AN OVERVIEW OF POINT OF VIEW IN THE NOVELS OF WILLIAM GOLDING

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

William Golding has said that his main intention in his novels is "to discover whether there is that in man which makes him do what he does . . ."[1] To accomplish this intention, Golding must not only look at his central character but look both inside him and look from inside him Thus Golding is reaching into man's spirit trying to find the core of human action To communicate what he believes he has found, he must duplicate as closely as possible a particular angle from which to see reality The manipulation of the reader's view of things, then, becomes a factor of prime significance. Golding says, "'I want people to see things my way . . So I don't simply describe something, I lead the reader round to discover it anew '"[2] The discovery which he hopes that we will make is a broader understanding of his view of human nature

The word "view" implies sight, and in Golding's novels we get pictures of human beings. Sometimes we look at the pictures and become a silent witness to the action of the characters. But at other times, we become part of a character's consciousness, thus we must see things as he sees them At still other times, we seem to get a mixture of both techniques. What emerges is a delineation of a human being which forces us to understand most graphically that what

[1]Douglas Davis, "A Conversation with Golding," The New Republic, CXL (May 4, 1963), 28

[2]Owen Webster, "Living with Chaos," Books and Art,(March, 1958), 16, quoting an interview with William Golding

seems "real" to us is often quite a different reality to someone else More importantly, though, our understanding of and appreciation for the complexities of living are expanded as a result of our experience with Golding's characters. Thus it is through these characters that we come to know more of the nature of reality. As Golding has said, "'A good picture of a human being--like the picture of Hamlet--is a far greater window on reality.'"[3]

It is the intention of this thesis to study Golding's control of point of view in an attempt to understand his view of reality Unfortunately, the concept of point of view is not particularly easy to describe, but there are several basic elements which will help identify it. First, we must be aware of the source of the information in the story In many cases the author simply tells the story. He gives information about character and event directly. This type of narration is commonly called omniscient observer. An author may use this mode in one of two ways, however. If he comments upon the nature of the character or situation at hand, gives his own attitudes, or tries to control openly our reactions to the scene, he is employing editorial omniscience. On the other hand, if the author presents his material without personal comment, simply giving facts, he employs neutral omniscience He may still control our reactions to his story, but in the latter case, he does it by subtly juxtaposing event and character rather than by "telling" us what to think

[3]Webster, p 16.

An author may also employ omniscient in another way--through the minds of his characters If the perceptions, feelings, and thoughts, of a character come to us as they would occur to him, and if these are narrated in the third person, the mode becomes what one scholar calls selective omniscience [4] The author remains detached from the story in the sense that he is free--if he chooses to exercise that freedom--to move out of the mind of the character if he likes The major difference between selective omniscience and editorial or neutral omniscience is that the former gives details in immediate sequence, as they are happening, the latter explains the details after they have occurred.

Another source of information for a story is the "I" protagonist In this mode the author must stay within the limits of the narrator's mind since the author is telling the story as if it were happening to him. There is still a degree of freedom in this mode also. For example, the author may employ flashbacks to fill in background material about the character or situation Still the major limitation is to a single consciousness within the story

Finally, we may know the story through the dialogue between characters. In this mode they reveal their thoughts by what they say as if they were characters in a drama

A second major consideration in identifying point of view is the angle of vision Depending on the mode of the narration, we may see the story from one side (center, front, perphery), from above, or

[4]Norman Friedman, "Point of View in Fiction," PMLA, LXX (December, 1955), 1160-84. I have only shown the modes which are relevant to Golding The termonology used to identify these modes is Friedman's.

from within the action itself Obviously, editorial and neutral omniscience tend to be "above" the story. However, the flexibility of this mode offers the prospect of a close view if one is appropriate Golding, as we will see, makes considerable use of this possibility. Selective omniscience demands limitation, but offers the advantage of capturing a given character's unique view regarding the reality of the story without using the absolute restrictions of the first person mode The "I" protagonist mode while restricting the angle of vision to a single character, offers the advantage of knowing a situation or set of circumstances according to a given set of prejudices. Vicariously, then, we can look through another's view to see reality in a different way

Such definitive terms as the ones listed above would seem to simplify the problem of identifying point of view. However, they should not be considered "rules" which authors feel obliged to follow Rather the terms have been evolved from the evidence Wayne Booth has pointed out that

> It is not surprising to hear practicing novelists report that they have never had any help from critics about point of view. In dealing with point of view the novelist must always deal with the individual work which particular character shall tell this particular story, or part of a story, with what precise degree of reliability, privilege, freedom to comment, and so on [5]

When one attempts to apply the terms to Golding's work, one finds a mixture of the several modes Point of view is an important and, as we

[5]Wayne C Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), p. 164.

shall see, a significant part of Golding's effort He consciously manipulates the source and angle of vision to produce a new kind of understanding or reality in the reader. As the analyses which follow will show he has grown more skillful and consequently more subtle in his ability to control point of view In addition, he is able to communicate, because of this subtlety, a view of human nature which shows the real evil in the world to be the ego itself. But at the same time, the subtlety is partly responsible for the seeming difficulty in reading his work The following essay attempts to clarify some of the confusion which Golding's technique has produced

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY NOVELS

Lord of the Flies, Golding's first novel, is technically the most conventional of the five. Set on a tropical island, this novel traces the slow decay of a civilized approach to living. The characters range in age from about five to eleven or twelve. They have ostensibly--although the reader is not at first aware of it--been sent in a plane by an adult society engaged in an atomic war For the most part the novel is objective in its presentation, however, the book is indicative of Golding's special manipulation of point of view.

As the first chapter unfolds, we become increasingly aware that we are physical spectators and silent participants in the action, in spite of the fact that technically the point of view is neutral omniscient observer. Our view of the scene is usually, though not always, at about the same level of perception as Ralph's. As a result, one's acquaintance with the island develops roughly at the same rate as his does. This control of the reader's awareness of time and place is one of the first elements that one notices in Golding's technique. We know little more about the island than Ralph, and a decided sense of bewilderment concerning "what is going on" seems to be ever present in the early sections Thus Golding forces us into the situation by placing the same demands on us--vicariously--that he places on his characters.

> The boy with fair hair lowered himself down the last few feet of rock and began to pick his way toward the lagoon Though he had taken off his school sweater and trailed it now from one hand, his grey shirt stuck to him and his hair was plastered to his forehead. All round him the long scar

> smashed into the jungle was a bath of heat. He was clambering heavily among the creepers and broken trunks when a bird, a vision of red and yellow, flashed upwards with a witch-like cry, and this cry was echoed by another.
>
> "Hi!" it said "Wait a minute'"[1]

This "boy with the fair hair" identifies himself to the other voice as "'Ralph'" (p. 5). With a second character in the scene, the mode shifts from neutral omniscience to dramatic. However, the sense of bewilderment continues in spite of the addition of details indicating character and appearance.

> "I expect we'll want to know all their names," said the fat boy, "and make a list We ought to have a meeting."
>
> Ralph did not take the hint so the fat boy was forced to continue
>
> "I don't care what they call me," he said confidentially, "so long as they don't call me what they used to call me at school
>
> Ralph was faintly interested.
>
> "What was that?"
>
> The fat boy glanced over his shoulder, then leaned toward Ralph
>
> He whispered.
>
> "They used to call me 'Piggy '"
>
> Ralph shrieked with laughter He jumped up
>
> "Piggy! Piggy!"
>
> "Ralph--please!"
>
> Piggy clasped his hands in apprehension.
>
> "I said I didn't want--"
>
> "Piggy' Piggy'"
>
> Ralph danced out into the hot air of the beach and then returned as a fighter-plane, with wings swept back, and machine-gunned Piggy (p 8)

All of the relationships between characters are established through dialogue--thus in this way the mode is dramatic. We never enter the mind

[1]William Golding, Lord of the Flies (New York, 1962), p 3 All subsequent references to this novel are to this edition and are shown parenthetically in the text

of Piggy, Jack, or Roger We know them only through their speech and action. Golding, therefore, does not stay strictly within the limits of neutral omniscience, but moves to other modes mixing the channels of information.

When he uses neutral omniscient observer, we get vivid description Thus the nature of the setting becomes a necessary element in our response to the theme Such phrases as "a great platform of pink granite," "coarse grass . shaded with young palm trees," "a criss-cross pattern of trunks, very convenient to sit on," "palms that . . . made a green roof, covered on the underside with a quivering tangle of reflections from the lagoon," "water . . . clear to the bottom and bright with the efflorescence of tropical weed and coral," (p. 9) - these phrases give the reader a photographic view of the setting He must be aware sensually of the cool mornings and the hot steaming afternoons, of the warmth of the natural swimming pool, of the tangle of the "creepers" in the jungle, before he can appreciate fully the view of human nature which Golding ultimately develops, since it is this natural setting which is at least partly responsible for the stripping away of the external marks of civilization such as the clothing and, later, the psychological elements seen in the behavior of the boys

But detail is also used dramatically For example after Ralph and Piggy have found the conch shell, and after Ralph has learned to blow it, the sound attracts the attention of the other children on the island.

They come from within the jungle and up the beach.

> Here the eye was first attracted to a black, bat-like creature that danced on the sand, and only later perceived the body above it The bat was the child's shadow, shrunk by the vertical sun to a patch between the hurrying feet. Even while he blew, Ralph noticed the last pair of bodies that reached the platform above a fluttering patch of black (p. 17)

These lines are more than just visual images of boys walking in the sun. It is at this point that the reader gets a foreshadowing of the evil which is to come Black is often used in connection with evil, and in this way Golding is conventional. The evil in this novel is really within the boys themselves, as Simon so graphically realizes later. The shadow cast on the beach is in one sense, then, a physical manifestation of the blackness which will later come from their exposure to nature itself.

Associations with black and darkness are immediately present when Jack brings his group to the first meeting, and these associations help establish Jack's character. Notice that the scene is pictured as though through the eyes of Ralph:

> Within the diamond haze of the beach something dark was fumbling along Ralph saw it first, and watched till the intentness of his gaze drew all eyes that way Then the creature stepped from mirage on to clear sand, and they saw that the darkness was not all shadow but mostly clothing. The creature was a party of boys, marching approximately in step in two parallel lines and dressed in strangely eccentric clothing Shorts, shirts, and different garments they carried in their hands, but each boy wore a square black cap with a silver badge on it. Their bodies, from throat to ankle, were hidden by black cloaks which bore a long silver cross on the left breast and the boy who controlled them was dressed in the same way though his cap badge was golden (p 18).

These same boys later become Jack's tribe and paint their faces black,

red, and white. They come to represent "the liberation into savagery that the concealing paint brought" (p 206). The delineation of detail both through concrete imagery and shading of light and dark are, therefore, a significant part of Golding's effort to control our reactions. These views are described most often in a manner which has Ralph as the center, but the description is not totally his--only "as if" it might be his.

Another important factor which controls our response to the book is Ralph's loss of contact with reality as the factors of shame and frustration weigh on his mind. His refusal to go to the mountain to maintain the fire, his failure to enlist sufficient respect of the other boys in order to keep the idea of rescue alive in their minds, causes his power to crumble, and he begins to lose his sense of purpose. His stubborn determination to keep the fire going remains, but he forgets the purpose of the fire from time to time.

> "We've got to keep it going "
> Eric flung himself down
> "I'm too tired And what's the good?"
> "Eric'" cried Ralph in a shocked voice. "Don't talk like that'"
> Sam knelt by Eric
> "Well-what <u>is</u> the good?"
> Ralph tried indignantly to remember There was something good about a fire Something overwhelmingly good.
> "Ralph's told you often enough," said Piggy moodily "How else are we going to be rescued?"
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "There's only one thing we can do to get out of this mess. Anyone can play at hunting, anyone can get us meat--" (said Ralph).
> He looked from face to face. Then, at the moment of greatest passion and conviction, that curtain flapped

> in his head and he forgot what he had been driving at. He knelt there, his fist clenched, gazing solemnly from one to the other then the curtain whisked back.
>
> "Oh, yes. So we've got to make smoke, and more smoke--" (pp 194-95)

The curtain images appear several times toward the end of the book. It is important to note, however, that although Ralph is losing contact, we know enough about the island and the events to "see through" the curtain ourselves. We shall see how Golding alters this technique in later novels.

In general, in spite of the fact that Jack is a success on the island and begins to maintain a kind of ordered-tribal life, Golding keeps the reader's sympathy focused on Ralph Jack is unnecessarily brutal and cruel. For example, he ties Wilfred down and beats him for no apparent reason other than to make himself feel more powerful (p. 190). Consequently, one can have little patience for the "savage" leader. One finds himself hoping, though, that Ralph will take more advantage of the "good" elements at his disposal. He never really recognizes Piggy's intelligence or Simon's insight as useful devices for civilized control. Without capable leadership, both of these "saviors" of the humanity on the island are lost Simon fresh with the knowledge that the "beast" is nothing but a dead pilot caught on the mountain, is killed in a frenzied ritual dance in which he is the symbol for the pig Piggy blinded by the theft of his glasses is crushed by a huge bolder sent down upon him by Roger, one of Jack's tribe. "Sam'neric" are captured by the tribe, and Ralph is left alone himself the object of a hunt.

As the hunt scene develops, the angle of vision is nearly identical with Ralph's Consequently, as the pace increases, we feel as much hunted as does Ralph. The full significance of this fact shows itself when the crucial and dramatic shift in point of view occurs at the end of the book

Jack's tribe has set the island on fire, and ironically the smoke from this fire attracts the attention of a passing ship. When Ralph stumbles out of the jungle onto the beach, he finds the naval officer standing before him Thus, one is forced to see the inhabitants on the island as boys again and to see the hunt as a game--a brutal one to be sure--but still as a game

The effect of this shift has caused a rather negative reaction among critics Wayland Young seems puzzled by what he calls a "trick" ending.

> We have already had something like the first coming in the episode of the dead airman and his parachute and the boy who understood and was put to death. But compared with the great narrative splendor of this, the arrival of the naval officer is strangely flat and cursory [2]

Louis Halle remarks, "There is a great deal of commotion, and the last page is nothing more than a playwright's contrivance for bringing down the curtain One is left asking What is the point?"[3]

[2]Wayland Young, "Letter from London," Kenyon Review, XIX (Summer, 1957), 481

[3]Louis J Halle, "Small Savages," Saturday Review, XXXVIII (October 15, 1955), 16

W. J Harvey calls the last chapter "a pity, it destroys the unity of the rest without really providing an enveloping ironic frame, the twist in the tail [sic] emerges as a cheap gimmick . "[4] F. R. Karl sees the shift as a dissipation of the "possible irony he [Golding] intended . " The power generated by the conflict "dribbles away in the resolution "[5] James Gindin uses Golding's term "gimmick" to see the ending as "a means of cutting down or softening the implications built up within the structure of the boy's society on the island "[6]

To see the shift in any of these ways, it seems to me is to fail to appreciate the total impact of the novel These views reveal a sense of shock and disappointment with the novel as just a story But this is Golding's intention One must view the boys as boys in the end to find the larger meaning of the story. Golding has purposely led the reader to believe the reality of the brutal hunt in order to "shake" him into the realization that life in the world beyond the island is really the same type of hunt The shift is more a "necessary change of focus " The boys "have grown almost titanic" and should be thought of so--but they are not really titanic One realizes "that mankind is still in something of a pre-puberty stage " The end of the novel, then,

[4]W J. Harvey, "The Reviewing of Contemporary Fiction," Essays in Criticism, VIII (April, 1958), 185

[5]F. R. Karl, The Contemporary English Novel (New York, 1962), p. 258.

[6]James Gindin, "'Gimmick' and Metaphor in the Novels of William Golding," Postwar British Fiction, (Berkeley, California, 1962), p. 197.

is an act of recognition Golding's vision "is through both ends of the telescope "[7]

The effect of the novel is to create for the reader a double irony. First, "the human propensity for evil knows no limits, not even limits of age." Second, the naval officer is really no savior at all. He is a "large, stupid Coral Island mentality in a peaked cap, entirely blind to the moral realities of the situation "[8]

We come to see that the elements of point of view that emerge as significant are: the use of bewilderment in the opening chapters, the use of photographic detail to build a setting, the use of close range neutral omniscient observer focusing on Ralph, the partial loss of contact with reality by Ralph, and the shift in point of view at the end of the novel. With the exception of the shift, none of these is particularly remarkable in the modern novel, but it is important to note that for all of the conventionality, the novel tends generally to center on Ralph. It is vaguely a study of his relations with the others. Although we move entirely away from Ralph in the scenes with Simon when he creeps to his own shelter and when he encounters the sow's head, we never really get "inside" his mind to know him very well. In

[7]Bern Oldsey and Stanley Weintraub, "Lord of the Flies: Beelzebub Revisited," College English, XXV (November, 1963), 98-99.

[8]Samuel Hynes, William Golding (New York, 1964), p. 15

this sense, Simon bears closer resemblance to Piggy, Jack, and Roger [9] Ralph is the mind we know most clearly Nevertheless we do stay "above" the whole story, moving only close to Ralph to get a particularly individual view of the situation It is this individuality which carries over into Golding's second novel, The Inheritors

Pre-adolescent boys form one type of innocence, but pre-human innocence is quite another and in some ways a much more difficult kind to understand. Golding approaches the subject in much the same way as he did in Lord of the Flies. As Ralph's awareness was almost coincident with the reader's, Lok often becomes the lens for one's view of reality in The Inheritors. Similarly, just as one never gets "inside" Piggy or Jack, the unarticulated insights and discoveries of Fa and the old woman remain outside the reader's knowledge The effect of this technique is much stronger in the second novel than it is in the first, and the result is a much more fully realized treatment of the innocence theme than we see in Lord of the Flies

One is reminded upon reading The Inheritors of Faulkner's Benjy

[9] Ernest Bufkin generalizes the point of view in his study claiming that "Golding as narrator shifts from one boy to another among the major characters telling each one's thoughts and decisions, explaining his motivations and reactions, or seeing a situation with his perspective . " The implication here, it seems to me, is that Bufkin sees the point of view as multiple selective observer As I have shown, it is not We know what all the boys think (except Ralph and Simon) only by what they say and do, we never see things from their perspective. See the unpublished dissertation (Vanderbilt, 1964) by Ernest Claude Bufkin, Jr., "The Novels of William Golding: A Descriptive and Analytic Study," p 106

Golding attempts to capture what he considers to be the thoughts and emotions of Neanderthal men who are defeated by early Homo sapiens. Technically, the point of view is not as simple as it might seem. Although the story is primarily in neutral omniscience, there are times when one feels oneself looking through Golding's view of Lok's view, thus editorial omniscience does operate to some extent. At other times Lok's view seems to predominate, so the selective omniscient observer functions also.

The first four chapters of the book are intended to acquaint us with the mechanics of Neanderthal thought patterns and attitudes. In making these felt, Golding again employs the technique of bewilderment We do not know where we are or what is happening. Golding is placing a grossly different lens before our eyes, which alters our own orientation to life and, more importantly demands that we see life as Golding conceives the Neanderthal to have seen it. For example, in the first scene, we are told that "Lok's feet were clever They saw. They threw him round the displayed roots of the beeches, leapt when a puddle of water lay across the trail."[10] The perception here is that of a child-like innocence, where the parts of the body are considered to have a kind of separate identity This view extends beyond parts of the body, however. For example, Lok remarks, when he gets to the river, "'The log has gone away'" (p. 12), an expression which is to be taken at face value

[10]William Golding, The Inheritors (New York, 1955), p 11. All subsequent references to this novel are to this edition and are shown parenthetically in the text.

These attitudes apply to all of the "people," not just Lok, but there are degrees in the level of perception For instance

> Whoever else went hungry it would not be the new one She glanced at him as he clung to Fa's hair, saw that he was asleep, then went to Ha and touched him on the arm
>
> "Why did you leave me? You have more pictures in your head than Lok "
>
> Ha pointed to the water.
>
> "I came quickly to see the log."
>
> "But the log has gone away."
>
> The three of them stood and looked at each other Then, as so often happened with the people, there were feelings between them Fa and Nil shared a picture of Ha thinking He had thought that he must make sure the log was still in position because if the water had taken the log or if the log had crawled off on business of its own then the people would have to trek a day's journey round the swamp and that meant danger or even more discomfort than usual

Although Golding is speaking here, one can see that there is degree in perception Ha can "'have more pictures than Lok'" (p. 14)

Notice the difference in the following Lok

> . . shut his eyes and frowned at the picture of the log It had lain in the water from this side to that, grey and rotting. When you trod the centre you could feel the water that washed beneath you, horrible water, as deep in places as a man's shoulder. The water was not awake like the river or the fall but asleep, spreading there to the river and waking up, stretching on the right into wilderness of impassable swamp and thicket and bog So sure was he of this log the people always used that he opened his eyes again, beginning to smile as if he were waking out of a dream, but the log was gone (p. 12).

We recognize that to recall an event, or to suggest an idea to someone else is known as "having a picture " However, the phrase is also used to indicate memory. For example, Mal the older leader of the small group communicates the solution for the problem in this way·

> "I have a picture "
>
> He freed a hand and put it flat on his head as if confining the images that flickered there.

"Mal is not old but clinging to his mother's back There is more water not only here but along the trail where we came A man is wise He makes men take a tree that has fallen and--" His eyes deep in their hollows turned to the people imploring them to share a picture with him. He coughed again, softly. The old woman carefully lifted her burden

At last Ha spoke.

"I do not see this picture."

The old man sighed and took his hand away from his head

"Find a tree that has fallen" (pp. 15-16)

In presenting his material in this manner, Golding forces the reader to see reality as if he were seeing it through the eyes of the Neanderthal man. Consequently, he enlists the reader's sympathy for these people in an effort to get us to see ourselves in a different perspective.

This perspective ultimately grows out of our understanding of what I call the "natural" attitudes of the people, and an examination of these attitudes is important to understanding the significance of the shift.

Water in the river is evil. The temperature and dark appearance of the river are associated with fear and pain. It is for this reason that the people avoid contact when possible with the river For example, when Ha is putting the new log in place, we are told that he "deliberately put a foot into the water. When the people saw what he was doing they groaned in sympathy. Ha inserted himself warily, he grimaced and the people grimaced with him" (p. 17). When everyone else has crossed, Mal makes the attempt and falls into the water. Later when his illness gets worse as a result of this exposure the old woman remarks that "'This is the cold of the water where the log was'" (p. 34).

Another natural attitude is the affinity for warmth Although they cannot make fire themselves, and although Mal recounts for the others that many of their people have been killed in a forest fire (p. 45), fire for them is positive, and they are able to utilize it for crude cooking Thus they have developed past the animal stage of an instinctive fear of fire, but they do not use it as a weapon, nor do they worship it.

Their goddess is called Oa, whom they see represented in ice formations Here again the view is a natural one Birth is associated with females, and the people see themselves ultimately related to the goddess, for Mal tells us, "'There was the great Oa She brought forth the earth from her belly She gave suck The earth brought forth woman and the woman brought forth the first man out of her belly'" (p. 35) When Mal dies, the old woman says that "'Oa has taken Mal into her belly'" (p 91)

This rather primitive religion gives rise to a system of morality Killing animals is wrong even for food. The people can only consume meat when another animal has made the kill and drained the carcass of blood (pp. 54-55) Most of the time they eat plant life, but they realize the strength to be gained from meat For example, the old woman points out, "'Mal must drink of the hot water. There is strength in the water from the meat'" (p 62)

These points are indicative of the people's value system, and are important elements in our reaction to the shift Our view of the people is that they are totally simple and take reality at face value They

have a system of right and wrong, and they are superstitious to a certain extent However, we find no trace of jealousy, malice, or self-centeredness present in any of them They do not fight with each other and only occasionally with other creatures when the need for food becomes great and even then they have decided misgivings Thus for all their filth and physical ugliness (which is not really a factor since the nature of beauty is really a value judgment, and since our view is theirs, "filth" and "ugliness" do not have any meaning) these people become for us figures of uncorrupted innocence.

Seeing reality from their point of view is, of course, not without its confusion For example, we become increasingly aware that something in the environment is different Lok is asleep "balanced on his hams. A hint of danger would have sent him flying along the terrace like a sprinter from his mark " Golding tells us in neutral omniscience that

> a noise from the foot of the fall, a noise that the thunder robbed of echo and resonance, the form of a noise Lok's ears twiched in the moonlight so that the frost that lay along their upper edges shivered Lok's ears spoke to Lok "?" (p 43).

The next day Lok approaches the overhang, and he notices smoke from a fire We get his reaction in selective omniscience.

> Then he began to frown at the air over the fall and his mouth opened The smoke of the fire had moved and changed in quality For a moment he thought that the old woman had shifted it but then the folly of this picture made him laugh Neither would the old woman make smoke like that It was a coil of yellow and white, the smoke that comes from wet wood or a green branch loaded with leaves, no one but a fool or some creature too unacquainted with the nature of fire would use it so unwisely The idea of two fires came to him Fire sometimes fell from the sky and flared in the forest for a

> while. It woke magically on the plain among the heather when the flowers had died away and the sun was too hot
>
> Lok laughed again at his picture The old woman would not make such smoke and fires never woke of their own accord in the wet spring He watched the smoke uncoil and drift away through the smoke and his picture (p 57).

The meaning of the smoke is, at this point in the story, as vague for us as it is for Lok, and although we eventually realize that the smoke, the disappearance of Ha--who falls off a cliff--and the debauchery under the tree, are caused by Homo sapiens, we come to these realizations through a sub-human perception. Such a condition is, to say the least, frustrating to the reader, and it has led nearly every critic of novel to call this sort of manipulation a tour de force But to see the novel in this way is to dismiss Golding's technique too easily. He is being more than just clever He is presenting, as we shall see below, a view of modern man, which demands an extraordinary approach.

By limiting our view to Neanderthal perception, Golding forces us to accept the fact that what we might consider to be enemies or intruders are not really thought to be by the people. Their sense of innocence leads them to conclude that the scent of "another" could mean others like themselves, and their response to this conclusion is friendliness.

> Fa frowned.
> "Does the other know Mal?"
> Lok laughed again.
> "Everyone knows Mal'"

Lok then reaches the final conclusion to which everyone agrees

> Lok seized Nil and shook her a little
>
> "They have changed words or shared a picture. Ha will tell us and I will go after him " He looked round at them "People understand each other "
>
> The people considered this and shook their heads in agreement (pp. 71-72).

The Neanderthals are not angry at the loss of a leader, but rather show an innocent faith that Ha's presence among "other people" guarantees his safety.

This common loyalty is part of Lok's character, and is important in understanding Golding's point As Lok searches for Ha, he finds the scent of the "other" and becomes the "other" for a time At the end of this fantasy in which he has looked at his own people as if he were the other, Lok has a kind of mystic revelation close in type to Simon's in Lord of the Flies.[11] Lok watches the activity in the overhang

> The old woman came out of the overhang, ran down to the river and came back with a double handful of water. She was so close that Lok could see the drops that fell from her fingers and the twin fires reflected in her eyes She passed under the rock and he knew that she had not seen him All at once Lok was frightened because she had not seen him. The old woman knew so much, yet she had not seen him He was cut off and no longer one of the people, as though his communion with the other had changed him he was different from them and they could not see him He had no words to formulate these thoughts but he felt his difference and invisibility as a cold wind that blew on his skin. The other had tugged at the strings that bound him to Fa and Mal and Liku and the rest of the people The strings were not the ornament of life but its substance. If they broke, a man would die All at once he was hungry for someone's eyes to meet his and recognize him (p. 78).

Lok feels the separation caused by the fantasy. He is unconscious of its meaning, but we are not--the self demands recognition for security. Lok's response here is fear and frustration As we shall see, the conflict caused by the "others" becomes more intense, and Lok's ability to

[11] This division of personality also occurs when Lok is in the tree witnessing the activities of the "new people " Here he becomes "the inner Lok [who] could look forever," and "the outer that breathed and heard and smelt and was awake always . . ." Golding, Inheritors, p 141.

sense reality decreases He begins to lose contact with reality just as Ralph did Thus his first response (loyalty for Ha) has been thwarted and twisted because of the "new people" into fear of isolation and destruction (although he does not know it nor do we with our limited point of view)

The unselfish devotion is not destroyed all at once, however It occurs to him again after he has actually seen the "new people" with their collection of logs and food and "a dirty smudge in the earth where the fire had been and logs as huge had been used to build it" (p 103) These men are "people without pictures in their heads" (p 103). Suddenly Lok is afraid with

> fear as complete and unreasoning as Mal's when he had seen the fire burning the forest . And because [Lok] was one of the people, tied to them with a thousand invisible strings, his fear was for the people (p 104)

A few moments later, he hears Liku's screams which are "like the noise the horse makes when the cat sinks its curved teeth into the neck and hangs there sucking blood" (p 105) We notice that nearly every association with the new people has negative connotation

The new people respond to Lok's shouting for Liku, with a twig

> The dead tree by Lok's ear acquired a voice
> "Clop'"
> His ears twitched and he turned to the tree By his face there has grown a twig a twig that smelt of other and of goose, and of the bitter berries that Lok's stomach told him he must not eat This twig had a white bone at the end There were hooks in the bone and sticky brown stuff hung in the crooks His nose examined the stuff and did not like it. He smelled along the shaft of the twig The leaves on the twig were red feathers and reminded him of goose. He was lost in a generalized astonishment and excitement (p 106)

Again, Lok shows his innocence in his belief that the "twig" is a present from the new people, and he must be persuaded by Fa to throw it back. But Fa at last makes the association between the new people and death. "The new people took the log and Mal died Ha was on the cliff and a new man was on the cliff Ha died. The new people came to the overhang. Nil and the old woman died" (p. 133). Still Lok's mind cannot grasp the evil of the situation. He responds, "'When the new people bring Liku back I shall be glad'" (p. 133)

But the growing pressure on Lok's mind begins to have its effect. Golding repeats a technique used in Lord of the Flies Just as the curtain falls before Ralph's eyes flock comes between Lok and reality. He cannot remember clearly the details of the night before. He presses the heels of his hands into his eyes

> so that spokes of light flashed in them like the river
> "There has not been a night "
> That was real Where the night should have been was a greyness . There was stuffed inside the bones of his head the white flock of the autumn creepers, their seeds were in his nose, making him yawn and sneeze (p. 134).

This flock appears to him several other times in similar circumstances, while he watches the activities of the new people under the tree (Cf. pp. 145, 163, 169). It is during this time that we begin to fully understand the implications of the new people. We see (though Lok does not) that the new people, the "bone faces," the Homo sapiens have "advanced." They have the bow and arrow. They have built dug-out canoes. They have discovered how to make mead. And they have discovered a particularly animalistic outlet for the sex drive. We see that these men are the first of our own species

It is not until the last chapter when the point of view has been shifted that we realize the full significance of the preceding eleven chapters. On the lake above the falls as we sit in the dug-out with Tuami we slowly realize that the advance from Lok's people to Tuami's has involved not only a higher intelligence but a clear sense of bitterness, hate, jealousy, guilt, and grief. Tuami "thought bitterly of the great square sail they had left bundled up in that last mad hour among the mountains " (p 223) Hoping "for a return to sanity and the manhood that seemed to have left [him] " with the coming of dawn, Tuami realizes that "they were what they had been in the gap, haunted, bedeviled, full of strange irrational grief like himself, or emptied, collapsed, and helplessly asleep" (p. 224-25). He looks at these sleeping people in the dug-out, Vivani in particular.

> She was covered with a magnificent skin, the cave-bear skin that had cost two lives to get and was the price her first man paid for her What was a sail, thought, Tuami bitterly, when Vivani wanted to be comfortable? What a fool Marlan was at his age, to have run off with her for her great heart and wit, her laughter and her white, incredible body . . ! He looked at Marlan, hating him, and thought of the ivory dagger that he [Tuami] had been grinding so slowly to a point . . . To watch Marlan's face and intend to kill him was daunting (pp. 225-26).

Tuami continues to think guiltily about the events of the night before, "I am like a pool, he thought, some tide has filled me, the sand is swirling, the waters are obscured and strange things are creeping out of the cracks and crannies in my mind" (p. 227). At last he cries out in grief from his confused state, "'What else could we have done?'" (p. 227).

It is only here that we fully realize the significance of the wholly innocent unity which governed the life of Lok's people. The demands

of unsatisfied ego have displaced the unknowing brotherhood of Lok and Ha and Mal Hynes calls this the "anthropological analogue of the Fall," which of course the novel clearly is However Hynes is quick to point out that the originality is in the fictional conception of the moral, not the theology (which in a novel is surely as it ought to be)."[12]

This "fictional conception" is of course the limitation imposed by telling the story from the sub-human point of view The "people," as we have seen, cannot reason or interpret very well the reality which they experience, but we can and do. The shift in point of view in the end shows us in a way which no other method could achieve the greatness which we have lost Tuami is a haunted man, just as we are haunted by the guilt feelings brought on by our own acts This irony is emphasized even more strongly by the fact that Liku lies in the bottom of the dug-out but will never be able to demonstrate her innocence to the others since they think of her as an ignorant devil.

Thus we see the theme of lost innocence traced through two novels which deal primarily with social groups. Although in both cases the omniscient observer seems to be the main source of information, technically, the point of view is limited categorically to the mind of a single character. Thus there is neither a clear case of selective omniscience nor total omniscience but rather a mixture of the two. But more important, it becomes clear that the function of the shift has served to place the novels in a larger context of meaning for the reader. Lord of the Flies is not just an adventure story, and The Inheritors is

[12]Hynes, William Golding, p. 22

not just a tour de force of the last Neanderthal man's view of the world

We have also seen the beginning of a refinement on the part of Golding in his use of devices The technical limitations imposed by pre-adolescents in Lord of the Flies, Golding makes more stringent in The Inheritors by demanding us to interpret the significance of reality through the sub-human view Golding maintains the technique of bewilderment as part of his effect, although one feels much more "lost" in the second novel, a feeling which is, of course, intentional and not what one critic has called a failure,[13] since we must see and feel as Lok does, according to Golding, before we can fully understand the evil and darkness in Homo sapiens Consequently Golding must refine his technique We must spend more time with Lok than with Ralph In The Inheritors there can be no intelligence like Piggy although, as I have shown above there is degree in the perception of the several Neanderthal people. A reduction of intelligence does not eliminate the possibility of a loss of contact with reality, and, oddly enough, the possibility is not increased, either. However, the use of flock does seem less pronounced in Lok's mind than does the curtain in Ralph's. The device of the mystic revelation seen in Simon's confrontation with

[13]Young says that "Golding has his eyes wide open to something concrete and very soberly imagined and objective, but it fails because he has set himself the task of conveying the sense of bewilderment felt by the more primitive people The result is that sometimes the reader himself does not know what is going on " Young, Kenyon Review, p 478.

the sow's head in Lord of the Flies, can be seen operating much less bluntly in The Inheritors. The reasons for such refinements are several, but it would seem that the experience gained in writing Lord of the Flies had an influence on the nature of the technique in The Inheritors.

With Pincher Martin we begin to see some major changes in Golding's approach to a similar theme, and the technique in putting it across What has been a reserved focus on a single character in the early novels, becomes a thorough interior and exterior study in Pincher Martin.

CHAPTER III

THE LATER NOVELS

A man's struggle in a void faces the reader when he opens Pincher Martin. The details of the scene are sketched in. The man speaks:

> "Help!"
> When the air had gone with the shriek, water came in to fill its place--burning water, hard in the throat and mouth as stones that hurt. He hutched his body towards the place where air had been but now it was gone and there was nothing but black, choking welter [1]

We watch his struggle in the water, are told that he regains enough consciousness to think, and see his ego assert itself

> I won't die
> I won't die
> Not me--
> Precious (p 13)

We learn that he has been on a ship (p 13), that the ship has been hit "bang under the bridge" by something, and that the man gave the right order concerning the object (p 14). The ship was in the Atlantic, and was apparently torpedoed by a U-boat (p 16). In addition, we get the image of the half-filled jam-jar which shows both to us and to Martin the helplessness of his situation A hollow glass figure of a man floats in the water. When the membrane stretched across the opening is pressed, the change in air pressure causes the figure to sink. Thus the jam-jar becomes a kind of microcosm of the novel itself The image

[1] William Golding, Pincher Martin (New York, 1956), p. 7. All subsequent references to this novel are from this edition and are shown parenthetically in the text

also demonstrates the sadistic qualities of Martin's ego He has enjoyed manipulating the figure by holding it below the surface and letting it rise again, just as he has enjoyed manipulating other peoples' lives, although at this point we are unaware of the latter significance

Golding is again placing us directly in a situation at close range just as he did in the first two novels He is again forcing us to gather the pieces of significant reality from a mass of detail and movement where we have no orientation He is again demanding that we approximate vicariously the situation as it unfolds for his character He is again bewildering us

Golding takes us inside the mind of the man to let us see the action of the semiconsciousness moving into self awareness·

> The pattern was white and black but mostly white. It existed in two layers, one behind the other, one for each eye. He thought nothing, did nothing while the pattern changed a trifle and made little noises. The hardnesses under his cheek began to insist. They passed through pressure to a burning without heat, to a localized pain. They became vicious in their insistence like the nag of an aching tooth. They began to pull him back into himself and organize him again as a single being (p 22).

At other times, we feel as if we are within the character and looking at him at the same time.

> The man was lying with one foot on a limpet, held mostly by friction But his foot was on one limpet and the second one was before his eyes He reached up and there was a possible handhold that his fingers found, provided the other one still gripped the limpet by his face He moved up, up, up and then there was an edge for his fingers His right arm rose, seized He pulled with both arms, thrust with both legs He saw a trench of rock beyond the edge, glimpsed sea, saw whiteness on the rocks and jumble He fell forward (p 35)

Thus the mixture of selective omniscient and neutral omniscient observers which operated only slightly in Lord of the Flies, and was more discernible in The Inheritors has become blurred in Pincher Martin. It is impossible to be entirely sure whether we are experiencing Golding's view or the character's view or both. By presenting his material in this way Golding is able to get the effect of a first person narration without imposing the necessary limitations of that mode. We can be beside Martin to get the effect of his view without seeing it wholly from his eyes. Consequently we approximate the experience, but at the same time we do not feel that it is being "told" to us. For example, the following description of the waves could be either Golding's view or Martin's or both

> There was a gathering rhythm in the sea. The Saftey Rock tripped the waves and shot them at the cleft below the funnel. Nine times out of ten these waves would meet a reflection coming back and spurt up a line of spray like a fuse burning--a fast fuse that whipped over the water. But the tenth time the wave would find the way clear because the ninth wave had been a very small one. So the tenth wave would come wheeling in, the cleft would squeeze the water so that it speeded up and hit the back of the angle--bung! (p. 159).

Golding does use the first person narrator when he has Martin expressing his thoughts

> He began to think slowly.
> I have tumbled in a trench My head is jammed against the farther side and my neck is twisted. My legs must be up in the air over the other wall. . . (p. 37).

However, it is important to note that even when using the third person the effect is often that of first. The reader is aware of the rock only when Martin is, and the reader looks only where Martin looks, but Martin does not tell his own story about the rock. Golding helps

Martin through the third person

In addition to the fact that Martin is already dead, perhaps part of the reason for using the third person narration for a story which would seem more appropriate in the first person, is that Golding can develop contrast between action on the rock and Martin's thoughts. We know why Martin names the parts of the rock, makes rules about sleeping and eating, builds a "dwarf" from loose stones, and calculates the distance of his visibility, because of the first-person dream sequences. Thus Martin's character is delineated ostensibly by his own unconscious rather than through the eyes of an omniscient observer.

Golding has used the device before in the earlier novels, but Pincher Martin is the first to depend so heavily upon it. For example, Ralph has a day dream during a hunt in Lord of the Flies (pp. 132-133), and we have seen how Golding's Neanderthal men depend upon "pictures" of past events, as a kind of crude memory In Pincher Martin, however, the system of flash-backs is fully utilized to fill in Martin's extreme sense of his own importance. It is in these dream sequenses that we learn of the mask of Greed which he had worn as an actor, before he became a sailor. This mask is an important key to his nature (p. 106), along with the image of the mirror (p. 117). Golding is able to show us, though, not just the fact that Martin is an egotist, but that he knows that he is one, and that he likes it. Through switching back and forth between Martin's memory and his conscious moments on the rock, Golding shows us a man who does not really wish rescue, but identity and

power, and at the same time is aware that his situation is hopeless He sees himself as powerless as the glass figure in the jar, and as the maggot in the Chinese box, but still his ego pushes him on. We cannot respect him for his effort, and he is not heroic in exerting it because he assumes superiority over Nature, just as he had over the other people in his life His egotism, then, while demanding admiration for its tenacity on the rock is also that egotism which consumed--just as the maggot in the Chinese box consumed and was consumed--all other life As a result Martin becomes anti-heroic.

When the shift occurs, we discover that Martin had died in the first chapter.[2] This realization is the most difficult of Golding's endings for the reader to accept, and has led Young to call the book a "major puzzle " To him "this particular ending [is] the trickiest of them all and, leaves one with a rather rebellious feeling "[3] Gindin admits that the ending "extends the technique," but he thinks that the shift "magnifies and exaggerates [this] extension [so] that the novel ends by supplying its own parody "[4] Hynes also sees parody in the novel as a result of the last chapter, but he does deeper than Gindin, showing the parody to be one of "heroism."[5] While the latter

[2]This type of story is not unique. One recalls a story by Ambrose Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge " Cf. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, The Scope of Fiction (New York, 1960), pp. 95-103

[3]Young, Letter from London," p. 481

[4]Gindin, "'Gimmick' and Metaphor," p. 202.

[5]Hynes, William Golding, p 29

view seems more substantial, it is clear in all cases that the last chapter forces us to consider the novel in another light.[6]

Rebellion or flat statements about self-parodies do not show much of a reaction to the novel Hynes has pointed out that the main point of the book "seems to be [that] . . death is the end of identity " As I have shown above, we realize even before the shift that the search for identity is really Martin's motivation. When we find that he is already dead, we must return to the scene between Nathaniel and Martin in which Nathaniel discusses "'the technique of dying into heaven'" (p. 64) Martin never understands these words, and as a result his "'extraordinary capacity to endure'"--what we see to be his ego--creates a place to endure exclusive of physical reality This ego referred to so often by Golding as "the centre" can only create--whether in heaven (meaning universal infinity) or on earth (meaning physical life)--one kind of existence Martin's ego was extremely selfish, consuming, and blind to the needs and feelings of others. Consequently, his "after life" was one of self-consumption--whether in the form of a rock created by his imagination, or a lobster claw, or a maggot in a Chinese box. The struggle caused by the ego trying to save itself on the one hand and trying to consume itself on the other is the struggle to which the shift in point of view in the end calls our attention The parodox is that in being victorious, the ego consumes itself.[7]

[6]Bufkin has given the point an extended discussion, but in the end he does little more than point to a rather questionable passage which supposedly shows Martin's death Cf Bufkin, "The Novels of William Golding," p 201 Cf Golding, Pincher Martin, p. 8

[7]Hynes, William Golding, pp. 29-31.

Thus the new perspective of the shift asserts that perhaps the evil in human nature is to be found in the center of the personality· that the enemy is in us just as it was in the boys in Lord of the Flies and in the Homo sapiens in The Inheritors

But the ego is free to make a choice, it is not ipso facto evil It is the loss of that freedom which dominates Free Fall This novel is the first of Golding's to utilize the "I" protagonist mode, and he takes full advantage of the range which it presents For example, the book is not chronological as the others are Sammy Mountjoy points out that "time is not to be laid out endlessly like a row of bricks That straight line from the first hiccup to the last gasp is a dead thing "[8] The system of flashbacks used in Pincher Martin, then, becomes the major device in Free Fall In the latter, though, the use of the first person limits but is not necessarily less flexible than the effect of the first person as we have seen it in Pincher Martin Generally, the flashback sections in Free Fall are by definition the view of Sammy Mountjoy and as a result we see them from his eyes, whereas in Pincher Martin, the flashback sections seem to be simply scenes being told by the omniscient Golding, and remembered by Martin

Free Fall traces the life of Samuel Mountjoy, giving in flashback scenes from his childhood in a London slum, his early manhood as an art student, and his experiences in a Nazi prison camp

[8]William Golding, Free Fall (New York, 1959), p 6 All subsequent references to this novel are from this edition and are shown parenthetically in the text

The problem of deciding just where the information of the story is coming from in Free Fall is not an easy one, however. While Sammy is the acknowledged narrator, Golding makes us aware that there are three "Sammies." First, the entire book is told by the adult Sammy who is looking back over the events of his life to discover, if possible, the point at which he lost his freedom. But the Sammy in many of the scenes which occur to the narrator, do not represent an earlier version of himself--that Sammy is someone else. This fact is openly presented, and reminders of it are scattered throughout the novel.[9]

> I can remember myself as I was when I was a child. But even if I had committed murder then, I should no longer feel responsible for it. There is a threshold here, too, beyond which what we did was done by someone else. Yet I was there. Perhaps, to understand, must include pictures from those early days also. Perhaps reading my story through again I shall see the connection between the little boy, clear as spring water, and the man like a stagnant pool (p. 9).

For the most part, these "pictures" are viewed from the point of view of the narrator, but at times Golding shifts to the point of view of Sammy the child. Thus the second Sammy emerges. For instance, Sammy has spent part of his childhood in a London slum called Rotten Row in which there is a common latrine with private enclosures for each dwelling. It is part of the code that this privacy be respected by the tenants. In the following example Sammy the child is playing in "water

[9]Cf. Golding, Free Fall, pp. 45, 46, 47, 77, 195. In all of these passages Sammy is reminding himself and us of the dual nature of the narration.

[which was] spread across the bricks [of the street] and [which] made a convenient ocean " The point of view changes from a memory by an adult to an actual incident as if experienced from the child's eyes, and then back again.

> Yet my great, apocalyptic memory is not of stretched-out time, but an instant. Mrs. Donavan's Maggie who smelt so sweet and showed round, silk knees was recoiled from the entrance to our brick square. She had retreated so fast and so far that one high heel was in my ocean. She was caught in act to turn away, her arms were raised to ward off I cannot remember her face--for it is mesmerized in the other direction Poor Mrs Donavan, the dear withered creature, peeps out of her own bog with the air of someone unfairly caught, someone who could explain everything, given time--but knows, in that tremendous instant, that time is not to be given her. And from our bog, our own, private bog, with its warm personal seat, comes my ma
>
> She has burst out for the door has banged against the wall and the latch hangs broken. My ma faces Maggie, one foot in front of the other for she has come out of the narrow box sideways Her knees are bent, she is crouched in a position and she holds her vast grey bloomers in two purple hands just above her knees I see her voice, a jagged shape of scarlet and bronze, shatter into the air till it hangs there under the sky, a deed of conquest and terror.
>
> "You bloody whore! Keep your clap for your bastards'"
>
> I have no memory of majesty to match that one from Rotten Row (pp 20-21)

Thus Golding's technique of presenting his material directly as it appears to the character is present in Free Fall as well as the earlier novels--The Inheritors being the most notable example

Golding also mixes this technique, as we have seen him do before. When Sammy was in elementary school, an apparently mentally retarded girl was in the class·

> If Minnie wanted to pick up a crayon she would make perhaps three sideways movements at it with one hand while the other was held up in the air and jerked in sympathy If she reached

> the crayon she made hard crushing movements with her fingers until somehow they fastened round it Sometimes the sharpened end of the crayon would be uppermost, and then Minnie would make scratches on the paper for a moment or two with the blunt end. Usually, a tree would lean down at this point and reverse the crayon, but then one day the crayons appeared on her side of the desk sharpened at both ends, so life was easier (p 34)

Although the nature of the description is not particularly child-like (with the exception of the use of the word "tree" to mean teacher) as in the previous example, the impression that one gets is, it seems to me, more like that of a child than of an adult.

Golding's use of this "second Sammy" also allows him at one point to give us another dimension--Sammy's view of Johnny Spragg's day dream. The two boys are good friends, and with Sammy's artistic perception such a view would not be uncommon

> Johnny was diving for a loop. He was sitting building up under his seat the power that would swing him into his sky. He was helmeted, assured, delicate at the rudder-bar and joystick in the fish-'n-chip smell of the engine oil and great wind He pulled the joystick back slowly, a huge hand thrust him up and he reeled of the top of the loop while the irrelevant dark earth reeled sideways as easy as a shadow (pp 55-56).

This kind of innocent identification with another human being has been lost when the narrator falls in love with Beatrice. Although his contact with women has been positive--his mother and a childhood idol Evie both are people whom he admires (p. 103)--he is not able to identify with Beatrice. Sammy asks her, "'What is it like to be you?'" (p. 103). "'Where do you live, Beatrice?'" (p. 105). He thinks such things as, "How far do you extend? Are you the black, central patch which cannot examine itself?" (p 105) Finally, in exasperation, he says, "'Oh God,

Beatrice, Beatrice, I love you--I want to be you'" (p 105) This desire is never fulfilled, and is an element in Sammy's loss of freedom The technique involved in allowing us first to see the child Sammy establishing contact so mutual that he can fully appreciate another's position as if he were within them as in the case of Johnny, is responsible for the irony of the adult Sammy's inability to know and understand Beatrice We know that he is not incapable of such understanding because we have seen him do it before

Thus we can see two Sammy's functioning to effect the theme of the loss of freedom--the narrator of the story, and the early child Sammy as seen for the most part through the narrator's eyes, but also at times as if the narrator were actually experiencing the event through the eyes of the child Sammy By presenting the story in this way Golding is able to control our reactions to the nature of his character, at the same rate that the character discovers the same knowledge about himself. This point of view, then, restricts the partial omniscience that we have seen in each of the previous novels. We can only be aware of that which Sammy is aware We can experience the flashback scenes as only Sammy experiences them Thus our view is always his view When the narrator tells us that he is searching for his lost freedom, we accept it

As an artist, Sammy's mind demands objects, and sight Because of his sensitivity, he is a man oriented, more so than the rest of us perhaps, to a life of light, color and vision When he is placed in the cell in the Nazi prison camp, he is deprived of his most urgent

need--light Eventually, this fact forces him to look at his own nature and it is here that he finds the answer He committed himself to Beatrice, but betrayed her innocence Because of his personality which he really understands for the first time during the introspection in the cell, he sees that it is that very personality which has caused his loss of freedom Thus we see a third Sammy

> Just as the substance of the living cell comes shining into focus as you turn the screw by the microscope, so I now saw that being of Beatrice which had once shone out of her face She was simple and loving and generous and humble, qualities which have no political importance and do not commonly bring their owners much success. Like the ward for children, remembered, they shine And yet as I remembered myself as well as Beatrice I could find no moment when I was free to do as I would In all that lamentable story of seduction I could not remember one moment when being what I was I could do other than I did (p 191)

The shift which occurs at the end of the novel is not as dramatic as it is in the previous novels. We never move outside the protagnist's view within the novel proper, as we have in each of the others--Ralph, Lok, Christopher Martin Rather we move from being just a part of Sammy's memory to a vision greater than his because of his experience

At the end of Chapter IX, Sammy cries out for help from the darkened cell. He tells us that

> the thing that screamed left all living behind and came to the entry where death is close as darkness against eyeballs
> And burst that door (p 185).

Chapter X opens with the words, "Therefore when the commandant let me out of the darkness he came late and as a second string, giving me the liberty of the camp when perhaps I no longer needed it" (p 186)

Sammy tells us of the epiphany which occurred as he stood in the prison camp. "Standing between the understood huts, among jewels and music, I was visited by a flake of fire, miraculous and pentecostal, and fire transmuted me, once and forever" (p 188) This flake is love, for it is while he is engaged in considering the relationship of love to man's heart that the epiphany occurs (p 188). At the end of the chapter, he recalls again the division between the innocent child of Rotten Row and "the boy on the bike, the young man " (p 192) In the next three chapters, Sammy explains the effect of this epiphany on his behavior, but in the end of the last chapter, he gives us a scene of his release from the cell. Sammy says of the commandant

> He spoke the inscrutable words that I should puzzle over as though they were the Sphinx's riddle.
> "The Herr Doctor does not know about peoples" (p. 253)

These last words show us that what we have understood to be a search is in reality only the story of a search, for this is the point where the adult Sammy began his search, not ended it We realize that this is where we must begin Golding has been leading us through the adult Sammy's memory to force us to realize just what his character has realized within the darkness of the prison cell--that love is the spark that illumines man's heart and man's world. The book itself is really an act of love, an effort by one man who understood what he was to get others to do the same This subtle point rests singly and beautifully upon the shift in point of view, a shift which has occurred in Sammy's mind, a shift from looking out at the world, to looking in at himself, and a shift which is unlike any of the others which Golding has employed

Critics disagree on the ending Gregor and Kinkead-Weekes have seen the ending as a

> gap between the myth of fall and judgement and the whole truth of human experience, and [we are to] take the leap across it ahead of Sammy It is like a jigsaw puzzle with one piece missing, the eye cannot rest on the pattern but is compelled remorselessly to the missing shape which the incomplete pattern defines.[10]

Bufkin, while admitting that this reading of the novel "works," shows this line of reasoning to be "unconvincing as a kind of non sequitur or interpretative legerdemain."[11] He also sees the error in Gindin's argument that the shift occurs in "the final scene at the mental institution"[12] by showing that the mental institution is not the last scene It seems that Bufkin has missed the point here. The scene at the mental institution is the final scene, chronologically, and this of course, is what Gindin means. What occurs in the mental institution is not really the shift at all as Gindin thinks it is, rather the mental institution is another flashback Bufkin, basing his criticism on unidentified testimony from Golding himself, claims that there is no shift In the absence of further documentation, however, one must rely on the evidence within the novel, concluding that the shift does indeed exist [13]

[10]Ian Gregor and Mark Kinkead-Weekes, "The Strange Case of Mr Golding and His Critics," Twentieth Century, CLXVII (February, 1960), 123

[11]Bufkin, "The Novels of William Golding," p. 248

[12]Gindin, "'Gimmick'" and Metaphor," pp 203-04

[13]Bufkin, "The Novels of William Golding," p. 246

This controversy about the nature of the shift, of course, raises questions about its effectiveness. The shifts in all of the previous novels are unmistakable. In Free Fall the shift is subtle. Perhaps Golding has tried in this novel to avoid the bluntness of the shift in the earlier novels by, in a sense, "hiding" it Indeed an attempt to move out of a first person narration is too much a technical manipulation to be very effective A shift in another mode would seem at once too much an intrusion However, the effect of a new perspective at the end of the novel is achieved within the limits of the first person, and is effective in demanding us to reexamine the work, just as the shifts in the other works have done

Upon reading The Spire, one finds that Golding has returned to some earlier techniques For example, he employs the neutral omniscient observer in a way which recalls but is not identical to that used in Lord of the Flies The selective omniscient point of view echoes the view of Lok and the child Sammy Mountjoy The first person effect of a third person narration reminds one of Pincher Martin The Spire, then, emerges as a book which employs former techniques, but which combines them in such a way as to yield a novel which is entirely different from and in ways much more powerful than the earlier efforts.

The Spire opens with a view from the eyes of a man apparently in a church.

> He was laughing, chin up,and shaking his head God the Father was exploding in his face with a glory of sunlight through painted glass, a glory that moved with his movements to consume an exalt Abraham and Isaac and then God

> again The tears of laughter in his eyes made additional spokes and wheels and rainbows.[14]

A moment later we participate directly in the man's thought, after he watches the chancellor leave him

> Jocelin stood still, and shot an arrow of love after him. My place, my house, my people. He will come out of the vestry at the tail of the procession and turn left as he has always done, then he will remember and turn right to the Lady Chapel' So Jocelin laughed again, chin lifted, in holy mirth I know them all, know what they are doing and will do, know what they have done. All these years I have gone on, put the place on me like a coat (p. 4)

Already we can see characteristics which are by now common to Golding. For example, we do not really know much about where we are, and we are seeing reality at close range. With the addition of the image of the church as a "man lying on his back" (p 4), given in neutral omniscience, the several points of view used in the novel are established.

These modes are used, along with dialogue to weave a pattern which when taken in toto represents more Jocelin's view than any other To accomplish this effect, Golding depends strongly upon the selective omniscient observer. However, there is one significant difference between the effect gained here and the effect in Pincher Martin which tends to do the same thing. Our awareness of reality in the novel depends to a large extent on what we see through Jocelin's mind, but as is not the case in the other novels (except Free Fall)

[14]William Golding, The Spire (New York, 1964), p. 3 All subsequent references to this novel are from this edition and are shown parenthetically in the text.

Jocelin knows what the reality is, we do not. Ralph, Lok[15], and Christopher Martin, do not know the respective worlds in which we find them. Consequently, as we have seen, our awareness of their world grows roughly at the same rate as theirs In The Spire as in Free Fall, one state of innocence is the reader's innocence rather than the reader's and the character's. Jocelin knows what the nature of his vision is long before we know it. Thus much of the action in the earlier sections of the novel seems somewhat obscure. For example, the dumb character who follows Jocelin around chiseling in stone does not make much sense to us until we see that the objects are to be gargoyles in the image of Jocelin Pangall is another case Through dialogue we recognize him to be in conflict with the builders But we never see the total significance of this conflict until near the end of the novel

To help offset this difficulty, Golding has used much more obvious intrusion than previously. For instance, the early section of Chapter III and Chapter IV show the passage of time told from the neutral omniscient point of view. In addition, in these early chapters we get some explanation, in this mode, of the general floor plan of the cathedral.

> The most seeming solid thing in the nave was not the barricades of wood and canvas that cut the cathedral

[15]Lok might be considered an exception since he has been to the summer quarters before, but the impression that we get because of his limited intelligence and limited memory is one of immediate rather than familiar experience, generally

> in two, at the choir steps, was not the two arcades of the nave, nor the chantries and painted tomb slabs between them The most solid thing was the light It smashed through the rows of windows in the south aisle, so that they exploded with colour, it slanted before him from right to left in an exact formation, to hit the bottom yard of the pillars on the north side of the nave (pp 5-6)

Golding also has Jocelin walk through the parts of the cathedral immediately adjacent to the crossways Thus we become somewhat more familiar with the physical nature of the setting in a rather conventional way This method is dictated, of course, by the reader's innocence of the situation

Once we are oriented, Golding is free to develop his novel around Jocelin As we have seen him do before, Golding moves us from a position of relative normality to one of abnormality The method in this novel is significantly different because Jocelin loses his sanity, and as a result his "normal" contact with reality is greatly altered Golding, of course, has used this technique before but never to the extent that he uses it here In Chapter III, we get strong hints that the building of the spire is having some adverse effects on Jocelin's mind Full of hope for the progress of the work, he witnesses a secret meeting between Goody Pangall and Roger Mason Jocelin "saw---and it was in some mode like that of prayer that he saw it--how the air round them was different He saw they were in some sort of tent that shut them off from all other people . . " (p 52). Jocelin's response is anger. "All at once it seemed to him that the renewing life of the world was a filthy thing, a rising tide of muck so that he gasped for air . " (p 53). He rushes outside, feels

foolish because he is carrying the model of the spire, and returns to the crossways at the same moment as a small group is on its way to the Lady Chapel for a christening

> This left him with Rachel, who was somehow compelled to stay behind, and though his eyes were blinded by the vision of Roger and Goody Pangall, he began to hear why. Nor could he believe how any woman, even an outraged one (her eyes bulging, tresses of black hair escaped across her cheek), would ever talk so. What paralysed him was not her spate, but the matter of it Rachel, face shaken like a windowpane in a gale, was explaining to him why she had no child though she had prayed for one. When she and Roger went together, at the most inappropriate moment she began to laugh--had to laugh--it wasn't that she was barren as some people might think and indeed had said, my Lord, no indeed' But she had to laugh and then he had to laugh--
>
> He stood in sheer disbelief and confusion, until she took herself away into the north ambulatory and part of the nature of woman burned into him, how they would speak delicately, if too much, nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine times, but on the ten thousandth they would come out with a fact of such gross impropriety, such violated privacy, it was as if the furious womb had acquired a tongue And of all women in the world, only she, forced to do it by some urgency of her spate-like nature, to the wrong person, in the wrong place, at the wrong time. She stripped the business of living down to where horror and farce took over, parti-coloured Zany in red and yellow, striking out in the torture chamber with his pig's bladder on a stick.
>
> He spoke viciously to the model in his hands
>
> "The impervious insolence of the woman'"
>
> Then Zany struck him in the groin with the pig's bladder so that he jerked out a laugh that ended in a shudder
>
> He cried out loud.
>
> "Filth' Filth'"
>
> He opened his eyes and heard his own words ringing through the crossways And there was Pangall with his broom, standing startled by the temporary door from the north ambulatory So in a half-conscious effort to make his words logical and to hide their true source, Jocelin cried out again
>
> "The place is filthy dirty' They dirty everything!" (pp 54-55)

We get a glimpse here of the operation of Jocelin's mind moving from tranquillity to a seeming state of total dissociation from reality and back again in a very short space of time In addition, the use of the "tent" image recalls the curtain in Ralph's mind, and the flock in Lok's. Jocelin sees Goody Pangall and Roger Mason as separated from him by the tent just as we are forced to do. Finally, what is Rachel talking about? Are the references of the pronouns to herself or to Goody Pangall? At this point, we are confused, but the confusing element shows itself at the end of Chapter IX The confusion is caused by Jocelin's guilt feelings for having himself had sexual relations with Goody Pangall earlier in his life at the cathedral Jocelin is not conscious in the quoted passage that this is the cause, he is simply angered and confused, and, as Golding intends, so are we

Jocelin's madness increases as the spire rises because of the pressure of his will to get the spire completed in the face of any obstacle Since our point of view is roughly coincident with his, our contact with the world decreases at about the same rate as his Thus the scenes at the crossways when the pit is filled, the erection of the octagon supports in the spire, the trial, and the placing of the nail in the top of the spire are all difficult to understand in terms of literal reality The condition of Jocelin's mind is made more complex and for us even more difficult to understand, because at times he is entirely lucid For example, he ascends the spire several times to view the progress of the work

> He picked his way among the mystifying wood and stone and leaned out to see, and the square of the cloister

> was below him, with the bulge of the cedar in the middle. The boys of the songschool were playing tag on the grass, or bent over checkers on the sill of the arcade. It seemed suddenly to Jocelin that now he loved everybody with ease and delight. He was filled with excitement (p. 65)

At another point he is conscious enough to help in the work.

> As the skin [of the spire] came further in, and there was laughter and fierceness in the tent-like space, they let him take charge of the metal sheet that threw reflected light into the interior. He was very proud of this, even to tears, though he could not tell why He would squat there holding the sheet, and the master carpenter would be lying on his back and hammering up into a corner
>
> "Left a bid, Father'"
>
> "Like that, my son?"
>
> "More. More Steady'"
>
> So he would squat there devotedly directing the light. They were all good men, he thought. They blaspheme and curse and work with their hands, but they are good men. I taste their goodness here in the sunlight nearly four hundred feet above the pavement (p. 148).

The line between sanity and insanity is an indistinct one, and this example shows lucidity, but perhaps tainted with a kind of madness. We can see the extent of the insanity better by contrast.

When the weight of the spire has become so great that the pillars begin to vibrate, Roger Mason wants to stop the building

> He bent back his thin neck and stared into the sky
>
> "And not the spire, another hundred and fifty feet of it. Father--this is enough!"
>
> The will spoke out of Jocelin's head He heard it
>
> "I understand you, my son It's the little dare all over again . . . (p. 111)

This dissociation between Jocelin and his will which he is aware of here becomes so pronounced that he is only vaguely aware of reality. When he visits Roger Mason after the spire is finished, we get

> Hands took him under the armpits and lifted him away from the block with his feet and his stick dragging. He saw a door approach, and stairs on which his feet touched

> one by one, while his stick went tap, bounce, tap. Then there was another door in comparative darkness, which swung open Hands lowered him in a cloud of faintness to a settle, then went away and shut the door He waited with his eyes shut for things to come back to him (p 199)

The effect of these complexities makes the book quite difficult to understand even on a literal level, and obviously these same complexities have a decided bearing on our understanding of the theme of the book. By being partially within the consciousness of Jocelin we are forced to hold the same view of reality that he holds. The result is that at first we too are impatient with those who would for one reason or another impede the construction of the spire But our response is not to be complete identification with Jocelin, and the tempering effects of the neutral omniscient observer control this possibility What results is a study of an unusual man in whom we see elements of ourselves and with whom we progressively have less and less sympathy. The theme of ego and the evil it brings to what we would normally consider to be good things in life--whether it be tropical islands or great cathedrals--is of course not a new new one for Golding Neither is the method for presenting this theme

The Spire employs a shift in point of view which insures that we have no sympathy for Jocelin, and as a result see his evil to a degree our evil The shift differs from the others in that it is composed of several elements rather than a single event at the end As in Free Fall, the shift is subtle rather than shocking When the nail has been secured, Jocelin has an hallucination in which he sees himself sexually assaulting Goody Pangall when she was a child (pp 170-171). In

Chapter X, we get the information that Jocelin's position as Dean was the result of a request by his aunt rather than his being "chosen" as he had thought (pp 176-77) We hear the reading of the diary, which is Jocelin's account of his vision, written earlier in his life (pp 183-86). We get the information from Father Anselm that Jocelin was not really trained properly to be a priest, and was really unqualified to serve as Dean (pp 188-90) What emerges is neither the Jocelin of the earlier sections of the book, nor the Jocelin on the bed, but the young vigorous, ambitious, idealistic Jocelin

These elements yield a different view of Jocelin than we have been previously aware of The strongest of these elements, Jocelin's will, he admists to himself, and to us, to be his "stupidity" (p. 187). As a result of these elements, the scope of the evil surrounding the building of the spire takes on additional significance. The workers whom Jocelin saw as "all good men" (p. 148) are really grossly vulgar But more important, they have been motivated ultimately by Jocelin's will The cessation of services and the general decay of the practice of religion in the cathedral constitute another kind of evil wrought by that same will

Here the final contradiction makes itself felt most strongly The building of the spire has caused nearly every type of sin to come to the surface of man's behavior, and the view that we get of the building of the spire is an evil one when we are finally forced back from the scene because of the shift in point of view But the spire still stands, in spite of all the corruption associated with it The moral

foundations of its builders are fully as questionable as the physically unstable foundations which hold the spire itself. What are we to draw from this? Simply, the human being is capable of creating great good and great evil from the same source--his will. We cannot condemn Jocelin, entirely His final accomplishment was great. Conversely, we cannot accept him either, since his means were so evil that they touched the lives of many others in addition to himself. In light of the information of the shift, it is doubtful that his acts could be blameable, since he was partially ignorant of the whole situation. We must forgive him just as the Church forgave him in the unction ceremony. He is one of us, more so because of the point of view, than perhaps we would like to admit.

Golding has again forced us to reexamine our own lives by showing us a view of life which we cannot deny because we have been made a part of that life. The Spire accomplishes this more subtly, more skillfully, than Lord of the Flies, partly because the author has become more skilled, as we have seen, in maintaining his control over our view of things

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

In analyzing the five novels, one finds Golding using a mixture of neutral omniscient and selective omniscient observer more often than any other technical approach In Lord of the Flies, The Inheritors, and Pincher Martin, we find him manipulating our view of reality through these modes in a way which shows the "truth" to us rather than just tells it Golding's tendency to focus on a single character becomes more pronounced as one moves thought the first three novels

In Free Fall, the "I" protagonist becomes the mode It would seem that such a change in approach is a logical step in the pattern of Golding's development If one can view Golding's first three novels as experiments in form, and in subject matter, when one turns to Free Fall, he finds the skill of the author already practiced enough to produce a novel which fits within the limitations of a first person protagonist The child Sammy recalls the view of the innocent Neanderthals, the evil Sammy resembles the egocentricity of Christopher Martin, the knowing voice of the adult Sammy recalls--and really is of course--the omniscient voice of Golding himself which has dominated the earlier novels.

In The Spire, Golding returns to the modes found in the first three novels. He apparently finds the flexibility afforded by the neutral omniscient and selective omniscient more appropriate to the type of subject matter in the book In contrast to Free Fall which is an introspective examination of a man's life, The Spire is an examination

of the effect of a man's will on his environment Thus the mode cannot be one which remains wholly within the character's mind since Jocelin is unaware of the entire significance of the reasons for his acts The mode used in the earlier novels then, suits the type of treatment found in The Spire Thus the total pattern of Golding's work would seem to indicate that the flexibility of the neutral and selective omniscient modes offers Golding a more direct avenue of communication than the limitations imposed by the "I" protagonist mode

This essay undertook to discover Golding's view of human nature as revealed by the technical point of view which he used in his novels In the early ones, we find Golding identifying us with a nearly innocent mind and developing a theme of the corruption and eventual loss of that innocence. Both Ralph and Lok are characters of this type In the later novels, we find Golding taking the individual to be the center of concentration. But the focus is no longer innocence, rather it is guilt caused by the demands of the ego as it reaches the lives of other people Essentially, what is at stake in Christopher Martin, Sammy Mountjoy, and Dean Jocelin, is that the action of their egos has in one way or another caused an assortment of evils to be wrought on both themselves and their fellows. They each are aware in varying degrees of their own natures, and because of the point of view we are aware of the evil qualities in their natures in ourselves Thus Golding finds the cause of man's evil to be in himself--an idea which is not new, but which deserves articulation in a world which daily tinkers with its own destruction

On a technical level, we found Golding employing certain devices within the modes mentioned above. Most obvious in all of the novels is the use of bewilderment There is no overture or prelude to limit or hint the nature of the novels. We are immediately within the situation groping for some means of orientation

Second, we find in all of the novels the protagonist's loss of contact with reality This device is more tightly controlled in the later novels and is quite subtle in The Spire, as we have seen The device serves a double function: first, thematically it shows the effects of evil and corruption on the mind. Second, technically, it affects our perception of the reality in the novel Golding has developed this device as he moves from novel to novel Ralph's curtain becomes the flock in The Inheritors It is present in the latter sections of Pincher Martin as Martin supposedly gets delirious; and it is most powerful in Sammy's torture in the broom closet, and in Jocelin's insanity

Third, the use of flashback occurs in all of the novels, but it is articulated most clearly in Pincher Martin and Free Fall In the early novels, it is used as Ralph's day dream which helps to establish the loss of contact element In The Inheritors, flashbacks take the form of a mode of thinking--or a kind of memory In The Spire, Golding returns to the practice which he followed in Pincher Martin--the flashback as hallucination However, Golding also uses the element developed in Free Fall--the first person narrator--to give us the nature of an earlier Jocelin in The Spire. The technical problem of capturing a partially insane personality requires a greater delicacy of control

than the dream sequences in Pincher Martin, and the narration of Free Fall. Golding has developed his skill to the extent that in The Spire we are often somewhat unsure of the nature of the reality--which is, of course, just how he wants us to feel.

Finally, the device of the shift in point of view is an element in all of the novels In the first three, we see a gradation The shift in Lord of the Flies occurs as a kind of deus ex machina which widens the scope of the work. It comes within the general technical limits of the novel, but functions to project the story into the broader context of life itself. Thus in the end we move "above" the story itself to see a larger significance In The Inheritors, the shift is somewhat more abrupt in that a neutral omniscient approach seems very much in the background through most of the novel, then we find that observer taking over the last chapter. The full significance of Neanderthal innocence being erased by Homo sapien "progress" and "intelligence" becomes clear. These men are not without their fears and guilts about what they have done, but ironically, they are not really to blame for their actions since they thought they were protecting themselves against "monsters." Thus again we move "above" the story to see, in this case, a lack of communication between groups and the resultant loss of innocence

Pincher Martin employs the most violent shift in point of view As we have seen, though, Golding is not just dealing with a story of survival on a rock in the Atlantic, he is examining the nature of man's ego and its relationships to itself and the world. The shift

at the end of the work amplifies this second significance directing our attention not to the fate of Martin but to the nature of his soul

In Free Fall, Sammy Mountjoy is able to see the evil in himself, that which Christopher Martin could not see The shift in point of view in Free Fall occurs within the technical limits of the work. Consequently, it is much less pronounced than the others Nevertheless, as I have pointed out above we recognize because of the shift (a movement from examining the past, and the present world as it appears, to one of looking in at ourselves to discover our own natures) that the center of evil in the world is in the ego

The Spire employs a similar non-dramatic shift in point of view This work shows that Golding can use a neutral omniscient and selective omniscient observer as he did in the first three novels, and still gain the effect of getting us above the novel without employing a questionable violent shift at the end of the work. The shift is there--we come to see the significance of Jocelin's action in an entirely new light- but that shift is subtly a part of the texture of the novel

An overview of the point of view in the novels reveals that Golding has moved from an examination of the nature of innocence as seen in Lord of the Flies and The Inheritors to one of the effects of human ego on itself and on the environment. Part of their movement is Golding's technique of sharpening the point of the stories so that we cannot fail to see ourselves in the characters. To achieve this end,

Golding has us see reality as his main characters would see it Then in or near the end of the work we get information which moves us above the story and which projects the truths of perception revealed in the story into our own lives

Another part of this movement is Golding's view that the causes of evil in the world lie within man's own soul. This factor is part of man's nature whether he is ignorant of it as Ralph is, whether he is afraid of it as Tuami is, whether he is too egocentric to see it as Christopher Martin is, or whether he is too late in discovering it as both Sammy and Jocelin are, man cannot seem to exist without corrupting both himself and his environment Such a view is a grim one on Golding's part, but it seems to me that he has demonstrated it so graphically as to make it undeniable.

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AN OVERVIEW OF POINT OF VIEW

IN THE

NOVELS OF WILLIAM GOLDING

Richard L Arthur

An Abstract of
A Thesis

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An Overview of Point of View in the Novels of William Golding. (60 pp.) No.

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This study undertook to show first that William Golding's skill in controlling point of view developed considerably during the writing of his first five novels. Second, the study proposed that there was a relationship between technical point of view and Golding's view of human nature.

A definition of the concept of point of view was developed and applied to the several novels. An analysis of each novel, using the definition, formed the central part of the thesis.

The thesis concluded that Golding's use of point of view grew more subtle in the later novels. Consequently, his ability developed with the experience gained in the earlier efforts In addition, the study took into account the evolution of the several devices used by Golding in his work, showing that the shift in point of view which occurs in the earlier works became less noticeable but significantly not less important in expressing the theme of the novels.