

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**  
**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**  
**Ammar Thlidji University-Laghouat**  
**Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages**  
**Department of English**



***Alienation in *Lord of the Flies* by  
William Golding and *The Beach* by  
Alex Garland***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment for the  
Requirements of the Master Degree**

**Written by:**

**Aicha DJEDOUEL**

**Supervised by:**

**Mr. A. KOURDOURLI**

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and friends.

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor, Mr. A. Kourdourli for his valuable guidance and advice not only throughout the course of this work, but through the master studies.

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## Abstract

The alienation of man is considered as one of the most fundamental themes in both old and contemporary literature. Alienation is a result of wars and social problems taking place in the modern era, in which individuals feel estranged and separated from their social network, family, work and even their own self. Alienation further contributes to the struggle for recognition, anxiety, savagery and madness. In this context, two novels, *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*, were suggested as a field of study in which different states of alienation are compared, one is voluntary and the other is involuntary, both of which contribute to the same results. This study is a good opportunity to delve into the examination of what is really meant by feeling alienated in a remote setting, where social rules and civilisation are absent, observing how the characters fall into savagery and primitive state. This dissertation's main objectives are first to prove that nature does not protect individuals, and that social rules are necessary to establish order. This dissertation is based upon the use of analytical mode of research that suits the study of literary works. It includes library sources and articles. Moreover, through this study, the types of alienation, the reasons for alienation, and the effects of alienation are demonstrated. Additionally, this research shows how alienation contributes to the decline of morals to conclude that social rules are necessary to establish peace within a given society.

يعتبر الانعزال واحد من أهم المحاور الأساسية في كل من الأدب القديم و المعاصر. وقد يكون الانعزال نتيجة للحروب و المشاكل الاجتماعية التي يشهدها العصر الحديث, و التي عادة ما يشعر الإنسان و كأنه غريب عن الوسط الاجتماعي. الأسرة أو العمل وحتى من ذاته. و الانعزال قد يولد القلق, الوحشية والجنون أو الصراع من أجل نيل التقدير والاعتراف. و في هذا السياق قد تم اقتراح روايتين: *Lord of the Flies* و *The Beach* كحقل للدراسة, و التي يتم من خلالها مقارنة مفهوم الانعزال والوصول الي أنا هناك الانعزال طوعي اختياري و آخر حتمي إلا أن كلاهما يؤدي لبلوغ نتيجة واحدة. تهدف هذه دراسة لإثبات ان الطبيعة لا تحمي الانسان, الي جانب ان القواعد الاجتماعية جد ضرورية لتحقيق مجتمع يقوم علي العدالة. هذه الدراسة تقوم علي النمط التحليلي الذي يتماشى والدراسة الادبية للنصوص, و التي تعتمد في ذلك علي الكتب و المقالات. هذه الدراسة هي فرصة جيدة للخوض في فهم المعنى الحقيقي لشعور بالانعزال في مكان نائي و بعيد, حيث أن النظم الاجتماعية و المبادئ الحضارية تعد شبه مفقودة, التي بدورها تؤدي إلى انسياق الشخصيات في كلا الروايتين نحو التصرفات الوحشية و البدائية في ظل غياب القوانين. سنتطرق إلي دراسة أنواع العزلة, أسبابها و آثارها. و توضيح كيفية مساهمة العزلة في انحطاط الأخلاق, لنصل إلى هذه الخلاصة: ألا و هي: أن النظم الاجتماعية تعد ضرورة حتمية للإحلال السلام في المجتمع.

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# **General Introduction**

## General Introduction:

Alienation is a recurrent theme in 20<sup>th</sup>-century modern literature. Being alienated from one's society is a phenomenon which is associated with the feeling of estrangement and separation of individuals from any particular community they belong to. As a result, individuals withdraw from their actual existing society. Many modern British writers have drawn a significant attention towards the importance of the concept of alienation and how it affects their lives negatively as a result of the growing conflicts and wars in any society, leading individuals to escape to the state of nature abandoning civilised society, which may contribute to the decline in morals and civilisation. Among these writers are William Golding and Alex Garland. This paper offers a comparative study of the theme of alienation between William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Alex Garland's *The Beach*. Both novels are perceived as key elements in examining the effects of alienation on the characters either by force or by choice. Though *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* are written in completely different epochs of time, they share some similarities in terms of causes and effects of alienation. *Lord of the Flies* was first published in 1954. A masterpiece of William Golding, it is about a group of English schoolchildren stranded on a Pacific deserted island, far from the outstanding civilised world. The children's true nature emerges and they turn into savages. In contrast, *The Beach* (1996) is not regarded as popular as *Lord of the Flies*. It is about a character named Richard who travels to Thailand where he embarks on numerous adventures. He joins a community of young people, who undergo different experiences and learn how dangerous it is to live outside social norms. This topic was selected in the light of a lecture in American literature which was held on the alienation of modern men, stating that society is responsible for shaping the freedom of the individuals. Alienation had been used as a theme before by many writers such as Robert Michael Ballantyne in *The Coral Island* and Daniel Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*.

Robert Michael Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1858) was about three children shipwrecked on an isolated island. They spend a nice time having adventures and experiencing joyful moments on the island. Furthermore, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is another novel about an alienated character who lives most of the time on remote island escaping the constraints of 17<sup>th</sup>-century society. He enjoys wild life, praises his alienation and individuality despite the hardships he endures. Even when he returns to England, he longs for wild life. However, our most important contribution in this study is to show that the character's alienation in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* is born out of social

insecurity, political conflict and wars, which is typical of modern times. Regarding the destruction taking place in modern societies, a number of views were introduced to discuss the real reason for this defect. Some thinkers related it to the human nature and others however, insist that modern society is the only reason for this defect.

The main objectives of this paper are set to prove how social rules and laws are necessary to create order in society and how nature is a threat to individuals. Moreover, this paper aims to show that alienation contributes to the decline in morals and that modern societies and civilisation are the source of corruption, which is manifest in wars and social problem. When dealing with human alienation, a number of questions are suggested.

This dissertation tends to answer several questions like: What is the major influence that leads the characters towards alienation? How does nature, as a physical setting, contribute to the decline in human morals in both novels? In other words, what happens in a state where social rules and laws do not exist? Who is responsible for this decline? Is it human nature or society? Are people born good, or are they born greedy and selfish? What are the benefits of establishing social rules? The choice of this topic is guided by two main reasons.

What directed my attention towards dealing with the theme of alienation is the following: Everyone of us, as part of society, may develop the sense of alienation. My main concern is to provide a good vision of what is meant by alienation, psychologically and socially. By stating all types and effects of isolation on individuals, this study can be beneficial in suggesting solutions to the issues of alienation. Moreover, the theme of alienation is frequently used in modern literature.

The concept of alienation came into existence in the early writings of many authors and thinkers throughout history. In his book *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (1932), Karl Marx indicates that alienation is restricted to the separation of the worker from ownership. Furthermore, Emile Durkheim claims that alienation is a psychological condition in which the individual feels disconnected from society because of the lack of support and moral guidance, *The Suicide* (1897). These works are fruitful in the depiction of man's alienation. My work is significant and different from the previously-mentioned works which referred to alienation as being merely a psychological and economic phenomenon. My current research, however, adopts a different approach. Through the analysis of *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*, I attempt to demonstrate that human alienation is purely a social fact. In other words, society is responsible for alienation, because it poses problems and conflicts that

would push a man towards choosing isolation. In this dissertation I shall pursue an analytical approach.

This paper will be based on an analytical type of research, which best serves any piece of literary work. This study involves an evaluation of facts, it revolves around some critical details, and it is also constructed on fact-based evidence. Since this study is more analytical, the primary sources are novels. The secondary sources include interpretations and analysis of the primary sources. Examples of secondary sources include articles, books and criticism.

By the end of the study of these novels, all the characters are convinced of the idea that society is the only way to escape the hardships of nature and that all humans are born as communal beings. This dissertation is divided into three chapters.

Chapter one will analyse the concept of alienation, referring to its history and main types. This chapter will also study alienation as a recurrent theme in British literature. In chapter two, I shall discuss the main similarities and differences between *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*, in terms of the context in which both novels were written, the setting, with an emphasis upon the effects of alienation on the characters. In chapter three, I shall bring out the reasons for the defect of society following the defect of human nature. This chapter will also examine how each author views the way to impose morality.

The overall idea throughout this dissertation is about how society is shown to be the only influential factor that would make man either successful and a good citizen or would contribute to the failure of man and drives him towards isolation.

**Chapter One**  
**An Introduction into the**  
**Concept of *Alienation***

The theme of *alienation* is one of the most recurrent themes in the history of literature. The term is viewed as increasingly prevalent in ancient, modern and contemporary epochs, when man suffers from problems in society. Although it is widely used, *alienation* is a vague and complex concept used by many philosophers and thinkers throughout history. *Alienation* is related to the state of estrangement and disconnection from one's community. It is a broad term that comes in various forms, most importantly sociology and psychology. In sociology, *alienation* is defined as the withdrawal of the individual from society resulting in the feeling of isolation. In psychology, *alienation* is a state of a powerful feeling linked to the loss of self, anxiety, despair and depersonalisation often leading to identity crisis.

This chapter will discuss and analyse the concept of *alienation*. The first part will be about defining what is meant by *alienation*; the second part will be devoted to the study of *alienation* as a theme from old to modern times. Next, I shall discuss the types of *alienation*. The last part will shed light upon the theme of *alienation* in British literature.

## **1. A Survey into the Concept of Alienation:**

*Alienation* is a broad concept that is present in many domains such as sociology, psychology, philosophy or literature. The term differs in meaning according to each field. For instance, psychiatrists consider *alienation* as the blocking or the disassociation of a person's feelings, making the individual's behaviour less effective and abnormal, whereas sociologists view *alienation* as merely a social product referring to society as being the reason for human isolation.

In general terms, *alienation* is derived from the Latin word *alienatio*, which signifies the transference of property, a state of insensibility, mental derangement or the act of becoming hostile or estranged. The Latin verb *alienare* means to take away, remove or cause a separation to occur. *Alienation* in English usage and *aliénation* in French retain the ideas of estrangement, of madness, and, in a legal context, of transference of property<sup>1</sup>. Within the literary sphere, it is the state in which characters in a story, a novel or a play feel disconnected from a particular social institution.

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Charles Seigneurt, *Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs A-J*, London: Greenwood publishing group, 1998 (p, 31).

In literature *alienation* has been regarded as one of the most predominant themes. *Alienation* means the complete lack of connection between characters, who are portrayed as being marginalised and disintegrated from society because of racial, social or psychological problems. This state of disconnection is often accompanied by the feeling of loneliness and frustration. In literature, the state of being alienated from one's society may provoke two different reactions on the part of characters. On the one hand, characters may rebel to get recognised as members of society. An example of a character who fights back his state of *alienation* for recognition is presented through Richard Wright's novel *Native Son*,<sup>2</sup> which expresses the extreme forms of black segregation. Richard Wright's character, Bigger Thomas is a black person who struggles in a white society, he is portrayed as a typical rebel, who always seeks recognition and desperately looks for his lost personal identity. On the other hand, characters may accept their state of isolation and never fight back, in this case they are in complete state of *alienation*. Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground*<sup>3</sup> is a good example of a man who accepts his state of *alienation*. The novella is about an unnamed and isolated character. He is depicted as having a little connection with people, that is often featured by disgrace and revenge and despite of the fact that he is intelligent and conscious, he is often unable to take any action towards recognition. Throughout the history of literature, *alienation* is considered as one of the most concurrent themes in world literature. *Alienation* was deeply rooted in history. It was first used by the Greeks and then by the Romans as a notion of exile i.e. abandoning the home country.

The theme of *alienation* has been largely explored over the ages from ancient times to the modern era. The term has first been used by the Greeks particularly in Homer's<sup>4</sup> epic poem *The Iliad*, which represents the great instances of *alienation*. The poem is about Achilles, the main character, who is a strong warrior in the Trojan War. Achilles' strong sense of order in a society makes him revolt against chaos and lack of harmony taking place in the war camps, leading in the end to his withdrawal from the army. Another form of *alienation*

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<sup>2</sup>Britannica: (September 4, 1908- November 28, 1960) was an African-American novelist and short story writer, who is arguably the most prominent and influential African-American novelist of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>3</sup> (November 11, 1821- February 9, 1881) was a 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian novelist considered by many critics to be among the greatest writers of his or any age. His works had a profound and lasting impact on the 20<sup>th</sup> century thought and fiction, according to Britannica

<sup>4</sup> Universalis: Greek poet (flourished 9<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE? Lonia? Now in Turkey) presumed author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

was presented in Roman literature, mainly in Juvenal's,<sup>5</sup> *Third Satire*. Rome in this period was a place of corruption and social injustice. This period was far more characterised by the loss of morality and the decline of culture. *Third Satire* is a collection of satirical poems written in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, in a time when crime and social prejudice reached their peak. The poem tells the story of Umbricius, one of Juvenal's friends. Umbricius affirms and clarifies the reason why he flees Rome. Throughout his poem, Juvenal describes satirically how life has become so chaotic by the coming of the Greeks and other immigrants. He further states his willingness to abandon the city of Rome. In the following era of the Middle Ages, *alienation* was found in some religious works portraying how people started to break away from the material world. The Age of Enlightenment was a period of deep changes in western society. These changes were marked by the birth of new philosophical views. People started to question their previous beliefs, they attempted to find a new meaning of life, yet they wanted to revolt against the dark vision of the Medieval Age. All people in the Age of Enlightenment were searching for liberty, reason and tolerance. Writers in this period turned to be optimistic, confident and more at ease to express their beliefs freely without any constraints. They criticised society, because it is the reason for human malaise.

One of those thinkers was Jean Jacques Rousseau<sup>6</sup> who is against society along with his description of the social context as often destructive and hypocritical. Instead, Rousseau values the state of nature. He claims that man is free and at peace in nature. However, if man is subjected to life in society, man would be alienated. Moreover, Rousseau declares that society is responsible for the restriction of human freedom and the spread of inequality among all individuals. He further explains in his book *The Social Contract* his mistrust in social intuitions that increase the gap between the rich and the poor. In this sense, Karl Marx<sup>7</sup> is another important figure in the modern period, having dealt profoundly with the *alienation* of humans in the capitalist world. Marx criticised Capitalism<sup>8</sup>, industrialism and urbanism because they provoke conflict among individuals. He focuses mainly on the isolation of

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<sup>5</sup> Universalis: Roman poet Latin in full Decimus Junius Juvenalis 55–60? ce Aquinum, Italy probably in or after 127 most powerful of all Roman satiric poets.

<sup>6</sup> Routledge: Rousseau (1712–78) was born in Geneva. His essay, *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts* (1750), won the prize; related concerns shape the more profound *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* of 1755. In his most famous work of political theory, *The Social Contract* (1762), Rousseau presents an alternative approach to how we might achieve a just and legitimate civil order

<sup>7</sup> Britannica: (Born in May 5, 1818 Trier, Rhine Province, Prussia Germany- died March 14, 1883 London-England) revolutionary, sociologist, historian, and economist.

workers. He further claims that the economic system of the 19<sup>th</sup> century destroys the workers, having them work for long hours for pitiful wages. In this context, workers tend to draw from work and seek *alienation*. Karl Marx explains work alienation in the following quotation:

*First, that the work is external to the worker, that is not a part of his nature; and that, consequently, he does not fulfill himself in his work but denies himself, has a feeling of misery rather than well-being, does not develop freely a physical and mental energies, but is physically exhausted and mentally debased. The worker therefore feels himself at home only during his leisure time, whereas at work he feels homeless. His work is not voluntary but imposed, forced labour. It is not a satisfaction of a need, but a means for satisfying other needs.*<sup>9</sup>

Through his illustration of labour *alienation*, Karl Marx conveys the idea that man in a state of work suffers a kind of lack of fulfillment of needs, that are freedom, independence and power. Instead, man feels that his social needs are poor when he is at work, i.e., work makes man restricted in terms of lack of control, autonomy and ownership. This latter would certainly cause *alienation* of the individual in the work place. In addition to Marx's view, Emile Durkheim<sup>10</sup> brought about a new explanation of *alienation*, quite distinguishable from the previous ones in his social theory.

Sociology provides another view of *alienation* in Emile Durkheim's view. It is either the result of anomie,<sup>11</sup> or as Durkheim called it *the perceived lack of socially approved means and norms to guide one's behaviour for the purpose of achieving culturally prescribed goals*.<sup>12</sup> Under the dysfunction of these social norms such as anomie or normalness, the individual can not adjust himself in the changing social order and,

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<sup>9</sup> Hamid Sarfraz, *Alienation: A Theoretical Overview*, Pakistan: Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research, 1997 (p, 47).

<sup>10</sup> Routledge: (1858–1917), born in France, he is generally recognized to be one of the founders of sociology as a distinct scientific discipline.

<sup>11</sup> Universalis: also spelled anomy, in societies or individuals, a condition of instability resulting from a breakdown of standards and values or from a lack of purpose or ideals.

<sup>12</sup> Hamid Sarfraz, *Alienation: A Theoretical Overview*, Pakistan: Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research, 1997 (p,49).

consequently, gets alienated. This point is well explained by Durkheim in the following quotation:

*Man's characteristics privilege is that the bond he accepts is not physical but moral; that is, social... but when the society is disturbed by some painful crisis or by beneficent or abrupt transition, it is momentarily incapable of exercising this influence. In the case of economic disaster, indeed, something like declassification occurs which suddenly casts certain individuals into a lower state than their previous one*<sup>13</sup>

In the above quotation, Durkheim explains that a human being's needs are not basically genetic or physical, but they are rather social and moral. These needs would only increase when competition is at its height rate in any particular social context: the more the needs are satisfied, the more needs we have, thus individuals feel happy. Consequently, those passions in a human being need to be controlled in a good manner to produce a balanced society. However, if in a society those needs and passions were continuously restricted and maladjusted by exterior forces, this would make the individual fail to adjust himself to the social order of the society he actually belongs to, and hence becomes alienated. In 20<sup>th</sup> literature *alienation* has received a particular attention among writers belonging to this period. They attempted to depict characters as being disturbed and lonely from their social network as a result of the complexity of modern life.

20<sup>th</sup>- century literature has always focused on *alienation*. Most characters in a novel or a play are portrayed as lonely, isolated and alienated. This is simply the result of wars, social injustice, and inequality among citizens as well as oppression, and racial problems dominating the world in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An example of racial segregation and the question of black identity has been a concern of many blacks during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of which have made the black voice heard. Richard Wright's *Black Boy* and Ralph Ellison's<sup>14</sup> novel *Invisible Man*, both of which are semiautobiographical works, aim at forming black cultural consciousness. Both novels deal with the same theme which is the *alienation* of man

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<sup>13</sup> Hamid Sarfraz, *Alienation: A Theoretical Overview*, Pakistan: Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research, 1997 (p, 49).

<sup>14</sup>Britannica: (born March 1, 1914, Oklahoma City, US-died April16, 1994, New York City) American writer who won eminence with his first novel (and the only one published during his lifetime), *Invisible Man* (1952).

because of racial problems. *Alienation* is also present in the drama of the Absurd<sup>15</sup>, in which human being is represented as being both isolated from the self and the others. Most famous works that tackled the theme of *alienation* in the drama of the Absurd was Harold Pinter's<sup>16</sup> *The Birthday Party*.

The drama of the Absurd drama has also dealt with the theme of *alienation* though the work of Harold Pinter, *The Birthday Party* a play that displays characters who are often terrified by unnamed dangers. The complexity and tense relationships lead those characters towards choosing *alienation* as a salvation. They often sit in enclosed areas like a room with no communication or interaction. In many of its forms, *alienation* can be distinguished in two main types.

## 2. Types of Alienation:

Alienation can be classified into two types social and psychological. Social alienation refers to the state in which the person is disconnected from a particular social milieu. Psychological alienation is however, related to the state in which a person experiences the sense of unreality and depersonalisation.

### 2.1. Social Alienation:

Social alienation is the absence of contact and interaction with people, family, friends, and society at large. In other words, it is the isolation of a person from his own social network both physically and emotionally. Robert Ankony stated that *alienation* is '*a condition in social relationships reflected by a low degree of integration or common values and a high degree of distance or isolation between individuals, or between an individual and a group of people in a community or work environment*'<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Dramatic works of certain European and American dramatists of the 1950s and early 60s who agreed with Existentialist philosopher Albert Camus's assessment, in his essay "*The Myth of Sisyphus*" (1942), that the human situation is essentially absurd, devoid of purpose, according to Universalis.

<sup>16</sup> Universalis: (born October. 10, 1930n London – died December. 24, 2008, London) English playwright, who achieved international renown as one of the most complex and challenging post-World War II dramatist.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Ankony, *The impact of Perceived Alienation on Police Officers*, Michigan: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management, 1999 vol 22.

Social alienation can be either voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary social alienation is related to people who choose to be isolated from a social context for a variety of reasons, whereas involuntary social alienation refers to a person who is forced to be alienated because of many reasons that push him to be isolated from his surrounding environment. Furthermore, alienation occurs in four layers in a given social community.

According to Nan Lin, 2006, alienation can occur in four layers. The outmost social layer is community, where one feels integrated or isolated from the larger social structure. Next is the layer of organisation such as work, school and church, followed by a layer close to the person, that is, confidantes, family, friends, and others. Finally, the innermost layer is that of the person, who has personality, intellectual ability, or the senses with which to apprehend and interpret relationships. In addition to social alienation, psychological alienation has long been viewed as an important subject that deals with human self- alienation.

## **2.2. Psychological Alienation:**

The field of psychology is concerned with the study of human alienation. It refers to the separation of a person from his or her own self. This is known as a divided-self, which ultimately means madness and derangement. This phenomenon has received a considerable attention in modern psychology. The concept of having more than one self indicates two important facts: psychic loss of reality, which is a type of mental isolation and psychic discrepancy that resides within the person. *The Disowned Self* is a book by Nathaniel Branden, in which he explores the reasons and the consequences of psychological alienation engaging into providing therapies. According to him, self-alienation is a state in which individuals are disconnected from their own needs and emotions and often frustrated. They either view themselves or the outside world as being unreal. Another concern of self-alienation is bounded within Existentialism.

In Existentialist<sup>18</sup> literature, alienation is a recurrent theme. Existentialists saw an individual's alienation as the estrangement of the person from the condition of being a human. They held the view that alienation is the separation of an individual from real life, simply

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<sup>18</sup> Routledge: The term was officially coined by Gabriel Marcel in 1943. Existentialism is an interpretation of human existence in the world that stresses its concreteness and its problematic characters.

because they are preoccupied by abstraction. Thus, Existentialists view the alienation of men on two levels: man is alienated from other men and man is alienated from himself.

One of the most important writers in the literature of Existentialism was Albert Camus<sup>19</sup>. In his famous work *The Stranger*, Meursault, the main character, is an isolated man from society, family and friends, which further contributes to his isolation from his own-self, including his emotions and feelings. Meursault is neither exiled nor neglected but he voluntarily separates himself from others. Thus, he extensively does not react to his mother's death. Meursault has emotional detachment from his surroundings. Therefore, he is regarded as a stranger to his society due to the fact that he perceives others as strangers to him. All of Albert Camus's works depict the sense of absurdity of human existence that is mainly the product of a chaotic and obscure world. Further illustration of Existentialist writings can be traced back to Jean Paul Sartre's<sup>20</sup> famous work, *Nausea*, which tells the story of Roquentin, an isolated character, who is alienated from his family, even when he interacts with people, he shows deep boredom and lack of interest. The novel is about the absence of coherence and meaningfulness. British literature has long dealt with the theme of *alienation*.

### 3. Alienation in British Literature:

Human isolation is one of the most prevalent themes in the history of British Literature, especially since Daniel Defoe's<sup>21</sup>, most notable novel, *Robinson Crusoe*. The story is about a journey into on a wild island far away from civilisation and society. Crusoe admires life on the island and values his own personal liberty despite his *alienation* and hardship. Even after returning to England, his homeland, Crusoe still longs for wild life. Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*<sup>22</sup> is an orphan, brought up in the Reeds' home, where she was mal-treated and made to

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<sup>19</sup> Routledge: (1913–60) French novelist, essayist best known for such novels (1942; *The Stranger*), (1947; *The Plague*), (1956; *The Fall*). He received the 1957 Nobel Prize for Literature.

<sup>20</sup> Universalis: (born June 21, 1905 Paris, France- died April 15, 1980 Paris), French novelist, playwright and exponent of Existentialism – a philosophy acclaiming the freedom of the individual human being. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1964, but he declined it.

<sup>21</sup> Britannica: (born 1660, London , England- died April 24, 1731, London) English novelist, pamphleteer, and journalist, author of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719-22) and *Moll Flanders* (1722)

<sup>22</sup> Universalis: (born April 21, Yorkshire, England- died March, 31, 1855, Yorkshire) English novelist noted for *Jane Eyre* (1847), a strong narrative of a woman in conflict with her nature desires and social condition. she later wrote *Shirley* (1849) and *Villette* (1853)

feel inferior. She goes into different experiences of *alienation* since her childhood: either physical or mental. Jane Eyre was subjected to loneliness to escape harsh reality. She feels psychologically-detached from her surrounding world and even from herself. Jane Eyre undergoes difficult moments of anger and solitude that make her detest her relatives. She thus, sees alienation as a way to escape her family's ill-treatment. Another example of alienation is expressed in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*,<sup>23</sup> which is about Stephen Dedalus, who is depicted as an isolated figure from Irish society. Dedalus is considered as an outsider in a conventional Irish society, because of his extreme beliefs in freedom and a dislike of society's conventions that embody Irish culture. Stephen Dedalus seeks loneliness, solitude and even prefers to be exiled in search for his freedom and demonstrate his artistic talents. Furthermore, T.S. Eliot's, *The Waste Land*<sup>24</sup> explores *alienation* as a dominant theme. It is set in the aftermath of World War I, through which Eliot expresses his deep shock to see society devastated and destructed after the war. The poem is about the alienation of modern men, it is about the meaninglessness of life, loss of innocence, death and the sense of betrayal encountered by many people after the war. Aldous Huxley's novel, *Brave New World*<sup>25</sup>, provides a deep insight into the concept of alienation through his characters: Bernard Marx, Helmholtz Watson, and John. Each of the character is alienated for one particular reason. But they are alienated because of one common cause: they are not able to become part of the World State. Further examples of alienation in British literature is William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* and Alex Garland's novel *The Beach*, both of which are the core of this study. The two novels' main theme is alienation and how it affects characters. The novels further explore the fall of morals and the break of civilisation as a result of *alienation*.

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<sup>23</sup>Literary Encyclopedia: (born 1882, Dublin, Ireland- died January, 13, 1941, Switzerland), Irish author James Joyce is probably the single most influential author of twentieth-century literature, he wrote *Dubliners* (1914), *Ulysses*(1922) and *Finnegans Wake* (1939).

<sup>24</sup> Universalis: (born September, 26, 1888 US- dies January, 4, 1965 London, England), American-English playwright, literary critic, and editor, leader of the modernist movement in poetry.

<sup>25</sup> Britannica: (born July, 26, 1894 England- died November, 22, 1963, US), English novelist and critic gifted with an acute and far-ranging intelligence. His works were notable for their elegance, wit, and pessimistic satire.

To summarise alienation is a state of feeling estranged and separated from one's social network. It is considered as a recurrent theme in both ancient and modern literature. It is mainly present in all literary genres. It is a result of wars, social problems and racial discrimination along with the spread of injustice and inequality among people. Alienation comes in two types, social alienation and psychological alienation. Alienation assumes much recognition in the Existentialist literature that depicts human being as both disconnected from the outside world and his own self often results in the feeling of illusion, meaninglessness and frustration. Furthermore, throughout the history of British literature alienation has been explored as a recurrent theme, which is often related to wars and social injustice.

This chapter has dealt with the concept of *alienation*, which is a predominant theme in *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding and *The Beach* by Alex Garland. Both novels are the subject of the next chapter.

## **Chapter Two**

**The Effects of *Alienation* on  
the Characters in *Lord of the  
Flies* and *The Beach***

Most of the writing produced in Post-modern British literature has been marked by a common use of the theme of *alienation*. The term has come into use as a result of wars and social problems that dominate the modern world. In such a condition, individuals lose faith in their social institutions, moving instead towards isolation. Through a comparative study of two novels, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding and *The Beach* by Alex Garland, light will be cast on the theme of *alienation* in terms of stating its main types and forms, emphasising mainly the effects of *alienation* in the contribution to the downfall of human morals and the decline of civilisation. Though dissimilar and written in different epochs of time, the characters in *The Beach* flee to the state of nature due to the fact that they face problems in society. The characters in *Lord of the Flies* are forced to live in the state of nature because of war. However, both novels mirror how a disconnected and an isolated group of people from civilisation and society have changed to be primitive and savage. In addition, they convey one fundamental aspect: *alienation* is a product of the modern world, which is often seen as meaningless and insecure that escaping to the state of nature is seen as the best solution no matter how dangerous it is to live there.

The first part of this chapter will provide a full insight into the historical context in which the two novels were written. The second part will be devoted to the comparison and the contrast between the two novels, mentioning the main similarities and difference in terms of the setting. It will also focus on the conditions under which the characters are alienated, examining the different degrees of *alienation* in characters and how *alienation* has driven them towards insanity. The last part will focus on presenting the allegorical concepts in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*.

## **1. The Historical Context of *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*:**

The contextualisation of both novels is completely different. It can be seen that *Lord of the Flies* is born out of wars and the loss of civilisation, whereas *The Beach* is influenced by Alex Garland's own fascination for travelling to Southeast Asia, where he encounters a massive addiction to drugs and social disability and insecurity among the new-developed community on an isolated island.

*Lord of the Flies* was written in the era following World War II, exactly in 1954. The world was still recovering from a devastating war that was characterised by the spread of

disease, violence and brutality as well as the use of the atomic bomb. Britain as any other European country had decreased in power, the idea of being a great empire started to dissolve, losing much of self-confidence they used to have in the preceding decades. These political and social changes frightened people, made them anxious and often feel insecure in a meaningless universe. The novel was thus an opportunity to criticise civilisation and the Western World, as well as putting much blame on *human nature*<sup>26</sup> that Golding always considers as evil. Moreover, it was written in response to World War II as a definitive expression of man's inhumanity to man. As an eyewitness, Golding encountered the suffering of people and why they made wars when he fought in World War II. The question remained open and unanswered that the war was really and merely a human product, something inevitable that may happen any time. Why England, as a civilised nation, would have a need for a war to solve problems? This is well-presented through Jack in *Lord of the Flies*, a civilised boy, who in the state of nature does anything to reach power. In his description of the change that happens in society because of war, Golding says:

*Before the Second World War, I believe in the perfectibility of social man... but after the war I did not because I was unable to. I had discovered what one man would do to another... They were not done by the headhunters of New Guinea or by some primitive tribe in the Amazon. They were done, skillfully, coldly, by educated men, doctors, lawyers, by men with a tradition of civilisation behind them, to beings of their own kind.*<sup>27</sup>

This means that Golding believed that it is possible to achieve a perfect society based on equality and respect, in which everyone would treat the other nicely. But human nature prevents this from happening. This is why he changed his mind about the perfectibility of society. Golding was astonished about how intellectual and civilised people would do to harm others of their own kind, claiming that only people with no civilisation can commit such primitive acts. William Golding wrote *Lord of the Flies* in response to World War II. He saw World War II as the ultimate expression of man's inhumanity to man. Golding was mostly

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<sup>26</sup> Universalis: fundamental dispositions and traits of humans. Theories about the nature of humankind form a part of every culture. In the West, one traditional question centered on whether humans are naturally selfish and competitive (Thomas Hobbes; John Locke) or social and altruistic (Karl Marx; Emile Durkheim).

<sup>27</sup> Harold Bloom, *Blooms Guides William Golding Lord of the Flies*, London: Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, 2004 (p,58).

frightened by two main incidents: the Holocaust<sup>28</sup> which left millions of Jews killed and the atom bomb that was dropped in Japan, causing a tremendous loss in human lives.

William Golding saw how millions of Jews were murdered, and how much the Japanese suffered in the war by the effects of the atomic bomb. This is compared to the situation of the children in *Lord of the Flies*, when they allow evil and savagery to emerge, how the fire in the novel symbolises the fire of the war, and how people are capable of destroying their civilisation. The novel reflects Golding's own experience, it is a social commentary on how people act in the absence of civilisation. *Lord of the Flies* shares similar theme with *The Beach*, that of *alienation* and the decline of civilisation, but both novels are different in terms of circumstances under which the characters are alienated. *The Beach* is a story of discovering an apparent paradise on an island in Thailand, on which the main protagonist, Richard, soon realises that it is hard to maintain a civilised behaviour in a place without restraints.

*The Beach* circles around travelling overseas, encountering different cultures and visiting and exploring other countries, that has become a popular activity among students and young people all over the world. Alex Garland's most preferable place to visit is Thailand, a country in Southeast Asia known for its beautiful landscape, great islands and perfect beaches. *The Beach* reflects the growing popularity of English backpackers who travel for adventurous goals, and experience new modes of life, go to other places different from the one they used to live in and share different experience. *The Beach* is a similar story about an English backpacker named Richard. He goes to Thailand for a holiday in order to seek adventure and find a utopian society. Richard comes across all sorts of corruption in Thailand, such as the excessive use of drug that is cultivated in large fields on an isolated island. There, he witnesses massive violence, death, terror and insanity. Alex Garland attempts to prove through his story and his main protagonist, Richard, a community of young people on a distant island created far away from society and shows how those young backpackers can fall from their ideal as they are trying to create another alternative way of life, that is unsafe, rigid, cruel, and dominated by disease, and in which no democracy is allowed. Instead, there is murder, dictatorship and corruption putting aside the very tendencies they want to achieve

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<sup>28</sup> Britannica: The systematic state-sponsored killing of six million Jewish men, women and children, and millions of others by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II. The Germans called this "the final solution to the Jewish question."

before going to the isolated island. Though the context of the two stories is dissimilar, both books, *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* share the same setting and theme and suggest how life can be portrayed in the absence of social norms.

## **2. The Similarities and Differences Between *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*:**

*Lord of the Flies* is similar to *The Beach*: the two novels are alike in terms of the setting and the use of the theme in contributing to the collapse of civilisation as well as the decline of utopian society. However, it is obviously clear that the two novels highlight some differences in the circumstances under which the characters are isolated.

### **2.1. The Setting in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*:**

The setting in both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* plays a significant role in determining the destiny of the characters as well as in contributing to the downfall of morals and the decline of civilisation. It is regarded as a tool to reinforce the idea existing in Golding's mind that the natural state destroys human values, leading individuals towards savagery. On the other hand, both William Golding and Alex Garland show through their novels how human beings destroy nature. The two novels are hence considered as similar in terms of geographical location, although written in different eras of time.

*Lord of the Flies* takes place on an uninhabited exotic island in the Pacific Ocean where a group of English schoolchildren aged from six to twelve crash-land on the island during a nuclear war. At first, the island is viewed as paradise-like, safe and perfect for the children to settle on. The setting is thus described as being wonderful, virgin, bright and, unspoiled. The children can bathe in lagoon, eat both fresh fruit and meat of the wild animals like pigs. However, as the novel progresses towards its end, Golding reveals through the use of nature as a setting, two important elements: humans are self-destructive following the destruction of the earth. In this sense, Golding illustrates that humans are self-destructive as when the children are left alone on the isolated island without any restraints or rules imposed on them. They become by nature primitive and savage in the absence of civilisation. The destruction of the earth, on the other hand, is also caused by human flaws, when using technological advancement, such as weapons to destroy the earth. In the novel, the destruction

of the island is witnessed through the plane crash that leaves scars on the earth and the fire made by the children to call for rescue. This fire has burnt the island. As for the setting in *Lord of the Flies*, it is so symbolic. The mountain in the novel symbolises salvation for the children. It is a place where they can put fire to get the attention of any passing ship.

As regards *The Beach*, Alex Garland represents a similar setting as *Lord of the Flies*. The story takes place on an isolated island in an era which is famous for tourism and exploration. The island is described as an impressive place because of the fascinating scenery. The secret beach is at first glance represented as paradise. The beautiful landscape of the island has attracted the group of backpackers and made them eager to settle down to form their own community. But soon, the events have taken another direction: the characters start to experience troublesome problems on the island and recognise that life in the jungle is responsible for the savagery of humans. In the absence of rules, control and punishment, the young backpackers are now addicted to drugs excessively, everyone attempts to hurt the other. They become selfish, savage and primitive, yet they have become sick and poisoned, leading many of them to death. Through the description of the setting, Alex Garland and William Golding attempt to show that nature is a place of evil which always leads individuals towards cruelty and violence.

The similitude between both novels does not reside only in the setting, but it goes further. Both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* share the same theme of *alienation*, but the conditions under which the characters are alienated differ in each novel.

## **2.2. Alienation in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*:**

*Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* share one common theme, that of *alienation* of characters from society's rules. The characters in both novels are in a world that lacks order and rules. However the reason for their *alienation* differs from one novel to the other, because of the circumstances under which the characters are alienated. But both novels are built on the idea that *alienation* has made the characters go insane and savage by the end.

In *Lord of the Flies*, the children are involuntary alienated: when the plane crashes, the children are left alone on a deserted island. They are completely cut from the outside world having nowhere to escape. They are forced to be alienated despite the frequent attempt to manage to survive and go back to civilisation by means of building a signal fire to attract any passing ship to get help. The desire for returning to civilisation has grown in the children, who

constantly remember their families, the old schooldays and their home country. For instance, Piggy keeps talking about his aunt, while Ralph remembers how he was feeding his little horses. Thus, the characters in *Lord of the Flies* are in total and extreme *alienation*. They are disconnected from the outside world. They have no way to get back to society, and therefore, they struggle to survive in nature. While being on the island, the children are exposed to extreme dangers and difficulties, but still cannot find any solution to escape and survive. Therefore, the children have to struggle to carry it through. They are more alienated compared to the characters in *The Beach*.

Nonetheless, in *The Beach* the characters are voluntary alienated: the group of young travellers seek to find a better life based on their own free choice far away from society, which is regarded as insecure and hostile. The characters attempt to form a community of their own, made according to their own rules and norms. They are not forced to live in isolation, they can go outside the community to buy food and get all they need. However, to be subjected to the outside world is seen as a dangerous menace to the community, all of which want to keep this little place as a secret. For instance, when Sal, the leader of the community, shows a need for a medical treatment, she is portrayed as cautious and uncertain about urging for a medical help from outside the community. This shows how the community members are careful to preserve this secret beach. In spite of the fact that the characters choose to alienate themselves on an isolated island, they gradually want to get back to society and civilisation, see how dangerous is to be in the state of nature. In the absence of rules, the characters are in a constant conflict with each other. They are exposed to disease. Having found no medical care, they are harmed by wild animals. Regardless of the difficulties the characters have experienced in the state of nature, they are in total freedom to get back to the normal life they used to live. Facing any problem in the state of nature is not an absolute end. The characters are able to go back to society when they wish; they can flee the island in case of an emergency. By the end of the novel, the characters are convinced of the necessity of returning to society.

Alienation of the characters in each novel is obviously different, since in *The Beach*, the characters are consciously made alienated, which gave them much control over their actual state, whereas alienation of the characters in *Lord of the Flies* is unlimited, because they are forced to be alienated.

Allegory is a form of expressing events and characters in a novel as symbols that stands for giving a deeper meaning behind the surface one. Both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* are two allegorical novels that feature Postmodern literature.

### **3. Allegory in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*:**

The term *allegory* derives from Greek *allegoria*, 'speaking otherwise'. As a rule, an allegory is a story in a verse or prose with a double meaning: primary or surface meaning; and a secondary or under-the-surface meaning. It is a story, that can be read, understood or interpreted at two levels.<sup>29</sup> William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* allegorical meaning is derived from Sigmund Freud's<sup>30</sup> theories of human nature assuming that the human psyche is divided into three main parts: the Ego, which is the part of the mind containing consciousness and memory, which controls, plans and conforms to reality. The Superego, which is the part of the mind that acts as a conscience to the ego, developing more standards and rules through contact with society. The Id, which is the part of the psyche that is unconscious and the source of primitive, instinctive impulses and drives. In this sense, William Golding explains that when we remove the Ego that is related to society and convention, the human being will regress to his instinctive animalistic roots. In *Lord of the Flies*, this Freudian notion is adopted: each character represents one of these elements. Ralph is the leader who represents civilisation and order, he is the Ego. Piggy represents science and intelligence. Though physically weak, he is the Superego for his logistic and rationalistic tendencies. Jack, however, represents wilderness, violence, instinct. He is the Id. Further exemplification of symbolism in the novel can be related to the clothing of the children: At first, they appear to be well-dressed, which is a symbol of civilisation, but soon as they take off their clothes, they become devoid of civilisation. Their painted faces symbolise wilderness. Furthermore, fire is a source of power for the children, especially Jack. When the fire is put out, the hope for survival disappears and when the fire is out of control the children go wild. It is also a symbol of war that destroys the earth. Piggy's glasses, on the other hand, represent science and technology as they help to make fire. Similarly, *The Beach* is a symbolic novel. One

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<sup>29</sup>,J.A.Cuddon, *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, London: Penguin Books, 1998 (p,20).

<sup>30</sup> Routledge: Born May 6, 1856, died September 23, 1939) Austrian neurologist. Freud developed the theory and practice of psychoanalysis, one of the most influential schools of psychology and psychotherapy of the twentieth century.

important aspects of symbolism throughout the novel is the secret island. Though it appears as a paradise, place of leisure, purity, freedom and exotic life, however, as the novel gradually progresses towards its end, the island is revealed as place of darkness that holds in its ties death and massive loss for the characters. The island is hence, regarded as dangerous where drugs can be consumed; it is a symbol of death, madness and wilderness. Furthermore, Richard's interest in video games of war is related to the fact that he would have rather served in the Vietnam War if he had born twenty years earlier. His eagerness towards Americanisation and as to be a part of Vietnam War reflects his deep disappointment about his country, Britain that has diminished in power, due to the emergence Americans as a superpower.

To summaries, both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* explore the theme of alienation of the characters on a remote island, far away from society. Though the novels are different in terms of the conditions under which those characters are alienated, the characters destiny remains the same. All of them in the end favour civilised society over the state of nature. Through the analysis of *Lord of the Flies*, we come to the conclusion that William Golding has sought to understand the unlimited cruelty of human beings who become destructive and frightening. He also wonders how it is possible for civilisation aged more than six hundred years to spend much effort in destruction. He seems to say that this fundamental defect lies in human nature. He suggests that there is no way to survive, that humans are meant to kill one another. Similar to *Lord of the Flies*, *The Beach* depicts the moral deterioration of an isolated group of young backpackers, some of whom tend to do anything evil in order to protect their secret place. There, they encounter different dangers due to the natural state they live in, which makes them seem primitive, behave in an animalistic manner, which itself has contributed to the downfall of morals and the decline of civilisation. Both novels tend to prove that evil and immorality reside in humans themselves; and that without the constraints and laws imposed by society, life would become a jungle. This chapter has examined alienation in both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*, as a way that leads to the decline in morals. Both Garland and Golding's views about human nature and modern society's flaws as a source of human's destruction are going to be the subject of the next chapter.

**Chapter Three**  
**Study of the Human**  
**Condition in *Lord of the Flies***  
**and *The Beach***

William Golding and Alex Garland have long been questioning the origin of sins in a society claiming that it might either be innate evil in human nature or society as a whole. Through the analytical study of *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*, both writers have provided an insightful explanation of the massive defect taking place in a society. In this context, numbers of views have been introduced to discuss human condition and the possibility of survival in the state of nature. However, these views have been deemed as contradictory and paradoxical in their claim to ensure the perfect and the most suitable state for humans to develop a good living condition. All of these views attempted to discuss the real reason for the defect of man. *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* were a reference to Thomas Hobbes and Jean Jacques Rousseau who developed different opinions about human nature in which they questioned how man, who lives in the state of nature, would be like in the absence of moral values and social order.

This chapter will examine human condition in both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*. The first part will discuss human nature in *Lord of the Flies*. The second part will deal with human nature in *The Beach*. The third part will be on analysing the impact of isolation on characters in both novels. The last part will be on finding a way to achieve morals.

## **1. Human Nature in *Lord of the Flies*:**

Throughout *Lord of the Flies*, William Golding attempts to show how the world appears as a place of evil after World War II. He observes how people reacted to the war: they were shocked by what the war had brought into their lives. Golding blamed civilisation and regimes, which committed crimes against humanity. This is the reason why Golding wrote about the defect of society, which is in fact related to the defect in human nature i.e. evil resides in the human being. Golding learned from his own experience that human nature is savage, wicked and sinful. Talking about the defect of society in *Lord of the Flies*, Golding explores the strongest emotions in the human being: the desire for leadership and control, the intense fear, jealousy and wrath by portraying a group of children trying to form a society after being evacuated on an isolated island. An attempt to form a society begins when Ralph blows the conch to call meetings, that symbolises reason, they start to create assemblies, electing Ralph as a chief and Jack as the leader of the choirboys. Jack is responsible for hunting, in addition to the building of shelters. Golding shows how society is formed on the

island. Events take another turn, as Ralph and Jack start to have conflicts over the leadership on the island, which eventually breaks out into war, that marks a split between the groups and hence the society being formed was divided. Their experience of creating a society has ended in failure, because in fact the children do not have ethics or morals due to their cruel nature. By giving an account of the children's difficulty in realising a society on the island, Golding said: *'The boys try to construct a civilisation on the island; but it breaks down in blood and terror because the boys are suffering from the terrible disease of being human'*<sup>31</sup>. *Lord of the Flies* reveals the dark side of the human being, through which Golding attempts to show the impossibility to build an idyllic life based on equality and respect. Instead, the children turn to exhibit aggressive behaviour. Roger and Maurice spoil the sandcastles made by little children, then Roger throws stones on a child. This passage indicates Roger's cruelty to little children, which is an early sign of the decline of morality. He tries to show his superiority and physical force over small weak children, while the children are still building their utopian society:

*'Roger gathered a handful of stones and began to throw them. Yet there was a space round Henry, perhaps six yards in diameter, into which he dare not throw. Here, invisible yet strong, was the taboo of the old life. Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law'*<sup>32</sup>.

Furthermore, Jack's savagery rises from his pleasure of hunting the pig, which is considered as a sign of success and strength of primitive state over civilisation. The children's chances of rescue are soon lost when they abandon the signal fire as a ship passes the island, being instead occupied by hunting. Moreover, most of the children's primitive, ritual dance marks the children's getting into savagery, when they attempt to kill their friend Simon, except Piggy and Ralph who are still loyal to civilisation. The children's engagement with violence and barbarity is revealed in the following quotation:

*Do our dance! Come on dance! Dance! He ran stumbling through the thick sand to the open space of rock beyond the fire. Between the flashes of lightening the air was dark and terrible, the boys followed him, clamorously. Roger became the pig, granting and charging at Jack. Who side-stepped. The hunters took their spears, the cooks took spits, and the rest clubs of the*

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<sup>31</sup> William Golding, *Fable*, London: Faber & Faber, 1984 (p, 89).

<sup>32</sup> William Golding, *Lord Of the Flies*, New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 1954 (p, 69)

*firewood. A circling movement developed and a chant. While Roger mimed the terror of the pig, the littluns ran and jumped on the outside of the circle. Piggy and Ralph, under the threat of the sky [...] kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood.*<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, the children in *Lord of the Flies* act in accordance with their evil nature. As a result, they abandon their civilisation and act instead in reference to their primal instinct based on their own desires and impulses. Golding considers the return to society's rules as a key element to abandon the innate savagery that resides in all humans whether civilised or not civilised. In this context, Golding says about *Lord of the Flies*:

*'The overall picture was to be the tragic lesson that the English have had to learn over a period of one hundred years; that one of the people is inherently like any other lot of people; that the only enemy of man is inside him'*<sup>34</sup>. Golding's dark vision of human nature was in fact a reference to Thomas Hobbes'<sup>35</sup> vision of human cruel nature.

In his book *Leviathan*, Hobbes made an imaginative description of humans in the state of nature isolated from society's rules when everyone is born free and naturally equal that no difference exists between man and man. Hobbes yet portrays the state of nature as a place where no moral, no body of rules exist, and certainly no one to enforce those rules, each individual is free to exert power and dominate the other. Thereof, each person has the unlimited will and freedom to hurt, attack, kill and discriminate others without receiving any punishment, which would make the act of violence vilest, thus everyone would become a threat to the other. This is probably what actually happened in *Lord of the Flies*. In his illustration of the state of nature Hobbes says:

*In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently, no culture of the earth, no navigation, nor the use of commodities that may be imported by sea, no commodious building, no instruments of moving and*

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<sup>33</sup> William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*, New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 1955 (p, 155).

<sup>34</sup> Harold Bloom, *Bloom's Guide*, InfoBase Publishing, New York, 2010. (P,11).

<sup>35</sup> Universalis: (born April 5, 1588, Westport, Wiltshire, England—Died December 4, 1679, Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire) English philosopher, scientist, and historian, best known for his political philosophy, especially as articulated in his masterpiece *Leviathan* (1651).

*removing such things as require much force, no knowledge of the face of the earth, no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society, and which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death, and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short*<sup>36</sup>

In this context, Hobbes describes the state of nature as primitive, intolerable, threatening and deprived of civilisation, construction, industry, commerce or culture, in which most people would live in continuous fear with a notion of violence and injustice. Hobbes claims that humans in the state of nature are animalistic, isolated, selfish and always seek self-interest, insisting on the idea that there must be a superior power, an authority that can handle the situation, otherwise people are likely to be in a constant state of war and conflict. Both of William Golding and Thomas Hobbes suggest an alternative way for the human being to develop a better life, which is the coming back to the state of civil society. This fact expresses the idea that all human beings have to live within a social institution restricted by order, rules and laws, they insist on the fact that there must be a supreme and single power to ensure safety, peace and equality upon which morality and legal rules will be based. The existence of rules is an absolute condition for the creation of a just society. In contrast to William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*, Alex Garland's characters in *The Beach* long for isolation and freedom, they seek to build a society based on their own will, claiming that the state of nature is a place of peace and harmony.

### **1. Human Nature in *The Beach*:**

Through the exploration of Thailand, Alex Garland reveals an experience of discovery. On an isolated island far away from society, Garland's characters attempt to create a utopian community of their own to escape a society which is believed to be corrupt and to flee the restrictions they are subjected to. All characters who come from different places are shown to be eager to abandon their societies to experience a sense of freedom in a place called nature. The state of nature is a place which is regarded as salvation, an exotic place of pleasure and self-satisfaction as Sal, the leader of the community, declares: '*After a little while, you'll see that this is a wonderful place, as long as you appreciate it for what it is*'<sup>37</sup>. At first glance, it is obviously clear that Alex Garland's view of nature is much more optimistic than that of

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<sup>36</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, England: Renaissance Editions, 1651 chapter XIII (p, 4).

<sup>37</sup> Alex Garland, *The Beach*, England: Penguin, 1996 (p, 96).

Golding. He sees nature as a pleasant place to enjoy a happy life. This difference can be probably related to the different ages of both writers, Golding seemingly lived in an age of wars and political problems, that was mostly reflected in his novel *Lord of the Flies*, whereas, Alex Garland belonged to an age of political stability, which had a positive impact on his novel *The Beach*. Garland's view of nature can be clearly traced back to Jean Jacques Rousseau's ideas of nature. Rousseau held an optimistic vision about human nature that centers on the idea that humans are naturally good. He believed in the freedom of man, claiming that nature is the most perfect place where individuals would feel free. He further stated that people in ancient times used to live in forests without any social rules, they had indeed a satisfactory life based on liberty and respect. In this sense, Rousseau says:

... *Wandering in the forests without industry, without settled abode, without war, and without tie, without any need of others of his kind and without any desire to harm them, perhaps even without ever recognizing any one of them individually, subjected to few passions and self-sufficient, savage man had only the sentiments and the enlightenment suited to this state, that he sensed only his true needs....*<sup>38</sup>

In this quotation Rousseau claims that all men valued nature. He saw the natural setting as being humble and guided by spontaneous pity, where man should be free and equal. Furthermore, Rousseau ensured that man in the state of nature owns a moral imperative to make decisions about what is right and what is wrong. On the other hand, Rousseau criticised civilisation and social institutions, he regarded society as a dark place, which is devoid of pity and emotions. However, in Garland's novel events went otherwise, all characters are now negatively affected by nature and isolation which results in death and madness. This decisive moment in the novel has convinced both the reader and the writer that modern life is the source of trouble and corruption. By the end of the novel, Richard and his fellow friends are well-convinced of returning to civilisation. The isolated setting is both portrayed as being negative and harmful, driving characters in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* towards madness.

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<sup>38</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Discourses on Equality*, France : Dover Publication, 2004 Part One.

### 3. The Impact of Isolation on the Characters in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*:

The isolation of the characters plays a crucial role in the making of the plot in *both Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*. Being isolated from society is one of the most common aspects in both novels. As the characters in *Lord of the Flies* are exposed for the first time to nature, they appear to be well-behaved then they gradually come to be cruel and savage. They become violent to each other. It starts as a game then develops to be real violence. This is shown through Ralph, when he discovers Piggy's name, '*Ralph danced out into the hot air of the beach and then returned as a fighter-plane, with wings swept back, and machine-gunned Piggy*'.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, isolation results in establishing a tense relationship between the children, everyone is craving for taking control of the island symbolised by Ralph's and Jack's rivalry for power. Isolation has also contributed to the loss of innocence due to the fact that children have been part of a setting, which is devoid of control and regulation. The children are victims of the isolated setting, the children are burnt with sun, and they are left hungry with no shelter. Being isolated from the outside world, the children's language and behaviour deteriorate to lower standards, some of them forget their names, especially the little children. For instance, the twin Sam and Eric start to be called Samneric. When he was at school in England Jack was called Merridew, but on the island he is called Jack or chief. His school mates become his tribe, this is how isolation has made the children hunters. Isolation has the same effects on the characters in Garland's novel *The Beach*. It contributes to the breakdown and insanity of the characters.

Similarly to *Lord of the Flies*, at first the island is described as an idyllic landscape. Richard requests the reader to imagine the beauty of the island; he says:

*Think about lagoon, hidden from the sea and passing boats by a high curving wall of rock. Then imagine white sands and coral gardens never imagine by dynamite fishing or trawling nets. Freshwater falls scatter the island, surrounded by jungle—not forests of inland Thailand, but jungle. Canopies three levels deep,*

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<sup>39</sup> William Golding, *Lord Of the Flies*, New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 1954 (p. 12).

*plants untouched for a thousand years, strangely coloured birds  
and monkeys in the trees.*<sup>40</sup>

Although it looks perfect at first glance the island is really dangerous. In complete isolation and as the story progresses, all the characters start to live moments of crisis, terror and insecurity on the island: the massive shark attack and cannabis intoxication signify the failure to build a utopian society. By the end of the novel, Richard is shown as completely dissatisfied with what happened on the island, he is portrayed as being terrified by the harsh reality of being part of nature. Richard sees how his friends are severely addicted to drugs and subjected to insanity and madness. He says, '*I was suddenly sick of how difficult this journey had become. There was too much effort, too many shocks and dilemma to dissect*'<sup>41</sup>

All the characters in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* are exposed to the danger of the state of nature, they are subjected to surmount all the difficulties they face. Exposed to nature, a place without rules and laws has affected the characters negatively in both novels. They start to feel free to act according to their instinct and impulses, which ends up in savagery, insanity, death and barbarity. However, by the end of both novels, Alex Garland and William Golding seem to suggest a solution to the defect of human nature.

#### **4. Achieving Morality:**

The most important theme throughout *Lord of the Flies* is the defect of society as a result of the defect of human nature. The moral taken from the novel is that society is not the product of problems and malaise; indeed it is rather the unethical nature of the human being that produces such a defect. Golding believes all humans were born savage and cruel, he insists on the necessity of creating a body of rules that would govern and restrict any instinctive and animalistic behaviour on the part of humans. However, Alex Garland seems to admire the state of nature, but by the end of the novel he shows his conviction that nature has had a negative effect on his characters. This fact denotes how nature is hostile when the characters experience that harshness of life in the jungle. This difficult situation can be embodied in death, the danger of wild animals, illness, and conflicts taking place between the

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<sup>40</sup> Alex Garland, *The Beach*, England: Penguin, 1996 (p, 58).

<sup>41</sup> Alex Garland, *The Beach*, England: Penguin, 1996 (p, 86).

members of the so-called new community. Though the two novels are different in language, the type of narration and the literary genre, *The Beach* is an autobiographical novel narrated in the first person with the use of dialects and vernacular language, the novel belongs to the literature of travel and exploration. As for, *Lord of the Flies*, it is a highly symbolic novel which is written in the third person, written in Standard English. Golding's fiction is related to the Robinsonade<sup>42</sup>. Both writers attempt to show the absence of civilisation as a result of the increasing notion of savagery. They examine the negative impact of isolation and the absence of rules in driving the characters towards insanity and madness. Thus, *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach* convey one fundamental aspect: social norms and rules contribute to the survival of humanity from falling into savagery and help establish balance in society. Furthermore, both authors urge for establishing a society based on a body of strong laws that everyone should obey.

To conclude, William Golding has examined the real reason for the defect of society and the decadence of morality, by making an imaginary story of English schoolchildren as a way to create a laboratory to analyse the cause of the flaws in society. Golding presumes that human nature is responsible for the ruins taking place in a society. He further shows how people would act when social rules vanish to let go of human values and moral. In *Lord of the Flies* all the characters are children, who are usually portrayed as innocent in any piece of a literary work. However, comparing how the children are portrayed at the beginning of the novel is obviously different from the way they are depicted in the end, observing how shocking the children have become. Their behaviour changes in a short time from civilised to cruel. They become overwhelmed by killing and hurting each other and bring the island to chaos, which symbolises the end of civilisation. Similarly, Alex Garland has made the same assumption in his novel *The Beach*, when he examines his characters in an isolated place being consumed by the natural setting. Garland describes realistically his characters being first fascinated by the exotic setting as if they were unaware of the danger of the island, which itself results in death and insanity. The novel, hence, goes far beyond an adventurous trip. It further depicts a nightmarish experience in the jungle. Furthermore, Alex Garland modern life's flaws brings into question, while showing his disapproval of backpackers' culture.

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<sup>42</sup> Britannica: Any novel written in imitation of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719-22) that deals with the problem of the castaways' survival on a deserted island.

# **General Conclusion**

## General Conclusion:

Through the analysis of *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding and *The Beach* by Alex Garland, light was shed on the theme of alienation of the characters who are completely disconnected from the outside world. Both writers attempt to portray how their characters are affected negatively by isolation. They show how the isolated physical setting has played a crucial role in the decline in morals. Golding and Garland explore the fragility of morality in the absence of social norms. Both novels invite readers to evaluate modern man and society. In *Lord of the Flies* and *The Beach*, there is a number of influences that lead the characters towards alienation.

The reasons for alienation of the characters in both novels are different. In *Lord of the Flies*, the children are alienated due to the fact that they are plane-crashed on a deserted tropical island because of an atomic bomb taking place in World War II. Golding's characters find themselves stuck on a remote island on which they were subjected to live in isolation. They are hence forced to be alienated. Golding shows his discontent about the war and how it can contribute to isolation. However, the characters in *The Beach* are adult, they are portrayed as willing to choose to be alienated in an era when travel and exploration were prevalent among young people. They are further depicted as craving for liberty; they want to abandon the restrictions and fundamental flaws which become apparent in their societies. As a way to flee corruption, they attempt to form a society of their own, based on their own beliefs. Furthermore, nature, as a setting, contributes to the decline in morals in both novels.

All the characters in both novels are portrayed to be willing to form a society despite of the difficulties they face and the different conditions under which they are alienated. In *Lord of the Flies*, all the characters are children. At first sight, the characters tend to bring their notions of civilisation into the isolated island, they try to organise themselves in a democratic and civilised way, through the establishment of assemblies and elections. The nature of the setting that lacks order corrupts ethics and morality and causes conflicts among children. Things soon deteriorate when Jack becomes a dictator and the children's irrational fear of the jungle and the beast take over. Thus the children's attempt to build a society has ended into failure because there are no pre-existing rules on the island that the children must obey. The children end up forming two groups: the rational ones and the hunters. By the end of *Lord of the Flies*, the children are depicted as primitive, they moved to barbarism, their behaviour and language are altered. Similarly in *The Beach*, nature has affected the characters

negatively in a way that makes the newly-formed community not strong enough to impose punishment and restrictions over the characters. Any character in the novel feels free to foist his/her opinion upon the group, which leads to conflicts. In the absence of social order, the characters become hopelessly addicted to drugs, which marks the degeneration of the utopian society and the decline in morals. William Golding and Alex Garland hold different views on the defect in society. This has mostly been regarded as a debatable issue: Is it due to evil in human nature or in modern society?

Garland and Golding have long been interested in finding the real cause of the human being's defect. Through examining a group of young adults' attempt to form a community of their own, and their failure to bring order and create rules on the island, Garland relates this fact to the flaws of modern society and how it drives individuals towards corruption and destruction. Furthermore, Garland voices a heavy criticism of modern backpackers' way of life. Golding, on the other hand, gives an insightful commentary on human evil nature. He relates the defect in society to the human being's defect. He relates his own experience of World War II, as a navy officer, to his novel *Lord of the Flies* through which he shows how civilised people who belong to great nations spend much effort and energy in destruction. Through his characters, Golding shows madness, wrath, jealousy and fear and how these strong emotions would be revealed in the absence of control and rules. Furthermore, Garland and Golding agree upon the idea that social rules are necessary to enhance the well-being of the individual and the whole community.

Garland and Golding insist on the necessity of establishing rules to limit any instinctive behaviour. Both authors claim that social order is fundamental to ensure the well-being of individuals. In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding expresses his optimism when the children get rescued by the army officer, which marked the end of savagery and the birth of a new hopeful beginning. Similarly, the characters in *The Beach* are portrayed as willing to come back to society after all the difficulties they encounter on the isolated island.

From the research that has been carried out, it is possible to conclude that social norms and rules help restrict human evil nature. They further save humanity from being subjected to alienation as well as from falling into savagery. This is the way good morals and balanced society can be achieved.

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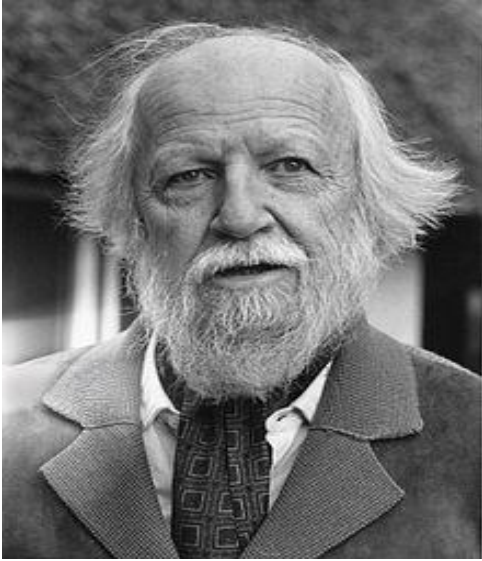
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# Appendices

## Appendix A



### **William Golding:**

William Golding was born September 19, 1911, in Saint Columb Minor, Cornwall, England. In 1935 he started teaching English and philosophy in Salisbury. He temporarily left teaching in 1940 to join the Royal Navy. In 1954 he published his first novel, *Lord of the Flies*. In 1983, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. On June 19, 1993, he died in Perranarworthal, Cornwall, England.

### **Early Life:**

William Golding was born on September 19, 1911, in Saint Columb Minor, Cornwall, England. He was raised in a 14th-century house next door to a graveyard. His mother, Mildred, was an active suffragette who fought for women's right to vote. His father, Alex, worked as a schoolmaster. William received his early education at the school his father ran, Marlborough Grammar School. When William was just 12 years old, he attempted, unsuccessfully, to write a novel. A frustrated child, he found an outlet in bullying his peers. Later in life, William would describe his childhood self as a brat, even going so far as to say, "I enjoyed hurting people." After primary school, William went on to attend Brasenose College at Oxford University. His father hoped he would become a scientist, but William opted to study English literature instead. In 1934, a year before he graduated, William

published his first work, a book of poetry aptly entitled *Poems*. The collection was largely overlooked by critics. Teaching after college, Golding worked in settlement houses and the theater for a time. Eventually, he decided to follow in his father's footsteps. In 1935 Golding took a position teaching English and philosophy at Bishop Wordsworth's School in Salisbury. Golding's experience teaching unruly young boys would later serve as inspiration for his novel *Lord of the Flies*. Although passionate about teaching from day one, in 1940 Golding temporarily abandoned the profession to join the Royal Navy and fight in World War II.

### **Royal Navy:**

Golding spent the better part of the next six years on a boat, except for a seven-month stint in New York, where he assisted Lord Cherwell at the Naval Research Establishment. While in the Royal Navy, Golding developed a lifelong romance with sailing and the sea. During World War II, he fought battleships at the sinking of the *Bismarck*, and also fended off submarines and planes. Lieutenant Golding was even placed in command of a rocket-launching craft. Of his World War II experiences, Golding has said, "I began to see what people were capable of doing. Anyone who moved through those years without understanding that man produces evil as a bee produces honey, must have been blind or wrong in the head." Like his teaching experience, Golding's participation in the war would prove to be fruitful material for his fiction. In 1945, after World War II had ended, Golding went back to teaching and writing. *Lord of the Flies*: In 1954, after 21 rejections, Golding published his first and most acclaimed novel, *Lord of the Flies*. The novel told the gripping story of a group of adolescent boys stranded on a deserted island after a plane wreck.

### **Death and Legacy:**

Golding spent the last few years of his life quietly living with his wife, Ann Brookfield, at their house near Falmouth, Cornwall, where he continued to toil at his writing. On June 19, 1993, Golding died of a heart attack in Perranarworthal, Cornwall. He was survived by his wife and their two children, David and Judith. After Golding passed away, his completed manuscript for *The Double Tongue* was published posthumously. Among the most successful novels of Golding's writing career were *Rites of Passage* (winner of the 1980 Booker McConnell Prize), *Pincher Martin*, *Free Fall* and *The Pyramid*. While Golding was mainly a novelist, his body of work also includes poetry, plays, essays and short stories.

## Appendix B

### Alex Garland:



Alex Garland was born in London in 1970. After leaving school, he spent six months in Southeast Asia, and he has returned there many times since, most frequently to the Philippines. He graduated in history of art from Manchester University in England and began his career as an artist and freelance journalist. *The Beach*, his first novel, was written in 1996 and became an international bestseller, with five million copies sold worldwide. In 1997 it won the Betty Trask prize for the best first novel by a writer under 35. Garland's second novel, *The Tesseract*, was published in 1998. In 2000 *The Beach* was made into a successful film starring Leonardo di Caprio as Richard and Virginie Ledoyen as Françoise.