

Structures of the World; Human Rights and Equality through the Archetypes in Lord of the Flies

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Abstract

The world as a whole is already full of corruptions, especially when looking at the human rights and equality. From birth till death, people teach generations what is right and what is wrong, but never ask what's really right or wrong, without depending on standardizations. What is meant here is, that when a child is born, his family teaches the child rights and wrongs and let him live with the principles he has learned for the rest of his life. Then, the society even determines what his or her religion is going to be. These standardizations or stereotypes appear as 'archetypes' since the time of Plato to this century. While these archetypes can change from time to time, they also become the representatives of human beings that show the characterizations of every single people with their types. This is exactly what *Lord of the Flies* tries to show; relationships of the children who seem innocent, but act according to what they've learned from their societies. A group of children land on an island by coincidence due to a plane crash and they find a conch. They use it to build a parliament and they try to maintain equality while giving everyone the right to talk, choose and live freely which is exactly the same of what they've learned from their parents and the world they live in. The problem is, after sometime they forget about this equality and start to fight for power.

Keywords: *Archetypes, Corruption, Failure of relationships, Equality, Structures of the world*

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Öz

Dünya, özellikle insan hakları ve eşitlik kavramlarına baktığımızda, bir bütün olarak halihazırda yozlaşmış durumdadır. Doğumlarından ölümlerine kadar insanlar yeni nesillere, standartlaşmalara bağlı kalmaksızın, neyin yanlış neyin doğru olduğunu öğretmekte, ancak neyin gerçekten yanlış ya da doğru olduğunu asla sorgulamamaktadır. Burada anlatılmak istenen, bir çocuk doğduğu zaman, ailesi ona bir takım doğrular ve yanlışlar öğretmekte ve öğrendiği prensipler doğrultusunda ömrünün sonuna kadar yaşamaya terkedilmektedir. Sonrasında ait olduğu toplum, dininin bile ne olacağına karar vermektedir. Bu standartlaşmalar veya klişeler, Platon'un zamanından bu yüzyıla kadar geçen süre boyunca 'arketipler' olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu arketipler zaman zaman değişkenlik gösterirken, kendi türleriyle birlikte her bir insanın nitelendirmelerini gösteren insanların temsilcileri haline de gelmektedir. Bu durum *Sineklerin Tanrısı* kitabının tam olarak göstermeye çalıştığı şeydir; masum görünen, ancak ait oldukları toplumlardan öğrendiklerine göre hareket eden çocukların ilişkileri. Bir grup çocuk bir uçak kazası sonucu mecburi olarak bir adaya düşerler ve bir deniz kabuğu bulurlar. Bu deniz kabuğunu bir parlamento kurmak ve ailelerinden ve yaşadıkları dünyadan gördüklerinin birebir aynısını uygulayarak herkese konuşma, seçme ve özgürce yaşama hakkı tanıyıp eşitliği korumak için kullanırlar. Problem şudur ki, bir süre sonra kendi oluşturdukları eşitliği unutup güç uğruna savaşılmaya başlarlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Arketipler, yozlaşma, ilişkilerin başarısız olması, eşitlik, dünya düzenleri*

Introduction

In the ancient times when Plato creates his ‘world of ideas’ he has also created the first version of archetypes. As anyone who read his theory about world of ideas can relate that in this world there are perfect states of every single thing which means everything in our world actually is an imitation. So he creates primordial versions of archetypes in this way. For him these are not like the archetypes of today, but an ‘idea’ which refers to this world of ideas. These ideas show up as ‘primordial forms’ in his words. However, there is an expression of him that basically claims this; these forms or archetypes are permanent which means even if a hero dies his/her name or his/her heroic state continues that’s why it’s called an archetype (Williamson, pp. 95).

In a different timeline, Northrop Frye in one of his articles, *The Archetypes of Literature*, shows the true meaning of learning literature and claims that it is not possible to learn literature because what a person learns is the criticism of literature according to him. Yet, he claims that literature is the central part of Criticism which is only the subdivision of literature. Then he continues with his definition of Archetype as follows;

“... III. The myth is the central informing power that gives archetypal significance to the ritual and archetypal narrative to the oracle. Hence the myth is the archetype, though it might be convenient to say myth only when referring to narrative, and archetype when speaking of significance... 1. The father and the mother: archetypes of romance... 2. The companion and the bride: archetypes of comedy, pastoral and idyll... 3. The traitor and that siren: archetypes of tragedy and elegy...” (Frye, Northrop, *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, pp. 1304-1315).

What Northrop Frye tells is that in the process of ‘learning literature’ there are some simple elements to be acquired such as structures of establishing the literary criticism and archetypes that one can learn from mythology in order for someone to apply them on his/her life. In fact, what Northrop Frye tells is not exactly the part of the archetypes in this article, but because he is the successor of the archetype ideas, he leads people to the definition of the literary criticism and helps others to establish a form which works as archetypes.

On the other hand, as the follower of Plato, Carl Gustav Jung brings his ideas about archetypes with a logical sense because they are related to psychology. In his book, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, he suggests that there are twelve core archetypes that represent the general idea of it which he calls the 'psyche' (Jung, pp. V). These archetypes are not specified as a list, they are available throughout the book, like the part 'Psychological Aspects of the Mother Archetype' (73). To give an example in this extent, Jung suggests that,

"It is necessary to point out once more that archetypes are not determined as regards their content, but only as regards their form and then only to a very limited degree. A primordial image is determined as to its content only when it has become conscious and is therefore filled out with the material of conscious experience." (79).

This can be seen as the proof for him that he is following the primordial footsteps of Plato and for this reason actually he claims that archetypes are the part of this collective unconscious. Yet, according to other philosophers and according to Jung also, one can determine some other archetypes as well because this is the meaning of an archetype; general forms of stereotypical characters that can change according to the timeline.

Since the beginning of the early civilizations, every man fights for himself, but the issue of human rights and equality begins with the idea of having a property. It goes back as far as to cavemen, who are the first with the title as the owners of something; cave, farms, animals, etc.

Nowadays, people are so crazy about owning something. It is right to have something that binds one to this world, but during the time of slavery people went mad and thought that they could own other people and thus they created superiority, slavery and subalternity. As the Indian philosopher Gayatri Spivak says in her article *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, there is this distinction between people; some declare themselves as masters and don't let subalterns speak for their own sake. She uses Karl Marx's passage in her article which suggests that;

“... The small peasant proprietors ‘cannot represent themselves; they must be represented. Their representative must appear simultaneously as their master, as an authority over them, as unrestricted governmental power that protects them from other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above...’” (Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, pp. 71).

The main point here is that those masters never send them rain and sunshine from above, but send wipes and pain. This goes against democracy because the idea of democracy stands for having equal rights and having the same quality of life standards. However, there are some people who think they are more entitled than others, like in the book *Animal Farm* by George Orwell who claims that some animals like pigs think they are superior to others, so they must be more deserving in the society, which is the exact violation of democracy and these people believe that they can run the democracy on their own and can ‘have’ the rest of the world. In literature, there are many examples about these topics; *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding is the main book of this article because it shows what owning something means to the society and it also shows what the effect of it is to equality and human rights, especially when it’s looked through the structures and archetypes in the book. *Lord of the Flies* shows some relatable examples about equality and human rights and it shows the archetypes of people clearly.

First of all, the very first archetype is the conch which is found in the first couple of pages of the book by Ralph who is the protagonist and Piggy who is the sidekick and advisor of him, to summon other boys (Golding, *Lord of the Flies*, pp. 10-13). At first, it seems good to gather all the boys around to be united. The point is that the conch is the first thing they own on the island and they sort of build a parliament with it. Till now, everything is perfect because this is a part of human nature; humans cannot survive in wilderness without standing together. So people need democracy, they need their rights and they need (unfortunately) some classes to prevent everyone from falling apart. The conch also represents power because it functions like a microphone on the platform in the parliament, the one who owns the conch has the right to speak. It is for everyone, every single person has the right to take the conch and speak as he likes, but this changes once they choose a leader and let him speak on behalf of other people. It is

only because the boys on the island build up the exact system they used to see every day in their normal lives, but they also take the corruption of the system during this process when they let the power in.

This situation shows how literature reflects reality; boys have a plane crash, they find themselves in an isolated island, then find a conch, they build a parliament, create job opportunities for themselves such as hunting, cooking and 'ruling' which means they re-create the reality of society; the world they have been living in. Besides, in the real world, the book shows the archetype of the villain/devil. In the book, there is this specific character, Jack, who wants to personalize the crown of the king, the conch, for himself for good; which can be resembled as dictatorship. Others don't let him personalize this common property; they fight for it; and they finally get separated. The main point of this is that since ancient times when Ancient Greeks created democracy, there have been so many fights to make it happen; to give the public what they deserve. That's why this particular topic becomes the main event in today's world, because the world is full of greedy people who are power-hungry. In this respect, the book *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie can be seen as a comparison to the clear example of the parliament and the archetype of becoming or owning the conch in *Lord of the Flies*. For instance, in some parts of the book the main character Saleem who is also a part of the Midnight's Children Society, creates a telepathic conference with other kids and discuss about important issues, like the future of the kids (Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* 240-254). The relation of this situation with *Lord of the Flies* is that just because Saleem has the power of creating a conference in his mind, he becomes the conch itself. Here, there is also a villain archetype who tries to confiscate the management of the children. Owing to this, he creates a chaos out of chaos, because there is also another war going on between Pakistan and India in the background for the sake of Pakistan's freedom. The main point in this paragraph is that there are still archetypes of people like Ralph who is trying to build something instead of destroying what has already existed, in other words, the archetype of 'the hero'; and people like Jack who wants to possess all the power and use it mostly for their own benefits, in other words villain or the archetype of 'the warrior'.

The second archetype or structure for this topic is the general meaning of equality in people's mind or the archetype of masters who try to become gods. This issue is related with all of the events in case someone is dealing with humans. All around the world, people have always dealt with equality problems because of slavery. From the beginning of the early ages, all civilizations think about this idea as a matter of their causes, which are basically war treasures. All countries always think that they are superior and the rest of the world is either their ally or enemy. A person can only be good or bad, it is that simple for people. After sometime people evolve, especially mentally, and they start to create new classes like; rich and poor, literate and illiterate or even legitimate and illegitimate. This is the moment where authors take control of the show and let people know how this is shown in literature.

William Golding shows some quite apparent examples about this in his book. In *Lord of the Flies*, these kids are just school children, which mean they only learn to be equal in their classes because that's what teachers tell them. Besides, the society they live in teaches them how to treat 'others' as if they are the lower class; similar to white parents teaching their children how to treat black people during the time of slavery. So, the children in the book come to the island with the knowledge of how to treat and mistreat others. This might be something they learn from their parents or just some kind of trauma which isolates them and limits their communications with others, but even after they create the parliament-like system and reanimate their civilizations, they start acting angrily instead of speaking properly. The problem of miscommunication here reflects the human inner world, the primitive sides of someone who loses his relationship skills.

Some symbolic examples in the book shows the reality behind two edges of civilization. It's not easy to become civilized but it seems easy to turn back one's primal existence. As an Englishman, Golding show these edges of civilization with the examples from English society. In the book *Lord of the Flies*, as the representation of both civilization and savagery, there is a group of boys that are controlled by Jack who wears school uniforms. This symbol of uniform comes in our sight three times inside the book. At first when Ralph and Piggy call the boys with the conch, boys on the island are described in different appearance. "...Some were naked and carrying their

clothes; others half-naked, or more-or-less dressed, in school uniforms; grey, blue, fawn, jacketed or jerseyed.” (Golding, pp. 14). This part shows in a way that these children represent the stages of being civilized; at first naked like first men, then half naked like cavemen and uncivilized countries or tribes, and lastly with uniforms like civilized countries. In the first chapter of the book while boys on the island are trying to establish a parliament on the island they decide to use the conch as a microphone so that everyone can speak like in the parliament. When it comes to the second chapter it seems boys try to figure out how to keep fire burning so they decide to put someone as a watchman (41). They want to handle things as how it is in their normal lives, because they say that they are English and they have to act like that. “I agree with Ralph. We’ve got to have rules and obey them. After all, we’re not savages. We’re English; and the English are best at everything. So we’ve got to do the right things.” (42). Owing to these words of Jack, one can see that this is where the boys are the only boys and this is the only point that they are clearly imitating their ‘civilized’ societies with innocent thoughts. After some time, they turn back to their origin.

On the island, Jack and his Boy Scout group bully others, even kill some, because their aim is to show their strength like primitive people and use force to dominate the rest of the children. “See? See? That’s what you’ll get! I meant that! There isn’t a tribe for you anymore! The conch is gone...” says Jack after they kill Piggy (Golding, pp. 201). This is where William Golding shows the violation of equality in his book. As mentioned at the beginning about the pigs in the book *Animal Farm*, Jack and his group think that they are more deserving than others, because they are fearless and superior so they must rule the island. Also, just because they are stronger, they have the power which divides the society of the island. With this power and ego of the group, they take this ruling business on the other part of the island and make a rival sort of country. So with this example, one can see two types of regimes; democracy and tyranny. Ralph and his group represent democracy because they have all the elements such as parliament, public and equal rights. In Jack’s tyranny there is one supreme leader and his warriors.

The third archetype in this article is the archetype of ‘purity’ and ‘innocence’ or with Jung’s words ‘the child’. One may think that everyone is free and people can do whatever they want, but this is wrong because people have boundaries and responsibilities against the society. Sometimes, these responsibilities put some people into the positions that they do not want to be in and once one crosses these boundaries, that person loses his/her innocence, because crossing boundaries can start from insulting others without any reason or killing them. This is also what happens on the island. According to William Golding, the kids on the island reflect these ideas, life styles and actions of their parents or the societies they belong, which means they cannot think on their own, they build up a distraught copy of the life they used to live in order to be able to survive. Their parents or the society do not teach them to imagine or do not give them the idea of creation and imagination, but they just give the order to make them follow. This is the main problem about freedom because as long as people follow traditions blindly, without asking anything or just do whatever the stronger ones tell them to do, they cannot achieve anything in their lives. The ones who give up their freedom live exactly as how Edward Said starts his book *Orientalism* with the words of Karl Marx; “They can’t represent themselves. They must be represented.” (Said, *Orientalism*).

The first time when someone loses his innocence is the time he creates distinctions between people. As how it is in archetypes, people create their own archetypes as well, but this can be a bad version of them. Meaning, one can label others because of their appearances or their deficiencies which create unlivable and unequal environments for those people. In fact, this issue includes Piggy as well but because Simon is the youngest of the boys he fits in the position of ‘the child’ archetype. William Golding here shows a kind of a pure soul among the kids. Simon is the representative of the neutral side on the island; he is the archetype of innocence and logical sense. He is just a regular kid who does not want to get involved in any fight. He doesn’t represent any religion, any culture, but represents the logical side of humans. He just wants to be free and out of corruption, but here is the point, corrupted minds do not allow him to live his life. Through the middle of the book, after those children on the island create their own society, they also create a religion for themselves. They find a pig, kill it and put its head on a stick. They call it ‘Lord of the Flies’. When

the time comes, the time of hunting the 'beast', Simon puts his head above the parapet and tries to act reasonable as if others can understand him. All scream "Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" (Golding, pp. 168). While Simon tries to tell them the reason of his existence in between the two sides, they do not listen; only throw the sticks on him (Golding, pp. 160-170).

In the book, children see the pig as their Lord that must be an archetype of God on the island, because humans need faith to give a meaning to their lives, but when one looks at the signs and elements throughout the book it's easy to see that this figure of the pig or 'Lord of the Flies' represents the evil side of the boys. They refer to the pig as a female, "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Bash her in." (79) which shows that after 'she' becomes their Lord they actually start worshipping Devil since the Devil can be seen as 'she' even in Bible itself. Besides, it is shown both in the name of the chapter, *Gift for the Darkness*, that basically explains their sacrifice to the so called 'beast' and in the definition of its appearance which displays that, "...and in front of Simon, the Lord of the Flies hung on his stick and grinned. At last Simon gave up and looked back; saw the white teeth and dim eyes, the blood--and his gaze was held by that ancient, inescapable recognition." (152). In this quotation also, Simon appears as the reflection of Jesus because even the protagonist Ralph has some dark sides in him since he also seeks for power, but Simon is pure and thinks as if this 'Lord of the Flies' speaks to him. Like the Crucifixion of Jesus, they kill Simon with wooden sticks and this is the end of their hopes. He never fits in either group on the island, but rather he is the man of all. However, in the world, there is not exactly a neutral side. People have to choose a side to be able to survive in the society or the society devours them. This can also prove that there is a transition through civilized to uncivilized because earlier in Chapter 4 of the book, Jack and his 'civilized' Boy Scout group who used to have uniforms appear as hunters with painted faces. It was actually their duty when they have divided the jobs, but in this part, when they first kill something, which is a pig, their attitudes change. Like blood lust, they want more that leads them to do other things on the island. "I painted my face--I stole up. Now you eat--all of you--and I—" says Jack to Simon when they are staring at the pig meat (Golding, pp. 78). Then when it comes to tell the story they are so excited that their narrative becomes scary. "We

spread round. I crept, on hands and knees. The spears fell out because they hadn't barbs on. The pig ran away and made an awful noise--" (79). As an example for the boys who go back to their primordial sides, this part of the book can be seen as another vision referring to pagan rituals. Again in the same chapter, when the boys bring the pig near the fire they start talking about how they hunt the pig. After some time, they decide to act that scene and show others what they do and how they do it which unconsciously turns out to be a pagan ritual. "Then Maurice pretended to be the pig and ran squealing into the center, and the hunters, circling still, pretended to beat him. As they danced, they sang." (79) Their circular dancing and singing becomes the part of a ritual that pagans or shamans used to perform in ancient times. This circular dancing is very obvious in Chapter 9 when the boys gather around in a circular way dancing after they kill Simon and can be seen as a sacrifice to the pagan gods (168-169). Also, after they kill Piggy and crash the conch, they start dancing like in a ceremony. "The tribe was dancing. Somewhere on the other side of this rocky wall there would be a dark circle, a glowing fire, and meat. They would be savoring food and the comfort of safety." (206). This in a way proves that they are not the same anymore. This too, can be seen as their rebirth into the nature.

The forth and the last part of this article is the struggle between power and knowledge. This struggle leads people to create differences and fight with their own creation. For example, in *Lord of the Flies*, there is one point where mean boys bully Piggy because as the only child who wears glasses and being a bit fatter than the other boys, they see him different than themselves and because of this different appearance and because he is the 'wisest', one of the boys kills him by rolling a big rock onto him (Golding, pp. 201). When some of the boys turn to their primordial beings, they start to scare from wisdom and intellectuality. For them Piggy is the other; he represents the archetype of wisdom that some children refuse to use in the book. Piggy can be seen as 'the Sage' in the book who seeks for knowledge. His glasses are the representation of his wisdom. Not exactly a wisdom maybe, since they are only children but it's obvious that he has different intelligence than other boys. This intelligence is shown since the beginning of the book. For example, when boys try to choose the leader, with help of Piggy, they decide to vote for the leader.

“This toy of voting was almost as pleasing as the conch. Jack started to protest but the clamor changed from the general wish for a chief to an election by the acclaim of Ralph himself. None of the boys could have found good reason for this; what intelligence had been shown was traceable to Piggy while the most obvious leader was Jack.” (18).

Besides, Piggy is the only one who can suggest things intellectually and rationally. “The boys began to babble. Only Piggy could have the intellectual daring to suggest moving the fire from the mountain.” (142). Just because he is speaking with logical sense, he can dare to say whatever he wants to say. These quotations lead to two different points; the struggle between power and knowledge which is the war between Jack and Piggy, and awakening the monster inside the innocent minds. Even the appearance of the boys reflects who is representing which side but the point is that while these boys are all alone fighting for their lives they turn into savages instead of acting rationally. The ones who represent power act as if they have to fight, kill and give fear to others which is what dictators do; and the ones, Piggy and Simon, who represent wisdom act as if they can bring civilization back, but they lose their lives instead.

“[T]hat it is notably enlightening to posit power in place of individual ‘happiness’ (after which every living thing is supposed to be striving): ‘there is a striving for power, for an increase of power’; -pleasure is only a symptom of the feeling of power attained, a consciousness of a difference.” (Nietzsche, pp. 366).

This quotation from Friedrich Nietzsche’s book *Will to Power* suggests that humans always seek for power. When they have it, they want more which is why once Jack starts killing animals he starts to want more. This bloodlust or seek for ‘power’ gives him pleasure that he cannot reach in any other way than to go back to his inner self. Since this struggle for the need of power makes Boy Scout group crazy, their threshold for pleasure increases and thus they start killing boys. Because of these reasons, until ‘the King’ comes to the island at the end of the book, this fight turns into the fight between the Warrior and the Sage in Jungian terms. However, while looking at the symbols or even just the appearances of the boys, as how it is explained before, Piggy represents the Sage but also the other.

This otherness can be seen as discrimination in English Christian societies. Since Golding criticizes this specific society, it's not wrong to say that apart from Piggy's different looks, it is also a fight between religious figures. While pagan culture or pre-Christian culture is obvious in the book, there is also the element of Jewish representation through Piggy. Even the name Piggy is not randomly chosen. Here William Golding tries to show the importance of this name and what it represents. As the wisest, Piggy is the figure of the Jew amongst Christian boys. Although some people can see Simon as another Jewish figure as well, he is seen as the prophet Jesus, but because of how they kill him he also can be seen as Moses. At the end of the 9th chapter where they see Simon as 'the beast', they gather around in a circular way and hunt him down which is like both the crucifixion of the Jesus and the death of Moses (Golding, pp. 168-169). That's why the position of Piggy in the book, him being the other, the wise and good at decisions, is the Jew because this fight between power and knowledge is also the fight between Christians and Jews; Old Testament and New Testament; society and outcasts (Rosenberg, *Lord of the Fire Flies*).

Conclusion

The archetypes of this world can vary largely. To see all of the archetypes, all that is needed is to look at the structures of the world. From the beginning of mythology, to the creation of comic books, people always put themselves in archetypes. One becomes a hero while another becomes the villain. Modern world children put themselves into the position of Superman, Batman, Joker or even mythological gods like Thor and Odin. Even writers while writing their novels, short stories or poems, put their imaginary characters into the position of archetypes; they create stereotypes and as if the character has morals they call him or her a hero or the protagonist, and if a character commits sins they call him or her a villain or the antagonist with the aim of creating some certain structures.

In *Lord of the Flies*, William Golding serves the real meaning of human rights, equality and freedom while pointing out the archetypes of the world. Only establishing a parliament does not show the real democracy; the person who is in charge should also chase the rights of the public; giving birth to the rights for people is not enough alone; the person who is in charge should also protect these rights and the others should respect

these rights; only saying to people ‘we are all equal’ does not mean there is equality, but all of the others should also act as if all people are equal by not bullying people, not starting a war or not treating people like they are not from this world. Lastly, even in the 21st century, real freedom should not be like this, because this era is not the era of physical wars anymore. Today, wars are happening in people’s minds that they cannot control it as simple human beings. This means that they aren’t even aware that they are the slaves of the ideology of their societies. They are the archetypes of all times; they are the mimic men of their own societies.

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