The Postimperial Neurosis in the First Five Novels of William Golding

(Submitted for the Award of Ph.D. Degree in the
Department of English, Bodoland University)

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2024

Conclusion

There is no doubt that as a novelist William Golding does something new to fictionalise the contemporary postimperial reality and its effect on the British psyche. His deft handling of the psychoanalytical tropes opens up his fiction for a study of the postimperial neurosis. Each of the first five novels are unique tales of human struggle for survival in a chaotic situation as a result either of displacement or of isolation. The setting is an important aspect which marks the insularity and claustrophobia of the postimperial human condition. The narrowed down setting is symbolic of the narrowed down physical space caused by the loss of sprawling empire, as symbolised by the one-room attic flat of Jimmy Porter in Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* in which Porters had to make painful adjustment of living, much like the painful adjustment that the British had to make within the limited space of the British island to which their empire got reduced in the wake of decolonization. Island is thus an important setting in Golding's vision of postimperial neurosis. Moreover, the loss of the empire created a sense of lack in the colonialist psyche that manifests in his fiction as the colonial desire of recolonization. The action of the novels is thereby characterised by some building activity like building of civilization, or a habitat, or a colony-like habitat, or a spire, and by some manifestation of guilt and bad conscience. These forms of building show the substitution of the empire-building process in the way of sublimation. The psychopathology of the characters gives a direction towards a psychoanalytical study of the novels. As the teleology of Golding's fiction is largely determined by the twentieth century eschatological developments in history, the novels also turn towards what Kingsley Amis calls 'new maps of hell' (Amis 5), and which has already been pointed out. In one tradition of philosophical thought or theological reasoning, like in Christopher Marlowe, William Blake, Dante or John Milton's poetic vision and rendering, the hell is placed within the unconscious. And the journey to hell is considered the way towards self-knowledge. Thus it can be said that the novels of William Golding are novels of the unconscious and they contribute to the discourse of the unconscious. They are symptomatic of the past trauma of the loss of empire and offer coded repetition of the painful psychic conditions of postimperial neurosis. It is to be noted here that one established fact in psychoanalysis is, according to Jill Barker, that "Symptoms in the present are read

as a coded repetition of past traumas or frustrations, now repressed from consciousness" (Barker 202). And veritably, as substitutes or displaced objects for the lost object, they turn out to be what Lacan calls the *objet petit a*, or, the small 'o' other, and the repetition brings into play the nightmare of the return of the repressed, which creates a Janus-like yearning for the paradisial pre-colonial and a coming to terms with the postcolonial reality. The novels are thematically repetitions of his first novel and the fictional rendering of the return of the repressed attempts to mitigate the repetition by means of melancholia that in one sense leads to the identification of the self by means of the Other. One indication of this mitigation becomes obvious in the fact that there is a gradual broadening of the human image in the novels when serially read, as pointed out by Michael Gallagher. This incremental way of the self's identification with the other is also the way how the rigidity of Manichean binary duality is moderated by the liminality or hybridity. So the master-slave narrative gets problematic by the shifting relation between the centre and margin, one very important political and polemical issue in Golding's fiction, by the operation of melancholia.The Other in his novels is represented by the oppressed, suppressed and the repressed characters, who are weak and what Julia Kristeva calls the abject, characters who are physically deformed like Piggy, Simon, the shambling-gait Neanderthals, or the good characters whom Pincher Martin brutalised, the Mongol girl Minnie and Pangall. There are other characters who play the role of the conscience-keeper, the saint-figures, like Simon, Lok, Beatrice and Nathaniel who are also shown to be at the receiving end. By way of displacement and isolation the central consciousness is placed at the margin of existence and eventually they come to realise the plight of the oppressed other, through their own similar suffering at the margin of existence which is symbolically represented by nature and which also brings into sharp critical focus the role of culture as the hegemonic centre. Moreover, the one significant movement that can be noticed in Golding's fiction is the movement towards a bigger awareness of the self, this greater consciousness is what connects the conscious and the unconscious in his fiction, and also the existential and the metaphysical.

However, there is a state of confusion in his fiction that results from the predominance of ambiguity. The role of ambiguity is productive in the proliferation of meaning but it also breeds confusion. There can be no clear-cut opinion regarding

Golding's standing as a novelist. His critical acceptance ranges from considering him being profoundly rich to extremely shallow in matters of philosophy or theory and mostly unpredictable. That is why his Nobel Prize stature and a large critical focus notwithstanding, there is one critical opinion that holds William Golding as an overrated novelist whose novels lack social setting, normal character development, fully realized women characters but over-emphasise a moral framework referring to Man with capital M which often distorts realism by relying on the generalised universalism and in which the readers as particular individuals really remain potentially uninvolved. The moral vision involving Man with capital M is always manifested in such expressions like basic human condition or essential human nature, yet the uncommonness of the context makes it lie outside the scope of common experience. The lack of social involvement in his novels on the one hand and the narrowed down settings on the other amply indicate a direction towards a psychological understanding of life and reality. This is borne out of the fact that his novels become dark parables of paranoia, aggression, atavistic sense of domination and repression, trauma and violence, expressed through dark and mythical images, metaphors and symbols, rendering his novels puzzling and difficult for clear-cut interpretation. This makes his standing among critics mostly as much a puzzle as his novels are. "To most people," writes Richards Jones, "Golding was a mystery, a part genius, part sublime silly-billy, a man of exceptional imaginative powers working too often on tasks not worthy of the effort; uneven and never predictable" (Jones 675). Ralph Freedman finds "a significant distortion" (Freedman 119) in Golding's "phantastic vision" (Freedman 118) of presenting "his "unreal" and hypothetical world" (Freedman 119). The claustrophobic, solipsistic and identity related issues of the central consciousness come out in their grappling with a changed reality. It is this changed or distorted reality that distinguishes Golding's novels. The connecting link between the macro and the micro is what he tries to establish by his fiction. The psychological sense of humanity, society and the fall, instead of the sociological cum moral sense, is the way that Golding can be understood better as a post-war, post-holocaust, and most importantly, as a post-empire British writer. The mainstay of his fiction is the allegorical presentation of the post-empire colonial self and psyche. Considering the avowed seriousness of Golding's artistic engagement, his themes of moral evil and personal sexuality appear too flimsy to analyse. Rather,

true to the craft of an allegorist, his novels have something stronger to represent, that is to say, his thesis of the fall of man is only the surface; what lies beneath is an engagement with the predicament of the colonial mind in the time of the loss of the empire that seems to be the real crux of crisis in a Golding novel, unravelled in the way of psychology and confession.

The psychological orientation of his novels is buttressed by the extrapolation that he makes of the myth of the Fall. He uses the "ambiguity of the fall" (Burroway 55) in order to extend and design his post-empire psychological investigation. The puzzle behind Golding's revitalization of allegory and a metaphysical moral framework which he considers 'trite' and "a truism" (Golding *Hot Gates* 88), can be partially solved by following this post-empire standpoint as a yardstick to judge his novels. He justifies the triteness and truism of his assertion by saying that "Always the truth is metaphorical" (Golding *Hot Gates* 85). The metaphorical nature of truth is a hint of a much bigger historical truth in his fiction which makes him paradoxical. The paradoxical nature of his assertion that he is a fabulist and a moralist on the one hand and an anti-humanist dystopian on the other is akin to that of Jonathan Swift. Pervaded by a sense of guilt in the wake of decolonization, that established for the oppressed Other the fundamental right to be human, the novels provide a psychological journey backward. In *Lord of the Flies,* the psychological journey is towards acknowledging that the evil is inside everyone of us (that is to say legitimately inside every European); in *The Inheritors*, towards establishing evil as generic in humanity; in *Pincher Martin,* it is the process of moving backward and uncreating the very nature and character of human greed and lust; in *Free Fall,* it is to find out the point of departure from innocence to experience, and the movement is from experience to innocence; and in *The Spire*, it is to analyse the psychological morphology of domination and oppression.

Viewed from this perspective, his novels offer themselves for a valorised reading, so that the embedded narrative can be extricated. One embedded narrative is the post-empire effects on the British psyche that has to cope up with the loss of empire with a yearning for restoration of colonialism. Both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors* go beyond the metaphysical boundaries of the generic evil in humanity and explore the process of disintegration due to colonial intervention. The

novels represent dislocation as a metaphor for chaos and a consciousness of the end of innocence. Though this embedded narrative is heavily disguised with allegory, but a historical sense often breaks through to come to the surface. One important aspect is that his novels are thematically connected, this connection is basically seen as a metaphysical condition of the fallen nature of man, but this connection can also be understood in a more historical sense of the fall of the British Empire in the aftermath of the World War II. For the colonial British psyche, the fall of the empire or the end of the colonies was like to fall into a state of chaos, similar to a fall from the state of innocence to the state of experience, that automatically puts into action a valiant and frantic effort of survival in a grim situation of dislocation and isolation. As it is observed in the Introduction of this thesis that Golding's novels, especially the first five ones, are conceived not as social novels; they are basically novels of human extremity which prominently showcase stories featuring secluded and narrowed-down setting and act out ostentatiously the drama of loss, of violence and dehumanization, coupled with a frantic effort to control and order the chaotic existence by an equally prominent central consciousness and their eventual degeneration into chaos. In some novels like *Lord of the Flies* and *Pincher Martin*, Golding uses a gimmick in the ending to deflate the overwhelming chaos and show a semblance of normality, probably emphasising the need for restoration of colonial order and control in an age of decolonization, as Stefan Hawlin points out (Hawlin 133). In the ending of *Pincher Martin*,two rescuers who arrive on the scene come to the conclusion that there was no suffering on the part of Pincher Martin, because he had no time to throw off the heavy sea-boots which is a standard practice in the navy for the survival of the sailors in the water – meaning that Pincher Martin died instantly, this revelation turns the entire saga of Pincher's suffering on the rock as a mere hallucination. One important narrative strategy in Golding's novels is the use of the methodology of dislocation, a rupture or a point of crisis in life in order to have a new awakening of the mind in the face of an irredeemable situation. That is to say, dislocation becomes a medium of achieving greater consciousness. This methodology is often likened to the Greek tragic technique of reversal and discovery. The discovery acts like a revelation of truth, and results in self-knowledge. Both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors* are novels of dislocation and survival. In *Lord of the Flies*, a group of British schoolboys are plane-crashed on a

remote Pacific island, as if to unlearn their civilisation and engage with bare survival and become at par with the inhuman condition of the colonised natives. Gabriel Josipovici calls the novel an experimentation under 'laboratory condition' (Josipovici 236), but this laboratory experimentation is done in order to know about the adaptability of the British psyche to an already dislocated time and place, and the outcome is more or less a kind of 'nemesis' (Subbarao 6) happening to the ex-empire colonial self in the face of chaos. In *The Inheritors*, the last surviving members of a Neanderthal group face dislocation in their own habitat because of the arrival or intrusion of an advanced group of humans, and the whole group of the Neanderthals undergoes a catastrophic phase of survival and adaptation to their newly discovered dislocation. The violent process of their decimation may be attributed to their mistaken identity as ogre but it is more likely to be a matter of skilful and paranoid manifestation of a random chance colonialist encounter. The new people are the prototype of early European colonialist in search of new lands and coming across the Neanderthals, exercised no restraint but their cruel area domination. Lok, the last surviving member of the Neanderthals, becomes the medium of the novelist for mapping the trajectory of chaos and fall, like an unself-conscious version of Okonkwo in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and jolts into a consciousness only to highlight the dislocation through a pathetic death.

The most problematic aspect of Golding's view of man is the loss of innocence. It is the central theme in many of his novels, and corresponds to the dislocation, physical, metaphysical and psychological. In the end of *Lord of the Flies* Ralph weeps for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and in the end of *The Inheritors* Lok tastes the rotten honey of the new people to mark the loss of innocence of the Neanderthals, and Tuami the artist tries to fathom the darkness of human heart. In *Free Fall* Sammy Mountjoy undertakes a quest to determine his loss of innocence. Golding's moralist-fabulist intention notwithstanding, this thematic centrality of the loss of innocence necessitates a problematic reading of Golding as a writer of postimperial neurosis. Moving from the state of innocence to the state of experience is like a paradigm shift, enacted through a violent schism of dislocation. Thus a state of innocence is an equal state of freedom for the self and the other, which is lost at the very moment this equality is lost, and a dislocation happens, resulting in chaos. In Golding's perception, chaos is not a given, nor it is

imposed from outside, but is the result of violent self-aggrandisement and the resultant dislocation. If the state of innocence is marked by order and freedom, the state of experience is marked by dislocation and chaos, all are worked out in terms of human will and action. They are not the handiwork of outside natural forces, but they emanate out of inner moral blindness. As Simon the saint-figure in *Lord of the Flies* intuits that the beast lies within and the beast is only us, and later dramatically confronts the lord of the flies as a confirmation of his intuitive truth. Nature does not bring about this dislocation. When the British boys crash-land on the remote Pacific island, it is in the beginning a paradisical island with the boys indulging in fun, frolic and play. But the island is scarred by the crash of the fuselage, and it is bruised and turned into a hell by the later activities of the boys who according to Claire Rosenfield act like the 'men of a smaller growth' (Rosenfield 13). In *The Inheritors,* the paradisiacal natural habitat of the Neanderthals is changed by the new people, resulting in the dislocation and loss of freedom of the Neanderthals. Paradisiacal implies the sense of freedom, hell implies loss of freedom and innocence. In these two novels the chaos is marked by atrocity, reminding us of the twentieth century World War II atrocity and Nazi atrocity, of genocide and holocaust, as the two rival groups of boys indulge in destruction and killing. Hell is let loose, brute force triumph over innocence and freedom. It is within the power of humanity to cater to freedom or cater to chaos. Golding's fiction tries to map this borderline of chaos. The ideographic structure with its coda (Tiger *Dark Fields* 16) and the gimmick ending (Gindin 196) of the novels bring out the cycle of order, chaos and the new realisation of order. This new realisation of order and paradisiacal innocence is fully explored in *The Spire* through the image of the upward waterfall. Through the image of the upward waterfall, a bridge is constructed between experience and innocence.

Connected with this problematic of the end of innocence, is the problematic of Golding's overt rejection of certain texts and textual positions; he rejects the smug position taken up in R. M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*, and H. G. Wells' *An Outline of History* and "The Grisly Folk". Ballantyne's book is the epitome of British colonialist mindset and was written in the Victorian period, in the time of the height of colonialism. *The Coral Island* is also the epitome of the tradition of island stories, like *Robinson Crusoe, Tresure Island, Amazon and Swallows* etc.

Golding's main argument against Ballantyne's book is that it is unrealistic. Writing in the post-empire postcolonial time Golding finds Ballantyne's boys paper cutouts rather than living and breathing human beings of flesh and blood, and finds the outcome quite preposterous. *Lord of the Flies* is a rewriting of Ballantyne's most popular children's book and provides a post-empire version of it; Golding's adaptation of Ballantyne in *Lord of the Flies* shows the extent of his concern and engagement with the British pessimism and a dystopian sensibility in the wake of the fall of the empire. Golding's boys, despite carrying the baggage of British education and colonialism, not only fail to overcome chaos but fall into chaos and savagery. Only after they destroy the paradisical island by their regression into savagery they are rescued by a naval officer and the semblance of normalcy is restored. In *The Inheritors* Golding rewrites Wells's story "The Grisly Folk" and also counters Wells's views of the Neanderthals in *Outline of History.* Golding finds Wells's portrayal of the Neanderthals biased and unrealistic because this portrayal is fraught with the same British colonialist mindset. Wells's Neanderthals are veritable ogres and cannibalistic, so primitive and backward; and the arrival of the *Homo Sapiens* is an advancement in the history of mankind. Golding's Neanderthals are opposite, they are not ogres, but because they are truly human and endowed with innocence, they are prone to love the Other, ignoring the dangers posed by the strangers; and they are not cannibalistic, but non-violent lover of nature and peace. This peaceful, non-violent, innocent species meets their end with the arrival of the more advanced *Homo Sapiens.* Golding's tragic story highlights the point that the arrival of a better species may be an advancement in anthropological sense, but this can not be considered an advancement in moral sense. Both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors* take up the issue of civilisation, and find civilisation lacking, because the concept of civilisation is inextricably linked with British enlightenment/colonialist perception of progress and domination. Ralph who wants to preserve civilisation, cries at the loss of innocence and the darkness of human heart; Tuami the artist contemplates over the unending line of darkness against which humanity is powerless and perplexed.

It is important for a Golding novel to chart the course of the journey from innocence to experience, and as Virginia Tiger points out, there is an effort of 'bridge-building' (Tiger *Dark Fields* 16) in the novels, with various degrees of

failure and success. Golding's first three novels are stories of stark failure to build a bridge and man is shown as fallen from grace and into a state of experience; in the next two novels, as Michael P. Gallagher points out, there is a gradual broadening of the human image (Gallagher 204) as the bridge is built across the self and the other, the centre and the margin, the culture and nature, and most importantly, across experience and innocence. The reaching out to a recovery of innocence happens by coming to terms with the post-empire, postcolonial reality in both *Free Fall* and *The Spire.* In a mood of penance and repentance the self now recognises the subjugated other as his forgiver. There is utterly chaotic bewilderment in the first three novels, corresponding to the immediate aftermath of the loss of the colonies; this utter chaos and bewilderment is gradually balanced by a more sobering experience in the next two novels. Taken together, Golding's first five novels are a record of the sobering effect and consequence upon the British mind in the aftermath of the loss of innocence and fall into bewilderment of chaos. In *Free Fall* and *The Spire,* coming to terms with reality gains momentum and both Sammy Mountjoy and Dean Jocelin are somewhat blessed and attain a spiritual composure by acknowledging the guilt and wrongdoing. There are opposite interpretations to Jocelin's final experiencing of his vision. In one interpretation, Dean Jocelin dies a blessed death by accepting the post-contaminated state of experience and by having a vision of an upward waterfall, a kingfisher and an appletree in his created spire. This is the best possible progress of a fallen being towards a state of innocence in Golding's vision of life in the post-empire postcolonial time. It is a redemption possibly, not much in religious sense, but in historical sense. Jocelin's story is a lifetime of colonial imposition and erection, and an acceptance of it as a folly and wrongdoing, and a repentance and redemption, all told in allegorical terms.

Thus the first five novels of William Golding are thematically connected. And as it has already been observed that they are novels of end of innocence, and they are novels of darkness of human heart, and they become the novels of disturbed consciousness in confrontation with the unconscious. The novels are stories of discovery and revelation, based on the predicament of the disturbed consciousness. The darkness and pessimism of human condition is mitigated by the glimmer of light that flickers through the saint-figures.This tragic cum melioristic pattern is worked out by keeping a focus on the central consciousness and the saint

figures, like Ralph and Simon in *Lord of the Flies*, Lok and Tuami in *The Inheritors,* Pincher Martin and Nathaniel in *Pincher Martin,* Sammy Mountjoy and Beatrice in *Free Fall,* and Jocelin the megalomaniac and Jocelin the humble workman in *The Spire.* And the plot follows a common dramatic pattern, there is more or less a sense of equilibrium in the beginning, from which it moves towards a point of crisis not because of any external agency but the human agency, as a result of which discovery and revelation is made of the darkness of the human heart, and a bigger perspective attained by means of the ending. What becomes important is not any event or character, but the consciousness of the darkness emanating either from ego or from destroying the other. In spite of a pervading sense of things falling apart in the novels, especially in *Lord of the Flies* (1954) and *The Inheritors* (1955), the awakening into a sense of reality from a dim perception of displacement is most important aspect of his novels. The value remains not with the account of things which fall apart, but with the discovery and response of the central consciousness to it. In this dramatic movement towards a bigger reality, perhaps there lies a tragic sense of loss of belief; and in this loss of belief, the central consciousness acts out Quixotically, holds a belief in innocence or a state of equilibrium, only to undergo suffering, violence and trauma to jolt into a rude reality of experience. The state of equilibrium is always lost in Golding's novels, because it is a Quixotic illusion of a lost reality that remains latent in the central consciousness and erupts into a bigger reality. The boys ignore the dim perception of displacement and hold on to a belief in equilibrium even when they are aware of the loss of the adults; and even when an adult in the form of naval officer comes to rescue them in the end, the dim perception of an already displaced world continues, "And who will rescue the adult and his cruiser?" (Golding to E. L. Epstein, quoted in Tiger *Unmoved Target* 38). When the Neanderthals appear on the scene, they have a dim perception of displacement in their habitat in the form of the missing log which they use as a bridge to cross a stream, but they hold on to a belief of equilibrium not Quixotically but out of their natural innocence, a belief which is shattered most ruthlessly and which is likened to the extermination of the Jews by Nazis (Boyd 41); and Lok, the central consciousness in the novel, jolts into a new reality. Here in this novel the pattern is slightly different, because the novel deals with the subaltern victims, not the colonial masters. Only in the last chapter of the novel the perspective of the

colonial masters is taken up, and the focus shifts to the appearance of man and it is clear that the displacement of the log is the result of the arrival of man in the Neanderthal habitat, and it now becomes crystal clear that new men took away the log Neanderthals used to cross the river and used it to make a canoe for their use. The central consciousness now changes from the Neanderthal Lok to *Homo Sapiens* Tuami, who tries to come to terms with their own perception of displacement by looking into the line of unending darkness. The very arrival of the new men is marked by displacement and it is their predicament that they carry with them the shadow of a displaced world. This sense of displacement is made utterly stark in the form of Pincher Martin who is never out of his displaced dead world, in fact it is wholly a bizarre postmortem story, with no connection with the real reality. For Sammy, a quest is undertaken to know the time and reason behind his psychological displacement and chaos, and he reaches to his victim, of whom he is only dimly aware, but, although awakened to a new consciousness, he actually could not reach out to his victim because she is utterly dehumanised by Sammy's lust for possession of a female body. In the fifth novel however, it is Jocelin who is finally able to reach out to his trampled victims and achieves sainthood. Displacement becomes the central metaphor in Golding's novels, and reaching out to the Other is similarly is aimed at the mitigation of the effects of displacement.

There is no doubt that the major obstacle in Golding's novels is the apparatus of Christian imagery and paradigms that effectively cloaks his post-Empire and postcolonial preoccupation as a writer of the 1950s. The loud historical backdrop against which he wrote is blocked and muted by the allegorical or fabular or mythic mechanisms, but the suppressed historical sense very often erupts, emerges and comes to the surface like slavery does in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. The conditioning of the historical or the temporal or the concrete by the eternal or the perennial or the abstract is worked out in the way of an overlapping or a defamiliarization of this historical sense by means of allegorization, fabulation and mythicization. The extended metaphor of the Fall and fallen human nature minimizes the stark contemporary reality but increases and intensifies the level of sensation. The metaphor of the Fall is not a new idea, but the methodology of superimposing it over the contemporary history is certainly new, and it makes Golding an important writer of human condition and evil, making his novels new

maps of hell. Understanding this difficulty or the impediment requires a problematic reading of his novels, which makes Golding one of the most challenging novelists. Obscurity, ambiguity and ambivalence mark his fiction, the novels are thematically spread along the line of an ironic discord that lies at the heart of experience (Talon 299). There emerges an amalgamation of post-empire, post-colonial with the post-Fall, post-innocence human condition. Golding is a romantic in a reverse sense; unable to integrate with the psychological chaos brought about by the decimation of the Empire he yearns for a return to Empire. Nature and culture become emblamatic of this yearning to go back to a pre-fall state. In *Lord of the Flies*, culture breaks down and nature rises, in *The Inheritors,* nature breaks down and culture rises, in *Pincher Martin*, culture breaks down and nature rises, in *Free Fall* and *The Spire* nature and culture are counter-balanced and equipoised, especially in *The Spire*, where the spire of culture is made to appear like an appletree, a kingfisher and an upward waterfall, all objects of nature, and it is also made to stand in spite of its precariousness, like a 'miracle of rare device' of Coleridge's "Kubla Khan".

The boys in *Lord of the Flies* are not much concerned about themselves in the absence of the adults, and they are playful and light-hearted in the beginning. They find the island a worthy temporary home, and soon get into the task of turning the island into a human civilization, or, a hub of human activities, enacting division of labour and power hierarchy. The very initiation of a human habitat creates an imbalance, in which pigs are hunted and killing is celebrated, epitomised by the pig's head on the stick, a symbol of violence and degeneration, from which the novel acquires its title, 'Lord of the Flies' which in Hebrew means lord of the dung. But it cannot be said that the ensuing dislocation is the result of a reprisal from nature. Because there is no external reason for human dislocation, but it emanates from human pride, self-aggrandisement and hunger for power; in the celebrated thesis of the novel, the beast rises from inside the civilisation. In a battle of power, in the line of the myth of the sacred wood, the island is turned into a chaotic hell, leading to the death of Simon, Piggy and a near-kill of Ralph. The novel is aptly called by A. D. Fleck as 'The Golding Bough' (Fleck 189) because of its similarity with the golden bough myth. The island is set on fire, amidst all round degeneration and chaos. Attracted by the smoke, a passing naval ship jolts into the island to

discover the terrifying game of the children. As the naval officer intervenes, Ralph is saved, order is restored, boys are rescued and Ralph breaks down weeping at the loss of innocence and the darkness of the heart. Stefan Hawlin finds in the story the end of colonialism and the rise of the natives (Hawlin 124). Paul Crawford finds in the story the rise of the fascists (Crawford 58). Pig-flesh and meat become the standard of civilization, the island gets littered with garbage and filth. The novel's setting shows a violent dislocation of the boys, who originate from war-torn civilisation, their plane is attacked over the ocean and they crash-land on the island, the rest of the novel follows the pattern of violence as a way of domination and subjugation. Aggression, paranoia, trauma, scar are racially symptomatic of the hunter-gatherer, they are atavistically common to a Yahoo civilisation, and the "Lotus Eaters are taken over by the Hunters" (Freedman 125). Reason is a mask over unreason and its putrefaction is the lesson of the novel. Reason falls off conveniently and the residue of reason makes the human even more obnoxious than a Yahoo. The naval officer acts like a god, a deus-ex-machina, a veritable Don Pedro rescuing the fallen boys, but even he is not above the rank of a Yahoo, and he is viewed with the same pessimism and scepticism by Golding as Don Pedro is viewed by Gulliver.

Similarly, in *The Inheritors* dislocation occurs, by the intrusion of the human species and human activity. The Neanderthals are pro-nature and mystically one with nature, and therefore enjoys a holistic relationship, beneficial for both the Neanderthals and nature. Like *Lord of the Flies*, here also nature does not cause dislocation. The novel is a testimony of how culture causes dislocation, disruption and destruction. The new people bring with them elements and sophistication of culture, the tools like bow and arrow and knife, and wreaks havoc in the habitat of the Neanderthals. The storyline follows the same thematic pattern of aggression, domination, cruelty, violence and killing; and the Neanderthals are wiped out by the new people. The title carries a profound irony, the inheritors of the earth are not the meek and innocent who are easy bait of subjugation, but the aggressive colonisers. The story is built around the binary of innocence and experience, innocence is drowned in blood and terror. The progress from innocence to experience is marked by violent dislocation that leads to extreme chaos for the Neanderthals. The whole novel becomes poignant because of the incomprehension on the part of the

Neanderthals regarding what is happening to them, until Lok gradually comes to understand the new people as famished wolves. It is the end of innocence for Lok, and he acquires a consciousness of the new people. The dislocation from innocence to experience becomes the basis of his new consciousness, which is like a death to him, and he goes to his physical death in the most pathetic scene of the novel. And this is the consciousness of the reader as well, as he is offered an insight into the working of the colonialist mind placed against the Other. The Other leaves an indelible impression on the colonialist mind, so it does on the mind of the reader, and that is probably the intention of the writer.

Golding's third novel *Pincher Martin* can be seen as the climax of the above mentioned thematic line of the first two novels. Here the narrative focus changes from the historical themes of war and colonialism based on real life experience, to the dark psychological recesses of a dead colonialist who is hell-bent to colonize a rock in the Atlantic. The rock represents the margin in the geographical imagination of colonialism, the occupation of which is symbolical of the reflex action of the colonial consciousness indulging in a morbid psychological reaction to the end of colonies. Pincher's diehard consciousness conjures up an imagined survival on the rock, and he imagines himself as the ruler of what he can see on the rock, and he performs his role as a master with elaborate flourish and panache. He uses the conventional and unconventional tools of colonialism to dominate and subjugate the rock. Golding has already shown his familiarity of the colonial paintbox of depicting the colonial situation both in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors.* And he shows his full artistic strength in depicting the colonial aggression in *Pincher Martin.* The rock-island world of Pincher is modelled on 'Rockall', a newly discovered rock at the outermost periphery of British territory and Pincher tries to remember the name of the rock-island on the Queen's map, but what he remembers is the captain's calling the rock 'a near miss' (Golding *Pincher Martin* 31) which in maritime parlance means nothing. It is conceived as a place of negation in the line of colonialist practice of setting up a foil, as pointed out by Chinua Achebe in his celebrated words that Europe conceives Africa as a negative, as a foil (Achebe 251-52). The rock is described in the novel accordingly, "The rock was negative. It confined his body so that here and there the shudders were beaten; not soothed but forced inward" (Golding *Pincher Martin* 48). As Pincher suffers from the existential

crisis of meaning, this Rockall turns into Fuck-all in his mind, which is an antithesis of Love-all of the heart – constituting a vision of the divine image consisting of mercy, pity, love and charity, and of which Fuck-all is a blatant negation. On the purgatory of the rock Martin is forced to remember all his past victims, especially Nathaniel, Golding's saint-figure in this novel and Nathaniel's beloved Mary Lovell whose surname sounds like Love-Well or Love-All. They now appear to Martin as the sad commentary of his past life. Both of them are a constant reminder that they were senselessly victimised by Pincher, Mary was hated because she loved Nathaniel and was brutally raped; and Nathaniel, whom Martin hated most for being so good to him was killed by Martin's wrong order on board the destroyer *Wildbeeste*. One important thing that should be kept in mind is that these characters are used as a plot mechanism. They point to Martin's existential crisis of meaning which is formed with these two poles of Love-all and Fuck-all.The rock is the touchstone method used by Golding to bring out the colonial impulse in Pincher and at the same time it brings out the claustrophobic and insular island existence of post-empire time. It is to be repeated here that Stefan Hawlin in his essay has discussed Golding as a colonialist writer with sufficient clarity and strong arguments. In doing so, Hawlin goes beyond the traditional ways of reading Golding as a moralist and fabulist, and analyses *Lord of the Flies* as a colonialist writing "by setting it within the history of decolonisation, and hence to show how the novel reflects a profoundly conservative ethos" (Hawlin 125). Like Hawlin, Kevin McCarron also finds traces and elements of the colonialist mindset in Golding's novels. Commenting on *The Inheritors* which is a story of the decimation and extermination of the Neanderthals at the hand of Homo Sapiens, McCarron writes,

> Colonialism can be seen as an issue in *The Inheritors*; one that is linked to evolutionary theories. If one is at the top of the evolutionary ladder, then one has no moral obligation to respect the rights, or even the lives, of those who have yet to reach this plateau. Instead, there is a moral duty to impose one's superior values on all those people who remain in a state of unenlightened savagery, and if they remain obdurate then it is permissible to kill them. A large number of British novelists have written about colonialism and imperialistic conflict: Rudyard Kipling, George Orwell, Winifred Holtby, Joyce Cary, Paul

> Scott, and, with *The Inheritors*, perhaps William Golding could be added to the list. A reading of the novel which sees Lok's peoples [the Neanderthals] as the colonized and the New Men [Homo Sapiens] as the colonizers does not displace other readings, but may be seen as an indication of the ways in which fabular constructions, in particular, are amenable to a variety of approaches. (McCarron 10)

The validity of the view that Golding is a colonialist writer as held by Hawlin and McCarron is evident in Golding's third novel *Pincher Martin* in which the allegory becomes exploratory of colonial impulse by examining the grim human image "in the refusal of grief and growth and of the possibility of accepting forgiveness and mercy" (Gallagher 205). The possibility of mercy and forgiveness as found in *Lord of the Flies* and in *The Inheritors,* is sadly missing in *Pincher Martin.* Pincher stubbornly acts out the role of Prometheus in his refusal to submit to the black lightning and thus refuses the very possibility of receiving forgiveness and mercy. In the ending, Christopher is reduced to the condition of inflamed pinchers, exhausted and imploded, assigned to the vast darkness of being in the midst of black lightning and storm, and the claws "were outlined like a night sign against the absolute nothingness and they gripped their whole strength into each other. The serrations of the claws broke. They were lambent and real and locked" (Golding *Pincher Martin* 201). Thus Pincher ends up destroyed as broken claws, as a parable of the exhausted colonialist mind after reenacting the heroic and sick enterprise of colonising on his afterlife rock. Although evil is universal and mankind suffers from an always already postcontamination but Golding makes a distinction and indicts more the educated, intelligent and the enlightened centre of civilization, or those who are at the top of the evolutionary ladder, than the unenlightened margin of primitivism, or those who are at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder, because in his view it is on the enlightened centre that the responsibility of preventing the commencement of evil lies. Golding's indictment is evidently against the enlightened centre than the unenlightened margin. This is evident in his first three novels. In *Pincher Martin,* he cuts open and dismantles the heart and head of a modern, rational, enlightened consciousness in order to show the extent of the deep-rooted psychological centring of colonialism.

Golding's fourth novel *Free Fall* is also symptomatic of the fallen condition of a colonial mind in the wake of the fall of British empire. Although the novel is apparently a personal quest narrative to determine the loss of innocence of the central character, the novel can be read against the backdrop of post-empire British psyche that Golding's first five novels allegorically unravel. Golding's revival of allegory is a sure sign of his underlying intention to depict the unpleasant truth of the colonialist mind in the post-empire postcolonial time. By shifting through the details of Sammy's personal history and by keeping these novelistic materials aside, and by taking up the allegorical content of the story, *Free Fall* can be read as a novel of postimperial neurosis in which the process of emasculation becomes the central motif of the novel. This may appear a little bit far-fetched; but considering the avowed seriousness of Golding's artistic engagement, his themes of moral evil and personal sexuality appear too flimsy to analyse. Rather, true to the craft of an allegorist, his novels have something stronger to represent, that is to say, his thesis of the fall of man is only the surface; what lies beneath is an engagement with the predicament of the colonial mind in the time of the loss of the empire that seems to be the real crux of crisis in a Golding novel, unravelled in the way of psychology and confession.Since the mainstay of William Golding's fiction is the allegorical presentation of the post-empire colonial self in its morbid state of desire, it is logical that in *Free Fall* he takes up the colonial self as a tormented and haunted being in the mode of soul-searching and trying to fix responsibility for his fall. As usual the novelistic surface tale appears not so overt in betraying the novelist as an allegorist of the post-empire predicament of the colonial self, but the allegory keeps on surfacing in order to point towards either a metaphysical concern or a colonialist concern. Golding himself protests too much in favour of his metaphysical concern in his fiction but the colonialist implications his readers can easily grasp by contextualizing the novels, by following certain recurrent thematic patterns, like the loss of a state of innocence, the masculine setting and action, conquering of the female as the other territory, denigration of the other, and the post-empire trauma and guilt which mark the colonialist concern of the novels. The loss of innocence as a result of colonialist intervention happens in *The Inheritors*; the loss of innocence as a result of decolonization happens in *Lord of the Flies*; the masculine setting and action happen in *Pincher Martin*; the conquering of the female as the territory of the

Other, denigration of the other, and the post-empire trauma and guilt happen in *Pincher Martin, Free Fall* and *The Spire*. It is evident that Golding's fiction centres around a violent dislocation or a lack or a loss which is perceived in geographical terms. In the colonialist allegory of Golding's fiction, the aggressive male sexuality is a symptom of colonialist impulse, and the female is often seen as a colonised victim. In the decolonised post-empire context, emasculation is the reality that the colonialist faces in relation to the Other and caused by the Other. Although *Free Fall* is more or less a personal quest, it can still be read against its post-empire setting and in the colonialist line.

Golding's fifth novel *The Spire* is deeply allegorical and it is by virtue of its allegory that the novel essentially becomes a post-empire novel. Although the story is set in the fourteenth century Christendom of cathedrals and priests, a valorised reading based on the allegory makes it symbolical of the postimperial colonial condition. There is no doubt that the novel is fraught with post-Freudian understanding of human psychology of building phallic structures which also carries the colonialist motive of domination and self-aggrandisement. And what better conclusion of the thesis can be than studying the novel against another work of British imagination which also carries the tell-tale sign of colonialist design of perpetuating domination and subjugation, namely, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, in order to demonstrate how far a seemingly innocuous novel can yield to such a valorised reading. Because reading *The Spire* brings into mind, oddly but remarkably, William Shakespeare's 1611 play *The Tempest*, for Golding's Jocelin appears to be another version of Shakespeare's Prospero, not in the realm of magic but in the realm of a vision and its execution, yet betrays a nostalgia for magical (imperial) power. In *The Tempest*, Prospero is an all-powerful romantic magician who with his magic spell and the help of Ariel creates the illusion of a tempest in order to wreck a ship full of his enemies so that he can achieve his objectives of restoration of his lost dukedom, of marrying off his daughter Miranda to Ferdinand, and of disciplining his minions like Caliban and Ariel; and when all his objectives are achieved, he removes his magic spell to restore the destroyed ship, renounces magic, gives Ariel freedom and goes away with all people leaving the island to Caliban, the native of the island, as if nothing had happened. In *The Spire*, Jocelin, the Dean of a cathedral, directs all his efforts to erect a 400-foot spire on his

cathedral against all odds, considering the erection as a divine vision, he coerces and cajoles his workmen to complete the building of the spire, undergoes physical and spiritual degeneration during the erection, and when finally the spire is completed, dies of spine cancer. The erection of the spire is described in terms of ship imagery, the spire is the main mast upon the floating rock-ship of a cathedral. The reference of the cathedral to a stone-ship recurs continuously through the pages of the novel, as much as the reference to Jocelin's libido. The cathedral is often described as floating because it is built on the marshland and bogs and therefore lacks a proper foundation. Jocelin is too anxious to keep the tottering spire hold on to the cathedral, and seeks the magical power of a nail, a relic sent from Rome, to climb on the top of his 400-foot spire on a stormy night to fix it by nailing it with the sky and thus preventing it from falling. In *The Tempest,* Prospero's benign magic is involved in the creation of a storm that wrecks a ship but when the magic spell is removed the ship comes back to life intact and by which Prospero and others set sails for Milan. In *The Spire,* Jocelin's vision is involved in the precarious erection of a spire-mast on a stone-ship of a cathedral and finally saving it from a storm. Shakespeare's play and Golding's novel live up to the historical background against which they were written. Shakespeare's play was written at a time when British imperialism was making its presence felt all over the globe, and Golding's novel was written against the backdrop of the dissolution of the British empire in the wake of decolonization. Both the works are considered as tragicomedies, containing the dark themes of imperialism and psychology.

It is these twin themes of imperialism and psychology that make the two works quite contemporary despite their remote and otherworldly setting. The setting of *The Tempest* is an unidentified enchanted island. In the "Introduction" to the Arden Shakespeare series of the play, Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan conjecture that the unidentified exotic island may be anywhere in the Brave New World, or in Africa, or it may be near home, Ireland, considering the fact that Caliban is a colonized subject of the British (Vaughan and Vaughan 51). From this island setting of *The Tempest* we move to an inland setting in *The Spire*. Golding's novel is set in the fourteenth century medieval Christendom, just before the time colonialism became rampant as a European phenomenon. But Golding in this novel does not offer a study of medieval time, rather he develops the theme of

domination and self-aggrandizement through a megalomaniac Dean who is otherwise occupied in building a spire over his cathedral thus neglecting his priestly duties. The emphasis on the libidinal impulses of the character rather than his piety makes Jocelin a post-Freudian twentieth century entity. The narrative conforms to the post-empire British psychology of loss and lack that Golding seems to explore in his novels and which makes him a post-empire writer. Golding wrote his novels during the time of decolonization when England lost its overseas empire and geographically got reduced to the homeland. Restricted in its outward movement, England had to fall back on itself, a new reality that is metaphorically described in John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger* through the Porters' family drama in an one-room attic flat. The ship that was the symbol of its maritime prowess and free movement thoughout the empire, is finally brought home, inland. And delusional Jocelin has to fortify it with rocks, and all his efforts and anxiety are directed to make it safe. From a romantic and magical colonialist in *The Tempest* we move to a delusional colonialist in *The Spire* who seeks to perpetrate and perpetuate an architectural symbol of a diehard colonialist centre that has already been shaken to the very foundation by the event of decolonization.

This comparison may sound a little bit far-fetched, but considering the fact that both Shakespeare and Golding deftly garb their colonialist ideology and agenda under the guise of a romance and an allegory respectively in their works, the comparison stands tenable and sustainable. Golding calls himself a very serious and committed writer (Golding, "The Writer in His Age", 45), committed to unravel the truth about humanity; but instead of writing directly about contemporary political reality, he writes veiled allegories of human nature, thus commenting on contemporary political reality only indirectly. However, the reader can reconstruct the colonialist ideology and agenda from the allegories of othertime and otherplace. The alienated and remote setting helps Golding in his fabulation, but the contrivance of such a setting does not hide the contemporary political reality for long. This is the case with *The Spire.* So it is not anomalous to think a fourteenth century priest as a degenerated version of a sixteenth century magician desperately looking for some magical power in his mission of erecting and preserving a colonialist architecture in the decolonized time. The will-to-power of both the

characters is worked out by the master-slave narrative embedded in both the texts; the situation and characters contribute to their similarities.

The main element in this master-slave narrative is Prospero's relation with Caliban, Ariel, Miranda and Gonzalo in *The Tempest* and Jocelin's relation with Pangall, Roger Mason, Goody Pangall and Father Adam in *The Spire*. Prospero's relation with Caliban raises the prospect of colonialism, so does Jocelin's relation with Pangall. Caliban complains that Prospero has usurped his island (which he inherited from his mother Sycorax) and reduced him to a menial slave, and for which he seeks revenge first by attempting to rape Perospero's daughter Miranda and then by conspiring with Stephano and Trinculo to dethrone him. Pangall, the caretaker of the cathedral (and whose father, grandfather and great grandfather also worked at the cathedral), similarly complains that Jocelin's workmen have taken over his cottage which lies attached to the cathedral building and which he calls his 'kingdom', and driven him out. It is because of his inheritance of his 'kingdom' from his father, grandfather and great grandfather, Pangall identifies himself with the cathedral. In his conversation with Jocelin in the first chapter Pangall asserts, "My great-great-great grandfather helped to build it [the cathedral]" (15). Both Caliban and Pangall thus betray a genuine sense of attachment for their homes. It is because of their sense of belonging to the island and the cathedral respectively that both Caliban and Pangall deeply feel a sense of injustice done to them by their masters. The subjection of Caliban and the Calibanization of Pangall underline their inferior, deformed and derogatory subaltern status which is readily exploited by their masters. The loss of Caliban's island to Prospero and the loss of Pangall's kingdom to Jocelin's workmen also raise the spectre of British colonialism over the Irish people. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan point out that Caliban may be a native American or Carribean, or an African, but more likely he is an Irishman (Vaughan and Vaughan 52).

This form of racial prejudice and subalternity is also present in Jocelin's treatment of Pangall, a representative of the pre-Christian pagan world. As Kevin McCarron shows,

> The historical setting [of *The Spire*] allows the proximity of Stonehenge to challenge the authority of the cathedral, and just as for

> *The Inheritors* Golding selected a period of crucial historical importance, the destruction of Neanderthal Man and the simultaneous ascendancy of the New Men, so too in *The Spire* he has chosen a period and a setting which allow him to depict a destructive collision, this time between pagan beliefs and Christianity. (McCarron 24)

Both Caliban and Pangall emerge as subjects of oppression, not only by what they suffer at the hand of their masters, but also by the portrayal of their physical deformity which stereotypes them as dehumanized figures. Although "the extent of Caliban's deformity is woefully imprecise" (Vaughan and Vaughan 33) he is portrayed as an earth-monster, "usually hunched and close to the earth, often, in illustrations and stage productions, emerging from a rocky or subterranean cave" (Vaughan and Vaughan 28). The physical deformity of Caliban draws derogatory responses from other characters. However, Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan find this 'indeterminate' because "the bulk of evidence points to a Caliban who is, despite his possibly demonic parentage and unspecified deformity, essentially human" (Vaughan and Vaughan 34). Pangall, like the deformed Caliban, is described as physically deformed, crippled and limping in the left leg, and is believed to be impotent. Caliban's name is an anagram of 'cannibal' (Vaughan and Vaughan 31), so Pangall's name is a combination of the word 'Pan' the Greek god whose nether part is goat-like and who stands for lust and nature, and the word 'gall' which means bitterness and rancour. Because of his physical deformity and impotence, he is turned into a scapegoat by the workmen, a sacrificial victim mocked, cuckolded and hounded by them in order to keep away bad luck. Eventually he is reported missing, but the truth is that he is killed by the workmen in a riot and his deadbody is thrown into the dark pit beneath the cathedral to carry the load of the spire. Like Caliban, he also is demonized and turned into an earth-monster. Both the characters resent their masters.

The master-slave narrative continues with two other characters, Ariel in *The Tempest* and Roger Mason in *The Spire.* Ariel acts as Prospero's agent "who contrives a storm and a disappearing banquet" (Vaughan and Vaughan 27). Bound by an agreement with Prospero to work as his minion, he has to obey his master, but he is resentful of the bondage and demands his freedom sooner than later. Similarly,

Roger Mason is the master mason of Jocelin who, bound by an agreement with Jocelin, has to complete the building of the spire, although while facing the difficulty of the work he resents his bondage and demands freedom. Although he is scared of heights (Golding *The Spire* 114), he has to work on the spire which goes up through the air, thus resembling an air-spirit in his action, doomed to be hanging on the spire, as opposed to Pangall's Earth-burial. Ariel is used by Prospero to torment Caliban and his enemies, so Roger Mason becomes an instrument of torture for Pangall. In order to keep Roger Mason from desertion, Jocelin sets Pangall's wife as a sexual bait for his diversion which Roger takes and the affair progresses from the 'swallow's nest' to Goody Pangall's death in childbirth and further to Roger's drunkenness and to his failed suicide attempt by hanging.

What can be seen in the stories is the great manipulative power of both Prospero and Jocelin which makes and mars the lives of others, and in this regard both the characters emerge as father figures. Prospero as a father is concerned with the wellbeing of Miranda, and arranges situation for both Miranda and Ferdinand to fall in love which eventually culminates in their betrothal. Possessive as he is of his daughter he punishes Caliban who is intent on raping her. That is to say, as a stern father figure of repression, Prospero castrates (in the psychoanalytic sense) Caliban who is a symbol of lust. By castrating the rebellious son (Caliban), he keeps the only woman on the island for himself. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan opine that the urgency of marrying off Miranda to Ferdinand is connected with the incestuous feeling of the father for the daughter. Whereas Miranda is fifteen years of age, following the age of the actors in the performances, Vaughan and Vaughan conclude that Prospero may be a middle-aged man, aged between 40 to 45. As Caliban is repressed, so is Pangall. In Golding's novel, Pangall is impotent, or, castrated in the psychoanalytical sense, and he is made to marry Goody, Jocelin's 'daughter in God' (Golding *The Spire* 11), by Jocelin himself. As it is revealed, Goody is the object of Jocelin's unconscious lust, and her marriage with Pangall is Jocelin's ploy to keep his 'daughter in God' unravished. Both Caliban and Pangall represent the libido, of Prospero and Jocelin respectively. For Miranda, she has seen only three men in her life, her father, Caliban and Ferdinand. For Goody, she has likewise 'seen' (in the sexual sense) three men, Jocelin, Pangall and Roger Mason. Goody's sexual encounter with Roger is revealed to be Jocelin's devious way to

keep Roger Mason from defecting. Although Roger is married to Rachel, but their relationship is "more like brother and sister than man and wife" (Golding *The Spire* 43). As Goody's marrige and sexlife is manipulated by Jocelin for his self-interest, so also Miranda's love for Ferdinand is also designed and staged by Prospero for his and her wellbeing. Thus sexuality, latent and manifest, problematizes both the texts. An element of repression is at work in both the texts. The sublimation of this repressed libido is expressed in the form of Prospero's obsession with magic and Jocelin's obsession with the building of the spire. As Laurence Lerner in his essay "Jocelin's folly; or, Down with the spire" points out, "Jocelin discovers that his love for Goody Pangall, his daughter in God, was far more sexual and forbidden than he had dared realise, and his repressed lust for her turns out to be profoundly and inextricably connected with his passion to build the spire" (Lerner 4). That is why Jocelin cannot extricate himself from his delusional sighting of Goody's red hair which contaminates him and his phallic spire like a devil, "there was a tangle of hair, blazing among the stars; and the great club of his spire lifted towards it" (Golding *The Spire* 221).

The end of the texts comes in the way of self-realization of the characters, and the end is important for the colonialist mind. And it is the end that shows the two central characters as artists, art versus nature being the major theme of both the texts. And keeping with the spirit of a tragi-comedy, the sense of tragedy and sadness is mitigated at the end by a sense of reconciliation, forgiveness and renunciation of power and glory. The relative ease with which Prospero works out his magical storm of revenge and justice gets mired with a sexual tension, contamination, discomfort and the unconscious. Faced with latent/incipient rebellion and the pitfalls of Calibanisation, he finally learns the lesson of renunciation/withdrawal from the island and his magical world of domination and subjugation vanishes into the thin air. The colonial master has learnt the joy of humility, fellow-feeling, forgiveness and renunciation as an imperial being, and rises as a romantic. Jocelin's monomaniacal vision turns out to be a manifestation of his repressed sexuality and sublimation. The upward/vertical expansion of the cathedral is a displaced colonial ambition, diverted from the usual horizontal expansion in the wake of decolonization and loss of the empire. The 'bible in stone' (Golding *The Spire* 51) that he intends to build (write), turns out to be an erection of

a phallic structure, a ‘stone hammer’ (Golding *The Spire* 222) and corresponds to his domination and subjugation of both nature and man. Jocelin’s building of the spire is not only a domination over earth and air, but also over human lives, by means of manipulation and exploitation. The magical power of control over nature and human lives turns the master into an artist who deftly and diplomatically gets his work done by coercing or cajoling people to submission. The novel brings into question the boundary between the sacred and the profane, and most often leads to an understanding of the postcontaminated world, by grappling with the unconscious—both sexual and colonial. With the erection of the spire, which corresponds a phallic erection, Jocelin comes to know about his unconscious sexuality and will-to-power, demonstrating the psychology of a colonialist mind at work. However, the spire is erected over a (sexual) pit, over no (colonial) foundation, and therefore seethes with sexual turmoil and contamination, and sways in a precarious condition. Jocelin is seen busying himself securing the spire by nailing it against the heavens, and learns the lesson of humility, fellow-feeling, forgiveness, pain and renunciation/withdrawal from the world. The colonial master has learnt the pain of loss and renunciation as a postimperial being, and falls as a neurotic.

There are two characters, who although very different in temperament, connect the two texts by their loyalty and obedience. Gonzalo in *The Tempest* is a loyal courtier who works to help Prospero in time of need, Father Adam in *The Spire* is obedient to Jocelin and works to bring about Jocelin’s salvation. “One of the pleasantest characters of the piece [*The Tempest*]”, writes A. W. Verity, “is Gonzalo, the shrewd, witty and loyal old courtier” (Verity xxvii). Laurence Lerner finds Father Adam as “the most charitable, the kindliest character in the book” (Lerner 4) and whom Jocelin lovingly calls ‘Father Anonymous’ (Golding *The Spire* 26). The composure and moderation of the two men are in sharp contrast to the obsession of the two central characters, but they help their journey of self-discovery, as well as creating a soft corner for them.

This self-discovery of both Prospero and Jocelin includes a vision of regaining some lost paradise. As Frank Kermode comments that learning is a major theme in *The Tempest* (Kermode l) and it is learning that enables Prospero to make

up for that deeper loss and return, of which his lost dukedom and return to it are only an allegory.

> Prospero, like Adam, fell from his kingdom by an inordinate thirst for knowledge; but learning is a great aid to virtue, the road by which we may love and imitate God, and "repair the ruins of our first parents", and by its means he is enabled to return. (Kermode l)

The journey from innocence to experience parallels the experience of Adam and Eve, and ironically the experience of an imperial self. Prospero is an Adam who carefully avoids getting spoiled by his Eve (Miranda), and regains the paradise with relative ease by renunciation of his power (empire), but Jocelin has to labour hard in this direction. Thus learning becomes a major theme in *The Spire* as well. Jocelin's project of erecting the tower of Babel, the symbol of human folly and pride (Boyd 89), finally becomes a project of connecting earth and heaven, 'an upward waterfall' (Golding *The Spire* 223) and an 'appletree' (Golding *The Spire* 223), the tree of life – Igdrasil (Boyd 103). This is achieved by learning the lesson of humility, love and forgiveness. Jocelin, like Adam, is contaminated by his Eve, Goody Pangall, suffers pride and lust for power, but finally settles for a means of regaining paradise and blessedness. However, in the process the imperial self of Jocelin is shown to live and die for an imperial symbol of lost power and glory.

Thus it can easily be said that *The Spire* is a post-empire novel having tell-tale signature of a colonialist mind at work behind the primary motive of erecting a spire. The novel is fraught with post-Freudian understanding of human psychology of building phallic structures which also carries the colonialist motive of domination and self-aggrandisement. The architectural aspect of colonialism is a symbolic one of imposition and authority. It is so because the story of building a spire over an old cathedral runs the colonialist vision of erection as a mark of glory and divine sanction. The architectural motif fits well into the colonialist agenda, like Kubla's decreeing of a pleasure dome in Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan". As the Mongol emperor in Coleridge's poem brings about architectural order over the natural chaos and the barbarism of Tartars as part of the poet's dream vision, so the Dean of a cathedral in Golding's story plans to build a spire against all odds as part of a divine vision, and his domination over natural chaos

and unruly army of workers is worked out in geographical terms. Allegorically, both Coleridge's poem and Golding's novel may be read as a statement of the nature of creative imagination, fraught with sexual tension, contamination, pain, joy and a sense of incompleteness; as they reveal the process of authoring a second nature and the metafictional nature of writing itself. Coleridge's poem, written in the heyday of the early nineteenth century British colonialism, evokes the medieval Orient of exoticism and opulence; whereas Golding's novel, written in the difficult time of the mid-twentienth century decolonisation, evokes the medieval Christendom of churches and spires. Golding's going back to the Christendom of fourteenth century medieval times as a setting for his story probably has this precise point: that having retreated from the colonies and thus deprived of external manifestation, the English colonialist mind has to internalise the whole colonial process and fall back on its own subalterns to treat them as expendable others in the same process so that the "book is all about the human cost of building the spire" (Golding *Moving Target* 166). Secondly, as Stefan Hawlin convincingly that Golding emerges as a colonialist writer in *Lord of the Flies* who is in favour of bringing back the colonial rule and reinstate the precarious centre by subduing the chaoticand murderous margin through military takeover (Hawlin 125-135). If Hawlin's analysis of *Lord of the Flies* is applied to Golding's other novels, especially *The Inheritors, Pincher Martin* and *The Spire*, then they gradually come out of their innocuous fable mode to become, to borrow Sara Suleri's words for E. M. Forster's novel *A Passage to India*, "acts of representation as a mode of recolonization" (Suleri 245). By adopting the postcolonialist position as enunciated in Said's *Orientalism*, Suleri suggests that "Forster transgresses even an Orientalist decorum... by implying that India is really not other at all, but merely a mode or passageway to endorse the infinite variety that constitutes a reading of the West" (Suleri 246). For Suleri India represents a lack, "where the god neglects to come":

> The structure of the novel images this neglect through its emblematic representation of empty institutions, or buildings that are somewhat wanton in their lack of habitation. *A Passage to India* makes neat architecture of this lack, in that the three sections of the book – 'Mosque', 'Caves', and 'Temple' – function primarily as

> cavities to contain western perceptions of that which is missing from the East. The edifices thus constitute the shells into which Forster can uncurl echoes of what first appears to be a humane compassion, but what gradually and more threateningly develops into an exquisite nostalgia for betrayal. Both Mosque and Temple, therefore, collaborate and collapse into the emptiness that is the Cave. (Suleri 248)

Instead of collapsing into emptiness, although always threatened by negation and dissolution, Golding's spire becomes an act of representation as a mode of internalisation of this lack which is to be filled in by desperate act of erection. In the muddle and mystery resulting from 'the infinite variety that constitutes a reading of the West' that reveals 'an exquisite nostalgia for betrayal', the erection of the spire simultaneously turns out to be a phallic erection and also a metafictional writerly feat.

Thus it would not be wrong to say that Golding's fiction is built on the loss and lack of empire, expression of which ranges from overt to covert. The mythic propensity of his writingon the one hand masks the fall of the empire with the fall of man, and on the other makes his novels allegory of human evil, but the mask falls off and the real face of the colonialist intention bares itself under an able critical investigation. The fall of the empire syndrome is marked by trauma, violence and guilty introspection, making the novels an uneven apology for injustices done. However he tries to distance his fiction from the contemporary by means of an alienated setting, the theme of colonialism becomes apparent. This is particularlyevident in his first three novels, *Lord of the Flies, The Inheritors* and *Pincher Martin.* In *The Spire* he employs the same technique of positioning his novel in a distant setting in Christendom, in fourteenth century medieval period, before colonialism became a rampant European phenomenon, by taking up the story of a Dean of a cathedral who is obsessed with building a 400-foot spire upon a structure that lacks a foundation, Quixotic enough to sanctify it with a vision of divine mission. Golding's fascination with a lack gets itself manifested in different forms of building, building a civilisation in *Lord of the Flies,* building a habitat in *The Inheritors,* and building a colony in *Pincher Martin.* This

building or making is done at the expense of the other, an act of denial, repression and elimination of the other, that grants a body to the imperial vision. *The Spire* is motivated by an embodiment of such a vision, which is now rendered disembodied in the wake of decolonisation. The identification of the spire with Jocelin's own body and then variously with fetishes like phallus, red hair of his object of desire, upward waterfall, kingfisher and appletree is a process of development of thought in terms of erection that makes the author a colonizer of his fictional space.

What becomes so important in the novel is the status of Jocelin as a colonialist master in the post-empire time. This is marked by a sense of domination by sexual erection on the one hand, and on the other by a sense of losing that domination by increasing emasculation as signified by the precariousness of the erected spire/phallus. The manliness and virility of the master is embodied in the architectural erection, his precariousness and jeopardy is embodied in the precariousness of that erection. Emasculation is a recurring motif in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*; it becomes a dominant motif in Golding's *Free Fall* and *The Spire.* In Achebe's novel the falling apart of the Igbo community and the representative of its values, Okonkwo, is shown in terms of increasing emasculation to connote the precariousness of this community in the face of colonialist intervention. In Golding's novel, it is the precariousness of the centre that is signified in the symbolic emasculation of Jocelin who thinks himself as God's emissary, and hence the authority of the author. According to Paul Crawford, "The construction of Jocelin's spire, and coterminously the novel *The Spire*, is humorously linked with penile erection" and "Ever threatened by collapse, the spire emphasizes sexual, religious, and creative impotency" (Crawford 120). One can find in the overthrow of Pangall's kingdom, as Virginia Tiger does, the echo of the sacred wood myth of "the emasculation of an old king by his successor" (Tiger *Unmoved Target* 170); but the identification of Jocelin and the Pangall happens in the emasculation of Jocelin. The simultaneous erection of the spire and the emasculation of Jocelin are dynamically presented through the upward and downward movement, the tower and the pit; and also the construction of the spire and the deconstruction of Jocelin's spine. According to Paul Crawford,

> Throughout the novel Jocelin refers to his personal "constructive" angel who aids his work. Yet with a critical prescience, Golding eventually reveals this angel as "deconstructive", a cancer that deforms Jocelin's spine and brings chaos and death. This naturalization of the angel as cancer erodes the wider fantastic hesitation in a way that works metaphorically to suggest the threat that hangs not simply over the spire as a building, but over the novel itself and language in general. (Crawford 122)

Jocelin moves between the vision of heaven and the nightmare of hell. This is practically the same kind of movement one can notice in Golding's fiction. In *Lord of the Flies* the British boys try to build a civilisation on the basis of imperialist literature, but their efforts end "in blood and terror" (Golding *Hot Gates* 89). In *The Inheritors* the vision of heaven comprises the state of innocence of the Neanderthals, and the nightmare of hell is represented by the state of experience of the new people. In *Pincher Martin* the die-hard colonialist mentality conjures up a heaven of a rock, only to turn to a nightmare of hallucination. In *Free Fall* the freedom of innocence is contrasted with the fallen condition of loss of freedom. In *The Spire* the subterranean corruption ruins the angelic vision and turns it into a devilish project. Like Sammy Mountjoy in *Free Fall*, Jocelin faces a trial not merely by the external agency of the Visitor, but also the internal agency of his conscience. With every corruption, Jocelin is emasculated. He comes to term with reality by corruptly appointing Ivo as a canon of the church because his father supplied timber; by condoning Roger's relationship with Goody to keep Roger continue to work; and by using his personal seal to acquire money for building the spire. He not merely "traded a stone hammer for four people" (Golding *Spire* 222), but also damaged the career of Father Anselm, undermined the chapter and sacrileged the cathedral. He finally comes to realize that he has become unworthy of forgiveness and redemption.

Jocelin's transition from the realm of a colonialist to that of a colonized enables him to live in both the realms, and this is perhaps the new development and new realization in the decolonized time, and this contributes to the vision of

man in Golding's novels. Golding's vision of man in his fiction becomes explicit in *Free Fall*, the adumbration of which is given in *The Inheritors* that consciousness is a dubious gift to humanity, because consciousness begets guilt. Innocence is unselfconsciousness. *Free Fall* talks about three kinds of humanity, the innocent, the wicked and the guilty, "The innocent and the wicked live in one world... But we are neither innocent nor the wicked. We are the guilty. We fall down. We crawl on hands and knees. We weep and tear each other" (Golding *Free Fall* 251). Mark Kinkead-Weekes and Ian Gregor find a 'new distinction' between the Wicked and the Guilty, unlike the Wicked "The Guilty live in both worlds, so that they recognize what they are, understand how they became as they are, but can find no forgiveness" (Kinkead-Weekes and Gregor 196). Jocelin in *The Spire* is an example of the Guilty, and therefore, like Sammy Mountjoy, undergoes his own purgatorial ordeal of a colonialist self. The allegorical tendency of Golding's fiction allows the novels to be read as novels and also as allegories. And what emerges in the reading process is not merely a metaphysical dimension but also a colonialist dimension as well.

In analysing the postimperial neurosis in the said novels of William Golding it becomes clear that his fiction is symptomatic of a crisis of imperial faith in the contemporary European history. The postcolonial motive on the part of the novelist of examining where the European colonialism went wrong was necessarily an examination of where the European civilisation went wrong, and finally it becomes an examination of where human rationalism went wrong. Golding is not an ideologue, he is an artist, and in the capacity of an artist he created a laboratory condition to delve deep into the psychological conditions of life and the real life existential conditions marked by limitations like social conditioning, off-campus history and social/racial expectations. Golding is a postimperial thinker, there is no doubt about it, but with a difference. He differs significantly from the imperialistic writers and the long-established literary/philosophical traditions that catered to or propagated imperialism as divine right and racial superiority as something natural. He parodied them with gusto to unearth the true reality beneath these traditional imperialist beliefs. In order to examine the true disease of humanity he of course takes the recourse to determinism, but modifies it with meliorism. His sense of justice makes him see

virtue in the resolution of the Manichean binaries, the binaries he found evil and conterproductive. The mitigating force in his fiction as envisaged through the trope of Christ figure is undeniably appealing to all the sensitive and sensible beings. This is the true task of the artist, that along with giving a glimpse of contemporary reality, he has to provide a vision of life worthy to pursue. And in the process of doing so, he is able to match and balance perfectly the political, the aesthetic and the ethical, so that a harmonious psyche and society leads to human wholeness and health and ensures happiness.