

# Dialogue between Mikhail Bakhtin and Eric Fromm in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

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**Abstract** William Golding's debut post-war novel *Lord of the Flies* is the tale of a party of English school boys who after a plane crash marooned on a desert tropical island. To establish their own model of community based on rules, order and democracy, they attempted to arrange an assembly, deciding to elect a chief. The democratic election was a kind of tug of war (power struggle) between Ralph and Jack which ironically instead of bringing peace and solidarity sowed the seeds of discord and enmity and led to a split and antagonism in that vulnerable fledgling community and potentially paved the way for the later conflict and confrontation between the two communities whose points of differences and type of values were significant. The present paper aims to study the formation of two communities under the leaderships of Ralph and Jack and examine their sets of principles and ethics in the light of Bakhtinian theories and those of Eric Fromm. The paper also demonstrates the way one community was based on such Bakhtinian dialogic and ethical values as "responsibility," "answerability" and "self-other" relationship whereas the other was based on monologic principles and those qualities, delineated by Fromm, such as individualism, total freedom and authoritarianism.

**Key words** Bakhtin; Eric Fromm; William Golding; *Lord of the Flies*; escape from freedom

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### **Introduction**

The Russian theorist and critic Mikhail Bakhtin was a protean figure, a philosopher and an “unfinalisable” thinker whose name has become a “heteroglossia” in cultural and literary scenes. The versatile body of his theories as well as a complex and fully developed set of his concepts and notions which were appropriated by critics and scholars for a wide array of discourses and purposes over the last decades earned him a currency in the contemporary cultural arena as a cultural authority. Thanks to substantial amount of scholarly research, torrent of learned commentary, plethora of books and articles on corpus of Bakhtin’s thoughts and oeuvre from a wide variety of discipline along with several international conferences and a lot more small events devoted to him and his “Circle,” Bakhtin was credited as an “unfinalisable” thinker, theorist and philosopher. His originality, erudition and heteroglot activities made him a protean figure and a polymath, allowing to be appropriated for different purposes, discourses and ideologies. As such Bakhtin’s concepts and theories were utilised as an analytical tool, interpretive methodology and a hermeneutical horizon for examining varied phenomena including novels of different authors, social uprising, cinematic productions, and so forth (Brandist 1). His theories and concepts such as dialogism, multiplicity of voices, differences, infinalisability, transgression, carnival and chronotope and such ethical concepts as responsibility, answerability, respectability and I-Thou relationship appeared in such fields as anthropology, cultural studies, film studies, postcolonial studies, political studies, to name a few, which made up a substantial part of Bakhtin’s popularity in the world today (Vice 1-3). As a result, in this way the *dissemination* of Bakhtin and his legacy was sustained, his theories and concepts were utilised as an adequate fundamental starting point for any kind of discursive enterprise and critical reading, culminating to dimming his proper name “Bakhtin” but proceeding to heteroglossic Bakhtin.

### **Bakhtin: From Neo-Kantian Socialism to Ethical Philosophy**

Bakhtin is “A thinker, whose main concern in everything he wrote was largely

ethical.” (Caliskan 3)

Bakhtin thought of himself more a philosopher, a moral philosopher and thinker, than a critic and literary and cultural theorist. This claim can be readily borne out by a brief survey of his total oeuvre, revealing the centrality of ethics in the corpus of his thought. Furthermore, such a claim can be proved by the vast amount of work and effort on Bakhtin's legacy over the last few years, and a concomitant revival of attention and interest in Bakhtin's early ethics and aesthetics which resulted not only in the return and reconsideration of ethics as the central philosophical concept but also in highlighting the significance of Bakhtin's early philosophical writings as points of reference for any ethical and aesthetic appropriation (Caliskan 3-4; Emerson 5-6, 21-23; Holquist 14).

In broaching the subject of Mikhail Bakhtin's early philosophical preoccupation especially his early ethical philosophy, it seems in order to consider both his avid and broad interest in philosophy which started from the prime of life and lasted over the 1910s and the contemporary socio-political situation of post-revolutionary Russia at the aftermath of the First World War in the 1920s. As for the former, it should be noted that at university Bakhtin passionately studied Latin and Greek classics and became a trained Latin and Greek scholar later. Later on, fortunately this unflagging interest in philosophy both intensified and broadened when Bakhtin joined a group of like-minded and pro-dialogic friends and intellectuals in “Bakhtin Circle” where a wide array of topics ranging from art, science, language, religion to philosophy were discussed and disputed. Since at this time Neo-Kantianism was the dominant school of philosophy in philosophy departments across Europe and the members of the Circle were affiliated to Neo-Kantian philosophy, young Bakhtin showed real enthusiasm for Neo-Kantian philosophy of the Marburg School, notably those of Ernest Cassirer and Hermann Cohen. However, as such, Bakhtin's philosophical aspiration varied and evolved so much so that prompted him to cultivate a wide array of philosophical and intellectual interests, drawing on a wealth of philosophical sources. Among the versatile sources (mostly germane to the topics, discussions and philosophical notion of the individual members of the Circle) that Bakhtin utilised Buber, Kant, Cohen (Marburg Neo-Kantianism), Shelling, Cassirer, Simmel and Husserlean Phenomenology were of those sources that fascinated the young Bakhtin and left their mark in small but telling way in the genesis and germination of a set of Bakhtin's philosophical writings and concomitantly became the anchor of his later theories, ideas and concepts (Holquist 2-5; Brandist 11-21).

The contemporary socio-political situation of post-revolutionary Russia in the 1920s, especially in the wake of two revolutions and the First World War was also a momentous period not only in the life and thoughts of Bakhtin but also the other fellow Russian thinkers, scholars and intellectuals. As for Bakhtin himself, it was a catalysing factor which resulted in the genesis and development of not only his philosophy, specifically his early ethical philosophy, but also a set of philosophical works, theories and concepts. In the early 1920s, Russia was in a chaotic state, devastated by civil war and pregnant with lots of other turmoils, socio-political unrest and instability. As a result, there was an urgent need for an intellectual current or a constructive philosophy which was pro-socialism in nature and orientation to save the country from such a corrosive situation and restore peace, stability and order. Indeed, a kind of cultural momentum, an intellectual leadership or an ethical philosophy was in demand whose (socialist) “responsibility,” “answerability” and commitment could be constructive and offer a road map to peace and tranquility. Undoubtedly, Bakhtin and the other fellow intellectuals and thinkers in the Circle of which Bakhtin was the senior figure were part of the solution. On the other hand, the Circle itself was in fact a sociologically significant phenomenon in which much like Jurgen Habermas’ “Public Sphere” the intellectuals discussed different socio-political issues such as freedom, democracy and so on. In Russia it was part of intellectual life which came into being as an “institutional phenomenon” and also as the legacy of the Russian tradition of discussion circle (*Krug*) where the fellow intellectuals and thinkers who due to the contemporary political condition had to secretly and clandestinely discuss current social and political issues, developing their critique of the cultural and ideological status quo (Brandist 11-12).

Furthermore, even the kind of philosophy to which the members of the Circle were affiliated was mainly a “*socialist* Neo-Kantianism” as well as an “ethical” one. More interestingly its members such as Herman Cohen and Paul Natorp were themselves socialists (Brandist 27-29). That is why, according to Ken Hirschkop, the terms and agendas of the Circle were associated with sociological conditions (Brandist 29). On the other hand, since there was not any civil society which was the direct consequence of lack of bona fide middle-class intellectuals, the Circle took advantage of abstract categories and came to reformulate political-oriented issues in ethical forms. Thus, they strove to “transform all political questions into ethical ones” (Brandist 29) which culminated to the emergence of Neo-Kantian Socialism.

On the other hand, a biographical survey of Bakhtin’s life will be very illuminating and reveal how Bakhtin’s own life condition due to the socio-political

condition of the contemporary Russia played a significant role in the formation of his ethical philosophy. His personal life was full of flux and “repeatedly disrupted by major political and cultural upheaval” (Renfrew 33). A chain of serious crises ranging from civil war, arrest, exile, Stalinist purges, the Depression to deteriorating health condition (bone disease and amputation), ubiquitously eclipsed his life, interrupting the normal pace of Bakhtin’s life. Indeed, the contemporary cultural and political situations of late 1910s and 1920s in Russia and the Soviet Union led to the emergence of a kind of dystopia which ruined not only Bakhtin’s public life but also the lives of a large number of scholars, critics and writers (some of them the member of “Bakhtin Circle”). The monologic and authoritarian Stalinist regime darkened the entire era and put the “Russian intellectual culture into a kind of ice age” (Renfrew 20-21). As a matter of fact, a kind of “*Death of the Author*” Bakhtin and the other contemporary Russian fellow intellectuals and scholars experienced which not only hampered the publication of their works but also led to a kind of self-effacement (*dialogically* significant) and denial of subjectivity which compelled them to publish their works under the names of their friends and colleagues (Emerson 19; Renfrew 20-21).

As a matter of fact, it was due to such a personal life condition and socio-political circumstances of contemporary Russia eclipsed by the dark Stalinist years (dystopia) during 1910s and 1920s that Bakhtin developed his own early idiosyncratic (ethical) philosophy which was a reformulated form of political issues, socialist in nature, ethical in orientation and utopian in construct (Morson and Emerson 97). Daunted by cultural and socio-political life of the mainstream society (dystopia), Bakhtin became preoccupied with a kind of philosophy whose central point was ethical and importantly based on the model of “self-other” relationship (Dialogism)--understanding and interacting with the other fellow human beings--and “in place of God, Bakhtin deified the everyday interlocutor. A creature made neither for prayer nor for parenting” (Emerson 5). It was indeed in line with such a kind of thinking that Bakhtin’s philosophical works with the centrality of ethics such as “Art and Answerability,” *Toward a philosophy of the Act* (1921) and *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* (1922-24) were composed.

### **Erich Fromm: From Ethics to Psychoanalyst Socialism**

The German-American socialist psychoanalyst Erich Fromm (1900 — 1980), somehow the contemporary of Bakhtin, was a man of broad interests. As a psychoanalyst, sociologist and democratic socialist, Erich Fromm is mostly renowned for being one of the most distinguished psychoanalysts in America and

also his affiliation to the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory. As a result of his religious family background, young Fromm studied the Talmud to such an extent that his formative years were influenced by Orthodox Judaism. Thanks to such an experience, Fromm later on developed an interest in ethics and legal issues so much so that he studied law and then in 1919 sociology at Frankfurt University under Marx Weber's brother, Alfred Weber and Heidelberg. Through his friend and later his wife (Frieda Reichmann), Fromm developed an interest in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, whereupon he formed his own theories and methodology of psychoanalysis and utilised it in order to understand different phenomena vis-à-vis society and culture. His cooperation with an Institute for Social research which was affiliated with the University of Frankfurt associated him with the Frankfurt School which was a *Circle* (recalling Bakhtin Circle) of like-minded intellectuals and critical theorists whose senior figure was Marx Horkheimer. With the advent of Nazism and due to the socio-political situation of the contemporary Germany (akin to the case with Bakhtin and other fellow Russian intellectuals) not only Erich Fromm but also the other intellectuals and members of the Social Research Institute left the country and went in exile in the United States (Fromm 266-67).

As the psychoanalyst of society, social scientist and also a member of the Frankfurt School, Erich Fromm like the other fellow thinkers of the School in his works was preoccupied with the systematic analysis of socio-political condition of the contemporary capitalist society, "applying his social-psychoanalytic approach to cultural and social phenomena" (Fromm 267). In 1941 Erich Fromm published his book *Escape from Freedom* which brought him popular acclaim and reputation. In it Fromm much like Bakhtin and Michel Foucault adopted a *genealogical-psychological* study of "Freedom" and "Individualism" over a long period of time, starting from the Medieval World, proceeding to Renaissance and Reformation, up to the Modern World and finally the rise of Nazism. In fact, Fromm's study, telescoping the psychological-historical past of Europe and America, psychologically examined the trend of freedom and individualism in different historical and socio-political context (the process of "Individuation"), revealing how the longing and desire for individualism and then freedom drastically changed from what it was initially intended and grotesquely turned into a nightmare and terror (negative freedom) and eventually *escape from freedom*. Fromm argued that Modern European and American history have witnessed lots of endless efforts, clashes and battles for "freedom from the political, economic, and spiritual shackles that have bound men" (Fromm 13). The final result was freedom but at the expense of very many lives which strove to obtain it as the approval of their individuality. Then he

explained how the “principles of economic liberalism, political democracy, religious autonomy, and individualism in personal life, gave expression to the longing for freedom” (Fromm 13). However, after the lapse of a few years, Fromm explained people in such countries as Italy and Germany came to the fact that this freedom and individualism had counter effect and brought about capitalism, isolation and powerlessness of the individuals. As a result, instead of democracy, it ended in such an authoritarian system as Fascism and such a despot as Hitler whose rule led to so much terror and fear for the whole world. Upon this realisation, “millions in Germany were as eager to surrender their freedom as their fathers were to fight for it... instead of wanting freedom, they fought for ways of escape from it” (Fromm 14). In effect, Fromm tried to depict how the utopian implication of individualism and freedom in the past underwent a metamorphosis, ending in Nazism, and brought about loneliness, powerlessness, disillusionment and despair of modern man, i.e. a kind of dystopia especially after two global catastrophic World Wars (as portrayed in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*).

*Escape from Freedom* was also partly Fromm's critique of the events during the Second World War in conjunction with the “exploration of the social psychology of fascism” (Shaffer 67) which was inspired by Freud's late works. In the forward of 1941 edition of his book, Fromm argued that his book was “part of a broad study concerning the character structure of modern man and the problems of the interaction between psychological and sociological factors” (Fromm 5). He maintained that the cultural and social crisis of the modern world is “the meaning of freedom for modern man” (5) because the meaning of freedom to great extent is dependent on character structure of modern man, i.e. the individual as the basic entity of social process. It is the individual, according to Fromm, whose desire, fears, passions and reason constitute the social process and it is also the dynamics of such an individual's psychological process that leads to the dynamics of the social process. As a result, the understanding of the dynamics of the individual is foremost for the understanding of the dynamics of the social process. However, as the thesis of his book, Fromm asserted that modern man's freedom is not genuinely the freedom of self, but rather a negative one (a burden) which instead brought about his isolation, anxiety and powerlessness and eventually culminated to totalitarianism (Fromm 5-6). In a similar vein, in the foreword of 1965 edition of *Escape from Freedom*, Fromm explained that during the medieval era, despite the presence of different sorts of dangers and fears, man felt safe and secure, but with the advent of the modern world that sense of safety and security disappeared and became things of the past. Instead, modern man's sense of anxiety, insecurity and fear mounted

so much so that he was “tempted to surrender his freedom to dictators of all kinds or to lose it” (Fromm 8). In nutshell, surprisingly man’s major source of fear in the modern world is ironically the “freedom” (individualism) itself and its repercussions such as the birth of authoritarianism (*monologism*), totalitarianism, despotism and total annihilation as the result of atomic bomb and such global disasters as the First and Second World Wars (recalling the plane crash at the beginning of Golding’s novel *Lord of the Flies* when evacuating a group of English school boys from a war-torn area).

### Discussion

William Golding’s debut (post) War novel *Lord of the Flies* (1954) was a novelistic tour de force. Despite the ebb and flow of its early popularity, it achieved a significant breakthrough and once became one of the most widely-read and widely admired novels in English which fascinated wide array of readers ranging from the teenagers to adults. It was also thanks to having all the making of a modern classic that less than a decade of its publication was hailed as “Lord of the Campus,” developing a rivalry with its contemporary American counterpart J. D. Salinger’s *Catcher in the Rye* (1951) on most college campuses.

In broaching the subject of Golding’s novel popularity and significance, it seems in order to consider it from two general perspectives both of which will be highly significant and enlightening when examined in the light of Bakhtinian ethical philosophy and Eric Fromm’s ideas and theory as delineated in his book *Escape from Freedom* (1941). Whereas part of this popularity and significance has originated in its “intertextual quality (intertextuality), that is to say, responding to such extrinsic forces as the contemporary socio-political context (significant in terms of both Bakhtin’s theory of “The Novel” and novelistic discourse and Erich Fromm’s socio-psychoanalytical study of “Freedom” and “Individualism”), another part of its popularity and significance has originated in its “textual” quality, that is to say, its intrinsic structure, narrative style, thematic organization and fictional world (again significant in terms of both Bakhtin’s moral-philosophical concepts as “Dialogism,” “Responsibility,” “answerability” and “I-Thou” relationship and Fromm’s socio-psychoanalytic study of “authoritarian,” “despotic” and “totalitarian” individuals) . In other words, whereas the former one is focused on its literal sense and Macrocosmic level (part of the task of “The Novel” as Bakhtin’s champion genre) which is part of Golding’s protest and critique of contemporary socio-political condition of the world and society (much akin to Fromm) which resulted in the present global catastrophe, the latter one refers to its allegorical sense and

Microcosmic level (the analysis of such fictional elements as characters, theme, and events in the light of both Bakhtin's moral-philosophical concepts and Fromm's theory of absolute "Freedom" and "Individualism") which so far has aroused a wide array of different competing literary interpretations, critical responses and explications which strove to analyse them from different hermeneutical horizons and critical approaches.

### **Golding: A Novelist in Bakhtinian Tradition**

Part of the popularity and significance of Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* (as it was stated above) originates in its genre as a novel ("a social phenomenon"), its "intertextual" aspect and being concerned with "extrinsic" (Social) forces as it is properly discussed in the final essay of Mikhail Bakhtin's *Dialogic Imagination: Four essays* (1981), entitled as "Discourse in the Novel" which presents Bakhtin's comprehensive theory of novel. In this essay, Bakhtin's primary concern is the literary forms or genres and tries to give a critique of the dichotomy between abstract formal approach (poetry) and abstract ideological approach (the novel) to the study of "verbal art." In fact, Bakhtin tries to demonstrate the inadequacy of the traditional stylistics for being unable to find a place for the novel. Because according to Bakhtin the appropriate stylistics which can do justice to the novel and is germane to the internal social dialogism of the novel is a *sociological stylistics* which can divulge the concrete social context of it. As such, Bakhtin turns his attention to his champion the novel and attempts to theorise it, as a genre which is heteroglossic and dialogic in nature, appropriating and incorporating the diversity of voices and multiplicity of languages. For Bakhtin's view of the novel is rooted in his radical view of language for being value-laden, dialogic and ideological material which makes it the concrete medium and locus of conflict, differences and social voices rather than a mere abstract neutral linguistic (formal) expression. Indeed, Bakhtin here comes very close to what his admirer Julia Kristeva dubbed as "intertextuality" and ascribed it to Bakhtinian scholarship, that is to say, the socio-political context from which the novel is born and is integrated with. In the similar vein, Golding's novel possesses such a kind of novelistic qualities and social engagement and accordingly an inherent dialogic (Intertextual) aspect as demanded by Bakhtin for the novel. In fact, in this context Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is a paragon of novelistic discourse par excellence which akin to other contemporary European novels is quintessentially social oriented and socially and historically committed. It deals with such contemporary socio-political issues as "the crisis of civilisation" and "the barbarity of mid-twentieth-century historical events" (Shaffer

10- 11). That is why Kevin McCarron in his essay “William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and Other Early Novels” addressed that “Golding was always very much a novelist of his times” (Shaffer 289), especially in portraying the global catastrophe of Second World War as indicated at the outset of the novel when the plane which was evacuating the group of English school boys from a war-torn area due to the outbreak of atomic war was hit and fell into the sea: “Not them. Didn’t you hear what the pilot said? About the atom bomb? They’re all dead” (Golding 14). Despite the ostensible unfashionableness and provocative ahistoricity of his novels compared to the neo-realism of other contemporary British novelists of 1950s and despite use of geographically and historically isolated settings of his novels, Golding’s “lack of engagement with his own society is only apparent” (Shaffer 289). In other words, instead of a direct involvement with the contemporary society, a realistic representation of it and a referential setting, Golding utilised “the fabular or allegorical mode of representation” (289) to avoid the naïve realism of the contemporary authors and enriched the polyphonic (dialogic) aspect of his novels. On the other hand, living in 1950s Britain and being the contemporary of Kingsley Amis, Golding was indeed one of those Angry Young Men in post war period who protested against the existing tradition and society which not only consolidates Golding’s engagement with social context as a background required by Bakhtin for the novel (Kristeva’s “Intertextuality”) but also makes him an author and intellectual in Bakhtinian line who favoured diversity and multiplicity of voices and challenged the contemporary monologic and homogenising culture. Although Golding was not young as the other Angry Young Men, he was angry with those contemporary authors who “misrepresented the actuality of human existence” (290). For this reason, he is believed to be a cultural revisionist who intended to “rewrite” the earlier texts in his early novels which not only causes him to make a *dialogue* with other texts but also is dialogically significant. That is why, his novels, due to being “associated with war and the military” are known to be one “of the most direct” to the context (290). By the same token, his 1950s novels, due to a historical actuality and also central subject of war that responded to the “historical horrors,” are known to be “conventional war” novels (290). As a result, due to their common theme of the global events, most of the contemporary British and Anglophone novels were more obsessed with the sociopolitical trauma, darkness and barbarity of those mid-twentieth century events than depicting the battle fields of Second World (Shaffer 10-11).

Erich Fromm in his book *Escape from Freedom*(1941), in a similar vein to Golding in his novel *lord of the Flies* (when Golding with the outbreak of Second

World War was in his naval career in the British Royal Navy--the experience which provided Golding the materials for his war novels) is also socio-psychologically concerned with the socio-political context of the modern world (as it was discussed above) and those forces and circumstances that resulted in emerging such radical, authoritarian and totalitarian individuals (fascists) who are responsible for such a global disaster. In fact, Fromm gets very close to what Golding uttered as the theme of *Lord of the flies*: "The theme is an attempt to trace the defects of society back to defects of human nature. The moral is that the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system however apparently logical or respectable" (Golding 204). In other words, Fromm, much like Golding, blames the socio-political context of the modern world (Europe) which granted unlimited (negative) freedom to such authoritarian and monologic individuals as Hitler in Germany (as Jack in *Lord of the Flies*) that led to their degeneration, barbarity and despotism which afflicted the entire world. Therefore, it implies that both of Golding's and Fromm's books are the encapsulation of the critique of the status quo, the socio-political context, the modern world in which despotic, authoritarian and monologic individuals came out and their devilish nature as well as lack of commitment to such ethical code and principle as "responsibility," "answerability" and "the other" led to a disastrous and catastrophic consequences. Both of Golding and Fromm however from different stand points were concerned with the socio-political circumstances (Macrocosmic level) in the world that brought about the present chaos and catastrophe. Whereas Golding is concerned with devilish human nature (free from any ethical code and moral conduct) and circumstances in human society that brings about such a crisis as the Second World War, genocide and eventually the dystopia, Fromm in the like manner is (psychologically) concerned with "the character structure of modern man," "the cultural and social crisis" and the social psychology of fascism. In short, both of them as their critique were concerned with the present literal dystopia which was produced by the modern man "free from all ties binding him to spiritual authorities" (Fromm 71) and from all such ethical principles as "responsibility," "answerability" and "self-other" relationship.

### **Power Struggle & the Formation of Two Communities: Dialogic and Monologic**

"They walked along, two continents of experience and feeling, unable to communicate." (Golding 55)

*Lord of the Flies* is the account of a party of English school boys who after a plane crash landed on a deserted uninhabited “roughly boat-shaped” (Golding 29) tropical island (allegorically the Garden of Eden) whose two sides with different natural features turned out to be very significant as the novel developed, symbolising the two sides of human (boys) nature and also two parties of boys under the leaderships of Ralph and Jack. Piggy and Ralph were the first two boys who found each other by chance in that island. In this new dwelling, they (like Adam and Eve after the “Fall”) started their “post-lapsarian” period and took off their clothes (signs of civilisation), gaining a new identity. They struck up conversation and in this way formed their early friendship. Having developed their friendship by talking about different topics from home and themselves and also introducing each other, Ralph and Piggy due to their humanitarian (Dialogic) nature, decided to search for the other boys who were stranded on the island. In so doing, they found a conch shell “In colour the shell was deep cream, touched here and there with fading pink” (Golding 16) and decided to use it to call the other boys to join them. Upon hearing the sound of the conch, the other boys one by one showed up, among whom were the choirboys marching in military style led by Jack Merridew. Jack, Ralph and Simon made an exploration team and embarked on their search of the island which made them sure that the island is uninhabited and was also Jack’s first attempt of hunting a pig and the first test of his hunting nature. Having learnt that the island was free from any adult figures or grown-ups, “Perhaps there aren’t any grown-ups anywhere” or “Aren’t there any grown-ups at all?” “I don’t think so” “No grown-ups” (Golding 8), they had the entire island to themselves: “This belongs to us” (Golding 29). They decided to establish their own model of small community based on rules, order and democracy symbolically indicated in the pink-colour “conch/shell.” Then they attempted to arrange an assembly, deciding to elect “A chief.” Acting based on democracy, they voted for the chief (“Let’s have a vote”... “Vote for chief”) (Golding 22) which was also kind of tug of war (power struggle) between Ralph and Jack, sowing the seeds of discord, enmity and dichotomy. Finally, although Jack wanted to be chosen, Ralph was elected as a chief: “there was his size, and attractive appearance, and most obscurely, yet most powerfully, there was the conch” (Golding 22). Jack remained as the *authoritarian* and *totalitarian* leader (*ringleader*) of the choir boys who said that he wanted them to be his *hunters* (foreshadowing the *hunting* of animal pigs and “Piggy”).

The democratic election (ironically) instead of bringing peace, unity and solidarity led to a separation and split in that vulnerable fledgling community and potentially paved the way for the later conflict, confrontation and clash between

the two communities whose points of differences and form of living and type of values were ethically and ideologically significant, especially when examined in the light of Bakhtinian ethical philosophy and Erick Fromm's model of individual as discussed in his book *Escape from Freedom* (1941). In other words, the election was a kind of "power struggle" between two individual leaders which led to the formation of two small but hostile communities (tribes) based on two different sets of values, principles and ethics: one based on (Bakhtinian ethical principle) and such dialogic and ethical values as "responsibility," "answerability" and the other/ "super self" whereas the other based on such monologic principles as authoritarianism and totalitarianism (Fromm's model of individual). In other words, in addition to the devil human nature ("dark side") and also the absence of the grown-ups' supervision and control, the power struggle between Ralph and Jack brought about a split and antagonism between the boys which consequently shattered the order and harmony of the island that was as fragile as the conch shell.

Afterwards such issues as exploring the island, possibility of being rescued, making a team for making fire, sending signal for the passing ships to be rescued, finding food and especially the fear of "littluns" raised which led to further divergence between the two parties of boys and fueled the fire of power struggle (rivalry) between Ralph and Jack to the point that put them in direct confrontation to each other and also prompted the formation of two opposing tribes whose antagonism, hostility and adversary culminated in corruption, disintegration, degeneration, chaos and especially the devastation of the benevolent nature (island). The immediate ramification was that once civilised school kids divided into two different communities under the control and leadership of two different individuals — Ralph and Jack — symbolically the representatives of two sides of human nature and two sides of the island. Soon they turned into barbaric vindictive tribesmen, revealing the real capacity of human nature which not only, "now divided into tribes," started "literally hunting each other down" (Shaffer 13), but also brought about the disruption of the rhythm of life and eventually devastation of the island.

In the dialogic world, there was Ralph's group consisting of Ralph himself as a leader, Simon (Christ figure), Piggy and Samneric who all together "seem to signify the code of nature" (Thapliyal & Kunwar 85). In terms of their human nature, they were dialogic, responsible, ethical, well-meaning and compared to Jack and his men they remained human, humane and less degenerated. Like the other creatures, they had a very strong sense of community (symbiosis), dialogue, peace and were very friendly and caring both for themselves and "other." They were "the carriers of order and harmony which are best seen in nature" (85) and symbolically

stood for different aspects of the island: “Ralph and his conch — nature and order [responsibility], Piggy — wisdom, Simon — the spiritual side, Samneric — sense of togetherness” (85).

Ralph was the good natured and dialogic leader and legislator of his small dialogic community and the island as well. His name, “originally from the Anglo-Saxon language, [which] means, ‘counsel’” (Salami 287) was very significant in this regard. E. M. Forster described him as “sunny, and descent, sensible and considerate” (Telgen 180) recalling Bakhtinian moral and ethical philosophy. While Jack was preoccupied with his rivalry with Ralph, hunting and killing (based on his own authoritarian and monologic nature), Ralph (based on his own ethics, dialogic nature, sense of “answerability” (responsibility) and “dialogue” was concerned about such issues as making fire to rescue all, making shelter for protection of all and friendship with Piggy, Simon and other boys. Ralph was “an embodiment of democracy” and whenever a decision was going to be made, he “knows that it is important for each of the boys to be able to speak his mind” and “lets the boys vote on it” (Salami 288). Thanks to his dialogic, caring and compassionate nature toward his fellow friends especially Piggy, he was “genuinely interested in the welfare of the entire group and can get along with all kinds of people” (288). By the same token, it was he who immediately after his arrival developed his friendship (with boys) with the island and its natural elements and “drops his clothing about the jungle as if it were his bedroom” (Salami 287-88). Therefore, both in the sense of being dialogic (responsible and answerable) and in the sense of being leader and legislator for establishing law, order and balance, “Ralph... seems to symbolise nature” (Thapliyal & Kunwar 86). Quite akin to the natural order and inherent balance of the island, Ralph succeeded to develop a dialogic personality and ethical attitude. It was he who laid down the “constitutions” and was preoccupied with organising things, holding meetings, maintaining fire, restoring order and distributing duties which were efficiently practiced in nature and natural elements (86). However, his lack of leadership and strategic skills kept him “far from the ideal leader” (Telgen 180), indicating that “he is not perfect” (Salami 288). In fact, it was due to such qualities as well as the “shutter” that clouded his mind and made him unable to find “the right way” which was the natural ordinary aspect of everyone. “Ralph [becomes] everyman with whom we can each identify” (180). Ethically, he had a very strong sense of responsibility and answerability and was the one who “recognises the need for responsibility” and “becomes more considerate of others” (Salami 288) in the island as well as in his small dialogic community.

Piggy was another ethical-oriented member of the dialogic world led by Ralph

whose presence was ethically significant. His name symbolised his animal-like (pig) nature. He was hunted like a pig at the end by the authoritarian Jack and his barbaric tribesman. His death symbolically stood for a person (martyr) who was sacrificed for dialogue, democracy and innocence. Thanks to his intelligence and rationality, he was the intellectual power and voice of reason in the island (in this context, recalling Freudian ego and Nietzsche's apollonian principle) both for Ralph and the entire island. He was very scientific and knew the rational solutions of different problems. Also, thanks to his sense of responsibility and answerability, akin to an adult, very soon he recognised the need of fire, shelter, and so on and quite willingly gave his spectacles for making fire. He thought more than Ralph and so understood more than him and became his mentor and assistant in maintaining order, balance and harmony. Although his friendship and association with Ralph (out of his dialogic nature) was very rewarding and vital for Ralph without whom Ralph would have lost leadership much earlier, it was very beneficial and essential for him as well without which his intellectual power and scientific approach was quite in vein and inefficient. However, in spite of his wisdom, intellectual power and scientific thinking, such disabilities (his Achilles Heels) as obesity, asthma and short-sightedness made Piggy as vulnerable and unprotected as the conch, the pig and democracy (balance, law and order) which were destroyed by violence, authoritarianism, despotism of an individual and individuals' self-indulgence in absolute freedom and power (Salami 291; Thapliyal and Kunwar 87; Telgen 179-180).

In the monologic world on the other hand, there were belligerent and totalitarian Jack and his ring/*hunters* who (much like their contemporary European despots) were truly the typical examples of Eric Fromm's model of "individual" as delineated in his book *Escape from Freedom* (1941). Jack was a paragon example and embodiment of Erich Fromm's model of individual (fascist) par excellence. Jack and his tribesmen were also the embodiment of human evil nature and "essential illness" which led the island to catastrophe. Jack and his men not only represented the ill-force "which at the onset is referred as 'something dark' (Thapliyal and Kunwar 86) but also stood for those (modern) individuals, as argued by Eric Fromm, for whom "The *abolition of external domination* seemed to be not a necessary but also a sufficient condition to attain the cherished goal: freedom of the individual" (18). In fact, they "emerged from the original oneness with man and nature" to gain freedom "as a separate entity" and participated in "a process we may call "individuation" (39-40). Afterwards, when those "primary ties" were cut off and the evolution concluded in an individual with total freedom, the next step was finding a refuge and security in other possible ways in the world which in case of Jack and his tribesmen could be hunting and killing

pigs, “All the same you need an army — for hunting. Hunting pigs —” (Golding 32). When one of the “littluns,” a small boy with a mulberry-coloured birthmark on his face, confided to them about his fear of darkness (symbolically the darkness of human heart and evil nature) and “beastie” (a snake-like beast) in the woods, Jack asserted his authority, declaring that he would kill it. It was in this context that Jack and his tribesmen (savage hunters) took the idea of hunting more seriously than ever before, painted their face and disguised their identity, revealed their true barbaric and vindictive nature and started their degeneration. One of the most important factors worth mentioning for this rapid degeneration and corruption of Jack and his hunters was what Erich Fromm called “process of individuation” (39-40) and indulgence in unlimited “Freedom” that they had due to the absence of any grown-ups: “The more the child grows and to the extent to which primary ties are cut off, the more it develops a quest for freedom and independence” (44). Thus, the more freedom they acquired, the more pigs they killed, the more they degenerated and corrupted (“absolute power corrupts absolutely”). It was in such a context in *Lord of the Flies* that “The roguish Jack emerged as a ruthless dictator” (Ousby 236) and in his quest for total freedom and complete “individuation” cut off his ties with Ralph and his (dialogic and answerable) friends who stood for order and balance in nature and formed his community of a band of barbaric, savage and irresponsible boys. They were in fact like those (totalitarian) individuals, as depicted by Fromm, who kindled the fire of global wars and brought about genocide and catastrophe in the whole world. Like the other real monologic, authoritarian and totalitarian societies which were under the control of a despot (tyrannical dictator), they had their own code of living, values and principles of behaviour. Indeed, unlike Ralph and his partners such as Piggy and Simon who had a strong sense of responsibility and answerability, Jack and his (army) hunters (accomplices) didn’t have any sense of responsibility and answerability and were quite negligent to it. They were so engulfed with their own diversions, interest and desire that if they hunted and killed the pigs and Piggy, it was out of their evil nature, inherent savagery and barbarism, but not a sense of altruism. In other words, they were the personification of Freudian “id,” “Pleasure Principle,” uncontrollable unlimited energy; the destructive energy without being suppressed.

### **Conclusion**

The present study has endeavoured to focus on Bakhtin’s ethical philosophy and Fromm’s socialist-psychological theory as delineated in his book *Escape from Freedom* and apply them to William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*. It has also demonstrated that Golding’s work as a novel on the macrocosmic level,

thanks to its novelistic and intertextual qualities as Bakhtin attributed to novel as a “social phenomenon,” like Fromm’s book was a response to and critique of the contemporary socio-political context. For both of them the present world condition (dystopia) and such a global disaster as the Second World War were the immediate ramifications of such monologic and authoritarian individuals as Hitler and Jack whose indulgence in individualism and total freedom brought about such a catastrophe to the world. Moreover, on the microcosmic level, that is to say the fictional world, the stranded school boys after the plane crash in order to establish their own model of society due to lack of grown-ups’ supervision and total freedom separated and consequently made two hostile communities one of which was “dialogic” based on Bakhtinian ethical concepts of “responsibility,” “answerability,” “self-other” relation under Ralph’s leadership and the other “monologic” based on those authoritarian, totalitarian principles which were characterised by Erich Fromm in his book for a despotic “individual” leader like Jack Merridew.

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