

## A CRITICAL STUDY ON GOLDING'S NOVELS, 1954-64: 'LITERARY FEATURES AND HUMAN CONFLICTS'

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William Golding, one of the prominent modern writers of English fiction cannot be classified though many diversified criticism about him have been issued from his first and seemingly the most outstanding novel, **Lord of the Flies** (1954). He is evaluated as a great fabulist, an allegorical writer or a mythmaker. In this respect his preference is to be called as a writer of 'mythopoeic power'. His novels are interpreted in the light of theology, modern psychology, politics, and sociology. These interpretations are not complete ones in themselves; on the contrary they all serve to understand his fiction as a whole. To what kind of English school of fiction he belongs does not matter. What is important for us is how skilfully Golding creates a universe in which the ideas are more vital than the action.

Before the World War II he was optimistic, but during the war he served as a naval officer and he saw what men, even 'the educated men like doctors or engineers', could do to their fellows. Therefore he lost his hope in human progression.

His knowledge about human nature is mirrored in his fiction. In a general sense he believes in God, but he questions if God believes in him or in humanity. His fiction is full of Christian symbolism but he appeals to every kind of belief in his fiction. His tendency is toward the meek and the spirit. He never attempts to didacticism. In his fiction there is no solution. He does not preach any kind of order. He exposes human nature to the reader so well that the reader is shocked after reading any Golding novel and begins to question his own nature and his role in the eternal tragedy on the earth-stage.

A Golding novel is two folded in meaning. The first is on the surface. It may seem easy to understand. **Lord of the Flies** can be read as the parody of Ballantyne's *Coral Island*. But to understand a Golding novel as a whole requires much more effort. The deeper meaning lays in the depth of the words both simple and complex. The novels as a whole are difficult to penetrate into the deeper meaning that depends on grasping the juxtapositions, so they require a second reading. Through re-reading of the novels the reader discovers something

inherent in his own nature. The requirement comes from Golding's literary features: his use of language, his time and space concepts and his character presentations.

His language seems simple at first reading, but the deeper meaning in the language can easily be overlooked since he conveys the most symbolic compact through his economic language. He gives a physical quality to his language: but this quality brings the abstract with itself. The language he uses is the crucial element that joins the narrative elements in a literary order; therefore his perspective is strictly linked to his language juxtaposing the concrete with the abstract. Points of view are limited and complex in the novels. Certain images are used highly metaphorically. Some characters' inner monologues are intently designed. The certain passages have symbolic intensity.

In **Lord of the Flies** the events are partly shown through Ralph's eyes, partly told through Simon's perspective and partly through a third person one. In **The Inheritors** the reader is locked in Lok's mind, a subhuman consciousness, then a third person-narrator reflects how helpless a red creature he is, lying down to death in a foetus position; and finally being in Tuami's mind the reader shares the guilt of killing innocence at the cost of inheriting the dark horizon. In **Pincher Martin** (1956) the reader is at the extremes of different levels of human mind going from cleverness to insanity. The third person perspective shows the body gradually being rotten. At the end it is the third person point of view that does not allow the reader to see completely the function of Mr. Davidson, probably the death angel. In **Free Fall** (1959) the reader encounters a self-questioning mind at work. The novel is seemingly a diary written to answer a crucial question: where and when has Sammy, the artist, lost freedom? Sammy as a mature artist interprets his childhood and adolescent memories, the different levels of his mental body are combined to give the reader much more profound understanding of Sammy's own nature, that is why the reader cannot penetrate into Beatrice's nature, the most affected person by Sammy's wrong doings. In **The Spire** (1964) the reader again meets Jocelin's point of view mixed with the third person narrative point. Till his final instant the reader shares Jocelin's mental and physical suffering. Therefore, to show the

spiritual and secular handicaps as a whole, Golding skilfully manipulates the different perspectives in his novels.

Images have a complex nature in Golding's fiction. The reader realizes the 'beauty and horror of life' in every minimum detail of the narrative. Golding's brilliantly imaginative style makes the reader feel the importance of his being in the universe. Golding does not force the reader to feel like him, but the reader's emotional response through the 'mystery of nature' with 'its fantastic variety' to the given object is on the various levels of symbolic meaning.

In **Lord of the Flies**, the island has a boat shape that symbolises mankind journey from the cradle to the grave, from innocence to guilt. Ralph, while watching the vast ocean, sees the lagoon from which he dreams that he will be rescued, but he becomes hopeless through the vastness of the ocean; beside the vastness it takes Simon's and Piggy's dead bodies away. The conch becomes a symbol of democracy or reason. By breaking the conch into pieces the boys have chosen the titanic leadership or the primitivism. In fact the conch is a physical thing, it is the human breath that makes the conch valuable and the sound of the conch has no meaning if the sound does not symbolise democracy and order in the mind of the reader. Piggy's asthma is an expression of fear and hate and alienation (1). Having an allegorical quality the dead parachutist represents the beast that the boys are terrified with, but it has deeper meaning than that, therefore it shows Golding's 'mythopoeic' power. It goes beyond what Golding aims at, because it is open to various interpretations. In the narrative physical, rational, moral and religious evolution (!) is given through concrete and 'resonant and explosive' prose.

In **The Inheritors** the forest represents innocence. It gives every kind of comfort to the Neanderthals. The island is a menace because it is an unknown territory. The waterfall represents the actual human fall. Its water is 'monstrous', 'unending' and 'profound'. The tree through which Lok and Fa hide themselves and watch the Homo sapiens' doings is a kind of Tree of Knowledge. Fa sees Liku's cannibalistic death from the tree. Lok and Fa realize the demonic effect of liquor on the Homo sapiens. They witness the sadistic lovemaking of the 'others' from this tree. The kidnapped baby of Neanderthals may represent the bridge between the innocent and the guilty, between the dead and the alive, between the old and the new

(2). The poisoned arrow represents both the hostility of the Homo sapiens and the innocence of Lok. Lok ironically thinks that it is a gift from the 'other', but the 'other' shoots it at Lok to kill him.

In **Pincher Martin**, Martin is always seen as eating. His mouth is at work while the body is suffering from the eaten. His nature is defined as greedy and selfish, so the images referring to his mouth is apt to Martin's past life. The Rockall, meaning nothing at all or nothingness, is the reflection of an aching tooth in the past in Martin's mind. His mind creates it and his body clings up to it. The Chinese maggot box represents the world in which the strong eat the weak, to be eaten by the stronger.

In **Free Fall** Sammy is imprisoned to a lavatory, actually the cell for Sammy to encounter his darkness. Dr. Halde, a Nazi doctor of psychology, knows that Sammy does not want to face his inner self since Sammy is 'opaque' both to himself and the Doctor. He is guilty-minded man, so in the cell he thinks the wet mob as a serpent as the projection of his own evil. His most primitive fear arouses from his own mind and he tortures himself. He likens his youth to a clear stream and his adulthood to the stagnant pool. First he does not taste the guilt, so he is innocent, but then he makes a mistake – where and when unknown – and he becomes a defiled man, but at least he is honest at present since he searches for his mistake.

In **The Spire** the most outstanding image is the spire itself. It will be a 'stone-prayer' of Jocelin. While the spire is arising step by step to the sky Jocelin's spiritualism is shattered. His mental power diminishes and he becomes insane. He begins to question his own faith while the spire is being built. He sacrifices everything for it, but the cost is too much for 'Jocelin's Folly'.

The red hair of Goody represents Jocelin's lust for her. He is the Dean; but he is human as well. He cannot help thinking Goody in obscene terms while knowing this a great sin. The red hair occupies his mind so frequently that he thinks that it is witchcraft and he suffers mentally and spiritually.

Golding employs black and dark images that refer to the irrational and self-destructive forces in one. Sammy confronts beasts of his own mind in the prison cell, just as the boys on the island, the Homo sapiens, and **Pincher Martin** who have externalized their own guilty fear (3).

Related to the images there are some important passages that enrich the whole narrative. In these passages Golding employs his poetic ability so effectively that they seem independent poems written in prose. In **Lord of the Flies** the passage that shows Simon's dead body in the bosom of the vast ocean is a brilliantly poetic one full of light imagery.

'Along the shoreward edge of the shallows the advancing clearness was full of strange, moonbeam-bodied creatures with fiery eyes. Here and there a large pebble clung to its own air and was covered with a coat of pearls. The tide swelled in over the rain-pitted sand and smoothed everything with a layer of silver. Now it touched the first of the stains that seeped from the broken body and the creatures made a moving patch of light as they gathered at the edge. The water rose further and dressed Simon's coarse hair with brightness. (4)

The writer in this passage applies for symbolism so skilfully that the saint-like character's Simon's, real function as the core of moral understanding of the novel is well exposed. On the other hand, Piggy, the scientific-minded character, who believes that reason solves every problem in society, is taken away by the vast ocean in a realistic and naturalistic prose.

In **Pincher Martin** the epic struggle of Martin with his inability to accept death in a selfless manner is given through poetic aspects in a realistic prose. The corruption in his mental and physical power connected with his spiritual weakness is described through the brilliant narrative. Martin struggles in his consciousness and as the last negation of the Other, supposedly God or his selfish consciousness, he says:

'I prefer it. You gave me the power to choose and all my life you led me carefully to this suffering because my choice was my own. Oh yes! I understand the pattern. All my life, whatever I had done I should have found myself in the end on that same bridge, at that same time, giving that same order – the right order, the wrong order. Yet, suppose I climbed away from the cellar over the bodies of used and defeated people, broke them to make steps on the road away from you, why should you torture me? If I ate them, who gave me a mouth? (5)

He always rejects to be a selfless creature even in his last moment. He clings to his egocentric identity and in his last battle he is defeated not because of his early doings but because he never learns 'the technique of dying into heaven'.

In **Free Fall** Sammy, imprisoned in the cell, faced his inside darkness because of his guilty consciousness, is desperately terrified:

The darkness was full of shapes. They moved and were self-supplying. They came, came and swam before the face of primordial chaos. The concrete ceased to be a material visualized because felt and became nothing but a cold feeling. The wood of the door was warm and soft by comparison; but not a female warmth and softness-only an absence of cold and immediate wounding. The darkness was full of shapes.' (6)

In **The Spire** the sexually frustrated and egotistic dean of the Virgin Mary Cathedral Church, Jocelin, confesses at the end that 'How proud their hope of hell is. There is no innocent work. God knows where God may be (7)'. This ironic expression indicates that Jocelin knows his sin: at least he knows his pride, a great sin in Christianity. Even the hope in the proud is evil. Proud and hope are the extremities of the order. Pride means one of the seven deadly sins and the hope of the proud man brings his self-destruction. In every human deed there must be some cost, any kind of sacrifice; so human beings are not innocent. Jocelin knows the terrible cost for his Folly, he tries to endure but he fails.

While tasting the seemingly simple but, in fact, a highly complicated language the reader feels himself trapped in a time and space conception of Golding's fiction. His novels are free from the boundaries of time and space because of his central theme: the original sin or the intrinsic human depravity melted in a dense and metaphorical prose.

James Gordin rightly asserts that the settings provide force and energy; they do not in themselves convey meaning in these unique fictions that make visible the pattern of a flawed and static nature common to all human beings (8). They are brilliant tools to convey the ideas.

The time and place Golding creates in his fiction sometimes make the reader isolated or alienated.

In **Lord of the Flies** the stranded boys should struggle to survive in a desert island in the supposedly atomic war in the future. The boys are isolated in a land surrounding by the vast ocean. The nature is both gentile and hostile to them. It supports them with fruits, water, and wood; but the pig is one of the first elements to draw them back to primitivism or bloodthirstiness. There are hardly flashbacks in the novel. Time progress is linear and the movements of the sun and the moon show time passing.

In **The Inheritors** the time concept is appalling since the reader is their inheritor in the future and they are the reader's prehistoric past; apart from this cosmic time concept, there are two different modes of time in the novel. The Neanderthals' time concept is frozen; they do not change themselves to survive in this still present. Their world is also still. Their time concept is 'To-day is like yesterday and tomorrow (9)'.

The forest embraces the Neanderthals but the unknown island frightens them. The water between the island and the forest is dangerous for them. The menacing atmosphere for the Neanderthals is exposed in a brilliant description of the nature: 'The air between the rocks was forbidding with violence and sweat, with the rich smell of meat and wickedness (10)'.

The Homo sapiens' concept of time is the opposite of the concept of the Neanderthals since they welcome every kind of change to survive. They move into the unknown places. They know literally that time is going on. At the end they set sail to the dark and unknown horizons. Although they are terrified with dark forest, they are able to use it as their tool.

In **Pincher Martin** the reader encounters the struggle in a timeless time. The last instant of a dying man is given through supposedly several days. During the World War II a man is imprisoned on a rock in the vast ocean. The rock, symbol of man's stability and control in a chaotic universe, is only a delusion. Golding goes beyond the limits of knowable notions of time and space. Nature aroused from his mind is his main enemy against which he must struggle to exist. In the enemy's bosom he creates his own place as the

projection of his selfish mind. The more he becomes insane, the less the rock is stable. The rock, the illusion of his mind begins to move, namely to crash (11). The rational man becomes weaker than the forces surrounding him, such as time, weather, ocean and his guilty consciousness. The rock, the tooth of the world, is the cosmic level of the whole world. The apocalyptic vision of the narrative is enriched through showing that the whole struggle is only an instant occurred in time: 'Time stretched out, like the passage of time on a rock in the middle of the sea (12)'. Martin creates a world in his last moment in which there is all time or no time. Past, present and future are interwoven. The flashbacks bring about his past, but he clings to his present, and he is tormented by the 'blacklightning', 'timeless and merciless'. There are many flashbacks with having symbolic intensity, hallucination and stream of consciousness; memories of childhood, the actual death, the rock, the ego, the fear of future, the actor's greed. On the present time level the novel is about the day dreaming of a dying man in the crevice of a rock. While he is dealing with his present wretchedness, his mind brings the memories: images of a woman's body, a boy's body, a box office, the bridge of a ship. He is hanging in the sea like a glass sailor in a jam jar in his past life. His future brings him the eternal damnation.

In **Free Fall** the time concept is somewhat different from the other novels. The novel is written as a diary. At present Sammy writes his life to find where and when he has fallen freely. The act of writing his memoirs and living them again through a mature person perspective constructs the time notion in the novel. The childhood and adolescent experiences, his imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp and his encounter Beatrice in a lunatic asylum is given through flashbacks. Sammy continually confronts and compares the fragments of his past life. To Sammy:

'Time is two moods. The one is an effortless perception native to us as water to the mackerel. The other is a memory, a sense of shuffle fold and coil, of that day nearer because it is more important of that event mirroring this, or those three set apart exceptional and out of the straight line altogether (13)'.  
His present is related both his being as a mature artist reporting his life and his effort to find a bridge between the opposite universes.

His present shows that he cannot find this connecting bridge, but maybe love and mutual understanding can bridge them.

In **Free Fall** the space is the memoirs of Sammy's guilty but honest mind. His flashbacks, his whole life and his confrontation scene with darkness in the cell enrich the narrative texture. He is in conflict with the two worlds he lives in: Rotten Row in which he spends his early childhood and the school-world, which expands while he is moving into the boyhood. The second world is divided into two groups that shape Sammy's consciousness much. He is between the innocent Johnny and the machiavelist Philip; then he is between Rowena Pringle, the cool spiritualist, and Nich Shales, the sympathetic rationalist. He is so much affected by Nick's warm personality that he chooses the rationalist world. Both worlds are real, but there is no connection between them.

The atmosphere in **The Spire** is both pagan and spiritual. The foundation is not so solid to carry the spire 400 feet high. The spire is being built on the human sins such as murder and adultery. It is set in the Middle Ages. The chronological order in the novel is linear. Actually there are two years in **The Spire**. It covers the period from the early spring of the first year to the spring of the third year. There are three different levels of time scales: The first is the chronological order of the building arising step by step and the event occurred during the work; the second is Jocelin's enlightenment about his past life long before the opening of the novel. He discovers that his deanery to the cathedral depends on his aunt's caprice while being the king's mistress. The third scale is Jocelin's self-discovery of his consciousness, his real motifs for the spire (14). The time structure depends on the narrative point of view, because the development of the novel is totally shaped by Joselin's consciousness just as time structure depends on Sammy's mind through flashbacks in **Free Fall**. The medieval town with its pagan conventions supports the double vision of **The Spire**.

Golding's employment of the conflicting notions includes the character presentation. His characters are in conflict with the different worlds. The characters can roughly be divided between two groups: the good and the evil. But in any Golding novel this kind of easy classification cannot work well since he reflects the many sided human nature. Man cannot be labeled as good or evil since he is

composed of the two conflicting aspects. To Golding man should know his darker side, his evil potentiality, and should try to tame it; at least he should accept it and should learn to live with it. The destructive forces lying deeper in man's self become easily self-destructive. Golding's characters suffer much from these forces since they prefer to ignore them or pretend to have none of them.

In **Lord of the Flies** the major characters, Ralph, Piggy, Simon -described in fairy terms- represent the good, the rational and the meek. Jack, Roger and Maurice -described in black terms- represent the wicked, the irrational and the sadist. The characters in **Lord of the Flies** are the boys but while the action proceeding, the reader cannot see them as simple boys, they become adults with destructive power. They try to establish the British order in the island, but the respectable values of the small English group are easily shattered. Jack as a tyrant demolishes the democratic system under the leadership of Ralph and the 'thin veneer of civilization' is easily crumbled. The result is the wickedness, filth and bloodshed. They turn the Edenic island to a hell. Ralph and Jack are the symbols of the opposite worlds: 'There was the brilliant world of hunting, tactics, fierce exhilaration, skill, and there was the world of longing and baffled common-sense (15)'.

The reader has thought that the children are the average men in society throughout the novel, but in the final chapter they are reduced to children again. Children are innocent to the conventional thought but they are destructive as much as the grown-ups.

In **The Inheritors** the Neanderthals represent the meek. They have a great respect for nature; their religious system depends on Oa, the female goddess of nature. They do not kill to eat. If an animal is killed by another animal, there is no 'blame' to eat it. In their social and moral system the Neanderthals are more human. They have a great respect for everything animate or inanimate in the nature. They share communal identity, so they are not the real individuals. Fa, his mate, is more clever than Lok since she comprehends and conceptualizes the events at some degree. It is Fa who thinks that Homo sapiens are worse than water and that should not bring them to earth from her belly. She has some insight into their evil since it is she who sees that Liku has been eaten by them.

Lok, the limited perspective, is a kind of clown in the clan. He makes gestures just to make them laugh. He is less able to have

'pictures', so his mental power resembles to Benjy's in **The Sound and the Fury** by Faulkner. He has no conceptualization; but through the end of the novel he begins to change; he imitates the other, so he discovers the likeness; but he is doomed to death since he does not learn so fast like Homo sapiens and he is not wicked. Maybe he gathers knowledge but he is not intelligent. Knowledge is different from intelligence on the ground that intelligence leads a being to evil.

In **Pincher Martin** the reader applauds Martin's will to exist because he suffers much; but he is an evil man in his life. He never belongs to the Neanderthal clan in **The Inheritors**. He is hypocrite. He uses everybody around him as a tool for his goal. He is a greedy person. Golding makes the hero and the reader aware that life is not only appetite. He relies on his intelligence, education and will, but he can achieve nothing in the struggle for survival, because being a hollow man, he never understands the spirituals, love and tolerance.

Through the last phase in his struggle he talks with God, created in his own consciousness. God offers him the last chance for salvation, but he refuses it out of his dark ego.

In **Free Fall** Sammy's struggle is different from Pincher's. Sammy tries to analyze his existence. He realizes his selfishness and searches for the way to join up body and soul; but he cannot bridge the physical and the spiritual worlds. He lives in the two worlds: the moral world and the rational world. He feels himself fallen and he is in trouble with the darkness of his own self. In his childhood he is innocent and free but he has lost his freedom through some mistake(s). Beatrice for him is a thing to be possessed so he uses her and leaves her. This may be his mistake. During the cell experience Sammy achieves more things because he gives up being rational.

Doctor Halde, on the other hand, a Nazi rationalist, represents the modern man's sacrificing his soul to reason. He has consciously pushed away his spiritual dimension for the sake of reason. Sammy is not so determined in his choice, he is between the two poles of the order: the belief in reason and the belief in spirit. The commandant thought about Halde is an enigmatic expression. 'Halde does not know about peoples (16)'. First Halde comes to the stage as the bearer of knowledge, as an expert in human nature. He may be responsible for Sammy's self-questioning; but the commandant's thought turns the whole pattern upside down.

In **The Spire** Jocelin's will is a false will. He is not analytical like Sammy. He realizes his real motives that cause his damnation at the end. He sees his true nature on the verge of death. Jocelin is in conflict with his faith and his human instincts, with his 'conscious motivation and unconscious desire'. He is the victim of his own vision and self-obsession. Jocelin, the Dean of the Cathedral, transforms into an agent of Satan. The Cathedral becomes the nest of sodomites, adultery, deceptions, murder, death, and madness. Jocelin becomes a tyrant, maybe a devil under the religious gown, destroys everyone and everything for the sake of spire, namely his sexual frustration and self-obsession. At the end he understands that man is alone in the universe and there is no guide in the chaos. The human beings consume each other and the practical application of self-knowledge is very difficult in the daily run of existence.

To Golding the primary task of a creative writer is to make people aware of their humanity and to motivate them to be honest with themselves about the surroundings in which they live. Through his narrative features his novels serve to his goal. His fiction interpreted by many critical terms functions as a warning to human beings against their destructive power.

NOTES

1. Mark Kinkead Weeks And Ian Gregor, **William Golding A Critical Study**, p. 36
2. L.L.Dickson, **The Modern Allegories of William Golding**, p. 33
3. L.L.Dickson, **The Modern Allegories of William Golding**, p.72
4. **Lord of the Flies**, pp. 169-170
5. **Pincher Martin**, p.197
6. **Free Fall**, p.174
7. **The Spire**, p. 222
8. J.Gindin, 'The Historical Imagination in William Golding's Later Fiction', **The British and Irish Novel Since 1960**, ed. by. James Acheson, p. 109
9. **The Inheritors**, p. 46
10. **The Inheritors**, p. 54
11. **Pincher Martin**, p. 167
12. **Pincher Martin**, p. 181
13. **Free Fall**, pp. 5-6
14. D. Skilton, 'On The Spire', **William Golding, Novels, 1954-67**, ed. By Norman Page, p. 161
15. **Lord of the Flies**, p. 77
16. **Free Fall**, p. 253

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## MAHMÛD TEYMÛR

(1894-1973)

### (HAYATI EDEBİ KİŞİLİĞİ VE ESERLERİ)

Dr.Nurullah YILMAZ\*

**Hayatı:** Kahire'nin mahallelerinden Derb-i Se'âde'de eski Arapça kitaplara vâkıf, el yazmaları ve kıymetli eserleri derleyen, aynı zamanda dil, edebiyat ve tarih alanında dönemin araştırmacı âlimlerinden biri olan Ahmed Teymûr Paşa'nın 1894 yılında bir oğlu dünyaya geldi. Arap Kürt aslına dayanan Ahmed Paşa, dedelerinden kalan geniş serveti saçıp savurmamış, çocuklarına saklamış, ayrıca Mısır'a ve Dârü'l-Kutub'e en kıymetli kütüphaneyi hediye etmekle asrın en büyük bağışını yapmıştır.

Ahmed Teymûr Paşa, güzel ahlaklı ve mütevazi birisiydi. Evinde Muhammed Abduh ve Şankıtî gibi edebiyatçı ve âlimlerin katıldığı bir meclis düzenlemekteydi. Buraya genellikle müsteşrikler ve komşu ülkelerden edebiyatçı ve âlimler gidip geliyordu. Hanımı ölünce çocuklarını Kâhire'nin kenar mahallelerinden biri olan Ayn Şems'e götürdü ve sonra onlara Zemâlik'te bir ev satın aldı. Yaz mevsimini çocuklarıyla beraber şahsına ait çiftliklerin birinde, sanki onlardan birisiymiş gibi çiftçiler arasında geçiriyordu.

İşte Mahmûd, kardeşi Muhammed ve iki kız kardeşi bu ortamda bu mutlu havayı teneffüs ederek büyüdü. Mahmûd, İbtidâiyye'yi bitirdikten sonra Lise'ye devam etti. Bu esnada babasının gözü onun üzerindeydi; Mahmûd ile kız kardeşini edebiyata yönlendirmeye çalışarak onları İmru'u'l-Kays'ın Mu'allaka' sını ezberlemeye teşvik etti. Çok geçmeden Mahmûd ve Muhammed bir âile gazetesi ve bazı ilgi çekici oyunların sahnelendiği bir âile tiyatrosu kurdular Şüphesiz bu durum onları Batı'dan tercüme edilen hikayeleri okumaya yöneltti.

\* Atatürk Üni. Fen -Ed.. Fak. Araştırma Görevlisi