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Social Power Dynamics in William Golding's The Lord of the Flies

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Social Power Dynamics in William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies*

This undergraduate thesis is submitted as partial fulfilment to obtain Bachelor Degree at English Department Faculty of Cultural Sciences Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan



Sherly Monica Saragih

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
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APPROVAL SHEET

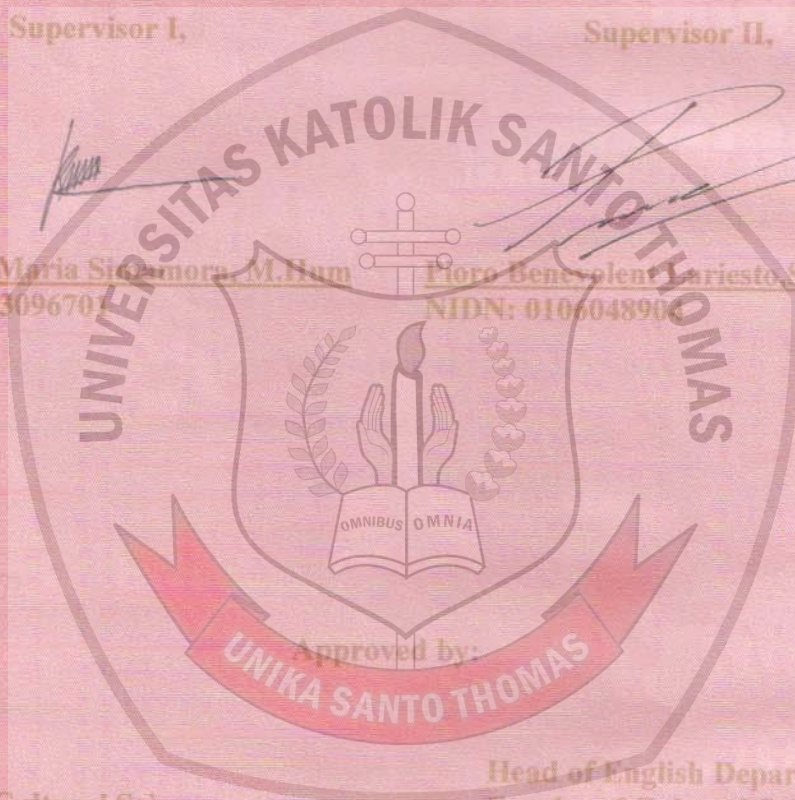
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Solemnly declare that this thesis entitled “**Social Power Dynamics in William Golding’s *The Lord of the Flies***” is my own work, free from plagiarism. Quotations are referenced in accordance with the scientific writing ethics that apply. If it is proven that this thesis contains plagiarism, deemed to have violated the rules, I am willing to accept sanctions for the act in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Medan, July 2025

The writer,

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The writer,

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates social power dynamics in William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies* by examining how leadership is constructed, questioned, and transformed through a sociological literary approach. By applying Max Weber's theory of authority, this research analyzes how individuals navigate group dynamics in situations where formal structures have collapsed. This study employs a qualitative method to focus on how rational, charismatic, and coercive types of power emerge and shift as the group struggles to establish order in an isolated environment. The findings reveal a gradual breakdown of rational authority as fear, survival instincts, and emotional impulses begin to dominate. Symbols such as tools of communication, sources of hope, and ritualistic objects become central to understanding how influence is maintained or lost. The study also highlights that the absence of shared norms creates space for dominance rooted in fear and instinct rather than reason and cooperation. Ultimately, the research emphasizes that leadership is not merely about holding a position, but about how power is perceived, accepted, and exercised within a group. When social structures collapse, the human drive for control and security can reshape power into forms that no longer reflect collective interest. Literature, in this case, serves as a mirror of the real tensions between order and chaos, between structure and human instinct.

Keywords: *social power, leadership, authority, sociological literary analysis, group dynamics*

ABSTRAK

*Penelitian ini mengkaji dinamika kekuasaan sosial dalam *The Lord of the Flies* karya William Golding dengan menelaah bagaimana kepemimpinan dikonstruksi, dipertanyakan, dan ditransformasikan melalui pendekatan sosiologi sastra. Dengan menerapkan teori otoritas Max Weber, penelitian ini menganalisis bagaimana individu menavigasi dinamika kelompok dalam situasi di mana struktur formal telah runtuh. Studi ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk fokus pada bagaimana tipe kekuasaan rasional, karismatik, dan koersif muncul dan berubah saat kelompok berjuang untuk membangun ketertiban di lingkungan yang terisolasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya keruntuhan bertahap terhadap otoritas yang rasional ketika rasa takut, kebutuhan untuk bertahan hidup, dan dorongan emosional mulai mengambil alih. Simbol-simbol seperti benda komunikasi, sumber harapan, dan objek ritual menjadi kunci dalam memahami bagaimana pengaruh dipertahankan atau hilang. Studi ini juga menyoroti bahwa ketiadaan norma bersama membuka ruang bagi dominasi yang berakar pada rasa takut dan naluri, bukan pada akal sehat dan kerja sama. Pada akhirnya, penelitian ini menekankan bahwa kepemimpinan bukan hanya tentang memegang posisi, tetapi juga tentang bagaimana kekuasaan dipersepsikan, diterima, dan dijalankan dalam suatu kelompok. Ketika struktur sosial runtuh, dorongan manusia untuk mengontrol dan mencari rasa aman dapat membentuk ulang kekuasaan menjadi bentuk yang tidak lagi mencerminkan kepentingan bersama. Sastra, dalam hal ini, menjadi cermin dari ketegangan nyata antara keteraturan dan kekacauan, antara struktur dan naluri manusia.*

Kata Kunci: *kekuasaan sosial, kepemimpinan, otoritas, analisis sastra sosiologis, dinamika kelompok*

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