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“ Lord of the Flies as an Allegorical and Symbolic Novel”

A B S T R A C T

This present paper discusses the symbolism and allegory in *Lord of the Flies*. This novel reveal what happens to civilization in isolation, so, civilization turns into savagery when rules are not followed. Symbolism, Ralph stands for democracy and civilization, while Jack stands for dictatorship and savagery. Allegorically, Ralph represents goodness and Jack represents the evil.

This study explains the significance of the allegory and the symbols by revealing elements, such as characters, setting, plot, and conflict. The symbols are associated with characters and setting, while the allegory is associated with the plot and conflict between good and evil.

This research applies theory symbol by Perrine to analyze the symbols and their significance in the story, and theory allegory by Abrams to analyze the allegory in the story. So, it consists of an introduction that talks about "Lord of the Flies" as allegorical and symbolic novel and it deals with the psychology of children.

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أمير الذباب رواية رمزية مجازية من قبل وليام كولد

محمد نصيف جاسم محمد/ جامعة تكريت كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

الخلاصة:

البحث المقدم يناقش الرمزية والمجازية في رواية أمير الذباب أنها تبوح ما الذي يحدث للحضارة الوحيدة. الحضارة تتحول الى الوحشية عندما لا يكون هنالك قانون. الرمزية رالف يمثل الحضارة والديمقراطية بينما جاك يمثل الوحشية والدكتاتورية. في المجازية رالف يمثل الشخصية الجيد بينما جاك يمثل الشخصية الشريرة.

هذا الدراسة يشرح أهمية المجازية والرموز لتبوح بعناصر مثل الشخصيات والمكان والحبكة والصراع. الرموز ترتبط بالشخصيات والمكان. بينما المجازية ترتبط بالحبكة والصراع بين الخير والشر.. هذا البحث يطبق نظرية الرمز من قبل بيرين لتحليل الرموز وأهميتها في القصة ونظرية المجازية من قبل ابرمز كآريز لتحليل المجازية في القصة. لذلك هذا البحث يتكون من مقدمة التي تتحدث عن الرواية الرمزية والمجازية وايضا تناولت نفسية الاطفال

1.Introduction:

Lord of the Flies is a 1954 novel by Nobel Prize-winning British author William Golding. The novel focuses on a group of British boys stranded on an uninhabited island and their disastrous attempt to govern themselves. Themes include the tension between groupthink and individuality, between rational and emotional reactions, and between morality and immorality. The conflict between the good and the evil as the central theme of *Lord of the Flies*. The writer has to tell us what happens to civilization in isolation. The characters stand for good and evil. Jack and his followers represent evil and torture do democracy. While, Ralph and his friends stand for the cause of democracy and also for good. (Amazon,2021 29)

Lord of the Flies is allegorical and symbolic novel by William Golding. It deals with the psychology of children. The novelist expresses his philosophical views through the story of some school boys stranded on an island. The story is told impressively. Conversation adds to the interest of the novel. The novel has really harmonious plot. (Ibid:46)

An allegory is a literary device used to tell stories on two levels: the literal and the figurative. The literal level is the plot, conflict, characters and setting. The figurative level is what these elements represent. (Bhadury,2013:68)

Symbolism is a technique which is used in literature when some things are not to be taken literally. The symbolism can be an object, person, situation, event or action that have a deeper meaning in context. Symbolism is often used by writers to enhance their writing and give insight to the reader. Symbolism can give a literary work more rich and more colorful and can make the meaning of the work deeper. (Fadaee,2011:24)

The difference between an allegory and a symbol is that an allegory is a complete narrative that conveys abstract ideas to get a point across, while a symbol is a representation of an idea or concept that have a different meaning throughout a literary work. (Ibid:38)

The writer uses literary devices to reveal the theme in *Lord of the Flies*. They are symbols and allegory. Symbols and allegory are so closely associated to one another. They help the author to clarify and understand the story. This literary work that will be analyzed in this research entitled *Lord of the Flies* is a highly symbolic novel, Golding's use of symbols makes the novel pleasant and effective. Several character and things are used symbolically and even allegorically. All the characters stand for the people of their type-good and evil. Golding cannot speak directly in order to express his thoughts through symbols, which is one of the modern narrative techniques. (Bhadury,2013:49)

William Golding born in 1911 is one of the great novelists after the Second World War. He has written 8 novels, a play, some short stories, book of poems and a number of essays. Allegory, Symbolism, Evil and Good, Religion, Philosophy and Metaphysical elements are some of the features of his novels. He got Booker Prize in 1980 and Nobel Prize for literature. (Meuronen,2013:14)

2. *Lord of the Flies* as a moral allegory:

2.1. Theory of Allegory:

Abrams define allegory as “narrative fiction in which the agents and actions, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived to make coherent sense on the ‘literal’ or primary, level of signification, and at the same time to signify a second, Correlated order of agents, concepts, and events” (1985:4). Meanwhile, Dr. Stephanie Carrez gives the following definition about allegory

“An allegory only aims at indicating a second level of meaning: it provides a link between an object and an abstract meaning. The two elements remain distinct and the object’s sole function is to suggest the secondary meaning. An allegory therefore represents an idea that could be expressed in abstract words, which the interpretation of allegory is finite. As a consequence, an allegory addresses the

intellection of the reader and has one clear meaning” (www.hawthorneinsalem.org).

According to the Literary Dictionary, allegory is a story or visual image with a second distinct meaning partially hidden behind its literal or visible meaning, it involves a continuous parallel between two or more levels of meaning in a story, so that its persons and events correspond to their equivalents in a system of idea or a chain of events external to the tale. (<http://www.literarydictionary.com/allegory>).

Golding makes use of allegory in the novel to expose the evils inside his characters, he describes how children power change their behavior in island because there is no rule in island. This experience showed the good characters in the novel stand for the various virtues, while the bad characters represent vices. (Bhadury, 2013:68)

Conflict is one of the basic elements that are related with allegory. Conflict between good and evil is one of the leading concerns of the contemporary novelists, particularly those who have seen the two World Wars. Golding is one of such novelists. Evil is one of the major themes in his novels and *Lord of the Flies* is not an exception to fact. (Ibid:47)

2.2. The Elements of Evil in *Lord of the Flies*.

First, the setting of the novel is allegorical. It is the uninhabited South Sea Island where some British school-boys are stranded after an air-crash. In the beginning, the island is innocent and beautiful as the Garden of Eden in Paradise. The boys are as innocent as Adam and Eve. They have brought precious values of England, a developed country. Towards the ending of the novel, the island turns into the Hell. The boys lose their innocence as Adam and Eve did. (Patrick, 1992:69)

Secondly, evil in the novel is allegorically represented by Jack, Roger and their followers. In the beginning, all the boys are civilized and good. But Jack gradually becomes evil in nature and is supported by most of the remaining boys. Jack's idea of killing the pig and his act of slamming his knife into a tree-trunk is the first symptom of evil in Jack. Soon Jack opposes Ralph in his idea of fire and shelter. He constantly attacks Piggy who is a strong supporter of Ralph who is also the representative of Good. Soon Jack and his followers paint their faces like savages,

hunt pigs, dance and sing the song of killing a pig. The hunters seem to be barbarians and Jack the primitive tribal chief. Finally, Ralph is chased with spears, fire and sound like those of savages. (Fitzgerald,1992:82)

Thirdly, the beasts also represent evil. The "Littluns" are afraid of snake-like things. Actually, it is just the imagination of the boy. Samneric report that they have seen the beast in air. Actually, it is the skeleton of a pilot.(Ibid:63)

Fourthly, Lord of the Flies allegorically represents the visible personification of the evil within the hearts of human beings. Lord of the Flies is nothing but the head of the pig put on a stick by Jack and his hunters. Simon imagines that *Lord of the Flies* warns him to go away and join others. His encounter with the *lord of the flies* may be hallucination but it tells Simon that 'evil is the part of human heart. (Ibid:58)

2.3. The Elements of Goodness in *Lord of the Flies*.

The elements of good in the novel are allegorically represented by Ralph and his followers-Piggy, Simon and Samneric.

First, Ralph is the upholder of civilization and democracy. He makes rules and asks others to follow them. He emphasizes the importance of fire and shelter. The fire would help for their rescue and the shelter or huts will reduce the fear of the beasts who stand for evil. Ralph also makes the rule that one must have the conch when he wants to speak. (Singh,1997:205)

Secondly, Piggy allegorically stands for moral goodness. He is really the champion of the values of civilization. It is his spectacles which help to create fire. He gives much value to fire and the conch. He very cleverly but vainly tries to change the evil view of Jack and his followers.(Ibid:207)

Thirdly, Simon too upholds the good. He is a lover of Nature. He possesses self-sacrifice. He plucks fruits for the Littluns. He defends Piggy and remains loyal to Ralph. He makes a valuable discovery that beast is only a skeleton of a parachutist. But he is killed before he could communicate his discovery to others. Thus, Simon resembles a martyr or even the Christ-figure who dies in the service of the community to which he belongs. (Ibid,208)

Fourthly, the twins (Samberic) to represent goodness. They remain loyal to Ralph. They may have touch of dishonesty in their nature but on the whole, they are the supporters of goodness. They join Jack's party but only because they are threatened and tortured. Even as the members of Jack's tribe, they inform Ralph about a danger to him. They also give him some meat as he is very hungry. (Carter, 2010:46)

Here, Rescue of Goodness by the Naval Officer though the partly of the evil is dominant, the novel does not deal with the triumph of the evil over the good. Actually, it is about the rescue of goodness from the clutches of the evil. The Naval officer, the only grown-up, allegorically stand for the divine person who rescues goodness represented by Ralph. (I bid,49)

3.The Symbols in *Lord of the Flies*.

A symbol is a setting, object, character, or event in a story that carries more than the literal meaning and therefore represents something significant to understanding the meaning of a work of literature. In other words, symbols always have a literal (concrete) meaning and a figurative (abstract) meaning. Conventional symbols have previously agreed upon meaning. (Perrine,1974:211)

Symbolism is one of the common devices in literature. It has become a prominent element in modern novel. William Golding uses striking images and symbols in his novels. *Lord of the Flies* too is full of symbols and symbolic elements.

3.1. The Island as a Symbol of Both Paradise and Hell.

Golding's chooses the place of the novel as the best and most beautiful place in the world, he gives island a double symbol. In the beginning, it symbolizes Paradise or the Garden of Eden, while towards the ending of the novel it becomes the symbols of the Hell.

“But this is a good island. We---Jack, Simon and me—we climbed the mountain. It's wizard. There's food and drink, and Rocks—Blue flowers—Piggy, Partly recovered, pointed to the conch in Ralph's hands, and Jack and Simon fell silent. Ralph went on. While we 're waiting we can have a good time on this island.” (Lof:45)

The quotation above indicates, the boys are stranded on the island, they are happy. The island is beautiful and has natural food like fruits and fish. The boys are innocent mentally and physically like Adam and Eve. But the evil also takes a form of the dead parachutist. Death comes on the island in the form of the deaths of the Littlun with birth-mark on his cheek, of the pilot, of Piggy and Simon. The boys lose innocence and get experience. Then there is the Fall of Man (Ralph) and the island becomes the Hell. (Golding,1954:73)

3.2. Symbolic Characters:

The characters in the novel also stand for certain things. First, Ralph symbolizes the devote of democracy, while Jack stand for a dictator. Secondly, Ralph and his followers symbolize civilization, but Jack and his followers stand for barbarism. Piggy with the conch stand for the strong supporter of democracy. Simon stands for a martyr. He also represents self-sacrifice and nobility. He represents a prophet or a Christ-figure. Jack becomes the embodiment of evil and Roger stand for a great supporter of evil. The dead pilot symbolizes the adult world of war, death and destruction. Finally, the Naval officer symbolizes the rescuer of civilization. (Wu,2009:48)

3.3. The conch

Golding uses the conch as symbol of Authority and Discipline in the novel. The conch which Ralph finds in the beginning. The conch then becomes the symbol of authority, discipline and democratic values. Ralph is elected as the Chief and he makes the rule that whoever wants to speak would hold the conch. The person who wants to speak should ask for the conch. Thus, the conch stands for the sign of the laws made by Ralph. Finally, the conch is shattered into pieces. The destruction of the conch means the end of civilization, democracy and emergence of barbarism and despotism. (Carter,2010:64)

3.4. The Fire

The symbol of Rescue, Comfort and Destruction: The fire in the novel symbolizes rescue. Ralph opines that fire and smoke will serve as a signal for the sailors of a passing ship. This proves to be true. At the end, the Naval Officer comes there by seeing the smoke. The fire also stands for comfort. The Littluns do not fear when

the fire is brought down from the mountain-top. The fire symbolizes destruction too. The little boy with a birthmark on his cheek is burnt in the spreading fire. (Kruger,1999:75)

3.5. The pig-head on the stick: The Lord of the Flies: Symbol of Evil:

The Lord of the Flies or the head of the sow killed by Jack symbolises evil. It is the central symbol in relation to the central theme of the novel. (Ibid,83)

3.6. Painted Faces:

Symbol of Primitivism and Savagery: Then the painted faces of Jack and his hunters symbolize primitivism and savagery. In the beginning, the hunters paint their faces with red and white clay and with charcoal so that they may not be recognized by the pigs. But in the course of time, the boys paint their faces to follow the example of the primitive people. Jack keeps his face painted all the time like an ancient tribe leader. He also refers to his supporters as his tribe.

Thus, the novel is abundant in symbols. They have thematic significance. They also give the novel the allegorical depth. (Van,2005:26)

4.The Significance of the Symbols.

4.1. The role of The Beast in *Lord of the Flies*.

The beast plays an important role in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. It is as important as a character in the novel which plays an indirect role. The role of the beast in the novel and its significance can be stated as follows:

Golding gives two types from Beast 'Beast from Water and Beast from Air in the boys imaginations because of their fear of the island.(Haldar,2006:26)

“Last night I had a dream, a horrid dream, fighting with things. I was outside the shelter by my self, fighting with things, those twisty things in the trees. Then I was frightened and I woke up. And I was outside the shelter by myself in the dark and twisty things had gone away And I was frightened and stared to call

out for Ralph and then I saw Something moving among the tress, something big and horried “(Holman,:1986 :92)

The quotation above indicates, the littluns on the island are fraid of beasts. Once Jack, Ralph and Piggy ask them if they have seen anything fearful. Some boys express their fear of the twisty things. A beast is supposed to come from the water and it is supposed to be a squid and then ghost. The beast from the air is given a very significant role in the novel. It creates mystery and at the same time humor. This is because it is a dead airman with a parachute frightening the boys as a black beast.

The beast element and fear of the boys on the island has great significance in the novel. First, the beast allegorically stands for evil. Simon knows that the beast's fear is (Evil) is a part of him (every human being). The moving away of the beast and its actually being a parachutist symbolizes. There is not need of beast. This is because man himself has become as savage as a beast. (Hollahan,1970:28)

Secondly, the beast-fear serves a practical purpose too. Jack knows that there is no beast on the mountain. But he cunningly does not reveal the truth. He exploits the boy's innocence by doing so the beast's fear helps Jack to hold the boys to gather under his control. He offers the pig-head as a gift to the beast only to impress the boys. Finally, the beast allegorically stands for Evil. (Ibid,29)

4.2. The significance of the Title *Lord of the flies*:

The title of the novel is symbolic also. It is concerned with the central symbol in the novel. The meaning and significance of the title can be explained as follows. The title of the novel may be traced back to the Jewish demon Beelzebub who is called *Lord of the Flies*. He is supposed to be the chief representative of false Gods. Milton too has mentioned him in Paradise Lost as a companion of Satan. He is also mentioned in the Old Testament and the New Testament. In Hebrew language, 'Beelzebub' means 'Lord of insects' Golding has symbolically entitled the novel after this demon's name. (Baker,1965:38)

The title of the novel also symbolic significance. The central theme of the novel is the conflict between the good and the evil. Some characters stand for the good and the others for the evil.

“There isn’t anyone to help you. Only me. And I’m the beast
Simon mouth labored, brought forth audible words. Pig’s head on a stick... We are
going to have fun on this island. Understand? We are going to Have fun on this
island! So don’t try it on, my poor misguided boy, or else---“ (Forster,1974:158).

The quotation above indicates, Simon does not believe in the existence of the beast
and goes on the mountain-top alone. Soon he comes across the pig head put on the
stick by Jack and boys. The head is covered with blood and flies. Simon imagines
that pig-head is the Lord of the Flies. He says that he is’ ’a part’’ of every man.
This means that evil is in man’s heart itself.

That is why, Jack and his followers have become evil. The Lord of the Flies warns
Simon but Simon cannot bear the warning and faints. This encounter of Simon
with the Lord of the Flies is quite significant. Thus, the novel is aptly entitled after
the central symbol in the novel which stand for evil.(Patrick,1992:36)

4.3. The Significance of the conch or the shell in *Lord of the Flies*.

Golding’s Lord of the Flies is a symbolical novel. The conch or shell plays as
significant role in the novel as far as the symbolism of the novel is concerned.

“a conch; ever so expensive...We can use this to call the others.
Have a meeting. They will come When they hear us “---(Golding,1968: 17)

The conch helps Ralph and piggy to call the boys from their hiding places. The
conch gets much importance in the meeting of the boys.

“ And another thing. We cannot have everybody talking at once. We’ll
have to have hands up like at school. He held the conch before his face and glace
around the mouth Then I ‘ll give him the conch, Conch? That’s what this shell
called. I’ll give to the next person to speak. He can hold it when he was speaking.”
(I bid,36) .

The quotation above indicates, that Golding gives importance to the conch for
children avoiding speaking. Ralph makes his first rule for the boys to follow. It is
ruling that one should speak in the meeting when he was a conch with him. One is
not allowed to speak when he does not possess the conch. The chief has his own

seat and the conch is always placed there. Thus, the conch becomes the emblem of authority.

Later on, when Jack and his hunters leave Ralph and others and become savages, the power of the conch decline. When Jack is angrily leaving with his gang, Piggy tells Ralph to blow the conch and call back. Ralph tells him that the conch will network at the moment. Later on, the followers of Jack declare that they will not listen to the conch. (Jaffe,1964: 283)

The Shell and the Glasses reveals the reduced power of the shell. Ralph sits sadly near the chiefs' seat with the conch. Later on, Roger drops a big stone on piggy. The conch in the hands of piggy falls and breaks into several white pieces and piggy is also killed. The end of the conch shows the end of democratic rules. Thenceforth, there is the force of the savages that rules on the island. (Ibid:284)

4.4. The significance of Piggy's spectacles.

The role of Piggy's spectacles in the novel can be explained as follows:

Spectacles is an important symbol; it symbolizes the power of intellect. Piggy stand for the force of intellect among the boys. Ralph desires to make fire on the island. The smoke will serve as the sign for a ship. The boys gather webbed. They need a match but nobody has it. Jack shout that Piggy's glasses can be used as matches.(Patrick,1992:24)

“Ralph shouted at him, Piggy! Have you got any matches? My! You have made a big heap, haven't you? Jack pointed suddenly. His specs! Use them as burning glasses!” (Hodson,1971: 44)

They use the spectacles of Piggy as the burning glass. Later on, it rains during the night when Simon gets killed. Ralph and others have to make fire. It is the spectacles again that help them to prepare the fire.

The chapters' 'The Shell and Glasses'' and 'Castle Rock'' speak much about the spectacles. Soon Jack and his boy steal piggy's spectacles. Piggy is almost blind

without them. Both Ralph and Piggy go the Castle Rock for demanding the spectacles. They can't get them. On the country, Piggy is killed and Ralph is wounded. Thus, the spectacles are lost before Piggy. (Dick,1967:23)

E. The Significance of the Fire in *Lord of the Flies*.

The fire plays a key role in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. It symbolizes the sign for civilization. Signal fire is used to attract notice of passing ships that may have rescued them. Ralph puts plan for the boys.

“There's another thing. We can help them to find us. If a ship comes near The island, they might not notice us. So, we must make a smoke on the top Of the mountain. We must make a fire.” (Myers,1989:41)

Ralph, feels that the boys will be definitely rescued. Some ship may come there and take them back. Fire is very essential. The Sailors of the ship will notice smoke and learn about the dwelling of human beings on the island. So, the boys make fire with piggy's spectacles.

Another important use of the fire on the island is to bake meat. Jack twice steals fire from Ralph for baking the flesh of the pigs. The fire is shifted from the mountain to the beach because of the fear of the beast. Special boys are appointed on the duty of keeping the fire alive. (Bufkin,1965,49)

However, the end of the novel reveals the significance of the fire. The naval officer who stands for civilization tells Ralph that they have seen the smoke and fire. Thus, it is the fire which saves Ralph from getting killed. It stands for the sign of civilization. (Ibid,49)

4.5. The significance of the Pig-dance or mock-hunting.

The Pig-dance is a significance element in the novel *Lord of the Files*. It is the symbol of the struggle and enjoyment of the savages.

The Pig-dance is done by Jack and his followers. They kill a pig and bring it. Soon the twin start moving. All become ready to dance. One of the them pretends to be a

pig. They beat him and sing the song' 'Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill her blood'' Ralph then asks them to keep silence. (Golding,2002:59)

Later on, we see Ralph, Jack and Simon with some boys go in search of the beast. While coming back, they attack a bear but lose it. Soon Roger pretends to be a pig. All sing the song and make pig- dance. They beat Roger very hard. Thus, the pig-dance gives pleasure to the boys.(Ibid,57)

The Final pig- dance proves to be dangerous too. The feast is over and it starts raining and thundering. Jack orders his followers to make the pig-dance. Simon has discovered that the fearful beast is not a real beast but a dead airman with a parachute. He is eager to talk about the discovery to the others. He reaches the boys but they are busy in the pig-dance. Simon gets killed in the dance. He raises and declares that he is being trampled. Nobody pays any attention. (Babb,1970:78)

5.Conclusion:

In fact, this study analyzes the symbols and allegory in "*Lord of the Flies*" using theory symbol by Perrine to analyze the symbols and their significance in the story, and theory allegory by Abrams to analyze the allegory in the story.

The researcher concludes that there are two findings based on the analysis the novel. The first finding is about the allegory in "*Lord of the Flies*" is presented in two levels of meaning, the literal and the figurative. The literal level is the plot, conflict, characters and setting. In the literal level, the Island turns into the Hell, the evil in the characters, the beasts and elements of goodness. In the figurative level is what these elements represent: the Island is innocent and beautiful as the Garden of Eden in Paradise and the Island turns into the Hell, The element of evil in the novel is allegorically represented by Jack, Roger and their followers, The beast also represent evil, Lord of the Flies represents the visible personification of the evil within the hearts of human beings, The elements of good in the novel are allegorically represented by Ralph and his followers such as Piggy, Simon and Samneric.

The second finding is about the symbols in “*Lord of the Flies* “. In the novel. The symbols are Island as a symbol of both Paradise and Hell, Symbolic Characters, First, Ralph symbolize democracy, while Jack stand for a dictator, the Conch as symbol of authority and discipline, the Fire symbolizes rescue, the painted faces of Jack and his hunters symbolize Primitivism and savagery.

Lord of the Flies is full of symbols that make the novel wonderful. Golding cannot speak directly in order to express his thoughts, because he gives a message to the readers to increase their talents in analyzing ideas and distinguishing between good and evil. Here, the use of symbols makes modern literature effective and pleasant. Thus, the researcher can be concluded that the symbols and allegory in “*Lord of the Flies*” reveal the theme of the novel.

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