Concept of will in the novels of William Golding

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THE CONCEPT OF WILL
IN THE NOVELS OF WILLIAM GOLDING

by

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B.S. Montana State College, 1961

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Introduction
William Golding, according to Bernard Oldsey and Stanley Weintraub, two of his most recent commentators, "would restore concepts of Belief, Free Will, Individual Responsibility, Sin, Forgiveness (or Atonement, anyway), Vision, and Divine Grace. He would restore principles in an unprincipled world; he would restore belief to a world of willful unbelievers."¹

Such an ambition, if it can truly be attributed to any modern author, is impressive, indeed. But the critical question, the extent of Golding's success in achieving this ambition, remains unresolved. The purpose of this study is to investigate one aspect of Golding's ambition, his treatment of the human will in his first five published novels.²

Perhaps the simplest definition of will, in Golding's own terms, is implicitly framed (though not explicitly stated as such) in his answer to a question concerning his purpose in writing Lord of the Flies: "I set out to discover whether there is that in man which makes him do

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² The five novels to be treated in this study are Lord of the Flies (1954), The Inheritors (1955), Pincher Martin (1956), Free Fall (1959), and The Spire (1964). In addition to these novels, Golding has published a volume of poetry, Poems (1934); one short story, "Envoy Extraordinary," included in Sometime, Never: Three Tales of Imagination (1956), and later made into a play, The Brass Butterfly (1958); and approximately thirty book reviews and essays, twenty of which have been collected and published as The Hot Gates and Other Occasional Pieces (1965).
what he does, that's all." By demonstrating in *Lord of the Flies* that "that . . . which makes [man] do what he does" is inherent in his nature, rather than in any of man's social systems or in his physical or geographic environment, Golding establishes the fact of man's moral responsibility for his actions. Man's will, then, as the agent which initiates and at the same time directs his actions, is gradually revealed in the sequence of Golding's novels as an extremely important—probably the most important—element of man's nature.

A study of basic human nature, of human needs and human longings, should be the first concern of the serious novelist, according to Golding. In a statement of his artistic creed for a series called "The Writer in His Age," Golding says:

> Current affairs are only expressions of the basic human condition where [the novelist's] true business lies. If he has a serious, an Aeschylean, preoccupation with the human tragedy, that is only to say that he is committed to looking for the root of the disease instead of describing the symptoms. . . . I am very serious. I believe that man suffers from an appalling ignorance of his own nature.⁴

Golding's "Aeschylean preoccupation with the human tragedy" manifests itself in a mythopoetic approach to his subject matter and in an idiosyncratic "neo-orthodox" ethic which sets his work apart from the main body of contemporary literary ideas and fashions. While other artists deal with "the fragmentary nature of our experience," says

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Frank Kermode, "Golding gives remarkably full expression to a profound modern need, the need for reassurance in terms of the primitive; the longing to know somehow of a possible humanity that lived equally in the whole world; the need for myths of total and satisfactory explanation." Such myths, says Kermode, explain "the ancient situation to which our anxieties recall us: loss of innocence, the guilt and ignominy of consciousness, the need for pardon. . . . Golding believes in human guilt and the human sense of paradise lost."5

Golding's belief in human guilt, or in the human capacity for evil, is implicit in the regressive theme of Lord of the Flies; Golding's schoolboys are clearly not the "noble savages" of Rousseau's romantic philosophy. In fact, says Golding, the very purpose of the novel is "to trace the defects of society back to the defects of human nature. The moral is that the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system however apparently logical or respectable."6

In tracing "the defects of society back to the defects of human nature" (Lord of the Flies), Golding implicitly suggests that the actions of innate human instincts and emotions on the will frequently result in man's regression to lawless savagery. In The Inheritors, Golding reverses the theme of regression and attempts, through a speculative investigation of human evolution, to locate in man's prehistory


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since he gradually comes to focus on more specific aspects of the will in his succeeding novels, it seems best for the purpose of this study to look at Lord of the Flies at once, and to introduce relevant background comments on will as the need for them arises during the course of the study.
Lord of the Flies
that the story, according to the author's note, was first published in 1935, then later in the "Best American Short Stories" and "Collected Stories" of the late author. The story's theme is moral retribution, which is central to the novel.

Critics have praised the story, saying it is a masterful example of the genre. The author, a master of the genre, has succeeded in creating a sense of atonement and redemption, and readers are left with a sense of catharsis.

Despite its length, the story has been successful in engaging readers, and a sequel is anticipated. The author has been praised for his ability to create a sense of cohesion between the various events in the novel.
reason is inconsistent, as are his alleged associations with moral conscience or with a Freudian superego.  

Thus consideration of Piggy's role as a moral guide is in order here, as Piggy can be an apt and moral counsellor on occasion. His will serves as a foil for the belligerent willfulness of Jack and as a moral prod which arouses Ralph's will, so that Ralph gradually develops a kind of moral dialectic within himself. At the site of the first signal fire, Piggy insists that the boys "put first things first and act proper" (40). He points out that they should have first made shelters and that the signal fire, now out of control, may well burn up their food supply. Finally, as an afterthought, Piggy thinks of the safety of the smaller children and specifically, in horror, of the probable fate of the small boy with the mulberry birthmark (40-42). But Piggy's morality appears to be prompted equally by concern for his own personal comfort and safety.

Piggy's verbal prodding begins early, "We ought to have a meeting" (9), and grows more emphatic, "We got to do something" (12), as Ralph's sense of responsibility is slowly awakened. When Ralph finds a large conch shell in a tidalwater pool, Piggy is jubilant; he perceives that it can be used to call the scattered boys together and to coordinate their individual wills toward a common effort which will increase their chances of rescue. Ralph is elected chief mainly because he is the first to call a meeting by blowing the conch, which becomes a powerful symbol

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8 Oldroyd and Weintraub, pp. 20-30.
of traditional authority. He still holds it as the boys assemble, and they agree to grant an audience—and thus to submit their wills temporarily, at least—to the authority implicit in anyone who holds the conch.

The basic differences in the natures of Ralph and Jack are apparent at the first general assembly. Ralph is tactful, deliberate, tolerant, and receptive to suggestions, a boy who ordinarily submits his will cheerfully to a higher authority. Jack, on the other hand, is rude, arrogant, and impetuous, quick to assert his will and accustomed to dominating the will of his peers. He is a born martinet, a natural leader, dynamic and aggressive. The wills of both boys seem almost entirely free as they climb the mountain with Simon to survey their new estate in a mood of youthful and jubilant camaraderie. "This belongs to us,"

Ralph announces, with the rhapsodic air of someone who thinks he possesses absolute freedom (25). But while Ralph scans the island for signs of human habitation, Jack's thoughts are of a willful holiday: "We'll get food. . . . Hunt. Catch things . . . until they fetch us" (25).

Back at the beach, Ralph is reminded by Piggy of the seriousness of their situation and is torn between the possibilities of having fun and the responsibility of devising an ordered plan for rescue. He tells the boys:

We may be here a long time. . . . But this is a good island. . . . It's wizard. There's food and drink, and—. . . While we're waiting we can have a good time on this island. . . . This is our island. It's a good island. Until the grownups come to fetch us we'll have fun. . . . We want to have fun. And we want to be rescued. (30-33)
Ralph's halting state-of-the-nation address reveals the dichotomy which is later to rend the group like lightning. For Jack is determined to have fun at any cost, and determined also that the fun of the group shall be organized according to his prescription; Jack's will takes the form of self-will. But Ralph's twelve-year-old mind warns him that he must discipline his will according to the traditional English sense of communal responsibility; he is determined that the boys shall be rescued and returned to their native English society.

The concept of fun becomes an important issue in the novel, and reflects the differing courses the will takes in Jack and Ralph. For Jack, fun represents uncircumscribed independence, the irresponsible abandonment of free will run rampant. But fun, pursued in this direction, is habit-forming, and addiction to it is frequently a contagious and extremely hazardous condition, as Joseph Wood Krutch suggests in a recent essay dealing with the problems of our contemporary "fun-oriented" society:

Is it—or isn't it—a cause for surprise that the age of fun should be also both an age of violence and (among a conspicuous group of intellectuals) an age of philosophical despair? Fun, violence, and despair seem at first sight to make an unexpected trio but perhaps there is a natural relation. Since you can't possibly have fun all the time, since seeking it too persistently and too exclusively is a sure way of finding boredom and frustration instead, perhaps pessimism is the inevitable reaction of the thoughtful, and violence the inevitable reaction of those who do not analyze their frustrations.9

Society

The concept of a society has a profound impact on the way we perceive and interact with each other. The boundaries of society are often unclear and subjective, leading to a complex tapestry of relationships.

Despite these challenges, society is a fundamental aspect of human experience, influencing our behavior and attitudes in numerous ways.

The importance of understanding social norms and interactions cannot be overstated, as they shape our lives and our connection to others.

In conclusion, the exploration of society's role in shaping human behavior is a critical aspect of understanding the complex tapestry of human existence.

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*This text is a fragment from a larger document and is provided as a sample for natural language processing and reading assistance.*
Barrett acknowledges the reductive nature of Nietzsche's philosophy, but maintains that, reductive though it may be, Nietzsche's theory of the "Will to Power" is highly pertinent to contemporary Western culture. And, although there are no indications in Lord of the Flies that Golding has necessarily been influenced directly by any of Nietzsche's major concepts, nevertheless his philosophy is pertinent to Golding's portrayal of Jack. Barrett continues:

But what is power? It is not, according to Nietzsche, a state of rest or stasis toward which all things tend. On the contrary, power itself is dynamic through and through; power consists in the discharge of power, and this means the exercise of the will to power on ever-ascending levels of power. Power itself is the will to power. And the will to power is the will to will... Precisely in this idea of power [Nietzsche] was the philosopher of this present age in history, for he revealed to it its own hidden and fateful being.  

Jack's dynamism, his will to power, and his gradual acquisition of that power are clearly revealed in the novel. He first appears as the strict and imperious leader of a boy choir and arrogantly assumes that he should be leader of the entire group of boys. His dynamic zest for exploring and for action mark him out among the other boys, and he revels in the challenges of survival and mastery over others: "We'll get food. . . . Hunt. . . . Catch things" (26). Jack is intrigued by, and relies upon, sheer force; he is fascinated by a balanced boulder on the mountainside which he, Ralph, and Simon are able to send crashing down.

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11 Barrett, pp. 200-201.
Here Golding editorializes slyly in order to emphasize the attraction of power: "The desire to squeeze and hurt was ever-mastering" (106). The same "desire to squeeze and hurt" obviously drives the boys later in the primitive ceremonial dance in which Simon is killed. Golding apparently shares the conviction of Dostoevsky, who observed about man's innate cruelty: "The characteristics of the torturer exist in embryo in almost every man of today." 12 The sheer ecstasy of power, of wanton exercise of one's own will, appears to be as important a motive as Roger's inherent sadism—or perhaps sadism is merely the ecstasy of power—when "with a sense of delirious abandonment," Roger triggers the boulder which kills Piggy and shatters the conch (107).

But his will to power is not the only resource at Jack's disposal; asOldsey and Weintraub correctly point out, he perceives almost intuitively the use of mask, dance, ritual, and propitiation to ward off—and yet encourage simultaneously—fear of the unknown. Propitiation is a recognition not only of the need to pacify but also of something to be pacified, . . . Politically and anthropologically he is more instinctive than Ralph. Jack [symbolizes] a stronger, more primitive order than Ralph provides. 13

In effect, Jack uses a variety of masks in order to gain his political ends. He appears first behind the figurative mask of choir leader, then assumes a mask which is figuratively a combination of the British schoolboy and the British imperialistic attitudes: "We're English, and

13 Oldsey and Weintraub, p. 23.
the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things" (36). Eventually, by painting his face, Jack assumes the literal mask of the savage hunter; feeling secure behind this camouflage, he can triumphantly reject the traditional rules which have tended to curb his will as a choir leader and as an English schoolboy. "Hellloaks to the rules!" he shouts. "We're strong--we hunt!" (34).

Jack's skillful manipulation of dance, ritual, and propitiation as means of furthering his will to power become clear as fear of the "beast" sweeps among the boys. The "littlums" first voice the fear by trying to explain the horror of their dreams and nightmares. Soon the older boys begin to imagine, and rapidly develop an irrational and superstitious fear of, some sort of horrible and destructive beast which they believe lurks in the jungle. Suddenly a "beast" appears in the form of a dead airman who drifts down in a parachute from an aerial night battle high above the island and lodges, partially suspended by his tangled chute, on top of the mountain near the signal fire. The few boys who see the corpse with its flapping parachute see it only in the dark and are terrified by the incarnation of their imaginary beast; as a result of their reports, all the boys abandon the signal fire and avoid the mountaintop. Their irrational fears mount hysterically as they imagine the beast prowling the island. By impaling the head of a freshly-killed cow on a stake in the jungle as a propitiatory offering to the "beast," Jack, already the leader of the hunters, assumes the additional role of a primitive priest or witch doctor, thus utilizing the boys' superstitious fear to further his own will to power. From this point on, Jack's
uncurbed will inspires the boys to increasingly wilder and more violent orgies in the ritualistic performances of their pig-killing game.

The projection of the boys' own irrational fears and superstitions into an externalized evil in the form of the beast provides Jack with a powerful weapon in his recruiting program. He promises the boys the security of both force and propitiation with which to repel the beast: "If there's a beast," he says, "we'll hunt it down! We'll close in and beat and beat and beat—!" (34). Later, Jack announces, "When we kill we'll leave some of the kill for the beast. Then it won't bother us, maybe" (123). "So leave the mountain alone, . . . and give it the head if you go hunting" (143).

Jack has an additional psychological advantage in that he can rely on the normal appetite of young boys for food and adventure. He can promise them the tangible rewards of meat and "fun," while Ralph can promise them only the abstract and rapidly-fading hope of "rescue."

As E. L. Epstein accurately observes, the killing of the sow is the turning point in the struggle between Ralph and Jack (191). From this point on, Jack almost completely abandons traditional Western moral considerations and rules, and is thus free to devote his attention primarily to tactical decisions; in this sense, his will appears to become more and more free. Ralph, on the other hand, feels constrained to make his decisions inside the constraining framework of traditional rules and is thus tactically handicapped in the struggle for control of the island.

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14 In his "Notes," appended to the text of Lord of the Flies.
society; thus his will becomes more and more restricted as he submits it to his vague ideas of duty.

Jack's will, then, becomes disturbingly free and degenerates into ultimate license; it appears to be limited only by the extent of his physical capabilities and by the extent to which he can manipulate the power he has accumulated. His will is restricted, however, by the dictates of his drive for power, and by the chronic uncertainty and striving for proof which that drive entails. Last of all, and most important, Jack's will is influenced by the inherent lust for violence and destruction (the beast within) which influences, in varying degrees, the conduct of most of the boys on the island. The human attraction to, and the beastly nature of, violence and destruction are suggested early in the story when Jack, with the help of Ralph and Simon, prides loose a huge boulder which goes crashing "like a bomb" down the mountainside; the boys cheer wildly while the forest shakes "as with the passage of an enraged monster" (24). In a sense, Jack's will is not truly free after all, for it gradually becomes enslaved to his lust for violence and destruction, to irrational fears, and to his drive for power.

Ralph, like Jack, has his own concept of fun. At "twelve years and a few months" of age, he reflects the typical conditioning and values of an English public schoolboy. Fun to him is the ordered fun of the playing field and of an English boy's world. In the presence of the brute power of the ocean, Ralph feels helpless and condemned; he dreams wistfully of the sheltered comfort of a boy's life, complete with penalties and the cozy security of a room full of boys' books. His world of fun is
the world of games with well-defined and strictly-enforced rules, and of adventures which can be terminated at will by a return to the world of school and authority. The glamour of the idea of "rescue" appeals to him, and he uses the word frequently. Ralph depends upon, and waits for, adult authority to lift all the boys bodily out of their unpleasant situation, so that a certain boyish trust and passivity weaken his position. He cannot bring himself to grapple with bare paws; he flings "his foolish wooden stick" at a boar from five yards' distance, while Jack grapples physically with the boar's brute strength.

Like Jack, but to a lesser degree, Ralph externalizes evil. To him, evil is the state of savage primitivism implied by long hair, physical uncleanness, deceit, and sloth; evil is the abandonment of the rules and "not playing the game" a refusal to exert the will toward communal responsibility and welfare. Ralph only reluctantly accepts Jack's externalization of the beast. Like Jack, Ralph attempts to use his own externalization of evil, the state of unkempt, destructive savagery, as a political lever and as a recruiting device. "We won't be painted," he says, "because we aren't savages" (133). But all that Ralph can offer as protection against evil are cleanliness and the rules of the game.

The boys intuitively sense that evil, like Jack, will not conform to the rules of the game, and they slowly and reluctantly gravitate to Jack, who promises meat, fun, and the protection of power and propitiation. The twins called "Summarias" realize, as Ralph's small group prepares to confront Jack and his painted tribe, that they ought to take spears. Force is the only possible argument which will impress Jack, and when
Ralph insists on standing on the principles of justice and repectability alone, Samneric examines him closely, "as though they were seeing him for the first time" (10). The twins are beginning to recognize the handicap which Ralph's limited will and vision represent.

In front of Jack's "fort," Ralph is forced to resort to his basic argument, "You aren't playing the game," which sounds pitifully feeble under the existing circumstances, and to the pleading reiteration of a moral choice which by now is meaningless to Jack: "Which is better, law and rescue, or hunting and breaking things up?" (16, 186). The issue is finally reduced to a simple problem of force, of will harnessed to muscle power versus will dedicated to the abstract ideas of duty and responsibility. The answer is obvious as Roger, high overhead, leans on the lever and triggers the monstrous boulder which shatters the covech and knocks Piggy into the sea.

Ralph's will, as represented by his actions and decisions, is circumscribed and restricted by his conditioned respect for cleanliness and fair play, for the rules of a game originated by "a civilization that knew nothing of the homy and was in ruins" (57). Ralph's limited vision, and thus the constraining framework within which his will operates, is made disturbingly clear as he insists, "The rules are the only thing we've got!" (84). With Piggy killed and Samneric captured, Ralph is forced to hide out like an animal while Jack and Roger prepare to hunt him to the death.

One other major figure, Simon, is significant to the theme of will in Lord of the Flies. Simon's will is both rational and intuitive; he
in gifted with an extraordinary sort of vision which is signal lacking in the other boys. Golding has endowed him with something like epilepsy, symbolically the mark of the visionary and the mystic, presumably to emphasize his clarity of vision. As Oldroyd and Weintraub point out, Simon thinks as logically as do any of the other boys, including Piggy; also, Simon is the only one in the novel who is consistently charitable.  
Simon refuses to externalize evil without thorough investigation of the so-called "beast." "Maybe," he insists, "the beast is only us" (52). If this be true, then the only course open to the group is to face up to the beast, to acknowledge it, and to try to determine precisely what it is. Thus Simon becomes the only one of the boys who exercises true freedom of the will in a moral and analytical sense.

When Simon plods up the mountain alone to investigate the beast, he encounters the Lord of the Flies (the pig's head which Jack and his hunters have left as a propitiatory offering to the beast), and the fantastic dialogue which ensues, actually a projection of Simon's inner dialectic, focuses the ultimate meaning of the novel. In a horrifying vision, Simon perceives that the beast truly is "only us," just as he has suspected; Simon goes on to learn that the beast on the mountaintop which has terrorized the rest of the boys is actually the rotting corpse of an airman swaying in the harness of its parachute which has caught on the rocks of the mountaintop.

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15 Oldroyd and Weintraub, p. 24.
The Lord of the Flies Eelmebub, a Hebrew name for Satan, literally means "lord of flies," and thus is a symbol of evil which Simon encounters in the jungle is, in one sense, only a "pig's head on a stick," as Simon sensibly points out. In another sense, however, it is tangible physical evidence of the externalization of evil which Jack (and Ralph, to a lesser degree) has accepted and, in fact, promoted. "Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!" the beast jeers at Simon, "You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you" (133).

The externalization of evil in the boys represents a denial of man's inherent propensity for violence and cruelty, and thus an evasion of moral responsibility. The loering and cynical pig's head on the stick is rotting, reek Flesh evidence of the innate violence and cruelty, the darkness or evil, which exist in the heart of man. At the same time, as a propitiatory gift to an externalized evil, the pig's head is a physical manifestation of man's denial of responsibility for the intrinsic evil implicit in violence and cruelty. Thus the Lord of the Flies stands as physical proof of its own statements to Simon, "I'm part of you," and "We are going to have fun on this island" (133). And the full meaning of "fun" is soon illustrated dramatically in the vicious ritualistic orgy which results in Simon's death. As the beast in the jungle (the rotting pig's head on a stick) represents the innate evil of violence and cruelty in the hearts of the boys on the island, so the beast on the mountaintop (the rotting corpse of the airman) represents the same evil in the hearts of the grownups of the world who are engaged
in an atomic war, the modern savagery of which compares very closely, on a larger scale, to the primitive savagery of Jack's tribe of children.

Though Simon is the only one of the boys with sufficient physical and moral courage to stand up to his fears and acknowledge the evil in the heart of man, he is shy and inarticulate when speaking before a group. His moral courage indicates that he has the only truly free will among the boys, but the value of his intelligence, vision, and courage is negated by the savagery and indifference of Jack and his followers, and even of Ralph and Piggy. Simon's revelation of the true identity of the beast is drowned in the ritualistic chant of the pig-killing game as the maddened boys claw and beat him to death. Driven by his will to power and his lust for violence, Jack has deliberately aroused the innate evil in the hearts of all the boys, including Ralph and Piggy; Simon's mangled body is tragic evidence of the total effect of this inherent evil on the collective wills of a group of "innocent" schoolboys. Golding implies that man is frequently deafened and blinded to the truth—until too late, at least—by the very evil within himself from which he seeks so desperately to escape.

Simon represents also, in a broad sense, an element of faith and of hope; Ralph clutches at Simon's prophecy, "You'll get back," as a talismen to brace his sagging will until he falls helplessly at the feet of the naval officer who rescues the boys.

On both the plot and thematic levels, then, Golding has centered his novel on the clash between the wills of Jack and Ralph, and on the related struggle of the two boys for status and dominance within the
larger group. Both at first appear to have almost unlimited freedom in their choice of action, but the novel makes clear that the range of choice which their will permits is decidedly limited.

Jack's behavior is influenced by his inherent dynamism and love of action, and by an irrational faith in the efficacy or efficiency of sheer physical power. Ralph, on the other hand, relies on democratic procedure, on the English public-school conventions of fair play, and on the humanistic traditions of everyday Christian and classical morality. With each boy operating within his individual mental framework, Ralph is gradually forced, by Jack's dole system and accompanying reign of terror, into increasingly difficult moral choices which seem inevitably to end in compromise or failure on his part. Ralph stands "among the ashes of the [first dead] signal fire, his hands full of meat, saying nothing" (68); later, he shares Piggy's rationalization for the guilt of Simon's murder (145). Ralph gradually becomes painfully aware of the penalties inherent in incorrect moral or tactical choice, or of the failure to choose promptly when alternatives are presented: "If I blow the conch and they don't come back; then we've had it," he tells Piggy. "We'll be like animals" (83). The penalties are human regression and ultimate surrender to the decimating violence of savagery.

Both boys are influenced also by an inherent human lust for violence and savagery, the innate evil shared in common within their individual hearts which is symbolized by Simon's image of the Lord of the Flies. Jack surrenders willingly and ecstatically to the dictates of the evil within himself; Ralph yields reluctantly, and considerably less
frequently: "I'd like to put on warpaint and be a savage. But . . .
the fire's the most important thing."

The novel itself suggests, then, that Golding believes in freedom
of the human will, but in a freedom which is severely limited because
the will is closely related to the evil instincts innate in the human
heart. Apparently Golding also believes in individual responsibility
for moral choice and moral action, which free will—regardless of its
limitations—logically entails. But his novel implicitly warns us that
rational exertion of the will for good is not likely to be effective in
a world in which adults commit themselves to the savagery of atomic war.

Since he allows anachronic power to triumph in Lord of the Flies,
Golding's view of the moral potential of the human will appears in this
novel to be one of qualified pessimism. Jack's will obviously succeeds
in dominating the society of the island, a domination which Ralph and
the other boys are rescued from only by means of a passing British
crusier in a faux as machine ending which many critics have denounced
as a contrived "gimmick."16 The pessimistic mood established by the
downward and regressive movement of the plot is further emphasized by
Golding's remarks in a subsequent (1955) publicity questionnaire con-
cerning Lord of the Flies:

16 For examples, see James Cindin, "'Gimmick' and Metaphor in the
Novels of William Golding," Modern Fiction Studies, VI (Summer, 1960),
pp. 145-152; and Louis J. Halle, "Small Savages," Saturday Review, Octo-
ber 15, 1955, p. 16.
The officer, having interrupted a man-hunt, prepares to take the children off the island in a cruiser which will presently be hunting its enemy in the same implacable way. And who will rescue the adult and his cruiser? 

In a later (1960) essay dealing with education as it relates to the current literary scene, Golding comments on the modern dedication to power: "We have come to pursue naked, inglorious power when we thought we were going to pursue Natural Philosophy." 

Hence, I revert to Barrett's conclusion concerning Nietzsche's philosophy of the "Will to Power," a conclusion which might seem, at first glance, to have been written about Lord of the Flies:

Yes, we hear with us still the old liberal ideals of the individual's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; but the actual day-to-day march of our collective life involves us in a frantic dynamism whose ultimate goals are undefined. Everywhere in the world, men and nations are behaving precisely in accordance with the Nietzschean notion of power: The goal of power need not be defined, because it is its own goal, and to halt or slacken speed even for a moment would be to fall behind in achieving it. Power does not stand still; as we say nowadays in America, you are either going up or coming down. 

And Golding's remarks on current (1960) trends in education are an echo of Barrett:

We are like the man who pays lip-service to culture and quiet and meditation; but who shows by his actions that the thing he really believes in is making

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a fortune. He is so surrounded by things, that he tries to have the lot; and ends by doing nothing or tagging along behind the shining thing that attracts his appetite.20

A recent (1965) essay which Golding wrote in an attempt to answer some of the most common questions about Lord of the Flies suggests the possibility of a slight shift in his pessimistic stance and implies that he was, at the time he wrote the novel, especially preoccupied with the moral and philosophical questions posed by World War II:

Before the second world war I believed in the perfectibility of social man; that a correct structure of society would produce goodwill; and that therefore you could remove all social ills by a reorganization of society. It is possible that today I believe something of the same again; but after the war I did not because I was unable to. . . . anyone who moved through these years without understanding that man produces evil as a bee produces honey must have been blind or wrong in the head. . . . How could the political and philosophical idealism of Germany produce as its ultimate fruit, the rule of Adolf Hitler?21

There is, however, a faint note of optimism in Lord of the Flies, one perhaps unintentional on Golding's part, but worth noting, though it cannot be pushed very far. Oldey and Weintraub have mentioned the irony implicit in the fact that the officer who rescues the boys reveals the same "old boy" attitude and the same "fun and games" playing-field vocabulary which have handicapped Ralph's efforts toward constructive organization on the island. 22 "I should have thought," says the officer, "that

20 "On the Crest of the Wave."


22 Oldey and Weintraub, p. 37.
a pack of British boys—"you're all British, aren't you?—would have been able to put up a better show than that" (186). Two basic tenets of the officer's philosophy are clearly suggested: Evil cannot—or at least certainly should not—be of British origin; and evil cannot exist in the climate of the playing field. It is clear also that the officer's revolver, the trix cruiser in the background, and the submachine gun in the hands of the enlisted men all represent bare power. We might assume, then, that the rescue party represents a combination of the basic attitudes of Jack and Ralph; both force and a sense of "the rules of the game" are present here. With this thought in mind, we might return to a scene from the boys' first free and happy days on the island. As they prepare to build the first signal fire, Ralph and Jack struggle together with a heavy log and grin at each other in the "glamour...of friendship, adventure, and content." The log is not too heavy "for the two of us," Jack boasts, and their united wills seem equal to any possible demand (33). In a larger sense than that of mere rescue, then, perhaps the cruiser and its crew can be seen at least as a partial recovery of traditional ethical values.

Finally, we must consider the validity of Golding's presentation of the theme of human will in Lord of the Flies. A common critical argument is that Golding has illustrated his theme through the actions of immature schoolboys, whose attitudes and responses are not typical of reasonable adult behavior. The objection is valid and significant, and Golding has not attempted to evade it. His characters are indeed schoolboys. Ralph daydreams of his cozy room and his boys' books (104); Jack
petulantly declares his "non service," "I'm not going to play any longer. Not with you" (118); and our final picture of the savage and murderous hunters, seen through the adult eyes of the officer, reveals merely "a semicircle of little boys, their bodies streaked with colored clay, sharp sticks in their hands" (125).

On the other hand, Golding takes pains to show his readers that Ralph's sense of moral awareness grows slowly and painfully, that Ralph learns, as an adult might, of the precariousness and uncertainty of the human condition, of the absolute necessity of making moral choices and of making them promptly, often under great pressure and against human resistance. Golding also pointedly presents the parallels between adult behavior in the outside world and the boys' behavior on the island. The dead parachutist is an obviously a symbol of the evil in the hearts of mature adults as the pig's head on a stick is a symbol of the evil in the hearts of the boys on the island. And the officer who leads the rescue party is only an adult version of Ralph, with very little broader vision than Ralph exhibits; his revolver, the submachine gun, and the cruiser represent simply a more refined version of the power and the savagery represented by Jack's warpaint, knife, and spear.

It might be argued that Jack's promises of meat and fun would not exert as strong an attraction for reasoning adults as they do for the eight-to-twelve-year-old boys of the story, or that superstitious fear of the beast could never gain such a grip on the minds of adults as it does on those of the boys. But the attraction of "fun" for the adult mind is considered a well-established and extremely useful fact in the
pragmatic world of modern advertising, as even a cursory survey of current television and magazine advertisements will reveal. Also, the enthusiastic adult reaction to such sports as skydiving, auto racing, and bullfighting attests to the universal attraction even of extremely violent and dangerous fun.

And certainly no American who remembers the Communist witch hunts led by the late Senator Joseph McCarthy in the 1950's can doubt the effects of irrational and superstitious fears on the adult mind. It is interesting—and somewhat frightening—to speculate on what might happen, for example, if a group of modern adults were marooned today on an island supposedly inhabited by the "abominable snowmen." Modern adults are indeed more vulnerable to superstitious fear than is generally believed, as Bergan Evans demonstrates in his amusing expose of commonly accepted superstitions, The Natural History of Nonsense. 23

In conclusion, though Golding's implied judgment on the limited potential of the human will is not truly profound in itself, we must remember that Lord of the Flies is his first published novel and, further, that it is concerned with other major themes in addition to that of the human will. Lord of the Flies does indicate, however, that Golding believes in the freedom of the human will—limited as that freedom may be due to the action of conflicting mental, psychic, environmental, and circumstantial influences—and in the moral responsibility which such freedom logically entails. A study of his succeeding novels reveals the direction his fictional arguments have taken in support of this theme.

23 New York, 1946.
The Inheritors
In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding deals with the regression of civilized man (or civilized schoolboys) to savagery because of an inherent evil or darkness in man’s heart. In his second published novel, *The Inheritors*, he deals with the progression of protohuman or prelapsarian man toward man’s present civilized condition. *The Inheritors*, then, is an attempt to locate the origin or source of the innate evil which afflicts the will of the schoolboys of *Lord of the Flies* (and, by implication, of contemporary man). Since *Lord of the Flies* suggests that the evil or darkness inherent in man’s heart is closely linked to, or even a part of, the human will itself, it should be possible to trace in *The Inheritors* the emergence of man’s will along with the emergence and growth of the evil within man’s heart.

Golding’s first problem is to establish the innocence of his protohuman "people," and, in doing so, he exhibits a considerable knowledge of contemporary anthropology and prehistory, as well as provocative speculations about prehuman psychology and spirituality. He takes us inside the mind of Lok, an adult male member of the protohuman tribe, and shows us through Lok’s eyes the conquest and destruction of his tribe by the "new people" (*Homo sapiens*). Golding’s physical description of Lok, delayed until nearly the end of the novel, is essentially an anthropologist’s view. Lok is

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24 William Golding, *The Inheritors* (New York, 1963—a Cardinal paperback). Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text.
In spite of this anthropoid portrait, Golding goes out of his way to elicit the reader's sympathy for his and his people. They are kind, cooperative, and happy, a group of omnivorous scavengers with highly developed senses of smell in locating food, sensing danger, and interpreting their environment. They are free from war and eternal struggle, and who provide all the necessities of life, including the all-important food. The probable accuracy of Golding's speculations about the innocent nature and simple social life of prehistoric man is supported (coincidentally, of course) by Lorrain Loop, the pioneering leader of a contemporary school of ethnologists, who says...

The legs and thighs were bent at the knees and there was a whole breadth of curls on the outside of the legs and arms. The back was a whole breadth of curls on the outside of the legs and arms. The back was half, and upon at the shoulders where brown and flat, the great toe projecting forward to the knees. The head was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck. The head was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck. The head was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck. The head was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck. The head was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck. The head was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck. The head was set slightly forward on the strong neck that was set slightly forward on the strong neck.
Our prehuman ancestor was indubitably as true a friend to his friend as a chimpanzee or even a dog, as tender and solicitous to the young of his community and as self-sacrificing in its defense, alone before he developed conceptual thought and became aware of the consequences of his actions. . . . Let us imagine a life, lived dangerously in the exclusive company of a dozen or so close friends and their wives and children. . . . The men would have fought side by side from earliest memory; they would have saved each other's lives many times. . . .

Within the bonds of such a community, natural inclination alone is very nearly sufficient to make men obey the Ten Commandments—perhaps with the exception of the third.25

Lok's people have only dim notions of conceptual thought and cause-and-effect reasoning; their thinking takes the form of mental pictures, occasionally extended into a related series, but rarely developed or organized into an abstract concept. Two or more of the people often "share a picture" and converse in simple verbal speech; but their thinking is incoherent and inefficient by our human standards. The spoken word is treated with awe and respect, and the decisions of the patriarchal leader, the wisest person in the group, take almost the form of a communal will to which the people submit their individual wills. When the dying patriarch, Mal, decrees that young Liku shall go on a food hunt with Lok and Fa, everyone questions the order, but "when the word had been said it was as though the action was already alive in performance" (26). The word, the picture, and the will, then, are very closely related in the psychology of Lok's people.

Lacking conceptual thought and cause-and-effect reasoning, Lok's people are unable to foresee the possible consequences of their actions, and must be ruled innocent on a juristic basis; their innocence is further assured by a communal life which fosters loyalty and responsibility, as well as mutual love and respect, and by a religion which inspires a profound reverence for life and for the creative and provident aspects of nature and of mankind. But the very nature of their innocence implies certain limitations; as Frank Kermode points out, the lives of Lok and his people are controlled by the seasons, by inhibiting fears of water, above all by a physiological equipment excellent in its way but prohibiting intellect. They know the world with senses like an animal's; they depend much upon involuntary reflexes—keen scent, night vision, acuteness of ear; they are not men at all, and that is why they are innocent.  

The innocence of Lok's people, furthermore, does not necessarily imply free-will. A contemporary Christian philosopher, Nicolas Berdyaev, describes the state of the human will at an evolutionary stage perhaps slightly more advanced than, but very similar to, that of Lok and his people: "In the primal stages of history," says Berdyaev, 

"... Man's servitude to the natural elements holds the human spirit and will spellbound. ... The theme of man's worldly destiny is the liberation of the creative human spirit from the depths of natural necessity and from its enslavement by the lowest elements."  


The experience of the individual with a cold, in fact, is very remarkable.

We now consider the roller and the lever, and the art of sailing.

The two weapons (horizontal and vertical) are very much like those used by men in the past for attack and defense.

In our own age, with their superior art in attack and defense, they have developed ideas of warfare that are basic.

A horizontal developed wall. They have constructed that can pose a real threat.

In the superpose the two of the new people (horizontal) a horizontal art can resist.

Against the defensive and defensive idea of fit and the group, does not guarantee.

The art of sail is as yet not involved as a weapon. Due to its position, it is an amphibious weapon, suitable for attack and defense and happy where else better to do and look after the charge.

There will be a press to attack a product of nature, the coasts.

A geographic peculiarity to severely intrude by their fear of water and by geography, people have only a very limited freedom of flight.
wise tribal priest, can resist the temptation of Vivani's willful and lusty sexuality.

Later, as the new people sail up the lake, Vivani willfully occupies the most comfortable position in their large, but crowded, dugout canoe. The high cost of submission to Vivani's sensual will is clearly suggested by her magnificent cave-bear skin which "had cost two lives to get and was the price her first man paid for her" (205). Tuami scorns Marlan's willful purchase of Vivani's charms: "What a fool Marlan was, at his age, to have run off with her for her great heart and wit, her laughter and her white, incredible body!" (205). As Tuami sharpens his ivory dagger and dreams of killing Marlan, jealousy over Vivani and resentment of Marlan's forceful leadership appear to be equally powerful motives for his hate. "And what fools we were," thinks Tuami, "to come with Marlan, forced by his magic, or at any rate forced by some compulsion there are no words for!" (205). Marlan's "magic" is a combination of his driving will to technological progress and power and his innate capacity for leadership.

In their nomadic wandering, Marlan's people have traveled up a river and into the summer range of Lok's tribe. They soon kill all the adults of Lok's group except Lok and Fa, and capture the little girl, Liku, and the male infant called the "new one." Hoping to rescue the two children, Lok and Fa hide in the upper branches of a tree and watch the camp of the new people for several hours, fascinated by their strange customs and dress, their religious ritual, and their drunken and lustful savagery. After dark, Lok and Fa steal into the camp, but they are discovered and
the rescue attempt ends in pandemonium; the next day the new people flee in terror, leaving some liquor and food in their deserted camp as propitiatory offerings to the "devils" whom they believe Lok's people to be, and moving their heavy boats overland in order to launch them in the lake above the falls and continue on upcountry. Though Lok is unaware of it, they have killed and eaten Liku, but Vivani keeps the "new one" as a pet.

Lok is torn between the innate curiosity which draws him inexorably toward the new people and the normal fear for his security which warns him away from them; but he is tempted to sample the liquor which they have left behind, and the result is a parody of the myth of the Fall of Man as Fa and he imitate the customs of the new people which they have observed with such fascination. Drunk with the liquor, Lok and Fa abuse each other in rage and lust and, in a burst of hybris, Lok announces, "I am one of the new people." "The fall" is, indeed, "roaring in the clearing" (184).

Even before Fa's and his debauch in the clearing, however, Lok has begun to increase his power of understanding. By a slow and painful mental process, he gradually apprehends the nature of comparison, the "like" relationship. Fungi growing on a tree are shaped like his ears, Lok thinks, and the hunters who use their bows and arrows "in skill and malice" are "like a famished wolf." He thinks of the new people in their occasional happy and compassionate moments: "The people are like honey trickling from a crevice in the rock." Lok realizes that the new people are at the same time cruel and kind, destructive and creative; above all, he thinks, they are a people of invincible will and power.
The feeble will of Lok and his people is helpless before them; in Lok's eyes "they are like the river and the fall, they are a people of the fall; nothing stands against them" (176).

Knowledge, as Lok gradually acquires it, includes a painful recognition of mortality. He remembers old Mal's death and knows also that the other adult members of his tribe have been killed by the new people. Separated from Fa in the abortive rescue attempt, he assumes that she too has been killed, and he knows "that the misery of the certainty of death must be embraced painfully as a man might hug thorns to him" (175). When Fa reappears, Lok is overjoyed, but she is killed accidentally in a second fruitless attempt to rescue the "new one." With Fa dead and the new people gone, Lok, alone and hopeless, reverts to the state of the animal, submitting his individual will to the universal will of Ga; he curls up in the funeral position of his people and waits for death: he "seemed to be growing into the earth, drawing the soft flesh of his body into a contact so close that the movements of pulse and breathing were inhibited" (201).

Many critics have noted that The Inheritors is organized as a variation of one of Golding's favorite themes, the myth of the Fall of Man. Frank Kermode also advances this view, and enlarges on it with a capsule explanation of The Inheritors:

Golding is fascinated by the evidence . . . that human consciousness [the Homo sapiens consciousness] is a biological asset purchased at a price; the price is the knowledge of evil. This evil emanates from the human mind, a product of its action upon the environment. The
The capture of resources, saved by plowing, clearing and her

The take are hampered, destroyed, filled by strange interchange.

In spite of other processes and power, the new people are down

To symbols, through sound and mental-struggling energy.

Instance by instance, keep time a common and harmonious-faceted myth.

The invaders are a drawn people, an oppressed people, knew in this

that their bodies, their energy, they could not command the elements.

But they could command to the extent they could control overland.

They went together as they worked and as they asserted to move their heavy

But a more of communally with their culture, the new people are essentially

The change and complexity in the human spirit. Take for people, the

behavior of the new people in the Interchange in the existence of

Evolutionary Systems.

The more complex, the wider and more complex than the world of the physical

For the human spirit, a fact of which Professor Kremode to well aware.

Of new people cannot be neatly categorized as simple guilt.

The Interchange opportunity represents more than a mere event.

The Interchange opportunity represents more than a mere event.
will to sensual pleasure, has caused him to "run off with her," leading his people to adventures and conquests in strange lands, and finally to the panic-stricken rout at the fall where their superstitious fear causes them to kill the near-human creatures of Lok's tribe. The cause of their malaise lies in the interaction of the wills of Marlan, Vivani, and Tuami, and in their primitive fear, now aggravated to near-hysteria by the imagined threat posed by Lok's gentle and harmless tribe. The artistic but rational seer, Tuami, refuses to recognize the effect of this fear on the will of the group; he chooses instead to justify the irrational slaughter of Lok's people with an ostensibly reasonable excuse: "what else could we have done? . . . If we had not killed them we should have died" (207).

We are reminded again of the price of their progress when Tuami stares fearfully toward the darkness in the mountains and along the lake shore which surrounds them. For it is easy for them to people the darkness with the projected evils of their irrational fear, and easier still to believe that the kidnapped Neanderthal infant is a small tangible "devil" with "too-nimble feet and . . . red curly hair" (210). Thus the new people are literally "bedeviled" because Vivani "wanted the child as a plaything" and because her sensual will, as usual, prevails upon the wills of Marlan and Tuami. As Tuami tries "to think of the time when the devil would be full grown," he recognizes the unreasonableness and futility of sharpening his ivory dagger against the will of Marlan, the magician and engineer who has brought them to their present position of power and frustration; he also realizes the futility of sharpening the
dagger against the fear, irrationality, and mystery which the "darkness of the world" represents.

For the darkness is actually centered in the hearts of the new people (i.e., *Homo sapiens*), as Golding has painstakingly shown in *Lord of the Flies*; and man seems determined to conjure up beasts or devils from his inner darkness, as the schoolboys do in *Lord of the Flies* and as the new people are doing in *The Inheritors*. These beasts and devils are, of course, only projections of man's own evil nature and evil acts, generated by his own irrational and superstitious fears. As the new people flee from the darkness under the trees "where the devils live" they carry with them their own devils. Tanakil, the half-grown girl, is mad, possessed by a demonic nightmare of the cannibalization of her captured playmate, Liku. And "the devil's hands and feet had laid hold of" Vivani; the little "devil" (the "new one") literally inhabits her body, living in her hair and feeding at her breast (210). Harlan's people are at the same time fascinated and repulsed by the little "devil," much as Lok has been earlier by them and their possessions. And the frightening darkness which they believe harbors more devils—and in which we can safely predict they will discover more—extends ahead of them so far that Tuami, their prophet, "could not see if the line of darkness had an ending" (213).

Occasionally they seem to suspect, or to sense, that the projected evil of beasts or devils is only a part of themselves. As Vivani shelters and nurses the little "devil" at her breast, "the people were grinning at her too as if they felt the strange, tugging mouth, as if in spite of them there was a well of feeling opened in love and fear. . . .
The sun shone on the head and the rump and quite suddenly everything was all right again." But untroubled moments of even partial recognition and acceptance have appeared only during periods of relative safety, when the line of darkness "was far away and there was plenty of water in between" (210-212).

The will of both Tuami and Marlan has been depleted by their adventure at the fall; Tuami hopes for a return of "the manhood that seemed to have left them... The portage of the boats... from that forest to the top of the fall seemed to have taken them on to a new level not only of land but of experience and emotion" (204). But Vivani's will to sensual pleasure has scarcely been affected by their adventures; settled comfortably on her furs, she combs her hair voluptuously: "She had not changed, or at least only in respect of the little devil who owned her. ... she rubbed her cheek sideways against the curly hair of the little devil, giggling and looking defiantly at the people" (209-213).

The new people illustrate, in a sense, man's evolutionary acquisition—and subsequent misuse—of free will and reason, and thus the growth of his potential capacity for self-knowledge and self-improvement. With the acquisition of knowledge and free choice, however, comes the responsibility for wise use of that knowledge and for wise moral choice. Golding implies that, without the recognition and acceptance of moral responsibility, man, however enlightened, is doomed as certainly as Lok, the physical and sensual creature who failed to adapt to a changing physical environment. If contemporary man continues to ignore or to externalize the evil aspects of his own nature and to cloak them in superstitious and irrational fears as the new people do in their flight
Some people doubt that there is a weapon suitable for the first town.

Evolve, therefore the existence, we have found Iours, and that the first town.

I can expect that a weapon suitable will most importantly
come to be need. But on reason, and an environment which forces, compels
- Second, given man's instinctive will to survive, the General as it.

(187)
of

animal method, known that "the time to the air" to be performed

the act, according to "the time, she, with her, general and instinctive
people in their overhand style with the two faces are performed. Of

study and cohesiveness a source of superstitions, very much, the new

that natural environment, or nature, the more, becomes more and more a

techochology, produces elements, more, from the natural environment.

don the animal part of the nature, he will improve further, or as

imprudent, or too close, from the natural environment, and to some

in fact, even for some, this to depend on the reason and technology.

- First, man's accustomed to mankind, then with these, too little, temperate-

true reading from many reasons, the which are experienced in the novel.

true will and reason on a coherent, the problems of them, only,

In comparison to Ior's people, the new people are endowed with both

"(187)"

numbers and necessities who led settled on the river because this

inhuman and repressed. All the group of said

in their, one remaining boat, are interspersed from the group of people:

and determined to certain at the new people, huddled together, all, and in their projection of will into Ior's people, he will be determined
In the natural process of evolution, organisms develop traits that are advantageous for survival. These traits can be passed on to future generations through evolution. Over time, natural selection leads to the development of more effective weapons and methods of defense.

Vertebrate speech, on the other hand, involves complex thought processes and demonstrates the advanced cognitive abilities of higher organisms. Vertebrates have developed intricate, interconnected mechanisms to produce speech, which is a unique adaptation to their environment. In contrast, other organisms, such as the octopus, have evolved with sufficient thought and mental processes to understand and express their thoughts and needs.

In the context of species and their evolution, it is crucial to consider the diverse ways in which organisms adapt and evolve. Each species has its own unique set of traits and abilities, which contribute to its survival and success in the natural world.
The new people with their bows, spears, and poisoned arrows, their military tactics and technology, and their amphibious mobility—in short, with what might be called a will to technological power—symbolize the sudden evolutionary leap of a weapons culture which outstrips the natural moral inhibitions of its members; in this sense, Lok and his tribe are the innocent but helpless victims of ungoverned technological progress in a creature not of their own species.

Golding’s position concerning the relative value of science as an implement for the advancement of human culture is more vociferously stated in a recent essay on contemporary education:

> It cannot be said often enough or loudly enough that 'Science' is not the most important thing. Philosophy is more important than 'Science'; so is history; so is courtesy, come to that, so is aesthetic perception. I say nothing of religion, since it is outside the scope of this article.

But the consequences of man's acquisition of conceptual thought are not entirely tragic, for with conceptual thought man developed an insatiable curiosity which forced him to ask questions. This curiosity indicates the first realization of man's will, for with curiosity and with the imagination which conceptual thought permits—in fact, promotes—man begins to recognize the potential of his freedom. And, with repeated asking of questions and recording of answers, an awareness of cause-and-effect relationships evolves; knowledge of cause-and-effect is, of course, the basis for rational and moral responsibility.

33 "On the Crest of the Wave."
The human condition, however (see the physical determinations on pp. 21-23, above), must be understood in context, in that the human experience of the abstract and the concrete—
underlying the intense and sudden threat of the abstractedness—and space—
and depth in order to meet the phantasmal task of a phantasmagorical
space.
Thus, the phantom phantasmagorical becomes clear, in the context to
which enable men to transcend—or even stand—dream—immanent,
departed, but for mere vast freedom of titi and the Gist of Reason
enchantment by their remembrance and their memorable self—
and mortal addiction of which the new people,政经, stood from their mortal
inference to death. For those who live a natural, sensuous, and
instantial understanding will to the component parts of nature, and when the
classes of life and our natural human corporealities be recognized, path—
real revelation, phantasm comprehension, the instance reveals the path—
through the natural sense, the physical adaptation, and the adaptive nature—
loved as the skilled eye of the natural environment.

The I-terms have been the human condition ever since.

And in a consequence, etc., and a general manner which, cold—
and in a consequence, etc., etc., are the human experience, only all this
that the reaction of the abstractedness, and their intellectual, intellectual, and emotional processes in a mixed plane—
entangled with possession (1.) and the teats to see that
new people who are, in the eyes, so sophisticated and efficient, are
The I-terms, in their own capacity, have been the affective sense of the

46
that the extinction of this creature is inevitable, though perhaps not "necessary," as Professor Kermode suggests. 34

The new people, on the other hand, are noticeably lacking in Lok's "instinctive appreciation of life and death," a quality which, according to Konrad Lorenz, is fundamental to the sense of moral responsibility. Lorenz's remarks on free will seem particularly applicable to Golding's new people:

Only on very superficial consideration does free will seem to imply that "we can want what we will" in complete lawlessness. . . . Nobody can seriously believe that free will means that it is left entirely to the will of the individual, as to an irresponsible tyrant, to do or not do whatever he pleases. Our freest will underlies strict moral laws, and one of the reasons for our longing for freedom is to prevent our obeying other laws than these. . . . The greatest and most precious freedom of man is identical with the moral laws within him. . . . If, in the impossible case that man should ever achieve complete insight into the causality of earthly phenomena, including the workings of his own organism, he would not cease to have a will but it would be in perfect harmony with the incontrovertible lawfulness of the universe, the Weltwärnnahft of the Logos. This idea is foreign only to our present-day Western thought; it was quite familiar to ancient Indian philosophy and to the mystics of the Middle Ages. 35

The new people appear to assume implicitly that, in Lorenz's words, they "can want what [they] will" without limitations; thus we see the tangentially-oriented wills of Marlan, Vivani, and Tuani all struggling

34 Kermode, p. 21. Professor Kermode's statement, "We can always see . . . that the extinction of this animal is necessary," has teleological implications which the context of the novel does not justify.

35 Lorenz, pp. 223-224.
against each other and all influencing the conduct and beliefs of the group. They act on the principle of self-will, irrespective of common moral law; therefore they lack a unified communal sense of moral direction. Their common progress is impeded as a result of the divergent vector forces of the wills of individuals within the society.

These new people resemble contemporary Western man in their dependence on technology and practical reason, in their propensity to be governed by self-will, and in their insulation from their elemental physical environment. Free will and a developed reason have superseded the instinctual wisdom and sensibilities, but have failed to provide an adequate system of moral checks and balances in their place. In short, the new people dramatically illustrate Golding's thesis: "Man suffers from an appalling ignorance of his own nature." 36

Golding's rejection of rationalism as a guide to the understanding of human nature is emphasized in a conversation with Professor Frank Kermode concerning the selection from H. G. Wells's Outline of History which serves as an epigraph for The Inheritors. Wells wrote:

We know nothing 37 of the appearance of the Neanderthal man, but this . . . seems to suggest an extreme hairiness, an ugliness, or a repulsive strangeness in his appearance over and above his low forehead, his beetle brows, his ape neck, and his inferior stature. . . . Says Sir Harry Johnston, in a survey of the rise of modern man in his Views and Reviews: "The dim racial remembrance of such gorilla-like monsters, with cunning brains,


37 Golding's quotation reads "We know very little . . . [by italics]."
shambling gait, hairy bodies, strong teeth, and possibly cannibalistic tendencies, may be the germ of the ogre in folklore."\textsuperscript{38}

Says Golding:

Wells' \textit{Outline of History} played a great part in my life because my father was a rationalist, and the \textit{Outline} . . . was something he took neat. Well now, Wells' \textit{Outline of History} is the rationalist's gospel in \textit{exaltam}, I should think. I got this from my father, and by and by it seemed to me not to be large enough. It seemed to me to be too neat and slick. And when I re-read it as an adult I came across his picture of the Neanderthal man, our immediate predecessors, as being the gross brutal creatures who were possibly the basis of the mythological bad man, whatever he may be, the ogre. I thought to myself that this is just absurd. What we're doing is externalizing our own inside.\textsuperscript{39}

As James Baker observes, "Wells's 'ogre,' then, proves to be nothing more than another projection of the beast within the dark heart of man; he is a 'mythological bad man,' an incarnation of the demon which has always haunted our species."\textsuperscript{40} The little Neanderthal devil thus ironically becomes an incarnation of evil for the fascinated yet horrified new people of \textit{The Inheritors}, just as the dead parachutist and the pig's head on a stick became incarnations of evil for the schoolboys of \textit{Lord of the Flies}. And the irrational fear (symbolically represented by the darkness which haunts the new people of \textit{The Inheritors}, and which

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Outline of History} (New York, 1936), I, p. 71.


\textsuperscript{40} Baker, pp. 20-21.
is inherent in the hearts of the schoolboys in Lord of the Flies) represents an instinctive awareness of, and at the same time a refusal to accept, what can be called moral responsibility.

The Inheritors, then, traces the emergence of the human will as it occurs simultaneously with the evolutionary emergence and development of conceptual thought and verbal speech in Homo sapiens. The novel suggests the likelihood—and the possible consequences—of the transformation of free will into self-will; it suggests also that, in rationalizing the actions of that self-will in an attempt to deny moral responsibility for those actions, man frequently produces and promotes within himself irrational and superstitious fears which constitute, or which emanate from, the darkness and evil in his own heart. Since, in Golding's view, these superstitious fears influence man's will and tend to drive him to further immoral and irrational actions, he is, in a sense, caught in a vicious cycle and does indeed, as Golding has remarked, produce "evil as a bee produces honey." 41

41 "Fable," in The Hot Gates, p. 87.
In the text, the phrase "the Grossnet" is repeated several times, which may indicate a typographical error or emphasis on the name. Without additional context, it is difficult to determine the full meaning or relevance of these repetitions. The text appears to be discussing some aspect of a work or topic, possibly historical or literary, given the references to "narrative" and "narrative net."
In some respects "sentential" meaning and "sentential" meaning can be ascribed to the logical structures in which the meanings are expressed.

An example of the "sentential" meaning being expressed in a sentence is "I am going to the store to buy milk.

The sentence expresses the concept of going to the store to buy milk. This is a "sentential" meaning because it conveys the idea of an action involving a specific goal.

In a more abstract sense, the "sentential" meaning can be seen as a way of organizing and conveying information in a structured manner. This is often referred to as "sentential" meaning because it involves the use of sentences to express ideas and concepts.

The "sentential" meaning is distinct from other types of meaning, such as "referential" meaning, which is concerned with the actual objects or things that are being referred to in a sentence.

In summary, the "sentential" meaning is an important aspect of language, allowing us to express ideas and concepts in a structured and organized way.

"Burrnet Section 2".
about the 'mythical aspect' of Pincher, he replied that Pincher was a fallen man . . . Very much fallen—he's fallen more than most. In fact, I went out of my way to damn Pincher as much as I could by making him the most unpleasant, the nastiest type I could think of, and I was very interested to see how critics all over the place said, 'Well, yes, we are like that.' I was really rather pleased.  

As Hynes remarks, Golding should not have been surprised at the critical recognition of greed as a universal human weakness. But Golding's pleasure at the implicit suggestion that critics were interpreting his "nastiest type" as an allegorical representation of modern man is curious, for this suggestion indicates a possible misinterpretation of his stated intent in writing Pincher Martin. Puzzled by the charges of obscurity and unnecessary complexity elicited by the novel, Golding remarked, "I would have said that I fell over backwards making Pincher Martin explicit. I said to myself,"

Now here is going to be a novel, it's going to be a blow on behalf of the ordinary universe, which I think on the whole to be the right one, and I'm going to write it so vividly and so accurately and with such an exact programme that nobody can possibly mistake what I mean.

Golding's "ordinary universe, which [he thinks] on the whole to be the right one," though not explicitly described in the novel as the Christian universe, appears to be a morally-ordered universe which

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47 Hynes, p. 32.
differs from the traditional Christian concept mainly in Golding's portrayal of heaven, hell, and purgatory. In an interview with Frank Kermode, Golding attempted to explain his intentions in this respect:

My point is really this you see: that you meet a Christian—he thinks that when he dies he will either have devils with three-pronged forks and forked tails or angels with wings and palms. If you're not a Christian and die, then if the universe is as the Christian sees it, you will still go either to heaven or hell or purgatory. But your purgatory, or your heaven or your hell won't have the Christian attributes... They'll be the things you make yourself, and that's all there is to it. 49

Golding's dramatic portrayal of Pincher Martin's refusal to die is the traditional Christian story of the fruitless revolt of creature against Creator. "Such a revolt," says Burnett Easton in his explanation of basic Christian beliefs, "cannot be successful in the long run if God is God; it is blasphemy which must be punished." 50 Pincher is indeed punished in the novel, to the consternation of at least one of Golding's critics. 51

50 Easton, p. 90.
51 Margaret Walters, in "Two Fabulists: Golding and Camus," Melbourne Critical Review, IV (1961), p. 25, writes: "The dominant imaginative impression the book makes upon us is... of... the resource and courage—the vitality—in Martin's fight for life, even as we recognize his egoism; in fact the egoism, which the book claims demands him, emerges as a necessary condition of that vitality. Such a struggle for life cannot, I think, serve as an image of damnation and spiritual death; it suggests possibilities and moral complexities that the author's thesis, the controlling pattern, fails to comprehend. The latter actually constricts and simplifies the dramatic material, preventing it from speaking its own meaning."
Pincher is Christopher Hadley Martin, a wartime British naval officer and former professional actor who has been blown from the bridge of his destroyer by a torpedo which sank the ship. He flounders in the water of the North Atlantic until he is able to climb onto a barren and isolated rock where he plans ingeniously for survival and rescue, pitting his will and intelligence against the will of God in defiance of death, and against the destructive and erosive will of nature which threatens to destroy his identity by disintegrating his physical body, just as it is slowly disintegrating the rock.

Early in the novel Golding establishes a dichotomy in Pincher's nature and aspirations which subtly adds to the tension implicit in Pincher's desperate struggle for survival, but which apparently has, at the same time, diverted the attention of readers and critics from the essentially orthodox Christian framework of the novel. For the basic plot seems to center at first on the heroic struggle of man against the sea and against nature; the heroism of protagonists in similar situations is a traditional theme in fiction. As Pincher flounders in the sea and pleads pathetically for help during the first fourteen pages of

52 "Pincher" is a nickname traditionally attached to all British seamen named Martin; thus, by naming the seaman Martin, Golding justified the attachment of the appropriate nickname to his insatiable protagonist. Colloquially speaking, a "pincher" is a thief; Golding apparently intended that this meaning should apply to Pincher Martin, as his remarks to Frank Kermode indicate: "That Pincher was a pincher. He'd spent the whole of his life acquiring things that really belonged to other people" (quoted by James Baker, William Golding, p. 39). The term "pincher" is also frequently applied to voracious insects; and, in the terminology of sailing (one of Golding's hobbies), a "pincher" is one who sails too close to the wind, in other words, one who courts disaster, as Pincher indeed does in the novel.
the novel, Golding dramatically elicits the sympathy of his readers for
the hapless sailor. Struggling in the darkness of the roaring, sucking
water, Pincher repeats to himself like a litany, "I won't die. I won't
die. Not me—Precious" (13). Golding establishes Pincher's smarling
defiance; he also reveals Pincher's delight in "playing God," as Pincher
recalls the childhood thrill of controlling the actions of a small human
figurine suspended in liquid inside a jam jar (8-9).

For the first third of the novel Pincher, to the degree in which
he represents man in conflict with overwhelming natural forces and the
degree in which the reader is able to empathize with him in his savage
struggle, seems somehow to embody much of the dignity of the epic hero.
"How can we not side with Man, against Nature?" asks Samuel Hynes.53

But even as Golding portrays the Sophoclean intransigence of Pincher's
will to survive, he reveals also the despicable shabbiness of Pincher's
morality. Gradually, by means of mental flashbacks seen through
Pincher's mind, we are able to assess his moral character.

Pincher believes in only one thing, "the thread of his own life,"
and he chooses to cling to that thread "at all costs" (174). Like the
new people of The Inheritors, he interprets free will as permission to
act entirely as he chooses; he believes—or at least he tries to convince
himself—that his will and intelligence should enable him to manipulate,
and to impose his will upon, the human, natural, and even the metaphys-
ical, elements of his environment. "If this rock tries to adapt me to
its ways," he declares, "I will refuse and adapt it to mine. I will

impose my routine on it, my geography" (78). Later, he defiantly announces to the image of God which his imagination has conjured up:

"I have created you and I can create my own heaven" (175).

A series of flashbacks reveals that Pincher's life has been devoted to imposing his routine (his will) on everything and everyone with whom he comes into contact. A fellow actor aptly characterizes him: "This 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 flaps open and both hands out to grab. He's a cosmic case of the bugger who gets his penny and someone else's bun" (106).

Greed in itself, however, is not the prevailing motive for Pincher's predatory way of life; greed is simply one aspect of his self-deification, of his all-consuming will to survive and to retain at any cost his personal identity as an individual. He eats, grabs, dominates, and uses every possible element of his environment in order to reassure himself that he exists and that he will continue to exist.

But after Pincher has crawled up on his barren rock, he is confronted with indisputable evidence of the inexorable will implicit in nature and of the eventual death of all living things: "He came on the mouldering bones of a fish and a dead gull, its upturned breast-bone like the keel of a derelict boat. . . . There were the empty shells of crabs, pieces of dead weed, and the claws of a lobster" (53).

The concept of a will in nature, as suggested by Schopenhauer, seems highly pertinent to the case of Pincher Martin, though I do not mean to say that Golding has been steeped in, or that he has necessarily even
read, Schopenhauer's philosophy. Schopenhauer establishes will as the
driving force in the struggle for survival which occurs among all ele-
ments of nature, including man. "Will," says Schopenhauer,

is the thing-in-itself, the inner content, the
essence of the world. Life, the visible world, the
phenomenon, is only the mirror of the will. Therefore life accompanies the will as insepa-
vably as the shadow accompanies the body; and if will exists, so will life, the world, exist. Life
is, therefore, assured to the will to live; and so long as we are filled with the will to live we
need have no fear for our existence, even in the
presence of death. 54

Pincher Martin is filled with the will to live; ostensibly, he
exemplifies the optimism implied in Schopenhauer's statement. But such
optimism occurs only in brief glimmers in Schopenhauer's philosophy; his
statement in this case refers only to the survival of the species, and
not to the individual, in nature. 55

In spite of his monumental will to survive, Pincher knows, in his
dark moments of terror, that as an individual he is in the presence of—
in fact, is condemned to—death. For finally, by means of a typical
Golding denouement, the reader learns on the last page of the novel that

54 Arthur Schopenhauer, The World As Will and Idea, trans. R. B.

55 Schopenhauer continues: "The individual receives his life as a
gift, rises out of nothing, then suffers the loss of this gift through
death, and returns to nothing. . . . For it is not the individual, but
only the species that Nature cares for, and for the preservation of which
she so earnestly strives. . . . The individual, on the contrary, neither
has nor can have any value for Nature, for her kingdom is infinite time
and infinite space, and in these infinite multiplicity of possible indi-
viduals. Therefore she is always ready to let the individual fall" (pp.
354-356).
death.

a man who arrives to accept what he considers to be the
entirely different meaning of
and to face that which are obstracings to the
put together as you like, and many readers are
even when the latest of you is—" (111) "But
creativity exists on grounds.

that material can be changed. And the themes, I mean I want to board
attitudes to reassure himself: I mean, I want to reassure myself: I want to reassure myself: Take a deep breath: (116) "And the themes, I mean I want to board"

the thought of the curiosity movement: I want to take a deep breath: (116) "And the themes, I mean I want to board"

when another three forces the story's end up the face of the rock, he
got in and crept, disentangled understanding from thought she novel.

by the author's repetition that the protagonist is already dead. But
reader is not aware of the sensation until he is suddenly thrown up short
and looking section of the protagonist sometime after death and the
sometimes called the "post-mortem consciousness" in which the characters
he was wanted up to the rock, gotting but until a narrative developed
dropped the seaplane into the ocean on page ten of the novel, long before

the sea to rock off the seaplane on golding tells the story, kurt's
Through a series of semi-delirious flashbacks during Pincher's stay on the rock, we learn the significant details of his rapacious life. Driven by the overwhelming will to assert his own identity, he has cuckolded and robbed his friends and employers, attempted to rape a girl who rejected him, and murdered his best friend because of jealousy. The strength and intransigence of his will are suggested when he first escapes the fury of the sea and lies exhausted on top of the rock:

The chill and the exhaustion spoke to him clearly. Give up, they said, lie still. Give up the thought of return, the thought of living. Break up, leave go. . . . An hour on this rock is a lifetime. What have you to lose? There is nothing here but torture. Give up. Leave go. . . . The voices of pain were like waves beating against the sides of a ship. But there was at the centre of all the pictures and pains and voices a fact like a bar of steel, a thing—that which was so nakedly the centre of everything that it could not even examine itself. In the darkness of the skull, it existed, a darker self, self-existent and indestructible. (40)

This "thing," this "darker self," appears to be Pincher's inner self, the very center of his being, which is inextricably involved with, and usually manifests itself in, his seemingly indomitable will to survive. Inside the skull also, "his consciousness was moving and poking about among the pictures and revelations . . . like an animal ceaselessly examining its cage. . . . It was looking for a thought. It found the thought, . . . 'I am intelligent'" (29). Like Milton's Satan, Pincher seems determined to prove that "The mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven." 57 He sees his world of

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57 Paradise Lost, I, 254-255.
rock and ocean as a mechanistic universe and addresses it with an intellectual bravado: "You are all a machine. I know you, wetness, hardness, movement. You have no mercy but you have no intelligence. I can outwit you. All I have to do is to endure" (102). But the individual will of Pincher Martin is merely one element in the infinite panorama of nature where, according to Schopenhauer,

everywhere . . . we see strife, conflict, and alternation of victory, and in it we shall come to recognise more distinctly that variance with itself which is essential to the will. Every grade of the objectification of will fights for the matter, the space, and the time of the others. . . . Each animal can only maintain its existence by the constant destruction of some other. Thus the will to live everywhere preys upon itself, and in different forms is its own nourishment, till finally the human race, because it subdues all the others, regards nature as a manufactory for its use. Yet even the human race . . . reveals in itself with most terrible distinctness this conflict, this variance with itself of the will. 58

The flashbacks of Pincher’s life reveal his talent for preying on other human beings, and during his willed existence on the barren rock we observe the strife inherent in nature as each element struggles for continued existence. The dead bird, the empty crab shell, the dead weeds, and the lobster claws which Pincher finds on the rock are remnants of this struggle. The seal perched on the rock, complacently eating his fish until Pincher’s mimicry of a man with a rifle frightens him into the sea, is a visual symbol of the struggle. Golding’s personification of natural phenomena emphasizes the struggle; the sea "carried [Pincher] like a retriever with a bird," "fawned round his face, licked him, [ran]"

58 Schopenhauer, pp. 191-192.
down to smell at his feet," and "nuzzled under his arm" (20-21), and the
"fists of rock . . . beat him impersonally" (38). Pincher thinks
repeatedly of the rocks as teeth, is aware of a weight pressing him down
on them, and feels that "the hardness of the rock is wearing out his
flesh," as though he were being gradually chewed and eaten by the forces
of nature (112-114).

Golding repeatedly uses metaphors of eating to describe Pincher's
former sensual life in contrast to his famished existence on the rock,
one of the most shocking of which appears in a flashback concerning
Pincher's career as an actor. Pincher remembers a drunken producer's
tale of a Chinese custom of burying a dead fish in a tin box until mag-
gots have eaten the fish; then the maggots eat each other until only one
huge, successful maggot is left. According to the producer, the Chinese
then dig up the box and eat the victorious remaining maggot. Pincher
Martin has lived and operated in just such a maggot's world; he has been
a most successful maggot; now he is gradually coming to realize that it
is his turn to be eaten. Curled in a crevice of the rock, Pincher thinks
of eating in terms curiously reminiscent of Schopenhauer's theory of the
will in action:

The whole business of eating was particularly significant. They made a ritual of it on every
level, the Fascists as punishment, the religious
as a rite, the cannibal either as ritual or as
medicine or as a superbly direct declaration of
conquest. Killed and eaten. And of course eat-
ing with the mouth was only the gross expression
of what was a universal process. You could eat
with your cock or with your fists, or with your
voice. You could eat with hobnailed boots or
buying and selling or marrying and begetting or
cuckolding--
Schopenhauer considers eating, or nourishment, to be the very process of life; his discussion concerning the relationship of nourishment and excretion to life, and thus to the will, is pertinent here:

That generation and death are to be regarded as something belonging to life, and essential to this phenomenon of the will, arises also from the fact that they both exhibit themselves merely as higher powers of the expression of that in which all the rest of life consists. . . . Constant nourishment and renewal differ from generation only in degree, and constant excretion differs only in degree from death. . . . The process of nourishing is a constant reproduction; the process of reproduction is a higher power of nourishing. The pleasure which accompanies the act of procreation is a higher power of the agreeableness of the sense of life. On the other hand, excretion, the constant exhalation and throwing off of matter, is the same as that which, at a higher power, death, is the contrary of generation. And if here we are always content to retain the form without lamenting the discarded matter, we ought to bear ourselves in the same way if in death the same thing happens, in a higher degree and to the whole, as takes place daily and hourly in a partial manner in excretion; if we are indifferent to the one, we ought not to shrink from the other. 50

Life (or existence) and death are central issues in Pincher Martin, and, though I do not mean to imply that Golding drew on Schopenhauer's philosophy in any way when writing the novel, his choice of imagery is strangely Schopenhauerian. Oldsey and Weintraub have observed

two major types of metaphors in Pincher Martin. The first—an extension of Golding's wordplay on Martin's nickname—are the recurrent metaphors of eating, implying every kind of animal greed and acquisitiveness, from the dietary to the sexual. The second are the excremental metaphors so common

50 Schopenhauer, pp. 356-357.
to Golding's fiction, here an intensifying fecal imagery which reaches a climax in the explosive scene of Martin's makeshift self-enema.

Pincher's ingenious device of the self-inflicted enema suggests the subliminal operation of his will to survive. He continues to eat voraciously (though without enjoyment) in order to sustain life, but his body and organs refuse to excrete waste material, even the poisonous mussels, until his intelligence comes temporarily to his rescue with the idea of the enema. In the same way, his will subconsciously rejects sleep, for he thinks of sleep as

a consenting to die, to go into complete unconsciousness, the personality defeated, acknowledging too frankly what is implicit in mortality that we are temporary structures patched up and unable to stand the pace without a daily respite from what we most think our—. . . There the carefully hoarded and enjoyed personality, our only treasure and at the same time our only defence, must die into the ultimate truth of things, the black lightning that splits and destroys all, the positive, unquestionable nothingness.

Although Pincher recognizes human mortality as "the ultimate truth of things," he maintains his defensive intellectual facade which, as Samuel Hynes notes, is based on the Cartesian view: "I think, therefore I am." Pincher inventories his weapons against a mechanistic universe:

60 A survey of Golding's works reveals little evidence for the statement that "excremental metaphors are so common to Golding's fiction."

61 The Art of William Golding, p. 98.

62 William Golding, p. 20.
"Intelligence. Will like a last ditch. Will like a monolith. Survival.
Education, a key to all patterns, itself able to impose them, to create.
Consciousness in a world asleep" (143-144).

But the creativity which Pincher ascribes to his education betrays
him in his efforts to preserve his "carefully hoarded and enjoyed person-
ality." Nathaniel Walserson, a pre-war friend of Pincher's, has warned
him of "the sort of heaven we invent for ourselves after death, if we
aren't ready for the real one" (152). Nat is a curious saintly type,
a selfless individual much given to highly personal, introspective medi-
tation and prayer, who propounds what seems to be an occult "technique
of dying into heaven" (64). "Take us as we are now and heaven would be
sheer negation. Without form and void," says Nat. "You see? A sort
of black lightning, destroying everything that we call life—" (162).
Pincher begins to suspect that, in his terror of the destructive "black
lightning," his consciousness has invented the seascape within which he
exists so precariously, for he discovers logical flaws in the natural
world observed by his intelligence; he has seen a red lobster swimming
in the sea (lobsters turn red only when cooked) and has imagined insol-
uble guano mixed with water into a slimy paste. Gradually he comes to
realize that his tortuous existence on the barren rock is "the sort of
heaven" he has invented for himself because he is "not ready for the
real one."

As Pincher gradually begins to feel that his knowledge, or conscious-
ness, is failing him, the relationship between consciousness and will
becomes more significant. Loss of consciousness, or a faulty conscious-
ness, might spell insanity, and Pincher is at first terrified (or appears
to be) by this prospect. But gradually his consciousness begins to welcome insanity in the hope of evading—or at least postponing—annihilation. "There is always madness," he thinks, "a refuge like a crevice in the rock. A man who has no more defence can always creep into madness. . . . Madness would account for everything" (165). "Everything" is, in this context, Pincher's predatory and immoral conduct; his madness, feigned or real, represents a denial of responsibility for his immoral life. But Pincher's "centre" (his inner self, which includes his will) remains aloof and withdrawn from his consciousness: "The centre co-operated but with an ear cocked" (166). Golding implies here the subordination of intelligence to will, and again his implication coincides curiously with the deductions of Schopenhauer, who says: "Will is first and original; knowledge is merely added to it as an instrument belonging to the phenomenon of will. Therefore every man is what he is through his will, and his character is original, for willing is the basis of his nature."63

As Pincher's consciousness feigns madness, the "centre" remains aloof and reserved while a rapidly-building lightning storm threatens to destroy the rock and Pincher with it. Finally the "dark centre" of the self, with its seemingly inflexible will to survive, joins wholeheartedly in the pretense of insanity, attempting to choose the partial identity of madness over the "nothingness" of death: "The centre knew what to do. It was wiser than the mouth. It sent the body scrambling over the rock to the water hole" to destroy the precious water supply. "Mad! Proof

63 Schopenhauer, p. 377.
of madness!" (177). But the black lightning inexorably destroys
Pincher's imaginary ocean and rock and reduces Pincher to "what he was,"
a pair of claws and the "dark centre" of his inner self, and finally
wears even them away "in a compassion that was timeless and without
mercy" (179).

The black lightning, which Golding has described as "the compassion
of God" (see his "mental lifeline," pp. 52-53, above) serves as a tran-
sitional symbol which shifts the focus from Pincher's first basic
struggle against the destructive will of nature to the true issue of the
novel, Pincher's defiance of God, or man's will at war with God's will.
Two-thirds through the novel Pincher recalls a recurrent nightmare (122)
which began in his childhood and has haunted him ever since. In his
dreams Pincher is irresistibly drawn down a stairway to a dark cellar;
at the same time he is horrified by the imagined presence of some terri-
ble being which he believes awaits him below in the dark cellar. He
finds little comfort in the rational reassurance of his conscious intel-
ligence which tells him: "I'm adult. I know what's what. There's no
connection between me and the kid in the cellar, none at all. I grew
up. I fixed my life. I have it under control. And anyway there's
nothing down there to be frightened of" (123).

Golding has attempted to explain the significance of the dark cel-
lar in a letter sent to and quoted by John Peter:

The cellar in Pincher Martin represents more than
childhood terrors; a whole philosophy in fact—sug-
gestig that God is the thing we turn away from into
life, and therefore we hate and fear him and make a
darkness there. Yes, very confused but surely legiti-
mately confused because at that depth there aren't
ideas as much as feelings. Pincher is running away all the time, always was running, from the moment he had a persona and could say 'I.'  

The irresistible attraction which the cellar holds for Pincher reveals an inner or subconscious tension and conflict within his seemingly inflexible will. He knows, subconsciously at least, that he will be "forced to go down into the dark cellar in order to meet the thing I turned my back on, . . . back through the death door to meet the master" (158). Pincher's will represents more than simply a monomaniacal dedication to the maintenance of existence. Again, the philosophy of Schopenhauer can help to illuminate Pincher's nature. Even though Pincher's "dark centre," in terror of death, "turned its back on the thing that created it and struggled to escape," that same "dark centre" is, in its subconscious nature, inextricably involved with death. "Birth and death," says Schopenhauer, "belong merely to the phenomenon of will, thus to life. . . . Birth and death belong in like manner to life, and hold the balance as reciprocal conditions of each other, or, if one likes the expression, as poles of the whole phenomenon of life."  

Pincher subconsciously associates birth and death with God, or with natural law, and thus, in terror of the death which necessarily accompanies creation and life, he runs away from the God who created him. But, says Schopenhauer, "Everything is entirely in Nature, and Nature is


65 Schopenhauer, p. 355.
entire in everything. She has her centre in every brute." According to this reasoning, the will of nature is also a part of Pincher's will. Further, by reading "God" for "Nature," we can transfer these ideas to the programme of Golding's novel. For Christopher is, after all, "the Christ-bearer," even though, as Golding has said, "his original spirit, God-given, the Scintillans Dei, is hopelessly obscured by his thirst for separate individual life." Thus Pincher's "dark centre" still contains a shadow, obscured though it may be, of the divine essence, and thus of the will of God which draws him back inexorably "to meet the master" in the dark cellar of his dreams.

Haunted by the subconscious knowledge that he must eventually "meet the master," Pincher expects and is not surprised by the vision of God which finally appears to him, a God significantly attired as a sailor. The seaman's garb in which Pincher's imagination clothes his vision suggests that God in this context may represent the long-obscured better part of Pincher's nature (the God-in-man of Christopher, the Christ-bearer), and that Pincher's conversation with this God is simply the projection of a moral dialectic in progress within Pincher himself. The ambiguity of the God in seaman's clothing with a "quality of refusing overall inspection" is conveniently suggestive also of Pincher's saintly friend and shipmate, Nathaniel.

Confronted by his vision of God, Pincher summons up his intellectual bravado: "I have a right to live if I can! . . . I have created

66 Schopenhauer, p. 362.
67 Quoted by Oldsey and Weintraub, p. 83.
please necessary and measure as necessary for the conduct

"the month" (the reading comprehension)

examine the text.

which was so needed the center of everybody that it could not even

only in the depth of the inner most, in the dark center, the answer to the question--it needed there to answer--can be found

vocabulary represents the second knowledge, the comprehension and

God teaches, there is an answer in your vocabulary. "Prayer,"

(374)

the tribe, who gave me a mouth

the words, you pray, you counterfeit me. If I see how you have made a counterfeit, you change your order over the order of the words. I have made the words order. God has given me the words order. For the sake of the same order, to this salvation because you read the sentence in the end and I had done I should have known why. Why should you care. Why am I here. Why are they here. Why do you take the power to choose and all my life have been necessary, in accordance with the God-Evan Eitan

created this prayer to the statement that all the actions have

you and I can create my own heaven. "But when God answers, you have
"In the production of literature, see note 44, above."

Schopenhauer, p. 40.
place where I can't get; because in your fool innocence you've got what I had to get or go mad" (60). In spite of their friendship, Pincher plans to murder Nat. "What can the last maggot but one do? Lose his identity?" (163). Pincher's interpretation of necessity in this instance is vicious and ridiculous, yet his order from the bridge proves ironically valid, as he realizes later, because of the approaching torpedo. Even though, as Frank Kermode says, "the order was freely-willed and murderous, it was also necessary and proper in the circumstance. . . . Only the best in fiction has invention of this order." 71

Pincher's preoccupation with the immediate necessity of the moment—sometimes imagined, and sometimes genuine, as the order from the bridge proved to be—suggests another significant aspect of his will to survive. Pincher's will seeks to attain assurance of identity in the immediate present; his intelligence refuses to contemplate eternity and he scoffs at Nat's preoccupation with "his aeons." 72 Thus Pincher's concept of identity is one of present time and space and of human individuality; he has no feeling of identification with God, nature, or eternity. Subconsciously, he realizes that as an individual he is condemned to death, for, as Schopenhauer says, "\[Nature's\] kingdom is infinite time and infinite space, and in these infinite multiplicity of possible individuals. Therefore she is always ready to let the individual fall." 73

71 Kermode, p. 23.

72 Nat's "aeons" suggest eternal beings or powers, as well as eternity itself; in gnosticism, aeons are eternal beings emanating from the supreme being and acting as intermediaries between the supreme being and the world.

73 See note 55, above.
But Pincher clings with frantic intransigence to the physical, temporal, and materialistic elements of his individual identity. Brandishing his naval identity disc, he screams defiantly at his vision of God: "I spit on your compassion!" (176), and clings desperately to his "Safety Rock" as the final storm builds into savage intensity. Eventually Pincher is reduced to his "dark centre" and a pair of lobster claws which lock themselves onto the solid rock. Mouthless, the "dark centre" screams its final wordless defiance: "I shit on your heaven!" But the "black lightning" inexorably destroys Pincher's imagined universe and wears away even the claws and his "dark centre ... in a compassion that was timeless and without mercy" (178-179).

The same mental limitations which have made Pincher's life a purgatory are evident in Davidson, the graves registration officer who retrieves Pincher's drowned body. Interested only in identification of the body so that the naval records in his care will be accurate, Davidson shore up his courage with liquor in order to face the grim evidence of man's mortality. Like Pincher, he has a limited conception of man's place and activity in time and space. When Campbell, the lonely islander who has discovered Pincher's floating body, asks, "Would you say there was any--surviving? Or is that all?" Davidson answers: "Don't worry about his suffering... He didn't even have time to kick off his seahooks" (185). Davidson can picture no aspect of human existence, or of human suffering, other than purely physical existence in the immediate present.

Pincher Martin, then, represents one repugnant aspect of "fallen man," pride and self-will carried to the ultimate extreme, the defiance
of divine and natural law. In a sense, Pincher is a refinement of the new people in *The Inheritors*, self-reliant to the point of obsession, yet haunted by his own mortality and guilt, a parody of Prometheus. Yet, through Golding's masterful presentation during the first half of the novel of Pincher as an epic hero in the "man against the sea" tradition, he also represents human courage and vitality confronted with an inimical universe. The paradox of Pincher's dual role as epic hero and contemptible sinner, the complex symbolism, the seemingly religious overtones, the retrospective ending, and the complexity of the theme have all contributed to the general critical confusion which has surrounded Pincher Martin, resulting in antithetical interpretations too varied to be treated in this study.

Pincher Martin emerges, however, as a massive study in self-will, the account of a man facing death who, in Peter Green's words, "adamantly refuses to admit the validity of spiritual experience." The novel suggests the possible consequences of obsessive human pride and insistent self-will in a man who refuses to accept moral responsibility for his actions and refuses to submit to the authority of divine or natural law. The final irony is that, throughout the novel, Pincher is continually submitting, though involuntarily, to both divine and natural law.

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Free Fall
In *Lord of the Flies*, William Golding suggests that evil is inherent in the heart of man; in *The Inheritors* he suggests that evil first appeared with the evolutionary emergence of human consciousness and will. In *Fincher Martin* he presents a grim and detailed picture of the ultimate consequences of obsession with self. Golding's fourth novel, *Free Fall*, deals with a more complex problem: Why is evil inherent in the heart of man; or, to put it another way, why, given free will, does man seem to prefer evil rather than good?

Golding is concerned here with the influences of social environment on a given man's behavior; thus *Free Fall* is set in contemporary British society and deals with individual man's fall from grace as it occurs through interaction with other people who share his "natural chaos of existence." Whether his protagonist is typical of contemporary man Golding leaves up to the reader's judgment.

75 William Golding, *Free Fall* (New York, 1962—a Harbinger paperback). Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text.

76 In the course of an interview conducted by Owen Webster and reported by James Baker (*William Golding*, pp. 55-56), Golding remarked that modern man must learn "to live fearlessly with the natural chaos of existence, without forcing artificial patterns on it. The orthodox Christian, the Marxist, the scientific humanist, and so on, all deny certain experiences because they cannot be fitted into the more or less rigid patterns by which life is made comprehensible to them." By imposing artificial patterns on life, modern man blinds himself to reality, according to Golding, for "the difference between being alive and being an inorganic substance is just this proliferation of experience, this absence of pattern." In *Free Fall*, Golding proposed to illustrate the true "patternlessness of life before we impose our patterns on it."
Our focus, therefore, is to prevent the standard patterns and systems that have evolved in the past, to have freedom in our own lives. We must use freedom to create, to invent, and to innovate. Freedom allows us to pursue our own passions and interests, to be creative and to explore new ideas. It is this freedom of expression that is essential to the development of human potential.

I am free. I have the power to choose.
Sammy Mountjoy is searching for a pattern which will explain his personal existence and behavior in a chaotic universe of continual flux and change. He is haunted by the recognition of his own moral shabbiness, and specifically by the near-certainty that his willful conduct has literally destroyed the personality of a girl whom he once believed he loved. Hypothetically, freedom of the human will, man's ability and capacity for independent and autonomous moral choice, should enable him to pursue a reasonably direct moral course even through a seemingly chaotic external universe. But experience tells Sammy that existence, and hence choice, is not so simple as all this; he knows that he has strayed from the generally-accepted course and that he can never regain his original innocence. Worse than this, he cannot even determine precisely when and where he first erred, when and where he lost his freedom, or when and where his choices ceased to be his own and began to be governed by what he considered at the time to be immediate necessity.

"Free will," Sammy reasons, "cannot be debated but only experienced" (5) and so he reviews the crucial experiences of his life in an attempt to discover precisely where he made the moral choice, and what that choice was, that cost him his freedom. Appropriately his review of his past takes the chaotic form of "memory, a sense of shuffle fold and coil, of that day nearer than that because more important, of that event mirroring this, or those three set apart, exceptional and out of the straight line altogether" (6). As he reviews the significant experiences of his life, Sammy periodically asks, "Where did I lose my freedom? Was it here?"
"I have no responsibility for some of the pictures," Sammy says.

I can remember myself as I was when I was a child. But even if I had committed murder then, I should no longer feel responsible for it. There is a threshold here, too, beyond which what we did was done by someone else.

Yet I was there... Perhaps reading my story through again I shall see the connection between the little boy, clear as spring water, and the man like a stagnant pool. Somehow, the one became the other. (9)

The first section of the novel (chaps. 1-3) deals with Sammy's early childhood, a period of unconscious innocence: "I was innocent of guilt, unconscious of innocence; happy, therefore, and unconscious of happiness" (78). Born the bastard son of an unknown father and a slatternly part-time charwoman in a London slum called Rotten Row, Sammy received little parental attention or care. He remembers his Ma as a simple amoral "creature" who represents for him, in retrospect, only the shadowy warmth, darkness, and security of an archetypal Earth Mother.

As an artist, he "can remember her only in clay, the common earth, the ground;" he cannot describe her "in words that are ten thousand years younger than her darkness and warmth. How can you describe an age, a world, a dimension?" (15).

Sammy remembers himself and his fellow urchins of Rotten Row as "noisy, screaming, tearful, animal" (17); his nursery- and grammar-school friends display varying degrees of innocence, ranging from the open generosity and simple faith of Johnny Sprague, who "was very complete" (39), to the precocious evil of Philip Arnold, an unscrupulous, pragmatic, and sadistic boy who uses people, especially Sammy, shrewdly and without compassion. Taunted by Philip, Sammy desecrates the altar
of a church; the verger strikes him a blow on the head which results in a long hospitalization, during which his Ma dies. But Sammy's will up to this point is immature and aimless; he has not yet crossed the threshold of guilt.

In the second section of the novel (chaps. 4-6), Sammy's probing memory recalls his late adolescent passion for Beatrice Ifor, a beautiful but reserved middle-class girl. After a carefully planned and executed campaign, he seduces Beatrice, then eventually deserts her to marry Taffy, a volatile wench he encounters at a Marxist rally. Reviewing this part of his past after twenty years, Sammy realizes that the decision to impose his will on Beatrice was his sin, his fateful choice; he decides that, even as a student in art school, planning his willful sexual campaign, he was already guilty. At this point he had crossed the threshold.

Beatrice's middle-class religious training has left her frigid, and she resists his advances, but "the obsession drove me at her," says Sammy. "Once a human being has lost freedom there is no end to the coils of cruelty. . . . We are forced [even after twenty years, Sammy's judgment of necessity is highly subjective] here and now to torture each other" (115). When Beatrice finally surrenders, she presents herself as a humble sacrificial victim, and Sammy's lustful ardor is temporarily chilled. "How far was I right to think myself obsessed with sex?" (117), he asks in retrospect. But the inertia of his lust, spurred by his youthful need to assert his masculinity, has launched him on into pathetic sexual exploitation which gradually turns to frustration and
boredom. Beatrice is reduced to a clinging and helpless victim of his lust; "she had become my ivy" (122). "What was I to do about Beatrice?" he asks later.

What could I do? Give Taffy up? Presumably that would be the standard reply of the moralist. . . . In the end I did nothing. . . . For, after all, in this bounded universe, I said, where nothing is certain but my own existence, what has to be cared for is the quiet and pleasure of this sultan. . . . So Taffy and I went our way regardless. (127-128)

Sammy lacks the will or moral strength to face Beatrice with the hopelessness of their relationship, as he has lacked the will to kill an injured and suffering cat which he found on the highway. "What else could I have done but run away from Beatrice?" Sammy asks.

I do not mean what ought I to have done or what someone else could have done. I simply mean that as I have described myself, as I see myself in my backward eyes, I could do nothing but run away. . . . I had lost my power to choose. I had given away my freedom. I cannot be blamed for the mechanical and helpless reaction of my nature. What I was, I had become. The young man who put her on the rack is different in every particular from the child. . . . Where was the division? What choice had he? (131)

Thus, even as Sammy begins to execute his carefully-planned campaign of seduction, he is already guilty, already condemned; the crucial point where his delicately-balanced will finally settles like a wavering compass needle is "not here" (132), he decides. But somewhere in the chaotic background of his existence are the influences and the experiences which shaped his will toward the misdirected choice which led him to subjugate Beatrice Ifor to his lust.
The third section of the novel (chaps. 7-10) reveals the beginning of Sammy's enlightenment. Serving as a British army captain, Sammy is captured and imprisoned in a German prisoner-of-war camp; he is interrogated by Dr. Halde, a Nazi psychologist, about the escape plans of his comrades, plans about which Sammy knows nothing. Halde, who claims to be a "scientific humanist," analyzes Sammy's will and moral consciousness by means of an image which James Baker maintains "is also an accurate portrait of 'modern man,' the relativist, who is not even sure whether he knows anything worth knowing."\(^{77}\)

What embryo if it could choose would go through the sufferings of birth to achieve your daily consciousness? There is no health in you, Mr. Mountjoy. You do not believe in anything enough to suffer for it or be glad. There is no point at which something has knocked on your door and taken possession of you. You possess yourself. Intellectual ideas, even the idea of loyalty to your country sit on you loosely. You wait in a dusty waiting room on no particular line for no particular train. And between the poles of belief, I mean the belief in material things and the belief in a world made and supported by a supreme being, you oscillate jerkily from day to day, from hour to hour. Only the things you cannot avoid, the fear of sex or pain, avoidance of the one suffering repetition and prolongation of the other, this constitutes what your daily consciousness would not admit, but experiences as life. Oh, yes, you are capable of a certain degree of friendship and a certain degree of love, but nothing to mark you out from the ants or the sparrows. (144-145)

Baker's assumption is correct in the sense that Halde's analysis of Mountjoy can also be applied to Halde himself, for Halde's position and his argument reveal his betrayal of his own alleged humanistic principles.

\(^{77}\) William Golding, p. 64.
"We are neither of us ordinary men," he tells Sammy (137). But neither are they free men: "We have given ourselves over to a kind of social machine. I am in the power of my machine; and you are in my power absolutely" (140). But, suggestive as Dr. Halde's analysis may be, Free Fall presents ample proof that "modern man, 'the relativist,'" is too complex and imperfect a being to be summed up relatively.

Sammy, with his artist's perception and aesthetic consciousness, is particularly vulnerable to Halde's overwhelming intellectualism. "What had I with my feelings, my gross sensuality, my skipping brain to put against a man who taught in a German university?" he asks himself (163). The saintly appearance, the "nationless" voice, and the perfect English diction of Dr. Halde all contribute to Sammy's awe; his preconceptions of Gestapo brutality add to his fear: "We did not know for certain in those days how bad the Gestapo were, but we heard rumours and made guesses" (134). Sammy believes that his awe and fear of Halde and the Nazis "blighted my will, blighted man's will and ever self-perpetuating" (171). He envies the men who have certain knowledge of the escape plans "for they . . . have something to protect, some simple knowledge, some certainty to die for. . . . But what can I say who have no knowledge, no certainty, no will?" (172).

Consigned to the total darkness of a solitary cell, Sammy tries to cope with an almost paralytic terror. Kneeling on the concrete floor, he cringes in the conviction that the Nazis have placed some unspeakably horrible object in the dark "centre" of the cell to torture him into a confession. Sammy's imaginative mind leaps frantically from one gruesome possibility to another as "the centre of the cell [boils] with shapes of
conjecture" (175). The guards have removed his belt, and Sammy clutches at his sagging trousers, "not for decency, but for protection. My flesh, though it crawled, cared nothing for the recent brain nor the important, social face. It cared only to protect my privates, our privates, the whole race" (186). Two knowledgeable critics of Golding pounce on this statement of Sammy's:

At last we realize that for Sammy there is only one central reality—sex—and consequently only one overwhelming fear, the fear for his privates. This is what he has become. The revelation is symbolic in two ways. The worst thing that he can imagine put into the cell to torture him is the mutilated male organ which he thinks he finds in the centre of the floor. But the gruesome thing is also a reflection of himself... that, severed from complex humanity, is what he has chosen to be.78

Such a Freudian judgment is only partially fair to Sammy, for he has already imagined and dismissed the existence of several other horrors (e.g., rats, a steel trap with toothed jaws, a corpse, a snake, and, somewhat later, a descending ceiling which slowly crushes the cell's occupant) as possible explanations of the slimy object. It is true, however, that in a sense "the gruesome thing is... what he has chosen to be," and what he is alluding to in his schoolboyish proclamation, "Musk... be thou my good," a statement which indicates the dedication of his will to the sexual conquest of Beatrice Ifor.

The "dark centre" of the prison cell which Sammy shrinks from in horror seems to suggest, at the same time, the dark and mysterious center

78 Ian Gregor and Mark Minkead-Weekes, "The Strange Case of Mr. Golding and His Critics," in William Golding's "Lord of the Flies": A Source Book, p. 85.
of Sammy's self; we are reminded of the "dark centre" which governed the actions of Pincher Martin. Sammy does, as Halde has observed, possess himself—in fact, is possessed by his self—as he enters the solitary cell. But, with the ever-mounting terrors suggested by his imagination, he loses his self-possession and its attendant pride until, in abject terror, he cries out from somewhere deep inside himself: "Help me!" And "the very act of crying out changed the thing that cried. . . . When a man cries out instinctively he begins to search for a place where help may be found. . . . But in the physical world there was neither help nor hope of weakness that might be attacked and overcome" (184-185). Sammy has tortured himself, his imagination picturing a succession of horrors which might be lurking in the darkness to injure or destroy him. "Why do you torment yourself?" he asks himself. "Why do you do their work for them? Nothing has touched you physically yet—" (183). Finally, with his desperate and instinctive scream for help, he frees his blighted will of the self-perpetuating fears inspired by his imagination. He "strikes at," or mentally rushes forward to meet, the imagined fears of the future:

The future was the flight of steps from terror to terror. . . . The thing that cried fled forward over those steps because there was no other way to go. . . . The thing that screamed left all living behind and came to the entry where death is close as darkness against eyeballs.

And burst that door. (185)

79 See Pincher Martin, pp. 40-41: "There was at the centre . . . a fact like a bar of steel, a thing—that which was so nakedly the centre of everything that it could not even examine itself. In the darkness of the skull, it existed, a darker dark, self-existent and indestructible. . . . The centre began to work."
Sammy has burst not literally the door of the prison cell, but the
doors of the cell of his self. When he is released from the prison cell,
he finally identifies the slimy object to which his imagination had at-
tached such horrifying significance; the Nazi soldiers are replacing the
mops and buckets in the cell and in the center of the cell lies a wet
floor cloth, the innocuous source of much of Sammy's terror.

Weeping tears of shame and horror, Sammy sees a beauty even in the
world of the prison camp. His cry for help has released him from the
smothering and blinding cell of his self and has earned him a miraculous
vision which reveals beauty in everything except the vulgarity of his own
nature.

Only now, with the vision made possible by his liberation from the
overwhelming demands of self, does Sammy fully appreciate Beatrice's
worth:

The beauty of her simplicity struck me a blow
in the face. That negative personality, that
clear absence of being, that vacuum which I had
finally deduced from her silences, I now saw to
have been full. . . . I now saw that being of
Beatrice which had once shone out of her face.
She was simple and loving and generous and humble;
qualities which have no political importance and
do not commonly bring their owners much success.
Like the ward for children, remembered, they
shine. (191)

With his new-found insight, Sammy can look back more clearly on his
past, and he begins now to test his accumulated philosophy for clues to
his loss of freedom. "What men believe," he reasons, "is a function of
what they are; and what they are is in part what has happened to them"
(212). He recalls as if they were present the two "spiritual parents"
of his public school days: Miss Pringle, the primly savage spinster who
teaches him Scripture; and Nick Shales, the lovable rationalist who teaches him the scientific principles of the universe. The moral and intellectual system offered by each is functional, autonomous, and magnificent to Sammy's discovering mind.

But Miss Pringle hates Sammy with the vengeance of a woman spurned. Secretly in love with the deranged clergyman who has adopted him, she sees in Sammy a ruffianly obstacle to her romantic dreams. Because of her frustration, she tortures him with a diabolical persistence by criticizing and humiliating him in class until he develops an aversion to religion because he associates her cruelty with it. Nick Shales, on the other hand, had "a love of people, a selflessness, a kindness and justice that made him a homeland for all people" (213).

During this time, Sammy begins to feel simultaneously the adolescent pressures of an emerging sexual drive and the social pressure exerted by his peers; he wants "the social security of belonging to the tribe" (218). "Sex thrust me strongly to choose and know," says Sammy (226). Yet he has an innate reverence for mystery and holiness; he has also the artist's devout appreciation of beauty: "The world of miracle drew me strongly. To give up the burning bush, the water from the rock, the spittle on the eyes was to give up a portion of myself, a dark and inward and fruitful portion" (217). But the world of Scripture and mystery is the realm of Miss Pringle. Illogically, Sammy chooses Nick's rational universe because Nick treats him with kindness and respect, and because Nick believes in the principles he teaches, as Miss Pringle obviously does not believe in her religious principles. Says Sammy:
In the prewar and adolescent world of the England Grammar School, people are the masters of our own room. When I was a boy, I always had a place to sit and read in a corner because reading was my passion. I was not meant to be a boy, but I tried to make the best of it. I chose music, not mathematics, and I-datepicker and danced to the rhythm of the beatles. I have always been fascinated by the beauty of the universe, and I believe that my calabhs are sex. You say? and now we have said sex where

consider this point:

preference when the adolescent sexual desire exists on the mind. anyway

At this stage of Western life, it would be easy to overestimate the

and depress.
right and wrong were nominal and relative, I
saw the beauty of holiness and tasted evil in
my mouth like the taste of vomit. (228)

At precisely this time young Sammy’s artistic eye encounters the
beauty of Beatrice Ifor; she sits as a model in his art class, and,
probing his memories twenty years later, he declares,

I saw there in her face and around the openness
of her brow, a metaphorical light that none the
less seemed to me to be an objective phenomenon,
a real thing. . . . How big is a feeling? Where
does an ache start and end? . . . Our decisions
are not logical but emotional. We have reason
and are irrational. It is easy now to be wise
about her. If I saw that light of heaven, why
then it should have been a counterpoise to Nick’s
rationalism. But my model was flesh and blood.
She was Beatrice Ifor; and besides that unearthly
expression, that holy light, she had knees sometimes
silk and young buds that lifted her blouse when she
breathed. (222)

Gradually and almost imperceptibly, Sammy’s will is shaped by the
influences of his peers, of Miss Fringle, of Nick Shales, of his adoles-
cent sexual drives, and of his childhood and adolescent experiences.
But the pressure of the adolescent sexual drive is immediate and demand-
ing, and Nick’s horrified aversion to the subject of sex makes it seem
even more appealing to Sammy, with his vague sense of adolescent guilt
and his youthful bragadocio and curiosity:

In my too susceptible mind sex dressed itself in
gorgeous colors, brilliant and evil. I was in
that glittering net, then, just as the silk moths
were when they swerved and lashed their slim bodies
and spurted the pink musk of their mating. Musk,
shameful and heady, be thou my good. . . . Musk if
man is only an animal, must be my good because that
is the standard of all animals. (231-232)
Sammy's will is just beginning to focus itself, to come to bear directly on Beatrice Ifor, as he leaves the public school:

There was, in and around me, an emotional life strange as dinosaurs. ... I was jealous of her very existence. Most terribly and exactly I felt that to kill her would only increase her power. She would go through a gate before me and know what I did not know. (224-225)

Up to this point Sammy has been a rowdy but serious and thoughtful boy with a considerable artistic talent that has found so far little direction of any sort, as Nick Shales implies in his incongruously-phrased blessing, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might" (232), and as the headmaster of Sammy's school also implies in his parting advice:

I'll tell you something which may be of value, I believe it to be true and powerful—therefore dangerous. If you want something enough, you can always get it provided you are willing to make the appropriate sacrifice. Something, anything. But what you get is never quite what you thought; and sooner or later the sacrifice is always regretted. (235)

That very afternoon, Sammy declares, in the grandiose manner of Milton's Satan, "Husk, ... be thou my good," and resolves that his goal shall be the possession of Beatrice Ifor, that he will sacrifice "everything" for her. His choice has been freely and irrevocably made, but not without indecision and uncertainty: "There remained deep as an assessment of experience itself the knowledge that if [sex] was everything it was a poor return for birth, for the shames and frustrations

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80 cf. Pincher Martin, p. 92. Pincher makes a similar statement concerning Mary Lovell: "I can't even kill her because that would be her final victory over me."
of growing up. Nevertheless I had now brought Beatrice into the sexual orbit" (108).

In spite of his preoccupation with "the positive value of salt sex," Sammy is frequently reminded of the complex nature of the human will. As he begs Beatrice to marry him and hears her tentative "Maybe," he clutches at her passionately:

There in the winter sunlight, among the raindrops and rusted foliage I stood and trembled regularly as if I should never stop and a sadness reached out of me that did not know what it wanted; for it is a part of my nature that I should need to worship, and this was not in the textbooks, not in the behaviour of those I had chosen and so without knowing I had thrown it away. (109)

Once his will has come to bear directly on the sexual conquest of Beatrice, however, Sammy is obsessed with the idea of possessing her.

Looking back on their unhappy life together, he observes:

What had been love on my part, passionate and reverent, what was to be a triumphant sharing, a fusion, the penetration of a secret, raising of my life to the enigmatic and holy level of hers became a desperately shoddy and cruel attempt to force a response from her somehow. . . . Those fantasies of adolescence now brought to half realization on my side . . . reinforced the reality of physical life and they destroyed the possibility of anything else; and they made physical life not only three times real but contemptible. . . . I painted her as a body and they are good and terrible paintings. . . . In my self-contempt I added the electric light-shades of Guernica to catch the terror, but there was no terror to catch. There ought to have been but there was not. . . . There is gold, rather, scattered from the window. (122-123)

The dichotomy of Sammy's vision, the subjection of his artist's sense of beauty and emotion to the relativism of rationalistic
philosophy, is the key to his loss of freedom. Regardless of the conflicting influences of Nick Shales and Rowena Pringle, two of the people who compose "the walls of high room," the responsibility is his, as he admits (214). His will was free. His choice was freely made.

The full impact of his choice comes home to Sammy when he visits Beatrice in an asylum more than seven years after he has deserted her. She is reduced to the state of a cringing and terrified animal, witless and subhuman, living a life of endless nightmare. As Gregor and Kinkead-Weekes point out in a penetrating exegesis of the novel, 81 an early question of Sammy's now comes into sharp focus: "Who but the injured can forgive an injury? And how if the lines at that particular exchange are dead?" (9). Certainly the lines of communication between Beatrice and Sammy are dead.

Sammy's fall has been free in the sense that it was freely willed; in Milton's terms, he was created "sufficient to have stood, though free to fall." Sammy's will is originally free, as he admits, although he seems periodically to forget this fact. Golding's title, Free Fall, appropriately suggests additional meanings. In the vocabulary of modern sky divers, "free fall" denotes the brief period of time in which a parachutist, after leaving the plane, is free to maneuver and to experiment with the aerodynamics of his relatively unencumbered body before he must open his chute and slow his descent to ensure a safe landing. Hence, the sky diver has a fleeting period of free choice (as Sammy has) before necessity forces him to act in a specific way. Sammy's fall is free also

81 "The Strange Case of Mr. Golding . . . ," p. 67.
in the scientific sense of a body suspended in space; his mind hovers between the equal attractions of the spiritual and the rational universes. Sammy sees an autonomous reality in both the rational and the spiritual worlds: "Nick's universe is real. . . . Miss Pringle's world was real, both worlds are real. There is no bridge" (252-253). Sammy can see "no bridge" between the two major intellectual and religious influences of the twentieth century. He sees in Christianity (as taught by Rowena Pringle) only a warped religiosity that fails to be what it professes, and in science (as taught by Nick Shales) only a sterile rationalism that denies the mystery and holiness of existence, even though, with his artist's perception, he feels that he has once sensed a combination or intersection of the manifestations of both in Beatrice Ifor:

I saw there . . . a metaphysical light that nonetheless seemed to me to be an objective phenomenon, a real thing. . . . But my model was flesh and blood, . . . and besides that unearthly expression, that holy light, she had knees sometimes silk and young buds that lifted her blouse when she breathed. (222)

Sammy is perceptive and intelligent enough to sense or to recognize manifestations of the reality of both the spiritual and rational universes and, at the same time, to recognize the inconsistencies and inadequacies of both as complete explanations for his existence. And, since he searches for total explanation, or for as complete an explanation as he can find for his existence and his behavior, he is unable to accept wholly, or to reconcile himself within, any one of the systems to which he has been periodically attracted and which he has espoused enthusiastically at one time or another; neither is he able to transcend any one
system. Thus he is not content with (or a "professional" in) any system; but he remains "a burning amateur, torn by the irrational and incoherent, violently searching and self-condemned" (5).

Sammy is "self-condemned" because, in his revelatory vision in the prison camp, he sees morality primarily as an interpersonal or interhuman relationship, rather than as a relationship between man and God. Thus he feels desperately the need of forgiveness from Beatrice (now impossible, of course); he wishes also to forgive Miss Pringle (now impossible also, because of her self-righteous stance). Thinking of Miss Pringle, Sammy says, "Forgiveness must not only be given but received also" (231), but he neglects to apply this statement to himself. His concept of an interhuman morality ignores the consideration of a human-divine relationship, thus blinding Sammy to the possibility of divine intervention in human affairs or the extension of divine mercy. He can perceive no evidence of grace extended from the spiritual world: "For this mode which we must call the spirit breathes through the universe and does not touch it; touches only the dark things, held prisoner, incommunicado, touches, judges, sentences, and passes on" (233).

Yet somehow Sammy has been touched, in the prison cell, when some "thing" deep inside himself cried out for help. That "thing" seems to be Sammy's self, "the human nature . . . inhabiting the centre of [his own awareness]" (190), which was touched and (he believes) judged. Actually, however, the only judgment Sammy recognizes is his own, and his belief and judgment in this instance are again strongly influenced by his overwhelming awe of Dr. Halde's intellectuality, his saintly aspect, and his professed humanism. "I can tell when I acquired or was
after observing Beatrice's pathetic state, he thinks: "Cause and effect. The law of succession. Statistical probability. The moral order. Sin and remorse. They are all true. Both worlds exist side by side. They meet in me. We have to satisfy the examiners in both worlds at once" (244).

Thus Sammy appears to rationalize his conduct, even though he remains "violently searching and self-condemned," and the novel ends inconclusively, from his point of view, as he puzzled over the commandant's cryptic remark, "The Herr Doctor Halde does not know about peoples" (253). Since Dr. Halde's influence and his remarks have caused Sammy to scrutinize himself and his moral character, and since this analysis has opened for Sammy new vistas of self-knowledge (much of it grim and condemnatory, in support of Halde's seething description of Sammy's moral apathy), Sammy accepts Halde as a near-infallible judge of character. Actually, Halde appears to consider himself defeated as Sammy leaves the office for the solitary cell; Sammy reports: "He would not meet my eye and he was swallowing on nothing as I had done" (152). The fact that Halde does not wait for Sammy's confession might also be considered evidence of Halde's defeat. Therefore, though Golding seems deliberately to avoid a specific explanation of the reasons for Sammy's liberation, Halde's acknowledgment of defeat may be one reason for the commandant's remark. But Sammy, in the expanded knowledge of his nature which he credits to Halde's character analysis, is mystified by the announcement that Halde "does not know about peoples." Sammy feels that Halde has indirectly introduced him to a moral system (the system which he saw in his vision) which offers a near-total explanation. "The nationless
of the two boys. In The Inheritors, the rudimentary wills of Lok and his people are subdued by the divergent, but clearly-defined, wills of the "new people." Pincher Martin's will is monolithic and unchanging in his determination to assert the primacy of his own shabby ego. In a sense, the first three novels reflect a reductive approach to the theme of will; in Free Fall, Golding chooses a nonreductive approach in his treatment of the will of Sammy Mountjoy. Free Fall is impressive in its portrayal of the subtlety, complexity, and variety of influences which contribute toward the shaping of the human will, of the precarious balance and erratic course of the will, and of the proclivity of the will to gravitate toward moral apathy and gratification of the self in a world which presents no one major force or influence powerful enough to impel complete devotion.
The Spire
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Since a test pit dug in the center of the cathedral reveals that there are indeed no foundations beneath the stone flooring, the spire can be supported, if at all, only by the four existing columns at the corners of the crossway. Roger warns Jocelin that the columns can be reasonably expected to support little more than their own weight and the weight of the present cathedral roof, but, adamant in the truth of his vision, Jocelin ignores the question of foundations in both the architectural and spiritual senses. As Jocelin's will forces the spire upward "stone by stone" and the weight of the structure increases accordingly, foundations become a major symbol in the novel.

The cathedral itself is built in the shape of a man lying on his back with arms outstretched, a shape Jocelin considers "a diagram of prayer;" the spire which will rise from the heart of the figure is to be "a diagram of the highest prayer of all" (115). But Jocelin's grandiose vision, like all human vision and effort, is incomplete and imperfect; he refuses to reckon the cost of objectifying his "highest prayer," and the reader begins to suspect that Jocelin may be inspired only by his own will, and not God's.

Golding reveals Jocelin's mounting obsession bit by bit as the spire mounts upward; each construction scene—indeed the entire novel—is seen predominantly through the eyes of Jocelin, with just enough omniscient authorial comment and relevant dialogue to expose the limited perspective of Jocelin's vision. Jocelin's imperfections are obvious almost immediately; his most serious weakness is a capacity for self-delusion which results in a monumental hybrid. In the opening paragraph Jocelin, triumphant in the knowledge that his visionary project is at last begun,
exults in the light of a stained-glass window depicting the glory of God and of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac; Jocelin feels that he also is one of God's chosen servants. He thinks of the church and its staff as "My place, my house, my people. All these years," he thinks, "I have... put the place on me like a coat" (4). Jocelin has indeed put on the church and its ways in order to hide, frequently even from his own eyes and mind, the inherent duplicity of his own human self.

Convinced that his vision is divinely inspired, Jocelin chooses to ignore human advice, and gradually comes to ignore humanity itself in his manic determination to frame his vision in solid stone and glass. Although Jocelin's chaplain, Father Adam, is a faithful and obedient servant, Jocelin haughtily thinks of him as "Father Anonymous" and treads on the devout old man's unshod toes with careless arrogance. Yet, in a spontaneous outburst of blissful self-delusion, Jocelin prays, "Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast kept me humble!" (18). But the mute stone carver is not deceived. Although doglike in his adoration of Jocelin, his artistic perception captures the blind acapacity of Jocelin's nature in the aquiline ferocity of the stone heads which are to grace the four sides of the tower. Characteristically, Jocelin interprets the carved heads as symbolic of the Holy Spirit which he feels is the driving force behind his dream. Even so, Jocelin is not unaware of the limitations of human vision; looking at the blind eyes of the first stone head, he thinks, "It is true. At the moment of vision, the eyes see nothing" (20). He is aware also of the human capacity for self-delusion. Gazing inside the church at the diagonal shafts of dust-saturated light which remind him of the masts of a foundered ship, he smiles to think "how the
mind touches all things with law, yet deceives itself as easily as a child" (5).

Yet Jocelin remains secure in the belief that his will is "God's will in this business" (35), in spite of the mounting, though muted, opposition of his colleagues in the chapter, all of whom resent the defiling of the cathedral by the army of pagan workmen and by the noise, dust, and rubble of construction. Jocelin's will is opposed also by Roger Mason, a bullet-headed man with a strong will of his own, who argues the practical impossibility of supporting so heavy a structure on swampy ground. Roger's professional ethic, his "Builder's Honor," is as important to him as "priesthood to a priest," and his will shrinks, both in pride and fear, from building a spire which seems to him doomed to fall.

The work is hindered by the winter rains which soak the church and grounds, invading the graves beneath the floor slabs and forcing the stench of death out of the open test pit to permeate the fog-drenched cathedral, spreading "fear of age and death, . . . of darkness and a universe without hope" (50). Even nature seems to frown on the construction and on man's aspirations in general as fog smothers the top half of the cathedral and presses down on the city, and the flood waters of the river invade the streets.

In the fervor of his supposedly divine inspiration, Jocelin gradually loses contact with humanity. He thinks of himself as an instrument of God's will, and of Roger Mason and his boisterous army of pagan workmen merely as instruments which he must manipulate in order to accomplish his dream. At first he cringes at the rude intrusion of the clamoring
army into the quiet sanctity of his cathedral: "Lord, what instruments we have to use!" (42); but soon he accepts the intrusion as a normal part of the cost of his dream: "His instruments, these people he had to use, seemed little more than apes now that clambered about the building" (50). "The highest prayer of all" is to cost more than a mere invasion of sanctity. Just as Jocelin has reduced the workmen in his mind to "little more than apes," so he reduces his colleagues within the chapter. He neglects his duties as Dean, becomes estranged from Father Anselm, his confessor and oldest friend, and finally withdraws completely from the business of the church to devote his full attention to supervision of the construction.

As work on the spire progresses, the weight of the tower increases until the four supporting columns hum with strain. Mental tension mounts throughout the chapter and among the workmen, one of whom falls from the scaffolding to his death on the cathedral floor, and the cost of the dream continues to increase. The nervous workmen torment Pangall, a lame and impotent church caretaker; Pangall's wife Goody, Jocelin's favorite "daughter in God," and Roger Mason are reluctantly but inexorably drawn together into a tragic liaison. The ground in the open pit under the crossways begins to crawl with graversnarks or with "some form of life, that which ought not to be seen or touched," or perhaps with "the living, pagan earth, unbound at last and waking, Dia Mater" (74–75). Roger orders his army to fill the pit with stone and, as Jocelin deduces much later, they kill the tortured Pangall in a pagan rite of sacrifice and bury his body in the pit as a propitiatory offering. (Jocelin is horrified to discover a mistletoe twig and berries in the crossways after
Pangall's disappearance, and later visualizes "Pangall, crouched beneath the crossways, with a sliver of mistletoe between his ribs" (205). 33

Praying desperately to prevent the collapse of the spire, Jocelin feels as if he has taken the entire weight of the structure on his back. Now the full weight of responsibility for the evils which accompany the fashioning of his "prayer in stone" comes home to him. "This is what it is," he realizes, "to offer oneself and have the offer accepted. . . . This is how a will feels when it is linked to a Will without limit or end" (79). Roger feels that Jocelin must now see the impracticality of his vision. "There comes a point," he tells Jocelin, "when vision's no more than a child's playing let's pretend" (80). But Jocelin's will prevails; he threatens to blacklist Roger and his crew throughout the land, and Roger is forced to continue his work on the spire.

Jocelin uses people, as well as the powers vested in him by the Church, in any way he can to further his project. "I would protect Goody Pangall if I could—protect all of the members of the Chapter," thinks Jocelin, "But we are each responsible for our own salvation" (81). The initial funds for building the spire have been given by his worldly

33 According to Robert Graves, The White Goddess (New York, 1948), pp. 48, 56, 123-124, 266, the religious ritual of the Druids was bound up with the mistletoe; they called it "all-heal" and considered it "a prime phallic emblem" and an aphrodisiac. "The Church now admits holly and ivy as reputable church decorations at Christmas, but forbids the mistletoe as pagan," says Graves. "However, mistletoe cannot be ousted from its sovereignty of Midwinter, and the exchange of kisses forbidden at all other seasons is still permitted under its bough, if it has berries on it." Graves reports a legendary sacrificial rite, presumably inflicted every mid-summer by the Druids on their current "Hercules" kind of priest, in which the body of the victim was mutilated and finally impaled with a mistletoe stake.
aunt, a favorite courtesan of the late king; she hopes to be buried in state in Jocelin's cathedral, but Jocelin has promised her nothing and now refuses to answer her anxious letters. The timber for the spire is a gift from Ivo, a rural nobleman who is made a canon in a farcical installation ceremony, after which "Ivo went back to his hunting" (67). Now, as Roger threatens to abandon the spire, Jocelin reasons slyly, "[Goody Pangall] will keep him here" (59).

As the tower mounts upward, Jocelin gradually severs his relationship with the chapter and enters into "a kind of necessary marriage; Jocelin, and the spire" (68). "My will has other business than to help [people]," he thinks. "My will is in the pillars and the high wall" (92). "I can't pray for [Pangall and Goody] since my whole life has become one prayer of will, fused, built in" (100).

Obsessed with his "diagram of the highest prayer of all," Jocelin neglects confession, one of the "two necessary ingredients in acceptable prayer." The confession which normally accompanies prayer constitutes an exposure—and consequent cleansing and purging—of the self; thus confession is seen as a necessary means of maintaining moral health, and is especially necessary for an individual consecrated to religious service. After quarreling with Father Anselm, Jocelin decides that he must

change his confessor; obsessed with the physical problems involved in erecting the spire, however, he rationalizes, "I am about my Father's business," and postpones confession (62). Later, when he is questioned by church officials about his neglect of chapter duties, Jocelin admits that he has not confessed since work on the tower was begun.

The advice of Rachel, the master builder's wife, to Jocelin is applicable to the relationship between prayer and confession: "There has to be as much weight under a building as there is over it. So if you are going up four hundred feet you will have to go down four hundred feet" (39). Perhaps partly because he does not avail himself of the cathartic effects of confession, and certainly because he is a human being under his robes, formerly unsuspected aspects of Jocelin's will begin to assert themselves. As the spire rises and the emotional tension increases, curiously new relationships and new manifestations of will emerge from the depths of Jocelin's consciousness. Jocelin has for some time sensed, in times of stress, the presence of an angel at his back, an angel who gives "comfort, but no advice" (70). Now the presence of the angel gives way to nightmarish dreams about Goody Pangall, and Jocelin gradually comes to realize that his affection for her, his "daughter in God," is the manifestation of sexual attraction as well as of Christian and fatherly love. Her white body and her flashing red hair become recurrent and emphatic symbols which haunt his dreams; sometimes she appears in the form of Satan, clad in long red hair, "seizing him by the loins" (133). This subtle juxtaposition of Jocelin's erotic and his devout dreams (of Goody Pangall and of the spire) emphasizes the
close relationship of two antithetical, and yet complementary, aspects of the will—its proclivity for both erotic and spiritual manifestation.

Jocelin observes Roger and Goody embracing in the secrecy of the builder's toolshed, and, with pangs of guilt and jealousy, remembers that he had arranged her marriage with the lame Pangall (121). Roger's wife discovers that Goody is pregnant with Roger's child and attacks Goody furiously; Jocelin attempts to protect Goody, but he learns that, to her, he represents only the moral censure of the church: "I was the accuser and she fled from me" (131). When Goody dies in the throes of childbirth, Jocelin tries to pray for her: "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 will. . . . This have I done for my true love" (132).

But the spire requires even more sacrifices before it is complete. Ruined and broken, Roger resorts to drink and finally scrambles down from the tower in panic, moaning like a helpless animal. Jocelin and a few devoted workers finish the spire, but it stands precariously, as if miraculously balanced at a slight angle from the perpendicular above the four bowed columns which support it. Jocelin, a burning physical wreck of a man, incoherent and unkempt, is finally interrogated by a council of church officials and relieved of his duties as Dean, but he climbs the swaying spire during a vicious storm in the belief that he can anchor the spire and prevent its collapse by driving into the wooden cross at the top a holy Nail which the bishop has sent from Rome.

At this time Jocelin's aunt arrives to visit him, and reveals that Jocelin's rapid rise to high position in the cathedral chapter was
accomplished through her influence upon her lover, the late king. Gone is Jocelin's conviction that he was chosen by God. Even the holy Naiad which anchors Jocelin's dream is a fraudulent relic, Alison implies.

His faith already shattered by Alison's revelation, Jocelin is led by the blind stonemason to one of the stone pillars which support the spire; he probes with an iron rod through a hole in the shell of the pillar and learns that "the giants who had been on the earth" in the great constructive era of the past had filled the heart of the pillar with rubble (181). Stricken by the knowledge that the builders of the original church had practiced deception, and that his proud spire stands on hollow, rubble-filled columns, Jocelin throws himself down on the stone floor and injures his already weakened and diseased spine: "His angel . . . struck him from arse to the head with a whitehot flail" (181).

Lying in his bed, tended faithfully by Father Adam, Jocelin assesses his life and his ambitions. "I thought that to offer myself was to offer everything," he tells Father Adam. "It was my stupidity" (187). But Jocelin has never really offered himself completely, and he does not now abandon personal pride in the glory of his vision. "My dares are big ones," he had boasted to Roger Mason (40); from the top of the spire, he had dreamed of overseeing the whole country and had had to remind himself "whose spire it would be" (101). Throughout the course of the spire's construction, he was inordinately proud of the strength and concentration of his will:
I have so much will it puts all other business by. I am like a flower that is bearing fruit. There is a preoccupation about the flower as the fruit swells and the petals wither; a preoccupation about the whole plant, leaves drooping, everything dying but the swelling fruit. That's how it must be. My will is in the pillars and the high wall. I offered myself; and I am learning. (92)

What Jocelin learns is that his will is infinitely more complex and less effectual than he had first thought. Interrogated by his superiors, he tries desperately to explain:

It was so simple at first... I had a vision, you see, a clear and explicit vision... It was to be my work. I was chosen for it. But then the complications began. A single green shoot at first, then clinging tendrils, then branches, then at last a riotous confusion--I didn't know what would be required of me, even when I offered myself.

The interrogator asks:

You are trying to say that the vision made your building of the spire an overriding necessity?

And Jocelin answers:

Exactly so. (182)

Now, lying helplessly on his injured back, he attempts to explain to Father Adam what happened to his will; it seems to Jocelin to have been like the "growth of a plant with strange flowers and fruit, complex, twining, engulfing, destroying, strangling."

And immediately the plant was visible to him, a riot of foliage and flowers and overripe, bursting fruit. There was no tracing its complications back to the root, no disentangling the anguished faces that cried out from among it; so he cried out himself, and then was silent. (187)

When Father Adam has read Jocelin's journal with its account of the inspired vision, Jocelin's pride cries out for praise from the old
In the doctrine of the great mystery of the cross and resurrection, it seems to represent an improved and intensified expression of the concept of the death of Christ. In doctrine, the doctrine of the death of Christ is the point at which the grace and mercy of God are made known. This is illustrated by the use of the word "cross" in the phrase "the cross of Christ." The cross of Christ is a symbol of the sacrifice and redemption that Christ endured for the sins of humanity. This sacrifice is seen as a sign of the love and forgiveness of God. The cross is also a reminder of the importance of faith and the need for repentance. It is a symbol of the union of humanity with Christ and the hope of eternal life. The cross of Christ is a source of comfort and strength for those who believe in its power and significance. It is a reminder of the ultimate victory of good over evil, and the triumph of love over hate. The cross of Christ is a symbol of the power of the gospel and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. It is a sign of the presence of God in the world and a call to live in accordance with his will. The cross of Christ is a source of hope and inspiration, and a reminder of the love and forgiveness of God.
symbolized by the spire, is seen by Jocelyn in his last conscious thought as somehow "like the apple tree," a thing of complexity, splendor, and aspiration, with roots that probe the unspeakable secrets of the cellarage and the pagan earth, and fruit-bearing blossoms of joy and splendor supported by "long, black springing" branches of human will.

Since Father Adam does not "understand how necessary it was to have forgiveness from those who were not Christian souls; nor how for that it was necessary to understand them; nor how impossible understanding them was," Jocelyn steals out of his sickbed and hobbles into the village to visit Roger Mason (195). But Roger, a bitter and drunken hulk of his former self, can neither understand nor forgive; he misconstrues Jocelyn's confession of guilt for Goody's death and fears that Jocelyn has come only to accuse him of murdering Pangall. Roger throws Jocelyn out into the street, in spite of Jocelyn's passionate profession of guilt: "I'm a building with a vast cellarage where the rats live; and there's some kind of blight on my hands. I injure everyone I touch, particularly those I love. Now I've come in pain and shame, to ask you to forgive me" (202). The village people scornfully strip and beat Jocelyn until Rachel and Father Adam find him and return him to his sickbed.

The archetypal image of the house as a symbol of man and of his aspirations hovers in the background throughout the novel. Jocelyn thinks of himself as a "building with a vast cellarage," and, dying, he is "like a building about to fall" (214). Jocelyn is, in a sense, a master builder himself, as he struggles to transform vision into concrete reality, but his visionary dream and the actual spire lack firm
foundations of faith as well as solid earthly or architectural foundations. Like Spenser's Palace of Pride, Jocelin's spire

... was a goodly heape for to behould,
And spake the praises of the workmen wit;
But full great pittie, that so faire a mould
Did on so weakes foundation ever sit:
For on a sandie hill, that still did flit
And fell away, it mounted was full his;
That every breath of heaven shaked it.85

Though the foundations of Jocelin's spire are not of shifting sand, the spire "seems founded on human filth," as Frank Kermode observes, "whether you take the foundations to be mud, or the corrupt money of his aunt."86

But the spire miraculously remains standing, though damaged, in spite of savage gales which strip roofs from houses and shatter windows in the cathedral. Here Golding deliberately emphasizes an ambiguity which is central to the novel, as it is to life itself, the ambiguity of apparent miracle in contradiction to known laws of nature. "I shall never know the truth until they take the cathedral apart stone by stone like a puzzle," muses Jocelin. "And not even then" (191). Neither Roger Mason, the worldly master builder, nor Jocelin, the disillusioned priest, can explain the unreasonable fact of the tower's standing. "You see—it may be a true Nail after all. There's just no way of knowing," Jocelin tells Roger (201).

85 The Faerie Queene, I, iv, 5, 1-7.
It'll fall one day; but for all the bending pil-
lars, the slanting spire, the rubble—I don't know.
I've still a residue of, what shall I call it, dis-
belief perhaps? You see it may be what we were
meant to do, the two of us.  

(204)

Jocelin's "residue of . . . disbelief," a remnant of the faith
which he believed he had in his original vision, remains to haunt him.
This uncertainty, the inability of man to know, is what makes life, for
Jocelin in his final epiphany, a thing of mixed terror and joy. For
Jocelin is forced to reassess his standards of good and evil in an
attempt to align them with the reality of his experience. He thinks of
Roger Mason as "such a good man, . . . so good--whatever that is!"
(203). With his readjusted views of good and evil, Jocelin thinks,
"There is no innocent work. God knows where God may be" (214).
Jocelin's initially innocent--in fact, naive--dedication to erecting
the spire as a "diagram of prayer" has, he now sees, generated evil
rather than good and alienated him from his chapter and from his God.

"If I could go back," thinks Jocelin, "I would take God as lying
between people and to be found there. 87 But now witchcraft hides Him"
(212). He would search for God, then, in the relationships between
people, in a sort of mutual human respect and brotherhood, "but now
witchcraft hides Him."

87 cf. Free Fall, p. 189. Sammy Mountjoy, in his enlightened vis-
ion after being released from the prison cell, sees an ordered world
depending on "pillars, . . . the substance of which/ was a kind of
vital morality, not the relationship of a man to remote posterity nor
even to a social system, but the relationship of individual man to indi-
vidual man—" In short, both Sammy and Jocelin describe, in their own
terms, the Christian virtue of charity.
The "witchcraft" which Jocelin feels (or seems to feel) stands as a screen between him and God represents Jocelin's continuing evasion of full moral responsibility and is, in a sense, one result of his lifelong asceticism. He is continually tormented by dreams and visions of Goody Pangall, of her white body and especially of her red hair, blazing like a barricade between him and heaven. These dreams represent in part, of course, his sense of guilt and responsibility for sanctioning her liaison with Roger Mason and for her consequent suffering and death. But there is a more important reason for Jocelin's haunted feeling of guilt and uneasiness, a reason which he gradually comes to recognize. His suppressed physical desire for Goody, a desire which is a natural and powerful part of his burning will, led him to arrange her marriage with the impotent Pangall, thus preserving her virginity in order that he may vicariously enjoy it himself as her "father in God." Though Jocelin eventually recognizes his sexual desire as part of his will, his ascetic training urges him to separate it from his soul and relegate it to the subconscious or instinctual part of his being which he calls "a vast cellarage where the rats live" (202). "What's a man's mind, Roger?" he asks, "Is it the whole building, cellarage and all?" (205). Jocelin finally realizes, in spite of his ascetic training, that the body cannot be separated from the mind, and that physical love is as much a part of his will, or of his whole being, as spiritual love. "There ought to be some mode of life where all love is good," he tells Roger, "where one love can't compete with another but adds to it" (206).

But the influence of Jocelin's asceticism is strong and, rather than openly admit his physical desires, he subconsciously externalizes them
in the dream projection of Goody Fangall as a witch. He questions the
two most worldly people he knows in order to justify his externalization
of his own "evil." He begs Alison, his courtesan aunt: "You'd know, of
course. Only tell me. That's all I want. It's witchcraft, isn't it?
It must be witchcraft!" (179). And he pleads with Roger Mason:

Then she bewitched me. She must have done,
mustn't she? That's why I must know what kind
of creature she was; because if she knew, knew
what happened to her husband, even consented to
it perhaps—there would be no horror as deep—and of course a creature like that would haunt
me!
(205)

Thus Jocelin's religious background limits his view of himself, and
he projects his own guilt and fear into the "witch" of Goody Fangall
much as the "new people" of The Inheritors project their fears into the
little Neanderthal "devil" and the schoolboys of Lord of the Flies pro-
ject their fears into the "beasts" of the pig's head and the dead para-
chutist.

Even though Jocelin's reasoning is still governed, or at least
strongly influenced, by his warped religiosity, like Sammy Mountjoy he
discards his former stunted conception of religion as an inadequate
explanation of his experience. As Father Adam labors to ensure the
admission of Jocelin's soul into the orthodox Christian conception of
heaven, Jocelin judges himself, "I traded a stone hammer for four peo-
ple," and tries to equate his behavior with his own speculations con-
cerning the "God ... between people and to be found there." "And
what is heaven to me," he thinks, "unless I go in holding him [Roger]
by one hand and her [Goody] by the other?" (212-214). Without human
charity, Jocelin implies, the joys of heaven would be hollow indeed.
With death near, Jocelin looks up

experimentally to see if at this late hour the
witchcraft had left him; and there was a tangle
of hair, blasing among the stars; and the great
club of his spire lifted towards it. That's
all, he thought, that's the explanation if I had
time. (213)

"The antinomies of love are reconciled there," says Frank Kermode. 88

Jocelin's erotic and his devout dreams are fused in his fleeting and
delirious apotheosis of Goody's red hair, an archetypal symbol of vio-
let passion, and the phallic spire, intended as the concretely realized
image of his faith and prayer thrusting toward heaven. Perhaps this is
a grotesque glimpse of Jocelin's "mode of life where all love is good,
where one love can't compete with another but adds to it" (206). Jocelin
thinks of the constellation Berenice's Hair, named for an erotic love,
and tries unsuccessfully to explain his vision to Father Adam by mutter-
ing "Berenice."

Jocelin has one last glimpse through the window of what seems to be
a fusion of the spire and the blossoming apple tree (perhaps a myopic view
of the spire seen projecting upward above the apple tree):

Something divided the window. Round the
division was the blue of the sky. The division
was still and silent, but rushing upward to
some point at the sky's end, and with a silent
cry. It was slim as a girl, translucent. It
had grown from some seed of rose-coloured sub-
stance that glittered like a waterfall, an
upward waterfall. The substance was one thing,
which broke all the way to infinity in cascades
of exultation that nothing could trammel. (215)

88 "The Case . . .," p. 4.
The apple tree, "bursting up with cloud and scatter, laying hold of
the earth and the air, a fountain, a marvel" (195), a glorious
example of God's creativity. And somehow Jocelin seems to see the spire
fused with the apple tree, "still and silent, but rushing upward to some
point at the sky's end, and with a silent cry," a crippled but triumphant
example of man's creativity. Jocelin's vision appears to suggest, to the
degree that the spire resembles, reflects, or is integrated with the
apple tree, the fusion of man's will with God's will. And the spire,
breaking "all the way to infinity in cascades of exultation that nothing
could tramnel," suggests man's aspiration and suggests also, as does the
apple tree with its beauty and burgeoning vitality, the very joy and
exuberance of life itself. Thus man's creativity, misdirected and imper-
fect though it may be, is somehow a reflection of, and therefore mysteri-
ously allied with, God's creativity.

Father Adam and the other priests at Jocelin's deathbed try to coax
a final profession of belief, or at least a gesture of assent, from him,
but perhaps, as Frank Kermode says, "Jocelin's final gesture of assent
is not to the priests...but to the beautiful maimed spire." For
Jocelin, struggling in an incoherent mixture of terror and joy, tries
desperately but unsuccessfully "to leave behind the words of magic and
incomprehension--It's like the apple tree!" (215).

89 "The Case...", p. 4.
"The words are not enough," as James Baker says, 

they do not even reach the air. But they have to do. No man could find the words to tell us what it is to see God. . . . We hear only a few notes of heavenly music, as it were. They are intriguing but flawed and incomplete, and then all fades into silence.\(^90\)

Even though Jocelin, on his deathbed, has not acknowledged his belief, Father Adam interprets the last murmuring tremor of his lips as a devout appeal to God, and "of the charity to which he had access, he laid the Host on the dead man's tongue" (215). The "charity to which Father Adam had access" is the formalized and symbolic charity of church ritual and dogma, presented ironically to Jocelin at the moment of his death. We are reminded of I Corinthians 13:13: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Jocelin had hope in abundance and an adamant faith in his own will, at least until the spire was finished; but, except for his glimmering and delirious picture of God as existing "between people," he never truly possesses charity. He uses people relentlessly; even in his last confrontation with Roger Mason, his real purpose is not to ask Roger's forgiveness, but to verify the witchcraft of Goody Fangall, and thus to salve his own conscience.

Thus *The Spire*, like *Free Fall*, is a study of the ambiguity inherent in the human will; more than *Free Fall*, however, it illustrates the mysterious, and sometimes even miraculous, perceptivity and strength of the human will. Jocelin learns, to his sorrow and horror, how complex

\(^{90}\) *William Golding*, pp. 87-89.
the will is; he learns also that the will is an integral and inextricable element of both his physical and his spiritual existence. And the spire which he erected and which continues to stand in spite of the physical laws so far known to man remains as a monument not only to the mysterious power of human will, but to the inscrutability of divine purpose. For, as Jocelin tells Roger, "There's just no way of knowing.... You see it may be what we were meant to do, the two of us" (201, 204).
Conclusion
but this is the picture as I see it.

You are always to say, "What's the matter with you?"

And you are always to say, "It's because you're
good at it.

The second thing a better must have to an intuition

be enough to have much of society to be able

stood their own importance.

The second act, "Get out the" into the novel (1926, after

narrative focus on new interviews into conduct, and

new ideas from the real estate agent of the theme of the

spur this stage and a restatement of critical themes. I begin this study

that and a restatement of critical themes can be assessed without the perspective of

by being have been understood and generally on conclusions.

appended within the last fourteen years, much of the critical theme

since this stage could not be treated in this study have all

123
In the five novels treated in this study, Golding keeps his eye steadily on the question of "what men are," but he constantly shifts the focus of his vision. In *Lord of the Flies* he presents a relatively broad and general picture of human nature, seen through a lens of low magnification, as it were, but nevertheless sharp and clear. Jack and Ralph are rounded characters, not caricatures or allegorical embodiments of human attributes, but they lack the psychological depth of Golding's later protagonists. Stripped of the veneer of civilization (with its attendant social and political controls), the schoolboys of *Lord of the Flies* are victims of evil and disaster that rise "simply and solely out of the nature of the brute. . . . It seemed to me," says Golding,

that man's capacity for greed, his innate cruelty and selfishness, was being hidden behind a kind of pair of political pants. I believed then, that man was sick—not exceptional man, but average man. I believed that the condition of man was to be a morally diseased creation and that the best job I could do at the time was to trace the connection between his diseased nature and the international mess he gets himself into.92

Golding's schoolboys embody man as "a morally diseased creation" and dramatically illustrate man's tendency to regress into a savage state of willful competition for leadership, and finally for survival itself. The issue of will in *Lord of the Flies* is restricted, however, to an interhuman conflict of will between Ralph and Jack.

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92 "Fable," in *The Hot Gates*, pp. 87, 89.
But certainly man represents more than an innate and savage will to power, just as his culture represents more than a veneer of social amenities and inhibitions, as Golding is quick to show in his second novel, *The Inheritors*. Somewhere in man's past is "a possible humanity that lived equably with the whole world," as Frank Kermode puts it. And Golding seeks, according to Kermode, "to discover again the undifferentiated myth, to return to Eden or to Neanderthal man—or indeed to the primary germ-cell the splitting of which is the beginning of guilt; that is to find innocence and wisdom."93 In *The Inheritors* Golding portrays, in Lok and his people, the "possible humanity that lived equably in the whole world," a people whose will is in accord—if not consciously, at least instinctually—with the will of God and with natural law. Also in *The Inheritors*, Golding illustrates the evolutionary emergence, in the "new people* (Homo sapiens), of the human will with its subsequent tendencies toward self-will and the will to power.

But the emergence of self-will spells revolt against the will of God, and here Golding brings his observer's glass into sharper focus on an individual specimen in *Pincher Martin*. Crouched defiantly on his barren rock in the watery expanse of the North Atlantic, Pincher embodies a monolithic self-will which smars in intransigent but futile defiance of the will of God, only to be inexorably annihilated by the "black lightning" of God. Thus *Pincher Martin* is a grim and dramatic portrayal of man's will at war with God's will.

But not all men are Pincher Martins, and so, relentless as Golding's scrutiny is of the defiant Pincher, his next observation appropriately takes in a wider field in Free Fall. Unlike Pincher Martin, Sammy Mountjoy recognizes the reality of spiritual experience as a part of man's existence, just as he recognizes moral responsibility. Sammy's difficulty lies, in fact, in his recognition of, and attraction to, two of the major influences of the contemporary world—a religion which professes to reveal the will of God and a rationalism which professes to reveal an equally powerful, but secular, universal law. Sammy's will, not overly strong at its best, is racked between the influences of Christian spirituality and rationalism, suspended in space in a state of free fall between alliance with the will of God and devotion to rationalistic principles.

Finally, in The Spire, Golding removes his protagonist from most of the worldly distractions which have neutralized Sammy's will. But the will of Jocelin, Golding's ascetic dean, is as crippled as that of Sammy Mountjoy, not by questions of belief, but by physical and psychological impulses and weaknesses which arise from inside the human nature of Jocelin himself. Jocelin assumes he is aligning his will with the will of God, as Lok and his people manage to do unconsciously or instinctually, but Golding leaves the success of the dean's efforts open to question.

In a sense, Golding has come full circle, for the disaster which befalls Jocelin, the proud priest of The Spire, like that which befalls the schoolboys of Lord of the Flies, rises, in Golding's words, "simply and solely out of the nature of the brute." But with each new novel, as Golding trains his observer's glass more directly on different individual
personalities, intricate inner relationships and subtle manifestations of the human will come into sharper focus. And, as the complexities and subtleties of human nature are gradually revealed, man's relationship to God or to the mysteries of the universe becomes more important in the human drama; accordingly, the novels themselves become increasingly complex and ambiguous.

"The evidence for holiness lies scattered among the fragments of our world," says Frank Kermode, "and those fragments are represented in Golding's books; they form part of the whole. . . . Golding believes in human guilt and the human sense of paradise lost; he also believes in divine mercy. . . . He supposes that we could not recapture that innocence, that natural veneration for Ga, the mother-goddess, had not something of it survived in us." 94

But the "evidence for holiness" is characteristically felt or sensed, rather than seen or measured by empirical standards; thus Golding's introduction of, and gradually increasing emphasis on, this element in his novels tends to further increase the complexity of theme, language, and symbolism, and to make inevitable a demanding amount of ambiguity. Kermode's statement that Golding "believes in divine mercy," for example, finds its most convincing support in Golding's paradoxical phrasing: the black lightning tears away the claws that were Pincher Martin "in a compassion that was timeless and without mercy;" in Sammy Mountjoy's seemingly gratuitous release from his dark cell; and in the

ambiguous significance of a damaged spire which continues to stand as possible evidence of the validity of Jocelin's "divine" inspiration.

Thus critical interpretations of Golding's novels have been varied and controversial. In response to the seemingly religious significance of his work, he has frequently been labeled a fabulist and a moralist, but, as Samuel Hynes remarks:

What we acknowledge if we choose to call Golding a fabulist is not that the total story is reducible to a moral proposition--this is obviously not true--but rather that he writes from clear and strong moral assumptions, and that those assumptions give form and direction to his fictions.95

One of Golding's "moral assumptions"--and one which might be denied by critics who read only pessimism in his works--is the assumption of purpose, mystery, and holiness in the universe. In a review of Gavin Maxwell's The Ring of Bright Water (which deals with the adventures of two pet otters kept by Maxwell), Golding writes:

Our manipulation of the world has grown explosive. Animals are capital, but they are not ours. I do not know whose they are, nor whose we are, except that we do not belong to ourselves. . . . I smell purpose in the world and guess it may include not only Adam but also the delectable lamb and the loathsome spider. . . . Maxwell has the great gift of intransigence in the face of popular belief. He recognizes mystery and he values it, as any man must whose mind has not come to a full stop.96

Golding's respect for intransigence as a virtue in art and his preoccupation with the mystery and holiness which he feels are integral

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95 William Golding, p. 5.

96 "In My Ark," The Hot Gates, pp. 103, 105.
extinguished enough; and interrupted enough to try.

are fortunate to have, in William Golding, a novel, exteded enough...

No man could find the words to tell us what it is to see God's eye. They do not enough. They do not even reach the sky. But they have to do...

"It's like the apple tree.

...and men's attempts to explain the world-

a world of constant flux.

The more complex, the more confusing, the more widespread, the more difficult, the more obscure, the more confusing, the more...
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