in the paintings and the statues are either painted or covered in white. This can be evaluated in two ways. People wish to have a creator who can be identified with themselves who are already blind and destitute, or they simply reflect their anger to God who has made them blind all of a sudden, so He has no right to be able to see like His people and should not be symbolized as an all-seeing God.

The end of blindness shows how much moral the blind people learn from the times of the plague. When people suffer from an illness or disorder, they generally end up learning a lesson, and this causes a positive or constructive change in their personality. However, when the first blind man is taken into consideration, he does not seem to have changed a lot. He is the first one who gains his sight back. He goes back to his masculine personality when he decides to go back to their own house with his still-blind wife. He says he will guide her, so he becomes the controlling and masculine man again. On the top of that, he does not show any gratefulness or appreciation towards the doctor's wife. He appears to put on his proud and authoritarian self back. The moral transition of the girl with dark glasses is the right opposite of the first blind man. When she gains her sight back, she first embraces the wife as "she was like a rope that has broken, like a spring that could no longer support the pressure it was

constantly subject to” (Saramago, 2017, p. 307). She always knew that it was the wife who had to endure the pain of being a woman, being a blind woman, being the only sighted person and being the female Saviour of this blind group. She has never enjoyed the privilege of being the non-blind person in the epidemic. The girl with dark glasses also keeps her promise about starting a new life with the old man with the black eyepatch. She knows that her true feelings for him cannot be toppled down by his wrinkles or baldness due to his old age. Sometimes, even the worst experiences cannot teach one a good lesson who are already too blind inside to see the right thing to do like the first blind man.

The doctor’s wife is the one who has the biggest enlightenment on the nature of humanity. Although she is not addressed with her actual name throughout the novel and is only known under the name of *the doctor’s wife*, she has the upmost similarity to the Saviour Christ since both she has the characteristics of leading people to the good and being a true sufferer. Her sightedness has helped her to see to what extent the people of this modern century can go uncivilized or in other words, cruel. When there is no superior power to control them, people are inclined to behave however they desire with no boundaries or moral limitations. While some people consult to violence, some people choose to listen to their conscience, which arises the question “Do people choose evil or born evil?”. Through the end of her journey as the altruistic character of the novel, she concludes her experience “I don’t think we did go blind, I think we are blind, [...] blind people who can see, but do not see (Saramago, 2017, p. 309). She clearly states that seeing is the ability of the eye which everyone has; however, what matters is to be able to see beyond the eyes can do.

CONCLUSION

Humans are complex beings. What makes them so complex is the way they are composites of various mental, biological, and psychological features such as pleasure, despair, good, evil, etc. Affected by these features, their existence has a fluctuating nature; in other words, they are unpredictable. This fluctuating nature is closely related with how their actions come about. The actions are the outcome of the moral essence, and the human's moral essence about whether it is good or evil has been a real debate for centuries.

People have cognitive abilities such as reasoning, planning, and thinking. These assist people to make decisions in their challenging life as to how to choose between evil and good. The fact that human being's good or evil has been debated for centuries by many philosophers. Some philosophers like Xunzi and Hobbes argue that human being is inherently evil while Rousseau considers the opposite. Along with these ideas, the most well-known psychologist Sigmund Freud states that people act according to their instincts and unconscious minds which makes them amoral or in other words, morally neutral. In short, according to Mill and Freud, people cannot be defined as either good or evil; they only act according to what grants them happiness.

In *Lord of the Flies*, in terms of being civilized or uncivilized, the reader encounters many characters that support the ideas of Hobbs, Rousseau, and Mill. One of the characters named Jack Merridew perfectly fits Hobbs' theory about human beings' being evil in the essence. Since his entrance into the story, his character never changes in terms of quality. At the beginning, he is the leader of the choir with his delicately formal uniform, then ends up being the painted and brutal, half-naked savage leader of other uncivilized looking boys on the island. He never follows the orders to be saved from the island but is carried away by his passion to be wild and ruthless. Rousseau's theory is observable in angelic Simon who appears to be a physically weak boy in Jack's group. Simon is the one who has been very kind and merciful to everyone on the island; however, Jack does not like him due to his feeble-looking stance. He, in effect, is the one who finds out the truth about the monster on the top of the island. Unfortunately, Jack and his savage tribe murder Simon in a delirious dramatization of a monster hunting thinking that the monster is Simon. Simon's death summarizes the novel; people carry the monsters within. Ralph is a character who looks rude to Piggy

until he is chosen to be the leader on the island in the first place. Although he picks Piggy up on his irritating talks about his asthma and aunt, he always struggles to be a fair chief and be saved from the island with a properly smoking fire. His rude attitude towards Piggy can be explained as Piggy's being a hoggish and unnecessarily fragile character. Thus, Ralph is the one who exemplifies the most civilized one in the novel despite his weaknesses. Mill's statement about people's being pleasure seekers theory is highly visible in other characters like littluns. This youngest group is always disorganized. Their young age, the reality of not having their parents around to control them and the older boys' indifference to their existence make them natural uncivilized beings. They yield to excitement and pleasure that is provided by either Ralph or Jack. The older boys are also affected by Jack's personality intensively. Except the littluns, older boys are going through a biological phase called pre-puberty. In this period, especially, boys are prone to seek pleasure and blood-boiling activities. This also adds up to their savagery. Piggy, who has never been loved anyone but Simon, shows the uncivilized side of human being due to his selfish nature. Although he always supports Ralph with his logical ideas and philosophical perspective, he proves to be a flawed one. When the tribe kills Simon, not only does he steer clear of this murder as a bystander, but he also blames Simon for his own death. Piggy's attempt to justify Simon's death with his logical reason despite being inappropriate does not make Piggy less evil than Jack. Therefore, Golding simply clarifies that childhood is only a temporary mask that hides the real nature of human beings.

In Saramago's *Blindness*, people's true nature is manifested through a plague of blindness. In the story, first, the group of doctor's wife is mistreated by the government, from which they expect mercy and help the most. Next, the blind male group reveals how vicious they could be to them by plundering the food and abusing women by raping and beating. The doctor's wife is the only one who can see; however, she feels no different from other blind people, and she bears all the pain like other blinds do. Being the one who sees more than eyes can see, she becomes the one who suffers the most. Being blind or not, once people seize the opportunity, as the blind male group does, they choose the easiest way of living: acting like savages. She kills the blind rapists to avenge all the women who die or suffer the savagery in the building,

which makes her the one and only altruistic character in the novel. Finally, she becomes the ultimate saviour helping them survive all these uncivilized acts.

In conclusion, in both books, there are two micro worlds, both of which suffer from their own true nature. They are both victims and abusers. They somehow reveal the selfish, brutal and hungry selves. At first, everything begins with normal characteristics of the civilized notions such as setting up rules and fair share of jobs on the island in the *Lord of the Flies* while in the *Blindness*, the first blind people are promised to be taken care of by the government. However, as time passes, in both novels, characters change according to conditions and their urges. All these shows who actually they are in the absence of a superior power controlling everything to provide discipline and safety in the environment. Once the superior power is gone or diminishes in time, people's instinct takes the control of the situation and exploits everything in the most inhumane and uncivilized way. This shows the true nature of people.

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