

Lord of Flies as a Apologue and a Fiction as Well

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Abstract— William Golding's first novel, *Lord of the Flies*, tells about the group of young English schoolboys, between the ages of six and twelve, who survive a plane crash on a tropical island. The boys were apparently evacuated during a destructive atomic war and are left with no adult control anywhere about, to build their own society on the island. The change to create a new paradise is clear enough, but Golding quickly indicates that the boys are products of and intrinsically parts of current human society. Some of the character in this novel appealed to adult sanity in their futile attempt to control their world, but, suddenly and inconsistently at the end of the novel, adult sanity really exist. The horror of the boys experience on the island was really a childish game, though a particularly vicious one, after all.

Keywords— Destructive, Atomic war, Human Society.

I. INTRODUCTION

William Gerald Golding was born on September 19, 1911, in St. Columb Minor, Cornwall, the son of Alec Golding, a noted schoolmaster, and Mildred A. Golding. William led a somewhat isolated childhood, spend largely in the company of his nurse, Lily. He was a prodigious reader as a boy, and at the age of twelve he conceived the idea of writing a twelve volume novel cycle on the trade union movement; but he wrote only a few pages. He attended Marlborough Grammar School and then Brasenose College, Oxford. He first thought of securing a degree in science, but after two years he switched to English, becoming immersed in Anglo-Saxon literature - an outgrowth of his lifelong fascination with primitive cultures. Golding graduated in 1935. While at Oxford, he published *Poems* (1934), a volume he later repudiated.

Golding became a social worker at a London settlement house; during his spare time he wrote, produced, and acted with small theatre companies. He married Ann Brookfield in 1939; they had a son and a daughter. Golding began teaching at Bishop Wordsworth's School in Salisbury shortly before World War II but entered the Royal Navy in 1940. He served for five years, achieving the rank of lieutenant and being stationed mostly on

various vessels in the North Atlantic; in 1944 he participated in the D-Day invasion of Normandy. The war was perhaps the defining moment in Golding's life, and much of the rest of his work draws either directly or metaphorically upon his war experiences.

Golding returned to Bishop Wordsworth's School in 1945, where he taught for another sixteen years. In 1960 he received an M.A. from Brasenose College. During 1961-62 he was writer-in-residence at Hollins College; for the rest of his life he was a full-time writer.

He spent his most of the days in writing and finally he wrote twelve novels. By June 18, 1993, he had finished two drafts soon thereafter. However, on the morning of June 19, he died in sleep of heart failure. Five days later, on Midsummer's Day, he was buried in the churchyard at Bowerchalke. On January 1, 1995, his wife Ann Golding passed away. She was buried beside him in the churchyard at Bowerchalke. In June 1995, Golding's last novel, *The Double Tongue*, was published.

Golding said that he believed that the ultimate purpose of literature is to foster change "It is the poetry of fact, the stuff of human courage and defence, and has changed the face of history." Recalling Sir Winston Churchill's words which won for Churchill the Nobel Prize, Golding said that Churchill's words were of the kind that could alter the course of human events. Words express what a huge segment of the world thinks and, in that sense literature has to be used for nation to speak to nation."

II. LORD OF THE FLIES AS A APOLOGUE AND A FICTION AS WELL

According to Ian Gergor and Mark Kinkead - Weekes, decisive changes have taken place within the form of the novel since it came into being in the eighteenth century. These changes have come about often due to historical circumstance; sometimes they can be defined in terms of the ruling ideas of the age or the literary expectations of their readers, but there are other changes which seem to arise from the very nature of the novelist itself. A fiction is something which takes the form of an exploration for the novelist; the concern is very much with

trying to make clear the individuality of a situation, of a person. With a fable, on the other hand, the case is very different. Here the writer begins with a general idea – “the world is not a reasonable place we are led to believe”, “all power corrupts” – seeks to translate it into fictional terms.

Apologue are those narratives which leave the impression that their purpose was anterior, some thesis or contention which they are apparently concerned to embody and express in concrete terms. Apologue give the impression that they were preceded by the conclusion which it is their function to draw. It is generally very easy to say what a ‘Apologue’ is about because the writer’s whole purpose is to make the reader respond to it in precisely the same way. Clear examples of fiction in this sense would be works like D.H. Lawrence’s *Sons and Lovers* or Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*.

The novel is divided into three sections. The first deals with the arrival of the boys on the island, the assembly, the early decisions about what to do; the emphasis falls on the paradise landscape, the hope of rescue and the pleasure of day to day events. Everything within this part of the book is contained within law and rule: the sense of the awful and the forbidden is strong. Jack cannot at first bring himself to kill a pig because of “the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh; because of the unbearable blood.” Roger throws stones at Henry, but he throws to miss because “round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law.” The world in this part of the book is the world of children’s games. The difference comes when there is no parental summons to bring these games to an end. These games have to continue throughout the day, and through the day that follows. Golding creates his first sense of unease through something which is familiar to every child in however protected a society the waning of the light. It is the dreams that usher in the beauties, the snake, the unidentifiable threat to security.

The second part of the book could be said to begin when that threat takes on physical reality with the arrival of the dead airman. Immediately the fear is crystallised, all the boys are now affected, discussion has increasingly to give way to action. As the narrative increases in tempo, Ralph has appealed to adult world for help, “If only they could send us something grown up a sign or something,” and the dead airman is shot down in flames over the island. Destruction is everything; the boy’s world is only a miniature version of the adult’s. By now the nature of the destroyer is becoming clearer; it is not a beasties or snake but man’s own nature. “What I mean is may be it’s only us.” Simon’s insight is confined to himself and he has to

pay the price of his own life for trying to communicate it to others. Simon’s death authenticates this truth, and now that the fact of evil has actually been created on the island, the airman is no longer necessary and his body vanishes in a high wind and is carried out to sea.

The third part of the book, and the most terrible, explore the meaning and consequence of this creation of evil. Complete moral anarchy is unleashed by Simon’s murder. When the destruction is complete, Golding suddenly restores “the external scene” to us, not the paradisaical world of the marooned boy’s, but our world, “the kid needed a bath, a hair cut, a nose wipe and a good deal of ointment.” He carries our emblems of power, the white drill, the epaulettes, the gilt – buttons, the revolver, the trim cruiser. Our every day sight has been restored to us, but the experience of reading the book is to make us re-interpret what we see, and say with Macbeth “mine eyes are made of the fools’ O the other senses.”

III. CONCLUSION

At the end of *Lord of the Flies* the abrupt return to childhood, to insignificance the argument of the narrative: that evil is inherent in the human mind itself, whatever innocence may cloak it, ready to put forth its strength as soon as the occasion is propitious. This is Golding’s theme, and it takes on a frightful force by being presented in juvenile terms, in a setting that is twice deliberately likened to the sunny Coral Island of R.M. Ballantyne. The boys’ society represent, in embryo, the society of the adult world, their impulses and convictions are those of adults incisively abridged, and the whole narrative is a powerfully ironic commentary on the nature of man, an accusation levelled at us all. Like any orthodox moralist Golding insists that Man is fallen creature, but he refuses to hyposatitize Evil or to locate it in a dimension of its own. On the contrary beelzebub, *Lord of the Flies* is Roger and Jack and you and I, ready to declare himself as soon as we permit him to.

Lord of the Flies impresses us equally as a novel as well. The function of the novelist, Joseph Conrad once said, is “by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel – it is, before all, to make you see.” This is what marks Golding as a novelist. The apologue and the fiction in *Lord of the Flies* occur simultaneously, so that in moving from one to other, we are not required to look at different parts of the novel, but at the same thing a different point of view.

Beginning with the description of the island (“Like the Coral Island,” naval officer remarks), Golding has imaginatively put the island before us. The sun and the thunder comes across to us as physical

realities, not because they have a symbolic part to play in the book, but because of the novelist's superb resourcefulness of language, as:

Strange things happened at midday. The glittering sea rose up, moved apart I planes of blatant impossibility; the coral reef and the few, stunted palms that clung to the more elevated parts would float up into the sky, would quiver, be plucked apart, run like raindrops on a wire or be repeated as in an old succession of mirrors. Sometimes land loomed where there was no land flicked out like a bubble as the children watched.

It is this kind of sensitivity to language, this effortless precision of statement that makes the novel worth the most patient attention. And what applies to the island applies to the character also. As Jack gradually loses his name so that at the end of the novel he is simply the chief, we feel this terrible loss of identity coming over in his total inability to do anything that is not instinctively gratifying. He begins to talk always in the final terrible stages of the novel. If we turn back to the beginning of the novel, we find Golding catching perfect a tone of voice, a particular rhythm of speech. Ralph is talking to Piggy shortly after they have met:

I could swim when I was five. Dad taught me. He's a commander in the Navy. When he goes leave he'll come and rescue us. What's your father?" Piggy blushed suddenly.

"My dad's dead," He said quickly, "and my mum..."

He took off his glasses and looked vainly for something with which to clean them.

"I used to live with my auntie. She kept a sweet-shop. I used to get ever so many sweets. As many as I liked. When'll your dad rescue us?"

Golding has caught in that snatch of dialogue, not only schoolboy speech rhythm, but also quite unobtrusively, the social difference between the two boys. "What's your father?" "When'll your dad rescue us?" There are two continents of social experience hinted here. This is the gift peculiar to the novelist, "to make you hear, to make you feel... to make you see."

These gifts are also represented in the extraordinary momentum and power which drives the whole narrative forward, so that one incident leads to another with an inevitability which is awesome. A great deal of power comes from Golding's careful preparation for an incident so that the full significance of the scene is only gradually revealed.

The climax is reached when the game turns into the killing of Simon - the pig, first mentioned in Ralph's delighted mockery of Piggy's name, made more real in the miming of Maurice and then in the hurting of Robert, becomes indistinguishable from Simon who is trampled to death. This series of incidents, unobtrusive in any ordinary reading, nevertheless helps to drive the book forward with its jetlike power and speed.

Just before Simon's at the feast, there is a sudden pause and silence, the game is suspended. "Roger ceased to be pig and became a hunter, so that the centre of the ring yawned emptily." It is this final phrase which crystallises the emotion, so that we feel we are suddenly on the brink of tragedy without being able to locate it. It is now, after the violence, that the way is clear for the spiritual climax of the novel. As Simon's body is carried out to sea we are made aware, in the writing of the significance of Simon's whole function in the novel; the beauty of the natural world and its order hints at a harmony beyond the tortured world of man and to which Simon has access. And Golding has made this real to us, not by asserting some abstract proposition with which we may or may not agree, but by "the power of the written word."

Ultimately, *Lord of the Flies* is valuable to us, not because it "tells us about," the darkness of man's heart, but because it shows it, because it is a work of art which enables us to enter into the world it creates and live at the level of a deeply perceptive and intelligent man. Golding's vision becomes ours, and such a translation should make us realise the truth of Shelley's remark that "the great instrument for the moral good is the imagination."

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