

ABSTRACT

William Golding dedicated his life's work to an exploration of man's nature. The primary themes of most of his novels are the conflict between civilization and savagery, good and evil and the question of the source of evil within man. This thesis focuses on his first two and most well-known novels: *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors*. The objective of this thesis is to analyse the theme of savagery in these books.

The aim of this thesis is to infer what Golding intends to convey concerning the nature of man and to analyse how he understands and views savagery. The theoretical foundation of this thesis is based on a comprehensive definition of the terms civilization, savagery and barbarism derived from their etymology and their meaning within various social sciences; and Golding's own ethical doctrine established in his works.

Other sources include works focused on literary analysis of Golding's novels, interviews and articles written about Golding's life and work and naturally both the novels analysed.

Key words: savagery, savage instinct, civilizing instinct, civilization, barbarism, morality, innate evil, man's nature, cruelty, William Golding, Lord of the Flies, The Inheritors