

T.C.

DOKUZ EYLÜL ÜNİVERSİTESİ

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ

İNGİLİZ DİLİ EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

THEMATIC AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SPIRE

GÜLŞAH YILMAZ

Prof. Dr.

GÜLDEN ERTUĞRUL

İZMİR

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Yüksek lisans tezi olarak sunduğum “ Thematic and Stylistic Analysis of The Spire ” adlı çalışmanın, tarafımdan, bilimsel ahlak ve geleneklere aykırı düşecek bir yardıma başvurmaksızın yazıldığını ve yararlandığım eserlerin bibliyografyada gösterilenlerden oluştuğunu, bunlara atıf yapılarak yararlanılmış olduğunu belirtir ve bunu onurumla doğrularım.

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ÖZET

William Golding, hiç şüphe yok ki, modern İngiliz romancılarının en göze çarpanlarından birisidir. Sayısız eserleri arasında The Spire üslup ve tema yoğunluğu bakımından özel bir yere sahiptir. Basit bir hikaye karmaşık bir şekilde anlatılmıştır. Roman, anlaşılması zor olduğu için, büyük bir dikkatle okunmayı gerektirir. Bu tezin amacı da romanı anlamayı güçleştiren bazı unsurları aydınlatmaktır. Semboller, göndermeler, imgeler gibi unsurların ışığında roman tema açısından incelenmiştir.

Önsöz bölümünde Golding'in edebi kariyeri ve özellikle The Spire hakkında kısa bilgi verilmiştir. Giriş bölümünde çeşitli kritiklerin yazarın üslubu hakkındaki görüşleri verilmiş, daha sonra The Spire ile ilgili kritiklerin değerlendirmelerine yer verilmiştir. The Spire'a Bakış, kitaba genel bir bakış açısı getirmekte, kitabın genel bir özeti karakterlerin tanıtımıyla birlikte verilmekte ve yazarın romanı yazarken hangi noktadan hareketle yola çıktığı tartışılmaktadır. The Spire'ın Tema ve Üslup Açısından İncelenmesi, kitabın tema ve üslup açısından incelenmesini içerir. Çeşitli semboller, göndermeler, imgeler ve motifler analiz edilmiş ve bunların ışığında roman tema açısından değerlendirilmiştir. Sonuç bölümünde ise, gelişme bölümünde kazanılan bakış açıları ele alınmış ve roman hakkında faydalı bir perspektife ulaşılmıştır.

ABSTRACT

William Golding is, without doubt, one of the most distinguished of modern British novelists. Among his numerous works, The Spire occupies a special place for its style and intensity of theme. A simple story is told in a complicated manner. The novel is difficult to comprehend and requires to be read with great attention. This thesis aims to illuminate some of the elements that make it difficult to understand the novel. In the light of these elements such as symbols, references and images, the novel is thematically analysed.

In Preface, a piece of information is given about Golding's literary career, particularly The Spire. In Introduction, opinions of various critics about Golding's style are given and then the focus is on The Spire and some opinions about the book are presented. In A View From The Spire, a general view of the book is given, a kind of summary is made and the basic characters are introduced. And the starting point in writing this novel is discussed. In Thematic And Stylistic Analysis of The Spire, thematic and stylistic analysis of the book is given. Various symbols, references, images and motifs are analysed and the novel is studied thematically with regard to these elements. In Conclusion, the insights that are derived in the development part are put forward and a useful perspective is reached out about the novel.

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PART I

PREFACE

William Golding (1913-1993) is without doubt one of the major British novelists of the post-World War II era. He has depicted in many different ways the anguish of modern man as he gropes for meaning and redemption in a world where the spiritual has been all but crushed by the material. Critics have called Golding an allegorist, a fabulist, and a mythmaker. Of the three terms Golding prefers mythmaker and when he was awarded the Nobel Prize the citation acknowledged the mythic quality of his work, his ability to illuminate the condition of humankind by means of a concrete story. In framing the concrete stories, Golding often draws on literary precedents. For Lord of the Flies Golding turns to R. M. Ballantyne's The Coral Island (1858). Yet where Ballantyne's boys, stranded on a desert island, have a jolly time and live harmoniously, Golding's boys become little savages. So Golding turns the literary precedent on its head, using it only as a starting place for his own unique view. Golding is so deeply affected by his war experience in the second world war that he successfully employs the theme of evil and violence in his first novel Lord of the Flies (1954). His most important novels are given as follows: The Inheritors (1955), Pincher Martin (1956), Free Fall (1959), The Spire (1964), The Pyramid (1967), The Scorpion God (1971), Darkness Visible (1979), Rites of Passage (1980), The Paper Men (1984), Close Quarters (1987), and Fire Down Below (1989). In addition to his novels, he has written numerous essays and book reviews and a few plays. His two collections of essays, The Hot Gates and Other Occasional Pieces (1965) and A Moving Target (1982), and an account of a trip, An Egyptian Journal (1985) are the most popular ones.

As a mythmaker he writes stories that illuminate a truth about human nature. The truth he most often reveals is the existence of a depravity most humans would like to ignore or deny. The pessimism of such a focus is sometimes balanced by the possibility that self-awareness empowers goodness in people. In the novels that present both the darkness and the potential light, Golding's pessimistic logic and optimistic nature merge. His themes deal with guilt, responsibility and salvation. The concepts of fall, the nature of evil, and the possibility of redemption dominate most of Golding's

fiction. Each of the five novels Golding produced in his first decade of fictional publication examined these concepts in different times and places and from different viewpoints. In the last novel of Golding's first period, The Spire, Jocelin's obsessive nature is examined, an ecclesiastical chancellor obsessed with the desire to build an edifice for God and prepared to sacrifice almost anything, including himself, to accomplish what he considers a holy purpose. In addition to a fine style that was poetic without being ostentatious, the novel displayed a passionate intensity, a singular fine eye for detail, a distaste for the contemporary, and the ability to produce mythic and allegorical effects from exciting stories. The book was fairly well received by the popular reviewers, sold well and, in the Honours list that so many newspapers like to publish around Christmas time, was duly voted one of the books of the year. The Spire has a special place among Golding's works and is considered to be one of the finest achievements in his literary career.



PART II

INTRODUCTION

The fiction of William Golding is a unique blending of realism and myth. His novels possess the recognisable qualities of realistic fiction yet at the same time they incorporate a consistent system of symbolism that allows for an allegorical meaning. The Spire is Golding's fifth novel and it represents many of Golding's collective concerns, along with providing a superb example of his exceedingly difficult role as allegorist in an age which largely rejects allegory. In a general sense, allegory may be defined as "a form of extended metaphor in which objects, persons, and actions in a narrative, either prose or verse, are equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself" (1). Allegorical fictions illustrate some further metaphysical, theological, ethical, or social doctrine through manipulation of images that have stipulated meanings other than their meanings as imitations of the actual world. It is the ethical or moral level of meaning that most significantly applies to the modern allegories of William Golding. In each novel, the protagonist's search to understand the nature of evil is manifested in a symbolic journey, central to the theme.

Allegory also includes imagery. An image may be invoked as metaphor, but if it persistently recurs, it becomes a symbol, or may become part of a symbolic or mythic system. Most of Golding's images function symbolically and are obviously connected with negative views of the human situation. Golding's views on allegory are recorded by Tiger, in her book entitled The Dark Fields of Discovery, in the following lines:

.....Allegory is nothing more than exegesis. Didactic lesson
is primary, story secondary. (2)

Tiger also records Golding's own views on myth and why he prefers to call his novels myths rather than fables:

What I would regard as tremendous compliment to myself
would be if someone would substitute the word myth for

fable. I think a myth is a much profounder and more significant thing than a fable. I do feel fable as being and invented thing on the surface whereas myth is something coming out from the roots of things in the ancient sense of being the key to existence the whole meaning of life, and experience as a whole. (3)

As it is obvious, Golding uses both terms as the modes of imagination. For him, fable can only explain things on the surface not deeply whereas myth explains the whole meaning of life as it goes into the roots of things in the ancient times of humanity. Myth is able to dig into the old questions of humanity by means of imagination.

Again in the same book, Tiger also points out Golding's desire to be called a writer of myth as given below:

...Golding is not so much interested in myth as an aesthetic device, but rather in the myth making and myth responding proclivity of the human imagination... Myth is simply an imaginative tendency or mode of perception to which all art struggles. Thus and I think this is central to his own type of religious vision. Myth can not simply be invented or made: it must be discovered... (4)

Golding's experiences in World War II provide him with a tremendous insight into human nature, as he realised that everyone had within him the potential to be utterly brutal should circumstances demand it. The impact of this realisation was that this potential lay latent within all of us, not just our war - time enemies, waiting only for circumstances suddenly to unleash it into a powerful manifestation. As James Gindin says: "The war lingered more deeply and crucially in Golding's mind. He recognised that in the past he had been naive and adolescent, that the war had demonstrated all the cruelties of which man was capable" (5). It was this observation that led Golding to

investigate the theme common to all his novels: man's capacity for inhumanity to man and the point in time when man fell from the perfect state of innocence into which he had been born.

There is little question of William Golding's originality as a novelist. He has not been afraid to experiment with form or to attempt daring themes. Most importantly, Gindin puts forward, Golding sees himself as a writer who is constantly changing and responding to his universe. Gindin continues as follows: "He sees no point in writing the same novel twice" (6) which means his striking fictions, although some have some elements in common with others, are all substantially different from each other. In the source book Concise Dictionary of British Literary Biography: Writers After World War II, Golding's statements on what should matter in writing a novel are given in the following paragraph:

There is very little point in writing a novel unless you do something that either you suspected you couldn't do, or which you are pretty certain nobody else has tried before. I don't think there is any point in writing two books that are like each other... (7)

It is clear that Golding is a writer who does not like to repeat himself all the time. He attempts to produce novels that nobody has produced before. He finds interesting themes which, he believes, are universal.

In each of his novels, the manner is indirect, the symbols rarely clarified. Golding's use of symbolism is his tool for his investigations, as this allows him to explore the possibilities of his themes in many varied ways and in many different contexts. Although Golding's theme may appear to be pessimistic, this is misleading. It is because of his use of symbolism that his tone never becomes oppressive, and although one often is left at the end of a novel with the question unanswered, even though the theme has been fully explored, one never feels that there is no hope for mankind.

Walter Allen claims that “the first thing to be said of Golding’s novels is that they are self – contained wholes beneath whose surface action and realism are to be found much wider and, in a sense, cosmic meanings” (8). Another critic, Joss Marsh thinks that “Golding is a heavyweight and serious novelist, a position difficult to take in the fragmented late twentieth century. He is also versatile, handling a wide variety of forms and historical backgrounds” (9). James Gindin writes that “Golding’s novels are permeated with the sense of man’s sin and guilt, and the images depict these qualities in conventional Christian terms. His metaphors are at least sufficiently unique to suggest the reality, the permanence of the traditional Christian explanation of the nature of man” (10).

The critics are quite right in their observations about Golding because man’s fall from grace is an important point in his works. He often compares man with characters from the Bible to give a more vivid picture of his descent. He parallels stories from the Bible, particularly the persecution and crucifixion of Christ, to compare humans to a more Godly man. By comparing mankind in general to Biblical characters in similar scenarios, Golding provides images of the darker side of man. In The Spire, Golding shaped extensive metaphors for humanity in a forceful version of traditional Christian concepts. His language echoed the universal sonority of that in the seventeenth - century Biblical tradition.

Again, Gindin, in his Harvest of a Quiet Eye: The Novel of Compassion, observes that “Golding’s novels are so tightly shaped, so intricately structured that they rest almost entirely on the acceptance of the authenticity of their Christian parallels” (11). Walter Sullivan agrees with Gindin and says that “Golding is a serious novelist who means to speak to the modern world; and one guess is that in order to say what he has in mind, he must transcend our divisive imagery” and he has also some striking remarks about The Spire and claims that “The Spire is a remarkable performance. Golding’s talent seems to encompass everything. The book is tight and profoundly researched. The spire stands at the centre of the action controlling all, putting all into perspective. Every stone that is laid is laid with authority” (12). It’s a novel about the inextricable mixture of faith, folly, arrogance and sublimated desire that makes every

work of art at once a miracle and a self-betrayal. It's about man's blind plunge into the pit that is his own subconscious mind, and about the terrible cost of that plunge. Don Crompton proposes, "The Spire seemed to provide evidence of a major development in Golding's work and marked a watershed in Golding's career. It was one of the most eagerly awaited books of the decade because the post-war years were not a good time for the creative artist to be at work" (13).

Like Crompton, Kevin McCarron has some striking opinions about the book and he evaluates the novel as follows:

The Spire both integrates and develops the concerns of its predecessors, and yet it is also prophetic, anticipating several principal concerns of Golding's second phase as a novelist, notably the relationship of language to reality and the ambivalent nature of human existence. (14)

When The Spire was published in 1964 a number of reviewers were hostile to the book and complained that it was difficult to understand. However, The Spire is like all of Golding's early fiction in that a simple story is told in a complicated manner. Kevin McCarron puts it this way:

The novel has an omniscient narrator, but virtually every event within it is seen through Jocelin's eyes. This creates a perspective which is both uneasily ambivalent and circumscribed, and this latter quality is paralleled in the claustrophobic, fourteenth – century setting of the novel. (15)

The chronology of the novel is uncomplicated, covering two years. It's a linear narrative. Jocelin, Dean of Barchester Cathedral, believes that he has been chosen by God to build a 400-foot-high spire on top of the cathedral. It quickly becomes apparent that the foundations under the cathedral will not support such a weight, and yet, against all sound practical advice, Jocelin persists with his dream. During the course of the novel the workmen murder Pangall, a deformed cathedral factotum, and Roger Mason,

the builder, has an adulterous relationship with Pangall's wife, Goody, who later dies in childbirth. Jocelin eventually realises that Pangall has been sacrificed in an attempt to appease the dark powers which the workmen worship, and he also realises that he has encouraged the adulterous relationship in a successful attempt to keep Roger Mason working on the spire. Although open to a vast range of metaphorical treatment, as Philip Redpath indicates, "The spire is obviously a phallic symbol, a reflection of Jocelin's sexual preoccupations" (16). Revelation succeeds revelation and Jocelin also discovers that his own elevation to a deanship was due to the whim of a relative. The novel ends with all the principle characters dead or dying, but the spire, against all logic, still stands. Structurally, the novel can be seen to consist of two sections: the first section (chapters one to ten) describes the building of the spire, and the second section (chapters ten to twelve) evaluates this achievement.

In the title essay of A Moving Target Golding says that "The Spire is about the human cost of building the spire" (17). As the spire progresses we witness the appalling personal price Jocelin is prepared to pay, and the price he inflicts upon the innocent.. The movement from ignorance to revelation is a continual process in Golding's fiction.

In the book there is a fine style that is poetic and in addition to this, the novel displays a passionate intensity, a singular fine eye for detail, a distaste for the contemporary, and the ability to produce mythic and allegorical effects from exciting stories. Frank Kermode argues that "The Spire is a book about vision and its cost. The whole work is a dance of figurative language. It requires to be read with unremitting attention and, first time perhaps, very little pleasure" (18). David Skilton agrees with Kermode and finds Golding's novels difficult to interpret and says that his books are complex and give the impression of being difficult to comprehend. From this perspective, Skilton immediately continues, "The Spire, in particular, is willfully obscure. It's a novel which demands to be read twice because it is a dense book" (19). He believes that Golding's vision of the world is complex, and states that "there are for Golding no simple, straightforward answers to the question of what is man's nature" (20). The second difficulty, as Skilton claims, is stylistic, and arises from what it is

... is ... to the ... , is
a visionary and possibly mad. But he is not a reliable informant as to what is going on around. The reader must go with him through his process of discovering the true significance of the events he witness. (21)

At another point in the same study Skilton suggests that there are three time scales working together in The Spire, each producing its own interest and suspense. The first is the chronological ordering of the events of building the spire: "Page by page it gets higher, everything about the operation is described in detail" (22). Then, there are Jocelin's discoveries about his past. It is revealed, for instance, that Jocelin owed his preferment to Lady Alison's whim and that he was unqualified for his appointment. And these discoveries form his progress of understanding. The third time system of the novel is Jocelin's development of comprehension of the events connected with the building of the spire. For instance, the ritual killing of Pangall and the significance of his own feelings for Goody.

Golding once declared himself by nature an optimist, by observation and deduction a pessimist, and while much of his work concentrates on the blackness in man's soul, in The Spire he presents a more holistic view. The Spire affords Golding's clearest statement of the theme that man is a synthesis of good and evil. This statement is fully explained in Popular World Fiction. It is stated that "The impulses behind the building of the spire in the novel are both religious vision and personal pride; the derive to complete it is both admirable and repulsive; the finished edifice raises men's minds to God, but the human price paid reduces men to their basest nature. In this novel, man is an example of the unity that can exist in paradox. Because it acknowledges the simultaneous existence of good and evil in man" (23).

We may notice that Golding reproduces the technique of the Genesis myths in his usual practice of isolating his characters from contemporary social and cultural structures. Like the Genesis myths Golding points to the tragic element in human life and attempts to probe down its causes. And in the light of this explanation David Anderson evaluates The Spire as follows:

In The Spire we have confirmation of the remark of Camus that when men believe that they are acting in the name of an Absolute, they quickly begin to regard themselves as absolutes and forget their inescapable contingency. In their very attempts to actualise their visions, men fall into the pit and let loose destruction. (24)

As it is seen in the remark of Camus, Jocelin, the protagonist of The Spire, believes that his actions are performed in the name of God. His very act of building a spire on top of a cathedral comes to him in a vision. In order to actualise his vision, which is supposed to be God's will, he ignores all the other people around him and this , in turn, leads to destruction. Golding points out that it is an actively evil principle that lies at the centre of man's being. The lesson of The Spire is that man is most pathetic when he fails to recognise this and claims for himself a moral purity which belongs only to God.

Golding has been charged with obscurity, but whatever obscurity exists in his work serves a thematic purpose. He creates a fictional world seen with new eyes from unusual perspectives. The degree to which readers experience a connection between the fictional world and the world they inhabit is the degree to which Golding succeeds as a mythmaker.

PART III

A VIEW FROM THE SPIRE

Although mythmakers are dependent on the past, that dependence does not make them unoriginal. Golding's novels are indeed derivative in the sense that they are parodies of other works and myths. Nevertheless, drawing on the past is really a classical or traditional tendency. To show one's gratitude to past authors is through allusions, reworked lines, and echoes. The ultimate goal is the assimilation of the past into the present. In The Spire the assimilation is total; Golding works as a historical novelist would, transmuting sources into narrative so that the reader is completely unaware of the research. The Spire is, among other things, a historical novel, Golding is drawing on early English history – the construction of the spire of the Salisbury Cathedral in the fourteenth century.

Growing up in Marlborough, reading about Egyptian legends, and the discoveries of tombs, cycling around Wiltshire and visiting Stonehenge, Old Sarum, and various forts and burial mounds, Golding's imagination was always archaeological. Constructions propel Golding's imagination almost as strongly as do excavations, and the cathedral at Salisbury is an important landmark in Golding's consciousness. In an interview, Golding, asked about what research he had done in preparation for writing The Spire, replied that he had not needed particular research, for "if you have lived for half a century or more in the south of England and you are naturally curious about a great many things, one of the things you are curious about is churches" (1). He goes on to demonstrate more than ordinary curiosity, talking of the distribution of constructive forces like an engineer and the suggestions of design like a historically sensitive architect. He has firm historical opinions as well, as in claiming that "the medieval builders combined technical knowledge with high imagination to create something like the spire of Salisbury Cathedral. The polarity between the rational and the imaginative or mysterious is always visible in all Golding's work. And the polarity leads, in Golding's perspective, to the constant "dissociation of thought and feeling" (2).

Golding has spent most of his life in and around Salisbury, the site of the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose great spire is visible from every point in the city. Ten miles to the north is Stonehenge, sown with relics of the past including a temple dating from around 1800 B.C; thirty-five miles away is Avebury and a much larger ancient sanctuary. Wiltshire and the district around Salisbury, an area Golding knows intimately and loves passionately, “illustrate the coalescence of paganism and Christianity, but not the absorption of the former by the latter” (3).

In an essay Golding retells the legend of the cathedral:

Round about the year 1200, Bishop Poore was standing on a hill overlooking the confluence of the local rivers, according to legend, when the mother of Jesus appeared to him, told him to shoot an arrow and build her a church where the arrow fell. The arrow flew more than a mile and fell in the middle of a swamp. There, with complete indifference to such things as health, foundations, access and general practicability, the cathedral was built. Eighty years later the builders erected the highest spire in the country on top of it, thousands of tons of lead and iron and wood and stone. Yet the whole building still stands. It totters. It bends. But it still stands.....a perpetual delight, a perpetual wonder. (4)

Just as Bishop Poore’s instructions came from an apparition, Jocelin’s, the dean of the cathedral, inspiration comes from a vision. Furthermore, both Richard Fairleigh, the actual architect of the Salisbury spire, and Roger Mason, the master builder of the novel, went ahead with the construction even though they doubted the foundations would hold. Even as recently as 1899, a well known Victorian architect regarded the original builders of the cathedral as wantonly careless and thought adding the spire a ‘foolhardy enterprise’ (5). It is evident that the spire in Golding’s novel is the Salisbury

spire, however, the events leading to its construction are Golding's. Here, as F. Dick Bernard states, "his imagination comes into play" (6).

The Spire was a fictional representation of the spire of the cathedral at Salisbury. This edifice was one of the great construction feats of the Middle Ages. Golding's novel has moved the architectural jewel of his home city out of the guidebooks and into literature. Salisbury has the highest spire of all the English cathedrals (404 feet against the 400 feet of Golding's spire) and its height is an essential element of the theme of the book. The real spire was also added, as it is in the story, a hundred years after the cathedral itself and does not appear to have been part of the original plan. The cathedral itself was built on nothing more substantial than a spongy bog. Even the names of the two protagonists, Jocelin and Roger are taken from two former bishops of the older foundation, whose bodies lie entombed under the same arch in the present cathedral. So, as Clive Pemberton observed, "in many ways the novel has its basis in reality" (7).

The novel concerns Jocelin's attempt to construct the four-hundred-foot spire with the help of his master builder, Roger Mason- an impossible task, since the church's foundations rest on a marsh and its pillars are made of rubble. Dean Jocelin is the human force behind the building of the spire. He reflects the theme. The idea of building the spire comes to him in a vision, so he believes he has been chosen to do God's work. He is convinced that the building of the spire is an act of faith, "a diagram of the highest prayer of all". He forces the building of the spire despite the fact that this act destroys himself and the four "pillars" of the church, representing the other main characters of the novel and the most important people in Jocelin's life. Jocelin's own moral blindness makes the project as much a mockery of misplaced egotism and it is the honour to God that Jocelin professes it to be. There are times when Jocelin speaks with the confidence of one who realizes his position in the divine scheme of things. In his speech to Roger Mason, he is quite specific about the role he is playing in the execution of the divine will:

My son. When such a role is ordained, it is put into the mind
of a, of a man. That's a terrible thing. I'm only learning now,

how terrible it is. It's a refiner's fire.....You and I were chosen to do this thing together. It's a great glory. I see now it'll destroy us of course. What are we, after all? Only I tell you this, Roger, with the whole strength of my soul. The thing can be built and will be built. (8)

And again:

D'you think you can escape? You're not in my net.....It's His. We can neither of us avoid this work. (9)

But soon, religious fervour is replaced by pride and will as Jocelin exploits all those around him to achieve his aims. But, in the end of the novel, he is forced to see the evil in himself. He pays no heed and proceeds with a plan that brings death, madness, but ultimately triumph: as Jocelin lies dying, the spire still stands. As his vision becomes an obsession, he changes from a priest to a visionary. He turns the cathedral into a home for fornicators, and sodomites, condones adultery, tolerates murder and is indirectly responsible for the deaths of two people and another's madness. He neglects his pastoral duties and the sacraments altogether. He loses his relationship with God. To the other clergymen of the cathedral he seems to have gone mad in his obsession, to have reduced himself to a buffoon. Then, he abandons hope in God. He is appalled by the vision of his own sinfulness. Father Adam encourages the dying man to re-affirm his belief that he might receive the sacrament and be saved, but Jocelin's reaction is ambiguous:

Father Adam, leaning down, could hear nothing. But he saw a Tremor of the lips that might be interpreted as a cry of: God! God! God! So of the charity to which he had access, he laid the Host on the dead man's tongue. (10)

L. L. Dickson indicates that “Jocelin’s name recalls both the associations with medieval church life (two thirteenth-century churchmen) and also the ironies connected with the Latin ‘jocus’. Jocelin literally means ‘joke’, ‘trifle’” (11). In addition, Golding has stated that he wanted the name to be something more than merely “medieval-sounding”, so he selected the name of one of his contemporary acquaintances, thus combining both past and present in one name.

It was not only medieval, there are still people called Jocelin.
I know at least one person called Jocelin. I wanted something
which would fit. (12)

Jocelin is both ignorant and obtuse. The dumb stonecutter carves the gargoye of Jocelin with ‘wide, blind eyes’, an image of innocent naivety and impercipient.

For a long time then, they were both still and silent, while
Jocelin looked at the gaunt, lifted cheekbones, the open
mouth, the nostrils strained wide as if they were giving lift to
the beak, like a pair of wings, the wide, blind eyes.(13)

Jocelin nods;

It is true. At the moment of vision, the eyes see nothing. (14)

That, for Golding, is the most dangerous blindness of all. Jocelin’s innocence is that of a wide-eyed child, of a big baby, who cannot see his own pride and who cannot lie to himself about his motive in wishing to see daily his ‘daughter in God’, Goody Pangall. But the building of the spire will educate Jocelin about himself, will help the great child grow up. So the action of the novel is precisely to bring home to Jocelin, by a series of sharply focused visual perceptions, how blind he has been to physical reality, to people, to relationships, to himself, to the nature of things, until at the very last moment of his life he can bring the two windows of his eyes together and focus that extraordinary mysterious thing, the spire, in a moment of wonder and terror fused with

Innocence and faith are not in themselves enough to build the spire. Jocelin needs the experience of the master builder Roger Mason, the other important character in the book, to achieve his ambition. Jocelin has his head in the clouds from the outset and finds himself at ease in the airy world of the ascending spire. Roger, by contrast, is a man of earth, practically minded, physically powerful, but with a most unfortunate fear of heights. He is a powerful and sceptical man who doubts what he is doing. He is connected to Jocelin and is part of the same human nature like the other characters in the novel. He is the representative of reason which opposes Jocelin's spiritual impetus. Jocelin contrasts himself with Roger Mason as a raven to a mayfly. David Skilton interprets this in the following way: "The raven knows that the sun will rise tomorrow, but the mayfly can know nothing of tomorrow, as it only lives for one day. It can see only means, not ends" (15).

He calculates that the foundations are not adequate for the spire but is overruled and overrun by Jocelin, since Jocelin's obsessive vision of the spire dominates the novel. Often the project seems impossible. At one of the many points in the novel at which he is anxious to abandon entirely or compromise the height of the spire, Roger explains to Jocelin:

We have nothing but a skin of glass and stone stretched between four stone rods, one at each corner. D'you understand that? The stone is no stronger than the glass between the verticals because every inch of the way I have to save weight or weight for strength, guessing how much, how far, how little, how near, until my very heart stops when I think of it. Look down, Father. Don't look at me – look down! See how the columns at each corner are tacked

together but still I can't make them stronger than stone. Stone snaps, crumbles, tears. Yet even now, when the pillars sing, perhaps this much may stand. I can give you a roof over it, and perhaps a weather vane that men will see for miles. (16)

Roger accepts the job partly because of Jocelin's insistence, partly because his workmen need employment and partly because of the attractions of Goody. Roger has the slang meaning 'to copulate with', indicating his troublesome sexual energy, another aspect of his earthiness and creativity. His affair with the attractive, red-haired Goody Pangall, encouraged by Jocelin, keeps him at work. Jocelin has long desired Goody sexually and has kept her near him by having arranged for her marriage to Pangall, the impotent caretaker who limps. Childless and full of contempt for her husband, Goody eagerly welcomes Roger who was also childless. Jocelin, watching from the outside, is part of the sexual drama. He allows the house of God to become an unruly house, that he himself becomes a pimp for the sake of the spire. Jocelin, who should look after Roger's soul with pastoral care, is prepared to use Roger as 'his tool' to get what he wants. Although Jocelin and Roger are in many ways mighty opposites, they are both engaged in colossal folly. The building of the spire is Jocelin's folly. Roger is reluctant to be involved in the folly of building too high but he is dragged down into the folly of another kind, folly in the occasional sense of sexual misbehaviour. He is entangled in the folly of adultery with Goody Pangall. The spire is thrust upward by faith and craft, but also by sexual energy. The spire is an image of Jocelin's desire for Goody.

Rachel is Roger's wife. They are closely linked together and their names begin with the same letter.

Not only were they inseparable, but alike in appearance; more like brother and sister than man and wife, dark, sturdy, red-lipped. They were islanded, and their life was a pattern of its own. (17)

Rachel, like her biblical namesake, is the good but barren wife (the Old Testament Rachel, Jacob's second wife, mother of Joseph and Benjamin, is barren for

seven years) who represents blind faith. She discovers her husband's infidelity with Goody. Her screams and fury at Goody, who is pregnant by Roger, help bring on Goody's miscarriage and death. She becomes another kind of scapegoat. All Jocelin's complicity and his encouragement, his ineffectual attempts to help ensure that he shares the guilt for all the disaster his project has brought to the surface.

In the manner of a Hawthorne story, other character names suggest the more abstract dimensions of the narrative. Pangall, the caretaker of the cathedral, endures a life of 'pain', as each day he is bitterly humiliated by the construction workers, who joke about his masculinity.

The book is discussed from a Christian perspective. But the novel's religious vision is wider than that. When Christ took the sins of the world upon himself and allowed himself to be killed to expiate them, to give new life to a sick world, he fulfilled a role that is found in pagan communities and beliefs. Jocelin later discovers that the masons are practisers of pagan rituals. The first signs of their lingering paganism are seen in their superstitious mistreatment of the unfortunate and misshapen Pangall. Finally, he dies in a riot caused by a group of dissatisfied workers who make him a scapegoat for their troubles. Pangall as a scapegoat and that he is an outcast is stressed right from the beginning:

Pangall shook his head with such solemnity and certainty, that Jocelin fell silent, looking down, mouth open. Pangall grounded the handle of his broom, and stood with his weight on it. He looked round the pavement, then up at the dean's face.

'One day they will kill me.'

For a while they were both silent, among the singing that the echo made of the work noises. The dust danced in the sun between them. All at once Jocelin remembered his joy. He dropped both his hands on the man's leather shoulders and gripped tight.

'They shan't kill you . No one shall kill you.'

‘Then they will drive me out.’ (18)

Not only does Jocelin do anything to prevent Pangall’s murder, he himself makes fun of him and participates in his death. The way in which he exhorts him to be patient is insincere enough:

.....In God’s good time you will have sons – Pangall’s sneer disappeared.

The house they will have to guard and cherish will be far more glorious than this one. Think, man. In the middle of this will stand upand passionately he held out the spire – and they will tell their children in their turn: ‘this thing was done in the days of our father.’ Pangall crouched.....

For a moment he stood like that, staring at the spire held out to him so enthusiastically. Then he looked up under his eyebrows.

‘Do you make a fool of me too?’(19)

But scapegoats are commonly associated with the idea of divinity: both Pangall’s name and many of his physical characteristics (e.g his deformity and impotency) reflect details concerning those gods who figure as scapegoats in vegetation myths. The spire is built not merely on Christian faith but on pagan human sacrifice. Jocelin offers himself, but Pangall is the first victim. His very name suggests the role, the bearer of all the cares and sorrows of the world. He is the church’s caretaker and the scapegoat as Don Crompton suggests:

Scapegoat he certainly is, and even his deformity.....is one of the common characteristics of the tainted wether of the flock who must bear the sins of the many that all may live.
(20)

There is, for instance, a strong hint of the Roman god Vulcan who was deformed and lame. But the main myth connected with Pangall is that of the Norse god, Balder. If

Pangall is to be seen as Balder, it is equally relevant to see Jocelin as Loki, the mischief-maker, who brings about Balder's death.

Goody is Pangall's wife and the secret love affair carried on by her, affords an ironic comment on her name. She's reminiscent of 'Faith', the name for the wife in Hawthorne's Young Goodman Brown. Goody, whom Jocelin has prostituted to Roger Mason in an attempt to keep him working on the spire, dies as she gives birth to Mason's child.

Another important character is Father Adams. His name connotes an archetypal universality appropriate to Jocelin's final dying vision. Looking into Father Adam's face, Jocelin sees the frailty and corruption of all humanity- the vision of the fallen Adam that so dominates Golding's fiction:

Then his mind trotted away again and he saw what an extraordinary creature Father Adam was, covered in parchment from head to foot, parchment stretched or tucked in, with curious hairs on top and a mad structure of bones to keep it apart. Immediately, as in a dream that came between him and the face, he saw all people naked, creatures of light brown parchment, which bound in their pipes or struts. He saw them pace or prance in sheets' of woven stuff, with the skins of death animals under their feet and he began to struggle and gasp to leave this vision behind him in words that never reached the air.

How proud their hope of hell is. There is no innocent work. (21)

'There is no innocent work,' Golding insists in the novel. Though dedicated to God the work is associated with guilt and sin. The story of Adam and Eve, the story of Original Sin, is one of a fall from innocence into experience. So too is that of Dean Jocelin. The end of innocence is associated with original sin. Sin is present in the world because mankind has rebelled against God. The story of Adam and Eve depicts the

dramatic fall of men and women from the high place they had as friends of God. The couple listened to the serpent and as a result of this disobedience they were banished from God's presence. They were told life would be hard work. They would know sorrow, and life would end in death. Although we still know and search for God, we have an inbuilt bias towards sin.



PART IV

THEMATIC AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SPIRE

The word 'sin' is a key word in many of Golding's novels. In The Spire we also see that the book develops mostly in the light of this myth and Golding makes use of symbols, metaphors, references, images and motives to give his readers a more impressive reading. The density of imagery, recurring motifs, and symbolism both psychological and theological blend into marvellous rhythms of ecstasy and horror. The interweaving of inner monologue, dialogue and narrative dissolves the traditional tight bounds of time and space of the novel form to create intensity. This means the language of The Spire is the most poetic that Golding has attempted.

Golding's most distinctive technique in this novel is linking symbols to develop his themes. The book is entirely dominated by one immense symbol, 'the spire' itself, from which all the book's formal properties derive. Throughout the novel the spire represents the idealism or vision that enables man to do what seemingly cannot be done. It stands despite inadequate foundations and lifts men's hearts and minds. Golding's obsessive vision of the spire dominates the novel. In this novel Golding's symbolism is explicit throughout. The model of the spire thrust itself out of the cathedral as an image of a phallus. It is observed by Nicola C. Dicken-Fuller, in William Golding's Use of Symbolism, that "the spire was viewed by Jocelin as the symbol of spiritual rebirth for the cathedral. However, Golding exploits it as a symbol of obsessive lust" (1). Jocelin's last vision of the spire, for instance, is a sexual one, combining both masculine and feminine images. He imagines that the spire is 'an upward waterfall' thrusting into the sky; yet he also says it is 'as slim as a girl' (2). Jocelin's mixed feelings of sacred love and physical lust are combined in the shape of the spire.

As Nicola C. Dicken claims in the same study, The spire is not only a symbol of the quest for Heaven, encouraging people to lift their eyes to greater heights, but also the opposite. "The higher the spire was built, the closer to Hell Jocelin came" (3). The pit had to be dug below the crossways to the same depth as the spire has height. The pit revealed the reality of the building's foundations: brushwood and rubble. The discovery

that the church itself is constructed upon swamp land emphasises the parallel between the physical foundations tottering in the black, watery mire and the church father's, namely Jocelin's, own spiritual hypocrisy. The vibrating pillars foreshadow the destructive results of Jocelin's obsession. The exterior circumstances of the rumbling stones reflect the fearful inner turmoil of both the townspeople and Jocelin himself. The atmosphere is highly charged with dread and anticipation:

Late in December the stones began to sing again. They did not sing all the time; and in the Lady Chapel there were whole weeks together when the choir could sing unhindered....Then the needles would become audible, so that breath let itself out in long expiration, to be replaced by exasperation and fear. (4)

Though Jocelin tells his followers "It will pass", his words are hollow and unconvincing. The rumbling earth continues to shake both the spire and Jocelin's faith in himself. "As winter moved towards spring....the stones sang more frequently" (5). The entire weight of the cathedral already floated on insecure foundations of mud, leading Golding to introduce the idea of a ship as a symbol for the cathedral. Despite Jocelin's faith, it did not seem possible that the spire could be built, and yet it was. From the pit rose the stench of death, as old burial places were discovered, symbolising Hell, rather than the peaceful rest of eternity. Golding hinted at this cost in his opening paragraph, when he described the light in the stained glass window illuminating Abraham, willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac. The symbol of sacrifice gradually grows into a main theme of the novel; a workman fell from the scaffolding and even Pangall, before his death, was aware of the symbolic cost of the spire. He had confided in Jocelin that he had seen the workmen kill a man. He was afraid that he too might become a victim.

Goody lost her life. Symbolically, this too was sacrificed to the spire. Jocelin knew that she was having an affair with Roger and had overheard their having intercourse. Yet, to ensure that Roger continued to work on the spire, Jocelin had had to

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worried about the impossible weight that he was constructing for the pillars to support and so turned to drink, becoming incapable of carrying out his work. After Jocelin's visit, he attempted to hang himself, but miscalculated the breaking strain of the beam, and so failed to kill himself, becoming a helpless imbecile.

Jocelin was the ultimate symbol of sacrifice to the spire. His vision, the angel that warmed his back, was really tuberculosis of the spine, bending him over, as if he bore the entire weight of the cathedral spire upon his back. However, it was not enough that he had sacrificed his back to the spire, even more suffering and humiliation was demanded. When he left Roger's room, he was pursued by the mob—was a victim of the symbolic hunt, like Pangall.

Symbolically, just as the foundations of the cathedral had to be examined before the spire could be built, so Jocelin had to come to know himself as he really was. He had to examine his own symbolic foundations, before he could glimpse the glory that the spire could bring. The pit of death and decay, found in the foundations of the cathedral, symbolised the haunted crypt of Jocelin's mind, the dark side of his cathedral, which he dared not admit existed, even to himself. In a moment of dramatic irony, before Jocelin fully comprehends the awful significance of his actions, his naive remarks imply an unfolding moral allegory:

I never guessed in my folly that there would be a new lesson
at every level. (7)

Jocelin's inner revelations about himself and those around him contribute to the pattern of spiritual pilgrimage. The first two chapters of the novel present a Jocelin extremely confident of his mission while they also contain several indications of his

frailties. About the world of the church he feels almost divinely omniscient, chuckling over how well he knows the people in it, 'what they are doing and will do.....what they have done' (8), although he cautions himself rather coyly to 'remember that the spire isn't everything' (9) and a little later proclaims his humility, 'Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast kept me humble' (10). In fact, he allies himself with the divine: he overhears one deacon remarking to another, 'He thinks he is a saint! A man like that!' (11), though Jocelin does not realise that the men are speaking of him; he imagines that a head of him being sculptured by the dumb man, which seems intended to capture his physical likeness, represents it as 'an angel,' if not the 'Holly Spirit' (12); he even identifies himself with God when addressing Roger Mason:

I shall thrust you upward by my will. It's God's will in this business. (13)

His certainty of being chosen to oversee the construction of the spire begins immediately to affect his personal relationships. When Pangall weeps in telling how the builders mock his impotence, Jocelin ignores him. Father Adam he depersonalises into a man with 'no face' whom he calls "Father Anonymous" (14). He dismisses a letter from Alison, who hopes to arrange for her burial in the church, because he has already gotten money from her for the spire; despite a surge of friendliness toward Father Anselm, who has quarrelled with him about the spire, the Dean exerts his authority in requiring the Sacrist to stand watch over the workmen at the crossways, though after a while – when he learnt that a Holy Nail is sent from Rome – Jocelin offers Anselm a 'release.....from this duty' (15).

In the chapters that follow, the facts and feelings which infringe on Jocelin's consciousness multiply and become more defined, so he must struggle harder to withstand them as he pushes on with the work. The builders, for instance, he continues to transform from persons into 'his instruments, these people he had to use, seemed little more than apes' (16). But he is startled to discover that Pangall's wife and Roger Mason are attracted to each other, caught up in some sort of tent that shut them off from all other people. A thought bursts into his mind that the presence of Goody will keep Roger on the job. The thought is so allaying because it assures Jocelin that the work will

go on, but so terrible because it places Goody within a sexual orbit, albeit Roger's. That night Satan visits Jocelin for the first time and tortures him. 'Satan was permitted to torment him during the night by a meaningless and hopeless dream' in which Jocelin lies 'crucified' :

It seemed to Jocelin that he lay on his back in his bed; and then he was lying on his back in the marshes, crucified, and his arms were the transepts with Pangall's kingdom nestled by his left side. (17)

Goody is disguised as

Satan himself, rising out of the west, clad in nothing but blazing hair.....tormenting him so that he writhed on the marsh in the warm water, and cried aloud. (18)

He tries to evade the dream by becoming very busy and by telling himself ' I am about my Father's business.' (19)

He faced the harsh reality that he had known that Pangall was impotent when he had arranged that Goody should marry him. When Goody died, he was haunted by her red hair, symbolising the blood that she had lost in child-birth. A priest must be celibate, so these erotic images of her were very dark troubles to his mind. He admitted to himself that he had used and sacrificed Goody to keep Roger at work. He learned that in the grim recesses of his mind, he had condemned Rachel for telling him that she and Roger were always unsuccessful in their love-making. The confrontations with the angels of good and evil, Lady Alison, Father Anselm, and Roger Mason finally reveal to Jocelin his self-deception and moral blindness. As his obsession with the spire grows stronger, he is unable to distinguish between the good or the evil angel. The warmth he feels at the back of his spine and that he first identifies with the good angel becomes a painful, hellish fire- the spreading tuberculosis that eventually kills him. Angel and devil visit him regularly. His troubled mind is the battlefield on which angel and devil

fight for supremacy. He eventually cannot discriminate between devil, townspeople, himself, or even the red-haired Goody. His sense of persecution intensifies:

The devils still had possession of the nave though the spire
was safe from them. But he was not safe from them himself.
His angel left him, and the sweetness of his devil was laid on
him like a hot hand. (20)

Jocelin has assumed that he was chosen for his holy occupation by God. Such a belief makes it easier for Jocelin to rationalise his exploitation of others: all who work on the spire are the instruments He learns the truth about his being made Dean. Lady Alison, his aunt, tells him the truth. She merely used her sexual charms to secure a favour from the king. Jocelin is perplexed by the knowledge that his appointment as dean has been determined by the random whimsies of his aunt, and by the haunting realisation that his own repressed sexual longings for Goody have been the unacknowledged motivation for his behaviour. Aunt Alison is behind the building of the spire which would never have been possible without her money. Though dedicated to God the work is associated with guilt and sin. Roger Mason is a pagan and seduces Goody but nobody else could build the spire; Aunt Alison is a whore but nobody else would pay for it. The change that transformed Jocelin while the spire was being built, is symbolised by his physical appearance. His physical decay symbolises his moral decay.

Opposing the spire is what Golding terms 'the cellarage', a pit dug at the center of the nave. It represents the evil that was also necessary to build the spire and will be discussed. 'The apple tree' with its associations with The Fall, is an apt symbol for the nature of man. Linking these three symbols, particularly at Jocelin's moment of self-awareness, Golding reiterates the theme of the simultaneous existence of opposites in man.

The construction of the spire is often treated in detail. Golding is elaborately detailed in describing all the feats of engineering involved, the construction and placement of beams and cross-beams, the carving and heavy placement of stone, and the

various means designed to shore foundations and forestall the creeping of the earth underneath. But the men who build it are dim shadows, performing dim actions in undefined space for this is the realm of allegory. There is little mention of the passage of days and nights. There is a timeless world of allegory. Time is not reckoned with precision because Jocelin measures it only in terms of progress or delay in construction of the spire. (21) On those occasions when Jocelin meditates about the progress of his cathedral spire, all time stops.

He passed in this frozen through a point of no time and no sight. (22)

The sequence of mental events, through which he comes to understand his own destructive nature, does not follow any set chronology. In this timeless setting, Jocelin's actions take on allegorical significance. As he comes nearer to completing the construction of the spire, he ironically comes closer to the demoralizing truth about himself. Jocelin is shaped by the spire as surely as he shapes it. This perfect fusion between the inner and the outer world is what gives the novel its immense solidity. The building of the spire becomes different at every level, and presents new problems both physically and metaphysically.

The Spire is inwardly focused. Concentration is centred on the creation of a self, of Jocelin. The structure of the book is straightforward, being a chronologically linear narrative. Jocelin and the spire are in the same process of construction; indeed he realises that 'there was a kind of necessary marriage; Jocelin and the spire'. The vertical spire becomes a four-hundred-feet pronoun, and with its completion Jocelin is also completed as an individual. Jocelin and the spire are one. Jocelin's concern is centred on his will which he sees in omniscient terms: 'I shall thrust you upward by my will. It's God's will in this business.' What his will is doing is defining and supporting his self. The spire has its source in his vision and its foundations in his will.

In The Spire the narrative is presented from the first and third persons. We are given the inner voice of Jocelin:

I do Thy work; and Thou hast sent Thy messenger to comfort
me.(23)

This is integrated with the third-person narrative. However, the objectivity this external view allows is strictly circumscribed, since it is also written from Jocelin's point of view:

He was struck by a gust of laughter, but not for him. The noises were as confused as the lights that swirled in his head. The place was a mass of brown tunics, leather jerkins, blue tunics, clothbound legs, wallets of leather, beards and teeth.
(24)

The reader participates in the creation of the spire – of a pronoun. As the spire rises, foot by foot, pushed up by Jocelin's will, so the novel moves forward page by page. And we, the readers, are made to experience the making of the spire as stone is laid on stone and paragraph follows paragraph.

There are times when Jocelin behaves like a myth-haunted figure, able to see the world only through the gauze of the collective unconscious. Then the action grows ambiguous, and the narrative halting; yet Golding never loses control. The Spire is a perfect example of a third-person narrator – agent novel; that is, a third – person novel whose central character exerts such an influence on the action that he or she seems to be telling the story.

Although open to a vast range of metaphorical treatment, the spire is obviously a phallic symbol, a reflection of Jocelin's sexual preoccupations. From the top of the tower he sees the landscape in physical terms:

Soft and warm and smooth as a young body. (25)

Since Jocelin's vocation precludes his marrying, he finds an outlet in the spire "so that now there was a kind of necessary marriage: Jocelin and the spire." But the spire is only a means of diverting his sexual energy for something or someone else, namely, Goody, who continually excites him. Her red hair activates his satanic side – red being the satanic colour. Although Jocelin is Goody's confessor and would like to consider her his daughter in God, the pull of the flesh is too strong. She becomes a symbol for the Devil in Jocelin's dream about her. He had never liked Goody's personality, which explains why he saw her as faceless. He was only interested in her body. Knowing Pangall's impotence, he had used it for unadmitted reasons, to keep her from belonging sexually to anyone else. He never cared for the girl's personality, hence the facelessness. He wanted just her body. He created the bogus marriage, which led to the adultery, which led to her death.

Golding, the consummate ironist, does not leave it at that. Goody shares Jocelin's frustration; just as Jocelin's vows prevent him from consummating his love for her, Pangall's impotence prevents the consummation of their marriage. When Goody finds herself in the presence of a virile male like Roger, Jocelin, unable to possess Goody himself, begins to envision her and Roger as a couple, separated from the rest of the cathedral by wood and canvas. What Jocelin cannot have with Goody, Roger can – and with Jocelin's blessing. Jocelin knows the practical function she will serve.

She will keep him here. (26)

As Jocelin's marriage to the spire becomes indissoluble, he changes markedly. First he is transfigured with joy, God the Father exploding in his face. But the euphoria does not last. Although he insists "the spire isn't everything" it becomes clear that it is. The vision swells into an obsession, altering everything that comes within its orbit. For construction to take place, religious services are suspended, and the high altar is barricaded. When Pangall tells Jocelin there has been a murder, Jocelin's dispassionate reply is 'I know'; when Pangall complains of being mistreated, Jocelin's answer is "You're too thin-skinned man." Jocelin is quite capable of averting his gaze, even to the point of ignoring the workers' paganism, which Christianity has been unable to change.

He is so obsessed with his vision that he refuses to heed the warnings of nature. He ignores a series of prodigies – the inexplicable crying of children, the eerie singing of the cathedral pillars, a plague rumour, an earth tremor, and a raven that flies past him. The final proof that the spire has become a personal undertaking occurs when Jocelin affixes his own seal to a document approving additional costs.

The complexity of Jocelin's motives is neatly emphasized by the fact that 'God' for whom Jocelin thinks builds, exists in 'Goody', whom Jocelin sexually desires and of the desire for whom the spire is a projection. Sexual love and the love of God are mixed.

Jocelin's symbolic journey toward self-knowledge is the central subject of the novel. Jocelin, like every person, can come to self-awareness only by acknowledging both good and evil impulses within. Jocelin is blind to his true self as the spire is rising. But through a series of confrontations with characters he has exploited, or ironically being exploited by, he learns about himself and, by extension, others. His obsessive vision of the rising spire results in physical calamities for his associates and spiritual blindness for himself; consequently, as Dickson states, 'Jocelin's gradual awareness of his tragic condition is presented through a complex moral allegory.' (27)

The Spire works very much like a Greek tragedy in the sense that the tension or polarity determines the structure. Like that of the Greek tragedians, it achieves an artistic balance between opposites. In Golding the opposites not only include the primitive and the modern but also the pagan and the Christian. Even the workmen reflect that tension; they commit murder within the cathedral whose spire they are erecting. Christianity has failed to satisfy their darker needs; hence they still celebrate Midsummer's Eve and offer a human sacrifice to the gods of the foundations. The central conflict – Jocelin's supposedly noble vision to glorify the cathedral despite the dark forces within him that seek expression in the erection of the spire – is the axis on which the narrative rotates. The construction will involve glory, suffering and sacrifice. So, as James R. Baker states "Golding is very close to the Greek playwrights who

worked with myths reflecting a barbarous past; myths of blood guilt, cannibalism, infanticide, matricide” (28).

The Spire is tragic in that it describes the fall into disgrace and destruction of Jocelin and Roger, a true medieval tragedy. At the outset Jocelin is an overgrown baby, childish in his innocence and ignorance of the world and himself. His experiences in the course of building the spire force him to grow up. He is a mass of pride and obstinacy with a belief that he has been divinely appointed to build a spire for his cathedral. As it mounts higher the spire becomes the outward semblance of Jocelin’s soaring pride. Soaring imagery is explicitly invoked in Jocelin’s resemblance to an eagle, the bird of pride. As the spire nears completion, Jocelin more and more compulsively climbs to its top where one day he spots his reflection in a metal sheet. More than ever the nose is “like a beak and now nearly as sharp .” As the spire rises in tandem with his vision, Jocelin’s already strong identification with the eagle of pride grows even stronger.

During the early stages of construction he imagines himself a surgeon taking a knife to the stomach of his church. So absolutely does Jocelin identify with the cathedral that its body becomes his own. He compares the old model of the cathedral with its newly affixed spire – his diagram of prayer –to a man lying on his back. From the beginning of the novel Jocelin observes the model of the spire standing in front of the cathedral’s crossways:

The model was like a man lying on his back. The nave was his legs placed together, the transepts on either side were his arms outspread. The choir was his body; and the Lady Chapel where now the services would be held, was his head. And now also, springing, projecting, bursting, erupting from the heart of the building, there was its own crown and majesty, the new spire. (29)

This description prefigures what will become in the novel the close identification between Jocelin's body and the building of the spire. He dreams that his body is the church. Finally, while dying, Jocelin perceives his own body, his protruding ribs, as the stone walls and vaulting of the church.

Other people are similarly regarded as extensions of himself rather than as valuable in themselves. Tools to be manipulated in a self-aggrandising project. With his every success in reducing people to bit players in his master plot, Jocelin opens a breach between himself and his fellowmen. He will brook no opposition, either by man or by nature, and the result is that he causes havoc wherever he goes. The spire gets built-but at what cost? This is the question that would seem to be passed by the novel.

Though he thinks himself a saint, one of God's chosen ones, is guilty of pride, that first and deadliest of sins. He is riding for a fall. He imagines himself a saint visited periodically by a guardian angel whose warm breath on his back is a palpable sign of God's grace. He casts the angel as God's messenger sent to comfort him.

All these years I have gone on, put the place on me like a
coat. (30)

reflects Jocelin cosily and complacently, but there is sinful pride and vanity in his regarding the cathedral as an embellishment to himself. As he goes ostentatiously to prayer, he compares himself, addressing the dumb man who is carving his image for a gargoyle, to one of the four central pier, the pillars of the temple, that hold the whole cathedral up. Jocelin's enthusiasm for the heaven-reaching spire may therefore be attributable to a desire, of which he is himself perhaps scarcely aware, to glorify himself as well as God. The scheme is reminiscent of the Tower of Babel in Genesis, that monument to the folly of human pride. Intended to pierce the sky at a height previously unimagined, the spire recalls the biblical Tower of Babel whose builders aspired to scale the heights of heaven. After the flood when people still spoke one language they planned to build a city on the plain of Shinar and a tower that would reach to heaven.

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name.(31)

God saw their pride and brought the work to a standstill by confusing their language so that they could not understand one another.

And there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. (32)

The association with Babel is reinforced by the varied languages of the masons, who have come from far for the work. On his first visit to the vertiginous world of the spire's growing top Jocelin says:

I would like the spire to be a thousand feet high, he thought, and then I should be able to able to oversee the whole country. (33)

Even Jocelin is surprised by the self-aggrandising ambition in this. He wondered at himself whose spire it would be. His ambition endangers many lives, but Jocelin is sure that God will provide and protect. This may be admirable faith, but Jocelin among the pinnacles of the tower also calls to mind the temptation of Christ by Satan at the pinnacle of the temple.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple. (34)

But there Christ refused to put God to the test. Jesus said unto him:

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (35)

Christ refuses to put his Father to the test by throwing himself down and rebukes Satan:

Thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God. (36)

Jocelin's mad confidence in God puts God to the test. It is arguable that Jocelin's pride grows with the spire into the sin of presumption, the arrogant assumption or certainty of God's grace and favour. He dares to cast himself as Christ. His identification with Christ is sinful. Jocelin's struggles are compared, for purposes of irony, to the position of Christ. In his dream, Jocelin imagines himself crucified, while the townspeople jeer at him. Again when he battles the raging winds that threaten to topple the spire, his struggles recall Christ's suffering. "A handful of something struck his face and left a stinging behind as if it had been nettles.....and raised a cruel welt on his thigh" (37). Jocelin even uses parables (pp. 111-12 & 117) to dignify his monomaniacal plans. He is the saint who cannot find forgiveness for himself, as his last meeting with Roger Mason reveals. As he leaves Mason's house, he is met with a 'sea of imprecation and hate' from the jeering townspeople. He has seen his angel ironically turn to devil; more evil than good has come from the construction of the spire.

Other deadly sins are also seen in Jocelin. There is anger in his argument with Anselm the Sacrist; there is envy of Roger's involvement with Goody Pangall; there is covetousness of Pangall's wife; there is lust for her. This last is at the bottom of much that is wrong with Jocelin. He fires an arrow of love, casting himself unknowingly in the role of Eros, sexual desire personified. Desire for Goody, desire for self-glorification, these cupidities are at the root of much evil in Jocelin.

Of the several tragedies sparked by the volatile combination of Jocelin's spiritual and phallic aspirations, Goody's is the most crucial to the overarching design of 'the spire'. Jocelin's repressed longing for Goody dehumanises her. A cardinal sin for Golding, the violation of the total personality by isolating its sexual component diminishes violated and violator alike. Jocelin is haunted by Goody's red hair, the erotic emblem to which he has reduced her. As nothing but a shock of red hair, Goody serves his sexual needs, just as Mason, as nothing but a trapped animal, serves his building needs. So completely does her blazing hair fill his thoughts, both waking and sleeping, then it becomes his primary mode of perception. At those times when he is most aware of her sexual nature, the red hair is omnipresent. Jocelin is so neurotically circumspect

about sex that whenever he feels the slightest physical urge, his unconscious takes over the narration, presenting the action metaphorically, and imagistically, as if it were loath to be direct. Immediately after discovering Goody with Roger Mason, Jocelin has a dream that night in which he is visited by Satan 'clad in nothing but blazing hair'. He imagines himself lying in a Christus pose on the marshes like the model of the cathedral. But instead of sun streaming through the windows, Satan appears naked with red hair, an amalgam of the devil and Goody. The sight causes him to writhe on the marsh in 'warm water'. James R. Baker explains this, in his Critical Essays on William Golding, as being "Jocelin's euphemism for semen".(38) The merger of Satan and Goody triggers ejaculation; and Jocelin awakens so full of self-loathing that he flagellates himself. After Goody exchanges glances with Mason during the workers' riot, Jocelin tries to 're-create the peaceful woman behind the hair'. But the hair cannot be put back again. As a result of finding Roger and Goody together in the spire,

.....the memories came storming in – a green girl running
in the close and slowing decorously for my Lord the Dean,
my Reverend Father,.....the arranged marriage with the
lame man, the wimpled hair, the tent..... (39)

The associations indicate that the Dean can still manage to consider his own relationship with Goody Pangall in the past as uncontaminated by an sexual attraction, but the mention of 'the arranged marriage' with the impotent Pangall betrays for the first time how Jocelin sought to preserve her for himself. Trying to recall the innocent Goody, Jocelin finds that the red hair has erased the past. No longer able to envision the whole woman, he finds himself looking at the red hair. In his final dream of Goody, he imagines the great club of the spire rising to meet a tangle of red hair blazing in the sky.

Although the masturbatory fantasy of Satan clothed in blazing hair conflates Jocelins repressed lust for Goody and the guilt it engenders, it is in her death scene that the red hair imagery is most fully orchestrated. Inside Pangall's cottage, Goody screams and goes on screaming as she grabbed her belly with both hands. At the same time Stilbury demands to accept the pregnant Goody and Jocelin has just arrived clutching the money that he will give Goody to go there. He brings money to Goody to ransom

her from disgrace, but in the panic and horror of this scene ‘there was blood over the money on the floor so that the world spun’ (40). and when Jocelin stumbles out of the cottage and into the choir to pray for Goody, ‘the hair and the blood blinded the eyes of his mind.’ This commingling of Goody’s hair and blood are the respective symbols of Jocelin’s sin. That her blood is on his hands is evoked in the grisly image of the bloodstained money, the very money he would use to send her away. Figuratively as well as literally, as indicated by Lawrence S. Friedman, “blood money is emblematic of Jocelin’s moral stain” (41).

Goody’s affective power lives on after her death. Haunted by her white body and irretrievable blood, Jocelin inches toward the humility he had all along professed in theory but denied in practice:

I’m not very intelligent (42)

When he has to answer for his actions before the dignitaries of the church, he recognises that his guilt has begun long before Pangall’s death, when he had married Goody to the impotent man in order to keep her near himself. The whole thing becomes clear in his mind:

She’s woven into it everywhere. She died and then she came alive in my mind. She’s there now. She haunts me. She wasn’t alive before, not in that way.....But it was all necessary, of course. Like the money. (43)

Unable to banish the dead Goody or to ignore the changes in Roger Mason who, symbolically enchained by his wife, has taken to drink and has come to resemble a trapped animal, Jocelin seeks refuge from his tutelary demons atop the spire. Increasingly, he identifies with the labourers, working alongside them on the spire to put the thoughts out of his head. Just as he had once overlooked murder and condoned adultery, Jocelin now ignores the workers’ paganism. That he has not fully comprehended the lesson of Goody’s death and Mason’s decline is evident in his conviction that the pagan workers are chosen just as he is chosen.

They are good men! I say so! (44)

Jocelin is forced by circumstance to confront the truth, this time when his 'crew of good men' joins 'the devil worshippers out on the hills' in a Midsummer Night ritual. Knowing now that the workers are devil worshippers, he is staggered by the realization that Pangall was ritually murdered. The shock of this recognition reminds Jocelin of the human cost of the spire. The hellfire and brimstone imagery of his Midsummer Night epiphany instills in Jocelin the same terror that overcome him when the rioting workers murdered Pangall. But if his men are sacrificers, so is he. Jocelin learns not only that the spire was financed chiefly by the tainted money of his aunt but that his deanship was produced by her sexual services to the former king. Then comes the dumb carver's ironic revelation that the apparently solid cathedral pillars Jocelin had trusted to support the spire consist of stone skin filled with rubble. Jocelin now suffers the terrible physical chastisement administered by the angel at his back. What Jocelin in his pride took for God's ministering angel is actually the spinal tuberculosis that will shortly kill him. Although the repeated attacks also signal his impending death, enough time remains for Jocelin to gain further insight.

The confrontation with Father Anselm reveals to Jocelin that for years his fellow churchman has hidden feelings of resentment. Though Anselm is correct in condemning the way Jocelin has willfully manipulated others at the expense of the church, his rebukes are motivated more by jealousy than by moral indignation. When astonished Jocelin asks Anselm what kind of priest he is, the answer is blunt: "You should know. The same sort as you, if you like. Minimal" (45). Jocelin is moved by his colleague's harshness, even though he recognises that pride and greed are parts of Anselm's motivation. (Anselm drives his income from the sale of candles for the church services, but Jocelin has canceled further ceremonies) The dean regrets being so blind to the feelings of those around him. When he asks Father Anselm's forgiveness, it is with a new awareness:

I beg you. No forgiveness for this or that, for this candle or that insult. Forgive me for being what I am. (46)

Jocelin asks his forgiveness twice. The first time Anselm replies, 'Of course', but there is "No smile under the eyes in the pink face" (47); the second time he is even colder: "Naturally I forgive you" (48) he says to Jocelin. Jocelin asks anxiously, "Do you feel it Anselm?" (49) Anselm does not answer.

Having failed to find forgiveness in a brother – priest, he turns to seek it from those who were not Christian folk. Bent almost double like an old man, Jocelin confronts the drunken degenerate that Roger Mason has become. Now Mason is a hopeless drunkard and potential suicide. In dragging his wasted body from his sickbed down to the village to ask Roger Mason's forgiveness, Jocelin finally breaks his habit of rejecting the human for the divine. During his final encounter with Mason, Jocelin acknowledges the wrongs he has committed against Pangall, against Goody and against Roger himself. The priest admits his guilt:

Imagine it. I thought I was doing a great work; and all I was doing was bringing ruin and breeding hate. (50)

All Roger can reply is 'You stinking corpse!' (51) He says:

You took my craft, you took my army, you took everything.
(52)

Jocelin also admits that he contributed to Pangall's death; he confesses his physical attraction to Goody, he reveals that he arranged Goody's marriage, knowing that Pangall was impotent; he even says that he has indirectly killed Goody. Finally, he admits that:

I'm a building with a vast cellarage where the rats live; and there is some kind of blight on my hands. I injured everyone I

touch, particularly those I love. Now I've come in pain and shame, to ask you to forgive me. (53)

In a burst of emotion, Roger does. The only person in the novel who extends forgiveness is Roger, the person with the most cause to hate Jocelin. Then, however, Jocelin probes deeper, and suddenly he seems to Roger a missionary of vengeance come to remind him of the terrors he has tried to escape in drink, and the punishment that awaits him. Questions about Goody, questions about the folly of the building, these can be contained. But not this:

What holds it up Roger? I? The Nail? Does she or do you? Or is it poor Pangall, crouched beneath the crossways, with a sliver of mistletoe between his ribs? (54)

At the first reading, this produces a sudden shock, for it is far from obvious how Jocelin has reached this point of understanding, because the readers mind has been occupied with many subjects throughout the book. A second reading, however, reveals that he has throughout been sorting his thoughts, and making more and more order out of the past.

Evil and terror banish forgiveness, and the two men destroy each other. Roger gets angry and tells Jocelin to get out. He hurls Jocelin sideways and shouts behind him: 'I hope they flay you!' (55). After Jocelin is thrown down the stairs his death agony begins, as he crawls in the gutter, mocked and reviled by the mob. If the mob is the townspeople, do they continue to hate and curse Jocelin for what he has done to the Cathedral? If the mob is the army of workers, do they hate him for what he has done to Roger, without whom they are nothing? It could be either or both. But the significance of the mob – scene is to be sought in another direction altogether. What Jocelin hears, above everything else, is laughter. He has become a re – embodiment of Pangall, re-enacting his death. On the other hand his words, 'there's still something you can do, Roger, my son', misunderstood as a demand for atonement, lead directly to Roger's abortive suicide and the helpless imbecility which follows. Jocelin seems to have failed utterly, first with Anselm, now with Roger. He can find no hope through others.

Begging their forgiveness, Jocelin achieves genuine humility. Though Roger does not give him the consolation of forgiveness, Jocelin's act of seeking compassion signals a significant change. Jocelin's story embodies the universal quest motif. He seeks to understand himself and his social environment. He shares the role of scapegoat figure with Pangall. After surviving a series of ordeals, he achieves insight into the human condition. As Weekes and Gregor states, Jocelin is not only 'the Snake struck by the flail beneath the Evil Tree,' but also 'Adam,' who, regretting his pride and selfishness, hopes to achieve forgiveness and regain God's grace' (56).

When the dying Jocelin learns of Mason's suicide attempt and that the once-dynamic builder is now blind and dumb (when Jocelin confesses his guilt in Goody's death, Roger thinks that the Dean is accusing him. He is so distressed at what he sees as spiritual authority blaming him that he tries to commit suicide), a burnt-out case beyond communication, this latest evidence of the human cost of the spire edges him toward despair. 'If I could go back,' thinks Jocelin, 'I would take God as lying between people and to be found there.' Because he cannot go back and undo the effects of seeking God in the wrong places, Jocelin can do little but reject the visionary mysticism that led him into error.

We learn of Jocelin's failings both through the direct evidence of his interaction with others and his thoughts and also by reading the book rather as a medieval might have read the symbolism of the form and images of a cathedral. Indeed, as Kinkead-Weekes and Gregor demonstrate, in the book's opening sentences we must interpret the significance of an image in the cathedral's glass. The meaning of the stained glass, that story of Abraham and Isaac and the cost of faith, passes Jocelin by. We must go back to the Bible to discover the image's relevance to Jocelin's story.

Abraham has been the foremost and tonmost friend of God The immense

faith even more. He told Abraham to sacrifice his son. Abraham was told to take Isaac to a distant mountain and sacrifice him there. With a heavy heart Abraham obeyed. Isaac was bound on the altar. The knife was raised ready to strike. Then God's angel called out:

Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. (57)

A ram, caught in a bush, was offered instead. God rewarded Abraham and promised that his descendants would be a great nation. God gave Isaac the same blessing he had given Abraham.

On the opening page of the novel, Jocelin rejoices in the sunlight shining through the stained glass picture of Abraham and Isaac:

He was laughing, chin up, and shaking his head. God the Father was exploding in his face with a glory of sunlight through painted glass, a glory that moved with his movements to consume and exalt Abraham and Isaac and then God again. The tears of laughter in his eyes made additional spokes and wheels and rainbows. (58)

He imagines that his own dedication to God (and to the building of the spire) is as pure and unquestioning as Abraham's. From the outset of the novel Dean Jocelin dominates the scene and our imaginations. But Jocelin does not hesitate to sacrifice anyone to the construction of his tower. Our response to him is however continuously ambivalent – is he a saint or a destructive monomaniac, self-deceived? The first four chapters suggest that any answer will be paradoxical.

The first chapter is ablaze with sunlight and exaltation; but we are presented with a visionary who sees nothing. As John Carey says:

The most visionary of Golding's heroes is the blindest of them all. Jocelin laughing with joy as the sun explodes in his face through the stained glass cannot see either Abraham or Isaac in the window. (59)

We encounter him laughing, crying with happiness as God the Father seems to explode in radiance through the stained glass; but his eyes are half-closed and the upthrust chin does not make for clear sight. The meaning of the stained glass, the story of Abraham and Isaac and the cost of faith, passes him by; and it does so because his glance is so fixedly upwards. He cannot focus on Pangall and the tear he sheds:

There was a sharp tap on the instep of Jocelin's shoe; and as he looked he saw a wet star there with arms to it and tiny globes of water that slid off the dubbin into the mud of the yard. Impatiently, he let out his breath and looked round for something to say. But the sunlight on stone drew his eye upward, to the empty air above the crossways and his irritation vanished in a return of excitement. (60)

'Joy', 'love', 'patience', 'forgiveness' – such words are constantly on Jocelin's lips; but of the realities which give the words meaning he remains tragically unaware. Pangall is an irritation. Father Adam has no face at all. He is the same all round like the top of a clothespeg. Jocelin is deaf to the depths of God's 'simplicities' as the choir sings the creed. He is just as deaf to the voice of Caesar when, reading the letter from his patroness in the bright light of the crossways, he refuses her any answer.

The second chapter reverses the strategy of the first. Dust obscures the sunshine. In a thick yellow fog workmen with deformed, cloth-covered faces caked with dirt and sweat, chant obscene songs in the transepts. The pit dug at the crossways reveals that the church rests on rubble, brushwood, mud. The human instruments of the work are no

more reliable. The master mason sees his assignment in the light of his own ends, and turns a blind eye to the fighting among his men and their sadistic treatment of Pangall.

His wife Rachel is vulgar, emancipated, a ceaseless torrent of abuse. The sacristan, Father Anselm, with his beautiful head, silver-haired and saintly, has a cold unloving heart, and a mind bound by rule and prescription. On the other hand, if the first chapter was concerned to point to the pride beneath Jocelin's sunny faith, here in the dust of the cathedral we are reminded of his warmth. We are not in doubt of his superiority as a human being to the others we meet.

Sunshine, dust, these elements belong to the surface. The third chapter introduces another element, Water, which takes us below ground, to places which are hidden, either in the church or in the human mind. Water seeps into the pit, into the graves in the choir and arcades, and the cathedral fills with the smell of corruption. There is irrational fear among the workmen, hysteria, and one of them falls from the roof. The old Chancellor lapses into imbecility. Plague threatens; 'and the voices rose in fear of age and death, in fear of weight and dimension, in fear of darkness and a universe without hope'. Jocelin is taken into the human cellarage. He learns of Pangall's impotence, Rachel's coital giggle that makes her incapable of giving or receiving fulfilment. Above all, he begins to be made aware of the growing relation between Pangall's wife and Roger Mason. To these intimations of mortality Jocelin's attitude is one of uncomprehending revulsion:

(Rachel) stripped the business of living down to where horror
and farce took over....He spoke viciously..... 'The impervious
insolence of the woman!'.....He cried out loud. 'Filth! Filth!'
(61)

His feelings toward Roger and Goody bring together the subterranean worlds of the mind and the earth:

Then an anger rose out of some pit inside Jocelin.....He lifted his chin, and the world burst out over it from an obscure place of indignation and hurt. 'No!' All at once it seemed to him that the renewing life of the world was a filthy thing, a rising tide of muck so that he gasped for air..... (62)

The very vehemence of Jocelin's disgust is however an indication of his own 'cellarage'. His mind is inhabited now by the devil as well as the angel; he can no longer suppress his own sexuality; the revelation of others' begins to reveal him to himself. In the sexual dream which closes the chapter the world within and the world without are seen within one perspective. The dream masturbates the phallus / spire of his body. And the dream poses the question: is the building of the spire a similar self-erection and self-fulfilment, a distortion and degradation of God-given creativity?

The fourth chapter literally clears the air, and lifts us into the sky. The wind blows the rain away and dries the earth. On the roof of the crossways the lead is rolled back to reveal blue sky; and at once the explosive ecstatic language is back, the old perspective resumed. Delightedly, Jocelin climbs into the tower:

The pit was no more than a black dot, a hundred and twenty feet below.....It seemed suddenly to Jocelin that now he loved everybody with ease and delight.....So Jocelin clasped his hands, lifted up his head and included the boys and the dumb man and Roger Mason and Goody in one tremendous ejaculation: 'Rejoice, O daughters of Jerusalem!'(63)

But though the language may be back, the tone has lost its assurance since the opening chapter. The brilliant sunshine causes confusion, shadows, after-images. The church at Easter is divided: flowers in the Lady Chapel, but on the other side of the screen 'the body of the church was as secular as a stable or an empty tythe barn'.

Jocelin cannot forget or ignore what he has learnt of Rachel, Roger, Goody and Pangall. The internal turmoil of visitation by angel and devil grows worse, robs him of sleep, makes his head ache and flashes of pain dart across his eyes. And suddenly those eyes are forced to concentrate on the pit at the crossways where a sheet of metal has been set up to throw light to the bottom. There he sees what it is for a building to aspire beyond the nature of its foundations:

Then, as Jocelin looked, he saw a pebble drop with two clods of earth; and immediately a patch perhaps a yard square fell out of the side below him and struck the bottom with a soft thud. The pebbles that fell with it lay shining dully in the reflected light, and settled themselves in their new bed. But as he watched them and waited for them to settle, the hair rose on the nape of his neck; for they never settled completely. He saw one stir, as with a sudden restlessness; and then he saw that they were all moving more or less, with a slow stirring, like the stirring of grubs. The earth was moving under the grubs, urging them this way and that, like porridge coming to the boil in a pot..... (64)

As the pavement splits and the pillars sing with unbearable strain, the whole army of workers become hysterical with fear. Frantically, they try to fill the pit with, amongst other rubble, the blindly ecstatic stone heads of Jocelin the dumb sculptor had been carving. The Dean himself kneels directly under the central keystone of the crossing. Defiantly he

‘knelt stiff, painful and enduring; all the time the singing of the stones operated on the inside of his head. At last, when he understood nothing else at all, he knew that the whole weight of the building was resting on his back.’ (65)

This is a parody of prayer in that it is dominantly self-assertion, self-will. There is no hint of penance or humility, no abandonment to the will of another. Nevertheless there are intensities of courage, faith, and vision here. Jocelin is willing to sacrifice not only himself but Roger too, in his absolute determination to see the spire built.

The nature of Jocelin's choice can be seen in a striking example, when he climbs to the top of the half-completed tower and observes the countryside from his vantage point:

He opened his eyes and found that he was looking away from the tower and out into the world: and it had changed in nature. It had bent itself into a sort of bowl, detailed here, sweeping up beyond that to a blue rim. In astonishment and delight, he laid hold of the stone and heaved himself into kneeling. This is what it must mean to be a bird, he thought- and as if in illustration, a raven slipped past his face, slanting on the wind with a harsh expostulation at the people lifted so boldly into its kingdom. Beyond the raven- and now Jocelin let go the stone and stood up so that he could see over the bending workmen-the valleys of the three rivers that met by the cathedral close opened them-selves up. The rivers glittered towards the tower; and you could see that all those places which had been separate to feet and only joined by an act of reason, were indeed part of a whole. (66)

Here, as Jocelin looks out, it appears that his angle of vision is wide, that he sees the multiplicity and diversity of existence in this perception of the whole. As the scene progresses, however, it is clear that the perception of the whole about which he speaks is represented by the shape of his design, the spire. As he watches a procession of travellers approach the city, he sees, in 'a flash of vision' how

Other feet would cut their track arrow-straight towards the city, understood how the tower was laying a hand on the whole landscape,.....Presently,.....predestined wheel. (67)

As this image of predestination suggests, Jocelin is most comfortable when his vision is framed and defined, so that no confusion can enter into his perception of the world. He prefers looking out a window to being outdoors; he likes peering through the small hole in the cathedral roof made for the spire's construction.

Jocelin's tragedy is that his vision is severely limited. So caught up is he in the moment-by-moment erection of his design, which is at once spire, spirit and phallus, that he can no longer use the language of prayer in order to communicate with his maker. Jocelin is unable to use language to convey the mixture of hope, fear, emotion and intelligence represented by the spire. Jocelin can only communicate with the world and interpret it, through the iconoclastic vision of the spire which is merely a representation and repetition of himself.

The final part of the book opens with what looks like an ending. In Roger's absence his foreman Jehan loosens too quickly the cable around the wedges. The octagons come thundering down; with a breaking of stone and a splintering of woodwork the spire impacts itself into the parapet, while terrified workmen fight down the ladders. The great work still stands. Yet it openly manifests its crookedness. The novel about building a spire is over.

Golding alters the viewpoint when the action is completed. But the change marked by the arrival of the Visitor and his Commission is a starting – point for a farther journey. When a commission of the church arrives to judge whether the Dean, who has been so obsessed with the spire, is fit to retain his position, Jocelin freely admits that the others think him mad, confessing “Perhaps I am” (68), and also affirms, “All I know is, I looked for men of faith to be with me; and there was none” (69). Here we witness a kind of interrogation. Jocelin's answers are desperate when the questions

are put. As the questioning proceeds, the direction becomes clear. Jocelin is forced into answers which sharpen his self – knowledge:

She's woven into it everywhere. She died and then she came alive in my mind. She's there now. She haunts me. She wasn't alive before, not in that way. And I must have known about him before, you see, down in the vaults, the cellarage of my mind. (70)

Only in the last moments of the novel does Jocelin have a vision of something other than the spire, something which might represent the multiplicity of life.

There was a cloud of angels flashing in the sunlight, they were pink and gold and white; and they were uttering..... His head swam with the angels and suddenly he understood that there was more to the apple tree than one branch. It was there beyond the wall, bursting up with cloud and scatter, laying hold of the earth and the air, a fountain, a marvel, an apple tree; and this made him weep in a childish way so that he could not tell whether he was glad or sorry. (71)

“The apple tree” is a reference to the fact that the great spire, like the trunk of a tree, thrusts upward, but also thrusts in many other directions like the mixed nature of man's motives – too complex to be seen at first view. Golding has chosen an apple tree rather than any other because he wanted to remind us of the most notorious of apple trees, as mentioned in the previous pages, whose fruit precipitated man's expulsion from Eden. The image of the apple tree, traditionally associated with knowledge and guilt, can be seen here as an undefinable object with many branches representing the richness of experience which Jocelin has ignored in favour of the domineering spire. The apple tree suggests both the faith in aspiration and the inevitable fall from paradise. The apple tree is the ‘flowering plant image’ and the flowering plant image is a continually changing symbol of both good and evil throughout the novel.

It first represents the malignancy within Jocelin's soul. When Jocelin is asked by a board of inquiry to justify his actions, he explains the allegorical nature of his story by using the evil plant image:

It was so simple at first. On the purely human level of course, it's a story of shame and folly – Jocelin's Folly, they call it. I had a vision you see, a clear and explicit vision. It was so simple! 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. (72)

At this point, as David Skilton claims, "Jocelin imagines himself entangled in the tendrils of a plant of sexuality, figuratively caught in the branches of Goody's witchcraft" (73).

Second, the plant becomes a symbol of Jocelin's growing obsession with building the spire, at the expense of the human beings around him. Jocelin is unable to confess to Father Adam:

All things were so mixed and the evil plant grew among and over them all. (74)

Third, the image changes to a positive one – the apple tree. The spire – tree is the outcome of Jocelin's long – lived obsession. Delbaere & Garant explain it this way, "It rises up to the sky away from the gaping pit below, and it owes it vitally to the constant struggle between the upward energy of its stems and the tropism of its roots to the centre of darkness" (75).

The 'motive of darkness' represents the inner blackness of Jocelin's soul. Jocelin's recognition of his own dark obsessions is expressed through the 'cellar image':

I'm building with a vast cellarage where the rats live; and
there's some kind of blight on my hands. (76)

When he admits to Roger that he arranged Pangall's marriage so that he, Dean Jocelin, could perpetuate his lust for Goody, he uses this same image:

The trouble is, Roger, that the cellarage knew about him –
knew he was impotent, I mean – and arranged the marriage.
(77)

These confessions are a kind of farewell to the old Jocelin and the embarkation on the new. He still has absolute faith in the power of the God he has lost. He believes in the ability of the crucified Christ to transfigure his church and make it prevail. The driving of the 'Holy Nail' into the capstone enacts his faith. With the nail, the spire cannot fall. The 'Holy Nail' represents the Christian coherence designed to keep the spire and the cathedral together. The nail is Jocelin's equivalent of Roger's steel hoop – not a physical stay but a spiritual one. The Church in Rome had refused Jocelin's appeal for funds to build the spire, and he had, in one sense, compromised his project from the very beginning by welcoming funds from his aunt Alison, who gave the money in return for Jocelin's promise to bury her in the cathedral. Rome offered the symbol of the 'Holy Nail' instead, the symbol of the price of human salvation. The 'Holy Nail' is delivered by an emissary from Rome and blessed; Jocelin sees it as crucially significant, the way to make his spire, now finished and floating, secure, or in another image, the way to convert the spire of stone and glass into the natural aspiring force of his vision. In the midst of a raging thunderstorm during the night after the 'Holy Nail' has been delivered and blessed, afraid the spire may topple, Jocelin feels he must place the nail on the spire himself, must demonstrate his faith in the human meaning of the spire. Although he suffers seriously from vertigo, he climbs the leaning and groaning spire himself. His spiritual climb is also compromised in that he keeps thinking of the dead Goody Pangall and his sexual attraction to her. He realises that she was the red – haired Satanic figure that troubled his dreams. A sexual dream reveals to him the identity of the devil of his lust:

She came towards him naked in her red hair. She was smiling and humming from an empty mouth. He new the sound explained everything, removed all hurt and all concealment, for this was the nature of the uncountryside. He could not see the devil's face for this was the nature of the uncountryside too; but he knew she was there, and moving towards him totally as he was moving towards her. Then there was a wave of ineffable good sweetness, wave after wave, and an atonement.

And then there was nothing. (78)

Despite the storm and the leaning tower, he hammers in the 'Holy Nail'. Back on the ground, he tells Aunt Alison, who thinks he has been a fool, that "There's a level you can't understand" (79) and that he has nailed the spire to the sky. The spire is, finally, the testament to faith that the Holy Nail suggests, though "Life itself is a rickety building" (80).

In the closing chapter of The Spire, Jocelin lies suspended between life and death, periodically aware of the secular, his body, and his guilt as well as of the spiritual, judging himself and others, yet remaining confronted with the riddle of himself and the universe, a riddle not to be resolved by the understanding of a limited human being. Informed that Roger has attempted suicide, Jocelin felt the weight of his responsibility for the master builder, for the others whom he has wronged, and for the spire; yet he also thinks, "I can't even feel for them. Or for myself" (81) – ambiguous words which, even if they suggest that in his exhausted state Jocelin lacks compassion for others, also declare that he has no pity for himself.

The ending of the novel contains vital shifts of meaning. Here all things come together. Father Adam summons Jocelin by name, to help him into heaven. With growing urgency, as the moment of death approaches, the priest tries to get him to say the words 'I believe', or if he cannot, to make a gesture of assent. But there is nothing. Only at the very end, he saw a tremor of the lips that might be interpreted as a cry of "God! God!". So of the charity to which he had access, he laid the Host on the dead

man's tongue. Since we know that it was not God! God!, the stark irony seems to be that the Man of Faith, the visionary, has died seeing nothing but despair.

On the first call of his name, knowing how near he is to death, Jocelin's freewheeling mind gives him the following explanations:

He looked up experimentally to see if at this late hour the witchcraft had left him; and there was the tangle of hair, blazing 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: and he made a word for Father Adam.

Berenice.

The smile became puzzled and anxious. Then it cleared.

"Saint?" (82)

While he is compelled to realise that the witchcraft of Goody Pangall still haunts him, he nevertheless tries to ease the anxious Father Adam, by allowing the Father to believe that Jocelin's mention of a pagan Berenice is a reference to a Christian saint. Jocelin unconsciously identifies Goody with the legendary pagan queen, whose hair, dedicated to sexual love, was made into a constellation. And Berenice erected her hair to the stars. So Jocelin's spire can be seen as an erect phallus lifted towards the girl he lusted after. Jocelin has assumed that his vision has been inspired by an angel; after his newly gained knowledge, he fears he has been driven by the devil.

He can see the whole world as inhabited by people stripped down to their physical selves who yet, in their arrogance as humans, "pace or prance in sheets of woven stuff"; and though he judges them by thinking "How proud their hope of hell is" he also judges himself in recognising that "There is no innocent work, God knows where God may be" (83). Even if 'God knows' is interpreted as an expression of doubt (God knows when we shall meet again) the basic concept of an omniscient and immanent God remains; God is present everywhere and in everything, even in a man

chosen to do His work despite a mind bursting with fantasies and a tuberculosis eating away his spine. Ironically, he has already understood where God truly exists:

If I could go back, I would take God as lying between people
and to be found there. (84)

The prepositions above sum up despair with bleak finality. The world of man is wholly absurd, irrational and evil. For in his absurdity and irrationality man is proud. There is no hope of good or beauty; only hell awaiting pride. His own aspiration towards heaven destroyed the man and the woman who alone could make heaven meaningful, since God is to be found between people.

At the end of the novel, Pangall and Goody are dead, Roger Mason is a hopeless alcoholic, and Jocelin is on his deathbed. In the background, the spire still stands. Disturbingly, the reader is asked to consider whether the spire stands despite the sacrifice of Pangall, or because of it. The final moments are another technical triumph for Golding; the highly charged language and the splintered chronology, brilliantly evoke the dying moments of Jocelin.

In his last moment of life Jocelin discovers something of immense importance, and simultaneously discovers that what he understands cannot be communicated. Language is an ineffective medium for the communication of what Jocelin has to say, and he is reduced to simile:

In the tide, flying like a bluebird, struggling, shouting,
screaming to leave behind the words of magic and
incomprehension –
It's like the appletree! (85)

Jocelin realises that, like the spire itself, life is a miracle, rooted deeply in both innocence and guilt, in beauty and in blood. The spire thrust upwards towards Heaven, exhibiting the beauty of a young girl, perfect and desirable. It was crooked, but that did not matter, because it stood and belonged to the earth, yet it carried with it the

ambiguous quality of evil that is present in every man, and perfectly symbolised in Jocelin. There are still undertones of temptation in the images of the appletree and the young girl, but the temptation has been subdued by the overall picture of perfection and awe. It was as if Jocelin were seeing the spire for the first time.

There is symbolic irony in Father Adam's misunderstanding Jocelin's last words, wholly in keeping with the ambiguity of the novel, but it was fitting that the Host should have been given so that Jocelin's soul could be redeemed. Perhaps this final image of the spire could be construed as Jocelin's symbolic finding of God. It is not certain whether Golding wants us to believe that he is saved and has found the ability to pray, or whether he remains, as he says himself, like a building with rats in the callage. Golding's novels never have one unequivocal message.



PART V

CONCLUSION

Unlike his contemporaries, Golding as a writer of tremendous talent, handles various themes which others do not have the courage to deal with. The sense of man's guilt and sin is the universal theme Golding largely employs in his novels and in The Spire he is at his peak using Christian terms, some of which are difficult to comprehend. The Spire seemed to provide evidence of a major development in Golding's work.

While Lord of the Flies continued to be the only novel that generated widespread popular interest and commitment, The Spire, both when it was published and frequently in the years since, was hailed by both reviewers and critics as Golding's finest achievement. In this novel, Golding shaped extensive metaphors for humanity in a forceful version of traditional Christian concepts. His language echoed the universal sonority of that in the seventeenth-century Biblical tradition. With The Spire, Golding presents his whole talent as an allegorist, using symbols, images, motives and Biblical references in order to create intensity.

Besides being an allegorical novel, The Spire is also historical in the sense that Golding bases his novel on the construction of the spire of the Salisbury Cathedral in the fourteenth century. As the interviews made with Golding suggests, the cathedral in Salisbury is an important influence in Golding's consciousness. Both cathedrals are the same in size and shape. And the height of Golding's spire is a crucial element for the development of the theme of the book. When the cathedral in Salisbury and the cathedral of Golding are compared, it is seen that the novel has its basis in reality.

Golding does not follow any set chronology in writing The Spire, which is one of the characteristics of allegory. There is a linear narrative and the book is inwardly focused. The narrative is presented from the first and third persons and the third person narrative is also written from Jocelin's point of view. The reader is involved in the creation of the spire. As the spire rises, the readers experience the building of the spire

paragraph by paragraph. In the end, as the end of the novel is ambiguous, the reader interprets the novel himself since there is no one meaning.

The central symbol of the novel, the spire, represents the monolithic viewpoint of its obsessed creator, Dean Jocelin. The paradoxical interrelationships between good and evil are traced throughout the novel. First, Jocelin believes that he builds the spire for God since the idea of building the spire came to him in a vision. Unfortunately, this does not last for a long time. There is another reason behind his building the spire. Since Jocelin's occupation precludes his marrying, he finds an outlet in the spire. The spire is a means of diverting his sexual energy for Goody, who continually excites him. Since he wants to keep Goody for himself, he arranges the marriage between Goody and the impotent Pangall and Pangall's impotence prevents the consummation of their marriage.

Jocelin is determined to build the spire despite the warnings of Roger Mason, the master builder. Although Roger warns him that the foundations of the cathedral will not carry such a weight, Jocelin never gives up. He insists on going with the work. After some time he abandons hope in God. He neglects his pastoral duties. Soon, ambition and pride replaces religious fervor. He even allows the adulterous relationship between Roger and Goody just to keep Roger at work. Jocelin begins to see everybody as his tools to achieve his aim. But he is not aware that as the spire rises he comes closer to Hell. The spire, in its conception a monument to God's glory, becomes in its execution a monument to Jocelin's pride. The spire is a symbol of hope, not for the proud, for theirs is the hope of hell; but for the humble, for whom it is an act of faith.

On his way to achieve his aims he destroys everybody that blocks him. The theme of sacrifice dominates the novel. Pangall, the caretaker of the church, realises that the pagan workers will kill him and when he says this to Jocelin, he never cares, but unfortunately Pangall is killed by the workmen who make him a scapegoat for their troubles. Towards the end of the novel Jocelin realises that the workmen are practitioners of pagan beliefs but it is too late. Goody loses her life while giving birth to Roger's child. Roger Mason is also sacrificed for the sake of the spire. He becomes a drunkard and a helpless imbecile. Jocelin is indirectly responsible for the deaths of these people.

In the end, he himself is sacrificed. He dies of tuberculosis. But before this, he suffers more and is humiliated. He goes to Father Anselm and Roger to ask their forgiveness but is rejected by them. Only in the last moments of his life, on his death bed, Father Anselm helps him into heaven.

His love for God and his long-repressed lust for Goody form an ambiguity and this persists until the very end of the novel. Where the dying Jocelin's last gasp might be interpreted as a cry of God! God!- or perhaps Goody! Goody!. The reader, who is allowed to penetrate the dean's mind in its last moments, cannot help feeling that Father Adam's interpretation of his last words is only partially right, that the tremor on the lips of the dying man means Goody as well as God – and preferably both at once. The end of the novel is ambiguous and this is Golding's style of reaching a universal theme. In order to provide the reader with a highly-structured and dense book he makes use of the Bible. He parallels stories from the Bible. In dealing with the theme of sacrifice he refers to the story of Abraham and Isaac. Jocelin equates his own dedication to God with Abraham's. The workmen working on the spire uses different languages and this is connected to The Tower of Babel in Genesis. In addition, the spire recalls the biblical Tower of Babel whose builders have an ambition to scale the heights of heaven like Jocelin. As the spire leads heavenward Jocelin increasingly associates it with himself. The word "sin" is a key word in many of Golding's novels and he keeps this tradition also in The Spire. The Original Sin, the temptation of Christ by Satan and the crucifixion of Christ are all referred back to the Bible. Christ rejects to put his Father to the test but Jocelin's mad confidence in God puts God to the test. Jocelin's identification with Christ is sinful. His struggles are compared, for purposes of irony, to the position of Christ. Once in a dream he imagines himself crucified. Other deadly sins; anger, envy, ambition and lust are also seen in Jocelin. "The apple tree" is associated with The Fall and is a symbol for the nature of man. It reminds us of the most notorious of apple trees which is associated with guilt and sin.

There is also "the cellar image". The motive of darkness represents the darker side of man, namely Jocelin's. In one part of the book, Jocelin is resembled to an eagle, the bird of pride. As the spire mounts higher it becomes the symbol of Jocelin's soaring

pride. In the end, after the spire is completed, Jocelin drives "The Holy Nail" into the capstone to show his faith. It is delivered from Rome and is blessed. It keeps the spire and cathedral together. This is the symbol of the price of human salvation.

The Spire records the dire consequences of pride. Jocelin leads directly to the manipulating of people, to the neglect of priestly duties, to the desecration of the cathedral, to the countenancing of adultery and murder, and somewhat less directly to the deaths of the Pangalls and to the destruction of Mason. The crucifier is the crucified in The Spire, Jocelin, who subordinates everyone to the spire, measuring their worth by what they can contribute to it, becomes the crucifier of two couples symbolised by the four pillars.

The dangers of pride and the desire for worldly power are pushed home by the book's setting in the fourteenth century, which was the great century of church corruption. Golding suggests that Jocelin himself has apparently secured his own appointment as dean, at a relatively early age and over the heads of the disgruntled Anselms of the time, by a process that is devious and corrupt. In his case, as Jocelin finally discovers to his horror, his Aunt Alison, a favoured mistress of the old king, is behind his being made Dean. In view of the fact that it is also Alison's money that is paying for the building of the spire (this time in the hope of buying an honourable resting place for her bones), it brings into question not only Jocelin's standing as a true representative of the cause he serves, but whether bad money can ever be put to good use.

The book develops mostly around two themes. The first one is that man is a synthesis of good and evil. The impulses behind the building of the spire are both religious vision and personal pride. In this novel, man is an example of the unity that can exist in paradox. Another important theme is self-knowledge. By acknowledging good and evil impulses within, Jocelin comes to self-awareness. In the end, through a series of confrontations with characters he has exploited, he sees the evil in himself. But this self-awareness does not make the ending of the novel clear. The final part of the novel contains shifts of meaning. Since Jocelin's last words are not understood clearly,

they might be interpreted in two different ways. If they are taken as Goody! Goody!, it can be said that Jocelin has died seeing nothing but despair. He is not redeemed. He is past redemption. However, when his last words are taken as God! God!, it can be easily interpreted that he regrets what he has done so far.

To sum it up, man has both good and evil impulses within him and these two are fighting for supremacy all the time. Since we have an inbuilt capacity for guilt and sin, the evil side emerges should the circumstances demand it. Although the tone of the book, The Spire, seems to be pessimistic, as Golding claims, there is always hope for redemption since God is merciful.



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