

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

After analyzing Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* and Golding's *Lord of the Flies* I conclude that both authors share quite similar ideas for their novels. They have some similarities and differences. The first similarity is that Ballantyne and Golding use children as their characters. They believe that children are still pure and innocent at heart and can be a good example to show the true nature of human. The second one is the situation of the boys who are stranded on an uninhabited island. The boys are just by themselves on a deserted island without the presence of adults. And the most important similarity is the purpose of the two novels as a means to show the respective authors' perspectives on human nature.

Though the author in the two novels use children as the characters, their characteristics are very different. Both Jacks are leaders, but Jack in *Lord of the Flies* experiences humanity degeneration as the story continues, which is also shown later by the other children. In *The Coral Island*, Jack is the true leader and the one whom Ralph and Peterkin admire. Jack manages to guide his friends until

they go back to England, and the bonds between them are very strong. The ending of Ballantyne's novel is a good and happy one, but Golding's ending is more serious. The perspective of human nature by both authors is also different. Ballantyne believes that humans are born good at heart, and evil is just an external force that tempts innocent people; on the other hand, Golding believes that every human has evil inside them. Golding once says, "Look out, the evil is in us all" (Lambert).

The purpose of both authors is to share their view on human nature, and they manage to do it through their books. *The Coral Island* and *Lord of the Flies* show how both authors create such characters that can fit their clashing opinions. From the very beginning, Golding's intention to write *Lord of the Flies* is none other than making a counterpart of Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*. I agree with Ross's thought that "Golding, who found Ballantyne's interpretation of the situation naïve and improbable, likely intended *Lord of the Flies* to be an indirect critique of *The Coral Island*. Golding preserves the names of two of Ballantyne's characters, Ralph and Jack, to force the two texts into deeper comparison" (Ross).

I also share the same idea with an article which states that the characteristics portrayed in each novel are presented as a total opposite. "In Ballantyne's tale, a group of shipwrecked English boys reach a tropical island and soon organize themselves into a reasonable imitation of the pious Victorian English society" ("Perceptiveness on Civilization and Savagery of Human Nature Reflected from William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*"). In *Lord of the Flies*, the opposite happens. Ballantyne lives in the Victorian era and in a way that fact influences his view on human nature. In *The Coral Island* Jack is described as

prudent, humane, and bold. He is good at heart, and the only thing that makes him furious is the influence from an outer source, in this case, Taroro. Another character is Ralph. Ralph is described as true. He is true to his friends, Jack and Peterkin. Even in a dangerous situation that can cost his life he chooses to be true to them, just like when he is being threatened by the pirates to tell his comrade's location. In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding makes the characters show many negative traits compared to *The Coral Island*. I agree with the article titled "Perceptiveness on Civilization and Savagery of Human Nature Reflected from William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*" that the reason is because "The time gap between the two books is about 100 years, but the numerous disasters and crises the Western society had undergone made the story of Coral Island shallow and hypocritical, sensitive intellectuals were thrown into deep disillusionment, and Golding was one of them." In the novel, Jack and Ralph are standing against each other. Jack is cruel, proud, and violent. He likes to bully Piggy, is not happy if people criticize him, then he turns violent and eventually kills his friend. Ralph, though he is organized and responsible, also has a violent side. He wants everything in order and does his job properly, but the other part of him is also happy to live a violent life. It is proven when he excitedly takes part in the 'game' that ends up taking his friend's life.

Comparing the two different ways of characterization by Ballantyne and Golding, I think Golding's is more realistic. Ballantyne's characterization is too good to be true. We cannot expect everything will be fine when several kids are deserted on an uninhabited island, especially when they meet cannibal savages. In my opinion, children at their age are still learning according to their environment.

Being friends with the savages and seeing them live that way, children are more likely going to adapt themselves to the same way and end up like the savages. Yet, in this novel, things are going smoothly and the entire adventure mostly gives them positive experiences. *Lord of the Flies*, though darker, is more realistic. The same situation happens to the children, but with the addition that they are in the middle of a war. It is highly possible for some children to turn violent when they are confronted with such a situation. The survival of the fittest contest applies. In the deserted island just by themselves, they need to adjust quickly to stay alive. Without parents who feed them, they must eat any resources available. If the children live under such circumstances for quite a long time, then it would not be strange if they become violent as they need to do anything to survive.

Having analyzed the two novels makes me more aware about my perspective of basic human nature. Before writing this topic I never really thought about whether humans are born good or bad. However, after searching for some support for my thesis and having read many arguments about basic human nature I come to a conclusion that every human is born neutral, pure, innocent; not good nor bad. There are many factors that affect what children become later, such as how they are raised, the circumstances they face, the society around them, and their experiences as they are growing up (just like Ballantyne who experiences war). In my opinion, there is no such thing that humans are good or bad from the very beginning.