

The Embodiment of Mankind`s Struggle for Power in Golding`s *Lord of the Flies*

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Abstract

This study aims to shed a light on the struggle that William Golding emphasizes in his novel, *Lord of the Flies*. This story was written after the WWII when Golding was a member of the Royal Navy, which inspired him to write *Lord of the Flies*. It employs figurative images to convey messages of the most controversial issues of that time: religious, psychological and social struggles. Religious struggle is reflected by well-known stories taken from the Holy book, such as Adam and Eve's fall from the Garden of Eden and the slaughter of Abel and Jesus Christ. These

religious images show how the individual blindly pursues the desire of gaining control over the world, as it happened in the last World War. Psychological struggle became the most dominant issue after the war began, especially after Sigmund Freud's death (the founder of Psychoanalysis Theory) in the first weeks of the WWII. As a Jewish man, Freud got high reputation after the war during which Holocaust happened. Freud's theory was an in-depth analysis of the individual's psychological struggle and their inner beast. This study also provides an example from the Holy Quran demonstrating that man has

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two spirits (good and evil) which are controlling him. The world before the WWII suffered the social struggle between the two superpowers: Capitalism and Socialism. Through his main characters (Ralph and Jack), Golding uses these axes to create a link between the inner and global struggle.

Key words: Religious struggle, Psychological struggle, Social struggle

1. Introduction

In the history of mankind, the good and evil have been conflicting. Adam and Eve, the parents of Cain and Abel, fell from the Garden of Eden because they ate the forbidden fruit. It is believed that Lucifer deceived Eve since he was green with envy and jealousy. (Byron, 1967)

Moreover, Cain killed his brother Abel because of the spirit of jealousy. In Genesis (4:3-5) Cain

brought some of the fruit of the ground for an offering to the Lord. Unlike to Cain's offer, Abel's offer pleased the Lord. Consequently, Cain got very angry, and his expression was downcast.

brought the fattest firstborn of his flock. And the Lord was pleased with Abel and his offering, but with Cain and his offering he was not pleased. So, Cain became very angry, and his expression was downcast ".

William Golding in his most well-known novel, *Lord of The Flies* published after the World War II, sums up the struggle that mankind lived over thousand years ago where man began his first steps in this world. He pictures the mankind's essential illness.

Lord of The Flies talks about a group of British schoolboys whose plane destroyed by enemies over a deserted island during unclear war. The events took place on island during the World War II. This island

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was a jungle: valueless and lawless. The boys acted cruelly and showed their ugly inner wickedness, rascality and devilishness. The island is a microcosm allegory for our world. (Nesrine, 2012: 14)

The boys found themselves without an adult leader. They suffered thirst and hunger. They could make a signal fire by using Piggy's glasses, to catch the attention of the passing ship and the only way to rescue them. One day, Ralph and Piggy found a conch near the beach; they decided to use it as a tool for gathering the boys and for giving them rules. Then, the boys exposed the whole of the island and they found food, also they built shelters. Some of the boys wanted Ralph to be their leader, but Jack imposed his power and became the leader of the hunters. The hunters wanted to hunt pigs and doing bad deeds. Unfortunately, they forgot the idea of rescue. They also led to savagery,

but Ralph and his friends remained civilized.

One day, a boy said that he was afraid of beasts, snakes and nightmares. The fear indicated the beginning of savagery. Simon was the only one who knew the truth of the beast. He told them that the beast was inside them. One night, Jack was celebrating with his friends killing the first pig in their life, they heard Simon shouting about what he found. He wanted to tell them about the truth of the beast who was just a dead man, but the hunters mistake him for the beast and kill him in a cruel way. "Simon represents goodness whereas the hunters represent the evil and sin."(Nesrine, 2014: 17).

The following day, Piggy and Ralph went to Jack's castle to blame him about bad deeds. When Piggy started speaking, Roger, who was one of the hunters, throws a big stone over him. Piggy died, and Ralph knew he was the next one:

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"he must protect himself from Jack's group of savages." (Arizmendi. 2006: VI). So, he runs away. The hunters decided to kill him too, and they followed him everywhere in the island and then burned the jungle to catch him. A passing ship had been attracted by the smoke from the huge fire, and a British naval officer arrived on the beach just in time to save Ralph from certain death. The end of the story revealed the win of civilization and end of savagery.

Apparently, this story addresses children's world, but if the reader focuses on it with deep thinking, he would realize extraordinary polemical and philosophical studies. It explains the inner world of human beings as well as how he/she struggles to achieve his/her desires. In this novel, Golding uses a panoramic reading for images of struggle by displaying three issues:

- **First**, religious allegory of Adam and Eve's fall from Eden and the

consequences thereof as mentioned in the Old and New Testament.

- **Second**, a great example of struggle issue in the most controversial scientific theory at that time, the psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud.

- **Third**, the conflict between capitalism and communism during the Cold War, or between democracy and dictatorship, according to the Marxist perspective.

1.1. Religious Allegory in Lord of The Flies

Lord of The Flies novel explores mankind behavior in purest and unadulterated form, based on biblical evidence. It shows the evil part of human being in spite of the fact that the boys of the story were unsoiled and uncorrupted by their society, similar to Adam and Eve's sons (Cain and Abel).

Throughout this journey, Golding exposes harsh truths about the

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inherent cruelty and savage urges of the boys by involving facts from Bible. He employs three well-known biblical stories as an allegory in *The Lord of Flies*: Adam and Eve, Cain and Able, and Jesus Christ story to shed light on the fundamental flaws in mankind's nature.

A careful reader of Golding's novel should consider not only the richness of biblical allegories in the text, but also the techniques in which religion and religious images are used. Biblical stories inspired individual through direct speech, but Golding's technique inspired his readers through summing up the actual reasons for the bad and good behaviour depending on the absolute power and the absence of law.

Golding starts his story with biblical anecdote, (Adam and Eve and Garden of Eden story) that conveys his thoughts in *Lord of Flies* setting. He initiates first chapter with full description of the island where the boys' plane crashed, this island has

attracted landscape, as if Garden of Eden. It has charming scenery, plentiful fruit, and pleasant air. This similarity has been everywhere in the story. Ralph also takes off his clothes and immerses his body in the water, it is an indication for Adam and Eve's nudity in baptism¹: "And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16). Thus, the boys are metaphorically related to Adam and Eve before and after the fall. Although Satan in the Old Testament is usually read as an image of evil within human nature, readers generally regard Satan an external power, and man committed the first sin because of Satan's temptation. Whereas in *The Lord of Flies*, Golding emphasizes the idea that Eden was already fallen, as

1. It is an immerse or sprinkle or pour water on person's body. A Christian rite cleanse spiritually; initiate or dedicate by purifying.

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well as evil was already within those boys waiting to be revealed.

In the second story, Golding employs Ralph and Jack to represent the Cain and Abel struggle that happened in the human being's history. Ralph is the main character in this novel. The boys elect him as a leader on the island, because he is the most civilized character and related with all the characters throughout the novel. Golding describes him as handsome and good looking symbolizes the moral person. In the story, Ralph tries to keep the boys away from Jack's desires, but he could not. Unlike Ralph, Jack is the leader of hunters². He is violent, cruel, and sadistic, as well as the most savage characters on the island. He turns boys into hunters and savages. He always makes bad deeds against Ralph. His savage

personality and ability to tell people what they want to hate, allows him to overtake Ralph as a chief.

In *Lord of The Flies* novel, Ralph defeats Jack in the race for chiefhood. Jack's anger releases attempt to murder Ralph: "He ran forward, stooping. 'I'm chief.' Viciously, with full intention, he hurled his spear at Ralph" (70). Hence, what is a simple jealousy turns to a motivation for murder: like the idea of the beast, initiated as a minor nightmare and with the boys' growing fear, more ravenous darkness and violence penetrated the island. Moreover, attempting to murder weaves deliberately after Jack secured the position of chief, justifying the reason of his deed because of a personal ire toward Ralph rather than a means to achieve his desires. In the same way, Cain assassinated his brother because of a deep-seated feeling of jealousy and rancor. Consequently, in the Bible and Golding's *Lord of*

2. Hunters are the same boys after Jack alter their minds to follow him and hunt animals in the island.

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The Flies, the victims are murdered with absolute intention, and Jack and Cain did not show any sound or moral judgement.

The story concluded with navy's arrival on time to rescue the boys, in the same time Ralph has the opportunity to examine the surroundings, he realizes a brutal and harsh truth:

His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. And in the middle of them, with filthy body, matted hair, and unwiped nose, Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy." (86).

This conclusion shows how the boys have lost their virtue when they inhabited this island. They were enjoying their childhood without hate before the fall, but this accident and their stay on the island corrupted and tainted them. It reveals the potential evil within their own hearts.

This corruption and lack of their morality make them weep in front of the navies for the loss of innocence. In a similar biblical story, Cain also wept after killing his brother because he learned that he owned inner demon who drove him to commit the worst sin, murder.

The third story is about Simon's prophecy, who represents Jesus Christ. When some studies analyze his character, it shows he is the most sensitive and shy person in the novel. He is profoundly compassionate, spiritual and against any violent idea. He is kind and has a deep affinity with nature. He is usually walking alone in the island. He represents the spiritual side of human nature. Only Simon understands the true nature of the beast, but when he decides to reveal what he has learned, Jack and his fellows adopt the idea of killing him.

Like many prophets in the all Holy Books, Simon is ostracized and

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scorned as an "unwanted person" for what the others perceive as "heretical" or odd behavior. Critics also have observed that Simon's conflict with the beast of *The Lord of the Flies* resembles Christ's confrontation with the devil during his 40 days in the Judean desert as it is mentioned in the Gospels. Also, critics have noticed that there is a resemblance between Simon's killing and Christ's sacrifice. Simon's inspiration is more of a debunking, rather than a prophetic condemnation. His realization is that the monster does not exist but is just a dead person.

1.2. The Psychological Analysis of *Lord of The Flies*

1.2.1. The Holy Quran and Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality discusses that human behavior is the result of the interactions between three component parts of mind: they are

Ego (**Conscious**), Id, and **Superego (Unconscious)**. This theory is named as a Freud's structural theory of personality. It deals with exposing the inner desires of the human beings and takes a great part in interpretation unlimited literary works. Also, it emphasizes the function of unconscious psychological conflict in forming personality and behavior of an individual. (web 2)

Holy Quran has preceded all scientific and social sciences by identifying facts and information, whose just recently discovered in the developed world. In the Holy Quran, God describes individual's behavior depending on his society and what it teaches. God states that man has two souls (spirits) controlling him, and he/she nourishes them depending on his/her conduct. In other words, man has good and evil souls, one pulls him to do the righteous deeds, that is what Freud calls (Superego),

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while the second one pulls him to do the opposite, the bad deeds, and that is what he calls (id), whereas (Ego) mediates between these two powers. This fact included in this Book with deliberated literary

technique since more than 1400 years ago. God tries to personify these two powers and how they pull an individual conduct toward their aims depending on the strength of each of them.

In the name of God, the most Gracious, the Merciful
By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it;
And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;
He indeed truly prospers who purifies it,
And he fails that corrupts it! (Sura AL shams 91: 6–9)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا
فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا
وَتَقْوَاهَا
قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا
وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

2.2.2 *Lord of the Flies* and The Psychological Analytic Perspective

Many scholars believe that characters, in *Lord of The Flies* by William Golding, represent Sigmund Freud's theory of personality, and the major three characters are symbolized Freud's components:

2.2.2.1 Jack as the Id

Id, according to Freud theory, is a part of the mind and unconscious that looks for desires and pleasure

(Freud, 1915). It explains why people act in a savage way. It is followed by what is called pleasure principle. The idea that an individual's needs should be met immediately, for instance when a child is thirsty, the pleasure principle directs him to drink. (Freud, 1991)

In *Lord of the Flies*, Jack's desires for power are manifested from the first encounter with Ralph. He is a selfish person, and the lust for power over an individual's

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psyche, clarified by the id features. He is determined to fulfill the mortal desires. After returning from exploring the island, Jack tells the boys "There's pigs ... there's food; and bathing—water in that little stream a long there – and everything"(33). He is obsessed with his longing to kill a pig. He is ferocious and lawless. He reacts against rules, and always wants to be dominating in the island. In short, all his behaviors are driven by undeveloped child who is governed by the id.

2.2.2.2 Ralph as the Ego

Ego is responsible for making a balance between desire and discipline. It is responsible to mediate between the idealistic (superego) and realistic (id). In fact, ego works by reason, whereas the id is chaotic, self-interested, and entirely amoral. In the *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph is a leader of the boys. He always attempts to keep the little ones safe and prevents Jack from

exploiting them. He balances Jack's needs (id) and Piggy's advices (superego), and he helps others. In other words, Ralph's struggle to cultivate civilization in the island explains that the spirit of ego is democratic (Wilson, 2004). In practical democracy, ego followed modernity and that is indicated through choosing Ralph as a leader.

2.2.2.3 Piggy as the Superego

Superego denotes the idealism, it integrates values and morals of society that are learned from parents or school. Its function is to control the id's desires, particularly those which society forbids, such as aggression and sex. It also has a role to modify ego from realistic to be moralistic and strive for perfection. (Freud,1915).

Superego has two systems: the conscience and the ideal-self. The first one can punish the ego by inducing remorse feelings. For instance, if the ego followed id's

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demands, the superego makes the person ashamed and feel guilty. Freud maintains that when there is disharmony and no balance between the three components, the consequent conflict and imbalance lead to mental disorder.

In Lord of The Flies, Piggy represents superego. He is the most opposite of Jack. He follows rules of conscience, and always tries to present the Id from bad deeds. Piggy attempts to re-form the society (the boys condition).

In short, *The Lord of The Flies* is an allegory for Freud's theory. In this novel, the boys are on an island, and Id and the Superego are fighting for control. Piggy (Superego) tries to keep the group orderly while Jack (Id) damages it. Also, Ralph (Ego) tries to recreate a democratic society where everybody is happy. The entire novel shows the way that the Id, the Ego and the Superego are attempting to act as

one when they cannot escape from each other.

2.2.3 Civilization and Savagery as a Psychological Effect

The meaning of the term civilization has changed several times during its history, it's commonly used to describe human societies with a high level of culture, science, industry, and government, or those people who reached such a state.

"Savagery, on the other hand, emerged from the Latin Sylva and referred specifically to those who lived in the woods, with human life in this habitat being taken as the antithesis of the "civil" society of cities,"(McNeill, 2005: 358).

Civilization, barbarism, and savagery are three powerful concepts. They have played an important role in human sciences since the eighteenth century. The main point in *Lord of The Flies* is the conflict between two instincts within humanity. The first instinct is the impulse to live peacefully, follow rules and moral commands; while

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the other one aims to gratify one's immediate desires, act violently to obtain supremacy over others, and enforce one's will. This conflict is depicted in the central idea of the novel which is civilization versus savagery, order versus chaos, good versus evil, and weak versus strong. Throughout the novel, Golding shows the connection between civilization with good and the instinct of savagery with evil.

Golding's novel is an allegorical novel. The writer used symbolic characters and symbolic theme in this novel. Golding represents the conflict between civilization and savagery in the conflict between two main characters Jack and Ralph (Id and Ego respectively). Ralph, the protagonist, represents civilized boy and the leader, and Jack, the antagonist, represents savage boy and the one who seeks for desire and power.

In the course of the novel, Golding shows the idea of civilization and savagery in different degrees. Piggy has no savage impulse or feeling, while Roger is hardly capable of comprehending the rules of civilization. Golding reveals that the instinct of savagery is far more primal to human being than the instinct of civilization. Also, he depicts the idea of civilization and savagery in many symbols especially the beast and the pig's head on a stake. Among the novel's characters only Simon seems to possess a natural and innate goodness. (web1)

2.3 The Marxist Perspective In the *Lord of the Flies*

William Golding's perspective in the *Lord of the Flies* novel refers to the Cold War conflict between totalitarian communism "Jack" and liberal democracy "Ralph". According to Marxism Theory ⁽³⁾, whoever has

(3) Both of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels are German philosophers and

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the power to control the production in a society, he/she dominates that society. This notion is called Dialectical Materialism (The Encyclopedia Britannica). In this philosophy, the production and means (i.e. the power) will be under the control of the masses, which actually run the means of production, not in the hands of a few people whom they own it.

Therefore, anyone reads Marxism Theory, should bear in his mind that Marxism believes that literature is a reflection of culture, and this culture can be influenced by literature. Marxism Theory

they established Marxism Theory in the 19th century. It is a social theory which indicates the notion of class struggle. It is an idealistic economic philosophy that depends on all people rich and poor want to work and will work to obtain what they need. It does not allow for corruption, organized crime, moochers, scam artists and the like. It has at its basis a very pro-human notion that assumes human nature is to be honest and earnest at all times. And, that by equalizing every person, no individual will possess the power that is said to corrupt.

involves Freudian Theory in that it focuses on subconscious. In other words, Freud deals with the individual subconscious, whereas Marx deals with the political subconscious. Marx believes that cruelty exists in the political subconscious of a society. Marxists support the idea that literature might spark a slave rebellion. (Kurtz, 2017)

Technically, Golding uses Marxist theory in his story depending on the class struggle and also analyzes the contradictions of the capitalist system. He shows how the working class has the potential to defeat capitalism and cultivate a classless society “ Marxists do not see any literary works as an aesthetic object but a product of the socioeconomic aspects.” (Dobie, 2008: 94)

To find connection between Marxism and Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, we have to understand how Golding served in the Royal Navy in 1939 and how he saw the war against the

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German. In this war, Golding participated in the battle of D-day as a naval support for the landing on the Normandy's beaches (The island of Lord of the Flies story). His experiences in World War II changed his perspective of mankind, and he returned for writing and teaching. He took a pessimistic view of European civilization when he realized that man produces evil, as a bee produces honey.

Golding believes that war is something gruesome and dark similarly with the evilness and corruption of man's nature. As the boys built their society and rules, Ralph fills the role of being the boys' leader; " 'All right. Who wants Jack for chief?' 'With a dreary obedience the choir raised their hands.' 'Who wants me? 'Every hand outside the choir except Piggy's was raised immediately.'" (23). Golding employs Ralph as a democratic character, chosen as a leader by election,

because he respects freedom of speech through using the conch and role. He isn't intelligent, but he can understand the situation through piggy's mind, and the quality of Ralph as a leader listed in the novel as; " There's another thing. We can help them to find us. If a ship comes near the island they may not notice us. So we must make smoke on top of the mountains. We must make a fire." (46). He outfights Jack by putting him as the chief of hunters. In the other side, Jack reflects an autocratic man; "He tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up." (51). Golding uses him to represent the figure who looks for chaos in the island. While Ralph attempts to keep the situation under the control, and always tries to leave the island by maintaining the fire.

In brief, William Golding's Novel and World War II are not just about class structure and society, it

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is also about power struggle. Marxism is dealing with the history of class struggle and how the working class has the potential to defeat a capitalist rule. In *Lord of the Flies*, Jack heads the rebellion along with his crew to overthrow Ralph's rule which led to the ruin of the boys' society. With the absence of class structure and with Ralph and Jack severely struggling to maintain leadership, the island undoubtedly becomes a classless society. Finally, due to the struggle between the main two powers (Ralph and Jack) and the absolute chaos, *Lord of the Flies* is considered as an image of struggle between two inner and universal axes, good and evil.

Conclusion:

Lord of the Flies novel sums up controversial issues that occupies the individual's mind after WWII. William Golding's central point in this story is that struggle between the civil impulse and the savage instinct rages within each human individual, regardless a child or an adult: "So the boys try to construct a civilization on the island; but it breaks down in blood and terror because the boys are suffering from the terrible disease of being human" (Tiger, 1974: 85).

For that reason, Golding employs certain images from religious stories which inform that man was unspoiled, but the seven sins who are responsible for this destruction and corruption. He also implicates scientific perspective to analyze man's nature by using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality. This theory shows how man's mind has two levels of thinking (conscious and unconscious) controlled three component (Id, Ego and Superego). He personifies Id as

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Jack character who is unconsciously looking for his desires, and the opposite of Jack is Piggy (superego), who unconsciously represents moral and logic behave. Whereas Ralph (Ego), consciously mediates between his desires and the boy's needs.

Finally, the world after the WWII was split into two communities, adherents of Capitalism and Socialism. These two ideologies have dominated the world and reflected democratic and autocratic movements. Thus, Golding deliberately chooses his characters to represent the class conflict. The story started with schoolboys as innocents, and ended with two groups are influenced by class system and savage life.

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ملخص بحث

فيما يتعلق بالجانب النفسي ، فان نظرية التحليل النفسي للعالم اليهودي سيكمن فرويد تعتبر من اهم الدراسات الجدلية التي تتعلق بتحليل الصراع الحاصل داخل الفرد نفسه و خصوصا بعد محرقة الهولوكوست التي جعلت من سيكمن فرويد بطلا و عالما معروفا .

ان هذا البحث يشير ايضا ان نظرية التحليل النفسي المعروفة لفرويد هي مصدرها اية من القران الكريم التي جاء على لسان النبي محمد صل الله عليه و اله و سلم قبل اكثر من ١٣٠٠ سنة لنظرية فرويد و التي بين فيها ان النفس البشرية خلقت من الخير و الشر و ان الانسان هو من يدير هاتين النفسين تبعا للتربية و المجتمع الذي فيه . و في الختام يركز البحث على الدراسة الماركسية و كيف ان المجتمع انقسم بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية الى شطرين ، شطر يطالب الديمقراطية و الشطر الاخر يركز على الديكتاتورية و التسلط .

يهدف هذا البحث تسليط الضوء على مسألة الصراع من خلال رواية الكاتب الانكليزي وليم غولدنج (اله الذباب). ان هذه القصة مثلت خلاصة الخبرة التي اكتسبها الكاتب من تجربته في الحرب العالمية الثانية حيث كان هو احد جنود البحرية الملكية البريطانية التي شاركت هذه الحرب. لقد وُصف وليم غولدنج من خلال هذه القصة صورا حية للتناقضات الموجودة في المجتمع من خلال رسم اهم صور الصراع المتعلقة في الجانب الديني و النفسي و المجتمعي في ذلك الوقت . فالجانب الديني تجسد من خلال القصص المذكورة في الكتاب المقدس لسقوط ادم و حواء من جنات عدن و قصة قتل قابيل لأخيه هابيل بسبب الغيرة و الحسد و كذلك قصة السيد المسيح و تضحيته من اجل بني جلدته . ان هذه الدراسة اوضحت كيف ان الفرد يتبع رغباته الشيطانية ليسيطر على العالم الذي حوله كما حصل في كل الحروب و خصوصا الحرب العالمية الثانية . و

دراسات باللغة الأنكليزية

