

# **Fear and Courage in The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane and Lord of the Flies by William Golding**

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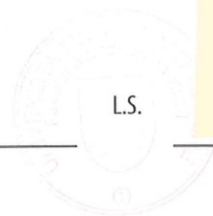
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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá konceptem pojmů „strach“ a „kuráž“ a jejich vzájemným působením. Cílem této práce je analyzovat tyto pojmy, poukázat na souvislosti mezi nimi a aplikovat získané informace na romány Pán Much Williama Goldinga a Rudý Odznak Odvahy Stephen Cranea. Teoretická část této práce je zaměřena na vysvětlení zmíněných pojmů, objasnění jejich vztahu a vlivu masové psychologie. Analytická část vychází ze získaných teoretických informací, které jsou využity při rozboru obou novel a jejich následném srovnání.

Klíčová slova: Strach, kuráž, neznámé, spojitost mezi strachem a kuráží, hrdinství, masová psychologie, instinkty, Rudý Odznak Odvahy, Pán Much

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor thesis deals with the concepts of terms “fear” and “courage” and their interaction. The aim of this thesis is to analyse these terms, point out the connections between them and to apply the gathered information on the books *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding and *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane. The theoretical part of this work is focused on the explanation of the mentioned terms, clarification of their relationship and the influence of mass psychology. The analytical part is based on the information obtained which is applied during the analysis of both novels and their subsequent comparison.

Keywords: Fear, courage, unknown, connection between fear and courage, heroism, mass psychology, instincts, The Red Badge of Courage, Lord of the Flies

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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## INTRODUCTION

When thinking about a courageous person, people may imagine someone who is brave enough to face obstacles and as a result, achieves something admirable. Some would under this term imagine firefighters or soldiers, willing to risk their lives to save other people out of danger. Others maybe admire civil courage and people like Rosa Parks or Martin Luther King, who were fighting injustice in order to improve the lives of others. Courageous can be perceived even a person whose bravery does not affect other people's lives, but only himself, for example, a child who defies his bully. But the truth is, that the scope of the actions recognized as courageous might be even wider than it seems and that not everything that appears to be brave is simultaneously commendable.

The goal of this thesis is to demonstrate that there exists a much greater connection between courage and fear and that courage can be even anti-heroical. The first point of the theoretical deals with the term "fear" and the essence of fear in our lives, specifically the effect of stress on human behaviour, with a closer focus on the fear of unknown, fear of darkness and fear of oneself. The second point explains the term "courage" and its relatedness to factors that significantly affect the perception of this quality. After that, the relationship between these two concepts is discussed in the third point, especially in connection with groups and their behaviour, and all the data obtained are subsequently used for the analysis of the novels *Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding. The analytical part, too, consists of three main points, the first of which is an analysis of the book *Lord of the Flies*, the second is an analysis of the book *The Red Badge of Courage* and the last part outlines the connections between these two.

## **I. THEORY**

# 1 BACKGROUND OF THE BOOK LORD OF THE FLIES

## 1.1 Summary of the book

As the book begins, a group of English schoolboys are being evacuated from England because of an unspecified nuclear war. Their plane is attacked and crashes on an unknown, deserted island. No adults survive the accident, only boys between the ages of 6 and 12. The island appears to be a paradise, with fresh water and abundant food sources, but even from the novel's opening pages, gruesome darkness hangs over this seemingly tranquil situation.

After they form a group, longing for rescue, the boys try to govern themselves and to maintain order and civility. But as the story continues, they ultimately fail the original plans and descend into the violence and brutality. As two of the main characters argue over the leadership and power, the whole group that aims to return to the society falls apart and most of the boys create a new group, submitting to their darker urges. They soon completely forget about the plans for being rescued, silence the few voices of reason among them and blindly follow one of the leaders to the other edge of the island and to the edge of the sanity. The logic and knowledge collapse under the weight of the fears and rules of the mob. The story concludes with all the boys crying on the beach, for the loss of their innocence, as the ship finally arrives to save them and they can go back to the life before, but only with the gained knowledge and crimes committed, that is and probably will remain in their memories forever.<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2 Author William Golding

William Golding was a British novelist and author of the book *Lord of the Flies*. Even though he had been writing before the 1940s, he is well-known mainly for his Post-World War II production. After his graduation at Brasenose College in Oxford, he spent some time working in small theatre companies and in settlement houses, followed by a career as a schoolmaster at Bishop Wordsworth's School in Salisbury, where he was teaching young boys. In the period of World War II, he entered the Royal Navy, where he spent six years. As the war ended, he returned back to the grammar school and teaching, but his perceptions and beliefs were not the same as before. As he once mentioned himself: *"I began to see what people were capable of doing. Anyone who moved through those years without*

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<sup>1</sup>William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 1-225.

*understanding that man produces evil as a bee produces honey, must have been blind or wrong in the head.”<sup>2</sup>*

### **1.2.1 Social and historical context**

Golding’s book *Lord of the Flies* was written during the Cold war, known also as the atomic age. This title refers to the post-war period, characterized by the use of atomic energy and the threat of atomic weapons. At the end of the war in 1945, the first atomic bombs were detonated over Japan by the United States. After this event, the Soviet Union began to build its own bomb and as both world’s main powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, owned this nuclear weaponry, the tense situation between them caused fear of apocalyptic nuclear conflict. Forced to live in constant fear, the citizens also started building bomb shelters and the educational systems included nuclear bomb protection drills into their programmes. The cold war was an era that lasted for many decades.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> “*William Golding Biography*,” The Biography.com website, last modified June 25, 2019, <https://www.biography.com/writer/william-golding>

<sup>3</sup> “*Cold War History*,” History, History.com, last modified May 6, 2020, <https://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/cold-war-history>

## 2 BACKGROUND OF THE BOOK RED BADGE OF COURAGE

### 2.1 Summary of the book

*Red Badge of Courage* is a story about a young man Henry, who wants to be a soldier and fight in a battle to pursue his dream of being a hero. One day he decides to enlist and soon after that, he heads towards the battlefield with his new colleagues. Instead of expressing pride in his decision and speaking about his return, before he leaves, his mother tells him how inexperienced and unimportant he is in comparison to the others. Then, once they set out on the road, the soldiers are welcomed and admired everywhere, until Henry thinks he is a real hero. But after some time spent in the camp, suddenly Henry is very nervous about actually fighting and he feels ashamed for those thoughts. Although the battle has not started yet, he is already thinking about fleeing. In an attempt to fit into the group, he keeps asking men about their feelings and looking for someone with the same fears.

The first experience of the warfare face-to-face is so overwhelming to him that he runs away, while the rest of the men eventually bring the battle to a victorious ending. He walks around the battlefield, thinking about and comparing his deeds to those of others, and as he tries to talk to some passing soldiers, he is hit on his head. When he meets his friends again, his wound is considered to be a combat wound and he is taken care of by one of his colleagues. During the next days, he suddenly gains some courage and after several more battles, he returns back to the camp with the others, while thinking about this whole experience and reviewing reality. He entered the army as a young and gullible man, longing for glory, and left it like a real man.<sup>4</sup>

### 2.2 Author Stephen Crane

Stephen Crane, the author of the book *Red Badge of Courage*, was a writer from New Jersey and one of the first American writers whose work belongs to the style known as Naturalism. In 1888 he went to the military school Hudson River Institute and Claverack College, where he became interested in the war and military studies and, three years later, he quit his studies to become a reporter. Although he had not participated in a war or battle before, he wrote a realistic story *Red Badge of Courage*, a psychological portrait that focuses on young

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<sup>4</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 1-205.

soldier's perceptions and reactions during a wartime situation. He was also an author of short stories, for example, *The Open Boat* that shows the power of nature against man.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "Stephen Crane," Poetry Foundation, accessed March 9, 2020, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/stephen-crane>.

### 3 THEORY OF THE FEAR AND COURAGE

#### 3.1 What is fear

In the Online Cambridge Dictionary, fear is described as “*an unpleasant emotion or thought*” that a person experiences when exposed to a dangerous or painful situation or incentive, which makes him frightened or worried.<sup>6</sup> Although this feature is supposed to serve mainly as the means of protection against harm, it also has many different side effects. One of the responses to fear is called stress, which can be accompanied by negative emotions such as sadness, anger, or anxiety. It encourages nervous and aggressive behaviour in order to protect the person from, or to avoid, some threats.<sup>7</sup> Fear comes to our minds every time it is triggered by some stimulus, coming either from the internal or external environment and once this emotion emerges, we tend to resist it by using various defensive mechanisms. What distinguishes different forms of fear from each other are their sources and the reactions to them, that both differ with each person. It also changes its form several times since we come to this world until we leave it, but it never completely disappears, thus is always present even if we do not realize it.<sup>8</sup>

##### 3.1.1 Fear of the unknown

In the story of *Lord of the Flies*, a group of evacuated boys ends up on a deserted island somewhere in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Not knowing neither cause of the crash, nor the environment they appeared in, the boys also do not know what to expect.<sup>9</sup> This is the key condition of the story as the lack of information, as Carleton describes, contributes to intolerance of uncertainty and therefore leads to “*an individual’s dispositional incapacity to endure the aversive response*” He even speculates that people might be scared of death not because they fear death itself, but for several possible reasons among which is the unknown as the object of fear.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, there is a link between uncertainty and anxiety, which has been demonstrated by research focused on the relationship between these, and results in

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<sup>6</sup> Collins Dictionary Online, s.v. “Gilded Age,” accessed April 12, 2020, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/gilded-age>

<sup>7</sup> Ján Praško, Jana Prašková and Jana Vyskočilová, *Úzkost a Obavy: Jak je překonat* (Praha: Portál, 2006), 39-40.

<sup>8</sup> Fritz Riemann and Eva Bosáková, *Základní formy strachu: typy lidské osobnosti, jejich vznik, charakteristiky a formy vztahů* (Praha: Portál, 2010), 11, <https://kramerius5.nkp.cz/uuid/uuid:f40233e0-3653-11e7-8881-5ef3fc9ae867>

<sup>9</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 1-225.

<sup>10</sup> Nicholas R. Carleton, “*Into the unknown: A review and synthesis of contemporary models involving uncertainty*,” *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* 39, no 2 (February 2016), accessed: March 18, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2016.02.007>.



finding that “*intolerance of uncertainty [is] highly related to the tendency to worry*” and “*moderately related to obsessions/compulsions.*”<sup>11</sup>

### 3.1.2 Fear of the darkness as an evolutionary trait

The monsters that come out in the dark, when the night comes and after we switch off the lights – that is a fear that hunts a lot of children. Although fearless in the face of matters that adults are concerned about, kids tend to be scared of unsubstantiated and seemingly unrealistic stimuli, like the darkness and the conceivable danger it can hide. Despite the presumption that it gradually fades away as we grow up, the truth is this fear remains with us evermore. The reason is that rather than being a childish, baseless problem, the fear of darkness might be a vital evolutionary feature that enables people to survive.

The darkness is essentially an unknown because our limited eyesight does not allow us to persuade our mind of its emptiness and therefore enables our imagination to take care of this work. In the past, when humans were nowhere near the technologies, science or research, our ancestors’ fears included, above all, the fear of natural forces. As this was something mysterious for them, the explanations to those were dependent on their imagination. Hence the myths and the Gods, who control those forces, were created and religions had developed. Humans also feared night and the animals who prefer to hunt during that time. It was because unlike us now, they were not the top predators, with the ability to hunt and kill every other live being. We are provided with more options than humans in the past and possess the necessary resources, as opposed to the spears and other handmade weapons used thousands of years ago. Moreover, we are protected from the external environment by our buildings and homes, which are not so easily accessible as a cave or house made of straw.

With the evolution, development and new discoveries, some fears can disappear completely, but also new ones appear, for example in connection with fire, guns or wars. As Fritz Riemann describes in his book *The Basic Forms of Fear*, once we manage to get rid of a certain form of fear, it is replaced by another one. Hence our fears do not disappear but rather evolve. The most common forms of fear in the earlier and primitive cultures that used to be concerned with natural phenomena like thunder and lightning, were gradually replaced

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Dougas, Patrick Gosselin and Robert Ladoucer, “*Intolerance of Uncertainty and Worry: Investigating Specificity in a Nonclinical Sample*,” *Cognitive Therapy and Research* 25, no 5 (2001), accessed: April 2, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005553414688>

by different ones at each stage of living, depending on the changes in the environment and on the living standards.<sup>12</sup>

### 3.1.3 The process of othering and fear of oneself

According to Fritz Riemann, only one fear does not fit into the previously mentioned pattern and can be considered as unique and linked to today's life, which is a fear of oneself. As an example, he uses the threat posed by the atomic bomb.<sup>13</sup> This appeared after World War II and its destructive power, together with the fact that the decision of its use was lying in the hands of certain individuals, was able of causing mass fear. Therefore, people did not fear some supernatural being, animal, or natural force, but rather other people able to make decisions for them and to use a destructive weapon, that was made by hands of man for the purpose of harming his own kind. Throughout the whole history, there is more than enough evidence that humans are able of horrible deeds. Among the worst of those, the killing plays the biggest role. We distinguish between ourselves and the others.

### 3.1.4 Fight-or-flight response

The fight-or-flight response is “*a physiological reaction that occurs in the presence of something that is terrifying, either mentally or physically*”, and even in the situations where fear is not real but only supposed. This reaction is based on certain hormones, released during such a situation, that prepare the body on both, physiological and psychological level, to stand up and face the fear or to escape it. When one encounters something that is threatening for him, his body reacts by quicker heartbeat, faster breathing and tension.<sup>14</sup>

## 3.2 What is courage

Courage is defined in the Online Cambridge Dictionary as “*the ability to control your fear in a dangerous or difficult situation,*”<sup>15</sup> which can be considered as a rather ambiguous description. For example, Wessley L.Fox, author of the book *Courage and Fear*, writes of courage as one's ability to not control, but to overcome threats and own fears, and a

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<sup>12</sup> Fritz Riemann and Eva Bosáková, *Základní formy strachu: typy lidské osobnosti, jejich vznik, charakteristiky a formy vztahů* (Praha: Portál, 2010), 10-13, <https://kramerius5.nkp.cz/uuid/uuid:f40233e0-3653-11e7-8881-5ef3fc9ae867>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>14</sup> Kendra Cherry and Steven Gans MD, “*Biological Psychology: How the Fight of Flight Response Works,*” Very Well Mind, last modified August 18, 2019, <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-fight-or-flight-response-2795194>

<sup>15</sup> Cambridge Dictionary Online, s.v. “Courage,” accessed February 15, 2020, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/courage>

willingness to risk something in order to gain something else. According to him, it is not an absence of fear, but the ability to overcome it.<sup>16</sup> Original restrictive Aristotle's view concerned courage as a virtue, an act of facing fear only in order to achieve some noble purpose,<sup>17</sup> and was built on by a philosopher Confucius, who believed it can be understood in a much broader sense. According to him, courageous behaviour can be, but does not necessarily need to be based on a moral motive and it can be applied to a bigger scale of meanings. Courageous deeds do not have to be moral and "*when it [courage] is not guided by other virtues, it may serve bad purposes.*"<sup>18</sup>

Therefore, courage can be used for both moral and immoral actions. His belief of courage standing only against external threats, like loss of life, was then broadened by Neo-Confucians, who believed that courage can face both external and internal dangers. In other words, for being courageous it is not important what is the source of the fear and where does it come from, but rather if the person does oppose that fear in order to achieve his goal. In this case, courage can also serve to self-criticism and correction.<sup>19</sup>

### 3.2.1 Courage as anti-heroical

When thinking about a courageous person, people may imagine someone who is brave enough to face obstacles and as a result, achieves something admirable. Some would under this term imagine firefighters or soldiers, willing to risk their lives to save other people out of danger. Another maybe admires civil courage and people like Rosa Parks or Martin Luther King, who were fighting injustice in order to change the lives of others. Courageous can be perceived even a person whose bravery does not affect other people's lives, but only himself, for example, a child who defies his bully. But the term courage does not always appear together with an act admired by everyone and the scope of the actions perceived as courageous might be wider than it seems. In fact, courage can be even anti-heroical.

A lot of people might agree that to risk losing one's life for one's homeland and fellow citizens is an admirable, courageous act, like in the case of the soldiers during wartime. But hardly anyone in the U.S. would agree that the terrorists, who piloted the planes during September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks were heroes. Even though this act applies to the description of the

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<sup>16</sup> Wesley L. Fox, *Courage and Fear: A primer* (Dulles, Virginia: Potomac Books, 2007) 12-13.

<sup>17</sup> George Kateb, "*Courage as a Virtue*," *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 71, no. 1 (Spring 2004), 42. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/527310/summary>

<sup>18</sup> Xinyan Jiang, "*Confucius's View of Courage*," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39, no. 1 (March 2012), <https://vufind.katalog.k.utb.cz/EdsRecord/a9h,75275630>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

courage as willingly sacrificing something, in this case one's own life, in order to achieve one's goal. In the eyes of some Muslim terrorists though, this might be perceived as a heroic act. The point is, what one person finds courageous might not be the same for another one and therefore it is not possible to clearly state what is a universally brave act and what is not, mainly because this perception depends highly on other factors, like the individual's system of values.<sup>20</sup> It seems that courage forms rather in the eyes of the beholders and is based on the goal sharing. The more people agree with the goal being pursued, the more proponents it has and the more courageous the act seems to be in general.

### 3.3 Relationship between fear and courage

If one is satisfied and happy and does not find oneself in a presence of some danger or risk, one does not need to overcome those to achieve something else and thus it is hardly imaginable for courage to be called on. While some psychologists and philosophers believe that courage is not related to the existence or absence of fear, most of them agree on the opposite opinion. For example, David Pears, a professor of Philosophy, argues in his *Aristotle's Analysis of Courage*, that one can be courageous only due to the fear one has and must face it to achieve one's goal. As he then also describes, Aristotle himself perceived courage as one of only three possible reactions to the fear, the other two being cowardice and foolhardiness. Thus, when exposed to some threat, the person can courageously face it and overcome it, flee and avoid the situation, or react too hastily, while taking on unnecessary risks.<sup>21</sup>

#### 3.3.1 The need to belong

Feelings of belonging and love are among the most important needs of people. In the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs it can be found on the third out of five places. As people feel this need, they require social contact and relationships in their lives. It has the roots in evolution, for example, at the times when humans were in a phase of hunter-gatherers, for the purposes of protection, sharing food and hunting, the gathering was essential for their survival. Furthermore, inclusion in the society increases the chance of reproduction that is important to the species' survival. Similarly, the failure to meet this need can be

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<sup>20</sup> Calvin Pinch, *Issue in Philosophy* (New York: Palgrave, 1990) 218-221.

<sup>21</sup> David Pears, "Aristotle's Analysis of Courage," *Philosophic Exchange* 7, no. 1 (1976), [https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/phil\\_ex/vol17/iss1/3](https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/phil_ex/vol17/iss1/3)

accompanied with negative emotions or feelings of lack of control and may decrease person's self-esteem.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.3.2 Crowds, their nature and behaviour

In his book *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, Gustav Le Bon expresses his ideas about the mass mentality and politics. While explaining the crowds' behaviour, he uses the term "psychological crowd". According to him, it is a group of people with a common idea, belief or ideology that is neither a result of the process of clear reasoning nor based on examined evidence. This gathering of the people then forms a collective mind, which influences the behaviour of the participants. What connects these people is not necessarily their presence in one place at the same time, but rather the turn of their feelings and thoughts towards the same points, together with the changes in their conscious personalities.

As a person becomes a part of the crowd, he undergoes psychological transformation and changes into "*an automaton who has ceased to be guided by his will.*"<sup>23</sup> Collective interest becomes more important than his personal goals, which are then often sacrificed in favour of the crowd. Although under ordinary circumstances they may behave differently, forming a part of the crowd affects the feelings, thoughts and acts of its members. This is due to the functioning of their subconscious mind, influenced among other things by heredity that results in conscious acts. Hence the individual behaves according to his "*instincts which had been alone, he would perforce have kept under restraint*".<sup>24</sup>

Among the most common characteristics of crowds, to name few examples, he states impulsiveness, mobility, irritability, exaggeration, intolerance, dictatorialness and conservatism, some of which, as he further explains, resemble of the behaviour of the primitive beings. The formation of opinions and beliefs of this collective mind is then based on two types of factors. The first ones are remote factors, including race, traditions, institutions and education that cause absolute adoption of a certain conviction with a rejection of other, different ideas. The second type is immediate factors, that can be for example images evoked by words and formulas, illusions, or experiences undergone by several generations, and they result in the realization of a certain idea and allowing for its consequences, even if they are not completely favourable. What happens in the formation of a crowd is that as the individuals in it are devoid of a sense of responsibility, the violence of

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<sup>22</sup> Theodore Millon, Melvin J. Lerner and Irwing B. Weiner, *Handbook of Psychology, Personality and Social Psychology* (John Wiley & Sons: New Jersey, 2003), 328.

<sup>23</sup> Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A study of the Popular Mind* (New York: Dover Publications, 2002), 37.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

their feelings increases, and the fear of punishment obliges even isolated and responsible individuals to obey.<sup>25</sup>

In the work *The Group Mind*, William McDougall compares the behaviour of a crowd to the behaviour of “*an unruly child*” or a “*wild beast*”. Although not completely, his theory on the behaviour of unorganized groups resembles Le Bon’s. He, too, points out the intensification of emotions, loss of criticism ability and customization of individual’s behaviour that happens to members of such a group.<sup>26</sup>

Freud’s book *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* has similarities with both Le Bon’s and McDougall’s theories and argues that individuals feel secure when being part of a group because the association with others and the feeling of belonging in the crowd give them a certain power. He also suggests that being part of the group causes changes in behaviour, as the group members are driven by primal instincts, but is paying more attention to the leadership and relationships, believing that these are the reasons of the group holding together.<sup>27</sup>

### 3.3.2.1 *Fears, morality and heroism of the crowds*

Leader of a crowd is a person that serves as a guide, who communicates simplified ideas to the rest, and therefore unites them together and stimulates them to act. When exposed to the immediate factors as for example hearing a certain phrase spoken by the leader, which stands for common idea or belief, the crowd is even able of heroically facing death. Le Bon writes about the connection between fear and heroism of a crowd as follows: “*It is crowds rather than isolated individuals that may be induced to run the risk of death to secure the triumph of a creed or an idea, that may be fired with enthusiasm for glory and honour... Such heroism is without doubt somewhat unconscious, but it is of such heroism that history is made.*”<sup>28</sup>

When it comes to morality, in terms of compliance with and the respecting of certain social standards, crowds tend to act in rather an immoral way. Le Bon sees the cause of this clearly, as a “*savage, destructive instinct*” that is inherent and remains part of us as a remnant of the primitive ages. The inclusion in the group allows its members to satisfy these instincts and to exercise them, which they usually do on the animals that are chased and slaughtered

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<sup>25</sup> Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A study of the Popular Mind* (New York: Dover Publications, 2002), 34-38.

<sup>26</sup> William McDougall, *The Group Mind* (London :Cambridge University Press, 1920) 44-46, <https://archive.org/details/groupmind032676mbp/page/n9/mode/2up/search/unruly>

<sup>27</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (New York: Logos Books, 2018), 16 -20.

<sup>28</sup> Le Bon, *The Crowd: A study of the Popular Mind*, 37-39.

by them with a passion.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, the importance of the satisfaction of inner instinct and achievement of the common goal can overcome the magnitude of the laws and rules, as well as the generally accepted moral rules of society.

Like the main character in Stevenson's classic tale *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, who "learned to recognize the thorough and primitive duality of men",<sup>30</sup> also numerous thinkers have contributed in their works to this idea. Plato in his Republic describes a type of human desire that is "terrible, wild, and lawless" and is inside of everyone.<sup>31</sup> The idea of duality of man was accepted also by the psychologist Carl Jung. He writes about the instinct, existing in our unconscious minds and "ready to break forth as soon as it is stimulated through the formation of a crowd." <sup>32</sup>

### 3.3.2.2 Social control and artificial fear

At the beginning of the 20th century, the American psychologist John B. Watson drafted out a theory of fear, where he stated that there exist only three stimuli for fear that are innate. In other words, stimuli capable of causing fear without having been learnt as being dangerous or harmful. These three stimuli include fear of pain, fear of loud noises and fear of sudden loss of support.<sup>33</sup> Acquired types of fear, as opposed to the innate ones, are caused by "classical conditioning", which is a learning process where a certain response is paired to a certain stimulus. These we gain throughout outward influence of other humans, for example, parents that teach children what to do and do not, or from the rest of the society by copying the behaviour.<sup>34</sup>

Another example can be the influence of the leadership or use of power over others. One of the ways how fear can be evoked in more people, in other words persuasive use of fear, are narratives of those to whom people listen, whether voluntarily or because, for a variety of reasons, they have to. For example, Aristotle believed that by making people "feel that they really are in danger of something", a skilful speaker could evoke fear in others.<sup>35</sup> As was described earlier, the presence of some fear is usually accompanied also by other feelings, such as anger, anxiety or sadness. Also, especially in the formation of a crowd, the

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<sup>29</sup> Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A study of the Popular Mind* (New York: Dover Publications, 2002), 27.

<sup>30</sup> Robert L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: Prestwick House Literary Edition* (Delaware: Prestwick House, 2005), 60.

<sup>31</sup> Plato and Robin Waterfield, *Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 314.

<sup>32</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Psychology and Religion* (New York: Yale University Press, 1960), 16.

<sup>33</sup> Jeffrey Alan Grey, *The Psychology of Fear and Stress* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 5

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>35</sup> Aristotle and W. Rhys Roberts, *Rhetoric* (New York: Dower Publications, 2012), 71.

thinking and behaviour of the individuals are significantly affected. Therefore, while one is undergoing these emotions and changes, especially when one fears something, it is much easier to be manipulated. This thought is expressed in what Edmund Burke once mentioned in his work, that is: “*No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear*”.<sup>36</sup> As the fear appears and a promise of safety can soothe the mentioned uncomfortable feelings, it is easier, then, to believe in someone who claims to guarantee a solution and to follow what he says.

And not only can be fear of others used in the situation when some real threat is present but also when it is not. Following the idea that a possible threat attracts others’ attention and triggers a reaction in them, in order to get people to do certain things, increase trust and submission or to gain personal goals, one might make them be scared deliberately. If we take a look back on history, we can see that this has happened more than once, most notably in the totalitarian states like Germany. By constantly invoking fear and propagating themselves as the only source of salvation, oppressive governments are able of maintaining their power.

### ***3.3.2.3 The need for and lack of control***

Based on the found evidence, authors of the book called *Born to Choose: The Origins and Value of the Need for Control* suggest, that we all have a desire for control, which is rather innate than acquired, and which seems to be important for reducing our responses to the environmental stress. Also, that we feel a need to exercise this control by making choices, which varies from person to person and is influenced by other factors.<sup>37</sup> How other scientists, who conducted research on the relationship between self-confidence and a threat perception have shown, people often face real difficulties when exercising their self-control. Even though aware of the harmful effects certain substances can have on their health, some individuals use these on a daily basis, for example smokers. As the results of this paper shows, such responses are caused by low self-control, which may lead to risky behaviour.<sup>38</sup>

There is also a connection between self-control and leadership. A study aimed at proving the people’s preference for a dominant leader over the prestige-based leader in the presence of uncertain conditions shows that lack of self-control can have an impact on this preference.

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<sup>36</sup> Edmund Burke and Joshua Reynolds, *The Works of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke* (London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1834), 38.

<sup>37</sup> Lauren A. Leotti, Sheena S. Iyengar and Kevin N. Ochsner, “*Born to choose: the origins and value of the need for control*,” *Trends in Cognitive Science* 14, no. 10 (2010) doi:10.1016/j.tics.2010.08.001

<sup>38</sup> Jia, Jayson and Uzma Khan, “*The Effect of Self-Control on the Construction of Risk Perceptions*.” *Management Science* 61, no. 9 (April 2015), DOI: 10.1287/mnsc.2014.2098



Basically, in the case that some person has low self-control, caused by an increase of uncertainty, he or she favours a dominant leader to take the charge. And vice versa, in the situation of high control people rather choose prestigious leader.<sup>39</sup>

### 3.3.3 An urge to heroism and a life that desires meaning

Ernest Becker, author of the book *The Denial of Death* believes, that not only death is a part of our lives, but also that the knowledge of our own mortality is ubiquitous. The fear evoked by this awareness influences our experience of reality, results in an anxiety and drives our behaviour, leading towards an urge to heroism. As he mentions: “*the idea of death, the fear of it, haunts human animal like nothing else; it is a mainspring of human activity*”.<sup>40</sup> Due to his capacity for having abstract conceptual thoughts, the human being is the most advanced of the all species. At the same time, this competence imposes a burden on him, as he is able to be aware of the inevitability of his own death and he is “*an animal, who is conscious of his animal limitation*”.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, the problem does not dwell in death itself, but rather in its possible insignificance. As well as other live beings on earth, man comes to this world to live his life and after a certain period spent here, he must eventually die. And this death is meaningless, no more significant than the death of some bug.<sup>42</sup> Because we are self-conscious and able to realize this fact, we seek a lasting significance, some proof of our importance over all other animals. Therefore, the individuals shape their reality to convince themselves, and sometimes others, of their importance .

As Becker believes, one of the means to persuade people of their importance is religion and “*the faith that one’s very creatureliness has some meaning to a Creator; that despite one’s true insignificance, weakness, death, one’s existence has meaning in some ultimate sense*”. Those, who do not identify with religious believes or do not find this satisfying enough, tend to achieve importance by doing deeds, considered to be important in their culture. Some attain status of a cultural hero due to their athletic or artistic performances, others by contributing to a social system they were born to, by acts generally recognized as heroic. Whether it is to save someone else’s life, to raise a family or to write a book – the

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<sup>39</sup> Hermant Kakkar and Niro Sicanathan, “*When the appeal of dominant leader is greater than a prestige leader*,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 114, no. 26 (June 2017), DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1617711114

<sup>40</sup> Ernest Becker., *The Denial of Death* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), xvii.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 25-27.

key is in one's persuasion of the importance and eternity of such act, that should last forever and, unlike the physical body, will never die.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Ernest Becker., *The Denial of Death* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), 88-89.

## **II. ANALYSIS**

## **4 LORD OF THE FLIES ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Fear as a result of the exposure to unknown**

The book opens with a plane crash on an unknown and deserted island. During their evacuation, young boys between 6 to 12 years happen to occur in this place. With an insufficient amount of information and no communication resources, nor the presence of adults, they are left in constant uncertainty and the necessity to take care of themselves, which is something they are most likely experiencing for the first time in their life and therefore it is unfamiliar and might be frightening for them. The lack of information, orientation and ability to rescue themselves may lead to the feelings of insecurity about both, the present and the future, and can cause fear and subsequent reactions to it.

At the beginning of the story, the reader gets to know Ralph, initially calm and a seemingly cheerful boy, who is soon joined by Piggy, an anxious and curious character that gradually reveals to him the terrifying facts and the possible outcomes of their arrival. As Ralph begins his journey, Piggy joins him and accompanies him ever since. The whole scene of Ralph meeting Piggy resembles a rather innocent and carefree childhood, running away from a menacing and inevitable reality and facts. Instead of swimming then, Ralph summons all the boys, using a white conch found on the beach, to disclose how many of the others have survived the accident and to hold their first assembly. Being a little concerned about the recent findings of their conditions, as soon as he is elected to be the leader, he decides to go with two new companions and to explore the island.

As they do not know anything about the new environment, they immediately feel a need to know this place and their courage to go and to examine their situation stems from their fear of the unknown. As a response to this fear and the potential threats it may be hiding, they find their first goal, which is knowledge, and gain it by willingly risking their safety and going to the mysterious jungle. They need to get rid of the fear and at the same time, it is the fear that motivates them to act.

### **4.2 Separation from the society and the need to ensure return home**

As they presume to be saved in the near future by the parents, the boys try to ensure this to happen and do it on the basis of what they already know. That is, creating a civilization, modelled on the one they are accustomed to, with laws and rules. On their second meeting, they express the need for hunting, having rules, and later building shelters and holding a signal fire, something that is rather unexpected from young schoolboys. At this moment,

soon after the arrival, being rescued is the most crucial thing, because they desire to be returned home and to their society. And before it happens, the rest of the activities, like playing and swimming, should serve only as a fulfilment of the spare time. They immediately react to the absence of the civilized life by establishing a new, provisional one on the island. Then again, this is obviously their first experience to be on a deserted island, hence they give some thoughts also to the probability of never being rescued and fear eternal separation from society.

Since a young age, kids are highly dependent on the physical and communicational contact with the humans caring for them. For this reason, a child can be undergoing separation anxiety and cry for his mother when he does not see her. And even though people develop certain coping responses during their life to handle stressful situations, when encountering threat or traumatization they remain dependent upon social support.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, "[p]eople in general, and children in particular, seek increased attachment in the face of external danger."<sup>45</sup> And now that the boys are surrounded by several possible threats and miss their parents, the fear and anxiety are escalating.

### 4.3 The end of civilization and the beginning of savagery

Uninhabited island in the middle of the ocean does not exactly provide them with what the boys are accustomed to. Staying on the island signifies that the advantages of the civilization, such as inventions and protection from the external threats in the unfamiliar and potentially hostile environment, are lost at once and these young boys find themselves in a somehow primitive stage of living. This implies that the threats and fears unknown to the civilized life are now possible to emerge in this uncivilized one.

Since they are children, they were probably taken care of by their parents in the past. They attended school and were free of the worries of adult life like provision of the food, shelters or even own safety. And now, since they involuntarily appear on the island, their survival is highly dependent on the adaptation to this new way of life. It is not only crucial but also inevitable. Unfortunately, there are no guiding norms to obey and no adults to set them. And while consciously accustoming their behaviour and actions, they are at the same time unconsciously undergoing changes in their perceptions and manners.

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<sup>44</sup> Bessel Van Der Kolk, "*The Compulsion to Repeat the Trauma: Re-enactment, revictimization, and masochism*," *The Psychiatric Clinics of North America* 12, no. 2 (1989).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

### 4.3.1 First group with the goal of being rescued

Since they have summoned on the beach, after hearing the sound of the shell, they form a small crowd. They are not only innocent young boys anymore, but rather a group, connected by a common problem, with a common goal to pursue and ready to soon enable their instincts to affect their behaviour. Once they merge into a group and as the conditions are ideal for it, the boys began resorting to the savagery.

First of all, they elect the leader Ralph, the same person who comes with the idea of the necessity of the leadership and who makes speeches that encourage others to act. He is the oldest of them and therefore the closest one to adulthood. In this new little world, the children turn into a crowd and the parental supervision and guidance are replaced in the form of the leadership. Then, as Ralph proposes to build a fire in order to be rescued, the impulsive crowd, with enthusiasm and without any hesitation, thoughtlessly runs towards the mountain. And shortly after that, their first fire starts burning and with it a large piece of the island, as none of them took the time or had a capacity to consider the side effect of such an action. Meanwhile, a young boy with a birthmark disappears and is never seen again, after he was playing in the place where the fire spread the most. Exaggeration, mobility and impulsiveness are some of the characteristics of the mobs and now also characteristics of the group of Golding's boys. Moreover, these kids lack boundaries and a system of punishment for wrongdoing or some supervision over their deeds, usually performed by parents, which allows them to fully indulge in their instincts and to exercise their power over other beings.

### 4.3.2 The origin of the beast

Immediately after the expedition, the boys get back to the platform and Ralph convenes another meeting, with an aim to inform the others about their discovery. Rules, pigs and hunting are discussed excitedly at this assembly, as soon as the leader says what they need to hear. That is, now they are sure there live no other people on the island and that it is necessary to look after each other. For a moment, there seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel, but only until Piggy reveals that nobody will find them as they don't know where the plane has ended. Ralph tries to save the situation by claiming that the island is a good place to be in, but his attempts are useless as there is immediately more to worry about.

A small boy, pushed by the others, comes and speaks about a beastie from the woods, that appears during the night and intends to eat him. This finding is absolutely shocking for all of them. Ralph keeps denying its existence and with a first idea that crosses his mind, fire, he changes the subject of the conversation. All the boys find this plan so exciting that,

without any hesitation, they run up the mountain, where they make the fire and at the same time cause a forest fire. As soon as a threat occurs, it is essential to ensure their self-preservation, hence they react to the first hint of possible protection and promptly go to get it. Again, when something unknown arises like a new situation or experience, they instinctively recognize danger in it and frightened by that react to this incentive.

The entire environment around them is described as mysterious and the woods as dark and strange, from where the idea of jeopardy emerges. As they give it a name, their fear of the unknown transforms into the fear of a mystical beast, which gradually affects almost all the new inhabitants of this island. Unlike the younger ones, the older boys are not much scared at first. They come with arguments that seem like a rational assurance to them and are based on their experiences from the past, or in other words, on what they had learnt in civil society and therefore perceive it as rules or truth. Nevertheless, as the time spent here continues and with some of the boys coming with more groundless evidence and less rational explanations, the beast gradually becomes more real to them and the fear of it changes everything.

#### 4.3.3 Clothing versus adaptation

People wear clothes for decorating and protecting their bodies. Moreover, clothing is something that has always been associated with several different meanings and that can define our role in society or can signalize power. But most importantly, it is highly related to civilized life.

In the story of the young boys, the heat of the climate is inescapable and seems to be constantly increasing, thus the school uniforms and black caps they wore back at home find no use in this place. Golding repeatedly draws attention to the condition and amount of the clothing they do or do not wear. This applies for all the boys. As an illustration, the first time he is hunting, Jack has a sharpened stick. He is almost nude “*except for a pair of tattered shorts*”<sup>46</sup>, and his hair is lighter and his bare skin darker. After the first and failed pig hunt, he puts a colour mask on his face as a way of camouflage. When he conducts a raid on Ralph’s shelter, aiming to get Piggy’s glasses, he is described as “*stark naked save for paint and belt*”<sup>47</sup> and when he becomes chief and resorts to violence against Wilfred, he is “*sitting there, naked to the waist, his face blocked out in white and red.*”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), .48.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

The gradual littering of the attire may be a simple adaptation to the new and warm environment. However, as this process co-appears in connection with the hunting and changes in behaviour, it suggests the sign of advancing to savagery. The fewer clothes they wear, the more primitive is their behaviour, and originally well-dressed English boys, wearing their school uniforms become dirty, exposed and painted hunters with almost no interest in own appearance or home.

As opposed to that is the tendency to be clean and to stay dressed. As soon as some ship appears near the island, Maurice runs to wear his shorts “*to be ready for anything*”<sup>49</sup>, as though the arrival of the ship and returning to society entailed a need to be clothed. When the problems emerge and Ralph prepares his speeches for the next assembly, he suddenly notices the change in his outward and is bothered by the dirt on his body. Then, after Jack rises to power and steals Piggy’s glasses, necessary to light the fire, Ralph’s group plans to get them back and to speak with the thieves. Before they go, at first, they pay attention to their appearance, caring about not being clean and having too long hair. Apparently, their aim is to appear more civilised than Jack and to look better in the eyes of others, to oppose his idea of hunting and barbarism by reminding the old way of life.

In the beginning, the boys think of themselves as civilized people, who follow rules and who are above any others, as one of the characters claims when saying: “*After all, we’re not savages. We’re English; and the English are best at everything*”<sup>50</sup>. Civilization is supposed to be superior and more powerful than barbarism. Because few individuals still believe in the superiority of the past life over the wild one, to look more civilised would give them more courage to defend this point of view. Unfortunately, this is a place where dirty and savage looks are unavoidable and at the same time more powerful. And at the moment, when the remaining individuals, longing to return back home, are about to confront the other group, that seems to have a different goal now, Ralph reminds others of that “*after all we aren’t savages really and being rescued isn’t a game—*”<sup>51</sup>. The problem is that his statement is not true anymore, as the circumstances do not allow to reverse it and because they have already committed themselves to their instincts and, at least most of them, have become real savages.

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<sup>49</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 68.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.



#### 4.3.4 Speech versus silence

Alike the clothes, their expressive skills lose their shape and piece by a piece disappear. Long sentences and complex speeches are replaced by one-word answers and orders, and unique words are coined. To demonstrate, instead of addressing them Sam and Eric, the twins are known as “*Samneric*”<sup>52</sup> and the youngest boys are called “*littluns*”.<sup>53</sup> The longer they are on the island, the harder it is for the boys to express themselves properly and it takes more time to settle the thoughts.

The English language, like any other, has certain rules and form. And while they keep turning away from the civilized life to the nature and savagery, they break the form of their native language and invent new expressions, while shortening the sentences as much as possible. For the primitive life and hunting, verbal communication is not crucial hence they are losing these skills and advance in different ones, particularly tracking animals.

#### 4.3.5 Hunting as a fun game

Although it cannot be confirmed whether the boys have ever encountered death, as there is not enough information provided about their former lives, it is obvious that they have never killed before. Firstly, it is highly improbable as they are children of school age and secondly, it can be observed from their reactions to the killing and death itself.

When Jack gets the first opportunity to slaughter a pig, he is not able to do so. Later asked about the reason for his hesitation and for not committing the stab, the answer is not expressed, but is more than clear: “*They knew very well why he hadn’t; because of the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh; because of the unbearable blood.*”<sup>54</sup> His reactions imply that he was probably scared of this unknown experience. It is a failure for him, and he is indignantly convincing others that he did not have enough time to kill the pig, ensuring them about the success of the future opportunity. In a hunting position described as a “*dog-like, uncomfortably on all fours*”<sup>55</sup> and almost naked and with “*eyes that in this frustration seemed bolting and nearly mad*”<sup>56</sup>, Jack continues in this activity even when the others have already stopped. After a few unsuccessful attempts, Jack keeps trying to complete his goal and as he becomes obsessed with the hunting, he eventually succeeds and achieves the desired result. It is primarily his fear of the death and killing the

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<sup>52</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 66.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

pig, which is something unknown and untried for him, that infuriates him and results in his courage to fulfil this action. It is a threshold crossing that begins a series of horrific acts.

Even though there are plenty of fruits everywhere, since the beginning the boys speak about the necessity of killing pigs for meat. Hunting may be perceived here as crucial for survival. Not only they become hunters to provide the food, but also their instincts tell them to protect themselves. Building on the earlier mention, the island is an unknown and obscure place. The safety is not certain here and since they have artificially created an external threat in the form of a beast, they have a good reason to be scared and to feel a need for protection.

Unlike when the individuals are on their own, in the group the violence increases, feelings get intensified and the behaviour resembles primitive and savage, rather than a civilized one. The participants tend to satisfy and exercise these instincts and power, which they do, as can be seen also in the case of the boys, on the hunted animals. And not only that but later they even get rid of their fears by attacking each other. Since their arrival, the threats are multiplying, and the frustration and anger are accumulating inside of them until eventually this becomes unbearable and has to be released.

When Jack admits there might be a real beast on the island, he describes how during the hunting he sometimes feels to be in the role of the prey rather than a hunter and this might be the source of his compulsion for the hunting and killing. And when the existence of the beast is confirmed, embodied by a dead paratrooper, they become extremely terrified and the fears overcome them and drive them into a state of frenzy. At this instant, hearing the news, *“the circle began to change.”*<sup>57</sup> Later, the moment the storm comes to it all and a figure emerges from the dark forest, the boys are no longer able to bear the fear and kill Simon in a manner that could be even called barbaric. *“There were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws.”*<sup>58</sup> And after all the time they have been threatened by a beast, the group is behaving and illustrated as a one.

#### **4.4 An omnipresent threat that cannot be grasped**

During World War II, Germany began its devastating night bomb attacks on England. During the previous year and this so-called Blitz, many people, mainly children, were evacuated from the cities to the countryside or were sent overseas to other countries. The evacuation does not only provide children's protection against the bomb attacks and the horrors of the

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<sup>57</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 109.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

war, but it also entails separation from their families, getting to know new places, living with strangers and adjusting to a completely unknown lifestyle. Even if they are sent back home after the danger has passed, it again involves many changes, as both the country and its citizens differ from before the conflict. This whole process and the horrors of the warfare usually have significant impacts on children, like injuries, illnesses, disabilities, psychological suffering or moral impacts. *“The experience of indifference from the surrounding world, or, worse still, malevolence may cause children to suffer loss of meaning in their construction of themselves in their world.”*<sup>59</sup>

The book *Lord of the Flies* opens with a crash of a plane full of young English schoolboys that, as mentioned later in the story, were being evacuated from their homeland. Although there was a storm and it is not completely clear what happened to the plane before the crash, Piggy speculates about a possible attack on the plane. Next, he comes with information about some atom bomb, that he apparently heard from the pilot during the flight.

In the middle of the narrative, there is a *“battle fought at ten miles’ height”*<sup>60</sup> near the island and a dead paratrooper falls from the sky and lands on the island. While the boys are undergoing their own struggles and try to survive on the island, the world itself is not a safe place now. And even though they are saved at the end of the story, the boys are probably taken from the one war to another. In time their rescue arrives, the first one who appears is a uniformed naval officer with a revolver. There is also a mention of *“sub-machine gun”*<sup>61</sup> and a *“trim cruiser,”*<sup>62</sup> If we associate these pieces of information with the reality and the period during which Golding wrote this book, it is imaginable that this work relates to the real geopolitical problems, specifically World War II.

Based on the phrases boys use, for example when they together push a huge boulder and someone shouts *“Like a bomb!”*<sup>63</sup> or when Ralph pretends to be attacking someone as a *“fighter-plane, with wings swept back”*,<sup>64</sup> it can be noticed how the war and its events are reflected in their lives. In the case of Golding’s boys on the island, there was neither introduction to the new environment and temporary families, nor the presence of a single adult human, who could calm their fears and take care of them during this harsh period.

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<sup>59</sup> Joanna Santa Barbara, *“Impact of War on Children and Imperative to End War,”* Croatian Medical Journal 47, no. 6 (2006).

<sup>60</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 103.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

Something they are well dependent on, as the boys point to when expressing regrets for the absence of parents and other adults: *“At home there was always a grown-up. Please, sir; please, miss; and then you got an answer. How I wish!”*<sup>65</sup> Hence the only thing that they too seem to have encountered, as the real-life evacuated children, are the traumas of the war.

By tying the story of the boys to the war environment and the atomic bomb, as well as letting them fall into savagery and killing, Golding may be trying to reveal the feasible outcome of the fighting that reigned during his time. The experience of and exposure to violence can result in symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorders or depressions.<sup>66</sup> During the nights, the boys in the story repeatedly struggle with nightmares, a feature that can be connected to the syndrome.<sup>67</sup> The traumatic experiences, associated with the war and the evacuation, could be one of the causes of their nightmares and fears. Also, of their subsequent violent behaviour.

Even though the island is separated from the epicentre of the war, it significantly affects the life on it. Instead of remaining focused on their goal to be rescued and returned to society, the boys gradually adjust to this new environment and ultimately forget about their past life and going back. They give up on the signal fire, rules, civilized behaviour and appearance, even on their own beliefs and rather create a new world of their own. And this happens despite of the fact that they are scared to be in this place, which poses the question of whether they subconsciously perceive this lifestyle a better option than returning back to what is happening at home.

Based on what Freud described in one of his books, there is additionally a possibility that the horrors they have experienced in connection with the war are now repeated and mirrored in their behaviour and the games they play together. *“This compulsion to repeat a traumatic event in the child’s play also allows the subject to displace negative experiences onto the Other.”*<sup>68</sup> As Jack admitted, when saying to others *“I’m not going to play any longer,”*<sup>69</sup> some or all of them might perceive the whole situation as a game, but the truth is that their deeds are very real and irreversible.

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<sup>65</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 101.

<sup>66</sup> Diala F Ammar, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Depression Among Children of War,” *Journal of Depression and Anxiety* 1, no. 5 (2012).

<sup>67</sup> Rebecca L. Campbell and Anne Germain, “Nightmares and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD),” *Current Sleep Medicine Reports* 2, no. 74-80 (2016), <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40675-016-0037-0>

<sup>68</sup> Robert Samuels, *Between Philosophy and Psychoanalysis: Lacan’s Reconstruction of Freud* (London: Routledge, 1993), 121.

<sup>69</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 140.

## **4.5 New goal, new leader and a new crowd**

When Ralph is the leader, all the boys listen to him because he assures them of eventually obtaining what they crave for, namely being rescued. They respect him at the beginning, but the degree of it declines as they lose the desire to return. The initial fear of not being saved from danger gradually disappears and is replaced by adjusting to the new habitat. There are two main causes of this. First, as was indicated in the previous paragraph, the option of return is not as favourable as in the past and second is that they indulge in their primitive way of life.

They were evacuated because of the war, which implies that the life they were used to will no longer be the same. The chances are their fatherland is destroyed, also that all their families and relatives are dead as a result of the atomic bomb. Not to mention the danger and the enemies who might be there now. Even if they had a chance to leave the island immediately, they would not be returning to life before, but to an unknown one. In this case, the island is a more familiar place now and might be less frightening, in comparison to the new version of the homeland. Likewise, provided that they don't think about this at all and still desire to be rescued, there is no certainty this will ever happen. The boys themselves have no idea where they are, nor does anybody else, as they do not get to the place they are flying to and instead they end up here, with no means to inform someone about their location.

Be that as it may, their fear of the unknown and of separation from the rest of civilization caused the courage to act in order to survive the time in this undesirable situation before the rescue arrives. But as time passes, everything begins to alter completely, and the focus is slowly shifting to different goals. They become increasingly more terrified in each chapter and their worries, along with their archaic instincts, contribute to their movement away from the civilization they came from towards the primitive behaviour. During this process, the concern about separation from society gradually decreases, conditioned by the modifications in the behaviour and attitude of the boys. Their goal changes from sailing home to stay on the island, thus they need a new leader who is of the same opinion.

### **4.5.1 Dominance over the prestige**

The whole group splits into two and even though they are a little frightened of him, most of the boys choose aggressive and dominant Jack to be their chief. Since his first attempts of hunting, he is less and less frightened of death and killing and even intentionally adapts his appearance to fit into his role, by using colours to paint his face. Instead of taking care of the fire, which could secure their rescue, especially when a boat appears near the island, Jack

and his party go chasing a pig. This signalizes he has no further interest in going back and as some of the boys do not either. In that case, it is logically a better choice for them to join him instead of Ralph, especially because his beliefs might be quite possibly naive and unlikely to be fulfilled.

Because Jack is the one who provides meat to the others, he feels superior and more significant. And while all the boys are scared, he abuses their fears to his advantage. What originates in the chants as “*kill the pig*”<sup>70</sup> changes under Jack’s influence into “*kill the beast*”<sup>71</sup> Since he becomes the leader of the hunting group, he promotes the magnitude of hunting as some separate and superior activity and when he finally manages to bring the meat for others, he is persuaded of his power and begins using it as a weapon.

As opposed to Ralph, denying the existence of the beast, he claims to kill it and to protect others. This turns to be crucial after a dead parachutist falls from the sky and is mistaken to be the alleged beast. Now, as they believe to have physical proof of its existence, the fear takes on enormous proportions and it is much easier to manipulate them. He, too, is scared but desires prestige and recognition. And because he lacks those, in addition to his worries, the emotions as anger and frustration rage inside him until he releases the tension through violence. For instance, after losing the elections he decides to be a hunter and starts slaughtering pigs, and when accused of failing his obligations, he hits Piggy in his abdomen.

His statements about killing the creature, together with the undermining of Ralph’s authority eventually ensure Jack the control over the majority. Although he might be cruel and dreaded, he is the most dominant one in this uncertain situation where nothing is under control. He is neither significantly stronger than others, nor fearless, but his power hunger and fears nourish his courage to overcome the obstacles and to ensure himself the authority. He then stirs the fears of others, so they are more afraid of him than anything else until he eventually becomes a dreaded leader, cruel to everyone, who gradually gets rid of those who do not obey him.

#### **4.5.2 The others are the enemies**

Throughout the whole story chants and dancing in connection with the killing of the pig have a bonding effect on the boys and increase their affection for Jack. Whenever possible, he persuades others to go hunting or at least to do hunt dancing and chanting. Killing gives him pleasure and he realizes what power he can have over another living being, and the masks

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<sup>70</sup>William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 72.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

distinguish him and his hunters from those who do not belong to the group. When covered by the paint, Jack does not see himself in the reflection of water, but rather some stranger and the mask is “*a thing on its own, behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness*”.<sup>72</sup> Before putting it on his face, Jack calls it a “*dazzle paint*”<sup>73</sup> that is used in a war which suggests that he too is preparing for a war with someone and soon all the hunters wear masks too. The process of othering enables them to see the enemy at first glance. From one large group, two small are created and those who are not hunters are ultimately considered an enemy.

#### 4.5.3 Hunters and their prey

In belief of having seen the beast, Jack decides to leave a piece of the pig as a gift for it. He subsequently cuts its head and puts it on a sharpened stick in the forest, the place where the new group resides now. This is a turning point of the story as it shows that instead of examining their fears and focusing on the rescue as a solution to their situation, some of the boys have accepted this new life as everlasting and have admitted the existence of the beast. They leave it the pig’s head as a gift to leave them alone, expressing that the beast is even more powerful than they are and trying to be at peace with it. Meanwhile, Simon is hidden in the forest, watching the whole situation. After all the boys leave this place, the so-called Lord of the Flies starts speaking to Simon and tells him: “*You knew, didn’t you? I’m part of you?*”<sup>74</sup> In this point of the story the reader can recognize that the assumed beast in this story is not some supernatural being, but a feature shared by all the boys on the island.

As soon as Ralph and Piggy realize they are abandoned by others, they go to find them and join them. Then when the weather becomes truly terrifying and the fear spreads among all, they even get involved in the wild ritual dance that results in the murder of Simon. Even Ralph and Piggy, seemingly good people, are able to let injustice happen or excuse it, when they are dominated by fear. They find themselves in this situation not only because they are scared of some beast, but also due to their fear of exclusion and desire for inclusion in the group. The situation is described as follows: “*under the threat of the sky, [they] found themselves eager to take a place in this demented but partly secure society.*”<sup>75</sup>

During the murder, they are all dancing in circles and chanting about killing their alleged threat, the beast. The whole process reminds one of a living organism, moving in one rhythm

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<sup>72</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 66.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 167.

and connected by the same goal. As if they all have lost their identities and have become one creature, forgetting about their rivalries and responsibilities and focusing only on getting rid of the threat and its source. Their fear of the beast leads to the courage to kill it, which cannot be perceived as a heroic act, as they instead of some monster kill one of themselves.

The hunting and killing are not the means of protection anymore, but rather a weapon against each other. As it is subsequently confirmed during the conversation between Ralph and Piggy, they are not scared of some beast anymore. Perhaps this is the reason why Ralph and Piggy went to join others in the first place, because all the boys themselves expose a threat to each other and the inclusion in the new group might be crucial for the survival.

Ralph realizes that what they committed was a murder and admits his participation. He says: *"I'm frightened. Of us."*<sup>76</sup> What the reader already knows from the words of the Lord of the Flies is that the boys themselves represent the true evil and they fear only each other now, even though they might not all know it yet. Given these points, because he is the only one out of the whole group at the moment, comes out of the darkness and maybe also because he is the only one who knows the truth, Simon is killed by them. Blinded by their own fears the boys act without hesitation and connected by the same feelings and goal, they all together violently fight until the rain appears and pours *"like a cold shower over the struggling heap on the sand"*.<sup>77</sup> Their fear causes the courage to achieve peace by killing the best and, unfortunately, results only in the murder of innocent young boy.

When the boys start gathering on the beach for the first time, the last ones who come here are Jack and his choir. Piggy's task is to find out names of all the boys, but when Jack is speaking, Piggy is *"intimidated by this uniformed superiority and the offhand authority"*<sup>78</sup> that he can hear in Jack's voice. Throughout the whole story, there are several situations that confirm his fear of this person. Jack tends to bully him verbally, undermine his views and when it comes to a situation where Piggy accuses him of not fulfilling his task, he attacks him physically.

Both boys represent two completely opposite worlds. Jack is highly focused on hunting, killing and gaining respect and power, while Piggy relies on science and facts, and has a strong desire to establish a civilized and ordered society. He often quotes his aunt and asks questions like *"What's grown-ups going to think?"*<sup>79</sup> through which he maintains a kind of

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<sup>76</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 174.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.



imaginary presence of maturity and memories of the past to the island. Jack has no respect for Piggy, who represents adults' world, and as he leans towards savagery, he increasingly hates him. Piggy, although being asthmatic, fat and mocked by everyone, means a threat to all boys, in the sense that he can reverse the generally accepted information by his rational considerations based on facts. He constantly reminds others of society and the adult world, which makes them attack him verbally and then physically until they eventually kill him too. This is mainly due to their recent preference of savagery, which involves getting rid of all reminders and bonds to the past life. After Jack unconsciously accepts to stay on the island forever and tries to get the beast to his side, individuals like Piggy belong to the group of "the others" that pose a threat to him and therefore must die.

One of the oldest boys called Simon is the only character who does not believe in the existence of the external source of the fear, but rather considers the possibility of an internal source of evil. In the first few chapters, Simon hesitates to speak in front of others. When Ralph and Jack bring up the discussion about how scared the younger boys are and about their nightmares, Simon admits that the beast may be real and the island might not really be as good place, as it seemed before. Later, when Jack and his hunters manage to kill the first pig and bring it to the fire, he is shocked as "*what he saw seemed to make him afraid.*"<sup>80</sup>. And finally, in 5th chapter, he comes with the idea of the beast being part of them. He is asking other boys: "*What's the dirtiest thing there is?*"<sup>81</sup> and although he never receives the requested answer, based on the following events in the book it might be killing.

As he does not believe truly in the existence of the mystical beast, unlike the others who do, he is the only one who has the courage to go alone into the woods and darkness and is therefore perceived as being mad. When he finally gets enough evidence for his thoughts and finds the truth, ready to speak out loud, it is too late. The other boys are already too deep in their illusions that they even kill him, in the false belief he is the beast. He is not fearless and he, too, believes in a potential threat on the island but finds its source elsewhere than others. Therefore, he is an outsider and "the other" and is killed.

And the last one who is not in Jack's new group, Ralph, poses the biggest threat to him. Since it was him who became the elected leader and who is the only one able to threaten Jack's power at any moment, he is also hunted and would have been killed, if the rescue had not arrived in time.

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<sup>80</sup> William Golding and Stephen King, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 72.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

## 5 RED BADGE OF COURAGE ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Lack of experience and immature beliefs about the unknown

This novel begins with a regiment of soldiers that have been waiting on the campsite, preparing themselves to finally proceed to the action, when suddenly, one of them brings news about a planned campaign. A passionate debate breaks out and they initiate to argue about the verity of the new information. Meanwhile, a young soldier named Henry leaves to be alone and to reconsider his own insights. All the time the men are in a state of knowing nothing. They remain in the camp and for several days nothing happens. They lack information and the intolerable uncertainty leads to the speculations, as it is the only thing they can do now. Especially concerned about this is the main character, Henry, who personally is not acquainted with the war and its events. And lying on the bed, he is “[trying] to mathematically prove to himself that he would not run from a battle.”<sup>82</sup>

In the past, which is indicated in the form of retrospectives in the novel, he used to imagine battles and brave men, and dreamed of himself becoming valiant and honoured one day. But his visions are nowhere near reality. In fact, these are only misconceptions of the immature man. As can be revealed from how he envisioned the war before enlisting, his beliefs are only a combination of what he read in the books with what he heard back home from those celebrating news of victorious battles. In other words, he harbours an image of war as it was assumed to be but not experienced. There is no mention of him speaking with any soldier or any person that might have been to the war. Moreover, he does not believe this conflict in his country to be alike the wars that used to be in the past, because the “[m]en were better, or more timid. Secular and religious education had effaced the throat-grappling instinct, or else firm finance held in check the passions.”<sup>83</sup> Perhaps he imagines that he lives in a modern world, where progress and inventions take place and where also warfare is more civilized. His idea is separated from reality and his courage to enlist stems from a desire for recognition and appreciation. And now, when he is closer to it and about to be exposed to the threatening situations, his abilities will be tested, and his fears of the unknown that the war, his abilities and death might be hiding emerge.

First of all, he has to face his mother’s disapproval of this deed. Unlike his, her visions of the war are gloomy and frightening. The delusion of the soldiers leaving home with the

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<sup>82</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 11.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

enthusiastic farewell of their families and loved ones are replaced by his mother's speech that undermines his self-confidence, lacks a joyful picture of heroic return and therefore does not fulfil his expectations at all. Only when the army ultimately sets out, Henry feels like a true hero, as they are treated by people on their way abundantly and with respect. Unfortunately, as soon as they eventually arrive at the camp, another refutation of an illusion occurs.

Instead of immediate advance to continuous warfare, the regiment only unwittingly waits for the unknown to be discovered, enabling the young Henry to listen to the veteran war stories and to rethink his images of the fighting. As well as others, he lacks information and speculates about the following days' outcomes, while the only possible way how to test his own skills is to face this fear. But here arises a different problem, which is that he lacks control over such action. As a novice, he is obliged to obey the orders of his superiors and while he desires to finally meet with the enemy, he and the others stay on the campsite or walk from one place to another with no final destination in sight. This makes him angry about the authors of such decisions.

## 5.2 The soldiers as a crowd

A military regiment is a group of people with a common idea to follow, which is that there is some enemy that is dangerous and needs to be stopped. As a collective mind, these individuals focus their thoughts and feelings on this point. They are affected by both remote and immediate factors. The former is rooted deep in their subconscious, encouraged by the beliefs of earlier generations and generally accepted perceptions that result in their desire and willingness to be soldiers. The latter then function as motivational factors, used by the leaders and generals of the group that causes them to go and face death. They work together as a group and gain power through the cooperation.

Because he feels excluded, different from the others, he is afraid of what is about to happen. In contrast, it can be observed that soon as he manages to fit in the group, Henry fights fearlessly. "*He became not a man but a member. He felt that something of which he was a part – a regiment, an army, a cause, or a country – was in a crisis.*"<sup>84</sup> The same applies when individuals in the regiment begin to doubt their abilities, which is followed by some of them running away from the battle, including Henry. What makes them more powerful

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<sup>84</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 49.

and motivated is the bond that is essential for survival, especially in the war, and due to this connection, their strength and courage increase.

### 5.2.1 The need to belong and the search for understanding

Henry longs to unearth someone with the same doubts to ensure that he is not so different from others as he deems himself to be. At the same time, he is afraid to reveal his feelings to someone, who might misuse such information. With a first option available, Henry begins questioning other soldiers about their feelings of the war, one of whom his friend Jim is. Instead of speaking about himself, Jim uses the third person to describe the possible behaviour of others, which allows him to divert the attention in another direction. But Henry specifies his questions and asks: "*Did you ever think you might run yourself, Jim?*"<sup>85</sup> This gets him the desired answer, as his friends admits being able to run away, conditioned by the behaviour of others. This discover partially allays his concerns, but not for long, as the information about the impending fight turns out to be untrue and the troops remain in the camp for several more days.

Meanwhile, Henry struggles unquenchably with this fear of the unknown and the only way how to get rid of it is not in sight. He keeps looking for some kind of reassurance. He is feeling lonely as he seems to be the only one, who is not ready for the battle. His need to belong to the group, basically to the society around him, is what makes him asking others about their feelings and desperately searching for some similarities.

During the first encounter with the enemy, there are a lot of men around, running away from this place, but none of his regiment. Henry stays in his position and focuses only on the shooting. "*He was welded into a common personality which was dominated by a single desire.*"<sup>86</sup> And through the belonging his courage is supported by his colleagues' belief in victory. It is the noise, awareness of the presence of the others and the "*battle brotherhood*",<sup>87</sup> which are now even more important than the reason of the whole war and which lead to their success. But not long after that, another wave of enemies is rushing towards them and this time, the men are not as determined as before. Through Henry's thoughts, it can be understood that another of his false beliefs is about to be refuted.

Before the first assault, the regiment was ready, full of strength and most importantly they did not assume a possible defeat. Their only aim was to win this duel with the enemy

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<sup>85</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 15.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

and then maybe celebrate and to unwind. Nobody expected to fight again in such a short period of the time, yet the adversary is back and now it seems to be even stronger than before. Someone says: “*We ain’t never goin’ to stand this second banging,*”<sup>88</sup> which indicates the loss of the faith in survival and causes Henry and several other men to flee. His fears are rapidly overcoming him when he sees the seemingly powerful enemy, and his support is falling apart while his colleagues run away, “*as if the regiment was leaving him behind,*”<sup>89</sup>, until he himself starts running away from this battlefield.

For some time, he struggles with this decision and is afraid that when he joins others and they find out he is not dead, they will realize he has cowardly fled the fight and will tease him. Soon after that he joins a procession of the suffering wounded and realizes that, unlike them, he is missing his “*red badge of courage*”<sup>90</sup> and that his uninjured body causes him to stand out from the crowd.

A tattered man, speaking of the heroism of his regiment and proudly describing just completed battle from which this crowd of wounded men leaves, begins to take an interest in Henry’s injuries and keeps asking him: “*Where yeh hit, ol’ boy?*”<sup>91</sup> which could reveal his secret to all around and he could be called a coward. They both leave the crowd and even though this man is obviously very disoriented and starts showing signs of insanity, Henry leaves him forsaken. The questions of this man make him reflect on his actions and he realizes more than before that his guilt and failure are noticeable and that his secret may be revealed any minute. Therefore, he cannot stay in the group and leaves to be alone again.

### 5.2.2 The release of the inner instincts

What Henry learns and the story gradually reveals to the reader is that “*a man [becomes] another thing in a battle.*”<sup>92</sup> Since they set out on a journey to the battlefield, the regiments of the soldiers are described as “*moving monsters wending with many feet*” and “*huge crawling reptiles.*”<sup>93</sup> Through the comparison of the soldiers with animals, the author draws attention to the changes that these men are undergoing. The formation of the crowd causes the intensification of their feelings, release of internal primitive instincts and therefore drives the individuals’ behaviour to the one resembling a mindless herd.

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<sup>88</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 59.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 20.

Those men are irritated by the conditions in which they find themselves. To demonstrate, every time they arrive at a new place, they devote a lot of energy to create a dugout and a protective shield in the form of mounds of clay and stones. However, once they complete this activity, they are forced to relocate, and this situation is repeated several times. They become very frustrated as they are ordered to march here and there, without knowing the cause or purpose and in the meantime, they are surrounded by the ubiquitous noises of gunshots and cannons, screams, fleeing men and dead bodies. Their anger, fears and anguish gradually accumulate and, as soon as they finally have the opportunity, they release all this collected energy in the fight against the enemy. Henry shoots furiously at the enemy with the anger of “*a driven beast.*”<sup>94</sup> The sounds they produce during that “[*make*] a wild, barbaric song” that is “*chantlike*”<sup>95</sup> and underlined by the din of the war. They subsequently celebrate the victory with furious cheering and shouting and some of them in silence, as if they were “*trying to contemplate themselves.*”<sup>96</sup>

Moreover, throughout the novel, there is not a single mention of a motivation to fight that could be considered heroic. It has already been pointed out that Henry’s main purpose of enlisting is his desire for fame and the admiration it entails, which suggests that maybe some of his colleagues have the same goal. Just as now, when they are at war it can be seen they alternately hate the enemy, the superiors and the adverse conditions. In any case, the honourable motives as a love of the native land or honour to protect the country and its citizens are not what pushes these soldiers into the battle. It is the act out of fear, whether for one’s own life, unknown or feelings of own inadequacy that drives them to kill the other human beings.

### 5.3 Fear of death

Death is something unknown itself. As was mentioned earlier, there exists a possibility that people do not fear the end of their lives, but rather the unknown it entails. The soldiers are about to willingly go and participate in something dangerous. After they enter the battlefield, there are not many options left for them what to do. They can face it and fight or run away and hide from the danger, in each case, there is a good chance they will not return home alive.

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<sup>94</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 51.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 54.

Henry suffers by his menacing thoughts about the future and when he sees the first dead body, first dead man, he is staring at him. "*He vaguely desired to walk around and around the body and stare; the impulse of the living to try to read in dead eyes the answer to the Question.*"<sup>97</sup> There is no explanation about what the question is about, but as dying is unknown to the living ones, the answer to this question should probably reveal this unknown. Also, after this experience, there is a certain point where Henry speculates about the fear of mortality and finds comfort and end of his sufferings in it. He even believes for a moment that "*it would be better to get killed directly and end his troubles*"<sup>98</sup> as "*he must look to the grave for comprehension.*"<sup>99</sup> Shortly after that, of course, this idea fades but at the same time an interesting thing happens. Because they are about to join their colleagues in the battle, the loud soldier suddenly becomes afraid and reveals his secret to Henry, with a request to transfer his belongings to the family after he dies. He is the first one after Henry who shows some signs of fear and this indicates that it is not only Henry who is scared of the bullets and the unknown.

Now when they are wearing the military attire, these men are probably aware of their mortality more than ever. Since death accompanies all wars from their beginnings to the ends and the task of the soldiers is to defend themselves or the others by attacking the enemy, or even killing if necessary, there is always present a chance to die at any moment. To die as a soldier is without a doubt a very significant death, but it does not mean that the person desires to die and that he is not scared of it.

After his flight from the battlefield, while he keeps walking, he enters the forest and finds another dead body in a blue uniform. "*The dead man and the living man exchanged a long look.*"<sup>100</sup> And in this look perhaps Henry found something important. They are both alone, far from the rest of the army and the sight of this dead man is scary so much that Henry quickly rushes back to the battlefield. There he finds more dead bodies and he feels like an intruder in this place. And shortly after that probably the most frightening experience with the death comes when he meets his dying friend Jim, the loud soldier.

This man is aware of his lack of strength and maybe of the fact that he is about to die soon. Out of nowhere, he gathers enough power to run and to find a quiet place to rest where he subsequently dies. Henry watches closely his anguish and terrifying movements and

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<sup>97</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 33.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

witnesses the process of suffering until Jim dies. Similarly, to Jim's fight with death, Henry fights with his own thoughts and with his feelings of guilt. In his case, the wound is a symbol of bravery and just as he longs to be brave, now he longs for a symbol of his courage to prevent the discovery of his cowardice. And he eventually gains this desired wound, but not during a fight with the enemy.

#### 5.4 From the hero to a coward

In the first battle Henry did well and survived but now that he had cowardly fled from the second fight, he probably feels ashamed and he tries to defend his behaviour. Instead of being angry on himself, he directs the anger at his friends and colleagues. His fears and instincts for self-preservation overcame the courage and helped him to survive, whereas now, as those who remained in their positions managed to defeat the second attack also survived, his flight is not justified and this young soldier suddenly behaves "*as if discovered in a crime.*"<sup>101</sup> In his attempts to rationalize the whole situation, he concludes that his behaviour was the right one and leaves to be alone.

The biggest problem is that he does not see any other solution at the moment. "*Since he had turned his back upon the fight his fears had been wondrously magnified.*"<sup>102</sup> Henry assesses the situation and from his point of the view, the only logical step is to run, as the death seems inevitable at the moment. But then again, instead of challenging his fear, he turns his back towards the threat, which is even more dangerous. Although they are clearly competing with other men of flesh and blood, the enemies are described as some menacing creatures and as Henry decides to run away, he puts himself in the role of prey. His behaviour resembles that of a frightened animal before the slaughter that is furiously striving to escape death. Disorientated and frightened, he keeps moving forward until he gets to a quieter and safer place.

#### 5.5 Chance to start from scratches

Henry is resting and observing what is happening around him. He can see two different groups of soldiers and tries to identify with each of them for a while. The first one consists of men running away from the battlefield. Like himself during his flight, the men are frightened and run for their lives with wild movements "*like soft, ungainly animals.*"<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 67.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.



On the contrary, the other regiment, full of energy and with a zeal to fight rushes fearlessly forward. Their movements signify bravery, which causes Henry feels lost. It seems that his biggest problems lie in his fears and lack of confidence. He expresses his desire to be in someone else's role, whether alive or dead or to join this seemingly fearless regiment. The only thing that prevents him from returning to his regiment is the fear of being mocked by the others, who, unlike him, courageously remain in their positions.

He is distracted from his thinking by the ongoing procession of frightened men and desperately needs to find out what made all of them run away in such horrors, so he stops one of them. Obsessed with his fear, this soldier begins to defend himself against Henry, as if fighting for his life and hits him on the head with the gun. The pain makes Henry forget his previous anguish and he walks thoughtlessly until someone grabs him and helps him to find his regiment. As soon as he meets his companions again, Henry lies about the reason for his disappearance and the origin of his wound. His friend Wilson takes care of him and as he is told that the bleeding is a result of a gunshot, Wilson appreciates Henry for his endurance. However, Henry only reacts nervously and does not say anything, which signifies that he is aware of his bad deeds and instead of being satisfied that someone has finally appreciated him, he feels ashamed. Be that as it may, there is a slight change in his behaviour. When his friend comes to fix his bandage the next day, Henry treats him arrogantly. He seems to have suddenly gained a lot of confidence and when they speak about the war, he even responds to the other: “[You] didn't see nothing of the fight.”<sup>104</sup>

His friend's manners have also changed, but in his case for the better. This soldier, formerly known as noisy, seems to have become wiser with all the gained experience. Since no one has discovered that Henry's explanation was only a lie, he is reintegrated into his group and no longer feels inferior. Moreover, he realizes that he still carries around his friend's package with personal belongings, from which he draws a false sense of superiority over him. Under a lot of pressure before the first battle, the colleague was afraid he would not survive and gave him this package. Henry finds a sign of weakness in this act and plans to use this against him in case he would start questioning and might reveal Henry's secret. Therefore, his supposed strength stems from the weakness of someone else and the peace of mind from the deception. “His self-pride was now entirely restored.”<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 127.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

## 5.6 Courage based on hatred and fury

As before, when the regiment goes into battle, it occupies a defensive position and not an offensive one. Here they keep waiting for the enemy to approach and for the orders obey, which again leads to further speculations among the men. They hear the news about other regiments' struggles and their insecurity, fears and anger gradually accumulate. They need to blame someone, a scapegoat, and they find some in their generals and others with a higher status in the chain of commands and began offending them. But then the lieutenant scolds them which demonstrates his superiority and thus they need to vent their anger elsewhere.

Henry's rediscovered self-confidence is taking on immense proportions. Firstly, he criticizes the work of his superiors and attributes to them all failures of the war and then he even utters: "*Well, don't we fight like the devil? Don't we do all that men can?*"<sup>106</sup> It is more than clear that he is well aware of his unjustified boasting yet continues to complain until confronted by another soldier. Only then he realizes again that his retreat of the previous day can be revealed at any time and becomes silent for a moment.

When the rival arrives, Henry is already in a state of fury and animosity that turns into "*a dark and stormy specter,[sic] that possessed him and made him dream of abominable cruelties.*"<sup>107</sup> The sense of helplessness in this situation makes him feel like an animal driven into a corner and sentenced to death. These feelings ignite his courage and he is fighting fearlessly even when no living opponent remains in front of him. His behaviour, which he himself compares to barbaric or animalistic and could be considered insane, is seen in his and others' eyes as admirable.

After the battle, he realizes his thirst and decides to join his friend who goes for some water. They do not find the river but instead overhear a conversation between the general and the officer, speaking about sending their regiment to attack the enemy. One of these men names their military unit a group of "*mule drivers*"<sup>108</sup> and the other man predicted that many of them would die in the battle they are about to participate in. For the first time, they are attacking the enemy and not waiting long for their arrival. The men rush furiously and madly toward the battlefield and during this dangerous and crazy process, Henry notices a flag, the "*creation of beauty and invulnerability,*"<sup>109</sup> and eagerly chases it until he obtains it. The rivals seem to be in the lead and so the terrified regiment in the state of madness literally

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<sup>106</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 138.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

fights for survival and escape from this deadly danger. Because they believe the situation to be desperate, they do their best to make their defeat as difficult as possible, until they ultimately win this conflict.

Their efforts are not appreciated. On the contrary, the other soldiers ridicule them and the general curses them until eventually even Henry and his friends begin to believe their performance to be insufficient. They are called the “mud diggers” again, this time directly to their faces. Nevertheless, when the next conflict arises, these frightened soldiers are extremely angry with their superiors and with anger and hate they rage furiously at the enemy. Their strength weakens after a while and they require some encouragement again. And at that very moment, their leaders come again to provoke further activity in them which results in “*a paroxysm, a display of the strength that comes before a final febleness.*”<sup>110</sup> They are furiously and desperately fighting, without focusing on anything else until they eventually win again.

The battle ends and instead of resting, the remaining soldiers have to march again. It is finally over and Henry needs to evaluate the whole experience. From the joy that he has survived, he quickly slides into memories of the deeds that were not heroic and that still might be revealed, but eventually comes to peace and contentment of his mind.

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<sup>110</sup> Stephen Crane and Wendell Minor, *The Red Badge of Courage* (London: Penguin Group, 2009), 192.

## 6 COMPARISON AND COMMON FEATURES OF THE NOVELS

The novels *Lord of the Flies* and *Red Badge of Courage* are two stories, written by two different people at various times in history. One is about a group of very young kids on a deserted island, who are playing games and expecting adults to come and save them, the other is about a young man, fighting in the war and wishing to become a hero. Nonetheless, these two stories have much more in common than it may appear.

Although there is an age contrast between Henry and Golding's boys and they are both located in heterogeneous places, from the beginning of their stories they struggle with the same problems, namely with uncertainty and omnipresent threats, not to mention that both stories have some connections to war time. Just as the soldier who goes to the battlefield for the first time and does not know what awaits him, in the same way, the boys find themselves for the first time in an environment that suggests the probability of fighting for own lives.

When Henry leaves his home and walks with the others toward the military camp, he is very happy, because he already feels like a hero and, based on his inexperience, he has no idea what is awaiting him. However, as soon as his assumptions are refuted and he obtains new information, his enthusiasm disappears, and he begins to fear. Now he is exposed to the unknown of the war and to death and is constantly surrounded by danger. In like manner the boys are also initially enthusiastic about the new experience and freedom from duties and control until they realize that this situation is not only advantageous but also possibly dangerous and permanent.

At first, these boys are afraid of some alleged beast that, as later turns out, is not real and gradually become afraid rather of each other. Likewise, Henry, who is fighting with other human beings, perceives his enemy as some monster with almost supernatural abilities and later, when he gets close enough, he realizes the 'enemy' only consists of men resembling his own regiment. In both cases, this uncertainty and lack of control leave all of them in a state of continual fear which is extremely stressful, evokes emotions like anxiety and anger and consequently leads to killing.

Furthermore, in both cases they are all participants of some group which means their thoughts and feelings are affected and, together with being exposed to the threatening elements, the deep-seated inner instincts are resurfaced and released. For these reasons, their behaviour is greatly affected, and their courage is basically a result of the fear and desperation turned into an aggression. In other words, the chief motivation for their courage is internal and in effect rather anti-heroical. And while Henry furiously fires bullets and tries

to kill the enemy, the boys in their story also keep defying their fears and kill the beast together. It may seem that they have gained courage and accomplished truly heroic deeds by confronting the threat and overcoming it. Nonetheless, their actions are far from heroic.

To put it another way, Henry kills other human beings with no intentions to protect his country, its citizens and himself and, on the contrary, he is motivated by his anger and fear, like his colleagues seem to be. And on the island, it is not a dangerous beast that is killed, but only an innocent boy who happens to interrupt the ritual dance and becomes the scapegoat for the currently aroused group. Accordingly, it is not an act of self-defence but a violent attack.

Given these points, both stories suggest an image of heroism that is ambivalent and delusional in comparison to the generally accepted idea, especially at the time these novels were written. In essence, the novels confirm the claim that courage, as a response to the fear, might be anti-heroical.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to point the relationship between terms “fear” and “courage” and to prove that courage, as a reaction to the fear, can be anti-heroical.

The theoretical part provided with the background information and explanation of the mentioned terms. Based on the data obtained, it can be seen that certain factors cause that courage can be immoral and can arise in response to adverse emotions. In terms of the connection between fear and courage, the fear of unknown proved to be especially important, as the lack of knowledge, lack of control and uncertainty affect our behaviour and evoke a response.

The analytical part pointed out the similarities between the novels *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding and proved that regardless of age, place or person – when exposed to the danger everyone is able of courageous act. However, this does not signify that it is a heroic act.

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