

SCARCE LIFE BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND NATURE OF SAVAGERY IN *WILLIAM GOLDING'S LORD OF THE FLIES*

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Abstract:

The current paper explores the behavior of some group of boys who happen to land on some isolated island after their evacuation from a war zone. It investigates the rapid change of the boys into a savage kind of behavior. Their education and their inherited civilization soon start to fade away. They wander through the island and decide to be hunters and thus end up with fighting over leadership. The analysis in this paper discloses how fragile civilizations are after some cataclysm hits the world. This paper investigates William Golding's Lord of the Flies in terms of its focus on the lost morality in the plantation of wilderness.

Keywords: Scarcity, deterioration, primitiveness, leadership and civilization.

Introduction

In post-apocalyptic society, when all resources of life have become meager, survivors would look for a responsible authority to restore order and start their journey of scavenging and discovery. Scarce life in post-apocalyptic communities does not necessarily mean the shortage of food supplies. It could also refer to the absence of morality and culture especially when that community is stripped away of all bases of civilized life. Scarcity in such afflicted society could also mean the insufficiency of law and order or maybe it hardly exists. This comes under the absence of school and college institutions. If such things are buried under the ruins of the apocalypse, then the collapse of human morality must be really close. The world would be living some material life free from the heritage of all civilized system. Gary K. Wolfe, as quoted in (Mulligan, 2012, p10) assumes that “the 'end of the world' means the end of a way of life, a configuration of attitudes, perhaps a system of beliefs but not the actual destruction of the planet or its Population” (Mulligan, 2012, p 10).

Scarcity and Civilization

In life of post-apocalyptic community, there could be sort of scarcity pertaining the presence of civilization. The civilization that was inherited through the time is likely to vanish after cataclysm the world on a large scale. This apocalypse will cut off the evolvement of civilizations from reaching to the survived communities. So the accumulated heritage of civilization will not make its way through to the coming society. The new society's concern would come down to finding a new leadership under which survivors can start their journey of discovery and settlement.

In the state of austerity, survivors become sort of rebellious and act according to their nature. The aspects of civilization melt under the impact of the new life of scarcity. The following days and years of the apocalypse would be obscure and really unpredictable. The society may live with no leading authority in the current state. This vacuum of leadership would create a state of panic and cautiousness. But the phase requires that survivors gather together under one leadership so as to avoid any appearance of robbing

gangsters or wild beasts attack. However, in this world of scarcity, could there be any sort of ruling lust? The disappearance of the previous civilization brings the present society back to its primitive nature. Leadership is part of the aspects of civilization which is not really welcomed in the new fierce society. Leadership is all what the conflict is about and thus the phase is posed to the eruption of hostility. Leadership in post-apocalyptic community is also something possible and occurs in all times. William Forstchen made his first appearance in a trilogy post-apocalyptic world which was like a new ice age. The post-apocalyptic survivors were divided into small political groups so that they could be under the dominance of brutal leaders (Clute, John and Peter Nicholls, 1995, p150).

In pre-collapse societies where some conflict might be there, societies can restore what they have lost because of the rules that are strictly applied upon them. In addition, rebellion might not take place due to some previous dominance over the society. That is because governments are in control of the rule over the society. This governable society accepts the rules and shows sufficient adjustments to the strict ones as part of their civilization. But when some catastrophe hits any society, residents just don't trust the new leadership which would not be worthy of trust no matter what they could be presenting in such difficult situations. People would be suffering of a great loss which would not be compensated under any circumstances. Yet, people of that destroyed society would not accept any sort of reestablishment and would constantly look back to what they were possessing in the pre-catastrophic state. After the post-nuclear war state, the world witnessed a large-scaled destruction and because of that the real meaning of human was destroyed. People had some speculations that the world is getting perished sooner or later. This remained the main obstacle for any sort of trust on new governments. Thus societies distrusted their new governments and rulers. In both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Coral Island* leadership and savage nature of the inhabitants of the islands exist in human nature. It is thus unavoidable kind of nature to play outside the law.

We could continue to list the ways in which Lord of the Flies deflates and diminishes the heroic occasion and mode of The Coral Island. Yet the two books are overwhelmingly similar in their thematic concern with legitimate authority, leadership, and government. Both texts equate good government with the containment and defeat of savagery (whether the savagery is shown to reside within us or without); and both characterize savagery as the absence of a restraining law (Singh, 208).

Brutality

The Lord of the Flies (1954) by William Golding presents the best example of how the lust of rule is a matter of conflict even in the world where scarcity of living is not an obstacle issue. Soon, among the ruled boys, a rebellion starts to take place and thus violence also occurs. Golding presents the boys as the new generation of the coming society who are going to colonize the island. Golding has reasons for such boys of certain age to be scattered on that island. These boys have no corrupt minds like those adults who might have been affected by their experience of wars etc. Golding shows that this theory does not make any difference in terms of how different the boy's behavior would be on this island. The story details the behavior of some boys who find themselves in an island with no control of adults. How long these boys would accept to get ruled by a leader and not get rebellious? The story presents a conflict that shows the inclining nature of human into evilness. Golding has his belief that "Man is a fallen being. He is gripped by original sin" (Singh, 1997, 210). In fact, the island in the *Lord of the Files* does not show any sort of risk to the boys' lives and there is no such beast which was only made by their own creation. The island I could say is safe from different aspects and free from wild animals with the exception of wild pigs. "At the same time the animosity between Ralph and Jack becomes progressively more open, eventually leading to a split into two separate tribes" (Clute and Peter Nicholls, 1995, p125). Golding obviously presents a brutality which is something viable in the absence of law and order while civilization is an obtainable kind of manner. As a matter of fact, brutality is not acquired at the time of hardships. The island has no direct impact on the boys

in the sense that they would kill each other for survival. Some may find that the nature of the isolation is the reason for the boys to change to that state of savagery. But, Golding, in this short duration of stay, is giving a clear image on the nature of human defect that is deep existing in human and comes to existence after the collapse of his civilization. When the boys left their civilized society, their nature of conduct changed rapidly which means that corruption does exist in the previous civilization.

The idea that civilisation contains the seeds of corruption is perhaps best expressed in William Golding's Lord of the Flies (1954). In this novel Golding does not examine a particular moment of the recent past, but childhood, as the site where adult civilised values are implanted, only to find their sheer brutality (Alegre 15).

Ironically, Golding presents the other world outside the island as a mysterious kind of unsafe place. The boys were evacuated from that world and finally end up in this island which obviously seems as a safe place. There is no such precarious place in the island and it is free from any dangerous animals or even some monstrous creatures. Moreover, the story is free from any supernatural factor and the only place that could be sort of risk is the one where the boys have come from. So Golding made this island as a place where the boys could have made their own community at least for a while. But the defect consists in the brutal nature of the human and the desire of ruling of the bully ones. Coexistence in the island is confined to the true nature of human and the degree of his satisfaction to reflect on the establishment of order and law.

Ralph and Jack

Golding presents Ralph as well as Jack as two opponent leaders. First, Ralph appears as the one who blows the conch and brings together all boys who are scattered in the island. Getting united is what the boys are in need of in this place and here Ralph is the only character that seems interested in unity. He acts as if he is chosen to be the leader. His leadership does not have any previous arrangements and came just by chance. "As soon as the rest of the boys gather together, they elect Ralph as chief, primarily because he blew the conch shell that attracted them all to one location" (*Clute and Peter Nicholls, 1995, p125*). He therefore deserves to be the leader after uniting the survival boys. The boys yelled for Ralph's name and naturally the leadership would go to him by luck. So there might be some arbitrariness in the way he is chosen as a leader.

"Ralph! Ralph!"

"Let him be chief with the trumpet-thing" (Golding, William, 1959, p 16).

On the other hand, there is Jack who appears as a rude and stubborn leader-like boy. He is taken by his wish to take leadership of the boy. His ambition comes from an obsessive wish and the absence of the law and order pushed him forward with his plan. His sternness makes him as a real leader and Ralph himself could not ignore him particularly after the choir obediently raised their hands for him. He gives him the choir who would be the army of the island or even the hunters as heedlessly suggested by Ralph himself.

"The choir belongs to you, of course."

"They could be the army..."

"Or hunters..." (Golding, William, 1959, p17).

Ralph holds to the leadership of the island and appoints himself the chief. "*I'm chief then*" (Golding, William, 1959, 17). However, he leaves the army in the hands of Jack and now Jack becomes the commander of the choir and can lead them to wherever he may wish. "*Jack's in charge of the choir. They can be--what do you want them to be?*" (Golding, William, 1959, 17). Jack wants them to be hunters. From here we get to know the nature of Jack and the way that he thinks. In fact the character of Jack is as important as Ralph or perhaps much more. The story details the deterioration of boys' community in an isolated island. There is some scarcity of community so the role of Jack is essential in the sense that the boys would be exposed to such savagery. It is Jack who turns the plot to turn to the climax and thus violence and

killing gives the story its bloody and tragic deterioration.

Golding does not show any sort of external effects on the island. The place is normal from the outside look. The boys have even explored the island and found that there is nothing suspicious about it. "Come on," said Jack presently, "we're explorers" (Golding, William, 1959, 19). Golding creates the beast in the minds of the boys and the island is only some illusive sort of location. So the reader as well as the inhabitants of the island would feel this kind of terror and intimidations. Early in their exploring, they are sure that no one before them has walked on this island. It is an unvisited island and perhaps this could be something positive that no strangers were there on it. It is now their home as they happen to be the first visitors on its surface. "This is real exploring," said Jack. "I bet nobody's been here before" (Golding, William, 1959, p 20). The exploring makes everybody pleased even Ralph who is the chief of the new inhabitants of the island. He proudly says "This belongs to us" (Golding, William, 1959, p 21).

Life on the Island

The beginning of the novel shows some harmony in terms of how the boys are going to act in such secluded part of the world. It is also expected that in such phase of isolation, the boys should work under one leadership only, so that they can survive and build their small community. Their stay in the island could go for months or even years if they are not rescued. Or probably they are going to live there forever. In some matters the stay of the boys in that island is definitely temporal in terms of how long the island is going to be inhabited. Golding in any way has established a short-term stay of the boys. Either some rescuers may come and rescue the boys or they could die when they get old or encountered with some deadly things. So Golding is not focusing on whether or not the boys can survive on the island. The story is mainly about the slow inclination into primitiveness and brutality. There are two kinds of leadership on the island which both of them have gone wrong and were the reason why the island has gone through terrible violence and disintegration. The absence of the adult's hand is also another reason that the boys released out their inner beast. Breaking piggy's glasses is an indication of how the present primitive community does not accept any sort of the past civilized heritage.

The power of Lord of the Flies (Golding 1954) is found in Golding's artful telling of the rapid disintegration of the civilization the boys knew and their reversion to barbarism. In the novel the breaking of Piggy's glasses is a symbolic termination of one of the last remnants of the civilization the boys left behind. Without the guiding hand of the adult world, these boys soon formed their own savage culture-or in essence, reverted to their own animal existence. (Levin, 419).

The transition from civilization into barbarism has occurred in a very short time and the boys have become so aggressive and barbaric. Actually, the changing of the boys has gone through some stages though it was a very short time. Golding presents this transition in a way that the boys dramatically fall into animalism without a break. This falling is not related to the impact of the surrounding of the island as much as it is to the internal nature of the boys. The boys at the beginning of the election of Ralph as a leader showed a considerable amount of coexistence. Seemingly, they got on well and satisfaction reached a high level among them. The part of the election is the only deceiving scene in the story and the reader would go pessimistic in his prediction of the coming actions. We could have developed some feeling that responsibility takes place early in the story and the boys would do well without the attendance of the adults. But advance in the story, things change rapidly.

When they elect Ralph as their chief, they think of the voting process as a new "toy," and the island itself becomes their personal property. Although they express pleasure to be without adult supervision, they almost immediately decide that they want "lots" of rules, some of which make sense, but none of which are applied evenhandedly. "We've got to have rules

and obey them (Clute and Peter Nicholls 125).

There are in fact many factors in the story that could have altered the current of the events into a peaceful ending. The beginning of the election of a leader is a positive act of establishing order. The location is normal and furthermore a quiet place to survive the stage of universal chaos. The nature of the civilized boys before their stay on the island is definitely reasonable. It could have remained for years before any change to savagery. The vacuum of the island from seriously dangerous animals could have been sort of vital factor for security of living. The presence of Swiggy, who is mainly mindful of many things, is a clear sign of knowledge and wise. However, Golding presents a very dramatic scene of conflict over authority. Ralph and Jack are the two conflicting powers who lead their teams to the final stage of animosity. "The bonds of society loosen very quickly" (Clute and Peter Nicholls, 1995, p126). So their unity at the beginning of their gathering proves to be temporal and baseless. In addition, their conversion is justified in terms of loosing their civilization and their home. Also, as soon as they were on the island, they easily give up their old culture and thus get stripped away from their urban life. "The failing is not the shape of society but is inherent in human nature itself. The quest for survival overrides all other priorities, and civilization is just a mask (Clute and Peter Nicholls, 1995, p 126-127).

Written within one decade of a span, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954) and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) have a special treat of portraying fake revolution for power. *Animal Farm* is a novel that depicts the transformation from utopia into dystopia. It presents the unattainable dream of the revolutionary animals and how systematically their revolution was manipulated for the sake of the intelligent pigs. As far as leadership is concerned, Napoleon and Snowball use their power to influence the farm animals. "The difference between two leaders was visible from their first descriptions; Napoleon was a strong character while Snowball was more educated" (Relotić, 2015, p12). Similarly, Ralph and Jack are two different characters seeking for leadership. Ralph resembles Snowball while Jack resembles Napoleon. Jack has his adventures and fierce character to try to attain leadership. Under his influence, he leads his team against Ralph. The common factor in both novels is the way that these characters are thinking. Ralph has plans to get out of the island while Jack tends to stay in the island for more adventures. He let the fire go off in the purpose of not leaving the island or picking some fight with Ralph. In addition, the two novels present the wrong path of revolution and how it turns into a state of dystopia.

The conflict in the *Lord of the Flies* is not only the sequence of the actions that led the boys to engage in a fatal fight. The novel has a different scene which focuses on the nature of human who cannot resist the lust of ruling. Civilization becomes venerable kind of a weapon in the face of the savagery. In addition, civilized leadership has no place when deterioration occurs in the society. The savagery brings human to his low nature and strips away all his manners. In other words, scarcity of culture and alienation can drive civilisations far enough to live in lawless world similarly to the law of wolves. The more vicious wolf, comparing with the rest, can take the leadership over a flock of other wolves. Meanwhile, the boys in the island are not starving, but being cut off from the rest of the world made them come down to the lowest state of their nature. However, scarcity has a number of aspects such as family, friends, schools, hospitals, cinema, beds, cars, bicycles, electricity and all kinds of civil life and technology. In the absence of all of these things, the boys turn their backs to Ralph's orders and start to feel monstrosity run in their blood.

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