



## Literary Techniques in the Novels of William Golding

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### ABSTRACT

The humans turn away from God, into life, making darkness there and therefore "we hate and fear Him" this is the enveloping theme which appears spread over the Golding-fiction. Golding believes that "God created man with the knowledge of good and evil" and implies that 'unfortunately man has chosen evil'; making the universe more and more ugly. And so, Golding is worried about the future of humankind, and advocates 'cultural reawakening' and 'spiritual regeneration', which would lead to the establishment of harmonious universal order. As Golding exposes in the close up, the protagonists usually turning away from the Absolute, selfishly struggle to prosper materially, ignorant of their ability-range; and fall spiritually, (383) Conclusion ' Thus Golding's novels mostly seem to be climatic-anticlimactic and seriocomic, evoking harmless satire and laughter. Golding takes up typical representatives of the various classes and slices of humankind as his protagonists and analyzes and exposes strikingly in the close up-their egotistic foolishness in thinking and behavior

**KEYWORDS: - DARKNESS, HUMAN, SELFISH, EVIL, LEADERSHIP, INNOCENCE**

### INTRODUCTION

Sir William Gerald Golding is unique in the galaxy of English novelists and his place in the History of English Literature is secure. His fiction is a splendid blend of myriad literary strains and bears the 'Golding Stamp'. Walter Allen describes the stream of English novel as 'the tyranny of the past' and labels this stream as 'Tradition' and the American Novel as quest in 'Dream'. Golding has nurtured himself in this 'British Tradition' and 'American Dream'. All the protagonists in Golding's novels are molded in the tradition and quest for identity disregarding of cosmic order to fulfill their dreamy ambitions to ascend in material prosperity unaware of their limitations and appear picaresque. In this pursuit, generally they follow morally trivial means of behavior. Thus Golding, as a fictionist, is a typical product of the two- 'Tradition and Dream', while novelists like Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, Henry James, H.G. Wells, Joseph Conrad, Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens, William Goldsmith, James Joyce, et al have laid the foundation with their individualistic trends and epical themes. Twentieth Century Fictionists are classified into the 'Lords' the 'Congenitalists' (Joyce Cary, Hugh Walpole, Charles Morgan, J.B. Priestly, V.S. Pritchett, Richard Hughes, C.P. Snow, Henry Green, Angus Wilson, et al), the 'Problem Novelists' (L.H. Myers, George Orwell, Evelyn Waugh, Christopher Isherwood, Arthur Koestler, et al), the 'Eccentrics' (Fredrick William Rolfe, Malcolm Lowry, Lawrence Durrell, et al), 'The Women' (Dorothy Richardson, Rebecca West, Rose Macaulay, Rosamond Lehman, et al), the 'Newcomers' (Kingsley Amis, John Wain, Doris Lessing, Iris Murdoch, Allan Sillitoe, et al), The Entertainers' ( A.J. Cronin, Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Edgar Wallace, A.E. Mason, et al), and other 'Bellentristis'. Golding has digested all the trends and themes of this great galaxy of writers.

### IMAGES AND SYMBOLS IN WORKS OF GOLDING

William Golding employs a number of images and symbols which help explain the inherent theme of evil in his novels. The light of his theme radiates from the motifs and actions of his typical representative protagonists of various classes and slices of society, reflects in the images and allusions and refracts through the symbols and names of the characters. Some of the significant symbols and images employed in *Lord of the Flies* are : 'platform', 'rock', 'conch', 'specs', 'fire', 'dead', 'airman', 'knife', 'mask', 'pig droppings', 'stick', 'pigs-head', etc. First of all the great 'platform' of pink granite where the boys assemble represents democratic order and discipline, the pulpit of primary good ; and the 'Castle Rock' on the other side of the island where the savages establish their dwelling stands for human cruelty, the seat of primary evil. The 'conch' picked up by Piggy and Ralph represents the voice of democracy and discipline. It produces a booming note of uniform radiance (described as OM or AUM in Indian mythology and philosophy), the 'Primeval sound of Pranavam', the origin of all creation and love as Ralph blows it deep, harsh note boomed under the palms, spread through the intricacies of the forest and echoed back from the pink granite of mountain .The note boomed again and then at his firmer pressure, the note, fluting up an octave, became a strident blare more penetrating than before. A boy should have if in his hand to speak in their meeting. The savages shatter it to pieces, shatter humanity and God's creation, exploding it savagely 'into a thousand white fragments finally, along with Piggy' . This represents the triumph of evil over virtue, the fall of democratic values or primary good on the island. The 'specs' of Piggy is a symbol of science or material wisdom or destructive civilization. Science associated with love holds Images and Symbols great hope. The 'signal fire' created by the glasses is hope of rescue for the marooned boys. But the glasses are used by the savages to roast pigs meat that intoxicates their savage cult or paganism. Abuse of science (as in war) or careless use of the glasses creates devastating fire threatening human existence. The 'dead airman' stands for the destructive side of science and the activity of the 'Beast' implied in

(atomic) warfare. Jack slams his 'knife' into a tree trunk. The 'knife' is thus a symbol of cruelty and savagery and degradation, and a challenge of Jack to Ralph to be the chief of the boys society. The 'mask' of the savages is a means of alienation and damnation covering the shame of fall into savagery. The savages follow the trail of 'pig-droppings to locate the pig, which indicates the filthy level of dung to which Jack and his followers have fallen. The savages carry 'sharpened sticks' for hunting and they hunt their human prey with sticks 'sharpened at both ends' Jack's 'knife' and the savages 'sharpened sticks', plunged with sexual vengeance into the female pig (sow), are symbolic of 'phallus', the central image in Golding's novels. Thus both the images stand for the moral degradation of the boys. The 'pigs head' on the stick stands for the invisible deity of Evil (presiding over humanity's damnation) that reappears indirectly as Holliday in *The Paper Men*. Finally the 'captain and his 'cruiser' are by no means instruments of rescue, for they are going to take the boys into the world of war where their parents are already dead. Ironically the officer is not safe for he himself is being pursued by his enemy. Golding describes the damnation of humanity symbolically both at children's (microcosmic and adults (macrocosmic) levels of human existence. The novel is full of suggestive references and allusion which hold the mirror up to the embedded theme of evil. The action in *Lord of the Flies* is reminiscent of the action in 'limited area' works like : Bacon's 'New Atlantis', Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Daniel Defoe - *Robinson Crusoe*, R.L. Stevenson's, *Treasure Island*, R.M. Ballantyne' ; The Coral Island J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, Rose Macaulay' *Images and Symbols* Orphan Island, Virginia Woolf's *To The Light House*, Richard Hughes *A High Wind in Jamaica* and R.K. Narayans 'Malgudi' ' novels; and fable parable- allegories like, George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, depicting the dystopian nature of modern mankind or civilization. The fall of the boys is akin to the Biblical Fall. The descent of the boys into evil in Golding's novel reminds the readers of Aeneas descending into Hades in Virgil's *Aeneid*, Dante into *Inferno* in *The Divine Comedy*, and Satan falling into Hell in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Jack's fall into evil is similar to that of Macbeth in *Macbeth*, King Lear's in *King Lear*, and Othello's in *Othello*. The novel is full of Biblical and other allusions suggesting the embedded theme of segregation and damnation which can be briefly substantiated. One of the boys says : "It's like a book". Thus 'book' bears an allusion to *The Bible* or Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Book IX) wherein the initial scene in the eternal human drama of alienation and fall (of Adam and Eve) is described. The description of the boys on the platform in expressions like : 'There, too, jutting into the lagoon, was the platform with insect like figures moving near it' and "...Like moths, on a tree trunk" remind the readers of the fallen angels and the Pandemonium in Hell compared to 'bees' and 'hive' in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The description of nature on the island in passages-such as: Flower and fruit grew together on the same tree and everywhere was the scent of ripeness and the booming of a million bees at pasture suggests Milton's description of the Garden of Eden. The term 'mankind's essential illness' refers to the inner darkness lurking in the boys on the island, which is akin to the Original Sin referred to in *The Bible*. The terms 'snake thing' 'snake' 'beastie' 'something moving among the trees' remind the readers of Satan in the guise of a 'wily serpent' referred to in *The Bible* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Book IX). The terms 'succulent chunk' and 'chunk of meat' suggest the Apple of Knowledge referred to in *Paradise Lost* (Book IX). First *Images and Symbols* "Things are breaking up by irresponsible authority and later even the conch sound disturbs nature: The forest re-echoed, and birds lifted, crying out of the tree tops, as on that first morning ages ago Such expressions and passages echo the breaking up of the natural and devotional order in the Garden of Eden on account of the spiteful intrusion of Satanic Evil into Eden on that first morning ages ago as stated in *The Bible* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

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