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LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S LORD OF THE FLIES

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LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S LORD OF THE FLIES

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FOREWORD

As a teacher and as an individual I identify with Golding in his concern for education, and the moral themes displayed in his work. I share Golding's belief that man suffers from an appalling ignorance of his own nature, and that behind the veneer of civilization there exists a darkness which must be recognized and accepted if the individual and society are to survive. The writer has his novels throw light on the understanding of humanity, and teachers, together with their pupils, can through an analysis of the author's work, engage in deciphering and grasping the author's message.

At the moment I started this investigation, there was nothing done in relation to Golding's novels in this country. Neither did I find an approach similar to mine based on the contrast between light and darkness in the Dissertation Abstracts.[1] At the beginning I tried to develop Golding's central themes in his first three novels, but due to shortness and other limitations, I finally shortened my comment to Lord of the Flies, which is Golding's best known novel. This book is being widely read in Europe and in the United States, where it is included in literary as well as political and sociological courses. I hope this study will arise

[1]For a related study see Virginia Tiger, William Golding: Dark Fields of Discovery (London: Calder, 1975).

interest in Golding's novels and help the reader understand Golding's work better and, through it, his own self and society.

I began this study under the guidance of Dr. Ian Mc.Niven, who soon left our university and then continued this analysis with Lic. Ursula Kött de Morales to whom I am indebted for her patience and kindness in helping me finish this work. I must thank and very warmly Dr. Dolores Brunner for her reading of the draft and valuable suggestions. My gratitude also to Lic. Marco Flores for his reading of this analysis. I am especially grateful to Lic. Alicia Cervantes de Rivera who devoted part of her vacation time to the reading of the final draft, and to proof-reading it. To all of them my sincerest gratitude.

INTRODUCTION

I have chosen as the basis for my study the contrast between light and darkness to prove Golding's thesis about the latent wickedness in human nature because this parallelism suits Golding's view of man as a being who has to choose constantly between wrong and right, flesh and spirit, in short, between his dark and his bright side. Golding expresses his thought about evil in human nature as follows:

> Man is a fallen being... His nature is sinful and his state perilous... I looked round me for some convenient form in which this thesis might be worked out, and found it in the play of children, and decided... to try to show how the shape of the society they evolved would be conditioned by their diseased, their fallen nature.[1]

Indeed, most of the images that rotate around Golding's concept of evil in his fictional world are expressed in terms of light and darkness. Light is identified with reason, peace, and goodness in man; darkness with irrationality, fear, and corruption of the self.

In this work I will limit the study of the author's concern with evil and some other relevant aspects to his first novel Lord of the Flies, with brief references to his second and third novels.

Lord of the Flies is susceptible of several levels of interpretation and analysis. Critics with an inclination

[1]William Golding, The Hot Gates (London: Faber & Faber, 1965), p. 88. Subsequent references to this work and edition H.G.

towards psychology see the novel as a dramatization of psychological theory;[2] the boys placed on an island without any authority, establish a new society in wich primitivism soon arises with its myths, rituals and taboos. From a political point of view, the novel can be interpreted as the destruction of democracy by irrational totalitarianism, or as an attack upon British imperialistic ideals. Those interested in sociology see how the absence of civilized restraints convert society into something despicable and brutish. The religious-minded see in the novel an allegory of original sin. And as Hynes states, "Lord of the Flies should be read as a moral novel embodying a conception of human depravity which is compatible with, but not limited to, the Christian doctrine of Original sin."[3]

The novel offers an ironical presentation of the myth of paradise lost in which Golding analyses man's ancestral fear of the unknown which makes the boys create the beast, the snake, symbolic of original sin. It is also a study of the sense of guilt which does not allow the boys to enjoy spiritual health and security and which makes them look for a scapegoat to expiate their sins.

[2]See Claire Rosenfield, "Men of a Smaller Growth: A Psychological analysis of William Golding's Lord of the Flies," Literature and Psychology, XI (Autumn, 1961) in William Nelson, ed. William Golding's Lord of the Flies: A Source Book (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1963), pp.121-32. Subsequent references to articles from this book, LOF (N).

[3]Samuel Hynes, William Golding (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 16.

The novel also shows as I will try to demonstrate in this analysis, that social, economical, and political forces, although powerful agents in the destruction of society, are not the primary source of evil. The main cause is located in man.

Evil is an important theme in the novels of William Golding. He analizes evil in the individual and in society in Lord of the Flies; he sees evil as a result of consciousness in The Inheritors; and as a total corruption of the self in Pincher Martin. As a religious man says Hynes,[4] Golding is concerned with the nature of good and evil, guilt and responsibility, the meaning of death and free will, themes that he develops respectively in his first four novels. But his main preoccupation is man's depravity, for Golding considers that "good can look after itself; it is self-propagating. The weight of any investigation must be in asking why man commits evil; rather than why he sometimes does good."[5]

There are different positions in relation to the corruption of human beings. Some think evil is part of our nature, while others firmly believe man is essentially good and it is society that corrupts him. Although Golding favors the first position when he says, "We all saw a hell of a lot in

[4]Samuel Hynes, "Novels of a Religious Man," in LOF (N), p. 70.

[5]Jack Biles, Talk: Conversations with William Golding (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1970), p. 106.

the war that can't be accounted for except on the basis of original evil. Man is born to sin. Set him free, and he will be a sinner, not Rousseau's 'noble savage,'"[6] he does not give us a straight answer to the problem. He says that there is evil in human beings, and that it is our duty to discover evil where it might be and deal with it the best we can with our inner resources. If pride blinds us, we will behave as the hunters, the inheritors, and Pincher Martin do when they locate evil in the outside world, losing the opportunity to rescue our selves from darkness.

This need for self-awareness and the use of "hubris," a blind pride, that darkens some characters' minds and leads them to their ruin, remind us that Golding devoted twenty years to the study of Greek literature. It is not surprising then to find other Greek influences in his fiction.[7] His use of light and darkness to illustrate man's dichotomy corresponds to the struggle between the rational and the irrational in Greek dramas. His treatment of animalism in human nature is based on the classical concept of barbarism as the predominance of the dark instincts and low passions over reason. His introduction of the myths of Ajax and Prometheus as parodies in Pincher Martin is partly due

[6]Golding in an interview with Maurice Dolbier printed in the New York Herald Tribune on May 20, 1962 and reprinted in Biles, p. 105.

[7]For a further study of Greek influence on Golding's novels, see Bernard Dick, William Golding (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1969), and James Baker, William Golding (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969).

to the fact that his narratives are essentially myths. Golding has said:

> Well, what I would regard as a tremendous compliment to myself, would be if someone would substitute the word "myth" for "fable" because I think a myth is a much profounder and more significant thing than a fable. I do feel fable as being an invented thing on the surface whereas myth is something which comes out from the roots of things in the ancient sense of being the key to existence, the whole meaning of life, and experience as a whole.[8]

Other Greek elements that contribute to enrich the symbolism of Golding's novels are the use of tragic irony where the destiny of a character is obvious to everyone but the individual, the utilization of choirboys in Lord of the Flies and the inner voices in Pincher Martin as choruses, the use of fate as a force that controls the characters' lives against laws of probability, and deus-ex-machina devices in his endings. But it is in the choice of an appalling situation in which Golding places his protagonists to attain enlightenment that his fiction best shows Greek influence. Golding makes us aware of the darkness of the human heart,[9] by awakening in us horror, pain, and compassion towards our own nature and selves. That is, he chooses the elements of Greek tragedy to shake the contemporary audience and make it react in bewilderment to the latent wicked-

[8]Golding in an interview with Frank Kermode, "The Meaning of It All," Lord of the Flies, Casebook Edition edited by James R. Baker & Arthur P. Ziegler (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1964), p. 197. Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text as LOF (C).

[9]In an interview with James Keating, Golding says that he has never read Conrad's Heart of Darkness, and that if there is a similar thematic presentation it is because both write about humanity. Baker and Ziegler, LOF (C), p. 194.

ness in man, ready to be released, regardless of race, faith or social condition. Golding reinforces this view when he writes in relation to the "vileness beyond all words" during the Second World War, his country, and Lord of the Flies:

> One of our faults is to believe that evil is somewhere else and inherent in another nation. My book was to say: you think that now that the war is over and an evil thing destroyed, you are safe because you are naturally kind and decent. But I know why the thing rose in Germany. I know it could happen in any country. It could happen here.[10]

Precisely, Golding chooses British children and Neanderthals for his first two novels to show us that evil comes from within, and that it is not limited by age, race, or time, for "there is no Age of Innocence," says Hynes.[11] Golding also deliberately creates microcosms to observe the motives of the disintegration of the self and society.

In Lord of the Flies the microcosm offers an imaginative disintegration of society from a sophisticated level back to a primitive state.

In The Inheritors the microcosm serves to prove the survival of the fittest. Here Golding shows that biological evolution and technological progress do not mean moral or social development. The Homo Sapiens, better equipped physically and technologically, destroy the Neanderthals who fail precisely

[10] H.G., p. 89.

[11] Hynes, p. 15.

because of the innocence of their pre-human condition. Thus, the deprived tribe is ironically the inheritor of the earth.

In Pincher Martin the microcosm is Pincher's mind, and the whole action centers on an exhausting analysis of one aspect of human nature, greed, and its consequences at the moment of death. Man has to learn the "technique of dying into heaven,"[12] which means he has to live selflessly in order to be prepared for his final dissolution. Otherwise, he will prolong his agony in a sort of after-life.

Although Golding chooses remote and isolated surroundings for his novels, he is a man greatly interested in modern society. Not only does he try to show the latent wickedness in human nature in his novels, but he also undertakes the task of breaking three well-established beliefs in contemporary society: (1) that children are innocent, kind and harmless, and that it is society that corrupts them; (2) that the average man is incapable of spiritual degradation under favorable conditions; and (3) that intelligence, education and will are enough to face life and death. I will try to demonstrate by an analysis of light and darkness in plot, characters, setting and scenery, not only the latent wickedness in human nature, but also Golding's skillful achievement of his other aims.

[12]Pincher Martin, p. 71 Subsequent references to this novel, P.M.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN PLOT

The story in the Lord of the Flies is very simple. It is a parody of adventure stories set in the Pacific Islands in the same style as Ballantine's Coral Island. Golding takes a group of British boys conditioned by western education and Christian beliefs, and places them on a desert island in order to determine what they are capable of becoming, angels or devils. Golding gives them a good start; a paradisal setting, food, water, a fire, and a democratic government which reinforces their sense of order, justice, and comradeship. While the boys wait to be rescued, they devote themselves to games and pig-hunting. The irony is that the parody ceases to be an imitation, and the boys' world becomes a micro-reproduction of the cruel war from which they were escaping in the moment of their arrival on the island. What causes the destruction of this society? This is what the story is about.

If the motives of the boys' behavior are readily recognized by the reader, what keeps the interest of the novel then? and if there is a thesis, how convincing will it be? Golding conveys his message by means of a chain of events logically developed and symbolically well-supported, and by displaying his technique of contrasting forces, recurring motifs,and parallelisms, all this in terms of black and white imagery.

Since Lord of the Flies is a narrative in which plot is interwined with the other elements of the novel, many important events in each chapter will be discussed in the analysis of the characters, setting, and scenery. Therefore, the comments on plot will be centered mainly on the meaning of the huntings, the games, the beast, and the rescue. Although the chapter headings are self-explanatory, and indicate the main event or events in each chapter, a brief summary of each will be given to keep the sequence of the action.

THE SOUND OF THE SHELL

Clues about the symbolic roles that people and objects are to take later in the novel are introduced in this chapter. It emphasizes the initial playful tone of the activities of the boys, to make their later metamorphosis more appalling. It also underlines the imperialistic cultural heritage of these British boys, who on their first exploration "savoured the right of domination," and exclaim: "All ours" (LOF p. 32), spreading their arms as if they tried to cover all the domain of the island. Concomitant with this colonial view-point, considerations about the easy degeneration of militarism into totalitarianism are introduced. To this respect Coskren says, "LOF castigates the Western democracies for their blind acceptance of salvation through militarism. It pictures the

tragic destruction of any society which nourishes and exalts the dictator."[1]

A criticism on the two opposing roles that civilization plays in modern life is also presented in the novel. Civilized manners are a necessary social curb to keep man's dark instincts under control. At the same time, technological progress is leading the world to its destruction with its mortal weapons, pollution, and the exploitation of the weakest. As a consequence, there is another theme which Golding is very concerned with, that of survival in a physical and spiritual way. These aspects are more deeply developed in Golding's second and third novels, The Inheritors and Pincher Martin.

Ralph, the main character, opens this chapter. Through his talk with Piggy, the boy who is behind him, it is revealed that the passenger tube in which the boys traveled was removed from the front cabin when the plane was presumable being bombarded during an atomic war in a near future. The pilot and crew disappeared into the sea, leaving the children on the island by themselves.

The most outstanding events in the chapter are the finding of the shell, the presentation of all the boys and

[1] Thomas Marcellus Coskren, "Is Golding Calvinistic?" in LOF (C), p. 259.

of their organization, and Jack's, Ralph's and Simon's first exploration of the island. It should be pointed out here, as Coskren observes, that Golding chooses "as explorers those who have dominated the history of man: the totalitarian, the parliamentarian and the mystic-poet."[2] The title of the chapter refers to the finding of the shell and to its use as a kind of trumpet for summoning the boys, who immediately invest it with a symbolic meaning of order and justice. The chapter closes with a view of the children's personalities, whose behavior does not indicate any significant predisposition to evil. It will be the author's job to carry out his thesis about the disintegration of boys and society in the following chapters.

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

This chapter shows how fear, irresponsibility, and intolerance are powerful agents in the destruction of society. It is a boy with a dark birthmark on his face who first mentions the "snake-thing" or "beastie," undermining the boys' confidence in themselves and in their society. Significantly the chapter closes when the marked boy is burned by the careless use of fire. Later his ashes will make Ralph weep

[2]Coskren, p. 258.

and become sick when he touches the boy's body (turned into part of a burnt patch,[3]) a few seconds before he mistakes the airman for the beast:

> Ralph put his hand in the cold, soft ashes of the fire and smothered a cry. His hand and shoulder were twitching from the unlooked-for contact. Green lights of nausea appeared for a moment and ate into the darkness (LOF, p. 135).

Thus, through Ralph's physical reaction all the horror of spiritual illness is expressed.

The main action of this chapter centers on the organization of the boys' society, on the quick forgetfulness of the rules, and the confusion that this carries, and especially on the election of Jack's hunters as meat-providers and protectors of the fire. These jobs require patience, devotion, and generosity, qualities that the hunters lack. Paradoxically, the boys' welfare, and the survival of society are left in the hands of the least appropriate people.

In the same way as fire and shell serve as symbolic devices, the theme of rescue, which emerges as a natural

[3] "I think it has not been generally noticed that the only satisfactory reading of a passage 11 paragraphs (cited above) from the end of chapter 7 of Golding's Lord of the Flies is that Ralph has touched the corpse of the mulberry-patch boy who perished in the fire at the end of chapter 2." Jacob Leed, "Golding's Lord of the Flies," The Explicator, XXIV (September 1965), p. 8.

consequence of the boys' situation, becomes fundamental to the understanding of plot, characterization, and meaning. Ralph brings out the theme of rescue whenever the children's spirit lowers, as it happens in this chapter. So, when the beast-talk arises, Ralph exclaims:

> "We want to be rescued; and of course we shall be rescued." Voices babbled. The simple statement, unbacked by any proof but the weight of Ralph's new authority, brought light and happiness (LOF, p. 41).

But happiness does not last long. Gloomily, Roger the darkest character introduces uncertainty:

> "I've been watching the sea. There hasn't been the trace of a ship. Perhaps we'll never be rescued."
> A murmur rose and swept away. Ralph took back the conch.
> "I said before we'll be rescued sometime. We've just got to wait; that's all." (LOF, p. 47).

Ralph's persuasive reply does not control the boys. Jack fights with Piggy, and disdains Ralph's authority. Jack's intolerance will be decisive in the breaking of society.

HUTS ON THE BEACH

The building of huts helps to point out the laziness of the boys, and to criticize the frailty of social institutions. One of the huts collapses, and the others are

not strong enough to protect the boys from the elements. Ralph's effort in establishing a sort of home fails, and the idea of rescue weakens, for the boys find games and hunting more immediately rewarding than an improbable return to England. Indeed, the children have all the necessary elements to survive, and they are getting accustomed to the primitive living that the island offers. Survival now becomes a matter of spiritual salvation, and the adventure story acquires religious overtones.

This chapter also raises important issues about communication, fear, different ways of life, and social organization. Jack and Ralph try in vain to make each other understand their new concept of life. Jack finds it difficult to remember what rescue is. Ironically, he is the first boy to bring out this topic, only to be its fiercest opponent as his mind darkens. Jack also becomes inarticulate in his efforts to explain the fear and the feelings he experiences when he is hunting:

> "But you can feel as if you're not hunting, but ____being hunted; as if something's behind you all the time in the jungle.
> That's how you can feel in the forest. Of course there's nothing in it. Only_____only____ "(LOF, p. 57).

But Jack is unable to communicate what he wants. He is losing his power of expression, the most valuable human quality. Without communication no understanding is possible, and consequently antagonism arises between Jack and Ralph. In fact, "they walked along, two continents of experience and feeling, unable to comunicate" (LOF, p. 60). Both boys start to define their future roles, Ralph as a builder and Jack as a destroyer.

Ralph's failure in making the children work implies a hard criticism on the excessive freedom of democracy, and the myth of communal life. To this respect Coskren says:

> And it is probably through the figure of Jack that William Golding pronounces his severest condemnation of the romantic myth of human progress. For, in the last analysis, it is the dictator who has benefited most from Rousseau's social view. When man's efforts toward progress and eventual fulfillment, however altruistic his motivation, proceed from sloppy thinking, then brute force takes over to direct the course of progress and subverts even the good in human nature to its own destructive ends.[4]

Men left on their own do not create a paradise. They tend to take advantage of each other. Ralph's lack of aggressiveness is not a solution. On the other hand, Jack's belief in imposing his code based on "a strong hand," leads

[4]Coskren, p. 257.

to terror, torture, captivity, destruction, and death. The implications are complex. Golding says that "the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system however apparently logical or respectable."[5] Nevertheless, people need some kind of government to rule themselves. The better balanced the political machinery is, the better results there must be.

PAINTED FACES AND LONG HAIR

This chapter depicts the painting of the boys' faces, their dirty appearance, and their nakedness as the first symptoms of the children's savagery. The events are full of revealing details about social and psychological changes. The split between destroyers and builders in the previous chapters deepens here, and the "littluns" start suffering "untold terrors in the dark" (LOF, p. 64). An apparently boyish event illustrates this division. Percival and Johnny, the smallest boys, amuse themselves by building sand castles, but two "biguns," Maurice and Roger, destroy the castles, throwing stones and sand at the "littluns," to exercise their power. When Percival leaves the beach crying,

[5] Quoted by Paul Elmen, William Golding: A Critical Essay (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), p. 19.

Maurice experiences that

> in his other life, he had received chastisement for filling a younger eye with sand. Now, though there was no parent to let fall a heavy hand, Maurice still felt the unease of wrongdoing. At the back of his mind formed the uncertain outlines of an excuse. He muttered something about a swim and broke into a trot (LOF, p. 65).

In Maurice's repentance and in the boys' difficulty in adjusting to a new rhythm of life so different from the "northern European tradition of work, play, and food " (LOF, p. 64), there is still hope for a life of order and law. Jack's device of camouflaging the boys "for hunting. Like in the war... Like things trying to look like something else_____" (LOF, p. 68), is the turning point of the novel. The boys indeed behave like something else, and end up by being beasts. To reinforce this view, the chapter ends with a ritual dance in which Maurice plays the role of a pig. The irony is that the parody takes place shortly after the real killing of a pig and a meat-feast. From this moment on, games and reality, masks and identity start to fuse.

The passing by of a ship is another symbolic and ironical event. The ship, the vehicle that may rescue the "world of longing and baffled common-sense," from "the brilliant world of hunting, tactics, fierce exhilaration, skill," (LOF, p. 77) is gone in the moment that the boys begin a life of

bloodlust.

Meat is in effect, an appropriate metaphor for sin. Simon's throwing of his meat to Piggy is an act of liberation more than one of charity. The others cannot get rid of the temptation of the meat and eat it gluttonously. The chapter opens and closes with fear of darkness, which becomes terror in the following chapter.

BEAST FROM WATER

"Beast from Water" is the most serious outburst of the boys' terror which makes them create a sea-monster that summarizes their loneliness, superstitions, and inability to comfort one another. Ralph's efforts to control the boys and Simon's discovery about human nature are happenings that develop around the key event, the assembly held, significantly, in the darkness of night.

When Ralph senses that order is slipping out of his hands, he carefully plans his talk for the most important assembly, for "this meeting must not be fun but business." (LOF, p. 83). Contrary to his custom, Ralph devotes himself to philosophical speculations about the nature of man, trying to understand the deterioration of the children. He finds his present life wearisome, "remembering the first enthusiastic exploration as though it were part of a brighter

childhood" (LOF, p. 83). He tries to "put things straight" (LOF, p. 86), but Jack's cunning in suggesting that the beast is an animal spoils Ralph's efforts. Later, Jack tries to convince the children that no beast can live on a small island like that, but it is too late, he has already planted the seed of doubt, and some of the boys exclaim that the beast comes from the sea, or that it is some sort of a ghost. Ralph attempts to rationalize fear, and considers that voting is the best way of deciding about ghosts. To Ralph's surprise, the boys do believe in ghosts, in the beast, in terror. Ralph senses that "the world, that understandable and lawful world, was slipping away. Once there was this and that; and now____ and the ship had gone." (LOF, p. 99). For Ralph this is the beginning of chaos.

There are also some events in this chapter that stress one of Golding's recurring themes, man's creation of his own hell. Golding does not allow us to forget the boy killed by the fire, the symbol of hell. Percival's dreadful fantasies about a beastie, reminds Ralph of "another small boy who had stood like this and he flinched away from the memory" (LOF, p. 94). In the previous chapter, Henry "who was also a distant relative of that other boy whose mulberry marked face had not been seen since the evening of the great fire" (LOF, p. 65), finds pleasure in hurting little fish. Thus,

two separate scenes evoke the burned boy, and emphasize the devilish tendencies in the apparently innocent boys who are "capable of producing evil as a bee produces honey."[6]

The image of the burned boy also acquires another dimension as the victim of man's passions. To this respect Whitley says: "The passion developing among the boys is to undergo a similar progress and its results are foreshadowed in the death, by fire, of the small boy with the mulberry-coloured birthmark."[7] To placate these passions, Jack feverishly exclaims:

> "Bollocks to the rules! We're strong ____ we hunt! If there's a beast, we'll hunt it down! We'll close in and beat and beat and beat ____!" (LOF, p. 100).

This is exactly what Jack will do from now on. Like fire, Jack will destroy things and people that do not adjust to his plans. The ritual dance will emerge more frantically in each crisis, not mitigating but arousing more violence in the boys. In the moment they get accustomed to the chaos provoked by their self-indulgence, their hell starts. The source of terror will not be easily located in a beast or non-hunters anymore.

[6] H.G., p. 87

[7] John Whitley, William Golding (London: The Camelot Press Ltd., 1970), p. 34.

The boys will experience the worst of horrors, that coming from excessive power in the hands of lunatics.

A touching scene depicts the agony of the minority unable to control its destiny. Percival, the smallest and a "silent effigy of sorrow," (LOF, p. 95) explodes as if:

> A spring had been tapped, far beyond the reach of authority or even physical intimidation. The crying went on, breath after breath, and seemed to sustain him upright as if he were nailed to it.
>
> "Shut up! Shut up!"
>
> For now the littluns were no longer silent. They were reminded of their personal sorrows; and perhaps felt themselves to share in a sorrow that was universal. They began to cry in sympathy, two of them almost as loud as Percival (LOF, p. 95).

Only that soon there won't be a conch, or a mild Simon for them to turn their eyes to for comfort.

The chapter opens in darkness, and closes at midnight with a pathetic scene in which Ralph, Simon, and Piggy ask for a sign from an adult world, which, ironically, is as pitiless as the one the hunters are establishing on the island.

BEAST FROM AIR

The sign comes in the form of a parachutist who is killed during a bombardment. He falls while the children are asleep, therefore:

> At he time there was no child awake to read it. There was a sudden bright explosion and a corkscrew trail across the sky; then darkness again and stars. There was a speck above the island, a figure dropping swiftly beneath a parachute, a figure that hung with dangling limbs, (LOF, p. 104).

Early in the morning the twins discover it:

> He [Eric] did not like to remember it [the first fire], and looked away at the mountain-top...
> Sam looked at Eric irritably. The intensity of Eric's gaze made the direction in which he looked terrible, for Sam had his back to it... Fifteen yards away from them came the plopping noise of fabric blown open (LOF, pp. 106-7).

Golding links the burned patch with the top of the mountain and the parachutist, obviously to establish a parallelism between the two worlds in ruins.

The twins do not explore the nature of the noise, and rush to tell Ralph and the others their own version of the beast, creating a commotion that Ralph is hardly able to cope with. Ralph organizes an expedition leaving the littluns in charge of Piggy. As the boys approach Castle Rock, they get more scared. Ralph, overcoming his own fear, sets out to face the beast alone. He feels that something deeper makes him say, "I'm chief. I'll go. Don't argue" (LOF, p. 114). He soon discovers that his fear disappears as he regains confidence in himself, and in the world around him. Ralph

enters Castle Rock alone but is immediately joined by Jack. who says that he does not want to leave Ralph by himself. Thus, for a while, their old comradeship is reestablished. The children feel happy when they see Ralph and Jack safe, and at once get involved in games, forgetting the purpose of the exploration. Ralph scolds them for their irresponsibility, and makes them realize that the only solution is to search for the beast in the mountain. The boys reluctantly obey him, and Ralph restores his leadership.

SHADOWS AND TALL TREES

This chapter narrates the hunting of the beast through the forest and underlines the shadowing of the boys' minds. There are several scenes which illustrate the dangers of ritual games, the implications being that evil is latent in every individual and that horror comes from within.

While the children rest and eat, Ralph examines the dirt on his body and sees the urgency of clean clothing, a haircut and manicure. He "discovered with a little fall of the heart that these were the conditions he took as normal now and that he did not mind " (LOF, p. 121). Then he takes refuge in his dreams and recalls his past life at home, where he used to read, ride ponies, and dress well. He is almost asleep

when he is awakened by a boar. Ralph hits it mistaking it for the beast, but Jack corrects him. In fact, Ralph is awaken to a life "full of fright and apprehension and pride," (LOF, p. 124) where he experiences that "hunting was good after all" (LOF, p. 125). Failing to kill the boar, the boys enact a ritual dance with Robert as a target. Ralph joins in:

> Jack shouted.
> "Make a ring!"
> The circle moved in and round. Robert squealed in mock terror, then in real pain...
> All at once, Robert was screaming and struggling with the strength of frenzy. Jack had him by the hair and was brandishing his knife. Behind him was Roger, fighting to get close. The chant rose ritually, as the last moment of a dance or a hunt.
> "Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Kill the pig! Bash him in!"
> Ralph too was fighting to get near, to get a handful of that brown, vulnerable flesh. The desire to squeeze and hurt was over-mastering (LOF, p. 126).

Ashamed of himself because he has tried to hurt Robert, Ralph apologizes by saying that it was just a game. Maurice adds that they need a drum to make their hunting more realistic, but the wounded Robert argues that what they want is a real pig for they ought to kill it next. At the same time that this passage fullfils the requirements of realism in plot, character, and language, it clearly points out that even the best children are not free of murderous passions. The passage is a premonition of the killing of the sow and

of Simon, and of the horrors to come.

Ralph's search for the beast and his attack on the boar do not impress the children for long. For the first time Ralph senses Jack's antagonism whenever he ceases to lead, and realizes how much Jack hates him. Jack accuses Ralph of cowardice, and forces him to set out for the beast to the top of the mountain. Ralph's common sense tells him to go during the day, when there is a chance to fight the beast and distinguish its nature. Besides, Ralph very humanely "thought of the littluns and Piggy. Vividly he imagined Piggy by himself, huddled in a shelter that was silent except for the sounds of nightmare " (LOF, p. 129), Ralph also sees the children need rest and food, but he cannot ignore Jack's challenge, and imposing courage on common sense he leaves for the mountain.

All the elements of the closing scene are favorable for a misinterpretation of the airman, the darkness of night, Jack's and Ralph's fatigue, and Roger's mutism. When Jack tells them that he has seen something on the top, they do not investigate. They simply see what their fear inspires them to interpret, fleeing in panic.

Pre-conceived ideas about gods and demons are so deeply rooted in man's nature that they are difficult to eradicate.

Man always seeks in his suffering, ignorance, and pride for an exterior source of evil. This is easier than to carry out his responsibility. Thus, the boys see in the ape-like figure a beast that could assume their inner troubles.

GIFT FOR DARKNESS

"Gift for Darkness" is the offering of the pig's head to the beast, which is the darkness already established in the boys' hearts. Ralph opens the chapter by telling the boys about their discovery the night before, which horrifies the children, especially Piggy. In his desperation Ralph offends Jack, for he sees the hunters for what they really are, "boys armed with sticks" (LOF, p. 138). Jack takes advantage of this and summons an assembly with the purpose of overthrowing Ralph. The boys do not support Jack, and he departs feeling highly resentful.

Jack's perception that the existence of a beast could be an ally to maintain and control his army contrasts with Simon's disbelief in a beast with claws, teeth, and speed, but which lacks the power to catch the twins. While Simon sets out to the mountain to clarify the mystery, Jack declares himself chief and invites the hunters, who by now support him, to pursue a pig in order to have a feast and celebrate their triumph.

The killing of the sow marks Jack's graduation in slaughter and the culmination of the evil that he had started to release when he broke Piggy's glasses. Jack finds the sleeping sow surrounded by piglets, and orders his hunters to throw their spears at them:

> They surrounded the covert but the sow got away with the sting of another spear in her flank. The trailing butts hindered her and the sharp, cross-cut points were a torment. She blundered into a tree, forcing a spear still deeper; and after that any of the hunters could follow her easily by the drops of vivid blood...Jack was on top of the sow, stabbing downward with his knife. Then Jack found the throat and the hot blood spouted over his hands (LOF, p.149).

Immediately after the sow collapses, Jack spreads the sow's blood over Maurice's cheeks,initiating a ritual that Jack continues with the beheading of the sow and the offering of its head to the darkness:

> Jack held up the head and jammed the soft throat down on the pointed end of the stick which pierced through into the mouth. He stood back and the head hung there, a little blood dribbling down the stick...
>
> Jack spoke loudly.
>
> "This head is for the beast. It's a gift " (LOF, p. 151).

At this moment, as Hillegas says, "Jack establishes a religion based on fear and controlled by force."[8] In the founding of the cult

[8]C.K. Hillegas, Ed., Notes on William Golding's Lord of the Flies (Nebraska: Cliff's Notes, 1971), p. 49.

to the Lord of the Flies, Jack renders homage to the wickedness of the human heart, and the hunters' dark side, half dormant, awakes, leaving behind their moral standards.

Simon, who has witnessed the hunters' action, wonders "a gift for the beast?" and wisely reconsiders:

> Might not the beast come for it? The head, he thought, appeared to agree with him. Run away, said the head silently, go back to the others. It was a joke really___why should you bother? You were just wrong, that's all. A little headache, something you ate, perhaps. Go back, child, said the head silently, (LOF, p. 152).

Simon's talk is an excellent example of how Golding manages to illustrate the dualism of human nature through events, characters, and symbols that are capable of double interpretation. Simon's dialogue is certainly a hallucination due to extreme heat, strain, or epilepsy. But could it not be real with the head enlivened by Satan? After all the head introduces itself as the Lord of the Flies, that is, Beelzebub,[9] the Lord of Filth devoted to the corruption of things and people. Besides, the head is at the same time the offering to the beast and the beast itself.

[9] "Lord of the Flies is a translation of Beelzebub, the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew Ba'alzevuv, and in Judaism and Christianity denotes the principle of evil personified___the Devil, Satan, Mephistopheles." Dick, p. 27.

Golding plans his novels in every detail,[10] and if he leaves the dialogue open to several interpretations about the nature of evil it is not because of gratitious ambiguity but rather to make the reader aware of the immensity of the power of evil that covers the whole scope of human life. In Simon's view, which is the author's too, evil is inherent in human nature. In Jack's opinion, it is an exterior force that man has to accept and learn to "put up with" (LOF, p. 90), while Piggy believes evil is merely accidental. Evil is also a social flaw that derives from irrationality, lack of freedom, cruelty, and exploitation. It could also be a psycho-biological unbalance, or a combination of all the preceding aspects.

Golding carefully controls the actions and symbols to illustrate, first of all, that evil exists under whatever name it is known, and secondly, that evil is a private and social affair. This double view of evil is strengthened by the connection, in two consecutive scenes, of the Lord of the Flies and the airman, and also through Simon, whose loss of consciousness in the closing scene and awakening in the opening paragraph of the next chapter have a double connotation. The fact that Simon faints while he falls into the

[10]"I plan a novel from the beginning out to the end, before I write anything. In detail." William Golding in Biles, p. 61.

darkness of the pig's head, that is, evil, can be read as a symbolic death,[11] as a preparation for his spiritual rebirth and real killing in the next chapter.[12]

A VIEW TO A DEATH

This short chapter narrates the discovery of the airman, Simon's murder, and his burial. Simon awakens from his fainting spell and continues his journey of self-awareness, and finds out that "the beast" is the dead airman, just a parody of man. The irony is that this half-corrupted body is a victim of savagery, as Simon will be shortly afterwards. The airman has endured and inflicted suffering to others, but he cannot do any more harm. Simon sees "how pitilessly the layers of rubber and canvas held together the poor body that should be rotting away" (LOF, pp.161-2). He frees it with care and tenderness, and hurries to tell the truth about "the beast" to the hunters.

[11]"When Simon wakes from his symbolic death he suddenly realizes that he must confront the beast on the mountain because 'what else is there to do?'". Rosenfield, p. 128.

[12]"Man becomes himself only after having solved a series of desperately difficult and even dangerous situations, that is, after having undergone 'tortures' and 'death,' followed by an awakening to another life, qualitatively different because regenerated." Mircea Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation in Juan Villegas, La estructura mítica del héroe en la novela del siglo XX, (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1973),pp. 80-1.

Simon's liberation of the airman is a kind of burial, for he lets him go and fall into the sea. It is also an act of charity, compassion, love, and faith in the human race.

While Simon is tempted and suffers in the forest,[13] the boys hold a feast, an orgy, in which they eat the meat of the sow whose head had been offered to the beast, the same head that had tempted Simon before. The eating of the pig at the communal feast might be regarded as "the symbolic cannibalism by which the children physically partake of the qualities of the slain and share responsibility for their crime,"[14] as Rosenfield says. Indeed, the eating of the meat can be interpreted as a symbolic communion with the beast, a communion which culminates with Simon's murder. When no meat is left, the boys form two circles and engage in an endless dance, "as though repetition would achieve safety of itself" (LOF, p. 167). When thunder strikes, a littlun screams in terror, breaking the circle of the biguns who by now have added a new phrase to their war chant, "Do him in" (LOF, p. 168). The boys are about to kill the

[13]Some critics, as Donald Spangler, have seen religious connotations in this scene: "The incidents of Simon's kneeling and sweating accord directly with the story of Gethsemane, moreover, Golding's description reinforces those associations by half-raising popular pictural renderings of the person of Jesus and of the Agony in the Garden." "Simon," LOF(C), p. 213.

[14]Rosenfield, p.127.

littlun when Simon appears. He is mistaken for the beast and murdered. By accident Simon saves the littlun, becoming a savior and a scapegoat. His sacrifice marks the initiation of a reign of terror that will demand more human blood.

THE SHELL AND THE GLASSES

This chapter carries great irony, for the two lightest symbols, the shell and the glasses, are deprived of their significance. Ralph considers his participation in Simon's murder, but Piggy tries to convince Ralph and himself that all was an accident. The twins arrive and share Piggy's opinion with relief. At the same time, Jack is confronting the same problem, but he reacts cunningly and manages to submerge the boys'incipient remorse for Simon's death and tells them that the beast has taken the form of the mystic boy, and that it might come back at any moment. Thus, the danger of the beast exists and they have to be armed to fight. Besides, they need to please the beast by leaving it some part of each hunt.

Jack prepares a raid to steal Piggy's glasses, and tells the hunters that if "he comes we'll do our, our dance again" (LOF, p. 178). Obviously the "he" refers to Simon, and since Jack is certain that Simon is dead, his words are to be

interpreted as the immolation of another human being.

Ralph, excited by the happenings of the night before, "settled himself for his nightly game of supposing " (LOF p. 181). He dreams about trains, jets, and the absence of wildness, "his mind skated to a consideration of a tamed town where savagery could not set foot. What would be safer than the bus centre with its lamps and wheels?" (LOF, p. 182).

As if sensing Jack's approach, Ralph becomes restless, and the dream turns into a nightmare, "there was a bus crawling out of the bus station, a strange bus..." (LOF, p. 182). The memory refers to Simon, crawling out of the forest, a strange forest indeed. Ralph is awaken by Piggy, who says that they will be "barmy" if they do not get home soon. As a premonition of his near tragedy, Piggy becomes more desperate. Shortly, the hunters attack in total darkness. Ralph, Piggy, and the twins defend themselves, without knowing at first whom they are fighting with and why.

The chapter closes with the hunters singing, exultantly proud of their cowardly action.

CASTLE ROCK

Highly indignant for Jack's theft, Ralph calls a formal assembly for the twins, Piggy and a few littluns. He considers

washing and combing the boys'hair, to have them look like the civilized boys they used to be, and in this way to impress the hunters and make them recall their previous status, responsibilities, and honor. Remembering Simon's death, Jack's injustice, and the hunters' mockery, Piggy loses his shyness and fear and asks the boys to lead him up to the castle, for he is nearly blind. The boys' procession is pathetic. Once near Castle Rock, Ralph blows the conch, and the boys, who come at first curiously, soon start jeering. Jack shows up and makes the boys' humiliation even worse. Finally, Ralph and Jack fight fiercely. Piggy reminds Ralph of the main purpose of their visit, his glasses, but Roger does not allow him to finish his argument. He releases the boulder, killing Piggy and destroying the conch. Ralph is attacked with spears, and obeying "an instinct he did not know he possessed " (LOF, p. 201), he runs towards the forest. In his flight he trips over the headless sow, completely unaware that he is bound to become the substitute of the sow's head, the next gift for the darkness.

The chapter closes with the twins' imprisonment and torture by the hunters. The twins in vain "protested out of the heart of civilization" (LOF, p. 198), for the triumph of the darkness of man's heart is unquestionable at this point.

THE CRY OF THE HUNTERS

This chapter refers to the ululation that the savages utter when they narrow their circle around the terrified Ralph, their most important prey. Lamenting about his wounds and spiritual state, Ralph opens the chapter. He can hardly accept the savagery of the boys and suffers when he sees Bill and thinks, "this was not Bill. This was a savage whose image refuse to blend with that ancient picture of a boy in shorts and shirt" (LOF, p. 202). He becomes more bitter when he remembers "that indefinable connection between himself and Jack; who therefore would never let him alone; never" (LOF, p. 203). The connection evokes that previous metaphor of "two continents of experience," that is, two different cultures, worlds, appreciation of values and life. Then, Ralph understands that one of the two chiefs ought to be eliminated, and that he is unwanted. There is no place for both of them in a savage world like the one they are in. Therefore, he cannot hope for mercy.

Ralph's finding of the skull of the sow's head comes immediately after this perception, as a confirmation of his fate, and as an aseveration of the hunters' power and anarchy, for the skull is ironically described in terms similar to the ones applied to the conch.

This finding shows the contrasting qualities of the two best characters, Ralph and Simon, who are the only ones to confront the head. Simon is a pacifist who reacts with passive acceptance and scorn. Ralph is a man of action who reacts with wrath and disgust, hitting the skull and parting it into two.

As a symbol of evil, the skull seems to jeer at boy and sky as if its diabolical force will continue in spite of the efforts of both boys to annihilate it. Ralph, like Simon, sees the skull for what it is, deprived of its malignancy. Therefore, the pig's head does not have any influence upon Ralph as it never did with Simon. Ralph lacks Simon's intuition and cannot perceive the influence that it does have upon the hunters. He takes the stick that held the skull and, still half-confident in the savages, he sets off to Castle Rock.

The irony is that Ralph carries the stick as a weapon, ignoring that it could be the instrument on which his head would be displayed. The stick is also a device to increase the reader's anxiety for Ralph's fate.

While Ralph waits for an appropriate moment to contact the twins, his mouth dribbles, for the hunters are beginning

a feast. Suddenly, Ralph remembers what comes after a feast and he momentarily loses interest in human contact and meat whereas the hunters do "savour food and the comfort of safety" (LOF, p. 205). When the twins see Ralph they feel that "memory of their new and shameful loyalty came to them... If it were light shame would burn them at admitting these things" (LOF, p. 207). The twins tell Ralph that the hunters will pursue him like a pig to kill him, that Roger has sharpened a stick at both ends, and urge him to hide. Ralph does not grasp the meaning of the twins' revelation, and still half confidently he retires to get some sleep. He falls into his habit of dreaming to escape from reality, but dreams do not help him this time. He awakes because of the ululation of the savages and the smoke. From this moment on, the narrative is seen through Ralph's mind, and this makes his chase more vivid and horrifying.

Ralph considers the possibility of hiding under the bushes, climbing a tree, or breaking the savages' line. In his desperation, he runs to the beach and again to the forest, precisely to the space where the skull still seems to be jeering. Suddenly, he discovers Simon's secret cabin in the bushes, where he hides, finding some relief for a while.

These two consecutive scenes imply, by contrast, that evil can be defeated by a combination of what Simon and Ralph represent. Mysticism alone is of little value in modern life. It has to be put into action by the average decent man. This task is not easy. It demands compromise and full awareness. When Ralph is discovered in the cabin by a hunter who forces him to defend himself, he throws his spear at him, and sees it is sharpened at both ends. He cries then in infinite horror and comprehension:

> Ralph screamed, a scream of fright and anger and desperation...He forgot his wounds, his hunger and thirst, and became fear; hopeless fear on flying feet; rushing through the forest towards the open beach... Then he was down, rolling over and over in the warm sand, crouching with arm up to ward off, trying to cry for mercy (LOF, p. 220).

Ralph's death is unavoidable at this point,and even the boys will die because of the fire they themselves have started. Only a miracle can save them, and the miracle comes in the person of the British Officer:

> He staggered to his feet, tensed for more terrors, and looked up at a huge peaked cap. It was a white-topped cap, and above the green shade of the peak was a crown, an anchor, gold foliage. He saw white drill, epaulettes, a revolver, a row of gilt buttons down the front of a uniform.
>
> A naval officer stood on the sand, looking down at Ralph in weary astonishment. On the beach behind him was a cutter, her bows hauled up and held by two ratings. In the stern-sheets another rating held a

> sub-machine gun.
> The ululation faltered and died away.
> The officer looked at Ralph doubtfully for a moment, then took his hand away from the butt of the revolver.
> "Hullo."
> Squirming a little, conscious of his filthy appearance, Ralph answered shyly.
> "Hullo" (LOF, p. 221).

Several critics have protested at the introduction of this deus ex machina element, for it forces a happy ending upon the adventure story. Others say that the ending is tricky, reducing the effect of evil, and that it does not correspond with the tone and theme of the novel, and that the end does not match the constant attacks on adult sanity, which Piggy ironically defends until his death. To this respect Gindin points out:

> Ralph and Piggy often 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 exists. The horror of the boys' experience on the island was really a childish game, though a particularly vicious one, after all... But the rescue is ultimately a "gimmick," a trick, a means of cutting down or softening the implications built up within the structure of the boys'society on the island. [15]

These points of view are due mainly to a misinterpretation of the author's intention. Golding calls his unexpected

[15] James Gindin, "'Gimmick' and Metaphor in the Novels of William Golding." Postwar British Fiction in LOF (N), p. 134.

endings "gimmicks," and he uses them as devices to turn the reader backwards and reconsider the implications and conclusions he has formed so far, although he knows the limitations of starting a novel with pre-conceived ideas and ending sentences in his mind.[16]

The tone of adventure stories is only superficial in Lord of the Flies, The Inheritors, and Pincher Martin. These novels narrate a symbolic voyage of exploration of the self, and the author chooses irony and bafflement for the heroes' final epiphanies, not to detract but to reaffirm the pessimistic tone of these novels and make the reader experience that "the beast is man's inability to recognize his own responsibilities for his own self-destruction."[17] Golding achieves this with great economy; in just a closing line as in Pincher Martin, or in a few sentences or a couple of paragraphs as in Lord of the Flies and The Inheritors respectively.

Adult sanity is satirized in Lord of the Flies in the inverted roles of boy and officer at the end of the novel.

[16]In relation to Lord of the Flies Golding says in an interview: "Well, you must remember I haven't read the book anyway, since I wrote it. I remember some key sentences. The last ones, which I thought of first, more or less." Biles, p. 22.

[17]Donald R. Spangler, "Simon," in LOF (C), p. 214

The officer's casual questions with a burning island behind, "Having a war or something? Nobody killed I hope? Any dead bodies?" (LOF, p. 222), and his whistling as a reply when Ralph answers that two were killed, indicate the indifference and blindness of adulthood, whereas Ralph's weeping, apparently a childish act, shows his maturity. Furthermore, the children's salvation is ironical, since they are being saved by the officer of a warship. Then, the ending is not an optimistic one. Neither does it return the children to a world of sanity, nor does it guarantee the children's survival, for as Golding has asked, "who will rescue the adult and his cruiser?"[18]

In the last paragraphs of The Inheritors, the New One undergoes a similar fate. He is adopted by the sensual Vivani, who protects him as long as hunger will not take hold of the Inheritors who will eat him as they ate his little relative Liku. Indeed, Vivani feeds the New One half ashamedly, experiencing pleasure and fear at the same time:

> He sniffed, turned, ran at Vivani's leg and scrambled up to her breast. She was shuddering and laughing as if this pleasure and love were also a fear and a torment. The devil's hands and feet had laid hold of her. Hesitating, half-ashamed, with that same frightened laughter, she bent her head, cradled him with her arms and shut her eyes. The people were grinning at her too as if they felt the strange, tugging mouth, as if in spite of them there was a

[18] Hynes, William Golding, p. 16.

> well of feeling opened in love and fear. They made adoring and submissive sounds, reached out their hands, and at the same time they shuddered in repulsion at the too-nimble feet and the red, curly hair (The Inheritors, pp.230-1).

The Inheritors regard the baby as a little red devil and, ironically, accept him as a talisman against the darkness of the forest. In effect, Tuami tries "to think of the time when the devil would be full grown" (p. 231), but Tuami does not realize that even if the baby happens to survive, he is incapable of reproducing his kind. The red devil is the last survivor of the meekest of the world, and the prisoner of the Homo Sapiens, our ancestors, whose salient characteristics are precisely lack of sanity and a ready disposition to kill.

In Pincher Martin the ending is the most surprising of all. Pincher kicks off his sea-boots to lighten his weight, for he is determined to survive sacrificing everything, according to his own code of living. The anxiety and suffering that the reader underwent together with Pincher was then a kind of purgatorial experience with a soul, not with a living being, but it is until the very last sentence that the reader realizes so. In the last brief chapter two officers appear. The first one is Mr. Davidson, who finds the corpse, and the other one is Mr. Campbell, who is in charge of taking

the information about the dead soldiers. When Mr. Davidson asks the latter if he thinks that Pincher suffered deeply before he passed away, Mr. Campbell answers coldly and in a way that reminds us of the officer in Lord of the Flies that Pincher did not endure much pain for "he didn't even have time to kick off his seaboots" (P.M.,p. 208).

It would have been a failure if the gimmicks had not had a double function, as everything else in Golding's novels in order to parallel his dual view of human nature. It is true that the triumph of darkness is unquestionable, but the gimmicks subtly introduce also optimism, although in the same proportion that light takes place in the individual. Thus, it is understandable that only one out of a group becomes enlighted and survives to transmit his knowledge to others.

Tuami's cry of desperation for his participation in the killing of the Neanderthalers, "What else could we have done?" (The Inh.,p.227) parallels Ralph's weeping. Both recognize their guilt and fear the darkness of their souls. Tuami, like Ralph, realizes that he has changed for his good. He feels like a new person since his contact with his victims. It is while looking at the little devil's innocent gestures that Tuami understands that carving a knife to kill a man, even a

murderous person like Marlan, will sink him deeper into sin and remorse, and he drops the knife, for after all, "Who would sharpen a point against the darkness of the world?" (The Inh., p.231).

In Vivani's fierceness in defending the New One, and in the degree that she manages to awake the Inheritors' acceptance of the "red devil," there is not only maternal instinct but faith in a kind of co-existence that the tribe has never experienced before.

Finally, Golding uses his "gimmicks" to abruptly turn the ideal and favorable conditions of his beginnings into unbearable situations. When the true nature of the characters and events comes out, the reader is not prepared and feels great horror at his discovery, realizing man's unlimited capacity towards evil.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN SETTING AND SCENERY

Golding creates limited settings and symbolic scenery to observe minutely people in their relations among themselves and with their environment. He uses physical elements to delineate the dark and light sides of human nature, and skillfully adapts setting and scenery to the development of characters, plot, and theme. This is why the realistic and symbolic levels are difficult to separate in Lord of the Flies, The Inheritors, and Pincher Martin.

Each part of the setting contributes to the comprehension of the inner conflicts and changes in the characters and events. The fury of the elements or the beauty and stillness of the surroundings serve to show either savagery or civilization, low passions or subtlety. Thus each element, rock, ocean, conch is loaded with great significance.

It is in the darkness of night or in a gloomy atmosphere that the most horrifying scenes take place. In Lord of the Flies the appearance of the "evil-thing," the fall of the parachutist, Simon's intuition about "man's essential illness" (LOF, p. 97), and his identification twice with the beast, the orgiastic feast and the ritual dance to placate the storm that lead to his murder, the theft of Piggy's glasses, and the cruel persecution of Ralph while the island is set on fire, all happen in the absence of light.

In The Inheritors also, the most frightening and demoralizing scenes occur in darkness: the death and burial of Mal, Lok's encounter with the body of the Old Woman, the murder and eating of Liku, the depravity of the "inheriting" people, their drunkenness, their incestuous relationships. It is twilight when Golding brutally reveals to us Lok's animality, and closes the book with Tuami looking and trying to see "if the line of darkness had an ending" (The Inh., p. 233).

In Pincher Martin death broods over the novel, that after all is the final battle of an isolated man, in conflict with himself and the universe surrounding him.[1] The novel, like a black and white film, shows us Pincher's personality in flashbacks and underlines the analogy between Pincher's self and the scenery. The rock turns to be one of Pincher's teeth, which points out his greedy character. The rock becomes also Pincher's stage. After all Pincher has been a professional actor and plays here the last parody of himself. He feels like a modern Prometheus, a defier of the gods, with enough power to undergo everlasting suffering. But Pincher fails to recall that Prometheus was a man's lover, a defender of humankind, whereas he has always been a devourer of his

[1]In his efforts to survive, Pincher invents a rock in the middle of the Atlantic that becomes the most appropriate setting for his expiation.

mates. Pincher is not a god either, and since voracity has been his keenest feature, he becomes nothing but jaws and claws. Thus, when his mind and will weaken, his rocky setting disappears, and his self is devoured by the terrifying blackness.

The setting in both Lord of the Flies and Pincher Martin is an island. The Inheritors adds to the small island a very limited geographical area of forest and cliffs along the river. As we have seen nature is of great importance in these novels. Nature as a background is vital in Lord of the Flies. It is essential in The Inheritors, but in Pincher Martin nature is not only fundamental, it is the antagonist of the novel, the core of plot and conflicts. Nature here is Pincher, and Pincher is nature. To determine the winner of the fierce battle between both is what gives the novel its suspense and immediacy, although the story develops in the few seconds before and after Pincher's death.

Golding consistently develops both parallelism and sharp contrasts in setting, scenery, and atmosphere from the first chapter to the last. He also uses the technique of interchanging setting and scenery. The novels open with an atmosphere of light, happiness or hope, and close in darkness, defeat, and hopelessness. There is an edenic

island that turns into hell at the end, in Lord of the Flies, the safe terrace and overhang are buried by an avalanche in The Inheritors, and the rock disappears into total nothingness in Pincher Martin. The British boys turn into savages, Pincher's purgatory becomes hell, and the People turn out to be ape-like creatures. In short, the dark forces eventually overshadow scenery and characters.

Golding relies heavily upon nature symbolism to support his thesis about the darkness in the human heart. He uses widely animal imagery to satirize man's tendency to locate evil outside himself. Golding extends his technique of symbolic parallelisms and contrasts to setting and scenery, and carefully arranges the presentation of his symbols.

The title of his first novel, Lord of the Flies is a very good example of his tactics. Literally, the "Lord of the Flies"[2] is a sow's head around which the insects who feed on filth and corruption gather. Symbolically, the Lord of the Flies is the inherent evil in man. The head is the gift that the terrified children leave to the beast on the mountain to placate it. But the beast, whom they blame for their misfortunes, is harmless. It is a fallen parachutist.

[2] Refer to footnote [9], p. 35.

A corpse. Ironically, it is the sow's head which the boys must fear, for the beheading of the sow is the result of their sadistic slaughter. Therefore, the head becomes an appropriate symbol for the boys' inner darkness. The sow's head contrasts with the conch, the emblem of beauty and reason. Both are part of the island, but while one symbolizes anarchy, the other represents order. And as Freedman points out:"the real distinction between the 'Lord of the Flies' and the 'conch shell' is that one is an object endowed with mystical qualities, embodying hallucination and fear and dedicated to social extinction, while the other is a real object, accepted in the light of reason and dedicated to social control."[3]

Nature is the element that Golding uses to emphasize Simon's holiness, and it also underlines the horror of the children's actions. Simon's saintliness is briefly stated through his furtive visits to the hidden cabin in the forest where he retires in communion with nature to satisfy his spiritual thirst for beauty and peace. Here "the whole space was walled with dark aromatic bushes," and "everywhere was the scent of ripeness and the booming of a million bees at pasture" (LOF, p. 61). It is in this clearing where the

[3]Freedman, p. 46.

disgusting head is left, profaning the majesty and harmony of nature. Significantly, when Simon encounters the sow's head, the butterflies,[4] the symbol of beauty and symmetry, which do "their unending dance" (LOF, p.146), take off and leave the space to their counterpart, the flies. This suggests that the triumph of darkness is imminent, and that the space has turned into the temple of the Lord of the Flies:

> Even the butterflies deserted the open space where the obscene thing grinned and dripped... The pile of guts was a black blob of flies that buzzed like a saw... They were black and iridescent green and without number; and in front of Simon, the Lord of the Flies hung on his stick and grinned (LOF, p. 152).

And the mocking grin of the face, paralled by the forest, in a deadly silence and extreme heat, makes Simon faint into a "vast mouth. There was blackness within, a blackness that spread "[5] (LOF, p. 159).

Indeed, for a long while in the forest "nothing prospered but the flies who blackened their lord and made the spilt guts look like a heap of glistening coal." (LOF, p. 160).

[4] "Simon comes upon the impaled head, and his confrontation with it is dramatically heralded by the disappearance of the butterflies." Dick, p. 28.

[5] "This mouth, the symbol of ravenous, unreasoning and eternally insatiable nature, appears again in P.M., in which the development of the theme of a Nature inimical to the conscious personality of man is developed in a stunning fashion." E.L.Epstein, "Notes on Lord of the Flies," LOF (C), p. 281.

The flies parallel the boys who, like these filthy insects, turn into worshippers of the same lord.

The blackness and the forest are favorite figures in Golding's imagery to indicate the defeat of light, the coming of physical impotence, and spiritual regression. Simon, Lok, and Pincher are swallowed by blackness, and Jack wears "the damp darkness of the forest like his old clothes" (LOF, p. 147). It is amid the thickness of the forest that Ralph is hunted. It is there where the killing of the sow takes place, and it is in Jack's identification with the forest that his animality becomes obvious. The opening scene of Chapter Three takes place in one of the darkest settings in the novel. Here the darkness of the forest illustrates Jack's animalistic behavior:

> Jack crouched with his face a few inches away from his clue, then started forward into the semidarkness of the undergrowth... The forest and he were very still. The silence of the forest was more oppressive than the heat, and at this hour of the day there was not even the whine of insects; and for a moment became less a hunter than a furtive thing, ape-like among the tangle of trees...He passed like a shadow under the darkness of the tree and crouched, looking down at the trodden ground at his feet (LOF, pp.52-3).

This chapter closes with a contrasting scene in which scenery stresses Simon's poetic nature. The jungle is the same, but this time the forest seems beaufiful, "Tall trunks

bore unexpected pale flowers all the way up to the dark canopy where life went on clamorously" (LOF, p. 61). The creepers, symbolic of evil snakes, shiver when Simon passes, and the darkness helps to emphasize the splendor of the candle-like buds. We see then, how skillfully Golding uses his technique of contrasts and parallels. A dark character opens Chapter Three in a somber and dense atmosphere, and a light character closes it, with one of the most poetic scenes in the novel.

The first chapter takes the name of the most important light symbol of the novel, the shell. Each chapter describes a stage of the journey into darkness, and each chapter title suggests the progressive victory of darkness. The titles refer mainly to the physical environment and events of the island, which are highly symbolic and ironic.

The shell, in itself is worthless. It is because of its sound that it becomes the substitute for the megaphone, the herald of the new society. To follow the conch is to "trace the defects of human nature back to the defects of society," Golding's theme.[6] The conch stands for democracy, loyalty,

[6] Golding wrote about his theme in a publicity questionnaire for Coward-McCann, his American Publisher. Lord of the Flies (New York: Coward McCann, 1971) in LOF (C), p. 251.

order, and justice. The conch, in relation to the community, the characters, and the plot, serves as a fixed point of reference. Ralph discovers the conch near the lagoon, and sees it as a "play-thing." Piggy values the conch for its usefulness. It is Piggy, the intellectual, who knows how to sound it, and teaches Ralph how to use it for calling the children; but it is Ralph, the man of action, who can blow it. When he first blows it, it is not a human response that he gets, but a pig's, "something squealed and ran in the undergrowth," a glimpse, a clue, of what Ralph is to come to at the end of the novel when:

> He was running with the swiftness of fear through the undergrowth, wondering if a pig would agree, finding the deepest thicket, the darkest hole on the island to creep in and hide (LOF, p. 217).

Subtly, the first sound links the shell and Ralph with the disturbing agent of the island, the pig, for later, pig-hunting and the sow's head will defeat the conch. When Ralph blows the shell again, the children appear and Ralph holds the first meeting. The conch acquires another dimension. It fulfills a social purpose too.

The conch becomes Ralph's sceptre and its beauty matches the handsomeness of its bearer. The qualities it stands for equal the inner attributes of the light characters. In

the first assembly Ralph appears sitting on a log, with the sea behind and the children in front of him. He looks majestic with the sceptre symbol in his hand, addressing his people in peace and order. The conch, as the sceptre, is the symbol of this order; but like any emblem of the outside world, it retains its meaning only as long as the members of the community agree. Its fate parallels the fate of the boys who more deeply depend on it. Ralph becomes helpless as soon as the children change the conch for Jack's spear. The conch becomes a useless instrument in his hands, and he loses all his authority. But Piggy does not accept the meaninglessness of the conch and carries it as a shield to protect himself from Jack's hate. When Piggy gets to Castle Rock, the hunters momentarily remember its power, but when Jack enters with the headless pig the attraction of the conch disappears, and Piggy's attempts to restore the conch's authority provokes the hunters' mockery and his death. In vain,

> He lifted the white magic shell, and stood still holding out the talisman, the fragile, shining beauty of the shell... the rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist (LOF, p. 200).

The conch smashes with its twin in reason, Piggy, and is destroyed by another natural object, though a far less attractive one, a rock.

Compassion, loyalty, and peace reign on the island, as long as the conch retains its power. As soon as its values are forgotten, savagery is established. In fact, Ralph was elected mainly because of the conch:

> There was his size and attractive appearance, and most obscurely, yet most powerfully there was the conch. The being that had blown that, had sat waiting for them on the platform with the delicate thing balanced on his knees, was set apart (LOF, p. 24).

In further meetings the "white gleaming conch" is obscured by the "white gleaming skull" of the sow. In each assembly the conch loses something of its power as civilization vanishes from the island. We can trace the loss of power of the conch back to the first challenge to its validity on top of the mountain when Ralph firmly asserts the authority of the conch there and all over the island, and when surprisingly Jack stands up "holding the delicate thing carefully in his sooty hands," exclaiming:

> I agree with Ralph. We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages. We're English; and the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things (LOF, p. 47).

But Jack soon forgets his moral standards, and cruelly mocks Ralph's concern for the littluns. Jack fights with Piggy over the conch, for he sees the shell as a symbol of authority that ensures its possessor power and free speech. He blows the conch inexpertly to gather the boys and elect himself chief. As Hillegas says: "That he blows the conch incompetently is symbolic of his lack of honest leadership."[7] The fact that Jack cannot blow the conch as well as Ralph does, indicates his inadequacy in parlamentarian affairs, and he fails in his arrogant attempts to overthrow Ralph. Jack, although humiliated and in tears, "laid the conch with great care in the grass at his feet," (LOF, p. 140) with reverence, for he still feels the power of the shell, and only when he is far away from it does he decide to "get more biguns away from the conch and all that " (LOF, p. 147). Jack's gradual irreverence for the conch demarcates his conversion to savagery, and through him the moral deterioration of the rest of the boys. The English boy, who had once supported Ralph on top of the mountain, finds himself denying the authority of the conch at Castle Rock. Significantly, thunder strikes as an indication of his denial and of his increasing violence:

[7] Hillegas, p. 39.

> "I'm chief," said Ralph tremulously. "And what about the fire? And I've got the conch____"
> "You haven't got it with you," said Jack, sneering. "You left it behind. See, clever? And the conch doesn't count at this end of the island____"
> All at once the thunder struck. Instead of the dull boom there was a point of impact in the explosion.
> "The conch counts here too," said Ralph, "and all over the island."
> "What are you going to do about it then?"
> Ralph examined the ranks of boys. There was no help in them and he looked away, confused and sweating...
> "I'll blow the conch," said Ralph breathlessly, "and call an assembly."
> "We shan't hear it " (LOF, p. 166).

The sound of the shell does not appeal to Jack or the boys anylonger, and the boys engage in the dance that leads to the murder of Simon. By now the boys have lost all notion of reason and order. Later, when Jack raids the shelters for Piggy's glasses, Ralph ingenuously thinks he has come for the conch. It is hard for Ralph to admit the weakening of the conch that parallels his own. Thus when Piggy dies:

> Jack began screaming wildly.
> "See? See? That's what you'll get! I meant that! There isn't a tribe for you any more! The conch is gone____" (LOF, p. 200).

At this point the children are no longer a church choir, but a tribe of savages whose chief's sceptre is a stick sharpened

at both ends. The sound of the shell has failed in summoning society in respect and understanding. As happened with the conch, the fire is gone too.

The fire, another natural symbol, stands for daylight sanity, physical and spiritual comfort, and hope. At first the sole hope of rescue, keeping the fire alight, gradually becomes "a symbolic duty ...the spirit of civilization which must be continually fed,"[8] as Dick says. Fire is the link with civilization, for it reminds the boys of their eventual rescue and it is the only way of calling the attention of a ship. Fire is the only opponent to darkness that the children have, but unlike the conch, it acts as both a helper and a destroyer. It is the friend and the enemy. Its flames are confused with snakes, the dreadful symbol of evil, and it causes the death of the birthmarked boy who introduced the snake-talk, substantiating the children's belief in the existence and voracity of the beast. It is the means of roasting the pig, and of the final devastation of the island. It destroys the paradise, but it is also the purifier and means of rescue. It attracts the cruiser that physically at least saves the boys, but it is also the motive for

[8]Dick, pp. 173-4.

stealing Piggy's glasses, hastening his death.

The second chapter, "Fire on the Mountain," takes the name of two important symbols in the novel. The fire as we have seen, has tremendous implications in regard to plot, meaning, and characters. The mountain, like the fire, stands at first as a symbol of hope and survival; later, the mountain top will be the most dreadful place for the children to go. This chapter emphasizes the double meaning of fire. The fire momentarily dissipates fear of the beast but it also contributes to break the rules:

> "A fire! Make a fire!"
> At once half of the boys were on their feet. Jack clamoured among them, the conch forgotten. "Come on! Follow me! " (LOF, p. 41).

Significantly, it is with Piggy's lenses, the symbol of intelligence, that the boys can make a fire, thus wisdom and hope are linked, only to be released when irrationality takes hold of the boys' minds. Piggy, afraid of the breaking of his glasses, holds up the conch as a protection, for Piggy thinks that the boys would not dare touch him for fear of breaking both conch and glasses:

> "Here___Let me go!" His voice rose to a shriek of terror as Jack snatched the glasses off his face. "mind out! Give'em back! I can hardly see! You'll break the conch!" (LOF, p. 44).

But Piggy's efforts are useless, for even Ralph elbows him to move the lenses "till a glossy white image of the declining sun lay on a piece of rotten wood" (LOF, p. 45). The fire, stolen from the sky, seems to rise the fury of nature, for acres of fruit trees are burned. Only Piggy is sensible enough to comprehend the danger of the irresponsible use of fire. The children's terror makes them see real snakes in the snake-like shapes formed by the smoke on the sky. Thus the chapter closes linking fire with snake.

The fire also depicts the darkening of mind and soul. Jack's initial enthusiasm for fire fades as his desire for pig-hunting increases. And as Whitley observes: "If the fire is first a rational but false symbol of safety and then, dominantly, an irrational but true symbol of destruction, then it exactly parallels the symbolic use of the hunters who offer first a hope of sustenance and then a foreshadowing of disaster in their concern with killing rather than cooking."[9] Indeed, Ralph can forsee only a solution to Jack's darkening, the fire, but Jack disdainfully denies its importance. The majority of the boys soon get tired of keeping the fire alive, and let it die out.

[9]Whitley, p. 34.

Ralph's indignation exerts little effect on the hunters who by now "wore black caps but otherwise they were almost naked" (LOF, p. 74), and provokes the fury of Jack, who breaks one of Piggy's lenses. The symbol of wisdom is half damaged as order is severely challenged. Still the fire and the conch are the instruments that Ralph uses to govern the children. It is through fire that

> Ralph asserted his chieftainship and could not have chosen a better way if he had thought for days. Against this weapon so indefinable and so effective, Jack was powerless and raged on different sides of a high barrier. When they had dealt with the fire another crisis arose, Jack had no means of lighting it. Then to his surprise, Ralph went to Piggy and took the glasses from him. Not even Ralph knew how a link between him and Jack had been snapped and fastened elsewhere (LOF, p. 79).

The fire that had joined Jack and Ralph before becomes the cause of their separation, and only momentarily do the children get together to warm bodies and hearts. Very soon Ralph finds himself lamenting the decay of the symbols of authority. The deterioration of the trunk-throne and especially that of the conch, for "exposure to the air had bleached the yellow and pink to near white, and transparency" (LOF, p. 85), parallels the disintegration of the values these objects stand for. Later Ralph's cry, "we ought to die before we let the fire out" (LOF, p. 88), has no resonance

in the children's minds, and they giggle, for "the primary images are no longer those of fire and light but those of darkness and blood,"[10] as Rosenfield states. The beast on top of the mountain contributes to increase his desolation and Ralph rationalizes:

> As long as there's light we're brave enough. But then? And now that thing squats by the fire as though it didn't want us to be rescued (LOF, p. 138).

Literally, "that thing," hidden within themselves, squats by the fire of their low passions. The beast, the evil within, indeed does not want them to be rescued. This view is reinforced by Jack's words that "the beast is a hunter," and Jack, the best hunter and therefore its best exemplar, leaves and dives into the forest, where he feels at ease now. The other children's assimilation into darkness is slower than Jack's. They fear the mountain and dare not light the fire there anymore. It is Piggy who wisely suggests to move the fire from the mountain to the beach. Convinced and proud of "his contribution to the good of society, he helps to fetch wood" (LOF, p. 143). However, Piggy is mistaken, there is no society of his own any longer.

[10] Rosenfield, p. 127.

This is the last time that the fire gathers the children together, for the boys soon desert to join Jack incondition-ally. The fire loses its noble meaning. The boys will be attracted only by the negative side of the fire from now on.

We can see so far that the symbols of nature, shell and fire, are intimately interwoven with plot. However, the parachutist, the beast in the children's eyes, is not a sea-monster or a destroying element of nature such as a hurricane or an earthquake. It is human. But only Simon discovers this truth. The twins readily identify it with the beast and when they vividly describe it, the atmosphere seems to share their horror:

> They lay there listening, at first with doubt but then with terror to the description the twins breathed at them between bouts of extreme silence. Soon the darkness was full of claws, full of the awful unknown and menace. An interminable dawn faded the stars out, and at last light, sad and grey, filtered into the shelter (LOF, p. 108).

Later, Ralph, Jack, and Roger see the airman as a completely dehumanized being, which "looks like a great ape sitting asleep with its head between its knees" (LOF, p. 136), lit by a sinister moon. The airman, now the beast, parallels the piglet and the sow's head. The parachutist and the sow are the victims of the cruelty of human beings. The airman

and the Lord of the Flies are both exterior symbols of evil and decay. Both are corrupted objects. Both are surrounded by flies. Ironically, the beast sits on top of the mountain, among blue flowers, only fifteen yards from the fire, contaminating the place of hope, as the pig's head has profaned Simon's clearing. Eventually, Simon, like the parachutist, becomes a beast in the children's eyes and a victim. When Ralph indignantly asks Simon "what were you mucking about in the dark for?" (LOF, p. 93) the elements seem to participate of Ralph's desperation, for "the sun went as if a light had turned off" (LOF, p. 93). In this obscurity Simon's identification with the beast, and the beast with a sea-monster, occur.

By dehumanizing the airman and Simon, Golding follows his pattern of animal and nature symbolism. In this way the localization of wickedness in outside things continues being one of the keystones in Golding's theme. It is not until the reader understands that there is no blame outside but within that he, like Simon or Ralph, achieves enlightenment, fulfilling Golding's aim.

Dehumanization is not only used to keep the balance among the symbols. It is, together with darkness and the

somber use of the elements, one of the ways in which Golding shows us how thin the barrier between sanity and irrationality is. Golding reveals, gradually, traits of animalism in his characters, and uses animal attributes and comparisons to indicate the dark side of the characters. In the first chapter Jack and his choir are introduced with darkness as a background. They are described as "black birds" (LOF, p. 22), because of their black cloaks and caps that give them the appearance of bat-like creatures. But so far it is only an appearance. Later they become animals in a real sense. Their chant, "Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" (LOF, p. 167) is literally obeyed and they see a beast in Simon, converting the most mystic character, the antithesis of dehumanization, into a beast. Ironically they are the beast, with claws, teeth and a mouth that engulfs the poor boy.

> The sticks fell and the mouth of the new circle crunched and screamed. The beast was on his knees in the centre, its arms folded over its face. The beast struggled forward, broke the ring and fell over the steep edge of the rock to the sand by the water. At once the crowd surged after it, poured down the rock, leapt on to the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore.
> There were no words, and no movement but the tearing of teeth and claws (LOF, p. 168).

This is the second time that Golding uses, in relation to Simon, the metaphor of a "mouth" to embody wickedness.

Later, the remaining light characters are forced by circumstances to lose their human dignity, at least in appearance, as in Piggy's case. The fat boy becomes literally a pig in the moment of his death, for "his head opened and stuff came out and turned red. Piggy's arms and legs twitched a bit, like a pig's after it has been killed" (LOF, p. 200). And finally Ralph has to think and act like a pig, and crawl on his belly like a worm, in order to preserve his life. It is not surprising then, that the main dark and strong symbols of the novel are given in animal terms, a sow's head, an ape-like creature, a sea-monster.

Sea, island, and water are important symbols in Lord of the Flies where "the island itself is boat-shaped, and the children typify all mankind on their journey through life."[11] At the beginning the sea is a symbol of hope, but afterwards, it turns into the refuge of the beast, and the children do not feel secure on its beach. For Ralph, the sea becomes the symbol of utter isclation, of the indifference of the universe for his suffering. For the first time, he resents

[11]C.B.Cox, "Lord of the Flies," in LOF (N), p. 85.
In relation to this aspect Cox adds: "A similar voyage through life is symbolized by the river in The Inheritors, and Pincher's inner voyage is a spiritual and physical struggle with the sea. Significantly all three voyages lead towards darkness." Ibid

the sea he has loved so deeply, and laments his difficulty in thinking, that increases because of the "effect of wave after wave, the rise and fall until something of the remoteness of the sea numbed his brain" (LOF, p. 122). But the sea, like the fire, has another connotation. As Cox observes, "it is significant that the two boys who are killed, Simon and Piggy, are taken back to this infinite ocean."[12] In Simon's case, the sea is the purifying element which takes him away with great care and reverence, as if the sea wanted to compensate the compassionate boy for his martyrdom, or as Cox adds, "The advancing waves are like moonbeam-bodied creatures, gently washing the body of Simon free from all stain, and dressing him in pearls, silver and marble in token of the richness of his love for the other children."[13] The sea also receives the body of the airman that descends towards the beach while a storm breaks and Simon is murdered. At midnight the rain ceases and nature prepares for the burial of Simon. The night clears, the air is fresh, and "even the sound of the water was still" (LOF, p. 169). This scene is one of the most lyrical passages of the novel. Nature seems to beautify itself to receive Simon's body with

[12]Cox, p. 86.

[13]Ibid

splendor. The lagoon becomes phosphorescent, the clear water reflects the sky, and the stars are brighter than ever. Tiny creatures with fiery eyes cover Simon's hair forming a "coat of pearls" (LOF, p. 170), the line of his cheek silvers, and the turn of his shoulder becomes "sculptured marble" (LOF, p. 170), as he is taken away by the sea. Piggy and the conch are also taken away by the ocean. The beautiful shell, reduced to powder, returns to its original setting: the sea.

Like the sea, the fire, and the mountain top. Castle Rock is symbolic. Castle Rock typifies the hardening of the boys' hearts; its caves, their conversion to sheer savages. The scenery is described realistically. The neck that separates the Castle from the rest of the island, the waves against the pink granite, the rocky stones that will kill Piggy, but especially the flat pink rock against which Piggy will fall:

> There was one flat rock there, spread like a table, and the waters sucking down on the four weedy sides made them see like cliffs. Then the sleeping leviathan breathed out____the water rose, the weed streamed, and the water boiled over the table rock with a roar (LOF, p. 115).

are so convincing that we feel the abruptness and immediacy of the sea and weeds. The entrance is protected by huge rocks that Roger immediately identifies with weapons. Jack

sees the Castle as a natural fortress with caves to live in, and stones to defend it from intruders.[14] On the other hand, Ralph vehemently answers:

> "Not me. This is a rotten place."
> _____ .....
>
> Consciousness of the bad times in between came to them both.
> Jack talked quickly.
> "Shove a palm trunk under that and if an enemy came _____ Look!"
> A hundred feet below them was the narrow causeway, then the stony ground, then the grass dotted with heads, and behind that the forest.
> "One heave," cried Jack, exulting," and __whee__!" He made a sweeping movement with his hand (LOF, pp.116-17).

Jack's excitement reminds us of the first expedition to the top of the mountain when Jack throws a stone at the sea, and its passing through the air is described as "the passage of an enraged monster" (LOF, p. 30). This is a clue of what the rock will symbolize in the last chapters. Rock is another of

[14]Golding is very concerned with man's increasing and dangerous control of nature, and expresses his disagreement in several passages of this novel, especially in this chapter where a natural and beautiful bastion is made a place to hide savages and perpetrate murder.

Biles: "Is the control of nature in itself sinful, guilty?"
Golding: "Just perhaps. Whether the beginning of this is sinful, don't ask me, but what you and I as people apart from our books are stuck with is the fact that the control of nature has become sinful. And it is being controlled not through knowledge but through intelligence." Biles, p. 110.

Golding's symbols to represent human hardness, and the indifference of nature towards man's pain.[15] A rock kills Piggy and a rock receives him.

The cave, synonymous with darkness, primitive civilization, marks the regression of the boys' customs, the breaking up of their civilized standards. The children build their shelters near the beach, where they try to establish a sense of home. When irrationality reaches its peak, the children move from the white sand to the dark caves. The once-civilized boys trade their shelters for primitive housing. They change the "home counties," of the first page, for the place of the vampires. And the bat-like creatures of the first chapter find a corresponding setting. Indeed, "the bat-like shadow of the evil that flaws every creature covered Eden and made an Inferno out of it,"[16] says Grande. Thus, through an analysis of the setting of the novel, the progressive deterioration of the boys, especially of their minds, is shown.

Golding presents his settings as realistically as possible, only to make them disappear at the end, as happens

[15]On a rocky overhang Lok loses part of his family and returns defeated to earth. On a rocky island Pincher creates his purgatory and hell.

[16]Luke Grande, "The Appeal of Golding," Commonweal, in *LOF (N)*, p. 156.

with the children's island, and with the protective overhang in The Inheritors, and Pincher's rock. Nature is the best device for Golding to emphasize that evil is not external, that it resides in the human heart. Very subtly Golding makes us see through the children's eyes the deterioration of the environment, a deterioration that exists only in their minds. The scenery is the same, it is the children's fear and irrational attitudes what have them see in the obscurity of night and forest, the reflection of their interior darkness. Concretely, that Golding sets the island on fire, indicates that the children have profaned the paradise, that children are not naturally good. They are human beings, ready to liberate the evil within them, independently of the goodness of the environment. Indeed, "it (LOF) states quite clearly that the time has come for the Western world to abandon its fantastic belief in the Rousseauvian concept of the natural goodness of the human species, which goodness must lead inevitably to the total perfection of the race,"[17] says Coskren. In other words, Golding proves by the burning of the paradise, his anti-Rousseauistic view. He uses setting, scenery and nature symbolism, to destroy the myth about the innocence in children, about the essential goodness in man.

[17]Coskren, p. 259.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN CHARACTERS

In Lord of the Flies, The Inheritors, and Pincher Martin the characters are representative of inner struggles in man, and illustrate the progressive absorption of the self by evil. The children in Lord of the Flies descend to the bottom of darkness and they will presumably carry some negative traits into their adulthood; nevertheless, they might achieve, after their brutal experience, some kind of enlightenment that would help them improve as individuals in the future. In The Inheritors the absorption is more complete. The exemplars of ingenuousness and goodness disappear from the surface of the earth, and among the inheritors only Tuami develops certain concern for his inner darkness. In Pincher Martin the anti-hero is destroyed by the blackness of his soul.

These three novels constitute a universe of darkness in which the deterioration of characters and the increasing shading of scenery depict the wide scope of wickedness in human nature. It is through the images of white and black, the metaphors of light and darkness, and the identification of light with goodness and darkness with evil, that the changes in scenery and characters' behavior are shown. According to Hodson, "the characters that Golding creates and the presentation of their behaviour and motives are aids to

the understanding of the darkness that lies in the heart of man."[1]

The choice of children, pre-historic men, and a drowning sailor is not accidental. By making British boys that are "best at everything" (LOF, p. 47), Neanderthals originally incapable of evil, and a poor derelict become part of the darkness, Golding awakens his readers and compels them to share his appalling view of the potential evil in human beings.

Golding reinforces his view by means of symbolism, which is a basic device in these novels. All the characters represent, to a certain extent, moral traits. The majority reflect ambition, greed, tyranny, selfishness, pride, ignorance, and cruelty. Only a few are inclined to order, loyalty, knowledge, humility, and compassion. That is, the characters are identified with light or darkness, although the power of the latter is so strong that it stains even characters like Ralph, Piggy, Fa, and Lok. Only Simon escapes from the influence of darkness and emerges as a

[1]Leighton Hodson, William Golding (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1969), p. 19.

Christ-figure.[2]

In this way, most of the characters illustrate different degrees of darkness. Roger, Pincher, and Marlan are mainly evil characters. Jack, naturally quarrelsome and self-confident, provides the best example of the reversion to savagery. Ralph, the good-natured boy, demonstrates how easy it is to break the barrier between light and darkness, for he once, in a moment of cowardice, "desperately prayed that the beast would prefer littluns" (LOF, p. 184). Henry enjoys his power over living things by poking scavengers, but Tanakil goes further by hitting her little friend Liku.

The physical features of the characters emphasize their inner personalities. Piggy's asthma,[3] Simon's fits, and Ralph's nail-bitting appear in moments of despair, fear, and desolation. Jack's ugliness, Ralph's attractiveness, and the Neanderthals' charm accurately match their behavior.

The names of Simon, Roger, Merridew, and Pincher give a symbolic dimension to these characters. Simon is the name

[2]Golding: "I intended a Christ figure in the novel, because Christ figures occur in humanity." In an interview with James Keating. "Purdue Interview," in LOF (C), p. 192.

[3]"The asthma always appears when he (Piggy) is confronted with something beyond his control and understanding." Ian Gregor and Mark Kinkead-Weekes, William Golding: A Critical Study (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), p. 36.

of one of Christ's apostles. Pincher is the nickname given to Christophers in the navy, but it is as well applied to greedy and nasty persons. Jack's surname, Merrydew, is also ironic, for it resembles freshness and happiness. According to Ziegler, the name Roger comes from "the Anglo Saxon name Hrothgar that means 'spear-fame,' and Ralph "is said to be akin to the Anglo-Saxon Raedwulf, 'wolf-council.'" [4]

Irony, another device used in characterization, contributes to the sense of hopelessness in the novels. Simon, the discoverer of the truth that might save society, is condemned not to be believed. Jack, the choir leader, the bearer of the silver cross, is forced by circumstances to participate in a murderous ritual. The Neanderthals' belief that "people understand each other" (LOF, p. 72), leads them to their death, and Pincher is defeated by what he loves most, himself.

In spite of the heavy combination of irony, symbolism, allegory and the constant references to the environment, Golding's characters are convincing human beings. He cares greatly about accurate language and credible attitudes in his characters, and uses his vivid imagination to enrich

[4]Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr. in his foreword to LOF(C), p. x.

his realistic descriptions. In this way, he makes the reader sympathize with pre-historic beings, with the games and reactions of schoolboys, and with the physical and mental efforts of a drowning person to overcome the elements. It is precisely in the struggle between man and the outside world that Golding's ability to communicate immediacy about scenery and characters is shown.

On the other hand, Golding's tendency to label each part of his invented world with a specific category makes it difficult to analyze the characters independently from scenery, plot, and theme, a relationship which limits their stature and psychological depth. It is also part of Golding's technique that the characters soon split into light and dark categories, and it is the interaction of these forces what gives them realism and growth, and saves them from symbolic stiffness.

It is also characteristic of Golding to present common people who succumb to darkness, under the pressure of fear of the unknown, the loss of confidence in themselves and in the patterns of the world around them, and especially because of their confrontation with their inner selves.

Golding deliberately wins the reader's sympathy towards

those of his characters who behave normally in the first chapters and makes of their later reversion to animality the climax of his first three novels, in order to produce in the reader horror for the characters he once admired, proving in this way his thesis about the inherent wickedness in human nature.

In Lord of the Flies Golding presents the gradual moral disintegration of ordinary schoolboys. The marooned children react boyishly at first to the surroundings, playing, swimming, and exploring. The group, heterogenuous in age, social class, and behavior, soon establishes a society based on the adult model. Without adult supervision, their democratic system fails. The deterioration starts with fear of the unknown, challenge of the rules, thirst for power, and cruelty. Once law and order break down, the inherent evil in the boys comes out. This conclusion can be supported by an examination of the boys as they are at the beginning of the novel, and then by noting what they have become by the end.

RALPH

When we first see Ralph he is an immature, ingenuous boy, a dreamer who is to undergo a full process of maturation, enlightenment, and disillusionment under the burden of leader-

ship and responsibility to protect society from chaos.

Ralph resembles a Greek leader, an Ancient god, or an angel, because of his beauty, size, strength, gentleness, and justice. Indeed, he has all the physical attributes to become a boxer, a warrior, or a savage hunter. It is on his decision which role to take that the novel centers.

At the beginning Ralph is a happy, optimistic boy, determined to take advantage of his opportunity to live freely on a paradisial island, away from school discipline and parents' supervision. He believes in the Queen whose room full of maps will facilitate his rescue, and in the efficiency of the navy, represented by his father. Therefore, he does not share Piggy's concern for the possible destruction of the British Isles. Instead, Ralph prefers to stay naked on the beach, and dream about fantastic adventures such as those in Treasure Island and Coral Island. It is by mentioning the titles of these 19th-century novels, that Golding suggests Ralph's identification with the romantic ideals displayed by these books about the goodness of educated British boys, and the triumph of reason and civilization. At the end, Ralph is a mentally aged, bitter boy who is rescued by a narrow-minded British Officer, a replica of his father.

It is gradually that Ralph experiences the destruction of his dreams, games, romantic ideas, and leadership. His disillusionment starts with the breaking up of the rules, the children's indifference towards rescue and his perception of the dualism of human nature. He deeply feels the bitterness of political defeat, social failure, and the pain of losing his dearest friends. In a word, his suffering begins with the finding of the conch, his election as a chief, and his role as a rescuer and protector of society.

Ralph is slow in learning and thinking. It takes him a long time to learn about the existence of evil in himself and in others, to detect Jack's cunning personality, to apprehend the wickedness of the hunters. Even at the end, Ralph stubbornly attributes their evil to accidental circumstances, and insists on relying on their daylight sanity, for "they were savages, it was true; but they were human" (LOF, p. 205). It is also in a slow and painful way that Ralph learns that games deteriorate into cruelty and murder, and dreams turn into nightmares. Ralph also has great difficulty in thinking under pressure, and as the irrationality of the boys increases, his capacity to think lowers. It is precisely in the development of his potentialities to learn and think that he grows and the meaning of his character is fully appreciated.

There is hope in Ralph's progressive learning. Lord of the Flies is a pessimistic book in which Ralph is the only survivor among the three boys who do not succumb to darkness. His discovery about the innate evil in man is the only hope left to the reader that spiritual survival and enlightenment is attainable by ordinary man. Ralph is the average bright citizen whose salient characteristic is his common sense, and he knows how to use it.

Ralph discovers the conch and learns how to blow it. He learns how to make quick decisions at the assemblies. He becomes a good organizer and fluent speaker. He invents the fire signal and the shelters. He establishes the rules, and makes the children respect them "because the rules are the only thing we've got" (LOF, p. 100). He orders Piggy to take a list of names and thinks of the littluns whenever there is danger. According to Whitley Ralph "gains some objectivity and sees the boys as grubby like himself"[5]. He develops a growing dislike for his filthy appearance, the boys' nakedness and his own, but he especially feels horror for the painted faces of the hunters. He learns that his initial goal of having fun in an orderly way,

[5]Whitley, p. 46.

while they wait for their rescue, is not enough to guarantee an indefinite idyllic situation. He realizes that he does not longer fit in the paradise of the island. The place he once compared with Coral Island and Treasure Island has become a gloomy and menacing site where he picks up fruit with spears for fear of the beast. He even comes to reject the idea of forest, sea, or isolation. And as Whitley says "his growing perception is enforced by his sense of man's isolation in nature"[6]. Finally, Ralph discovers that people are not what they seem to be, and that it is not easy to govern the children through democratic means.

He also learns to appreciate the good qualities of his friends. Piggy is not longer a nuisance, and Simon ceases to be "batty." He now values Piggy's judicious advice and loyalty, and he admires Simon's courage in crossing the jungle in the darkness. It is not until Ralph has a new scale of values and recognizes thought in others, that his enlightenment starts.

Ralph has his limitations. He is not perfect. He is a bad chess player and a tolerant leader. His values are

[6] Whitley, p. 46.

handicapsin a reign of terror. Hisfailure is partly due to his extreme honesty, gentleness, and ingenuousness. Nevertheless, Ralph is not basically different from the rest of the group. He cannot reject the temptation to eat, to amuse himself, and to inflict pain to others. He is very human, and shows the different phases through which he passes before he can discover the truth that will let him become a better citizen in the future. Indeed, he is the best exemplar of the struggle between good and evil, for he tries to control his dark instincts, and makes desperate efforts to overcome his indifference towards the deterioration of the children, and surmount his own disillusion. He even considers resigning the chieftainship, but he realizes that he is the only force that can oppose Jack's brutality, and bravely continues his work.

The attendance to the feast and the witnessing of Simon's murder mark Ralph's lowest descent into darkness. On the other hand, Ralph is the only boy who is ready to accept his share of guilt as a result of Simon's murder. It is precisely this recognition what highlights Ralph's enlighten ment. His bitter exclamation, "that was murder," is followed by his vehement appeal to Piggy, "Don't you understand, Piggy? The things we did ___" and he immediately adds, "I'm

frightened. Of us. I want to go home. Oh God I want to go home" (LOF, pp. 172-3). These last words show that Simon's insight "it's only us," begins to be understood by Ralph, the only one who will carry the message back to society. But Ralph is not a saint like Simon that apprehends the truth intuitively. He is not a mystic or an intelectual. He is an ordinary boy who needs the full impact of horror and pain to become fully enlightened.

Ralph opens and closes the novel, and a comparative analysis of what Ralph was in the first chapter and what he has become in the last one, illustrates his eventual disintegration. Physically, Ralph's marble-like body becomes scarred nakedness at the end, his fair hair is a curtain of tendrils that creep all over his face, and the littluns who loved him now scream and run away from him, afraid of his appearance. Mentally, Ralph "dreads the curtain that might waver in his brain, blackening out the sense of danger, making a simpleton of him" (LOF, p. 217). Spiritually, Ralph, the well-mannered and sensible leader, is reduced to his lowest ebb when he is forced to think and behave as an animal would do to preserve his life, and to realize "lying down in the darkness" that "he was an outcast. 'Cos I had some sense'" (LOF, p. 205). Ralph is not longer the self-confident boy who once voted

against the existence of ghosts, now he whimpers and longs for human company, for "if the horror of the supernatural emerged one could at least mix with humans" (LOF, p. 172). Finally, it is through the painful effect of a second murder, that of his dearest friend, Piggy, and the betrayal of the twins--his last hope of attaining rescue--that he reaches complete disillusionment.

Thus Golding has Ralph develop from the handsome boy who used to express his happiness by standing on his head, to the terrified "scarecrow" who "needed a bath, a haircut, a nose-wipe and a good deal of ointment" (LOF, p. 221), in order to make him weep not only for the hunters' moral disintegration and his own, but essentially for the power of evil in man.

Irony and horror are the elements that Golding selects to depict Ralph's final self-awareness. It is highly ironic that Ralph's only weapon, the stick that held the pig's sow, becomes the crutch on which he reels, and the instrument of his illumination. As Clark states, "If the pig's head spoke to Simon, the stake that held it up eventually becomes Ralph's guide to why 'things are what they are.'"[7] Indeed,

[7]George Clark, "William Golding's Pedagogy," in Seven Contemporary Authors (Austin & London: University of Texas Press, 1966), p. 83.

it is not until Ralph discovers in deep horror that his head will be impaled on a stick like the one he is carrying, that he fully realizes the darkness of man's heart. It is when he understands that reality might be worse than a nightmare, and that his hunting was not a game but a real thing that Ralph "weeps for the end of innocence" (LOF, p. 223), an innocence that has never existed, except in his mind. He finally grasps, as Simon did, that the beast has always been in their hearts. Ralph's solitude and bitterness are greater than ever. The last of his dreams about adult sanity ends, for the officer is as blind as he was when he arrived on the island.

JACK

Jack is the tyrant who governs by fear and is himself haunted by fear. He is initially the tough leader of a church choir who ends up as the chief of a tribe of hunters that has degenerated into savagery. Jack represents wickedness and irrationality, and his hunters support him as a dictator because they share his thirst for power and blood, and enjoy themselves in cruelty.

Jack's belligerent personality is sketched in his first

presentation through black images and emphasized by his rude behavior. Jack appears amidst a dark atmosphere, commanding his choir in a tyrannical way, as if it were a military troop. He wears a black cap, and a long black cloak in which he moves like a vampire. His red hair, blue eyes, and ugliness, give him the appearance of a Satan-like figure.

Since his first address Jack reveals his haughtiness and self-confidence. Without any salutation and with a martial tone he asks about a "man" and becomes angry when he finds a boy instead. Jack is the only boy who gives his surname, and ironically he is the one who loses his identity sooner and more profoundly than the others. When Piggy says, "We got most names" (LOF, p. 22), Jack replies with sarcasm, "Kids' names," adding quickly, "Why should I be Jack? I'm Merridew!" (LOF, p. 22). And as Handley states: "Jack has the adult preference for the use of surnames as against Christian names, in fact it is one of the marks of his superficial maturity."[8]

Jack's apparent maturity and determination mark him as the logical leader of the group, and when Ralph is elected chief instead of him, "the freckles on Jack's face disappeared

[8]Graham Handley, in Brodie's Notes on "William Golding's LOF" (London: Pan Books Ltd., 1965), p. 10.

under a blush of mortification" (LOF, p. 24). Jack can scarcely hide his disillusion, for he considers himself the best leader, and had taken for granted being elected chief, for he was "chapter chorister and Head boy," and "could sing C sharp" (LOF, p. 23).

For the time being Jack consoles himself for his failure by making his choir boys hunters, and suggests the first exploration to the top of the mountain during which more hints about his bellicose personality are given. He remains indifferent to the beauty of the island, and only sees the possibility of "catching things... until they fetch us" (LOF, p. 32), insinuating danger and defeat. He is as well the one who introduces the question about "something on the island," giving way to the "snake-talk" (LOF, p. 39), that marks the beginning of the terror that will contribute to destroy boys and island.

Indeed, Jack's salient characteristics, arrogance, aggression, and hate are the disguises of his intimate fear. His mistake lies in not trying to discover the sources of his terror, for if he had, he might have achieved some kind of salvation. Instead, he looks for ways to hide his fear, which make him move in circles of terror that become *darker*

each time. The circles that Jack constantly draws on the sand with his fingers and the circular movement that he follows in his ritual dances are symbolic of the terrified circle in which he moves, from the killing of the first piglet, to the murder of his companions.

Jack's tendency to satiate his hate and cruelty with those who cannot defend themselves is shown since the beginning, when he exclaims, "We'll have rules and rules and if anyone breaks them..." (LOF, p. 36). This menacing tone never leaves him. He is particularly fond of threatening Piggy, whose glasses he breaks without reason. In this opportunity Jack hypocritically apologized for his letting out of the fire but he never mentions his repentance for Piggy's reduction to half-blindness. Afterwards, Jack will not show any remorse for the fat boy's death or any pity for Ralph's persecution. Moreover, Jack constantly criticizes Ralph for overprotecting Piggy, "'Oh right. Favour Piggy as you always do.' Jack's voice sounded in bitter mimicry." And later he adds, "You're always scared. Fatty!" (LOF, p. 111). Piggy becomes Jack's target, for he represents what Jack hates more, physical weakness and rational order.

At first Jack is not a wholly evil character. He has his

good qualities. He is a brave and hard worker. He shares with Ralph a "shy liking," whenever they undertake a practical task like exploring, lighting a fire, hunting a boar, or searching for the beast. He once regrets the blood on his hands, and fails to kill a piglet "because of the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh" (LOF, p. 34). As a hunter he does his best to get meat for the community, and in his own manner he tries to win the boys' acceptance, "Jack sought, charitable in his happiness to include them in the thing that had happened" (LOF, p. 76). It is Jack's fate to be obeyed fearfully by those who admire his toughness but never to be loved. In fact Jack "looked round for understanding and found only respect" (LOF, p. 81).

Jack's tendency to cloak his personality under a mask indicates that he is not spiritually well-balanced, that he has descended into animality. His reversion is not only spiritual but also physical. His eyes are described in terms of a "bolting, opaque, mad look" (LOF, p. 58). He becomes and behaves like an animal. He walks on all fours, assesses the air for information, and follows the drops of blood left by the pigs, as "if he loved them." He becomes part of the forest and feels at ease at Castle Rock. He invents a mask

which he dislikes at first, for the reflection of his "new" face on the water is that of a stranger, not his. But soon "the mask was a thing on its own behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness" (LOF, p. 69). Significantly, Jack's laughter at his new identity becomes "a bloodthirsty snarling" (LOF, p. 69).

This change affects Jack's whole personality and the last vestiges of a civilized life are easily forgotten. He breaks away from everything that Ralph stands for, and whenever he has to commit a violent act he will take his new disguise. When he plans to raid the boys for fire he says, "We'll put on paint and sneak up; Roger can snatch a branch while I say what I want" (LOF, p. 150). He appears in front of the boys "stark naked saved for paint and a belt" (LOF, p. 155), and asks his hunters to proclaim him chief. From this moment on, the Jack Merridew of the first chapter fades into the anonymity of savage life, and becomes simply the Chief. Even Ralph and Piggy, when they refer to Jack, prefer to use the pronoun "he" for "a taboo was evolving round that word too" (LOF, p. 154). By the end, Jack is so transformed mentally and physically that Ralph has to "gaze at the green and black mask before him, trying to remember what Jack looked like" (LOF, p. 197).

Jack's animality increases as his power over the children grows. He sits on a log that is his throne, all painted and garlanded like an idol, waited on by his slaved hunters. He looks at Piggy and Ralph spitefully and feels that "power lay in the brown swell of his forearms; authority sat on his shoulder and chattered in his ear like an ape" (LOF, p. 165). Jack had already liberated his atavistic instincts when he baptized himself with the blood of his first slaughter, and now that his excessive pride has been fulfilled, he believes that he has control over the elements and commands the boys to do their ritual dance to placate the storm. The frantic attitude of the boys heightens their animality, and Jack and the boys become the "beast."

Jack passes through different stages before he loses his humanity. The choir leader becomes successively the explorer, the hunter, the murderer, the dictator, and the satanic priest. Each role shows his moral disintegration. As a demagogue, he finds in meat, hunting, and fear the elements for a motto that will enchant his followers, "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill her blood!" (LOF, p. 75). When Jack exchanges the word pig for 'beast,' he becomes a merciless tyrant. If with the breaking of one of Piggy's glasses Jack introduced violence

into the island, with their theft he consolidates his dictatorship, for he feels that "he was a chief now in truth" (LOF, p. 186).

Ralph indignantly tells Jack, "You're a beast and a swine and a bloody, bloody thief!" (LOF, p. 198), to which Jack reacts by throwing him a spear. He immediately incites his mob against Ralph and Piggy, and encourages Roger to murder the fat boy. He tortures the boys to exercise his power over them. He organizes the hunting of Ralph. He orders Roger to sharpen a stick for Ralph's head, which will be his supreme gift to the darkness. He makes himself absolute ruler, and emerges as a priest of the Lord of the Flies. In a word, Jack represents the chaotic forces that undermine society when terror and tyranny instead of reason and democracy, are the means of governing people.

It is in the last chapter that Jack's evil tendencies are fully realized. Jack is presumably the only boy who has a knife on the island and knows how to use it. Soon the knife becomes the symbol of murder, cruelty, and terrifying power. Indeed, "the knife is fixed as the symbol of corruption,"[9] says Freedman. With the knife, Jack makes

[9]Freedman, p. 45.

spears, cuts up pigs, and he will eventually use it to decapitate human beings. In the closing scene, Jack is the same little, unpleasant boy of the beginning. He wears the remains of a black cap, the remains of Piggy's specs, a spear, and the knife. The lenses are broken and useless, but Jack keeps them as if they were a trophy of his victory over wisdom, order, and compassion. The cap is his last link with a church and a past that Jack soon forgets. The cap is now the symbol of his negative leadership. The knife is the product of a civilization that Jack has defeated through his irrational abuse of power. The spear, symbol of human misuse of nature, is Jack's sceptre. A weapon instead of the conch. When the naval officer sees such an insignificant boy, he could never guess that Jack has undergone the different stages of war struggle, of which he is a representative as well. There is parallelism between Jack and the officer. Both are hunters, man hunters. Both represent destructive forces. Both have similar emblems, Jack, his knife and spear and the officer, his revolver and a warship. If the officer cannot understand how an educated British boy, conditioned by moral and social restraints could revert to a savage, the reader can, the reader knows the cause. Jack has exemplified the author's aim: to destroy the myth of innocence, the belief in the natural goodness of man.

PIGGY

If Jack helps the author undermine the myth of the "noble savage," Piggy's awkward personality serves well to point out Golding's bitter comments on rationalism. Golding has said on several opportunities that man should devote all his strength to narrow the gap beween the rational and the irrational, between the scientific and the spiritual. Golding calls this effort the "overriding necessity" of modern man,[10] adding that if man cannot succeed in bringing together thought and feeling, science and the humanities, at least he should be aware of the necessity of building a bridge between them. If man realizes this need, then there will be hope for the technological world of the future.

Golding scornfully calls Piggy a "rationalist, who is "short-sighted and naive like most scientists,"[11] for he is unable to understand the irrational society that is building up around him, and consistently denies everything that cannot be explained in rational terms.

As everything else in the novel, Piggy is highly symbolic. Nevertheless, his physical description and behavior are so

[10]For additional information see Biles, "The Overriding Necessity," p. 101.

[11]Biles, "Piggy", p. 12.

vividly done that we could simply see in him the ludicrous fat boy whose nickname suits him literally.

Claire Rosenfield says that Piggy represents the "light of reason."[12] It is significant that he first appears trying to disentangle the creepers that have caught him. If we remember that the creepers stand for the evil-snake, for irrationality, then Piggy's first gesture is to be interpreted as his struggle to liberate reason from the chaotic forces that eventually will defeat him. Immediately following this symbolic liberation, Piggy's face is twisted with pain because of a diahrrea, which tells us of Piggy's excessive appetite, as if Golding wanted to say that reason is not independent from corruption.

Piggy's lenses and his myopia have two contradictory meanings. According to Whitley "the myth that spectaoles denote superior intellect not merely persists, but is taken for granted."[13] Indeed, eyeglasses have been customarily accepted as a symbol of intelligence, but his myopia warns us about his limitations. At least indirectly, he is responsible for the boys' gathering and their democratic

[12]Rosenfield, p. 130.

[13]Whitley, p. 146.

organization, for Ralph's election, for the lighting of the fire, for according to Hillegas "symbolic of Piggy's role as the intellect is the use of his spectacles to bring fire to the island,"[14] and for devising the shelters. But at the same time, Piggy is ineffectual unless through Ralph, and his wisdom is often severely questioned.

This double view of Piggy makes him an ironic character. He is always worried about what grown-ups would think about the boys' behavior and constantly scolds them for "acting like a crowd of kids" (LOF, p. 42), failing to comprehend that if the boys were really behaving like children, there would be no need for his desperate utterance, "What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages? What's grown-ups going to think?" (LOF, p. 99), for they are imitating exactly what adults are doing in the outside world.

Piggy's excessive faith in the scientific world is another irony. He does not make any effort to adapt himself to the primitive setting, and longs for his return to the adult world, forgetting that his "scientific world" is being blown up by its own devices: atomic bombs.

The greatest irony is his death. In the moment when he

[14]Hillegas, p. 66.

loses his own cowardice and gains the full respect of Ralph, the person he admires most, Piggy is literally and symbolically devoured by the beast in the children's heart. A beast that Piggy does not accept, at least "with claws and all that_____," and when he asks "what would a beast eat?" the children prophetically answer him,

> "Pig."
> "We eat pig."
> "Piggy! (LOF, p. 91).

"The boys do indeed eat the pig and Piggy is destroyed by the pig-eating beast which lurks deep in each one of them,"[15] says Whitley. Piggy dies hearing but not seeing the great rock which strikes him, and his most valuable gift, his brains, is reduced to "red stuff," (LOF, p. 200). Indeed, Piggy's murder shows "what happens to scientific man when he trusts only in the activity of his unaided reason,"[16] says Coskren. Later, Ralph weeps for the "wise" friend (LOF, p. 223), which is another irony, for Piggy dies without attaining self-awareness.

Piggy's inability to analyse his own self and his tendency to locate evil in others prevent him from becoming

[15]Whitley, p. 23.

[16]Coskren, p. 259.

enlightened. He readily sees in Jack the primary source of evil on the island, but he is blind to his own defects. He is unaware that a weakness of his flesh, his desire for meat, contributes to the darkest moment of his life. Piggy advises Ralph to attend the feast, and gives as an excuse, "to make sure that nothing happens" (LOF, p. 163). Once the feast is over, Piggy forsees that something might happen, and selfishly tells Ralph, "Come away. There's going to be trouble. And we've had our meat " (LOF, p. 166). But they stay, and the following day Piggy tries to still his remorse by a cold analysis of the situation. He blames the wildness of the boys, the storm, and the darkness of the night. He attributes Simon's death to an accident, rationalizing:

> "It was an accident," said Piggy suddenly, "that's what it was. An accident." His voice shrilled again. "Coming in the dark___he had no business crawling like that out of the dark. He was batty. He asked for it." He gesticulated widely again. "It was an accident" (LOF, p. 173).

From Piggy's rational point of view, evil is not inherent in man, it is circumstantial. It depends on the situation in which a human being is placed. Besides, Piggy has to touch, see, and act to convince himself of something. He thinks that because he did not take a spear or a stone to hurt

Simon he is innocent. For Piggy's rationalistic mind, Simon's behavior is illogical. He is "batty," for only a senseless person can cross the mountain in the darkness, especially if the existence of the beast had been confirmed, and Ralph had warned him not to do so. For this reason, Piggy qualifies Simon's discovery about the inherent evil in man with a very expressive syllable, "Nuts!". This word reflects very clearly Piggy's concept of life. He does not accept ambiguities. He has a strict sense of what is right and wrong. However, Piggy, who is used to talking too much, and interfering whenever there is something he dislikes, does nothing to stop Simon's murder. He remains as if hypnotized by the franctic dance of the boys, and his sense of "decorum" is forgotten. In short, what Piggy is not capable of understanding is that all of the boys in a lesser or greater degree are responsible for the happenings, that even he, a mere spectator, is morally involved in Simon's murder.

Besides, Piggy has a very peculiar sense of honesty, for he exclaims as a salvation formula, "We was on the outside. We never done nothing. We never seen nothing" (LOF, p. 174), trying to exonerate himself of any guilt. Finally, his inability to recognize his own capacity for evil, and his role as a passive observer of life make Piggy a pathetic figure.

It is Piggy's misfortune to be an outsider and a parody of himself. Naively he confesses his nickname to Ralph giving way to the mockery of the children. His constant comments about his aunt and her sweetshop, his past illnesses, his laziness, his incipient baldness, his fatness, and his fear of Jack, make it easier for the children to ridicule and humiliate him. Although Piggy emerges as a parental figure, for he often "with the martyred expression of a parent who has to keep up with the senseless ebullience of the children" (LOF, p. 42), reminds the boys of their civilized background, he never tries to discover the causes of their misbehavior, or to gain the boys' friendship, except Ralph's. On the contrary, Piggy always plays the role of the outsider. He is the only boy who testifies, "I didn't vote for no ghosts!" (LOF, p. 99). He insists that ghosts cannot exist, "'cos things wouldn't make sense. Houses an' streets, an' _____ TV _____they couldn's work" (LOF, p. 101), ignoring that ghosts cannot be dispelled as long as there is fear. Again, Piggy is the only boy who does not accept fear as an abstraction, as a product of his imagination. Fear for him arises from a concrete basis, it is simply an instinctive reaction of self-defense. In fact, some critics have seen in Piggy's utterance "there is no fear ____unless we get frightened of people" (LOF, p. 92) a similar view to Simon's

insight "maybe it's only us," that is, fear as a manifestation of the evil in man. However, it is Jack who approaches Simon's view more closely, for he visualizes fear as part of human nature. He says to the boys, "Be frightened because you're like that" (LOF, p. 91), while Piggy confesses to Ralph:

> I'm scared of him and that's why I know him. If you're scared of someone, you hate him but you can't stop thinking about him. You kid yourself he's all right really, an' then when you see him again; it's like asthma an' you can't breathe (LOF, p. 102).

adding:

> ... I been in bed so much I done some thinking. I know about people. I know about me. And him. He can hurt you: but if you stand out of the way he'd hurt the next thing. And that's me (LOF, p. 102).

Piggy is right. He is unable to fight Jack physically, and his reason is of no use against Jack's savagery. He is condemned to be the outsider in a world seized by terror in which his mind proves to be powerless to solve the problem of evil, hate or moral integrity.

The fact that Piggy, the intellectual pragmatist, and Simon the mystic boy die, reinforces Golding's view that

education[17] must rest on a wise equilibrium between science and the arts. The split between them, which is the general tendency nowadays, will lead to the destruction of our humanity. Human beings will be either robots or savages incapable of value judgments about the world around them and their own selves.

SIMON

Simon's role is to discover the true nature of the boys' selves through an intuitive process. The drawing of his whole personality is postponed until late in the novel. Simon rises in stature as the novel reaches its deepest meaning. His symbolic character is comprehended at the climax, in an imaginative scene full of imagery and symbolism. To comprehend Simon's insight is to grasp the author's message about our own humanity, for Golding considers that "the greatest pleasure is not____say____sex or geometry. It is just understanding. And if you can get people to understand their own humanity__well,

[17]"The man on the street is persuaded by persistent half-truths that 'Science' is the most important thing in the world, and Education has been half persuaded too... I am not thinking now of the genuine scientist, the natural philosopher. He is, at most, part of one per cent. Such a boy or man is intelligent enough to move outside his own subjects and find what there is for him among the arts." Golding in "On the Crest of the Wave," H.G., pp. 129-30.

that's the job of the writer."[18]

Simon is described as a "vivid little boy" (LOF, p. 25), whose face glows. He is the typical saint-like figure, skinny, pale, and ascetic, ready to help others and sacrifice himself. He is introduced as a member of the choir boys. He wears the black cloak with the silver cross, but in his case, his belief in a spiritual life does not abandon him; on the contrary, it increases as the boys' savagery grows. From the beginning, Simon is presented as a helper, a mediator. He picks up fruit for the littluns and helps Ralph build the shelters. He defends Piggy's role as a fire-bringer, and throws him his meat when Piggy is given none by Jack. He becomes indignant for Jack's blow at Piggy, and reaches him his broken glasses. In spite of his dislike for Jack, Simon advises him how to cure his wound when he is attacked by the boar. He is not afraid of the darkness and volunteers to cross the mountain to take comfort to Piggy and the littluns left behind. Finally, it is his tenderness and charity what make Simon emerge as a savior who is ready to offer his life to rescue the boys from the depths of darkness.

Simon is a visionary, who according to Dick "has been

[18]In Hodson, p. 18.

blessed and cursed with the gift of prophecy but, like Cassandra, is doomed to be ignored."[19] It is ironical that Simon, who has the power to see into the future, has great difficulty in expressing himself, and therefore to communicate his inward thoughts to others. If Piggy's rationalism makes him an outsider, Simon's intuition keeps him apart in utter isolation, which is worse than Piggy's, for even Ralph considers him "queer, funny" (LOF, p. 50). Besides, his shyness and constant fits mark him as "batty" (LOF, p. 122), and all his remarks about human nature are received with derision.

Mockery and incredulity pursue Simon. The boys around him giggle when Ralph chooses him to ascend the mountain in the first exploration, and cruelly jeer at Simon's effort in trying to explain "mankind's essential illness" (LOF, p. 97). Sarcastically, Ralph asks Simon, "Got a ship in your pocket?" (LOF, p. 122), when Simon tells him that he will return safely to the adult world. At the same time, Simon implies that he is to remain on the island, for he does not include himself in this prophecy. Simon resents Ralph's reply qualifying him as "batty." Indeed, he "shook his head violently till the coarse black hair flew backwards and

[19]Dick, p. 27.

forwards across his face. "'No. I'm not'" (LOF, p. 122). Later the Lord of the Flies tempts Simon by calling him ignorant and silly, one who will be regarded permanently as batty, and who will lose the boys' affection unless he joins them in their cruel games:

> 'Don't you agree?' said the Lord of the Flies. 'Aren't you just a silly little boy?'
> Simon answered him in the same silent voice.
> 'Well then' said the Lord of the Flies, 'you'd better run off and play with the others. They think you're batty. You don't want Ralph to think you're batty, do you? You like Ralph a lot, don't you? And Piggy, and Jack?' (LOF, p. 158).

The Lord of the Flies is partially right. Simon is too little to take such a terrible responsibility as the boys' salvation, but he knows exactly what is wrong with the boys, and resists the temptation of being accepted and understood in exchange for his moral integrity.

Simon's hallucinatory dialogue with the Lord of the Flies is the metaphorical device that Golding uses to substantiate Simon's previous visions about evil and the beast. Simon was the first boy to recognize that the island was not a paradise anymore, for fear spread among the boys as "if it wasn't a good island" (LOF, p. 56). Simon's idea about "the infinite cynicism of adult life" is confirmed by his talk with the

Lord of the Flies, who also shares the belief that everything in the outside world is "a bad business" (LOF, p. 151). The head continues his interrogation:

> 'What are you doing out here all alone? Aren't you afraid of me?'
> Simon shook.
> 'There isn't anyone to help you. Only me. And I'm the beast.'
> Simon's mouth laboured, brought forth audible words.
> 'Pig's head on a stick' (LOF, p.158).

Simon despises the head because he sees it for what it is, an object without power over him. Indeed, "the pig's head is only an external device for referring to the evil that is within people," says Hodson.[20] Besides, Simon knows that man can only help himself by self-knowledge and will power. The head insists:

> 'Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!' said the head. For a moment or two the forest and all the other dimly appreciated places echoed with the parody of laughter. 'You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are what they are?' (LOF, p. 158).

Simon is not afraid of the head, because he is certain that evil, which is momentarily personified in the disgusting

[20]Hodson, p. 26.

pig's head, is part of himself. The head, as if it were reading his mind tempts him, "Get back to the others and we'll forget the whole thing" (LOF, p. 158). The head intimidates him further and announces Simon, his immediate death, in which Ralph, Piggy, and all the boys will participate. The head continues:

> 'This is ridiculous. You know perfectly well you'll only meet me down there_____so don't try to escape!'
>
> Simon's body was arched and stiff. The Lord of the Flies spoke in the voice of a schoolmaster.
>
> 'This has gone quite far enough. My poor misguided child, do you think you know better than I do?'
>
> There was a pause.
>
> 'I'm warning you. I'm going to get waxy. D'you see? You're not wanted. Understand? We are going to have fun on this island. Understand? We are going to have fun on this island! So don't try it on, my poor misguided boy, or else_____'
>
> Simon found he was looking into a vast mouth. There was blackness within, a blackness that spread.
>
> '____Or else,' said the Lord of the Flies, 'we shall do you. See? Jack and Roger and Maurice and Robert and Bill and Piggy and Ralph. Do you. See?' (LOF, pp.158-9).

But the Lord of the Flies cannot persuade him, and Simon sets out to the top of the mountain, for "what else is there to do?" (LOF, p. 161).

Humble acceptance of his duty and great compassion for his fellow men are Simon's essential virtues. He understands

that the only way towards salvation is to face the beast. In his ascent, Simon is caught by the creepers, as if they were snakes that tried to stop him, but he shakes them with energy and continues on his way. Indeed, "he pushed on, staggering sometimes with his weariness but never stopping. The usual brightness was gone from his eyes and he walked with a sort of glum determination like an old man" (LOF, p. 161). Before Simon finds the airman, he has forseen that the beast is a kind of corruption that man carries within. When he asks the assembly "What's the dirtiest thing there is?" Jack drops as an answer "the one crude expressive syllable" (LOF, p. 97). This is why Simon, whenever he thinks of the beast, imagines it as "a human at once heroic and sick" (LOF, p. 113). And this is exactly what the beast, the parachutist on top of the mountain is. It is a corrupted thing that inspires pity and repulsion, and makes Simon become literally sick, for the discovery is too overwhelming for him. As Dick corroborates, "...the beast is in man; and, when it expresses itself, it is in the form of a rotting self-portrait."[21] It is with great compassion that Simon frees the parachutist from the "wind's indignity" (LOF, p 162), allowing him to rest. Although weak and in pain, Simon hurries down to the beach to tell the boys that there is

[21]Dick, p. 28.

nothing to fear anymore, that the beast is harmless and, if horrible, it is because it reflects man's spiritual ugliness.

Ironically, Simon is murdered before he can deliver his message of peace and self-liberation. He undergoes the fate of many martyrs who die in the hands of those they attempt to save. When Simon at length achieves a vision so clear that it is readily communicable, Niemeyer points out, "he is killed by the pig hunters in their insane belief that he is the very evil which he alone has not only understood but actually exorcised. Like the martyr, he is killed for being precisely what he is not."[22] Simon's tragedy is that his martyrdom does not help to liberate the boys, who become more savage after his murder.

Simon does achieve his aim, self-knowledge, but if he cannot transform any other person except himself, then what is the reason of his participation in the novel, or rather, what is the value of his self-sacrifice? The conclusion is that neither Piggy, the rationalist, nor Simon, the mystic, has the key to the solution of man's darkness. Both are necessary in society, but the real battle has to be given by a combination of both strengths which are represented by

[22]Carl Niemeyer, "The Coral Island Revisited," College English, 22 (January, 1961), in LOF (C), p. 221.

Ralph. Simon's murder does affect Ralph's soul, for it provokes in him a sense of guilt that leads to his self-analysis, and eventually contributes to his enlightenment. The fact that Ralph survives is a way to compensate for Simon's "failure" in the novel. The hope is that Ralph will play the role of an apostle who will try to impart his insight to his fellow men.

ROGER

Roger is the best exemplar of the innate depravity in man. He can hardly restrain himself, and then only because of the curbs of civilization. As soon as the moral condi - tioning he is accustomed to fades, Roger reverts to savagery in a more murderous and colder way than even Jack himself. Early in the novel Roger throws stones to Henry aiming to miss, because he still feels "the taboo of the old school and policemen and the law" (LOF, p. 67). Shortly, he becomes Jack's second in command, and strengthens the chief's power by cruel means. When Jack prods at the twins' ribs, Roger, around whom "the hangman's horror clung" (LOF, p. 201), joins Jack in torturing the twins:

> The yelling ceased, and Samneric lay looking up in quiet terror. Roger advanced upon them as one wielding a nameless authority (LOF, p. 201).

A few minutes earlier "Roger had edged past the Chief only just avoiding pushing him with his shoulder" (LOF, p. 201). That is, if Roger had the opportunity he would overthrow Jack and no doubt he would refine Jack's hard methods of controlling society. Roger's extreme sadism is overtly shown in the killing of the sow, when he brutally uses the sow's annus as a lodgment for his spear, moving it "forward inch by inch" until "the terrified squealing" becomes " a highpitched scream" (LOF, p. 149).

Ironically, Roger is introduced together with his counterpart Simon as belonging to the same church choir. Roger is presented as a "dark furtive boy whom no one knew, who kept to himself with an inner intensity of avoidance and secrecy" (LOF, p. 23). Presumably all the choir boys know each other and have developed a certain friendship before they land on the island. Then the fact that nobody knows Roger is to be interpreted not physically but spiritually.

There is a parallelism between Roger and Simon that serves to emphasize the dark and light aspects of their personalities. Roger despises the littluns while Simon feeds them. Roger, like Simon, finds it difficult to talk in assemblies and to establish relationships with others. Both boys show a tendency to isolation, but Roger's is due

to his sinister personality, which inspires terror in the boys. Indeed, this is the word that the twins use to describe Jack and Roger's behavior.

Neither Simon nor Roger is afraid of the darkness. Simon wanders fearlessly in the forest at night because of his inner peace and love for nature. Roger feels at ease with darkness because evil has totally engulfed him. Roger does not fear the beast because he is certain that it exists outside himself, and that it can be either exterminated or propitiated. Finally, Simon exorcises evil, in the form of the parachutist, by infinite compassion, whereas Roger helps to enthronize the Lord of the Flies by hate and bloodlust.

Roger's dehumanization culminates when "with a sense of delirious abandonment" (LOF, p. 200), he releases the huge rock that kills Piggy. After the murder he calmly joins the hunters, reminding the reader of those concentration camp guards who devoted themselves to the extermination of their fellow men. "Here the double edge of Golding's satire is most evident for though he harshly criticizes Western civilization in Lord of the Flies, he also sees a need for the kind of restraint offered by civilization to people like

Roger"[23] says Hillegas. Thus, the author has illustrated through his darkest character what happens when order, justice, love, and respect for human life are forgotten in society.

SAMNERIC (SAM AND ERIC)

The twins' cheerfulness contrasts with Roger's sinister personality. While Roger gives in readily to wickedness, the twins stay beside Ralph longer than anybody else. They support him until nearly the end, when they are forced to join Jack's tribe. They introduce, together with Maurice, a sense of humor into the island. They do everything simultaneously and have a peculiar way of speaking--one starts a sentence, and the other completes it. Even when they discover the beast, they describe it in a comic way, for they exaggerate the beast's attributes and their own flight.

Although one of the twins betrays Ralph and reveals his hiding place, they remain compassionate characters. They throw Ralph a piece of meat when he is starving. They follow Piggy's instruction to offer Ralph fruit when he is on the verge of despair, and happily help with the fire, "The twins

[23]Hillegas, p. 67.

came, dragging a great log and grinning in their triumph" (LOF, p. 145). Afterwards, they lie about their presumable participation in Simon's murder to hide their shame and repentance; so they argue:

> "We left early," said Piggy quickly, "because we were tired."
> "So did we____"
> "____very early____"
> "____we were very tired."
> Sam touched a scratch on his forehead and then hurriedly took his hand away. Eric fingered his split lip.
> "Yes. We were very tired," repeated Sam, "so we left early. Was it a good____"
> The air was heavy with unspoken knowledge. Sam twisted and the obscene word shot out of him."____ ___dance?" (LOF, p. 175).

It is as a sort of expiation and a proof of their faith in justice that they accompany Ralph and Piggy to Castle Rock. Once there, Jack orders his savages to grab the twins and tie them in order to beat them. The twins first make an effort to endure torture, but having to choose between death and honor they very humanly decide to survive. They demonstrate, with their acceptance to belong "to a demented but partly secure society" (LOF, p. 167), that evil is a powerful force that tempts and corrupts even decent common people.

THE CHOIR BOYS

The characters that fall into the "light" category are presented first in great expectation and joy, while the choir boys who will indentify with darkness, are significantly introduced after a solemn pause that serves as a separation or barrier between the two forces that are going to be in opposition in the novel:

> Al last Ralph ceased to blow and sat there, the conch trailing from one hand, his head on his knees. As the echoes died away so did the laughter and there was silence (LOF, p. 20).

Total silence welcome the choir boys who impress the rest of the children because of their "uniformed superiority" (LOF, p. 22), for they enter "marching approximately in step in two parallel lines and dressed in strangely eccentric clothing" (LOF, p. 20). Indeed, the choir boys remain a well disciplined unit until the end, Simon being the only separate member who splits.

The personal description of the choir boys parallels most of the symbols that will identify them with the forces of evil, but it is necessary to observe that in spite of their black clothing, eccentric robes, silver crosses and badges,

discard of their school clothes, nakedness, and militarism, they behave boyshly and will react accordingly for a considerable length of time to make more noticeable their reversion in further chapters. In their first presentation, they happily take off their black robes and mix up with the other children, vote for Jack with "dreary obedience" (LOF, p. 24), and become obviously pleased with Ralph's election and with his decision of making them hunters.

Hunting is used as one of the excuses to explain the abandonment of the boys' cultural and moral background. The choir boys belonged to a church, but in their moments of despair and danger, they never pray or mention God. On the contrary, they canalize their fear by inventing a beast, proving that man under stress or not, feels the necessity of a superior force, and the kind of spiritual consolation man creates depends on the quality of his spiritual life. The more evil he is, the lower expression he finds. Jack and Roger are the exemplars of this darkest extreme.

The use of a Christian choir makes more repulsive their spiritual reversion than if they had been average school boys. In a subtle way we are reminded in chapter eight, just a few minutes before the killing of the sow, the choir's

cruelest act so far, that these boys were once sensible and sensitive children:

> Far off along the beach, Jack was standing before a small group of boys. He was looking brilliantly happy.
> "hunting," he said. He sized them up. Each of them wore the remains of a black cap and ages ago they had stood in two demure rows and their voices had been the song of angels (LOF, pp. 146-7).

At the end, the choir appears together with the rest of the children, harmless and intimidated by the uniformed authority of the British Officer, as once the choir itself had impressed the rest of the boys. The irony is that this trained officer, under similar circumstances, in fact he is, might forget his military duties and become as cruel and despotic as the savage hunters. The choir demonstrates how little man has learned through the ages about his own nature. Man's physical evolution does not imply the disappearance or at least the narrowing of his dark side.

THE LITTLUNS

Finally, the littluns are the weak and defenseless section of society, easy victims of brutal authority because

of their mental laziness, easy-going nature, and lack of culture and self-determination. Golding says that the boys are below the age of overt sex, for he does not want to complicate the issue with that relative triviality. The boys, he adds, do not have to fight for survival, for "I do not want a Marxist exegesis. If disaster came, it was not to come through the exploitation of one class by another. It was to rise, simply and solely out of the nature of the brute."[24] There are no girls on the island then, partly to emphasize brotherhood, understanding and affection among people independently of sex, partly to indicate that paradise is lost not because of the relationship between man and woman, but rather because of disobedience, destruction of law and order, murder, and treachery.

[24] H.G., p. 89.

SUMMARY

Gregor and Kinkead-Weekes believe Golding's fiction to be "too complex and many-sided to be reducible to a thesis and a conclusion,"[1] nevertheless, I think that the preceding analysis of the elements of Golding's fictional world has demonstrated:(1) his belief in the existence of evil in the world and its ineradicable place in human nature, (2) the futility of man's illusions about himself, progress, and social institutions, and (3) the need for self-awareness.

In his novels, Golding offers us a compassionate and accurate examination of modern man and his weaknesses. Keeping up appearances, smugness, and superficial goods are more important than spiritual values to a society in which materialism and science substitute religion. Man feels protected by social laws, technology and education. He is proud of his control over the environment, and thinks that nothing can alter this scheme. If there is evil, it comes from an exterior force and can be easily overcome. Indeed, modern man has become his own God, as Green says,[2] and children are sacred. Thus, the choice of choir children in Lord of the Flies as exemplars of average decent people, who succumb to darkness when hope in a better world or a

[1]Gregor and Kinkead-Weekes, p. 164.

[2]Green, p. 172.

life hereafter is lost, illustrates one of the main problems that contemporary man confronts and has to solve if he wants to preserve his humanity.

Lord of the Flies shows how easily man forgets his dignity and high standards of living, and how quickly he regresses to caves and savage rites--symbols of man's atavism--when spiritual beliefs and social restraints abandon him. It also stresses man's difficulty in getting rid of an ancestral fear which makes him create idols, such as the beast. This points out that superstition is a powerful distorting agent in the individual which eventually leads him to his destruction. Religion could be the means of spiritual improvement, but it could be used as well by unscrupulous rulers to manipulate society, as Jack does with the hunters. The novel also illustrates that archaic vestiges, as the need for a scapegoat[3] to blame for human sins, are still deeply rooted in modern man, who has proved with the murder of hundreds of people and even whole communities, how little man has progressed spiritually since prehistoric times, for he still clings to his myths, taboos, and exorcisms. The hunters' ritual songs and dances,

[3]"Primitive man had satisfied his sense of guilt by transferring it to a scapegoat who was put to death in atonement for the misdeeds of the community." Henry Bamford Parkes, Gods and Men: The Origins of Western Culture in LOF (N), p. 270.

their cannibalistic totem meal, and their animal and human sacrifices demonstrate man's degradation and wickedness. But it is through Jack's foundation of the cult to the Lord of the Flies, Beelzebub, the symbol of everlasting evil, that the novel best illustrates that darkness is part of every individual's soul. In short, the combination of mythological elements, contrasting images and animal symbolism contribute, as Guerin observes, "to take us back to the beginnings of mankind's oldest rituals and beliefs and deep into our own individual hearts of darkness."[4]

Golding seeks to "explore and understand the myth of paradise lost"[5] in his novels, as Gregor and Kinkead-Weekes state. In Lord of the Flies he offers an ironical presentation of this myth that serves to illustrate the disintegration of the self and society. Golding shows that man's longing for a return to an original communal state without tensions between good and evil is an illusion. The boys are isolated on a "natural paradise, an uncorrupted Eden offering all the lush abundance of the primal earth,"[6] as Baker says. They do not have to struggle for physical

[4]Wilfred L. Guerin, A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature (Harper and Row: New York, 1966), p. 149.

[5]Gregor and Kinkead-Weeks, p. 158

[6]Baker, LOF (C), p. xxi.

survival or to liberate themselves from social exploitation. But the boys do not strive to maintain their paradise. On the contrary, they soon reproduce the chaotic world from which they were escaping, converting paradise into hell.

Golding also wants his reader to realize the threats and benefits of civilization. Social curbs are necessary to control violence and low passions, but civilization alone --without faith in a spiritual world-- cannot restrain the most powerful nations from getting involved in an atomic war or to prevent their exploitation of the weakest. In Lord of the Flies the boys engage themselves in a cruel war as soon as they discard their religious and civilized background, showing no concern for the littluns' welfare. The novel also emphasizes that now that the destiny of man is more directly in his own hands than ever before, it is important to understand Golding's message that technology, politics, and education are not enough to rescue man from himself. Technology and moral awareness must go together, and man should establish a bridge between science and the arts to stop his dehumanization and destruction.

But not everything is somber in Golding's world. It is in his dual vision of man as it is expressed in Simon's concept of the beast--the dead parachutist-- as a being at

once "heroic and sick" (LOF, p. 113), that Golding's optimism is best reflected. Indeed, though man is capable of "infinite cynicism," as the Lord of the Flies says, he is also able of experiencing great compassion and willingness to sacrifice himself for others.

This dichotomy is illustrated by Golding's characters, especially by Ralph who proves to be as vulnerable to the drives that lead to murder as the savage hunters are. But he realizes his weakness and exercises his will power and reason to survive and remain civilized. In this struggle between reason and irrationality, darkness apparently triumphs by the end of the novel, but Ralph's enlightenment after his educational journey of self-awareness proves Golding's belief that there is still "hope for humanity in self-knowledge, attained and practised by the individual,"[7] as Green corroborates.

Thus, Ralph, unlike other modern heroes, does not return to his world defeated, for he does have a message, a new insight about human nature to communicate to his fellow men. Then, contrary to some modern novelists' pessimistic vision about man's salvation, Golding's view is ultimately one of

[7] Green, p. 172.

hope and faith.

In Simon's courage to face the Lord of the Flies, his liberation of the "beast," his acceptance of those who suffer and those who sin, Golding shows his compassion for man, and stresses the need for mysticism in the world. It is then to the education of the heroic and spiritual side of humanity that man should direct his efforts.

Finally, it is encouraging to find a modern writer who tries to educate his audience towards the acceptance of the Greek creed "Know yourself," if not as a solution to man's calamities, at least as the first step in starting to control evil in the world, for recognition of the power of the darkness within helps to illuminate our understanding of human nature.

APPENDIX

William Gerald Golding was born on September 19, 1911, in St. Columb Minor, a small town near Newquay, in Cornwall. He spent his childhood and boyhood in Marlbourough. His mother worked for the sufragette movement, and his father was Senior Assistant Master at Marlbourough Grammar School. Golding recalls his father as "incarnate omniscience,"[1] for he was a skillfull man who could carve a mantelpiece or a jewel box as well as explain calculus, geography, physics, zoology or chemistry. He wrote many textbooks on science, and a cosmology that Golding says he could pass for his own work, for his father never told anybody else. He played several instruments--and so does Golding. He was an active political participant who hated nobody except the Tories. He was a profoundly moral man, although as a scientific rationalist he had no religious beliefs. Golding considers that "he wasn't a man who scoffed at God. He was a man who regretted God so profoundly that he almost believed in Him. Like saying 'There's no God, I've told Him so.'"[2] In short, his world was one of sanity and logic and fascination.

In this atmosphere of affection and scientific devotion Golding was educated to become a scientist. At the age of nineteen he was sent to Brasenose College, Oxford, where he

[1] H.G., p. 168.

[2] Biles, p. 84.

took science mainly to please his father. After two years of attending science classes and reading literature widely, Golding switched to arts. In 1935 he graduated in English literature, and shortly afterwards he got a diploma in teaching. The shift from science to the arts is significant, for it indicates one of Golding's preoccupations throughout his work.[3]

Golding worries about the excessive weight that education gives to science in detriment of the arts. He says that science can cure a disease, increase production or ensure defense, but it can do little, if anything, to solve the problems of the self, like boredom, selfishness or fear.[4] Science relies on measurement and analysis, and therefore cannot tell what is just or unjust, beautiful or ugly. These distinctions are only made by the methods of philosophy and the arts. Golding criticizes scientists for their lack of intuition and imagination. He thinks that those are qualities

[3]"The switch exhibits a tension between the arts and sciences which was to run through Golding's life, and can be seen not only in the shape his novels take, but in the dichotomy they often seem to propose between rational and religious man." Clive Pemberton, William Golding, ed. Ian Scott-Kilbert (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1969), p. 6.

[4]"But my career was to be a scientific one. Science was busy clearing up the universe. There was nc place in this exquisitely logical universe for the terror of darkness. There was darkness, of course, but it was just darkness, the absence of light... though the march of science was irresistible, its path did not lie through my particular darkness." "The Ladder and the Tree." H.G., pp. 172-3.

only present in great poets or scientists, who are able to see the unity of separate phenomona. Knowledge, for Golding, is just one. Therefore, he rejects the strict delimitation among the areas of humanities, pure sciences, and technology. It is towards the integration of these areas that Golding believes education should direct its efforts.

Golding adds that science is affecting language. Present society demands more technicians than humanists, and education is being reduced to mere training. The emphasis given to experiments demands a special technical language that prevents the students from appreciating a literary work. If the average trained student wants to read a novel or an essay, he practically has to master another range of vocabulary, another language. For all this, Golding believes that education is helping to create "a world where it is better to be envied than ignored, better to be well-paid than happy, better to be successful than good, better to be vile, than vile-esteemed."[5]

In 1939 Golding got married and the following year he joined the Royal Navy. As commander of a minesweeper and a destroyer, he participated in the D-Day landings, and

[5] H.G., p. 163.

witnessed the sinking of the Bismarck. Since Golding's early childhood and adulthood coincided with the World Wars I and II, it is not surprising that war is the background of his first four novels.

Much of Golding's life is revealed in his essays, especially in his autobiographical one, "The Ladder and the Tree," where he evokes his early memories: the old house next to a churchyard in Marlbourough and his fear of darkness --that will later become a recurring theme in his novels. Golding recalls that in the churchyard the headstones were flat against the wall of their garden. So he wondered if the feet and the rest of the bodies were below their lawn. As the sun rose, the shadows of the tombs lengthened, exerting a terrifying effect upon him. His fear increased whenever he went to the cellar, which was next to he lawn. His father had made him a swing in the cellar but he never played here unless with company. Golding says that whenever he felt the terrors of darkness, tombs, and cellars he had wished to pray, for God would have been a consolation, but his parents "had thrown Him out."[6]

In Golding the cellar stands for the irrational fear that takes hold of the mind in the absence of light. In

[6] H.G., p. 173

Pincher Martin, for example, the cellar "represents more than childhood terrors; a whole philosophy in fact_____ suggesting that God is the thing we turn away from into life and therefore we hate and fear Him and make a darkness there."[7]

Golding also tells that there was a tree in their garden which he climbed to read and dream in isolation, where he could escape from "the darkness of the churchyard...and the proper requirements of growing up."[8] It is after this tree, that Golding named one of the characters in The Inheritors "Chessnut Tree." It is from the top of a tree that Fa and Lok, stirring the leaves aside, see the love-making scene between Tuami and Vivani, without fully understanding their gestures. Neither did the author as a boy understand a similar scene from his tree:

> Here, stirring the leaves aside, I could look down at the strangers in that world from which we were cut off and reflect on their nature...the man and the woman stood by the wall under me, she against it, he pressing her hard, and they wrestled and murmured gently. She would take her mouth away from his face and say 'no, no, no', and put it back again. His moony hand was in her neck. Then he began to undo something near her neck and she said 'no, no, no', more earnestly and laughed and giggled. But his hand went into her chest and she gave a gasp of pain like being pricked with a pin or having something raw touched.[9]

[7] H.G., p. 169.
[8] H.G., p. 171
[9] Ibid.

Golding communicates later to the Neanderthal minds his own innocence as a child.

In the same essay, another important theme is pointed out; the author's childhood loneliness, that becomes isolation in his novels. Golding says in "Billy the Kid," another autobiographical essay, that "no one had suggested, before this time, that anything mattered outside myself. I had known no one outside my family_____nothing but walks with Lily or my parents, and long holidays by a Cornish sea."[10] Golding grew up being the center of his family, which made him an outsider in school, in the same way that Piggy is. In these essays Golding constantly mentions the sea, which he, like Ralph, loves and fears. It is not surprising then that the settings of his novels are isolated surroundings, and that there is profusion of water imagery.

Before the war Golding had been an actor, a producer, and a poet. He wrote a book of poems in 1934 that soon went out of print. Golding recognizes, not without pain, his failure as a poet. He confesses that he writes prose, because he cannot write poetry. However, lyrism always enriches his prose. Once the war was over, Golding returned to his teaching job, but his philosophy of life had changed drastically.

[10] H.G., p. 159.

Before the war he had been an optimist who believed in the perfectibility of man by rational effort and good will. But in the war he saw so much cruelty that he started analizing the nature of evil in man in his novels. He decided to study the connection between man's diseased nature and the origin and consequences of his disease. To this period belong his early works: Lord of the Flies (1954), The Inheritors (1955), Pincher Martin (1956) and The Brass Butterfly (1958).

Golding resigned from his teaching position in 1962 to engage himself fully in writing. To his second period belong The Spire (1964), The Hot Gates and Other Occasional Pieces (1965), The Pyramid (1967), and The Scorpion God (1971). In The Pyramid and The Scorpion God there are some optimism and sense of humor that constrast with Golding's previous work and which may indicate a new direction in his work and ideas. Financial success has allowed Golding to travel widely (he spent a year in the United States as a writer in residence), but most of the time he prefers to stay at his home in Wiltshire, England, where he lives with his wife and two children. Since Golding is writing full time now, it is possible that the best of his work is yet to come.

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