

Univerzita Karlova v Praze  
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Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

## DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

Use of Symbolism in Selected Works of William Golding

Symbolismus ve vybraných dílech Williama Goldinga

Kateřina Kopečná

Vedoucí práce: PhDr. Petr Chalupský, Ph.D.

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Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci na téma Use of Symbolism in Selected Works of William Golding vypracovala pod vedením vedoucího práce samostatně za použití v práci uvedených pramenů a literatury. Dále prohlašuji, že tato práce nebyla využita k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

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podpis

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## **ABSTRAKT**

Diplomová práce se zabývá symbolismem ve třech vybraných románech Williama Goldinga, *Ztroskotání Christophera Martina*, *Věž* a *Dvojí jazyk*. Teoretická část představuje spisovatelův stručný životopis a nastiňuje teoretické pozadí literárního symbolismu, se zvláštním zaměřením na teorii symbolů Northropa Frye a psychoanalytickou perspektivu. Je zakončena výčtem zdrojů inspirace za vybranými Goldingovými díly, s ohledem na jeho vlastní zážitky, stejně tak jako na literární vlivy. Praktická část je zahájena charakterizací Goldingova obecného používání symbolů, včetně autorových metod, opakujících se témat a symbolických vzorců. Její hlavní část se jednotlivě soustředí na vybrané tři knihy v pořadí jejich vydání. Každá sekce analyzuje symboliku prostředí příběhu a jmen protagonistů, symbolické obrazy, a hledá křesťanské a psychoanalytické symboly. Navíc prezentuje možné výklady dalších význačných symbolů, které se objevují v daném románu. Používání symbolů je dáno do kontextu s vnějšími vlivy, aby se ukázala různorodost témat a specifičnost autorova stylu.

## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

William Golding, symbolismus, alegorie, symbol, psychoanalýza, *Ztroskotání Christophera Martina*, *Věž*, *Dvojí jazyk*

## **ABSTRACT**

This diploma thesis is concerned with the use of symbolism in three selected novels by William Golding, *Pincher Martin*, *The Spire* and *The Double Tongue*. The theoretical part presents a brief biography of the writer and outlines theoretical background of literary symbolism, focusing especially on Northrop Frye's Theory of Symbols and the psychoanalytic perspective. It is concluded by listing sources of inspiration behind the selected Golding's works, taking his own experiences as well as literary influences into account. The practical part begins with characterization of Golding's use of symbols in general, including his methods, recurring topics and symbolic patterns. Its main part focuses individually on the three chosen books, in the order of their publication. Each section analyses symbolism of setting of the story and the protagonists' names, symbolic imagery, and it seeks for Christian and psychoanalytic symbols. In addition, it presents possible interpretations of other significant symbols occurring in the particular novel. The use of symbolism is put in context with outer influences to show the variety of topics and specificity of the author's style.

## **KEYWORDS**

William Golding, symbolism, allegory, symbol, psychoanalysis, *Pincher Martin*, *The Spire*, *The Double Tongue*

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## Introduction

William Golding is a very distinctive figure in British literary canon of the second half of the 20th century. Unlike his contemporaries of the post-war England, in all his works he was deeply and systematically concerned with creating allegories, myths and fables based on moral dilemmas that are universal; i.e. not connected to one specific time and place. Although much has already been written about him, about his work, and especially about its nature and possible interpretations, it was usually his best-selling debut *Lord of the Flies* (1954) that drew the greatest attention of literary critics and reviewers, while his other works have undeservedly remained in its shade.

Since Golding is especially known for focusing on moral allegories and symbolism, this work's aim is to look at the use of symbolism predominantly in his three unique and distinctive novels *Pincher Martin* (1956), *The Spire* (1964) and *The Double Tongue* (1995). The works have been chosen deliberately – all of them are unified by a similar topic of the battle between the good and evil on an existential level. However, they are very different as far as the setting, plot and type of narration are concerned. They also vary in the time of publishing: *Pincher Martin* is one of his early works, in fact his third published novel; *The Spire* belongs to the “middle” of his literary career, almost ten years after *Pincher Martin*, and *The Double Tongue* is, on the contrary, his last, unfinished work, published posthumously. Therefore, the thesis attempts not only to analyse the above mentioned works in terms of the symbolic, but it also tries to come up with possible sources of inspiration that might have influenced Golding in the specific periods of time and how the impact is reflected in his novels.

The thesis is divided into two main parts – the first, theoretical one, presents the selection of main secondary sources necessary for exploring and analysing Golding's life and work and for understanding the overall context of Great Britain's socio-economic, cultural and political situation in the second half of the 20th century. It is followed by Golding's brief biography. The theoretical part is concluded by theoretical background of symbolism and allegory, together with possible sources of inspiration and works whose influence is more or less visible behind the three analysed books.

The practical part consists of four main chapters: the first deals with Golding's use of symbols on a general level and discusses major topics occurring in all his novels. The following three chapters focus individually on the works mentioned above, in the order of their time of publishing – *Pincher Martin*, *The Spire*, and *The Double Tongue*. Each of them is briefly summarized, when suitable, it is placed in context with the author's personal experiences, but the main attention is paid to the analysis of the use of symbols. What all three parts have in common is the attempted interpretation of the setting, names of the main protagonists, Christian symbols and psychoanalytic symbols. The rest of each part deals with the symbols, symbolic imagery and issues specific for the particular novel. Presented topics and motifs are accompanied by exemplifying passages to support the discussion.



# 1 Theoretical part

## 1.1 Outline of the theoretical literature

Although William Golding is perceived as one of the most interesting British writers of the 20th century, getting relevant theoretical literature describing his life has brought difficulties as it turned out that the access to such sources is very limited. Until recently it also seemed that Golding's life remained unexplored – most authors of publications analysing some of his works dedicate only a few pages to outline his brief and undetailed biography. However, an in-depth study by John Carey has recently appeared to reveal many unknown facts of Golding's life. In his extensive work, *William Golding: The Man who wrote Lord of the Flies* (2010), Carey focuses on the writer's life from much closer and complex perspective, with details and new pieces of information that no one managed to embrace before. With the help of authentic diaries, letters, testimonies and interviews with family members and friends, Carey was able to build up an elaborate biography and analyses of his fiction. This book served as one of the most valuable sources for drawing facts from Golding's life and especially for understanding the background of his lifetime.

The official web pages dedicated to William Golding also meant a significant help as far as Golding's important life events and his complete bibliography are concerned. Besides, they provide useful links on scholarly articles, reviews and commentaries on his work, as well as a section dealing with works influential in his novels, and his cultural legacy.

Among other sources used mainly for getting information about his life, R. H. Reiff's publication *William Golding: Lord of the Flies* (2010) provides a brisk and more author-oriented description of Golding's life, heavily relying on authentic sources and Golding's own statements. Especially Chapter 4, entitled "Golding's Place in Literature" was appreciated because it puts his books in context with his contemporaries, and because it also reviews works of art influenced by his fiction. In addition, Robert McCrum's article "William Golding's Crisis" (2012) published in the online version of *The Guardian* proved informative as it is based on an interview with Golding's daughter Judith and excerpts from his diaries.

Presenting the theoretical background of the use of symbolism was drawn prevalingly from L. L. Dickson's *The Modern Allegories of William Golding* (1990), which provided general introduction in how to read Golding's symbols and allegories and also what Golding himself said about his novels and extensive use of myths, as he preferred to call them. Besides the symbolic analysis of his nine novels (*Paper Men* being the last so far), the author often quotes other relevant sources, which makes the book even more useful. Dickson also made a couple of interviews with Golding, therefore he has an authentic commentary on the analysed subjects.

The second publication that was used is Philip Redpath's *William Golding: A Structural Reading of His Fiction* (1986), dealing with Golding's novels eclectically, from his own, distinct point of view. As Redpath says in the preface, his work's main aim is "to explore the ways in which the novels create meaning" (9) and to suggest possible readings of his works. For the purposes of the thesis, chapters 6 and 7 were the most interesting as they deal with *The Spire* and *Pincher Martin* differently than other critics: he explores the structure underlying the main "story" and examines individual layers and segments separately, through the theory of structuralism.

Both of these novels are also analysed in Gunnel Cleve's *Elements of Mysticism in Three of William Golding's Novels* (1986), with the main focus on mystical and symbolic aspect of the books. Together with the theoretical introduction, it served as a valuable source of inspiration for the structure of my work as well. What is also worth pointing out is one of the more innovative and investigative study of Golding's life and work, simply called *William Golding* (1994), by Kevin McCarron who tries to look at Golding's novels from an interdisciplinary perspective, searching for their roots in earlier works or events and in the overall context of Golding's life. Unlike other authors, he distributes his attention evenly, without promoting *Lord of the Flies* as the author's best book.

Regarding the three novels that are particularly explored in this thesis, forewords and afterwords included in some of the original as well as translated editions provide valuable observations: both *Pincher Martin* and *The Spire* were in Czech accompanied by critical afterwords. A significant amount of relevant information can also be found in the Czech version of *Lord of the Flies* and its casebook edition by J. R. Baker and A. B.

Ziegler (1983), which besides the actual novel consists of various introductions, commentaries and interviews with Golding.

## **1.2 William Golding's biography**

William Gerald Golding was born in Cornwall, England on 19 September 1911 to Alec and Mildred Golding, a very progressive couple at the time: his mother was a suffragette activist and together with her husband they were socialists with passion for music and science. His father is said to have a great influence on Golding's life: for most of his life he was teaching and writing journals, which created a fertile environment for his son's literary development (Carey 1, 7-10; Beran 217-218).

He grew up in Marlborough where his father worked, and where he also attended grammar school. In his memories he often describes fear and "irrational terror" (Carey 23) that he always felt in the Marlborough house and for which his parents had no understanding. Golding's fear of supernatural has in fact been ridiculed and ignored, however, his diary entries describing nightmares and terrifying figments of his imagination are far too vivid and detailed to consider them harmless and unimportant. On its basis, Carey finds Golding as a child "over-sensitive, timid, fearful, lonely, and imaginative to the point of hallucination" (29).

In 1930 Golding started attending Brasenose College in Oxford to study natural sciences (to satisfy his father's wish) but two years later he realized it had been a mistake and he transferred to studying English literature instead (Carey 40-45, Beran 218). The interest in literature and language has then accompanied him for his whole life. Already at college he wrote a collection of poems which he published in 1934 after his graduation. Nevertheless, his first work did not gain much attention and it has not become known even after him getting publicity.

In the beginnings of his working career he worked in small theatre companies for several years. In 1938, he also started to teach at Maidstone jail, as a "sign of his developing social conscience" (Carey 74), which also lead him to attend Left Book Club meetings in London where he met Ann Brookfield, a similarly thinking leftist. Although

she was at least two ranks above Golding on a social scale, they grew very close and it did not take long before they agreed on getting married.

The year 1939 meant significant changes in many aspects of Golding's life: he changed his job by becoming a teacher at Bishop Wordsworth's School in Salisbury, he got married and soon expected a child, and finally the Second World War burst out. After their first son David was born, Golding entered the Royal Navy for the period of 1940 – 1945. Serving mainly on cruisers and destroyers, he was exposed to open-fire battles, air raids, constant fear of U-boats' attacks and massive loss of friends. He was forced to witness sheer brutality, omnipresent death and suffering and yet perceive it in cold blood (McCarron 1).

The whole experience has influenced him to a great extent. As Beran (1996) states, during the wartime he has gradually lost not only his ideals, but also beliefs in humanism and socialism: his political and philosophical convictions were deeply shaken and he came to a conclusion that people are mere sinners from the moment of being born, which then became a pervading topic of almost all his works (217). What was the most shocking realization though were the findings about himself. Carey quotes a line from his diary: "I have always understood the Nazis because I am of that sort by nature" and he continues that "it was 'partly out of that sad self-knowledge' that he wrote *Lord of the Flies*" (82). He was released from the marine forces two months after D-day but came home as a completely different person.

In September 1945 Golding returned to his former job as a teacher, although he did not like it as he could not see the meaningfulness of his work. Also his colleagues viewed him as an eccentric, ungifted teacher, who spent most of his time by learning Greek, reading books and scribbling notes (Carey 115-116). In the same year, his wife gave birth to their second child, Judith. Despite considering himself "incompetent" for teaching, he stayed at Bishop Wordsworth's School until 1961, but he devoted his free time to writing. During 1952 he started to create a draft for his future novel *Strangers from Within* which was later edited and finished in 1954 as *Lord of the Flies*. Although it was first rejected by twenty one publishers, after the book was published, it quickly became a best-seller. The immense success of his debut allowed Golding to leave his position as a teacher in 1961 and he spent the following academic year lecturing in the United States. The positive

reception encouraged Golding to continue in writing and within the following two years he managed to publish two more books: *The Inheritors* (1955) and *Pincher Martin*.

As he was growing famous, he was repeatedly awarded – in 1955 he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and in 1966 he gained CBE (Commander of the Order of British Empire). Most of his life he stayed in Salisbury, which is also reflected in the setting of *The Spire*, but during 1980's he moved to Truro in Cornwall. Besides writing, he deepened his knowledge of Greek and the Antiquity in general, which can be seen in the whole story of his last, unfinished novel *The Double Tongue*.

In 1967, the whole Golding's family had a serious accident in a boat. Although everybody survived, an interview with Golding's daughter Judy and the writer's personal diary revealed that the accident triggered a deep crisis lasting for almost ten years: he had difficulties with writing, suffered from depressions and insomnia. In his diary he wrote: "The remedy for this, of course, was drink [...]. I do not now remember how many times I was dead drunk in this period" (McCrum).

The completion and publishing of *Darkness Visible* in 1979 brought a breakthrough of the long pause. The short novel was awarded the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, which helped Golding get his confidence back, at least regarding his writing skills. During the 1980s he was literally creating one work after another: in the period of 10 years he managed to publish 7 books. Soon he reached national as well as international recognition – for his novel *Rites of Passage* (1980) he received the Booker Prize (against Burgess's *Earthly Powers*) and in 1983 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Five years later he was knighted to become Sir William Golding (McCrum, McCarron 2). Despite the numerous appreciations he received, until the end of his life he remained closed and uncertain in terms of his talent: he was very sensitive to criticism and during his life, there were always voices questioning his awards (Carey 310).

William Golding died of heart failure in July 1993 at the age of 82. Although he had an operation of a malignant melanoma the previous year, his death was sudden and unexpected – in January he started working on a new novel. However, the unfinished manuscripts for *The Double Tongue* were eventually edited and published posthumously. (William Golding Limited).

## 1.3 Symbolism and allegory

### 1.3.1 Terms and theoretical background

To introduce the topic of symbolism which is discussed further on in connection with the three chosen novels, it is necessary to provide relevant background information explaining the terms used in context with symbolism and its use. As it has been implied, many Golding's novels are labelled as 'myths', 'fables', and 'allegories'. When we look at how these terms are dealt with in theoretical literature, a whole variety of definitions can be seen. For example, Peter (1983) explains fables as "narratives which leave the impression that their purpose was anterior, some initial thesis or contention which they are apparently concerned to embody and express in concrete terms" (249), which in fact refers to the author as the only source of meaning in his work and constricts to intended interpretation (Redpath 207). As Cleve notices, this term also appeared in the first critical study on Golding's novels and most critics have adopted it to refer to his works (1), although some of them still perceive his works as fables and fiction at the same time, such as Golding's prominent analysts, Ian Gregor and Mark Kinkead-Weekes.

Wheeler (2014) highlights the common substitution of the term 'fable' by 'parable' and he describes both of them as "a story or short narrative designed to reveal some religious principle, moral lesson, psychological reality, or general truth", however, he makes a clear distinction between them by stating that "unlike parable, the lesson learned is not necessarily allegorical". Other definitions are broader and less distinctive: e.g. The Oxford Dictionary describes parable as "any saying or narration in which something is expressed in terms of something else" and also "any kind of enigmatic or dark saying" (MacNeice 2), which is in fact more applicable on Golding's work. Cleve summarizes MacNeice's views and he notices interesting contradictions in how Golding perceives his own works as myths whereas MacNeice finds the parable as an umbrella term for his novels (Cleve 2).

As far as 'allegory' is concerned, there is also a number of definitions used in literary handbooks, but they mostly convey a similar message: generally, allegory can be described as an extended metaphor carrying a moral meaning, usually in a form of a description or a narrative. Dickson adds that the forms of metaphor "are equated with

meanings that lie outside the narrative itself” (1) which in Golding’s case means especially the ethical level. Nevertheless, although all of the terms mentioned are extensively used in connection with Golding’s novels, he prefers and considers the term ‘myth’ as the most suitable. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines myth as “an ancient story, usually containing religious or magical ideas, which may explain natural or historical events” (qtd. in Cleve 4), and, generally, the word ‘myth’ already bears the connotation with the ancient Greece and its mythology. Dickson explains Golding’s opinion on myths as something which “allows for an almost unconscious symbolism, a more desirable, flexible condition for a modern artist, and a more accurate description [than an allegory] of what he is doing” (3). Similarly, Redpath notices Golding’s conception of myth as “something which comes out from the roots of things in the ancient sense of being the key to existence“ (167), which inevitably evokes basic human instincts and imprinted patterns of behaviour, topics dealt with in *The Inheritors* and *Pincher Martin*, or in *Lord of the Flies*. However, Redpath considers the term ‘myth’ as wrong because according to him, there is too much left unexplained in Golding’s novels (168).

Definitions of all these terms convey something that seems to be the essence of Golding’s novels: the tool of the double-level writing bearing a concept of two worlds – one real and one beyond. Cleve explains that “the worlds he produces are likely to be manifestations of something else, which [...] to the writer is more real than its material manifestations” (5). However, Dickson goes further in stating that Golding’s works are much more complex: the text means what it seems but besides it also means something else. According to him, Golding “successfully incorporates larger symbolic meanings into novels that already possess interesting narratives, realistic situations, and believable characters in their own right” (Dickson 4).

The previously mentioned kind of duality incorporated in Golding’s works can be seen in other aspects than the semiotics though – MacNeice (1965) highlights the necessity of recurrence of images serving different purposes (7) and Yasunori Sugimura (2008) mentions fluctuation of metaphors as significant elements of symbolic duality, both appearing in Golding’s novels. Sugimura presents a specific example where “metaphors of apparent degeneration also have a connotation of regeneration, and vice versa” (10). The interaction of various levels of the novels suggests that they are in fact more than

allegories or fables, which supports Golding's own idea of calling them myths providing the necessary literary freedom, as presented by Dickson.

On the account of the above mentioned, it may be summarized that Golding's novels should be entitled as symbolic works rather than mere allegories: they work with whole systems of symbols and metaphors, their levels interact, and they combine elements of fables, parables and allegories.

### **1.3.2 Theory of symbols**

In 1957, Northrop Frye published *Anatomy of Criticism*, a set of essays concerning with aspects of literary criticism based exclusively on literary works. Especially the second essay, "Ethical Criticism: Theory of Symbols", provides a useful and well-arranged insight into the topic of symbols. As Frye states, the essay is in fact an answer to a simple question asked in the introduction: "how do we arrive at poetic meaning?" (Denham 63). The same year, Robert Denham reviews and interprets Frye's theory of symbols and he begins with a quotation crucial for understanding how Frye deals with terms and how he defines symbolic meaning:

The meaning of a literary work forms a part of a larger whole. In the previous essay ["Theory of Modes"] we saw that the meaning of *dianoia* was one of three elements, the other two being *mythos* or narrative and *ethos* or characterization. It is better to think, therefore, not simply of a sequence of meanings, but a sequence of contexts or relationships in which the whole work of literary art can be placed, each context having its characteristic *mythos* and *ethos* as well as its *dianoia* or meaning. (Denham 63)

What ensues from the excerpt is that Frye deals with the context of a literary work in the first place and he in fact analyses the contextual relationships which he calls "phases". In his essay they represent methods for examining the functions of a symbol, here defined as "any unit of literary structure which can be isolated for critical attention" (Denham 64). Denham adds that such a broad definition allows Frye "to associate the appropriate kind of symbolism with each phase, and thereby define the phase at the highest level of generality. The symbol used as a sign results in the descriptive phase; as motif, in the literal phase; as image, in the formal phase; as archetype, in the mythical phase; and as monad, in the anagogic phase" (64). In this respect, Frye's approach differs from other theories dealing with use of symbolism in literature.



Besides these, Frye also works with two above mentioned categories underlying his phases: narrative (*mythos*) and meaning (*dianoia*). “Narrative is associated with rhythm, movement, recurrence, event, and ritual. Meaning is associated with pattern, structure, stasis, precept, and dream” (Denham 64). Both of these levels are in fact distinguishable in Golding’s works although they are not treated separately in the practical part.

According to Frye, the descriptive and literal phase are highly interconnected as they are defined in relation to each other. However, by these terms he addresses something else than how they are generally used: in his theory, the descriptive phase is connected with connotations and collocations with a specific item outside the text, in which case the symbol is expressed by a *sign*, whereas the literal phase, paradoxically, relates to the meaning specific for the text itself – where he calls the symbol a *motif*. He also states that although every literary work is to a certain extent characterized by both mentioned phases, its symbolic value is positioned on a continuum between the two opposite poles of “documentary realism” and “pure poetry” (Denham 65). When dealing with Golding’s works, they would most likely lie somewhere in the middle, but nearer the poetic pole. Frye’s tool of analysing the inclination of a specific work to the individual sides of the continuum is to closely examine the occurrence of symbolic language within the work, however, he rejects reducing the language into two categories of emotional and rational discourse.

In the formal phase represented by the symbol as an *image*, Frye explores the form of a literary text and in contrast with the previous phases, he does not define opposing poles, but he seeks a unity of the meaning and narrative of the work. For example, when analysing a poem for symbolic elements, not only the language and its meaning should be looked at but also its form and structure should be taken into consideration. Similarly as in the previous case, “[t]he range of symbolism [here the “thematically significant imagery”] can be classified according to the degree of its explicitness [...], from the most to the least allegorical [meaning]” (Denham 68).

In Frye’s theory, the interpretation of a literary work, in this phase called “a commentary”, should also follow the way the principles of narrative and meaning interact: when the relationship between them is more implicit, the variety of possible commentaries

can be extremely wide. As examples for supporting the argument he uses generally known works by Bunyan, Milton or Shakespeare – Denham points out that “an implicit allegory like *Hamlet* can carry an almost infinite number of interpretations” (68). Since Golding’s works are, from this point of view, rather implicit as well, the attempt of the practical part is not to give only one possible interpretation of his symbols.

The concept of the mythical phase lies in taking other works of art in consideration when analysing a text – something we could call intertextuality. The symbol of this phase is an *archetype* and it is based on the principle of recurrence. Frey explains that symbols used in one work are mostly imitations or analogies with symbolism from other literary works, which in his opinion create conventional associations necessary for natural development of literary tradition. Recognizing them as part of the literary canon also connects them to the existence of civilization as such: Frey perceives the symbols as serving not only to one author’s work, but to the whole society.

The anagogic phase analyses a literary work from a more philosophical point of view: its symbol is represented by a *monad* that “refers to the individual poem which manifests or reflects within itself the entire poetic universe” (Denham 74). Frye also acknowledges a great influence of William Blake’s ideas in the background theory of anagogic criticism. In Denham’s interpretation it is crucial to explore poetry of “uninhibited writers” for connection with religion to find out what anagogic criticism is – to realize representations of higher spiritual entities by universal symbols (74).

Denham describes Frey’s division of symbolism into five individual phases as a successful attempt to synthesize various approaches and literary criticisms into one complex system that unites so far respected theories (77). It systematically analyses all aspects of symbolism with examples from well-known literary works and it is applicable (and applied) on other works of art, besides literature, as well.

### **1.3.3 Psychoanalytic perspective**

Since the use of symbols in Golding is often explored by literary critics from the perspective of psychoanalysis, it might seem relevant to include a brief review of the literary criticism based on psychoanalytic foundations. Although the theory of psychoanalysis was introduced at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century by Sigmund Freud,

the literary criticism developed into a more complex view that includes not only Freud's standpoints, but also other theoreticians building upon the theory, such as Karl Jung's, Jacques Lacan's or Julia Kristeva's thoughts.

The core ideas of the criticism ensue from the basic principles of the theory when authors' works are explored, for example, for the conflict of the instincts, especially connected to sexuality, social expectations described by the concept of id, ego and super-ego, the parent-child relationship (Oedipus or Electra complex), the childhood memories and traumas in general or the role of the unconscious. Such concepts may mirror in the work itself – in its story, plot, structure or setting, in the characterization of its protagonists, but also in the style of writing and the language used. The author also becomes a subject of criticism, although many critics claim that a definite conclusion should not be made solely on the basis of a writer's personal life. Typically, the concepts mentioned occur in the form of a symbol, which psychoanalysis recognizes on two levels: manifest and latent, thus symbols used on purpose, knowingly, and symbols created without purpose, on the basis of the unconscious. It is especially the latent, unconscious symbolic depiction that is the most valuable for psychoanalysts.

Freud highlights the role of dreams as “essentially symbolic fulfilments of unconscious wishes” (Eagleton 136), showing something we have willingly suppressed, but is still hidden in our subconsciousness. In his theory, dreams represent the most important gateway to our unconscious as only they combine the conscious and subconscious elements (Müller & Müller 368). That is why the occurrence of a dream in a novel, or a dream-like literature, is often perceived as an outburst of the author's suppressed unconscious.

Golding is known for having a sceptical approach towards psychoanalysis and especially Freud – in one of his lectures, he called Freud together with Marx and Darwin “the three most crashing bores of the Western world” and later he admitted that “he had never read any Freud” (Carey 412). Despite this fact, during his literary crisis he started to keep a dream diary and he began to rediscover Jung to whom he suddenly felt “an immediate and most powerful relevance” (Golding qtd. in Carey 335). He was mostly interested in Jung's *Man and His Symbols* (1964) and *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of Self* (1951). Carey explains that Golding was most likely attracted to

Jung thanks to his belief that “life has a spiritual purpose beyond the material” and, similarly as Golding, he seemed not to “believe in the objective existence of God, but only in a god-image ‘buried somewhere in the unconscious of all men’” (336). Although Golding did not agree with Jung’s conception of “collective unconscious”, Carey asserts that exploring Jung might have helped him to recover from the crisis: Golding noted in his diary that reading Jung’s books started to influence his dreams which he did not want, and that is why he stopped reading him (337). Carey also believes that his interest in Jung’s theories, such as “the belief that seeming coincidences are not coincidental but reflections of some governing dynamic underlying all human experience”, are reflected in the book written imminently after the crisis – in the interconnection of lives of various characters of *Darkness Visible* (337).

Undoubtedly, literary critics see psychoanalytic symbols in other Golding’s novels as well: in *Lord of the Flies* we may notice the evident clash between the rational and civilized super-ego and the instinctive id trying to fulfil the bliss principle and the topic of children’s traumas. E. L. Epstein (1983) sees the amoral and anarchic id in Golding’s version of the present evil (a literal translation of the Hebrew “Baalzebub” is “lord of the insects”), and the super-ego in the moral codes and the remains of the intelligence. He also compares the incident of killing the pig to a sexual intercourse and describes it as “a horrid parody of an oedipal wedding night” as the boys are aroused by the strong emotions and sensations accompanying the act of murder and death (302).

Similarly, in *The Spire*, the object of the spire is inevitably looked at as a phallic symbol, possibly representing Jocelin’s suppressed sexual desire and attraction towards Goody Pangall, as well as the id and super-ego conflict in the construction itself: although Jocelin is rationally aware of the weak foundations and reasons against the building, he passionately wants the spire to be built at any cost. Besides, Jocelin’s desire is manifested through dreams or hallucinations of a kind, which Betty Jay (2006), together with the occurrence of “verbal slippages” mentions as “symptoms which, in psychoanalytic discourse, provide evidence of the workings of the unconscious” (163). According to her, the verbal explicitness of Jocelin’s sexual desire and comparison of the whole cathedral to a man’s lying body only supports the idea of the spire symbolizing an erected phallus (Jay 163-164).

Generally, it is also worth noting how Freud's psychoanalysis treated women: they were perceived unequally, Freud even attributed them with "penis envy" and an inferior position to men. Since Golding has never satisfactorily explained his avoiding main female characters and providing his women figures with only a shallow, if any, characterization, from the psychoanalytic perspective it may also seem as if he had some unconscious problem with the female sex. Even his only exception, *The Double Tongue*, placing a woman in the position of the main storyteller, could be described as employing psychoanalytic symbols as well. Arieka's remembering her first memories alludes to Lacan's mirror stage, the focus on language and its role in Arieka's life refers to Kristeva's feminine language, and her description of her childhood traumas clarifies the following events from her adult life. Her attitude towards gods reflects Jung's influence on Golding's last novel.

## **1.4 Influences and sources of inspiration**

Regarding influential works and events that reflect in Golding's works, one has to acknowledge a whole range of aspects that might have had an impact, positive as well as negative, on the writer's life. That is why this chapter is divided into two sections, distinguishing between personal experiences and literary sources.

### **1.4.1 Personal experiences**

Critics exploring the background of Golding's novels often agree on four major outer influences that visibly reflect in his works: Golding's father, teaching, the Second World War and his passion for Old Greek literature and mythology. Carey portrays Alec Golding as a Renaissance man enthusiastic about new findings in natural sciences, music and Latin, analysing the Bible from a rationalist point of view, or believing in the equality of sexes, unusual for the contemporary society (8). When we look at the scope of topics dealt with in Golding's novels, we can see a great variety of issues deriving from timeless and universal concepts such as the clash between rationality and spirituality or rationality and instincts, and existential and religious questions. Also the settings vary – from the beginnings of the human civilization (*The Inheritors*) and the Ancient Egypt and Greece (*The Scorpion God*, *The Double Tongue*) through the 14<sup>th</sup> century Salisbury (*The Spire*)

and early 19<sup>th</sup> century sail to Australia (*To the Ends of the Earth*) up to the Second World War (*Pincher Martin, Free Fall*) and through the 20<sup>th</sup> century (*The Paper Men, Darkness Visible*) into a catastrophic future (*Lord of the Flies*).

Although the basic issues remain similar, the diversity of environments shows Golding's multiple area of interests triggered by his father's range of knowledge. In a radio program broadcasted after his father's death, Golding called his father "a profoundly religious man who remained a grieving atheist until the last day of his life" and emphasized his extent of expertise: "I never met anyone who could do so much, was interested in so much, and who knew so much. He could carve a mantelpiece or a jewel box, explain the calculus and the ablative absolute. He wrote a text book of geography, of physics, of chemistry, of botany and zoology, devised a course in astro-navigation, played the violin, the 'cello, viola, piano, flute [...]" (Carey 217). Later on, Carey also quotes Golding's remark pointed at his publisher who he counted as one of the three people who had "been of major importance and influence in my life" (406), which indisputably covers his father and his wife among them.

However, not only setting and main topics of his books mirror Golding's father beliefs: for example, he also adopted the critical view of Christian foundations which is evident in novels such as *Lord of the Flies*, *Pincher Martin* or *The Spire* where he heavily draws from Christian mythology but puts his ideas into a broader and more profound context.

Similarly, Golding's teaching practice (also a sign of following in his father's footsteps) is frequently mentioned in connection with the main protagonists of *Lord of the Flies*: according to Radoslav Nenadál (2003), the long-term and regular contact with teenage boys allowed him to understand their souls, with all its positive as well as negative sides, which helped him with creating the novel (261). In his book, Carey quotes Golding's statement: "Wouldn't it be a great idea if I wrote a book about children on an island, children who behave in the way children really would behave?" (149), reflecting his desire to make use of his observations. At the same time, Carey repeatedly refers to Golding's aversion to teaching (7, 252), and only after the success of his works he could have afforded to quit and start writing full-time. It can be therefore said that teaching had an indirect negative influence on his works – in terms of keeping him from writing.

Golding's determination to learn Greek was also a result of his father's impulse to be able to read certain passages in his favourite book (Carey 37). Therefore, his preoccupation with Greek and Greek literature has its basis already in his childhood. McCarron points out that some of the principles characteristic of ancient Greek tragedies are present in many Golding's books. He highlights the entrance of *deus ex machina*, typically at the end of his novels, serving as a turning point in the story (*Lord of the Flies*, *Pincher Martin*, *The Inheritors*) or the overall structure of his other works – according to McCarron, many critics noticed the reminiscence of Greek tragedies' spirit in Golding's "harsh and austere works" (2). Besides, some critics and the author himself find specific titles and characters from the Greek mythology in the background of Golding's novels, however, these will be discussed in the section of literary sources.

As it has been implied, the impact of the Second World War on Golding's life as a person and author was crucial. His frequently quoted statement that "anyone who moved through these years without understanding that man produces evil, as a bee produces honey, must have been blind or sick in the head" (McCarron 2) is telling enough: Golding's topics pervading his works refer to the dark corners of human mind and behaviour, the "fall of man", the primary conflict between the physical and the rational. Beran sees the war's reflection in the novels in the omnipresent topic of the painful and often desolating process of self-cognition (217), and J. R. Baker (1983) mentions the evident loss of illusions mirroring in Golding's treatment of human society (xv). Although he is obviously not a war writer, the Second World War provides a background to several works such as *Lord of the Flies*, *Pincher Martin*, *Free Fall*, *Darkness Visible* and also *Rites of Passage* in its setting, characters and issues dealt with.

Undoubtedly, there are other circumstances and life events that might be considered influential, but as the main aim of this work is to present symbolic elements in Golding's work, only the main and generally acknowledged determinants providing fertile background for drawing symbolism for his works are mentioned.

### **1.4.2 Literary sources**

It is never easy to identify literary works serving as authors' sources of inspiration, unless they explicitly mention them. Literary critics often come up with a number of novels and other pieces of literature where they seek for analogies and a "certain"

influence on specific works, however, until the authors themselves do or do not confirm it, the assumptions remain speculative. William Golding was fortunately a writer who stayed approachable and he answered and explained what he was asked to to a great extent in many interviews. Besides, he revealed a lot from the background of his novels in his essays. The literary sources of inspiration presented in the following part are therefore mostly authorized or by Golding personally admitted works of art. Since the aim of the thesis is not to analyse all Golding's novels, only the influences relevant to *Pincher Martin*, *The Spire* and *The Double Tongue* are mentioned.

### ***Pincher Martin***

As regards the main protagonist of the novel, the most frequent association connected with him is Prometheus from the Greek mythology. Martin's fate is compared to chained Prometheus' struggle on a rock, however, that is probably the only resemblance to the Olympian hero, which is why Golding's Martin is often attributed by the term "modern Prometheus". Carey supports the argument by noticing that "as Pincher struggles through hallucination, dream and delusion, his body and everything else on the rock assume monstrous shapes. The flying reptiles that attack him are seagulls, the terrible red lobsters beside him are his sunburnt hands" (192).

Both Carey and McCarron point out that the novel is a reversal of the previously written work, similarly as in the cases of *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors*, which is a story called *Pincher Martin O.D.* (1916) written by Henry Dorling under the pseudonym of Taffrail. The main protagonist is also thrown into the sea after his ship suffers a torpedo attack, but in contrast with Golding's Martin, the brave and patriotic naval officer embodies British qualities and comfortably surrenders himself to death in sea. Christopher Martin, on the other hand, is arrogant, greedy, self-centred, refusing to die. In the end, there is the typical shift in views – Taffrail's readers find out that the officer Martin was saved by a fisherman, while Christopher Martin has been dead for the whole time (Carey 195; McCarron 15).

McCarron and Howard S. Babb (1970) also argue that the surprising perspective shift is very much alike the turn in Ambrose Bierce's short story "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" (1890). Its main character is sentenced to death, but the readers are acquainted with a fragmented story of a man who is about to be hanged recalling various



events from his life, thinking about his family and even planning an escape plan, which he seems to accomplish. In the end, it is revealed that the man died immediately; the memories and fantasizing about the escape took a few seconds before his neck was broken (McCarron 15; Babb 66).

The role of the Bible, specifically of the Old Testament is also significant as the influential source. McCarron describes Golding's novel as a parody of the myth of God's creation in the Genesis: "for six days and six nights Martin creates his world: the rock, the sea, the sky, night, day, the seaweed, the gulls, and the shell fish. He also 'names' his world, giving parts of the rock names from his own world: The Red Lion, Prospect Cliff..." (16). In McCarron's opinion, the hallucinatory parts in the end of the story might represent God as well, especially the voice asking "Have you had enough, Christopher?" (PM 178), which is later on "answered" by "I shit on your heaven!" (PM 183).

When discussing its overall structure, it is worth mentioning that Golding calls the novel "a purgatorial experience" where the setting is reminiscent of the purgatory. Although the figure of Martin itself is not religious in the traditional sense of the word, Cleve considers the linguistic elements describing his experience highly mystical (53-54). Who however is seen as a religious or also a mystic figure is Martin's friend Nathaniel presented as almost his opposite – calm, patient, all-loving visionary, predicting Martin's death, described as "good, unwillingly loved for the face that was always rearranged from within, for the serious attention, for love given without thought" (PM 94). In Cleve's view, Nat might be a grown-up version of Simon in *Lord of the Flies* (9).

Cleve also observes God's presence in the setting – he argues that the image of rock, although horrifying, might be interpreted as the face of God: he believes that the usage of words like "apocalyptic" and "face", and disputably also "merciless", in connection with the rock may serve as a symbol of "angry God" (78). In one of his commentary, Golding explains the role of God within the framework of the novel:

Once you have free will and you are created, you have alternatives before you. You can either turn towards God or away from Him. And God can't stop you turning away from Him without removing your free will, because that's what free will is. This is the whole thing about Pincher Martin. It's that and nothing else. When you turn away from God, He becomes a darkness; when you turn towards Him, He becomes a light, in cliché terms. (Golding qtd. in Cleve 65)

Understandably, critics also agree on echoes of other well-known literary works recognizable in the background of *Pincher Martin*, such as Coleridge's "The Rime of Ancient Mariner" (1798). We can observe the similarity of a sort of punishment for what they have done – Martin's overwhelming greed and the sailor's killing of the albatross results in their isolation on sea. Besides, it may allude to Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) as Martin in many ways resembles Milton's Satan, and it might be perceived as a deconstruction of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) in the story of marooning and survival from an opposite perspective of dredging up the infamous past instead of building up an optimistic future. L. Bosch (2005), the author of an afterword to the Czech edition of *Pincher Martin*, sees the influence of Eliot's "The Waste Land" (1922). He suggests that the part called 'Death by water' might well summarize Martin's story (208):

Phlebas the Phoenician, a fortnight dead,  
Forgot the cry of gulls, and the deep seas swell  
And the profit and loss.  
    A current under sea  
Picked his bones in whispers. As he rose and fell  
He passed the stages of his age and youth  
Entering the whirlpool.  
    Gentile or Jew  
O you who turn the wheel and look to windward,  
Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you.  
  
(Eliot)

### ***The Spire***

The assumed inspirational sources behind *The Spire* are not as unambiguous as with the other novels. Most critics see an obvious similarity of the novel with the real process of constructing the Salisbury cathedral, which is also believed to be the setting of the story, although it is not specified in the book. McCarron states that the choice of names of the protagonists and the height of the spire support the argument: Jocelin and Roger were bishops buried in the cathedral, and the real spire is 404 feet tall - Golding rounded it to 400 (22). Jiří Munzar (1989) adds that one of the impulses for writing the novel might have been an old legend connected with the construction in Salisbury. It tells the story of bishop Poor to whom allegedly Saint Mary revealed. She told him to shoot an arrow from a bow, and in the place where the arrow falls he was supposed to build the cathedral, regardless the extremely unsuitable conditions for the foundations. It took

eighty years to finish the tallest spire in the whole country, heavy and shivering, yet still standing. Munzar observes the similarities not only in the story itself, but also in the bishop's and the dean's conviction of building the spire to fulfil a "higher purpose" (244). Both Carey and John Mullan (2013) also believe that Golding must have been influenced by his experience of seeing the Salisbury cathedral being rebuilt from his classroom window. The cathedral spire was being repaired between 1945 and 1951, a period when Golding was still teaching and literally looking at it every day (Mullan 3).

As far as literary works are concerned, Carey reports that Golding was involved in helping the school dramatic society which performed a play *The Zeal of Thy House* (1937) by Dorothy Sayers. It tells the story of an architect, chosen to rebuild a choir of Canterbury cathedral, who is "consumed by pride so overweening that he declares, '[w]e are the master craftsmen, God and I'" (Carey 250). Carey also notices other elements of the play that resemble *The Spire*, such as the presence of a character named Jocelyn, the importance of a "wealthy widow" for the architect, the occurrence of archangels, and the archangel Raphael's commentary on the building process: "the shafted columns rise/singing like music" (250) reminding of the singing of pillars that Jocelin hears: "he caught sight of the pillars at the crossways, he remembered that he knew where the singing note had come from" (S 93).

The only work which is mentioned by more critics (Dickson, Redpath, Munzar) as a probable inspiration for Golding's novel is Ibsen's *Master Builder* (1892) in the similar topic of building a spire. Both masters builders share, paradoxically, the fear of heights, in both works the spire is tightly connected with the erotic, and the music of the pillars is present as well (Munzar 245). On the other hand, McCarron and Paul Crawford (2002) assert that Golding has never admitted its influence on his work, in contrast with the real construction of the cathedral (McCarron 22; Crawford 118). Besides, the biblical story of the Tower of Babel is sometimes referred to when *The Spire* is being discussed, specifically in connection with Jocelin's thought: "I would like the spire to be a thousand feet high [...] and then I should be able to oversee the whole county" (S 106), craving impossible, and in resembling the division and misunderstanding among the workers caused during the building process.

From another perspective, Jane Costin (2009), who fittingly calls Golding's spire a "construction of desire", takes Gaston Bachelard's ideas into consideration when exploring the novel and she points out the similarity of assumptions between Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* (1958) and Golding's *The Spire*. Bachelard is concerned with various spaces in a building in relation to human psyche and he explores how we traditionally approach specific places, e.g. why we "feel more powerful when standing at the top of a tower" (Costin 1). She also quotes his findings that might have been applied to Jocelin's vision:

- the idea of a tower creates an intimate, romantic space that raises our perceptions from the earthly depths to 'the abode of a soul that believes in heaven'. The vertical structure of a tower makes an impressive statement rising from the landscape, creating a personal space, raised above the earth, in which to think elevated ideas unrelated to everyday life on the earth. (Bachelard qtd. In Costin 2)

This development of perspectives, when from the limiting point of view allowing only to look upwards one gets much broader view downwards, is precisely reflected in Jocelin's situation: he is finally allowed to gain a wider perspective, to suddenly see things differently, or things that have been hidden so far (Costin 2).

Mentioning the Bible as an influential source is almost obligatory, however, since in this book it has served primarily as a provider of Christian mysticism and related symbols, it will be discussed in more depth in the appropriate section.

### ***The Double Tongue***

To conclude this chapter with the last analysed book, *The Double Tongue*, the ancient Greece and its literature will be returned to. Similarly as with *The Spire*, the inspiration for this novel came from real events – historically, Golding chose "a moment of shifting balance" in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC Greece on decline, struggling to resist the rise of the Roman Empire (Rosoff 4). Carey also mentions the possibility of personal experience – in the 1960s, the Goldings made a trip to Greece where they visited, among others, exactly the places of the novel's setting, including Athens and Delphi with the former "chasm of the Oracle" (294).

Carey recognizes the inspirational sources for *The Double Tongue* especially in Plutarch, who himself was a Delphi priest reporting on the decline of oracles, and in Euripides's *Ion*, also set in Delphi and providing the name for the character of Ionides

(Carey 510). Also Laura McClure (1999), exploring the female discourse in ancient Athens, confirms that although the main female protagonist in the ancient Greek context might seem implausible, “we find the respected priestess as a stock figure of feminine authority in Athenian drama, including Theonoe in Euripides’ *Helen*, the priestesses of Apollo at Delphi represented in Aeschylus’ *Eumenides* and in Euripides’ *Ion*” (262). Frank Kermode (1995) agrees with the influence of Euripides and Plutarch, who in his opinion must have provided the background information for the novel, together with E. R. Dodds’s *The Greeks and the Irrational* (1951). The study stresses the surprising “durability of the oracle” despite the amount of “discreditable episodes” and also expresses Dodds’s opinion that “the truth was that the oracle depended on both the Pythia’s genuinely mediumistic performance and the manipulations of her staff” (Kermode), which is exactly portrayed in *The Double Tongue*.

Besides, critics notice that although it is a novel reflecting on Golding’s passion for Greece and its history, at the same time it must not be looked at solely as a historical novel. Reiff considers Golding’s work highly innovatory, drawing from new literary trends and tendencies, and together with others, he sees a significant influence of postmodernist principles: J. H. Stape (2001) emphasizes Golding’s blending of reality with fiction, playful language, the focus on the function of art and creativity, and the author’s figure behind Arieka’s character (Reiff 50; Carey 499; Stape 392-394). Carey also explains that the choice of female perspective might have resulted from Golding’s “rediscovery” of Virginia Woolf’s works, including her journals: in his diary he admired her deep insight into characters and “speculating that [it] was a uniquely female attribute, developed in prehistoric times as women’s only defence against male muscle” (Carey 499).

From a more theoretical point of view, Adela Jeng (2001) sees William Blake’s philosophy and symbolic imagery behind *The Double Tongue*, highlighting his “double vision” and Northrop Frye’s related book, *Double Vision* (1991), dealing with and interpreting Blake’s standing points. She argues that Blake, Frye and Golding distinguish between the “spiritual vision of language, space, time, and God from the single or natural one” (Jeng 529). This “doubleness”, duality, is in fact the core of the novel – beginning with its title, continuing with the two main protagonists, both representing two poles, but at the same time complementing each other, or the two entities (God and human) in one

together with the prophecy and its interpretation during the oracle, and culminating in the end, when Ion gives Arieka a “doubly doubled” key.

Interestingly, although Golding was known to be reluctant to research upon topics he was dealing with in his novels, the number of influential works suggests that the inspiration was usually triggered by something specific. Carey summarizes this standpoint and he explains that he mostly took advantage from his position as a storyteller and made history work how it suited him (330).

## 2 Practical part

### 2.1 William Golding's use of symbolism

McCarron labels Golding's novels as deviating from the mainstream that was "established" in Britain in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He calls his works "bold and visionary fables which claimed for themselves a universal applicability" (2-3). Together with Nenadál and George Usha (2008), he notices the different direction his prose takes – towards symbolic, moral levels, unlike his fellow writers following the more realistic tradition. For example, the Angry Young Men such as Kingsley Amis, John Wain or Alan Sillitoe focused on social issues specific for the postwar England, Doris Lessing, C. P. Snow and Anthony Powell represented the neo-realistic wave, although each of them from their distinct perspectives, and Anthony Burgess' works were rather dystopian and satirical (Usha 5-6). In addition, Golding himself considers his works "allegories" and "myths", which is more or less accurate with regard to the use of symbols in them. This section's aim is therefore to show the scope and nature of Golding's symbolism used generally, occurring in most of his books.

As it has been implied, his debut *Lord of the Flies* signalled the form and manner of Golding's future writings: in all his following novels, he was more or less concerned with the deep moral dilemmas of a person, always presented within an allegory. The themes pervading all his works can be identified as the fall of a person, the question of the original sin, the darkness in a person's heart connected with the end of one's innocence and to the cognition of one's (usually unpleasant) self as well as the surrounding world. Nenadál summarizes his novels as extended metaphors presenting dilemmas that people face during their lives, and although Golding usually places his characters in specific environments and shows them in extreme situations they have to cope with, most of them are in fact reflections of what every person can go through during their everyday life. He also compares Golding's area of concern to medieval English moralities and dramas with personified virtues and vices, but he finds his literary devices modern, with a more elaborated symbolic level (Nenadál 261-262).

It is therefore difficult to categorize Golding's symbols, nevertheless, related patterns can be traced in his works. In every novel, Golding describes distinctive settings

and he successfully accomplishes to use specific linguistic devices as well. In *The Inheritors* he uses imagery which the Neanderthals are capable of, adapts the language of the speakers to their stage of development, which makes it difficult to understand things otherwise familiar to the reader (e.g. it takes several chapters to realize that the “white bone” covering the new people’s faces is in fact the skin). In *Lord of the Flies* he adopts the children’s perspective and he describes everything from their point of view – hence the simplistic perception of reality where a dead parachutist changes into the Beast. In *Pincher Martin*, *The Spire* and *The Double Tongue* we observe the world through unreliable narrators, which is reflected in the language as well.

From his perspective, Dickson classifies Golding’s symbolism according to four main techniques that contribute to allegorical personification: “analogy through the use of names, the correlation of the state of nature with a state of mind, the implied comparison of an action with an extrafictional event, outside novel itself, and the correspondence of a state of mind with an action depicted in the narrative” (5). The name symbolism is evident in several novels – Simon in *Lord of the Flies*, Father Adam and Goody in *The Spire*, Nathaniel in *Pincher Martin*, Samuel Mountjoy in *Free Fall*, Sophy in *Darkness Visible* or Perseus in *The Double Tongue*. The relationship between the state of nature and the state of mind is something characteristic of *Pincher Martin* and *The Spire* as well, therefore this connection will be closely examined later on.

To a great extent, an action or a static element in a novel is often compared to an event outside the book: Golding uses what could be called a “traditional” symbolic, in this case drawing heavily from the Bible, but, according to Baker, the biblical metaphor “forms only a part of the larger mythic frame in which Golding sees the nature and destiny of man” (xxiii). To illustrate the point, a symbol of a tree is explored. From the perspective of Christian foundations, a tree typically alludes to the paradisaical Tree of Knowledge in Eden, in Cleve’s view it might also be connected with the tree of the cross (154), and it appears in both *The Inheritors* in the form of a dead tree where Lok and Fa hide and in *The Spire* as Jocelin’s apple tree. The dead tree truly serves as a source of cognition and knowledge to Fa and Lok, since it provides them with space safe enough to observe the new people, and the apple tree symbolizes the spire, to Jocelin’s surprise still standing and bearing fruits of his determination. Nonetheless, neither of the works can be



simply called Christian allegories, as the individual symbol is a mere part of a bigger whole.

At the same time, Golding experiments in using symbols by choosing atypical environments for telling a basic story and using defamiliarization. With the example of *The Inheritors* again, Redpath sees the basic concept of the novel in “the evils of imperialism and the domination of the less advanced peoples by advanced ones” (210) symbolized by the clash of the Neanderthals and Homo Sapiens, a time setting and protagonists we would not expect to convey such a message. In addition, *Rites of Passage*, in his opinion, deal simply with “cruelties and injustices of social stratification” (210), portrayed in a slightly exotic environment of a ship heading to Australia, documented in journal entries of an upper class man.

Analogically, Dickson and Claire Rosenfield (1983) notice that Golding’s main protagonists usually strive to understand the good and evil side of their soul – the struggle is often presented in a broader context, usually by them going through a symbolic journey. These quests are reminiscent of the ancient Greek and Roman allegories, especially regarding exploration of the underworld, although they are in fact metaphorical description of the process of self-cognition. In *Lord of the Flies*, it especially applies to Ralph, who, at the end of the book, “had a fleeting picture of the strange glamour that had once invested the beaches. But the island was scorched up like dead wood—Simon was dead—and Jack had... The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; with filthy body, matted hair, and unwiped nose, Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man’s heart” (LOTF 229). Rosenfield looks similarly on Simon, who resembles Christ and heroes from the mythical stories of being killed and brought back to life to redeem the rotten society. She compares Simon’s hallucination and seizure to “an internal journey necessary for self-understanding” and when he “wakes from his symbolic death, he suddenly realizes that he must confront the beast on the mountain because ‘what else is there to do?’” (Rosenfield 292). In *The Inheritors*, Lok reaches a similar point by finding out more about the “new” people – despite his original fascination by them, they in fact bring doom to the whole band of the Neanderthals and Lok gradually loses his illusions, shocked by their brutality in the end. A bitter world- and self-knowledge is also arrived at by Sammy Mountjoy, the

main protagonist of the *Free Fall*, which is basically introspective contemplation over his life.

Regarding Golding's interest in rationalism and science, they hold their place as far as the symbols are concerned as well. Sometimes it is expressed by a predictable metaphor such as Piggy's glasses, representing the wisdom and reason in *Lord of the Flies*, or by the already mentioned name symbolism – Sophy in *Darkness Visible* is the rationalist and earthbound one in contrast with the dreamy Toni, her twin sister. However, in *The Inheritors* (as well as in *The Paper Men*), there occurs a repetitive symbol of a waterfall and water stream, something that has seemingly nothing in common with science. Nonetheless, many events important for understanding or realizing something are connected with water: Carey states that the evolutionary and progressive rationalism of the “new” people is symbolized by them being able to travel against the current of the river (182). Moreover, by standing at the waterfall, Lok finally comprehends the circumstances of Ha's death, and when Fa is wounded, she seeks comfort in the river, which represents something she knows and understand, in comparison with the “new” people's behaviour.

The structure of the novels is also often symbolic in its way: for example, as Baker notices, the names of the chapters in *Lord of the Flies* and the mentions of the beast in the framework of the novel are reminiscent of the vision of the Apocalypse:

the weary repetition of human failure is assured by the birth of new devils for each generation of men. The first demon, who fathers all the others, falls from the heavens; the second is summoned from the sea to make war upon the saints and overcome them; the third, emerging from the earth itself, induces man to make and worship an image of the beast. (Baker xxiv)

Yet, what has become a central motif of Golding's works is especially the perspective shift, often forcing us to re-evaluate the previous pages and encouraging us to find out what the story concerned with. Typically, such technique is present in most of his earlier novels such as *Lord of the Flies*, *Pincher Martin* and *The Inheritors*.

Redpath highlights that as an even more frequent tool of structuring the works. Golding uses chronological displacement, a characteristic feature of *Pincher Martin*, *Darkness Visible*, *Free Fall*, *The Paper Men*, *Rites of Passage* and *The Pyramid*: in the first two mentioned, he points out that the structure draws the reader into the process of “discovering areas of mystery” (15) and thus it is partly upon the readers themselves how

they deal with the complexity of the text's layers. Apart from that, he also compares the structure of *The Paper Men* to the heartbeat: similarly as the "systole and diastole of the heart [...] we move inwards from the immediate present to the far past, to the near past, to the present of writing about the past" (Redpath 187). Since the novel is a kind of "writing about writing", the structure in fact symbolizes the writing process itself and the writer's evolution.

To summarize, Golding uses symbolism on many different levels, including the plot, the characters, real events' reflection and universal objects, exemplified above. The symbols and imagery used are widely interconnected and together they create a framework, always specific for the particular novel. That is why his works are called modern allegories – they no longer have "rigid structure of ideas" (Dickson 2), characteristic of naïve or moral allegories, but they draw from modern philosophy and contemporary issues. Although an analysis of particular symbols might prove useful and more clarifying, they should not be reduced to a single point to overshadow the main message.

## **2.2 Focus on *Pincher Martin***

### **2.2.1 Summary of the story**

Christopher Martin, the main protagonist of the book, is a British lieutenant serving in the navy during the Second World War. His ship is hit by a torpedo and he fights for his life after being thrown into sea. The novel then presents him marooned on a piece of rock in the middle of the ocean. It describes his struggle for survival, and his frequent flashbacks into his past which reveal his rather repelling character. In the end, he suffers to the point of hallucinations possibly caused by the inhumane conditions he finds himself in, culminating by a "storm" which destroys the rock and leaves him dying. The last chapter provides us with a perspective shift: a naval officer comes to a beach where its watcher found remains of a dead body. The officer identifies it as lieutenant Martin thanks to his identity disc, and in the last sentence of the novel he assures the bay watcher that he could not have suffered as "[h]e didn't even have time to kick off his seaboots" (PM 190). By a careful re-reading the story, readers realise the presence of hints referring to Martin's

immediate death at the beginning of the book and suggesting that the novel took place in Martin's dead and tormented mind.

### **2.2.2 Symbols in *Pincher Martin***

In the novel, there are several symbols repeatedly occurring throughout the whole book. Some of them are connected with its core topics such as the physical versus the metaphysical or the mental, which Alice Bennett (2012) calls "a mind-body dualism" (56), a punishment for a person's sins, or the suffering of human soul captured in one's consciousness. Some are strongly attached to Martin's character as such, for instance in the references to his earlier life, strikingly resembling Golding's own life, his all-embracing greed reflected in his craving to own everything, in his desperate "greed for life" and reluctance to die, despite being already dead. Since Golding calls the novel "an allegory of purgatorial experience" (qtd. in Dickson 42), there is also a number of Christian symbols based on the traditional conception of Christian philosophy, but placed in the context of human will, in Martin's case to doubt and even to be in a "war with God" (Dickson 43). However, it is also mirrored in the name symbolism of the novel's characters.

To begin with the overall setting of the story, everything (except the last chapter) takes place on a rock in the open ocean. Although Golding refers to the location as to "irrelevant" (Cleve 65), he also compares it to the purgatory – hence, in the traditional perception, to the place of isolation where we face only ourselves, where our deeds are judged. The symbolic place of the never-ending body of water, a single piece of rock and the open sky seems fitting enough to convey the feeling of complete loneliness. From the Christian perspective, the water might serve as a symbol of purification, transition to another world, but also as a symbol of the unconscious, reflecting the mind processes and conditions in analytic psychology (Lurker 565). Both these interpretations support Martin's condition – being a castaway in his own consciousness, contemplating his life from above. Nonetheless, the sea in *Pincher Martin* is also described as a living organism with its own will: "[t]he sea no longer played with him. It stayed its wild movement and held him gently, carried him with delicate and careful motion [...]. The sea laid him down gently and retreated. [...] The sea came back and fawned round his face, licked him. [...] He felt the sea run down to smell at his feet then come back and nuzzle under his arm. It

no longer licked his face” (PM 19). Cleve ponders that such an image of the ocean and sea (which is also a mystics’ frequent representation of God) exemplifies its God-like function in the way it treats Martin (78-79). However, the personification of the sea, especially in the first chapter, rather supports the argument of the “transmitting” role of water.

The rock is a powerful symbol of the book, serving the various layers of the “story”. On the one hand, it is Martin’s “safety rock” (PM 41), providing him with stability, shelter, food and drinking water. On the other hand, the first image of the rock is fearful and brings Martin terror instead of solace: “this solidity was terrible and apocalyptic after the world of inconsistent wetness. It was not vibrant as a ship’s hull might be but merciless and mother of panic. [...] He glimpsed a riven rock face with trees of spray growing up it and the sight of this rock floating in mid-Atlantic was so dreadful that he wasted his air by screaming as if it had been a wild beast” (PM 18). What is more, throughout the novel the rock is often described by unfriendly terms, such as “negative” and “inimical”, but also as “a sea-trap [...] alien to breathing life” (PM 28), or as “forcing additional discomfort on him” (PM 62).

As it is gradually revealed, the rock also appears to be Martin’s projection of his tooth: “the ravenous ego invents a rock for him to endure on. It is the memory of an aching tooth” (Golding qtd. in Cleve 72) which ensues from several references in the book. The first comparison of the rock to the tooth appears sooner than Martin realizes it by himself: “A single point of rock, peak of a mountain range, one tooth set in the ancient jaw of a sunken world, projecting through the inconceivable vastness of the whole ocean...” (PM 26). Later on, when Martin decides to give names to different parts of the rock, he considers calling three sharp rocks the Teeth. However, he immediately panics: “‘No! Not the Teeth!’ The teeth were here, inside his mouth. He felt them with his tongue, the double barrier of bone, each known and individual except the gaps – and there they persisted as a memory if one troubled to think. But to lie on a row of teeth in the middle of the sea -” (PM 83). After this passage, a question arises: why is it so difficult for him to name a piece of rock after the teeth? The answer comes much later, when it becomes obvious that Martin was trying to deny his death by suppressing the resemblance of the rock to his own teeth, therefore the reality of building up his own symbolic world on the basis of what was familiar to him:

His tongue felt along the barrier of his teeth – round to the side where the big ones were and the gap. He brought his hands together and held his breath. He stared at the sea and saw nothing. His tongue was remembering. It pried into the gap between the teeth and re-created the old, aching shape. It touched the rough edge of the cliff, traced the slope down, trench after aching trench, down towards the smooth surface where the Red Lion was, just above the gum – understood what was so hauntingly familiar and painful about an isolated and decaying rock in the middle of the sea. (PM 159)

The setting symbolism is connected with the symbols of his death: besides the role of the rock presented, we may notice other references to Martin's death. As Bosch highlights, the novel suggests a number of interpretations – for example, as the proverbial “life running in front of your eyes” at the moment of one's death accompanied by the chaos of brain's mental processes, or as the figment of the main protagonist's imagination before he dies. However, in Tiger's interpretation based upon her correspondence with Golding, she, together with many other critics, primarily sees Martin as a personification of the soul in purgatory, not a survivor on a rock (Bosch 204). And indeed, during the re-reading of the story, several mentions of Martin's death come out.

Since we are thrown into the novel similarly as Martin is thrown into water, we probably do not pay enough attention to the lines at the beginning of the first chapter: “But the man lay suspended behind the whole commotion, detached from his jerking body. [...] The hard lumps of water no longer hurt. There was a kind of truce, observation of the body. There was no face but there was a snarl” (PM 6). This might in fact serve as a description of Martin's sudden death, however, readers do not expect the death of the main character on the second page of the book. Nevertheless, it pervades the whole novel – when Martin realizes his poor physical condition, he sees himself “[l]ike a dead man” (PM 29) comparing himself to a corpse. Later on, an image is created to show him detached from his physical shell: “His body was in some other place that had nothing to do with this landscape” (PM 35), which is followed by a description of his body parts as perceived from above. Similarly, his mind seems to be trapped inside his body and experiencing the process of transformation: “I went through hell in the sea and in the funnel” (PM 112). The strongest implication of Martin's body being dead is expressed by himself when he is distracted by focusing on his physical appearance: “Strange that bristles go on growing even when the rest of you is-” (PM 114). In the unfinished sentence, Martin again avoids accepting his physical death.

Babb (88-89) sees the symbolism of death also in the protagonists of the last chapter, specifically in the naval officer Davidson. He is concerned with the phrases surrounding him and finds Davidson a personification of death on the basis of his coming during “a wintry sunset” with the help of “the west wind”, on “a black shape” (PM 185), doing his job “seven days a week” (PM 186), and, generally, due to his cynical cold-bloodedness. In sharp contrast with Mr Campbell’s humane and sensitive worries about Martin’s fate, Davidson is only interested in his identity disc and, finally, he is certain that Martin did not suffer. That is why, in Babb’s opinion, the naval officer might represent the “second death” (89): in fact, the American edition of the book was published as *Two Deaths of Pincher Martin*, which already implies Pincher dying twice.

In connection with the symbols of death, it is necessary to discuss the topic of Martin’s relationship to God and God’s role in the novel. Since Martin’s character is portrayed as despicable and dishonest, he can hardly be expected to have a positive attitude towards faith of any kind. At one point of the novel, his friend Nat explains his philosophy, foreshadowing the direction of Martin’s fate, “[t]ake us as we are now and heaven would be sheer negation. Without form and void. You see? A sort of black lightning destroying everything that we call life” (PM 63), which Martin simply laughs at and replies that he is “not really interested in heaven” (PM 64). However, the conversation continues and Nathaniel shocks Martin by saying: “in only a few years [...] you will be dead” (PM 65). In recall of the memory of Nat’s words, Martin shouts “I’m damned if I’ll die!” (PM 66), epitomizing his own condition. It also illustrates his denial of God, which culminates at the end of the book during the “conversation” with God.

Golding commented on *Pincher Martin* more than on any other of his novels, especially because of its ambiguousness and misunderstanding by the general public. In one of his commentary he explains:

Christopher Hadley Martin had no belief in anything but the importance of his own life; no love, no God. Because he was created in the image of God he had a freedom of choice which he used to centre the world on himself. He did not believe in purgatory and therefore when he died it was not presented to him in overtly theological terms. [...] Ostensibly and rationally he is a survivor from a torpedoed destroyer: but deep down he knows the truth. He is not fighting for bodily survival but for his continuing identity in the face of what will smash it and sweep it away – the black lightning, the compassion of God. For Christopher, the Christ bearer, has

become Pincher Martin who is little but greed. Just to be Pincher is purgatory; to be Pincher for eternity is hell. (Golding qtd. In Cleve 72)

This passage has a significant impact on reader's perception of the book: retrospectively, the Christian concept of purgatory pervades the whole novel, despite Martin's denial of God. Besides the symbolism of the location, Babb highlights the arrogance and limitations of the main protagonist as a typical feature of a person in the Christian perspective (94), which can be seen for example in Martin's already mentioned greed for literally everything. One of his former colleagues from theatre describes him as "[t]his painted bastard here takes anything he can lay his hands on. [...] He takes the best part, the best seat, the most money, the best notice, the best woman. He was born with his mouth and his flies open and both hands out to grab" (PM 109-110). Similarly, from the beginning, we may notice Martin's desperate greed for life – through assuring himself that he will not, cannot die, and the repetitive "I shall be rescued today" (PM 89, 97, 107, 113). As greed is, in the Catholic perspective, one of the seven deadly sins, the "hallucinatory" part in the end probably serves as the culmination of Martin's punishment – the black lightning, the representation of God, destroys Martin and his illusory world, as predicted by Nathaniel. However, even in his last moments, Martin remains arrogant and his mouth screams "I spit on your compassion" (PM 182), alluding to the hated, but still compassionate God who finally ends his internal suffering.

Symbols of Christian mythology can be seen in other aspects of the novel as well. Especially in the final part of the story, where Martin is divided into "centre" and "mouth" by the black lightning, we tend to perceive the new voice as speaking God supported by the lines "[h]ave you had enough, Christopher?' He looked at the lips. They were clear as the words. A tiny shred of spittle joined then near the right corner. 'I could never have invented that'" (PM 178). A little later, branches of the lightning hit the sea and the rock, both become petrified and in the rock, there appears a black crack, which "was utter, was absolute, was three times real" (PM 183). Since the black lightning is perceived to be a manifestation of God, the scene resembles the death of Christ described in the Gospels, when a storm came and the lightning hit the ground which then opened. The usage of the words "utter", "absolute", "three times real" also allude to the entity of God and the Trinity.



The influence of Christianity is visible in the name symbolism of the characters – Martin’s friend’s name is Nathaniel, which Dickson interprets as “God’s gift” (45) and which only enhances his good and religious nature. Besides, Mary Lovell, the only girl who rejected Martin and agreed to marry Nat, is also attributed with a symbolic name: Dickson describes her as “the virgin whom Pincher attempts to seduce, as he egoistically plays the role of God” (46), referring to biblical St. Mary. Martin’s full name and nickname are symbolic as well – Christopher, “Christ-bearer”, is an ironical name for someone turning away from God, parodying the creation process: Martin’s invention of the rock and its surroundings is compared to God’s creation of the Earth, also lasting six days.

The nickname Pincher has a multiple meaning. Bosch points out the etymology of the word “to pinch” which, during centuries, has shifted from its original sense to more negative meanings, such as “mean” or “rotten”, verbs like “to steal”, “to squeeze”, in the figurative sense even “to oppress”. In contrast, in a specific context, “a pinch” can also mean “emergency” or “lack”, up to “a very little amount (of something)”. What was probably the most decisive factor for the name choice though was the slang meaning of a pincher as “someone who serves on ships”, thus a sailor in nautical jargon. Bosch then summarizes the multiple symbolism hidden behind Martin’s nickname as the “Scoundrel Martin, Criminal Martin, Greedy Martin, Martin the Oppressor, but also Miserable Martin, and most importantly, Sailor Martin” (210). Dickson also notices the sound similarity of the initial sounds of Pincher Martin to the name of his predecessor, Prometheus, whom Martin calls and compares himself to (44): “‘I am Prometheus.’ [...] He became a hero for whom the impossible was an achievement” (PM 149). Later on, Martin elaborates this idea of him resembling the mythic hero:

I was brilliantly clever and I went out to fight your enemies. I endured the water, I fought the whole sea. I have fought a rock, and gulls and lobsters and seals and a storm. Now I am thin and weak [...]. Thor’s lightning challenges me! Flash after flash, rippling spurts of white fire, bolts flung at Prometheus, blinding white, white, white, searing, the aim of the sky at the man on the rock. (PM 172).

Dickson argues that, seemingly, Christopher Martin and Prometheus have much in common: we can see similarity in their destiny of outcasts imprisoned on a rock, suffering physically as well as mentally. Dickson adds that “both defy God; both assert their will

and intelligence against natural and supernatural forces” (45), however, Martin’s motives are triggered primarily by his selfishness, in contrast with Prometheus’ heroism.

As far as the physical and mental processes of the main “hero” are concerned, recurring symbols in the novel express the clash between the physical, bodily and the metaphysical, mental or spiritual. From the very beginning, Martin’s body is often reduced to “the centre”: already in the opening sentence of the book, he is referred to as “the centre of the writhing and kicking knot of his body” (PM 5). Later on, the centre gains its own function and “Christopher and Hadley and Martin” become mere “fragments far off” (PM 147): the symbolic division of Martin to the centre and the mouth refers to his disunited soul and mind. The separation of the centre and the mouth possibly stands for the conflict between the physical, represented by the centre, and the mental, represented by the mouth. The main concern of the centre is to stay physically alive: “I must be careful when I look around at the wind. I don’t want to die again” (PM 160), and it perceives his body in relation to the surrounding world: “The centre cried out. ‘I’m so alone!’” (PM 165). The mouth, however, symbolizes the thought process and represents the connection with the spiritual. For example, it communicates with the black lightning which is perceived as the revelation of God. The suggested conflict might also be seen when “[t]he centre told itself to pretend and keep on pretending. The mouth had its own wisdom.” (PM 170) and later on “[t]he mouth screamed out away from the centre” (PM 182), ignoring the condition of the body. In the end, it is also the centre which endures longer, after the mouth is destroyed, but, finally, it is also defeated by the lightning.

Besides, Golding frequently uses imagery to support the momentary focus on the physical or the mental – when he describes Martin’s body, he brings attention to the bodily functions such as sweating, eating and digesting, excretion, or physical pain. At the same time, he uses comparisons and similes when referring to Martin’s parts of body, such as his sunburnt hands becoming lobsters: “he was suddenly seized with a terrible loathing for lobsters and flung them away so that they cracked on the rock. The dull pain of the blow extended him into them again and they became his hands, lying discarded where he has tossed them” (PM 120), repeated again when “he jerked up and there was a lobster supporting his weight at the end of his right sleeve” (PM 122). Also his feet “seemed to have lost their shape” and “his right hip was blue as though someone had laid a hand

dipped in paint on it” (PM 66). Cleve sees symbolism in Martin’s hurt eye – due to the sharp pain in the corner of his eye his eyesight is blurred and he is unable to see things right, to see through the natural darkness but, at the same time, “the idea that he must ignore pain came and sat in the centre of his darkness where he could not avoid it” (PM 38) (84-85). Golding is generally explicit in using the imagery describing pain, for example when “[t]he needle reached after him in the skull behind the dark arch. If he moved the eyeball the needle moved too” (PM 38).

In contrast with the parts dealing with the physical, Martin often tries to remain rational, civilized, thinking. He relies heavily on his own intelligence and abilities – to organize his time, to assure his rescue, to stay sane. He attempts to set himself specific goals: “I must keep this body going. [...] I must watch for signs of sickness and doctor myself. [...] I must expect hallucinations. [...] I must help myself to be rescued. [...] All I have to do is live and wait. I must keep my grip on reality” (PM 74). During the novel he confirms his intelligence to show his superiority over the nature: “He looked at the quiet sea. ‘I don’t claim to be a hero. But I’ve got health and education and intelligence. I’ll beat you.’ The sea said nothing” (PM 70), and to keep himself aware of his identity, of his position within the human kind.

Martin’s belief in his identity is gradually weakened though: despite the arrangements made to retain his sanity and reminding himself of being an intelligent, rational human being, he starts to lose his certainty no matter how he convinces us of the opposite: “Plenty of identity in here, Ladies and Gentlemen -” (PM 79). Alexander Hollinger (2001) believes that Martin tries “at all costs to preserve his identity and rational approach to reality, which he considered as defining for his human quality” (77), yet it soon becomes clear how much he needs to struggle to do so: he calls out his name in a desperate effort to define himself and proclaims “I am who I was.” (PM 120). He is afraid that he is “in danger of losing definition” because he has “nothing to quarrel with” (PM 121). As the novel is coming to its end, Martin is getting more and more insecure regarding his definite identity. At one point he even admits his own fragmentation: “I was always two things, mind and body. Nothing has altered. Only I did not realize it before so clearly” (PM 161). Shortly before his death we are already presented a devastating image: “‘Mad,’ said the mouth, ‘raving mad. I can account for everything, lobsters, maggots,

hardness, brilliant reality, the laws of nature, film-trailers, snapshots of sight and sound, flying lizards, enmity – how should a man not be mad?” (PM 174), portraying him as having definitely lost his sanity.

A symbol which underlies the whole story and is repeatedly referred to is the parable of a Chinese box. Although its principle is described in the second half of the book, Martin occasionally recalls fragments related to it earlier in the novel. He tries to remember what the connection between consumption and the Chinese box was but he fails. When he alludes to it for the second time, it is already accompanied by terms symbolizing its importance: “The Chinese box was evasive [...], important and intrusive. She’s the producer’s wife, old man. Fat. White. Like a maggot with tiny black eyes. I should like to eat you” (PM 87). Hollinger argues that generally, Golding uses the animal imagery persistently in the novel to depict Martin’s alienation from other people (77), such as his “bear-like” feet, hands like lobsters, comparing himself to the limpets when sticking to the rock, or when Martin is “jerking his tail like a seal and lifting himself forward with his flippers” (PM 54). Moreover, he feels like an outcast when perceiving flying gulls as “wartime gulls who [...] told him, with their close approach, and flapping hover that he was far better be dead” (PM 50-51). Therefore, the Chinese box parable might be seen as the culmination of the animal similes when its principle is finally explained:

“Y’see when the Chinese want to prepare a very rare dish they bury a fish in a tin box. Presently all the lil’ maggots peep out and start to eat. Presently no fish. Only maggots. [...] Well, when they’ve finished the fish, Chris, they start on each other. [...] The little ones eat the tiny ones. The middle-sized ones eat the little ones. The big ones eat the middle-sized ones. Then the big ones eat each other. Then there are two and then one and where there was a fish there is now one huge successful maggot. Rare dish. [...] ‘N when there’s only one maggot left the Chinese dig it up- [...] Have you ever heard a spade knocking on the side of a tin box, Chris? Boom! [...] Just like thunder.” (PM 124-125)

From then on, Martin is inevitably compared to the remaining trapped maggot: he himself explains that he is “in the middle of the tin box” (PM 132), and, similarly, he feels a horrible recognition when it is not him, who eats, as he is used to, “but where he is eaten.” (PM 143). Finally, it is again the same symbol that signifies his close death when the noise of the destructive storm is described as a rumble of a spade against a giant box where he is buried.

When looking at the novel retrospectively, we can find a number of symbols significant for the psychoanalysts. Most prominently, similarly as in *Lord of the Flies*, *Pincher Martin* also represents the conflict of the instinctive id and the civilized super-ego in terms of their influence on Martin's ego. Although Martin strives to stay civilized, his primal fears (of darkness, of anything reminding insanity, of death) haunt him. At one point, he recalls his childhood trauma:

It's like those nights when I was a kid, lying awake thinking the darkness would go on for ever. And I couldn't go back to sleep because of the dream of the whatever it was in the cellar coming out of the corner. [...] Everything was the night world, the other world where everything but good could happen, the world of ghosts and robbers and horrors, of things harmless in the daytime coming to life, the wardrobe, the picture in the book, the story, coffins, corpses, vampires, and always squeezing, tormenting darkness, smoke thick. And I'd think of anything because if I didn't go on thinking I'd remember whatever it was in the cellar down there, and my mind would go walking away from my body and go down three stories defenceless, down the dark stairs past the tall, haunted clock, through the whining door, down the terrible steps to where the coffin ends were crushed in the walls of the cellar – and I'd be held helpless on the stone floor, trying to run back, run away, climb up- (PM 126-127)

As Babb points out, it is, generally put, the otherness that Martin is afraid of (74), and Carey adds that the whole novel is in fact “made out of seeing-things-differently” - based on the concept of defamiliarization (192). In context with this passage, it might be seen for example in the end when Martin projects the “old woman” from the cellar into “the Dwarf”, the pile of stones in a shape of a person he intentionally created to raise his chances of rescue. Carey also notices that Martin's childhood nightmares resemble Golding's own fears of cellars, and that Golding projected his own past into Pincher's character – he also studied at Oxford, became an actor, joined the navy together with his friend Adam, possibly a model for Nat (193).

The speech connected with the expressing of self as well as the unconscious is also important for psychoanalysis, and even the main protagonist believes that “[s]peech is identity” (PM 105). He exemplifies his conviction by naming individual parts of the rock: “I call this place the Look-out. That is the Dwarf [...], Safety Rock [...], Food Cliff [...], the Red Lion” (PM 77). At the same time, he hears himself shouting desperately “I am! I am! I am!” and his uncontrolled voice babbling: “Tunnels and wells and drops of water all this is old stuff. You can't tell me. I know my stuff, just sexual images from the

unconscious, the libido, or is it the id? All explained and known. Just sexual stuff what can you expect?" (PM 133). Such outburst reminds of the stream of unconsciousness, a characteristic tool of psychoanalysis.

The suppressed libido in the form of Martin's sexual images comes to the surface only a few pages later in his memories of Mary:

"How could she take this place behind the eyes as by right when she was nothing but another step on which one must place the advancing foot? Those nights of imagined copulation, when one thought not of love nor sensation nor comfort nor triumph, but of torture rather, the very rhythm of the body reinforced by hissed ejaculations – take that and that! [...] How can she so hold the centre of my darkness when the only real feeling I have for her is hate?" (PM 136).

Martin admits recalling Mary with nothing but hatred, which, together with greed, adultery and selfishness form his identity; from the psychoanalytic view it is therefore mainly the id which ultimately seizes his ego.

The symbol of a mirror is probably not coincidental as well: at one point Martin asks "[h]ow can I have a complete identity without a mirror?" (PM 120) and continues: "There were mirrors too, triple mirrors, more separate than the three lights in this window. I could arrange the sides ones so that there was a double reflection and spy myself from the side or back in the reflected mirror as though I were watching a stranger" (PM 121). In Lacan's theory, the mirror may symbolize the mirror stage, when people realize their personality through viewing themselves from "outside", it is hence understandable why Martin wants to see himself to gain his own personality.

The usage of specific words connected to dreaming, hallucinations and delusions is also symbolic in terms of the psychoanalysis: Martin claims to be dreaming although he is not and he convinces himself of being an adult who knows "what's what. There's no connexion between me and the kid in the cellar, none at all. I grew up. I firmed my life. I have it under control" (PM 127). Later he contemplates his childhood memories: "A recurrent dream, a neurosis? But surely the normal child in its cot goes through all the symptoms of the neurotic?" (PM 158). The last two chapters of his "life" are practically based on his hallucinations and losing the remains of his consciousness.

One of the author's statements might serve as a conclusion to this section, as it describes the author's motives and philosophy underlying his work: "what man is [...] that

I burn to know” (Golding qtd. in Cleve 49). In seeking for an answer, Golding indeed takes Martin to little pieces as if the complexity of a person could be scientifically analysed, but the result is not satisfactory. When he puts Pincher to his “tests”, he completely falls apart and proves only that the worst personality traits endure the longest. Since Golding defines his main topics as “themes of man at an extremity, man tested like building material, taken into the laboratory and used to destruction; man isolated, man obsessed, man drowning in a literal sea or in the sea of his ignorance” (qtd. in Cleve 49), the novel seems to embody all his burning questions. By these words Golding, maybe unconsciously, provided an accurate description of the case of *Pincher Martin*.

## **2.3 Focus on *The Spire***

### **2.3.1 Summary of the story**

Dean Jocelin believes he has been chosen by God to build up a cathedral spire. Although the circumstances are not favourable and the master builder, Roger Mason, tries to talk Jocelin out of the spire’s construction, the dean convinces him and the workers to keep on building, despite the missing foundations. Jocelin’s faith in his original vision is supported by a presence of a guardian angel that, as the dean believes, was sent by God to encourage him. It is clear from the narration that one of the impulses for fulfilling his vision is, among others, Jocelin’s suppressed physical desire towards Goody Pangall, the wife of the cathedral caretaker. After her tragic death, he is even more determined to achieve his goal, starts to neglect his role as a dean and becomes unhealthily attached to the spire’s erection. For the whole time, Jocelin’s spine is gradually seized by a disease which culminates after the construction is finished. Being in a very poor physical shape and lying on his deathbed, he begins to realize the “folly” of his blind determination and the vast loss the spire has cost him – people he loved, his own faith, health, and eventually life.

### **2.3.2 Symbols in *The Spire***

The novel is, briefly put, a symbolic net built upon Golding’s frequent topics of one’s gradual self-cognition, connected with the loss of ideals. The story is rich in symbols based on Christianity, as the setting and the main theme of the novel suggest, however,

they become a part of a more universal story of a person's sin and consequent moral struggle, human sacrifice, and of the conflict between faith and reason.

The setting itself is symbolic: the cathedral is undoubtedly a place of Christian influence and it is often attributed with the light, sun and other elements connected with God. However, at the same time, the crossways and the pit inside are often related to the hellish imagery – as Crawford argues, they represent “a kind of symbolic portal to a murderous, torturous, subterranean world and [...] cellars of the unconscious mind, particularly Jocelin's” (123). The duality and ironical treatment of Christian symbols can therefore be seen in the very building of the cathedral. In addition, when considering the construction of the spire, a similar clash of heaven and hell-like images is evident. The motives for building up the spire seem religious: dean Jocelin is truly convinced of “God's will” as a trigger of his vision. Nonetheless, other circumstances surrounding the construction gradually come out, such as Jocelin's physical attraction to Goody Pangall or the fact that the builders working on the spire are in fact irreligious “devilworshippers”. What is more, from the beginning of the constructing works, many obstacles occur, which Jocelin refuses to take seriously, on the contrary, he perceives them rather as challenges to be risen to fulfil his duty.

The spire is a symbol of its own. In the primary sense, it stands for human endeavour, as Golding suggested in his own notes (Carey 273), connected with pride and blind obsession with a vision. Jocelin is prepared to sacrifice literally everything and insists on building regardless the harm caused to others as well as to himself. He gradually destroys his relationship with Father Anselm, with the master builder Roger Mason and also with Pangall, the caretaker of the cathedral. Moreover, he deliberately supports adultery and, as a result, he is indirectly responsible for Goody Pangall's death. Throughout the novel, Jocelin's physical condition worsens, especially as regards his spine, and in the end he succumbs to a disease, presumably spinal tuberculosis.

Although the spire is necessarily perceived as a religious building – it seems to have its foundations in a vision of a divine nature and it is supposed to represent Jocelin's faith, yet, at the same time, it is frequently described in secular, even pagan terms. Richard S. Cammarota (1978) suggests that similarly as we can distinguish a “base” and “lofty” sides of a person, we may notice the pattern of images surrounding the cathedral



connected with “pagan elements, water, [...] cellar symbols, and images of trees, webs, nets, tents, and Goody’s hair” on one hand, and “images of birds and angels, and symbols of fire [and] light” on the other (152). Hence, it may be summarized that the symbol of the spire is rather paradoxical: the pagan and religious imagery is combined, the presence of both the angel and the devil is important as Jocelin eventually realizes the “evil” nature of the spire.

Besides, the spire’s secular side is enhanced by another symbol, tightly connected with the bodily: by many critics, the spire is perceived as an image of a phallus. Such interpretation is not only supported by the fact that Jocelin secretly longs for Goody and by an arranged marriage with Pangall he keeps her close to him. Goody is in fact an embodiment of the dean’s impure, sexual desires, which is even strengthened by her appearances in his dreams in the shape of a devil. It might suggest that it is the devil causing his lust which Jocelin tries to suppress. He realizes the physical undertones of his love towards her only when she is dying during a childbirth: “like a birth itself, words came, that seemed to fit the totality of his life, his sins, and his forced cruelty, and above all the dreadful glow of his dedicated will” (S 137). The phallic symbol of the spire also ensues from several passages of the book, comparing the cathedral to a male body:

The model was like a man lying on his back. The nave was his legs placed together, the transepts on either side were his arms outspread. The choir was his body; and the Lady Chapel where now the services would be held, was his head. And now also, springing, projecting, bursting, erupting from the heart of the building, there was its crown and majesty, the new spire. (S 8)

Later on, when looking from the top of the spire, Jocelin sees the land underneath as “soft and warm and smooth as a young body” (S 106). Also the fact that Jocelin projects himself into the position of the “lying man” in one of his dreams is significant: he is “lying on his back in the marshes, crucified, and his arms were the transepts with Pangall’s kingdom nestled by his left side” (S 64), which enhances the involvement of his physical body in the construction of the spire. Redpath even believes that Jocelin and the spire in fact become one: when Jocelin speaks of himself, his “I” includes both of them (134).

The construction of the spire is also symbolic: the development of Jocelin’s character is tightly connected with the development of the construction works, which reflects the process of Jocelin’s self-recognition. The events surrounding the building process usually somehow correspond to his current state of mind: when the earth in the pit

moves, his confident goes down, and the swaying of the spire represents the dean's "moral vacillation" (Babb 145). In the beginning, he is optimistic and full of hope as regards the spire, but as the tower grows, Jocelin's faith and self-esteem lower. As Jay points out, "the spire's ascent [...] is balanced by a descent into Jocelin's psyche" (167) which becomes more and more shaken. The most devastating news comes with his Aunt Alison, revealing the highly secular and humiliating circumstances of him becoming a dean. Cleve in fact calls it "the greatest irony of the novel" (210): it comes out that Jocelin has not earned his position because he had been "chosen" by God, as he believes, but thanks to the sexual relationship of his Aunt with the king. He is completely shattered, especially when Alison goes on encouraging him: "You must believe, Jocelin!" "Believe?" "Oh yes, yes. Believe in your – vocation – and in the nail -" (S 186). At this point, Jocelin seems to begin to realize the dreadful mistakes and sacrifices he has made, only to fulfil his own, selfish will. In terms of the character's development, it is a positive sign – from this moment, the dean regrets his deeds and his last words "Now – I know nothing at all" (S 223) signify that his pride has vanished. E. C. Bufkin (1978) also highlights that the dean's whole career is framed by symbolic "consuming": Jocelin becomes a dean after the king's promise "[w]e shall drop a plum in his mouth" (S 184) and it finishes by Father Adam laying "the Host on the dead man's tongue" (S 223). Bufkin summarizes that as "[t]he plum precipitated the fall; the Host concludes the redemption" (147).

The vision of the spire plays a crucial role in the novel. It also has multiple function – it might serve as "the beginning of his [Jocelin's] purification that lasts until his death" (Cleve 223), it represents the interconnection of the secular with the spiritual, it takes different forms as the story unfolds to mirror the dean's changing attitude, and it helps to create the framework of the novel: the vision opens as well as ends the book. From a certain point of view, the vision seems to be limiting Jocelin's perspective: he considers it "an overriding necessity" (S 141, 168) to accomplish and he ignores everything else seemingly irrelevant to him. Jay puts the central theme of having a vision and striving to fulfil its goal in a broader context – she believes that such topic symbolically reflects on the post-war atmosphere in the sense of decreasing importance of reason and growing influence of ideology (158), which is not necessarily solely a bad or a good thing. The visions occurring in the story express a similar ambiguity: the imagery surrounding them combines the secular with the holy – Jocelin describes the pinnacle he

sees as “the exact image of my prayer in stone”, perceives it as “a flame of fire” or “a key to unlock a vast book” (S 191-192) and further on, explains his feelings:

A new movement of my heart seemed to be building the church in me, walls, pinnacles, sloping roof, with a complete naturalness and inevitability of consent; so that in my newfound humility and newfound knowledge, a fountain burst up from me, up, out, through, up with flame and light, up through a notspace, filling with ultimate urgency and not to be denied [...] an implacable, unstoppable, glorious fountain of the spirit, a wild burning of me for Thee [...] and at the top, if top is the word, some mode, some gift that brought no pride of having. (S 193)

Although Jocelin takes it as granted that the vision came from God, the imagery, similes and symbols he uses in fact do not allude to traditionally Christian symbols and thus have multiple interpretations. Similarly, when he depicts his other visions of a kingfisher, of the spire as an apple tree or of dead Goody, the symbols are ambiguous. For example, when presenting the vision of the apple tree, undoubtedly divine images appear: “a cloud of angels [...], they were pink and gold and white [...] uttering this sweet scent for joy of the light and the air” (S 204). However, at the same time, the angels are carrying “a long, black springing thing” (S 204) and Jocelin suddenly understands “there was more to the appletree than one branch. It was there beyond the wall, bursting up with cloud and scatter, laying hold of the earth and the air, a fountain, a marvel, an appletree” (S 205). Referring to the natural elements is perceived as rather worldly, even pagan: Babb sums up the vision as manifesting “a miraculous totality” (161).

The two symbols/visions appearing in the end, when Jocelin is dying, are, in Jay’s opinion, expected to bring a kind of resolution or closure, however, they do not seemingly relate to the events or symbols already presented. This might lead to confusion since the dean’s last words do not clarify the visions. Jay in fact argues that what is often perceived as Jocelin’s last words, “*It’s like the appletree!*” and silent shouts “*God! God! God!*” (S 223) probably do not count as Jocelin’s spoken discourse. They are not marked as an utterance, and they do not bring the desired conclusion which seems, in a novel so carefully elaborated, unusual. Therefore, she classifies the remark about the appletree as a thought of a dying brain and the repetitive *God!* as a mere interpretation of Father Adam (Jay 169).

The clash of the natural and the spiritual, which is captured in the imagery of the visions, is, nevertheless, a pervading topic running through the whole novel, also reflected

in the conflict between reason and faith. The main characters of Jocelin and Roger Mason represent the opposite poles: the dean strongly believes in his Christian mission despite the missing foundations in which he is supported by the presence of an angel comforting him in times of doubts. Roger, on the other hand, is aware of the impossibility of the unstable soil to carry the weight of the spire and together with his workmen they try to discourage the dean from keeping on building by a legitimate argument that “the solid earth argues against us” (S 85). They ridicule his vision and call it “Jocelin’s Folly” (S 20), which creates direct connection between folly and faith (Cleve 171). The dean himself strengthens the link when claiming that “the folly isn’t mine. It’s God’s folly” (S 121). The reason and scientific attitude in the book are related to the pagan as well. In the beginning, Jocelin presents the cathedral as “some sort of pagan temple; and those two men [...] the priests of some outlandish rite” (S 10). When he finds out that the workers are in fact the “devilworshippers” and “[m]urderers, cutthroats, rowdies, brawlers, rapers, notorious fornicators, sodomites, atheists, or worse” (S 167), he seems he cannot comprehend as he was convinced of their goodness and loyalty.

Besides, the book is full of symbols connected with the natural or the spiritual, not necessarily put in contrast with each other. Cammarota notices that Golding uses biblical imagery within the pagan environment, which alludes back to Frye’s explanation of symbols (153). For example, when Jocelin observes the growing bond between Roger and Goody, he comments on the floor tiles he sees simultaneously as “two heraldic beasts [...], their snakey necks entwined” (S 63). Similarly, during a scene when Jocelin stands on the top of the spire and enjoys the real sounds of constructing, he begins to pray, “and his angel came, unseen with six wings” (S 132). In both cases, the religious symbols are simultaneously used within the natural imagery.

Many other symbols fit into the “pagan” pattern, including Pangall’s character who is often ridiculed and made fool of, which Roger justifies as a “way of keeping off bad luck” (S 42). Besides, recurring images of birds, plants and water appear. Although they are part of the “natural” chain, they again sometimes relate to the holy as well. For example, the birds’ building of nests on the scaffolding provides a parallel for building the spire, the swallows’ presence signify the development of the construction. The tower itself is called “the square chimney with its geometrical birds” or “the birdhaunted tower top”

(Cammarota 167). A significant scene which interconnects the image of a bird and the Holy Spirit presents a dumb sculptor portraying Jocelin's face:

The young man shot out his free arm sideways, brought it in again and made the palm sweep through the air in a swallow flight.

“A bird? What bird? An eagle, perhaps? You are thinking of the Holy Spirit?”

Arm out again, sweeping.

“Oh I see! You want to get an impression of speed!”

Young man laughing all over his face, nearly dropping the stone but catching it again, communion over the stone as with an angel, joy – (S 24)

Also, further on, symbols of various birds – ravens, eagles and swallows – occur, among others, in relation to the holiness of the spire. Furthermore, they also stand for something more characteristic of them: the eagle symbolizes freedom and wider perspective when Jocelin observes it from the top of the spire and he must force himself to go back down “since no man can live his life with eagles” (S 110). The raven brings a rather realistic element to Jocelin's vision (Cammarota 168): its squawk is described as “sane and daylight and matter-of-fact” (S 133). It is probably not a coincidence as well that the vision of the spire takes the form of a kingfisher towards the end of the novel. According to Lurker (2005), the kingfisher may symbolize resurrection or simply becoming a new person, thanks to the yearly regeneration of its feathers (255), something Jocelin goes through when lying on his deathbed, having realized his sins.

The plant imagery is also frequent, especially in similes. The sunlight shines in “trunks” (S 25), pillars surrounded by ladders are compared to “a fir-tree with the branches cut back” (S 53), and Jocelin himself is described as “clinging as to [...] a tree” (S 96) when embracing the dumb sculptor. By many critics, the twig of mistletoe is considered an important symbol. It is seen as particularly significant in the following passage: “Among the rubbish at the bottom of the pillar he [Jocelin] saw there was a twig lying across his shoe, with a rotting berry that clung obscenely to the leather” which triggers a “vision of the spire warping and branching and sprouting; and the terror of that had him on his feet” (S 95). Jocelin once more recalls the twig, realizing Pangall's murder, but still not his own share of responsibility. Babb argues that “Golding orders the references to mistletoe [...] in such a way that they gradually accumulate meaning as well as narrative pressure” (155), most likely referring primarily to the scene of the dean's recognition:

He was staring down – down past the ladders, the floors of wood, the vaulting, down to a pit dug at the crossways like a grave made ready for some notable. [...] He was remembering himself watching the floor down there, where among the dust and rubble a twig with a brown, obscene berry lay against his foot.

He whispered the word, in the high, dark air.  
“Mistletoe!” (S 156).

In addition, the mistletoe itself is an ambiguous symbol: it might symbolize luck, fertility, and protection against witchcraft, but at the same time, in Greek mythology, it is a magic branch opening a gate to the underworld (Lurker 197) and it “is associated with sacrificial killing” (Babb 154). The image of a plant as a symbol of the spire appears again when Jocelin compares the construction of the spire to “[g]rowth of a plant with strange flowers and fruit, complex, twining, engulfing, destroying, strangling” (S 194). The last vision portrays the spire as an apple tree, which may be seen as providing Jocelin with a kind of comfort, “a conviction that he has longed for as much as he longs for forgiveness: the spire is not entirely an evil thing” (Cleve 218).

One of the prominent symbols of the “nature” pattern is also water. It is a motif running throughout the whole book in the form of rivers, “snaking” towards the cathedral (S 106), the marshland surrounding the cathedral and causing the inconvenient soil for the spire, and the rain, announcing changes of seasons, among others. For example, spring is signalled by coming of rains and floods that prevent workers from digging, the cathedral is “slimy with water streaming down over moss and lichen and flaking stones” and the rain drizzles, then lashes down. The gargoyles “uttered water as if this were yet another penalty of damnation” (S 51). Consequently, water fills the pit, the graves, and the cathedral as such, which completely stops all the work. Cammarota sees the function of water in “foreshadowing what will happen morally and spiritually” (161), which can be seen for example when “the earth had swollen with water and pushed up the coarse grass, so that the stone seemed to dint the earth and the main impression was not now one of God’s glory, but of the weight of man’s building” (S 67). This implies the already mentioned Jocelin’s inclination towards the secular, favouring his own desire.

Among the ambiguous symbols connected alternately with both, the natural as well as the spiritual, is the recurring imagery of sun and light. In the beginning, the image of sunlight is presented as clearly divine: “God the Father was exploding in his face with a glory of sunlight through painted glass” (S 7), or, when Jocelin prays, “[j]oy fell on the

words like sunlight” (S 21). Generally, it is related mainly to optimism, God and hope. However, it changes – after an argument with Father Anselm “[t]he sunlight soaked the stone without warming it” (S 34), and, later on, the dean feels irritated when looking into the sunlight. Especially in the second half of the book, the light images began to bring discomfort: the sunshine blinds Jocelin, its rays pierce him and they only contribute to his blurred and confused eyesight, which, according to Cammarota, signifies Jocelin’s indecisiveness and weaker moral vision, as well as his poorer physical shape (165).

Opposing images of darkness occur in contrast with the light pattern. Same as the terms connected with sun and light are perceived as associated with God (Cleve 168), the dark and darkness often become something terrifying and evil. When one of the workmen accidentally dies by falling off the roof, “[a] dark night had not descended on the cathedral, but a midday without sun and therefore blasphemously without hope” (S 54), bringing despair on the workers. It continues by “[d]ay and night acts of worship [...] in the stink and halfdark, where the candles illuminated nothing but close haloes of vapour; and the voices rose [...] in fear of darkness and a universe without hope” (S 55). Finally, when Satan appears to torment Jocelin, he comes at nights and it finishes only when the dean “woke in the darkness, full of loathing” (S 65). Dickson believes that the reversing “pattern of light-dark imagery” is also included in the “paradoxical symbol of the spire contain[ing] the threat of dark foundations as well as the promise of ascension into the heavens” (92).

The light vs. dark motif is closely related, in Christian symbolism, to the conflict between good and evil, in the novel most prominently captured in the occurrences of the angel and the devil. Similarly to the light images, the figure of the angel is ambiguous. Although Jocelin automatically considers him the God’s messenger sent to support him, there is no clear evidence for that. From the beginning, the dean informs the readers of the angel’s presence as of something soothing, comforting and warming but when Jocelin’s sexual desires are brought up, the angel is suddenly gone. Towards the end, the angel emerges again, but brings “wearisomeness”, exhaustion and pain: “the angel was a great weight of glory to bear, and bent his spine. Moreover, after a visit by the angel – as if to keep him in his humility – Satan was given leave to torment him, seizing him by the loins, so that it became indeed an unruly member” (S 138). As presented, the angel is suddenly often accompanied by the devil and the angel’s warmth becomes physically

uncomfortable. Eventually, the angel transforms to the dark angel: “Then his angel put away the two wings from the cloven hoof and struck him from arse to the head with a whitehot flail. It filled his spine with sick fire” (S 188). When Jocelin is on his deathbed, it even goes so far that “the terror of the angel’s approach was on him” (S 197) although Father Adam tries to comfort him. Dickson argues that “[t]he way angel and devil merge as one ambiguous figure is consistent with the paradox of the spire itself.” (87). In addition, the angel’s “naturalization”, as Crawford calls it (122), in terms of the disease, only contributes to the multiplicity of meanings hidden behind the angel’s presence – on the realistic level, the images of the devil might be interpreted as simply figments of Jocelin’s twisted and ill mind.

Besides the angel and the devil symbols, other repetitive images fall under the pattern of Christian symbolism. For example, the symbol of snake, briefly mentioned, occurs several times: a rope hanging from a tower is compared to “a dead snake” (S 142), when Jocelin loses consciousness, “his body threw itself [...] like a broken snake” (S 188) and Rachel’s hair is also described as “snakes that brushed over him” (S 219). Cammarota states that although the snake images are not crucial for the story, they “contribute to the sense of corruption and entanglement” (154), and Cleve adds that such similes carry “biblical overtones” leading back to the snake in the Garden of Eden, to strengthen the underlying sense of misconception and seduction (213).

Although the already discussed vision of the apple tree combines elements of both, the natural as well as the holy, the image of the tree itself undoubtedly also refers to the Tree of Knowledge from the similar reasons as the snake imagery. At the same time, it may be perceived as a counterpart of the “evil plant” mentioned in the vision. Babb also points out that Jocelin’s deathbed vision of the appletree restores his faith in God since it signals his perception of the spire as God’s creation again (138).

A strong symbol of God and Jocelin’s belief throughout the novel is the Holy Nail, the final and most crucial part of the spire, which Jocelin expects with excitement and becomes attached to its arrival. For him, it not only represents the blessing of the bishop in Rome, but symbolizes especially the completion of the spire, securing its stability. Although Jocelin always thinks of the Nail as of the instrument of God and hope: “in his mind it came shining and powerful out of the glow of Rome” (S 158), when he finally receives it, the scene of its acceptance is introduced by “devils whisper[ing] in the high



branches of the cedar” (S 161). Moreover, when the dean decides to attach the Holy Nail on the spire by himself, it is accompanied by a great storm, dancing and howling devils, which culminates by a hallucination when one of the devils transforms to Goody, for the first time in the novel representing an undisguised and naked image of the female body.

Other religious symbols occurring in the novel include, for example, fire, which is again associated with both, the divine and the evil, and even the spire is referred to by Jocelin as “the thing I had felt as a flame of fire” (S 191). The book also covers images signifying Jocelin’s pride and greed, as Bufkin points out (138-139), and Crawford adds that thanks to the recurring images of the greedy mouth - “open mouth” or “gapping jaw” - Jocelin is like Pincher Martin, in the end also consumed by the disease (128). Similes of a ship also become prominent, possibly alluding to Noah’s Ark as a symbol of rescue and gathering all sorts of people at one location, but also a place of isolation. The cathedral is compared to “the ark, the refuge, a ship to contain all these people and now fitted with a mast” (S 107), the workmen are described as considering the church “the security of the stone ship, the security of her crew” (S 11), Jocelin calls Roger “a drunken master” on a ship when he realizes he started to drink (S 143), and Jocelin himself is portrayed as “a man climbing a mast at sea” (S 176).

The name symbolism of Goody’s and Father Adam’s characters seems to have its basis in Christian mythology as well. The obvious reminiscence of the word “God” to “good” is, however, ironical – Goody, in spite of being Jocelin’s “daughter in God”, can hardly be perceived as a good woman, having a love affair with the master builder, especially when both of them are married. Father Adam’s name origin appears to have special significance in the final scene when Jocelin looks into his face and:

he saw what as extraordinary creature Father Adam was, [...] he saw all people naked, creatures of light brown parchment, which bound in their pipes or struts. He saw them pace or prance in sheets of woven stuff, with the skins of dead animals under their feet and he began to struggle and gasp to leave his vision behind him in words that never reached the air. *How proud their hope of hell is. There is no innocent work. God knows where God may be.*” (S 222).

In Dickson’s view, such vision brings readers back to Adam in Eden, symbolizing the fallen mankind, fragile and corrupt (79).

Dickson comments on the other names as well. He believes Pangall “endures a life of ‘pain’ and ‘gall’” (78) as he must withstand being the object of the workers’

humiliation and ridicule as regards his masculinity. The literal meaning behind Jocelin's name can be interpreted as a "jest" or a "joke", which supports the town people's calling the spire "Jocelin's Folly" (Dickson 78). Also the names of Roger and Rachel are probably not coincidentally similar - "[n]ot only were they inseparable, but alike in appearance; more like brother and sister than man and wife, dark, sturdy, red-lipped" (S 43).

As in *Pincher Martin*, also in this novel psychoanalytic symbols occur. The overt interpretation of the spire's building as a phallic symbol and suppressed libido has already been discussed, however, it is interesting to realize that Golding must have acknowledged and willingly incorporated a part of the philosophy which he denied for some time. As Jay points out, "the sexually explicit imagery, which runs throughout *The Spire*, seems to preempt a psychoanalytic reading of the novel. The blatant association of Jocelin's desire for the spire with sexual longing suggests [...] [it] as a sign of ambivalence or a third term – into the more familiar dialectic between faith and reason which otherwise dominates his work" (163). She argues that the mode of sexuality and the unconscious also create a new conflict between psychoanalysis and theology, unusual in his works (Jay 162).

In the novel, sexual desire is often expressed by dreams and visions of a kind, which reflects the psychoanalytic view of images manifested by the unconscious, but triggered by the libido. It is mostly the dreams and visions of Goody that represent the most important thread. Jocelin, for example, describes Goody as "naked in her red hair. She was smiling and humming from an empty mouth. He knew the sound explained everything" (S 178), which has several implications. Besides the physical depiction, Redpath also sees the importance of the phrase "empty mouth" which, according to him, evokes the dumb sculptor's character and reminds Jocelin of the young man's as well as his kind of "inability" to articulate his desire (135). Jay also considers it ironic that Jocelin's spire is a result of his own sexual desire since his becoming a dean was a result of "a sexual economy" as well (165).

In Redpath's view, it is significant to acknowledge that Jocelin's sexual and spiritual love are mixed, which not only alludes to the influence of the Other in Lacan's conception (135), but also to the mirror stage of sudden self-cognition. For most of the novel, the dean is not aware of his physical longing for Goody and admits it only after her death, which serves as a milestone in his development. It is also important that his

unconscious thoughts often emerge in the stream of consciousness as described in the following situation: “a dark corner of his mind surprised him, forcing his mouth to utter words that had no logical meaning, but seemed connected directly to triumph or uneasiness” (S 75).

The role of the author in the text’s interpretation is also worth exploring. Many critics are convinced that the writer’s personality is reflected in *The Spire* – in the character of Jocelin and in the overall atmosphere of the novel. Jay believes that “[h]ighlighting the ‘hubris’ of both its author and protagonist, the novel records the crisis which ensues once intentions come to be disputed” (161). In this connection it is necessary to remind that it took Golding three years to write the novel, redrafting it over and over, as the amount of free time after quitting teaching gave him “limitless scope for perfectionism and self-doubt” and Carey asserts the book had “a more tormented birth than any of his previous novels” (268). Besides, Jocelin’s strives to gain glory, to achieve the feeling of self-inscription by creating the spire - “the bible in stone” (S 51). In Jay’s view, it resembles the whole process of a writer creating a book, specifically in Golding’s case reflecting the “anxiety about the act of interpreting” (161), which he suffered from until the end of his life.

Some of the author’s viewpoints are mirrored in the novel as well. At one point, Jocelin says: “[w]e could do well enough without women” and Father Anselm replies: “[t]hey have been called dangerous and incomprehensible” (S 28-29). This might reflect Golding’s own reserved attitude towards women, captured in insufficiently developed female characters in his works. This topic is explored in more detail in the following section, more closely examining the women’s place in Golding’s books. Similarly, the use of paradoxical symbols, pagan within Christian and vice versa, or the ambiguity of religious symbols capturing both God’s and Devil’s face may also be a result of Golding’s complicated relationship towards religion. On the whole, *The Spire* is, as usually, an allegory depicting human fall, in this case caused by pride and selfishness. Although set in a specific setting of 14<sup>th</sup> century England, the basic plot is universal in its message.

## **2.4 Focus on *The Double Tongue***

### **2.4.1 Summary of the story**

Arieka, the narrator of the story, is a girl growing up near Delphi, unhappy under the rules of her strict father. Thanks to two “miracles” performed during her childhood, she is chosen by Ionides, the Warden of the college of priests in Delphi, to serve as a ward in the Delphi oracle. Without having any choice, she is taken to the Foundation and only after her arrival she gets to know the real truth: she is in fact going to become the third Pythia, a priestess mediating prophecies of Apollo. Shocked but free Arieka enjoys her new tasks, such as reading an immense number of books or learning to speak in hexameters. After unexpected deaths of both older Pythias, she finally becomes the “god’s mouth” herself. She handles her duties surprisingly well, and the declining reputation of the Delphi oracle gradually regains its good name. Ionides is delighted: despite being a High Priest of Apollo, he is a politically engaged pragmatic and tries to use the oracle’s influence to gain Greece’s power back. As a part of secret conspiracy, he plans to get rid of the Roman rule, which, however, has a brief ending. The plot is uncovered, Ionides humiliated and in his bitterness he dies. Arieka, already in her eighties, realizes the transience of the oracle, gods, and life itself. In her scepticism, she requests to build up an altar dedicated “to the unknown god” (DT 165) instead of to her.

### **2.4.2 Symbols in *The Double Tongue***

Golding’s draft of his last novel is in many aspects exceptional. It acknowledges a woman as a fully developed character, moreover, puts her in the position of a storyteller and the main protagonist. Besides, it is influenced by postmodernist principles to a certain degree: it is much more playful and witty as far as language is concerned, it builds upon real events and refers to real persons, but mingles them with the author’s imagination. In accordance with the narrator, it uses feminine discourse, considers the inferior position of women and points out their oppression by a strongly masculine society. Apart from that, critics argue that of all his fiction, this work reflects Golding’s real character and opinions to the greatest extent. It is still an allegory, but foremost it serves as a mirror to the contemporary society: the relationship between the prophesying Pythia, interpreting Ionides and the public is often compared to the relationship between art, its critics or editors and the audience, in this case the readers.

Although some of the topics characteristic of Golding remain, such as the clash between rationalism and spirituality, a person's quest for self- and world-knowledge, and bitter disappointment over the darkness found in the core of things, most of the occurring symbols are not so traditional and they are treated in a more experimental way than in his previous works. The setting of Ancient Greece must have been chosen deliberately for its specifics not only resemble the contemporary situation of Britain, but also reflect some of the still relevant social concerns. Most critics agreed that despite the time and location of the story, the novel is not purely historical. For example, it raises the question of women's role and voice in the society – Carey describes the circumstances under which Golding most likely came up with such an issue. Golding was struck with the way Muslims treated women and he decided to capture the motif of a luxury-dressed woman having to hide her great look into a story (503). Even though the idea was transferred into a completely different setting, the concept remained: the life of a wealthy and influential woman forbidden to administer her possessions is also controlled by men, to a significant extent, by her father and brother during her childhood, and later on by Ionides, her guardian but a ruler at the same time. From another perspective, Stape compares the loss of political power and assimilation of Greece into the Roman Empire to the status of the Great Britain, Europe respectively, with the United States holding the post of the clever and efficiently-working autocrat (396).

Delphi itself might be interpreted as “symbolically dual and peripheral” (Stape 396) – an isolated, nearly uninhabited, during winter almost deserted place continues to fulfil its function of a religious centre for the whole world. This duality, ambiguousness or doubleness is the most prominent motif and recurring symbol of the book. It occurs even in the connection with the building of the Foundation as such: for example, a columbarium run by Ionides features a double nature. It is built into a cave, so one “never knew where you were in the open but in a building, or when you were under the earth and in a cave” (DT 61-62). However, the story's overall impression is ambiguous: its content and form may be described as “the highest spiritual tragedy in the lowest earthly farce” (Jeng 523).

The two main protagonists, Arieka and Ionides, are in many aspects dual characters as well, resembling and contrasting each other at the same time. Both of them are lifelong virgins – she giving herself only to Apollo, he a homosexual, repelled by any kind of physical contact as it ensues from numerous hints. They dedicate their lives to

serving gods but both of them come to realize the folly of their conviction in the end, although each a different one. In the beginning, Arieka truly believes in gods and she intends to perform her role of Pythia honestly, which she, surprisingly, seems to accomplish. Jeng states that “Arieka’s double tongue speaks the mortal language and the divine language, the literal sense and the metaphorical sense, the natural truth and the spiritual truth” (523) by which she successfully achieves to which she has been chosen for. However, observing Ionides’ plotting and uncertain of the rightness of their doings, she becomes more and more sceptical. As Reiff observes, “it leaves readers wondering whether she is an authentic oracle or just a con artist talking nonsense in order to get money from gullible worshipers [sic]” (50). Towards the end of her life, she even expresses doubts concerning the existence of gods: “What to do? It was an ideal moment for the obvious recourse – ask the oracle of Delphi! But how can a Pythia ask herself a question and then transmit to herself the god’s answer, if, if – if there is a god to give the answer?” (DT 161).

Ionides, on the other hand, goes through a reverse journey: from the beginning, he acts, paradoxically, like a disbeliever and a cynic: he claims he does not believe in gods, he “translates the god Apollo’s pronouncements into answers expedient to his own agenda” (Rosoff 6), which is the struggle to set Greece free from the Roman supremacy. Nevertheless, his plans to restore the glory of the oracle and to get the independence back fail. In his desperation, he apparently loses faith in himself and seeks it, to Arieka’s shock, in gods: “Ionides, cynic, atheist, contriver, liar, believed in god!” (DT 136). These metamorphoses may be summarized by Jeng’s observing: “[a]s they grow older and closer to each other, they also become mirror images – or doubles – to each other (534).

Although we can see the symbolic clash between the reason and faith in their characters, a certain kind of complementariness is apparent between them. As Ionides points out to Arieka, their differences make them a well-cooperating couple: he talks too much, whereas she too little, he “speak[s] with the tongues of the men, [...] [she] should speak with the tongues of the Holy Messengers” (DT 84). Arieka herself notices the uniqueness of their relationship: “[i]f we were not married – I mean Ionides and I – if he still had and would always have that shuddering distaste for a woman’s flesh which made any physical intimacy out of the question, I doubt if any married couple ever approaches the intimacy of thought and feeling that we sometimes enjoyed” (DT 76). Both Stape and

Jeng perceive them as joined and unified, as “an axe with a double tongue” (Jeng 547), and recalling the mythical hermaphrodite since both of them have something from the opposite sex as well (Stape 395).

Besides, the doubleness might be seen in the figure of Arieka herself. She “must live ‘quintessentially’ on two levels at once, mediating between the physical universe and the spiritual cosmos” (Jeng 529), she gives ambiguous prophecies which are, moreover, further interpreted. Despite being a “little barbarian” (DT 9), the literal meaning of her name, she is in the closest connection with god – although for her whole life she seems to oscillate between the belief and disbelief in them. Her most important feature, the double tongue, has also multiple meaning:

A female Python, Arieka is supposed to be endowed with a double tongue, the tongue of two forks that Apollo inherited from the huge snake he killed at Delphi (8). Before her ascension to the throne of the Pythia at around the age of fifteen, Arieka has understood the two forks of the tongue to speak respectively of the literal and the figurative. But the figurative is notoriously evasive, and what the literal refers to one often has to interpret figuratively. (Jeng 538)

Apparently, it refers not only to the characteristic feature of snakes, in this context of the mythical Python – which is, by the way, believed to have existed as a dual entity, both female and male – but also to the typical sign of influential people, which is to give ambiguous, equivocal pieces of advice. With an allusion to a human tongue, Lurker highlights that it might also symbolize eloquence and taciturnity at the same time (191), quite fittingly in Arieka’s case. What is more, in the final chapter, she makes, perhaps unconsciously, “a double declaration”: she requires building an altar with the inscription “[t]o the unknown god”, by which she erases her own existence on the one hand, but on the other hand it might be interpreted as identifying herself with the god (Jeng 551).

The ultimate symbol of duality appears at the end of the story, when Ionides, believing he would not see Arieka again, sends her a key: “It was a silver key, but of an extraordinary shape. The two ends were each shaped as a labrys, the Cretan double axe. But this was doubly doubled” (DT 160). She has no clue of how to use it and even she ponders whether it is something more than a mere symbol. Jeng, for instance, believes that it reflects the relationship between Arieka and Ionides of the same, doubly-doubled nature (530). However, a key may be perceived simply as something that enables its holder to enter a new place. Paradoxically, when she finally realizes where the key belongs and

finds the courage to open the double door in the cave of the oracle, what she sees is “the solid, impenetrable rock of the mountain behind them” (DT 165). Since she was not allowed to come into any real physical space, it can be perceived as a metaphor of a step forward in the process of her self-knowledge which Jeng describes as the “confrontation with her own ‘Being’ as well as with the mysterious nature of the gods” (536). Arieka’s reaction in the form of her wish to dedicate an altar to the unknown god only supports this argument, as presented earlier.

As regards the name symbolism, it has already been touched upon with Arieka’s name, which she was very dissatisfied with. Ionides is an opposite case: Golding attributed him with the name of his model from one of Euripides’ plays *Ion*. Although Ionides claims the priest Ion is not his ancestor, he admits their similar positions. In addition, it is surely not a coincidence that Euripides’ Ion was also involved in “oracular deceptions and accommodations” (Kermode). Similarly as the “original” Ion longs for glory and rise of Apollo’s precinct, Ionides has similar desires, although they serve him only as means to his higher political and economic goals. In the end, both of them die disillusioned (Jeng 546).

One of the characters that has not been mentioned yet is a slave serving in the Foundation as well, specifically in Ionides’ book room. He is called Perseus, which might have been inspired by the Greek hero of the same name, although he has little in common with the mythical warrior. On the contrary – in spite of being a slave, he is literate and well-read and he could easily gain freedom, but he loves the library and his occupation among books. Nevertheless, the name has presumably not been chosen deliberately: according to the legend, Perseus’ grandfather, king Acrisius, feared him because of a prophecy announcing that it would be the king’s own grandson who would kill him one day. It was precisely the oracle at Delphi where Acrisius came to consult his future fate (Hutchison). Moreover, in the end, Perseus resembles his predecessor in a journey he has to make, although a bit ironically: he accompanies Ionides on his way to Epirus, the meeting point of the conspirators. Since no one else comes because of the Roman intervention, only they are arrested, humiliated, and eventually set free. Regardless of the bravery Perseus tries to show, he is simply ignored and forced to run back.

Not only as a part of the library, a book is repeatedly used in the story to symbolize wisdom and intelligence. In the beginning, Arieka suffers from the realization of the



women's weak and subordinate role in the world she lives in. One of the few things that make her life more bearable is her desire to learn and read. She notices the paradox that "[t]hough the centre of the world is just a walk away up the hills from us, my brother was the only one who had a book" (DT 10), more precisely a schoolbook retelling a simplified story of Odysseus. It was also the first book she was able to read and even learn by heart. Later on, Ionides shows her the book room, presenting it with words indicating the importance of art as a natural product of humankind: "Goats give milk. Kings give gold. What are poets to do?" (DT 45). Finally, a similar opinion appears when Ionides praises Arieka for her extensive reading: "If everyone could read and would read – what an outburst of wisdom!" (DT 78). Although such a thought is typical for Greek view on education and erudition, similar beliefs occur in the postmodernist principles as well. Works already written are again perceived as sources of inspiration, as providers of the "truths".

Art in general, its role in society and its criticism is seen as a symbol underlying the whole work. Stape believes that the novel itself is a kind of response to the critics as it deals with the notion of "misinterpretation and misrepresentation of [...] ideas" (392), and the argument is even strengthened by the fact that Golding himself was writing from the position of an author "cocking a final snook at impercipient critics as well as at the legion of readers [...] who had badgered him about what exactly he had 'meant' in *Lord of the Flies*" (Stape 392). What is even more ironical is the fact that *The Double Tongue* was published by Golding's editor – it must have been a result of a cooperation between the author and its recipient. It seems to fulfil his own opinion expressed in one of his essays, that the truth presented by a writer should be sought "in that extended co-operation that must go on between the novelist and his reader" (Golding qtd. in Jeng 537).

The whole process of presenting a work of art, earning criticism and evaluating how it was accepted by the public comes into mind when reading about Arieka's real or prepared prophecies, their interpretation by Ionides and their understanding by the audience. The reception of his novels was one of Golding's major concerns, and as it has been mentioned, he was prone to judge himself according to the reviews to a too great extent. He also spent a lot of time explaining or commenting on his works simply because of his fear of being misunderstood. Such worries seem to be reflected in Arieka's attitude towards her oracles: she ponders to what use they can be to the people asking her

questions, and whether her mediation of god's words are always properly interpreted. She depicts the telling case of a man who was prophesied that he would be killed "by the fall of a house", which is why "he stayed out of doors until one day an eagle dropped a tortoise on his bald head" (DT 8). She wonders if the gods only want to have fun and mock people by giving them ambiguous messages and then observe their foolish struggle to understand the "higher principle" – and in the same way we may wonder whether the authors, including Golding, create works for their own pleasure and then watch the general public rack their brains over their meanings.

The concept of "writing about writing" is one of the concerns typical of postmodernist works. In relation, it is also not unusual that the author's figure enters the story in some form. In the novel, critics notice mainly the resemblance of Golding's and Arieka's voice – not only on the basis of the above mentioned reasons, but also thanks to their similar point of view: both of them are in their eighties, contemplating their lifelong work, Arieka writing her memoirs, Golding working on his draft. Jeng also points out that Arieka's portrayal strikingly resembles how Golding once described himself – "as an incorrigibly pessimistic optimist, a persistently realistic mystic: he was often religious and blasphemous in the same breath, and he could be serious and hilarious at one and the same moment" (552-523). However, Meg Rosoff (2013) has a different opinion: she perceives both Arieka and Ionides as symbolizing Golding's "speaking with his own double tongue – part Arieka, reconciling belief and duty, part Ionides, raging against the inexorable erosion of finer values" (6), which might also explain the tight connection and mutual complementariness between the characters. According to Rosoff, although they are individual figures, both of them are unified in their, as well as Golding's, perspective as they are "watching helplessly as life and empires wane, always with the regret, typical of old men, old women and old civilizations, that what lies ahead is worse than what has been" (6).

What might be seen as another postmodernist feature of the novel but a symbolic reflection of contemporary issues as well is the status of women within society, more precisely the rise of feminism and the critical approach towards the women's oppression. Arieka often thinks about her position and role in the masculine-controlled world. Already in her childhood, she reflects the different treatment she receives, in comparison with her brother or her neighbour Leptides, and from the detached view of an older woman she

criticizes it. At one point she is about to compare the fate of being born a woman to the life of a fish in a tank, blindly waiting for her death, but then she admits that “[t]here’s a time in childhood when girls don’t know how happy they are because they don’t know they’re girls if you see what I mean, though they find out later and most of them or some of them at any rate panic the way fish do in the pan” (DT 5). Her pessimistic view of her life as a woman is only strengthened by her realization of being unattractive – she is even literally told that she would have to get a large dowry to become marriageable. However, the most terrible experience comes with her menarche which she describes as “a not very heavy chain which had been waiting to fasten itself round my waist to ensure that I was a prisoner like all women” and it definitely confirms her suspicion that “women aren’t free, not even the free ones” (DT 17). The question of women’s freedom is raised repeatedly throughout the novel – even a noble wife of a wealthy Phoenician dares to express the same thought.

Interestingly, despite being a male writer avoiding more detailed characterization of female characters, Golding tries to induce the impression of authenticity by using “feminine” language. As Sara Mills (1995) suggests, already the first person narration evokes subjectivity and a limited point of view, fitting for portraying an oppressed woman (53). In addition, frequent comparisons Arieka uses are also attributed to women’s writing, together with using verbs of interior processes (Mills 137), in her case typically “wonder”, “suppose”, “believe”, “be aware”, but also “be terrified”, “dread”, “not know”. Generally, she often underestimates and speaks of herself as of a “muddled” or “frivolous” woman who may not understand things, hesitant in giving straightforward answers, and asking a lot of questions.

To exemplify, a passage from the novel was chosen where Arieka is being taken away from her parents to her new home in Delphi by Ionides. She is astonished by the view and comments on the scenery she sees:

“That’s Corinth across there. Sicily would be on our right wouldn’t it?”

“My goodness, you do know a lot. Yes. Sicily would be on our right and a bit south and also a long, long way away.”

We were silent for a time. I thought of my brother but said nothing about him. What was there to be said? Ionides broke the silence at last.

“Now what are you wondering?”

“The future. My future. All the questions. Where? How? What?” (DT 38)

Most of the features mentioned above appear in the excerpt, including the negative form (“nothing”), also believed to be used prominently by female authors, expressing the mitigation of extreme statements and their possible uncertainty (Cameron 44).

Besides, some other characteristic features of postmodernism appear in the novel, such as the aspect of humour and irony in conveying otherwise serious messages, not so usual for Golding’s previous books. The overall atmosphere is far more relaxed and the language is more playful and “modern” in contrast with its setting. Ionides often speaks sarcastically, for example when he explains to Arieka that “[w]e can say what we like and if anyone complains we can say we are inspired” or when he calls one of the Pythias a “fat slug” (DT 72). In a different passage, he orders Perseus to “[g]o back to your books about books about books” (DT 48), which sounds like a mockery of metafiction. Stape points out the irony of Golding’s “critique of the critic” in this scene, “double-edged, as so much is in this novel” (398). This topic is partly connected with the relativity of truth, symbolized in the book by the above-analysed Arieka’s oscillation between gods’ and Ionides’ influence. Moreover, as Ionides remarks, neither gods are unified and “[o]ne god’s truth is another god’s blasphemy” (DT 97). It shows us not only the lack of objectivity and truth as “the product of interpretation” (Eagleton 201) that Ionides realizes, but it also reflects the plurality and fluidity of opinions typical of postmodernist thoughts.

As regards the more traditional symbols occurring in the novel, similarly as in *The Spire*, the images of light and darkness are used in association with gods, the Pythia and the whole complex of the Foundation. Its building and the god are often accompanied by imagery of sun, light, and brightness, to enhance the symbolic power of Apollo as the god of sunlight, whereas the most prominent feature of the shrine is darkness, more or less terrifying to Arieka. The First Lady, or the Pythia serving before Arieka, is, aptly, an embodiment of both – being blind, her rooms remain dark, but with a bit of daylight her eyes shine and pierce like the rays of the sun. As earlier, water also fulfils its purifying function here – symbolically, it is used during the sacred ritual, but it also appears in “water” similes when Arieka sorrows: she “dissolve[s] away like a lump of salt in fresh water” (DT 23) or she becomes a “watering pot” (DT 48) when she is overcome by tears.

Animal imagery is also present, although serving a different purpose: it primarily intensifies the events by what is characteristic of specific animals. For example, when Arieka plans her escape from home and from a possible and terrifying marriage with

Leptides, she fully realizes the foolishness of her behaviour, which is only strengthened by her choosing a donkey Pittacus as her companion. In another situation, Perseus compares the poetess Sappho to a nightingale, to exemplify her small height but lovely and significant voice. Nevertheless, what is the most substantial for the story is, as previously implied, a fish. Arieka can relate to the fish in a tank in that their only purpose there is to wait, seemingly free, until they die. At one occasion, she observes a slave cook preparing a meal and describes him throwing the fish in heated oil:

One of the fish got its head over the edge of the pan and gaped its mouth at me.

I screamed. I went on screaming because it hurt so. I must have screamed things, not just screamed, for the next I remember is Zoileus shouting.

“All right! All right! I’ll take them back -” (DT 5)

When a house dame comes to see what is happening and commands to bring the fish back, the slave Zoileus explains that they are back in a tank, that they “jumped out of the pan [...] and swam off among the others” (DT 6). It is probably no surprise that fish is an ambiguous symbol, widely used before Christians, and originally alludes to women’s fertility and to the cycle of life and death (Lurker 439). However, its shifted meaning connected with Jesus might seem relevant here as well: the fish was brought back to live and the whole event meant a significant change for Arieka’s future life. It is necessary to add though that although she becomes the Pythia on the basis of her alleged supernatural powers, Ionides believes they are in fact built upon mere mistakes or even lies. Since Arieka senses some kind of power in herself and we get only her point of view, all conclusions remain mere speculations.

The fish and its gaped mouth also foreshadow the symbolic void, later on referred to by Arieka in connection with doubting the gods. Sugimura believes that various forms of the void appear in every Golding’s novel and in *The Double Tongue* it is for the first time represented precisely by the fish’s open mouth (204). Although its emptiness is immediately concealed by the incredible tale of the fish’s miraculous resurrection, the void gradually gains more specific shape: at one point Arieka asks herself, “[s]o that void which I felt I had come across and before which I lay in grief was – a kind of god?” (DT 125). Its culmination comes in one of the concluding scenes of the novel, when Arieka finally decides to use the doubly-doubled key: “I stood before it for a long time but the only thought that came to me was that whatever happened, it did not matter much” (DT

164). It reflects the nothingness she realizes earlier – when she expected a god, only void and grief came. She observes a similar resignation in Ionides' behaviour after his return: “[h]e was finding a place to hide, to draw into and away from himself, his shame the last bit of clothing to be dropped before the void, where at last there is the peace of not-god, not-man, nothingness -” (DT 163). The solid rock that she sees behind the curtain and the locked door seems to embody the “no-god” realization – the helplessness of gods and their meaning nothing (Sugimura 207).

From the psychoanalytic perspective, we may identify its influence in several aspects of the novel: the whole idea of remembering and contemplating one's life including the early childhood memories reflects Freud's ideas. Arieka succeeds in recalling even her infancy and it is especially the traumatic experiences she presents. At the same time, she realizes the indistinctness of her memory: “It is detached from succession, which means, I suppose, it may have happened at any point in my time – or out of it!” (DT 3). Closely related, the working of the subconscious might be seen in the discussed issue of Arieka's hypersensitivity towards the supernatural – we as readers can only guess whether what she describes is real or only an outburst of her perhaps too vivid imagination. Similarly, when she gives oracles, she goes into a trance by burning the laurel leaves. This may be a moment when her subconscious awakens, instead of gods, as she is convinced. Although Golding seems to take, eventually, Freud's theories into account, at one point Arieka expresses what could be perceived as mockery of interpretation of dreams: “I think that in sleep with its dreams we are trying to rid ourselves of the rubbish of our minds. Not of course that I would have had such precise thoughts in those days. I was merely aware, with a faint feeling of distaste, that the people who ordered their actions by the dreams they had were trying to walk on water.” (DT 33). It may, therefore, symbolize that even though Golding began to acknowledge psychoanalytic ideas, he still preserved his own opinion and did not accept it unconditionally.

The Bible and Christianity as such do not seem to provide, unusually, the background for religious symbols otherwise typical of his works. The only direct reference leading to the Old Testament is made to illustrate the possible misinterpretation of god's intentions: Ionides explains to Arieka that her feeling that gods “turned their back to me” (DT 71) might be misleading and he exemplifies it on the case when the Christian God

literally showed his “back parts” to Moses since he would die seeing him fully. However, Kermode mentions the Acts as one of the “most decisive source”. Furthermore, Stape places this point in context: by Arieka’s wish to erect an altar for the unknown god, Golding in fact connects the created Greek myth with the Bible since Saint Paul’s words recorded in the Acts of Apostles say “Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD” (Stape 404-405).

With the examples above, we may see that the draft of Golding’s last work is highly innovatory in topics and the overall atmosphere, but at the same time it fits into the body of his works by its message, elaborately created structure and timeless story. By reflecting himself in the narrator’s character, Golding made what Stape called “a testamentary act” (392) featuring also his views and attitudes towards the surrounding world. Therefore, the present despair is always balanced by humour, the rationality by the spirituality, the supernatural by cynicism and in result, the book confirms us “that the world is what we see, what we experience, and what we are able to imagine – nothing more” (Rosoff 7). It in fact seems that towards the end of his life, Golding reached if not optimism, then at least a certain reconciliation between his lifelong scepticism and hope in the mankind, emerging especially in his later novels.

## Conclusion

When exploring the use of symbolism in Golding's novels, it is necessary to consider a whole range of influences behind the works. This means not only taking the author's personal experiences into account – although they foreshadowed the future direction of his works to a great extent, but also literary and other theoretical tendencies significant during his lifetime. The wide range of topics, settings and symbols retelling the same, universal story of a human fall became a characteristic feature of his writing and that distinguished him from other prominent writers of his generation, such as the socially oriented Angry Young Men, dystopian and satirical Burgess or Lessing, also focusing on social and political issues from her female perspective, all of them contributing to the more realistic tradition established earlier.

In Golding's case, it is especially the intellectual environment he was growing up in and the Second World War that are recognized as decisive factors forming his earlier novels. Golding repeatedly admitted the war as an event of paramount importance for his life which most likely reflects in the choice of topics dealt with. Generally, the question of the interior processes of one's mind seems to hold the writer's attention for most of his life. Despite his own shock from the evil people are capable of and the expressed hopelessness about the mankind's future, he gradually became less pessimistic, which mirrored in the later novels. However, the issues he was interested in remained existential: he explores human behaviour in extreme, life threatening situations, focuses on moral struggle where the conflict between good and evil, or between the rational and the irrational is captured. Since his works are often referred to as "myths", "allegories" or "fables", the issues mentioned above usually underlie the main story and they are not discussed blatantly. Still, the dominant aspect of his style of writing is duality and his novels frequently work on two levels: thanks to their allegorical natures they convey a deeper message but the story is articulate on its own.

The main focus of the thesis is the symbolism used in three Golding's works, *Pincher Martin*, *The Spire* and *The Double Tongue*. The first two books represent his earlier writings, therefore they become a part of the more traditional techniques of using symbols and metaphors. *The Double Tongue*, in contrast, is a draft of his last novel which



was published posthumously. Since his books written during the 1970's and later reflect contemporary tendencies to a greater extent, the use of symbols is more experimental and creative. Although the books differ in many features, some of the aspects characteristic of Golding's style are preserved.

The analysed works introduce an isolated protagonist, all of them in a sense ostracised, self-centred and attached to a kind of vision. Christopher Martin is literally on his own, a survivor on a piece of rock in the middle of the ocean, experiencing everything inside his head, and voraciously hoping in his survival. Dean Jocelin is alone in his foolish desire to construct a spire, too high for the cathedral's foundations to bear. He considers himself different, chosen by God, and in his blind determination to fulfil his vision he sets everybody around him against himself. Arieka is a former prophetess, feeling lonely in her childhood within the patriarchal society, and again in her eighties, when she is left alone, drowning in scepticism. This results from her shattered image that gods do not intervene in people's lives as she trusted. Placing his characters in isolation, physical or mental, is Golding's typical tool of bringing the attention to the individuals and analysing their behaviour in specific conditions. Their lives and minds end up taken apart, always revealing the dark side of their personalities.

Martin, Jocelin and Arieka also undergo a significant development during the novels through the process of self-cognition as well as the cognition of the world around them. All three contemplate their lives and become aware of their weaknesses – pride and greed in Martin's and Jocelin's case, in contrast with Arieka's naivety and low self-esteem. All of them also possess a great amount of faith, although aimed differently: Pincher Martin strongly believes in himself, in the human power and intellect as tools of his expected rescue. Dean Jocelin's sincere faith in God is encouraged by the vision and the presence of an angel, believed to be God's messenger. Arieka is truly convinced that gods exist and that thanks to her connection with them she might in fact contribute to the "higher good". However, their symbolic journey helps them realize the folly of their beliefs and leaves them desperate. Despite the pessimistic endings, the novels are always balanced by a small amount of hope as well: Pincher Martin had in fact no time to suffer as he was immediately dead, Jocelin is forgiven by his only remaining close person Father Adam and Arieka eventually finds reconciliation, "tenderness", in the no-god realization.

A typical feature of Golding's novels, the clash between the physical or rational and the spiritual or irrational occurs in all three works. It is represented not only by the contradicting personalities of the protagonists, but also in the symbolic layer behind the story itself. Christopher Martin's counterpart is the religiously minded Nathaniel, Jocelin's reliance on God is balanced by the rationally thinking master builder Roger Mason, and Arieka finds an opposite in her guardian Ionides who by his opinions contradicts not only her, but his own position of the High Priest of Apollo. What is more, Golding uses symbolic imagery to highlight the omnipresent contrast in the narrative as well: in *Pincher Martin*, the conflict takes place primarily between Martin's physical body, the irrational "centre", and his mind, thinking and rational, trying to retain his sanity. In both *The Spire* and *The Double Tongue* the conflict is captured rather in the physical versus the metaphysical or spiritual: Jocelin's intentions are seemingly pure and religious but his desire to build the spire is in fact based on his suppressed sexual longings. Similarly, the angel's warmth that Jocelin feels turns out to be a deadly disease and, generally, contrasting images of the spiritual and the natural are intertwined to create contradictory environment. The same conflict can be seen in Arieka's figure as well: her body serves as a vessel for gods' will, she must balance between the physical and spiritual worlds when giving her prophecies, also partly divine and partly worldly.

The symbols and symbolic parallels Golding used in both *Pincher Martin* and *The Spire* have foundations in Christianity and the Bible, such as the name symbolism of some characters or references to biblical events and places – Martin's six-day projection of the space around him reminds of God's creation, Jocelin's vision of the spire as an apple tree and his perception of Father Adam alludes to Garden of Eden. It is not so prominently used in *The Double Tongue* where the influence of Greek literature and mythology is mainly visible in the overall setting and the issues raised. What is also analysed is the reflection of psychoanalytic theories in the novels. From its perspective, several symbols occur: for example, the preoccupation with childhood traumas, memories and working of the subconscious is evident in *Pincher Martin* and *The Double Tongue*, whereas a person's behaviour triggered by suppressed libido and the clash between id and superego is observed in *The Spire* and *Pincher Martin*. The writer's personal opinions regarding psychoanalytic interpretation possibly come out in Arieka's viewpoints, and a projection of his own personality might be seen in both Arieka's and Martin's characters.

Among other differences between the three books Golding's shift from the rather traditional attitude towards the more innovative approach (as far as the symbolism is concerned) is particularly notable. Already in his novels written in the 1980's the postmodernist principles began to appear in his books. These tendencies culminate in *The Double Tongue* where we may notice their impact on his writing style: the language is more playful, the used metaphors and similes not so conventional and predictable, and the topics result from Golding's new experiences as well as from the postmodernist influences.

The methods Golding uses are aptly equivocal: he draws simultaneously from Christian, Greek and pagan traditions which makes his symbols difficult to "decipher", which only contributes to the universality and multiplicity of meanings typical of his works. He often builds upon the concept of defamiliarization when he adopts the narrators' view and describes their worlds from their perspective. It strengthens the authenticity of the environment but complicates understanding: the readers are again encouraged to involve themselves into the story and its final meaning. It is especially reflected in the use of similar symbols which are treated differently. To illustrate the point, one of the symbols recurring in all three novels is water. In *Pincher Martin*, it takes the form of the ocean, intimidating in its vastness but soothing in its tenderness with which it carries Martin. It might be seen as enabling him to enter a new dimension of life, reflecting his turbulent subconscious, but, at the same time, it becomes a tool of his death. In *The Spire*, its symbolic is again dual – the rains and consequent floods manifest the processes of nature and signify the changes of seasons but they also indicate purification by which they unite the spiritual with the pagan. Water is symbolically used in *The Double Tongue* as well – it is supposed to wash away the unholy during a ritual before giving oracles but even more frequently it occurs in relation to Arieka's tears, hence the bodily function signifying sorrow.

Although Golding is interested in moral dilemmas and seeking causes for one's actions, he neither moralizes, nor he gives definite answers – on the contrary, he is ambiguous which leaves space for one's own interpretation. In spite of the often pessimistic impression his books give, in the end, the human cognition always brings a kind of solace as well, as presented in the three analysed books. The questions of ethics he raises and the issue of one's choice between good and evil make his allegories universally

applicable and timeless. The versatility is achieved especially by using symbols based on various traditions, combining the conventional with the modern, the rational with the spiritual. As we could see, already the setting of his stories is symbolic and creates the environment for building up an extended metaphor of a human fall, which Golding often strengthens by giving his protagonists symbolic names and characteristics, such as being greedy or proud on one hand, and innocent and virtuous on the other. His characters are forced to make a symbolic journey towards their self-knowledge, connected to solving difficult moral or even existential problems. Their state of mind is reflected in the surrounding events as well, such as a character's internal conflict supported by a thundering storm or one's losing heart mirrored in other matters going wrong. Despite the focus on the more evil side of a person, readers can relate to the protagonists' struggle and that is why the author and his work are and presumably will be still read all over the world.

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