

ARTICLE

The Formation of a Postmodern Frame of Reference in the Literary Works by William Golding

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ABSTRACT

The article considers the sequence of the early novels by W. Golding with the view to highlight their overall frame of reference in the context of postmodern culture. The concrete works under study are *Lord of the Flies*, *The Inheritors*, *Pincher Martin*, *Free Fall* and *The Spire*. A systemic approach to the novels in question allows for building their consolidate genre model with the view to define their general frame of reference. The discursive analysis of meaningful connections between the actual contents and genre forms of the novels series entails the discovery of its mediality channels with the outer currents of philosophical thought and the particular circumstances of the postmodern situation in literature. Further insights into the results of the writer's experience and contemporary theoretical researches highlight both similarities and essential differences in the attitude of the authors to social and cultural phenomena of postmodernity. The processual findings of this contemporary cross-section study prove the prescience formation of the author's intelligent design despite its common reference points with concurrent philosophical concepts and academic theories. The eventual outcome of the research leads to the conclusion that the general reference frame of the works under consideration emerged as a comprehensive response of the writer to the objective necessity in postmodern development of literature within the appropriate system of ontological, epistemological, socio-cultural and aesthetic coordinates.

Keywords: Fable Novels; Notional Contents; Architectonic Forms; Postmodern Condition; Frame of Reference; Postmodern Coordinate System

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1. Introduction

The studies of historical background of postmodernism are still in progress along with the continuing insights into the state of the art of this socio-cultural situation. The commonplace results of the research witness the fact that postmodern movements of aesthetic and philosophical thought took their general name and obtained the conceptual framework in the 1980s. The decisive factor of the framework's formation is the publication of fundamental theoretical works tracing the relevant changes in the reflexive consciousness of the contemporary human condition.

1.1. The Historical Background of the Subject Matter under Research

The French philosopher J.-F. Lyotard was the first to apply the term "postmodern" for the all-round definition of the current developments in science, arts and other branches of knowledge^[1]. Some years before, M. Foucault had explained the incipient shift of priorities from the issues of being to the problems of knowing by the growing awareness of the necessity for the conversion of human reason in the face of the existing world^[2]. Later on, the far-sighted works of the two authors brought the questions of cultural self-awareness to the forefront of debates in various areas of theoretical and practical philosophy. The mainstream of the theme discussions holds together the concepts, put forward by such different thinkers like J. Habermas in Germany^[3], R. Rorty in the USA^[4], J. Baudrillard, G. Deleuze and J. Guttari, J. Kristeva in France, and others^[5-7]. While the initiators of the postmodern "ontology of mind" were building the methodological foundation in support of the ongoing turn in philosophical narrative, J. Derrida worked out the method of deconstruction for eliminating the doctrinal metanarratives that prevented a relevant unfolding of cognitive discourse^[8].

The philosophical studies of postmodernity, however profound they were, leave a spare room for insights into prescience works of the authors, whose actual knowledge and imaginative vision of reality fostered the setting of the alternative value orientations in art and humanities after modernism. A purposeful overview of the recent literary history at the given angle reveals the principal importance of the British writers' experience, which dates back the emergence of the postmodern trends exactly to the mid-twentieth cen-

tury. A distinguished critic of the time, W. Allen, defined the current course of affairs as a reverse way to the traditional forms of fine letters with the vivid bias towards the classical samples of Victorian epoch^[9]. Subsequently, R. Rabinovitz discovered the apparent signs of these inverse changes in the works by K. Amis, A. Wilson and other novelists, who evinced a negative reaction against the innovative experiments of their immediate predecessors^[10]. V. V. Ivasheva found the similar symptoms of the novelists' skeptical refusal from modernist methods by comparing the authors' positions of C. P. Snow, D. Lessing and J. Wain^[11]. Further scholarly studies confirmed the validity of the previous findings and offered history-related explanations for the postmodern advancement of prospective goals and means for their achievement in creative writing at the turn of the century. The evidence-based concepts of historical continuity belong, in particular, to S. Connor^[12], L. Stonebridge and M. Mackay^[13], K. McHale^[14], V. Nünning and A. Nünning^[15].

1.2. Substantiation of the Research Issues and Objectives against the Given Historical Background

In all the cases mentioned above, the historic retrospection on the postmodern outlook admits the suggestion that installing the framing points for the future literary development was not only the prime necessity, but also a feasible possibility for the English writers of the present time. The presumption of the open opportunity of that kind finds a reasonable ground in view of the well-established interdisciplinary linkages and cognitive functions of literature in Great Britain. Given these specific features, fine letters became one of the main areas of humanitarian knowledge in the first half of the twentieth century, when many academic circles adopted positivism as the principle of genuine research for the reason that it implies verification of any concepts by methods of empiric and exact sciences. Scientism spread over the domain of philosophy-as-such and reached the epistemology of arts through the diverse systems of positivistic logics by A. N. Whitehead^[16], B. Russel, A. Ayer, and L. Wittgenstein. For instance, L. Wittgenstein and A. Ayer proposed the transfer of strictly analytical or empiric criteria of truth onto the area of humanitarian issues^[17, 18]. B. Russel, on the contrary, queried whether the latter might be subject to philosophical studies at all, because a genuinely scientific philosophy, in

his opinion, “does not offer, or attempts to offer a solution to the problem of human destiny”^[19]. Although the problem of human destiny in the world has always been the central question of literature, the writers, left in the face of its existential aspects, had to reconcile the figurative description with reasonable reflection of life phenomena to disclose their essential meanings. Naturally, such an extension of the area of aesthetic activities entailed the evolution of intellectual tendencies in fiction, which first showed in the “novels of ideas” by E. M. Forster, A. Huxley and S. Jameson^[20].

In the mid-twentieth century, the growth of ideological trends in literature took an intensive character due to the writers’ interdisciplinary researches into the dramatic changes in social and cultural life under postmodern condition. Eventually, the continuing infusion of rational elements into the works of creative writing caused the qualitative transformation of conventional architectonic structures, which facilitated, at the extremes, the genesis of a new genre of literary prose. That was the English philosophical novel, whose most recognized authors are W. Golding, I. Murdoch and C. Wilson. The distinguished philosophical features of their books ascend to the meaningful connections between the actual contents of the narrated life stories and the deep substantiation of the related notionable concepts pursuant to the guiding landmarks of literary thought after modernism. The prose of the named authors is remarkable not only for its philosophical density, but also for the skillfully composed forms capable of carrying high semantic loads without any loss for artistic merits of the plot narration. The preliminary consideration of the British philosophical novels within the frontal perspective of postmodern literary developments allows for a rather distinct vision of William Golding’s early works at the very beginning of the paradigm rising up to the immediate challenges of the time.

2. Materials and Methods

Taken together, the given above arguments make a case for in-depth consideration of the first novels by William Golding as a succession of paradigmatic samples, representing a postmodern reference frame of artistic awareness and reflecting the process of its formation.

2.1. Materials and Data Collection

All the materials and factual data, used in the represented article, are available in the open access mode in public libraries and the internet electronic resources.

2.1.1. The Literary Works under Study

The factual materials for elaborating on the stated theme are diverse and pertain to literature per se, history and theory of literature, cultural studies, and related disciplines of philosophy. It is a matter of course, the works by W. Golding himself account for the foundation of this interdisciplinary database. The particular books under research are the novels *Lord of the Flies* (1954), *The Inheritors* (1955), *Pincher Martin* (1956), *Free Fall* (1959) and *The Spire* (1964). The books mentioned above went down into literary history as a series of parable novels unified between each other with the consequential order of narrative and philosophical discourse connecting the initial premises and strategic goals of the author’s project.

2.1.2. The Works of Literary Studies and Criticism

The novels of the series have become the objects of the sustainable scholarly interest since the time of their publication. The history of the associated issues goes back to the studies of J. R. Baker^[21], C. Pemberton^[22], S. Medcalf^[23], H. S. Babb^[24], and many other literary critics and academic researchers. Their shared contribution to the informed knowledge about the novels in question is the discovery of author’s resumptive cogitations about general problems of human existence captured in the parable tales of individual life stories. Ph. Redpath employed a structural analysis of W. Golding’s fiction and thus opened free access to the notional content of the studied works through the formulaic codes of their genre architectonics^[25]. V. Tiger conducted a thorough exploration of the still “dark fields of discoveries” to highlight the underlying network of meaningful connotations, which bind the writer’s ideas into a multilateral concept of human beings and becoming on the paths of life^[26]. Meanwhile, K. McKarron applied an extensive approach to W. Golding’s aesthetic system by regarding his novels in the context of postmodern culture and by focusing on the relevant interrelations^[27]. J. Carey used a biographical method of literary research, whereby he proved, beyond any doubt, that the

writer derived his aesthetic ideas first from his experienced knowledge and then from philosophical cogitations over the immediate impressions of reality^[28].

2.1.3. The Relevant Philosophical Works

Further insights into W. Golding's works within the postmodern perspective suggest a subsequent increase of their epistemological horizon. Accordingly, the materials for this particular study include the theses by postmodern thinkers as far as their philosophical theories are comparable with the writing practices of the named novelist. Among the cited authors, there are R. Barthes, J. Baudrillard, M. Foucault, P. Lacoue-Labarthe, J.-F. Lyotard, and some other scholars, who laid the foundation for setting the postmodern framework of the picture of the world.

2.2. Systematic Methods of Research in Practical Application

The brief description of the factual materials prompts the clarifying restatement of the claimed topic of the article with the view to approximate the objectives of the research to the researched objects. On balance, the required definition shall be that the basic premise and the prospective aim of the proceeding query into the early W. Golding's novels focus on the disclosure of their literary reference frame with regard for the system of ontological, gnoseological, axiological and aesthetic coordinates of postmodern culture.

Since both the queried objects and the stated objectives presuppose a holistic approach, the most suitable way to the development of the selected materials is the use of systematic methods of research. A concurrent application of these methods specifies the matching of appropriate instruments for building an integrated model of the items under study to distinguish their common essential properties at different levels of the singular conventional construct. As applied to the study of W. Golding's works in this particular article, the set of collected instruments comprises the operational tools of cultural-historical, comparative, structural-functional and intertextual analysis. These analytical methods are subject to the synthesizing principle of systemic methodology, which stipulates a conceptual generalization of disparate results achieved at the consistent levels of the structural model.

3. Development and Results

The core element of systematic methodology is the ordering guideline for identifying the nature of investigated things or phenomena by the cause-and-effect relations between their components in view of the inner and outer networks of related interactions. The starting point for the linear discourse of the forthcoming study issues from the axiomatic statement that W. Golding's novels pertain to the postmodern period of literary and cultural history.

3.1. Identifying the Ontological and Gnoseological Points of Reference in the Novels by W. Golding

That point taken, the following move along the adopted baseline leads to a deeper historical background of the novels of interest. N. B. Mankovskaya observes that the postmodern aesthetics accepts the principle of historic continuity together with the broad understanding of tradition as a varied language of culture springing from ancient civilizations and spreading to the modernity of the twentieth century^[29]. The given observation helps explain W. Golding's return to the archaic language of the fable to convey the philosophical meanings of the tales, told in the series of his five parable novels. Constituting the matrix structure for the whole sequel, the genre architectonics of the fable also provides the appropriate form for each situational story, where the ideas of mind encounter the reality of life to engender a certain knowledge about things in their significance for human co-existence. The author himself specified the human-sized picture of the world in the fable stories when defining the cognitive, didactic and aesthetic dimensions of its uniform framing:

The exploration of the physical world is an art, with all the attendant aesthetic pleasures; but the knowledge we get from it is not immediately applicable to the problems that we have on hand^[30].

In the novels *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors*, W. Golding directs the explorative aspects of his literary project onto the philosophical question about the interrelation of being and consciousness. At the same time, he considers this issue within the concrete situations of human condition in search for the practical solutions based on factual experience and empirical criteria of the sought truth. The original

premise for empirical verification of the concepts of reason in the face of the realities of the world is the author's hypothetical proposition that the myth accounts for the archetypal structure of thinking which regulates the attitudes of mind to the perception of the world in terms of existence:

Myth is something which comes out from the roots of things in the ancient sense of being the key to existence, the whole meaning of life, an experience as whole^[31].

However, the predetermined statement loses its positive connotations with the steady progress of the research into the cognitive abilities of mythological thinking under real life circumstances. Thus, in the parable-novel *Lord of the Flies*, the covert imprints of ancient archetypes become apparent in the consciousness of the young heroes under the pressure of terrifying fear, when they found themselves alone on an uninhabited island:

When the sun sank, darkness dropped on the island like an extinguisher and soon the shelters were full of restlessness under remote stars^[32].

The irrational emotions awake some vague memories of mythical monsters and entice the anxious minds for fantastic recreation of infernal Lord of the Flies in the image and likeness of the pagan deity of Beelzebub, or Prince of Darkness. In the author's representation, the crucial moment of these transformations comes with the totemic incarnation of the imagined demon of evil in the severed head of a killed animal. This event marks the emergence of the superstitious belief in the almighty of the embodied evil spirit. One of the boys guessed that the mythical monster gained power not only over the minds, but also over the lives of all the teammates, impelling them to atrocities towards the things and beings of surrounding nature, to their own habitual environment, and towards each other:

You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go. Why things are what they are^[32]?

In the novel *The Inheritors*, the author expands the ontological scope of his parable series with the view to investigate the forward and backward linkages between the mythological mindsets and existential experience of people in prehistoric times. Therefore, unlike the fable of *Lord of the Flies*, where the main objects under study are the mythological rudiments of contemporary mentality, the parable story of inheritors aims to disclose the vital meaning of authentic mythologies

for knowing the world and their implications for human beings in the world at the dawn of civilization. Relying upon the scientific data of anthropology, the writer reproduces a conventional situation on the border of two epochs, when the tribes of dying out Neanderthals could meet the groups of Cro-Magnons, who succeeded them at the following stage of evolution. As described in the novel, one of such encounters erupts into conflict on the grounds of incompatible archetypes of collective consciousness, which determined the perceptual and behavioral attitudes of the ancestors and inheritors to each other. Thus, the Neanderthals were resignedly dying from the arrows of the invaders, obeying the taboo on the murder of brothers in humankind and being unaware of the death threat on their side. On the other hand, the newcomers killed the inoffensive forest dwellers with the strong belief in their own totemic myths about "devils of the wood". When leaving the place of the tragedy, the inheritors still feel haunted by their fearful ghosts, being in the dark about the truth and not knowing "if the line of darkness had an ending"^[33].

3.2. Defining the Postmodern Parameters of the Epistemological Framing of W. Golding's Fable Series

Evidently, the background idea about the ontological status and epistemological attributes of mythos shows apparent flaws during its experimental testing in contingent but very true-to-life situations. The counterarguments, following up on the parable stories and disproving the initial premise, imply the inference, that mythological archetypes prevent the movements of thought, retaining it in a once established network of semiotic connotations between the notions of reason and their objective correlates. Furthermore, the outgoing author's message spreads over the newest archetypes of egocentric mentality, enshrined in modernist literature and consolidated in existential philosophy on the concept of a personality as a self-sufficient subject of being and consciousness. W. Golding tests the viability of this idea in the parable novel *Pincher Martin*, where the title hero tries to put it into his own life. Since the life position of extreme individualism reduces the existence of the protagonist to the vicious circle of selfishness, he forfeits the positive sense of reality beyond the confined barrier of estrangement. Connectedly, ended up in the open sea after an accident, the

unfortunate hero is unable to recognize the obvious signs of nature, which showed the saving way to the nearby shore. Instead, the train of thoughts of the drowning man follows the misleading waypoints of phenomenal delusions within his self-centered vision of the world:

There, the whole of life is bundled up, dwindled. There is the carefully hoarded and enjoyed personality, our only treasure and at the same time our only defense must die into the ultimate truth of things^[34].

Actually, W. Golding's parable about Pincher Martin's unrighteous life and incongruous death contains rather transparent references to the existential philosophy, where the inner world of phenomenal images opposes the outer world of empiric objects as a visionary refuge for an individual, trying to escape "bad reality". J.-P. Sartre, a leading ideologist of existential phenomenology, claimed, that such images offer us "to slip away" not only from our troubles and fears, but also from any external coercion and enforcement, thus appearing for the negation of the material world, or, in brief, – for an ideal "anti-world"^[35]. In addition to the warning about the inevitable collapse of such illusionary "anti-worlds", W. Golding's novel *Pincher Martin* brings about the matter of ethical concern in appliance with the negative experience of the character. The fact of the matter is that the hero failed to overcome the barriers of existential solipsism due to the absence of the moral sense of his own involvement in objective reality far beyond the subjective outlook on it. In that context, the tragic termination of the parable story line takes the meaning of the philosophical demonstration, which points out to the necessity and possibility for eliminating the egocentric thought systems between consciousness and the world. The author suggests that a possible way to reach this goal lies through the moral aligning of individual selfness with the humanistic essence of a personality. In one of the comments on his literary and philosophical research, W. Golding emphasized the moral principle of the integrity of human beings as the most significant of the achieved results:

The only kind of real progress is the progress of the individual towards some kind of – I would describe it as ethical integration^[36].

3.3. Clarifying the Socio-Ethical Values of the Postmodern Coordinate System in W.

Golding's Fable Novels Sequel

In the fable novel *Free Fall*, W. Golding approaches the moral question about breaking the self-centered circle of personal alienation with regard to the individualistic standing of the central hero and with the intention to change his position. The baseline of the novel's plan conforms to the abovementioned (Word editor insists on the given spelling) statement of the existential phenomenology by J. P. Sartre about the entanglement of conceivable images into the circuit of selfishness within the narrow horizon of pure subjectivity. At the same time, the unfolding guideline of the novel's narrative discourse coincides with the provision of the classical phenomenology by E. Husserl about broadening the horizon of consciousness with the increase of the time-space existence of the subject^[37]. The golden mean between the extreme reference points of the author's design lies in the difficult way of the hero to understand the simple fact that something, aside from his own ego, is a reality. He sets off on this untrodden path under the hard pressure of the emergency, being on the threshold of life and death as a prisoner of war in a Nazi concentration camp. Confined in a solitary cell alone with himself, the prisoner is steadily awakening to the truth that his "free fall" into the void of solipsism has started long before, first with the accidental and then persistent preferences of self-interest to anything else in the world:

Our loneliness is the loneliness not of the cell or the castaway; it is the loneliness of that dark thing that sees as at the atom furnace by reflection, feels by remote control and hears only words phoned to it in a foreign tongue^[38].

The initial detachment from the egocentric position occurs in the modus of mental reflection when the questioning mind appeals to the deepest inwit and receives the response, which makes the protagonist confess the iniquity of his previous existence. Quite expectedly, neither the sincere confession, nor the tormenting pangs of guilt and repentance would bridge the gap between his inner world of phenomena and the outer world of things. However, the desperate efforts of reason, of will and fortitude encourage the prisoner of conscience for the ultimate move towards inclusive existence through the moral act of renunciation:

If I want something enough I can always get it provided

I am willing to make the appropriate sacrifice^[38].

The hero completes this self-denying action refusing to betray his prison fellows even under the threat of death, and then regains hope for life and freedom due to the feeling of moral and existential unity with the outer world:

Cause and effect. The law of succession. Static probability. The moral order. Sin and remorse. They are all true. Both worlds exist side by side. They meet in me^[38].

Given the synergic interaction of the narrative text and the philosophical metatext considered above, the coherent message of W. Golding's parable about free fall exceeds the simple amount of the meaningful values of the two lines of discourse. Actually, the emergent effect of the synergy is the ethical principle of integrity engaging the ontological and gnoseological aspects of human attitude toward the world. The hero proves the sustainability of this principle, acting as the subject of the moral transgression across the narrow circle of existential alienation and, at the same time, as the creator of the picture of being in the world within the broadening horizon of his vision. However, since the positive development of the picture involves the coaction of the subject's consciousness of objective reality and the conscience of human values, the discloser of their mutual dependence gives rise to the question about reconciliation of empirical criteria of truth with axiological measure of its authenticity. This problem takes the central place amidst the writer's themes in the book *The Spire*, the follow-up work in W. Golding's fable series.

3.4. Some Insights into the Historical and Cultural Retrospective of the Postmodern Frame of References in W. Golding's Fable Novels Series

To emphasize the possible discrepancies between practical sagacity and a sense of values, the author relates the storyline of the novel *The Spire* to the Mediaeval Age, when the humanistic consciousness and conscience of the world complied with the idea of God as the epitome of eternal truth and absolute morality. By analogy with the previous book, the central character of the novel takes the position of the sovereign subject of all actions and representations to create a picture of reality on his own way of knowledge and experience. Even so and despite the similar independent status, this hero acts and thinks differently of the previous

novels' characters, being an obedient adept of rigorous belief in the superiority of the transcendental will over the empirical world. Therefore, guided by the devoted faith and the post of a cathedral's dean, he initiates and conducts the erection of a gigantic spire on the dilapidated foundation of the cathedral, contrary to the laws of physics and architecture but in conformity with the presumed doctrinal dogmas. The impassable chasm between the earthly being and the heavenly ideal opened before the mind's eye of the dean only with the fortunate completion of the construction, although at the cost of misfortunes for other people and his own downfall into evil and wickedness. The after reflection over conceivable and actual order of things leads the hero to the thought that this paradoxical duality comes from cognitive distortions of the world picture, caused originally by his wrong path in life: "Why do I go to find something that isn't there"^[39]? However, he achieves the integrity of the created picture by leaving out of its frame the divine ideations, which extend beyond human experience, knowledge and system of values: "There is no innocent work. God knows where God may be"^[39].

Overall, the finds of the analytical research into the fable novels by W. Golding lead to the conclusion that their shared meaning accounts for a singular set of ideas. They build on the contents of particular stories, coherently developed in the consolidated architectonic structure of the whole series.

4. Discussion

Expectedly, the immanent analysis of W. Golding's parable novels uncovers only the internal network of semantic connotations between their narrative, notional and figurative patterns. Nevertheless, the eventual outcome of the analysis opens a perspective for enquiry into the external reference frame of the whole system so that to identify its distinctive features in the paradigm of contemporary postmodern concepts. In this respect, the most important find of the prior study is the cause-and-effect matrix, which defines the order of discourse in W. Golding's fable series and hence may give the analog access code to the parallel formation of the reference frame in question.

4.1. The Basic Prerequisites for Coinciding Reference Points of W. Golding's Literary Works and Postmodern Philosophical Studies

The adopted premise, concerning the linear development of W. Golding's aesthetic system, returns the discussion about its outward connections to the first two books of the fable series. *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors*, provide the access point to the transversal connecting lines, whereby the writer's intellectual design correlates with the outer currents of social thought. The preceding case study of the named novels revealed the basic intersections of that kind in the primary outline of the world picture. Its most prominent traits bear the impressions of references to mythological pre-images and their interpretations in modern psychology and postmodern philosophy of culture. However, notwithstanding the metanarrative allusions to the psychoanalytical theories of mythological archetypes by Z. Freud and K. Jung^[40, 41], W. Golding conducts his own strategy at the level of literary narrative. In fact, the factual contents of the narrated stories calls in question the practical sufficiency of their concepts as those bereft of a feasible solution to the problem of modifications or distraction of these apparently immutable constructs of thinking and behavior. As a result, the emergent effect of the writer's experience is much closer to the alternative theory by R. Barthes, who looks on mythos in the postmodern framing of philosophical hermeneutics with the view to their changing in history:

Myth is a pure ideographic system, where the forms are still motivated by the concept that they represent while not yet, by a long way, covering the sum of its possibilities for representation^[42].

Challenging the existential and cognitive consistency of mythological archetypes, W. Golding's fable tales fit into the postmodern criticism of conservative mental schemas or preconceived ideological systems that do not correspond to the actual course of things but still order strategies and practices of their cognition. M. Foucault^[2], J. Deleuze and F. Guattary^[6], J. Derrida^[43], and other critics put forward the requirement for the exclusion of these conventional constructs from epistemological frame of reference on the grounds of their disparity with the principle of unprejudiced thinking and unbiased knowledge. M. Foucault, in particular, insisted on dissociation of cognitive discourse from long-standing

ideological systems for the reason, that they disrupt their own "systems of formation" of current knowledge in various areas of sciences and arts:

These systems of formation must not be taken as blocks of immobility, static forms that are imposed on discourse from the outside, and that define once and for all its characteristics and possibilities^[2].

4.2. The Postmodern Methodology of Philosophical Hermeneutics and Its Practical Implications in the Literary Works by W. Golding

J. Derrida, in his turn, worked out a general methodology and particular methods for deconstructing such solidified blocks of ideas by reactivating the inner core of resistance to their pressure inside the "closure" of the actual narrative:

Within the closure, by an oblique and always perilous movement, constantly falling back within what is being deconstructed, it is necessary to surround the critical concepts with a careful and thorough discourse – to mark the conditions, the medium, and the limits to their effectiveness and to designate rigorously their intimate relationship to the machine whose deconstruction they permit^[43].

The previous insights into the two earliest W. Golding's novels, written several years before the treatise by J. Derrida's, testify the author's deliberate use of the similar tools of radical hermeneutics for disclosing the negative implications of mythos as misleading predispositions of mind. It is the same case with the novel *Pincher Martin*, which denotes a further postmodern shift in the ontological groundwork and epistemological framing of the entire sequel of fable tales by W. Golding. Employed there first as a means for discrediting the modernist concept of all-sufficient personality, the method of immanent criticism undergoes subsequent modifications to become the principle of "from within" deconstruction of rational or imaginary ideations, built on this concept in literature and philosophy. The relevancy of W. Golding's message about the inferiority of a person-centered picture of reality looks especially obvious in comparison to the statement by I. Murdoch, who considered decentralization of the literary character to be a primary objective of postmodern creative writing: "We need to return from the self-centred concept of sincerity to the other-centred concept of truth"^[44].

Calling in question the sovereign status of the self-centered hero in the parable novel *Pincher Martin*, W. Golding witnesses his existential nonentity as the subject of aesthetic representations in a literary work. The given arguments approximate M. Foucault's judgment about "death of the subject", but only to the extent that does not put at risk of negation the real author of discourse or the doer of actions. The French philosopher justifies his anti-subjective theory by the exigency of open epistemological space for objective knowledge about the contemporary human condition: "It is no longer possible to think in our day other than in the void left by human disappearance. For this void does not create a deficiency; it does not constitute a lacuna that must be filled. It is nothing more and nothing else, than the unfolding a space in which it is once more possible to think"^[45]. Expectedly, W. Golding's art project does not comply with M. Foucault's challenging statement, since the abolition of human subject constitutes a direct opposition to the very essence of literature as an area of humanitarian knowledge. At the same time, the writing practice of the novelist leaves no doubt, that the arbitrary subjectivity of the authorized hero is even less compatible with the obliging responsibility of the factual author for the objective picture of human reality. To align the traditional setup for the integrity of the represented image and the modernist offset from this frame, W. Golding relies on the concept of the evolutionary type of literary character, capable of self-renunciation and exceeding the limits of egocentric vision. The idea of the intrapersonal self-transcendence, developed in the novel *Free Fall*, makes up a common reference point of the literary work by W. Golding and the literary theory by Ph. Lacoue-Labarthe and J.-L. Nancy, who described the "autoformation" of the postmodern hero as the process of being "always in a state of excess with itself"^[46]. In addition, the linear correlations between the progressing changes of the protagonist's inner state and his world outlook are steadily shifting the reference frame of the featured picture to the vanishing point, where the modernist bias for subjective preferences coincides with the traditional principle of objective representation of things in the art of literature. J. Baudrillard came to a similar compromising solution to the dilemma of subject and object relations in postmodern philosophy, having started with the axiomatic theses about the continuity of inward and outward perception of things by human consciousness:

Perhaps the subject will see itself one day seduced by its object (which quite natural), and it will become once more the prey of appearance – which is by far the best thing that can happen to it and to science^[5].

4.3. The Ethical Aspects of W. Golding's Art System as Related to the Axiological Guidelines in Postmodern Philosophical Concepts

However, apart from the French philosopher, the British writer avoids reducing the subject-and-object duality to non-difference singularity by developing the idea of their moral integration in the novel *Free Fall*. As the transfiguration of the hero begins with the inner struggle of his humanistic essence against individualistic selfness, the generally accepted human values prove to be the signposts for outer advancements, which attain the ethical dimensions to the reference frame of the story. Furthermore, in the novel *The Spire*, the ethical reference points enter and fit in with the ontological and epistemological coordinates of the story line to the effect that the moral experience of the central hero emerge as the axiological measure of truth on his way of living and knowing. Actually, the uncover of the meanings of things in terms of value anticipates the return of ethical regulations in postmodern discourse, aimed at the resurrection of moral subject in humanities and at humanistic validation of finds and discoveries in positive sciences. Tracing the convergent trends for humanization of scholarly and scientific research in the latest theories of knowledge, A. R. Karimov fixates the enshrining of such cross-disciplinary connections in terms of the ethical category of "intellectual virtue", or of the ability of the subject for evaluation of the achieved concepts of truth:

Epistemology of virtues as a theory of knowledge is destined to conceptually clarify the transcending faculties of the subject, or the intellectual virtues by means of "conceptual analysis and elucidation of axiological (regulative) notions"^[47].

The discussion of W. Golding's fable novels with regard to the relevant philosophical studies gives reason for the statement that they belong to the paradigm of postmodern culture. At the same time, the earlier publication of W. Golding's writings as compared to the issuing of the named theories makes up a chronological interval, which indicates

the independent formations of the related reference frames and brings clarity to the divergences, conditioned by the literary or philosophical priorities of the authors in the corresponding period. Seen through this temporal perspective, the compared systems of ideas evince disparities in axiological and cultural aesthetic parameters in spite of common reference points at the levels of their ontological foundations and epistemological extensions. As the bottom line of the discussion, it is possible to note that, while the similarities trace back to the shared strategies for disrupting the egocentric model of the world, the growing differences stem from the choice of the authors between the methodology of radical deconstruction and the principle of moderate reconstruction of the object in question from within. Applying the methods of immanent transformation to person-centered pictures of reality, W. Golding alludes to literary experiences of the earlier and later predecessors and thus sets the reference points, which denote the continuing lineage of his ethical and aesthetic solutions with both classical traditions and modernist innovations.

5. Conclusions

The crosscutting research into the five fable novels by W. Golding found that they pertain to reflexive fiction, where figurative images appear as the outcome of the authors' intentional work on representation of real things in their essential meanings under the current circumstances of social life, cultural consciousness and condition of art. Considered in this perspective, W. Golding's fable sequence exhibits the aspects, which reflect the condition of literature after modernism and the formation of the reference frame of its postmodern development. The given frame of references has a definitive system of ontological, epistemological, societal and aesthetic coordinates in contemporary cultural space.

The ontological determinants of the coordinate system under study are subject to the writer's assumption about the inconsistency of the modernist outlook, within which natural and social reality might undergo forced intrusion with the view to their rational transformations. The postmodern reassessment of these groundbreaking strategies incurred the offset of gnoseological reference points from the outer world of objects towards the inner abilities of human subjects to reconcile the goals of civilization with the natural course of

things. W. Golding's further insights into the historical of development human consciousness adjusted the novels series the deep cultural retrospective, whereby their intellectual design obtained strong links with the age-old traditions, notably impaired in the precedent modernist period. As a result, the reclaimed principle of historical continuity increased the aesthetic dimensions of the novels reference frame to the extent that opened it for the inclusive perception of artistic experiences from ancient epoch to recent past.

Provided the coherent implementation in all the books of the fable series, the reestablished principle facilitated the positive solutions to the problems of human destiny in the world with bilateral references to the traditional presumption about the ethical integrity of social beings and to the modernist conception of relative sovereignty of personal existence. However, the synergic effect of the shared frame of reference exceeds the common outcome of the two trends, giving rise to methodological issues for the postmodern development of the aesthetic, didactic and cognitive functions of literature.

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