

CONCLUSION

The stated purpose of the thesis is not to analyze Golding's technique and style of writing but to trace the main themes in all of his novels. Yet it is quite interesting to make a few remarks on his technique since it is a basic element he uses to achieve his purpose and to communicate his opinion to the reader.

Since he is a writer of fables dealing with universal problems Golding naturally has recourse to symbolism as a useful technique. Symbolism is particularly suited to novels with timeless themes yet some of Golding's, as has been indicated, is so obvious as to lose its intended effect: an example is the scene of confrontation between Simon and the Lord of the Flies. Yet many of the symbolic devices are convincing. The Lord of the Flies itself, if only it did not have to speak, is the brilliant symbol of evil and demoralization, decay and hysterical fear. Golding cleverly introduces the conch which is beautiful and valuable but delicate as the symbol of authority and civilization. In Pincher Martin the rock which is created by Pincher himself in order to survive after his death is described now and then as a single pointed tooth in the ravenous mouth of the world. This is a poignant symbol of Pincher's own greed and lust. In The Spire Jocelin's suffering is symbolized by the spire itself which looks like a spear piercing the heart of a crucified man.

A striking feature of Golding's style is his ability to communicate vividly physical and mental suffering. In Pincher Martin

we read page after page describing Fincher's agonizing struggle for survival, first in the sea and then on the barren rock. In Tree Fall there is a frightening immediacy in the description of how Samuel Mountjoy is tormented both physically and mentally in a tiny dark cell where he crawls slowly this way and that trying to avoid imaginary traps. Particularly memorable in The Spire is the account of Jocelin's death agony, the delirious mental torment in which he begins to doubt the truth of his vision.

Another characteristic is Golding's ability to convey the sense of a particular place. The rock in Fincher Martin, although it is an imaginary one, is described so elaborately and with meticulous detail. In The Spire the material existence of the cathedral is established in a wealth of architecturally exact description and physical details.

Even ordinary scenes and things are treated with great carefulness. The seashore in Lord of the Flies is beautifully described:

"Now the sea would suck down, making cascades and waterfalls of retreating water, would sink past the rocks and plaster down the seaweed like shining hair: then, pausing, gather and rise with a roar, irresistibly swelling over point and outcrop, climbing the little cliff, sending at last an arm of surf up a gully to end a yard or so from him in fingers of spray.

Wave after wave, Ralph followed the rise and fall until something of the remoteness of the sea numbed his brain. Then gradually the almost infinite size of this water forced itself on his attention. This was the divider, the barrier. On the other side of the island, swathed at midday with mirage, defended by the shield of the quiet lagoon, one might dream of rescue, the miles of division, one was clamped down,

one was helpless, one was condemned, one was —³²³

The whole island is also described elaborately as a big ship floating in the vast ocean.

Golding can be called poetic in the sense that he sometimes uses prose of indefinable lyrical intense quality to suggest moments of vision, deep understanding and impressive meaning. In Lord of the Flies, Simon's dead body, despite its fatal, terrifying wounds, is beautifully described when it moves slowly out to sea. In the author's eyes it is like a wonderful, priceless piece of art — a universal treasure that belongs to no mortal being but the universe. Through the description the author seems to suggest the richness of Simon's love and good will for his friends and an idea that Simon has not sacrificed in vain; his martyrdom is at least acknowledged by the world. Another passage of poetic prose which Golding uses to express the character's deep insight and a feeling of being relieved from his burden is in Free Fall when Samuel recognizes the point at which he has fallen freely. The world, within the border of Nazi camp of wartime prisoners, which was once seen by Samuel as a sordid, dirty place, is now seen by him, after his realization of the cause of his fall, as a beautiful, pleasant place with an inviting panorama and with the echo of natural songs that vibrate in the pure, fresh air. This is one of Golding's greatest abilities to hypnotize the reader with his lyrical prose, to present the same thing at different times from completely opposite

viewpoints.

Golding's dramatic ability is quite distinctive. A scene in "Eyes Fall," in which an old lodger dies, is a good example of this. Since the old man's death is first realized by the boy Sammy, who has never viewed such an event, and who is too young to know what death is, Sammy identifies the old man's pulse with the swinging pendulum of the clock. When the old man stops breathing Sammy shouts with terror to his mother that the clock has stopped and when his mother rushes in she finds that the old man's body is as cold as a stone. There are many episodes in Lord of the Flies in which Golding successfully builds up climaxes. In the first hunt on the island, the boys, led by Ralph and Jack, find a piglet caught up in creepers. Jack suddenly draws out his knife and raises his hand high in the air. The piglet squeals and struggles hard. Jack's eyes focus on the desperate piglet, the sharp, white blade reflecting in the sun at the end of his arm length. Everything is still and quiet, the boys hold their breath knowing that the fall of Jack's hand means a fatal stroke. But Jack's hand does not fall until the piglet loosens himself from creepers and squeals away. Everyone is relieved including Jack, in spite of his shame of the first failure. The climax in Simon's death scene reaches even a higher point. Golding uses many elements to make the total and final point the most exciting. The party held by Jack and his hunters for celebrating his first successful hunting takes place on the beach on one stormy evening. Ralph and Piggy and their boys are invited to join the feast. After broiling the pig, the boys begin to dance, despite the thunderstorm,

around the fire. They sing their ritualistic chant: "Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" The dancing circles of the boys around the flame create horrifying shadows, the song and its hysterical rhythm and dancing arouse in them frenzy and bloodlust. The threatening thunder and darkness scare them and remind them of the unknown beast. Their chaotic frenzy is let loose from their control when Simon rushes down from the hill. They take him for the Beast and murder him cruelly. They strike, and stab, and beat and beat and spill his blood. When the frenzy mob spreads from the central point, Simon's body lies on the ground, torn to pieces.

Many critics accuse Golding of using gimmicks at the end of the books which, according to them, spoil the stories. In Lord of the Flies the 'gimmick' is the abrupt appearance of the naval officer that interrupts Jack's hunt and suddenly brings the boys to their former state of innocence, reducing their serious hunting to a game. But Golding has his reason to end the story like that. The naval officer comes in his cruiser to rescue the boys and will go on hunting the enemies. Golding wants to indicate that what the boys have done is a parallel to what adults are doing. He wants to emphasize the desperate plight of men who engage unawares in a dangerous game. In Pincher Martin also, the gimmick appears at the end when the naval officer who comes to identify Pincher's body points out that Pincher could not have suffered long since he did not even have time to kick off his seaboots. But this is the first thing Pincher did, in the narrative itself, even before he saw the rock. This means that the sequence of Pincher's

struggle on the rock in fact takes place in a moment in the mind of the dying man. Of this, a critic, James Gordin says:

"In the ultimate sense this revelation enhances the microcosm, compresses all the issues into a single instant in time. But the revelation, in fact, makes the situation too complete, too contrived, seems to carry the development of the microcosm to the point of parodying itself. One can accept the struggle of forces on the rock as emblematic of a contrast human struggle, but, when the dimension of time is removed, when the struggle is distilled to an instantaneous flash, one immediately thinks of parody in which the struggle was not significant at all."²³⁷

Yet we should consider Golding's purpose in using the gimmick. In Pincher Martin he wants to dramatize the extent of how much an individual's greed. The number of pages it takes Golding to express Martin's momentary struggle against death underlines the violence of that struggle and forcefulness of the ego, the selfishness of the man fighting proudly against extinction, against the destruction of the self he has cherished so exclusively.

In his later books, Golding expresses a profounder and more disturbing intuition of man's decaying nature under the image of well polished civilization and education, with the collapse of the will or the power to act. The emphasis on this point of view makes his individual characters very impressive. They are anti-heroes, fallible heroes, who may take their place alongside other great literary heroes and anti-heroes. The similarity between Pincher Martin, Samuel Mountjoy

and Jocelin is that they all make use of other people, they sacrifice them for their own purpose. Pincher Martin is one of the most williarous characters in English literature and in modern literary world. Pincher is a greedy man who finally becomes the victim of his own rapacity like Shakespeare's Mackbeth who is the victim of his own ambition. Like Dr. Faustus who sacrifices even his soul for the sake of power, Samuel Mountjoy has sacrificed everything even his freedom for the sake of his lust. Jocelin in 'The Spire' is another impressive character who strives his best to be religious and virtuous and to sacrifice his life for God yet cannot escape his essential fallen nature. Jocelin can compete with Anouilh's Becket and is perhaps even more impressive. While Anouilh's Becket only fights against the world outside the church, Jocelin, like Eliot's Archbishop, must struggle against both the outside world and the inner enemy.

I think it is not too early to predict that Golding will go down as one of the most important writers of the twentieth century. He is a serious novelist whose main purpose is not only to entertain but to do research on human nature. His novels are rather strange, difficult and demanding, but they are ultimately rewarding and memorable. Golding requires his reader to read with unremitting, serious attention. His greatness and, of course, his difficulty, lie in his uniqueness and the dramatic presentation of his philisophy. He never lacks a sense of direction. All his themes, which are apt to be forgotten in the modern world, in an age of comics, sickly sentimental magazines, are important and relevant to our age. All his books work up, focus, from different

angles, on the degradation and decay of the human race, on man's own evil and wickedness. His novels analyse the disintegration of man and argue "the precariousness of our superiority to beasts and savages, the superficiality of our civilization, and the importance of good will and the forms of democracy against the instinctive savagery of man."³²⁵

Golding uses his great gifts of imagination, as a novelist, to force us to accept the truth that evil is part of man and is in man. This is the brutally ugly and painful fact almost impossible for us to accept yet we have no choice but face it. Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare, "Shakespeare was not of an age, but of all time, not part of England but of the world." This can be said of Golding since his novels are concerned with fundamental human problems that are timeless and universal.

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