THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE NOVELS OF GRAHAM GREENE

A Thesis
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Chapter I - Introduction

Graham Greene's first three novels are historical adventure stories. For example, The Man Within, published in 1929, is the story of a young man who betrays his fellow smugglers into the hands of the law. The examination of his fear because of his knowledge that they will be avenged, constitutes the main material of the book. The novels of Greene which appeared in the period 1932-1938, however, have a contemporary setting. They follow the general pattern of the conventional thriller. The action is sudden and violent, events move swiftly, and suspense is continually sustained. Raven in A Gun for Sale (1936) is a hired assassin. He is chased by the police from London to a northern town called Nottwich. He in turn is trailing the people who tried to "double-cross" him by paying him in stolen bank notes. The chase takes the characters involved to a housing project, a house of prostitution, a jumble sale, and through the streets of Nottwich during a practice against gas attack. Other novels of the same period, while containing fewer characteristics of the thriller, still maintain the element of chase. Technically Greene's novels of this period can be compared to the mystery stories which form the basis of the films of

Hitchcock. They were, however, read as thrillers and nothing more.

In 1940 The Power and the Glory appeared. Superficially the story follows the same pattern as Greene's previous books. It is set in Mexico, where the Catholic Church has been ruthlessly persecuted, and the hero is a priest, the only one remaining in the state, who is trying to escape from the police. However, he is neither a conventional type of hero nor a conventional type of priest. He is continually drunk; he has fathered a child; he has lost all the marks of a good priest, to say nothing of a good Christian, but by the end of the book the reader is left with the impression that he is closer to heaven than even he realizes because in his degradation he has learnt humility.

The remaining books confirm the suspicion that there is more to Greene's novels than one would at first suppose. Scobie, the hero of "The Heart of the Matter, is ready to offer up his soul in damnation for the sake of any other soul who may be damned. "Oh God," he says, "I offer up my damnation to you. Take it. Use it for them."[1]

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[1]Graham Greene, The Heart of the Matter,(The Reprint Society of Canada Ltd., 1948) p.242.

Arthur Rowe in The Ministry of Fear has such an over-developed sense of pity that he kills his wife rather than see her suffer from an incurable illness.

These later books, however, still contain certain characteristics of the adventure novel. Events in The Ministry of Fear move swiftly from a church bazaar, to a private inquiry bureau, to a seance, to a nursing home. This leads to the assumption that the earlier novels must also have a deeper significance although it may be less obvious. In the closing pages of Brighton Rock, after Pinkie's death, Rose, his child-wife, goes to the confessional for comfort. The priest speaks to her about the "appalling ---- strangeness of the mercy of God", and later he says to her, "---- a Catholic is more capable of evil than anyone."[2] After a further examination of the same book the reader will come to the conclusion that as well as being a "super" adventure story it is also a penetrating study of good and evil. "Life's not so bad," Rose says to Pinkie, and he answers her savagely: "I'll tell you what it is. It's a gaol, it's not knowing where to get some money. Worms and cataract, cancer. You hear 'em shrieking from the upper windows - children being born. It's dying slowly."[3]

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[2]Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, (William Heinemann Ltd., Uniform edition, London, 1951, pp.331 & 332.

[3]Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p.304.

A more detailed examaination of A Gun for Sale will also reveal that the adventure story provides only a suitable background for the real material which is the isolation of Raven. Even his fellow criminals will not accept him, and when Anne approaches him with an attitude of trust and understanding his first reaction is one of astonishment. He is "like Kay in The Snow Queen; he bore the cold within him as he walked",[4] Anne's friendliness leads him to confide in her:

> "This isn't a world I'd bring children into -------- It's just their (the parents') selfishness-------- They have a good time and what do they mind if someone's born ugly? Three minutes in bed or against a wall, and then a lifetime for the one that's born."[5]

With few exceptions this expression could have been uttered by any of Greene's characters because their significance is not limited to the part they play in the novels themselves. They serve to illustrate the emotions developed in man as a result of his contact with others, and also to illustrate what Mr. Allott and Miss Farris call a "terror of life" inherent in man as a result of living in an evil world.

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[4]Graham Greene, A Gun for Sale, (William Heinemann Ltd., Uniform Edition, London, 1951) p.9.

[5]Ibid., p.155.

Greene's essays, the most important of which are collected in a volume entitled The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, express his views of life without the disguise of fiction. An understanding of his novels may be better obtained by referring to these essays before examining the fiction in any greater detail. In a discussion of Walter de la Mare's short stories Greene states that "every writer who can be called in the wide eighteenth-century use of the term of a poet, is a victim: a man given over to an obsession".[6] Earlier in the same book, in an examination of the private universe of Henry James, he also states that "a sense of evil religious in its intensity"[7] is the force, or the obsession, which drives James to write. Greene's whole interpretation of James's work is seen in terms of good and evil. He finds that James is fascinated by the idea of treachery, and the betrayal of one person by another, who is usually a trusted friend such as Kate Croy in The Wings of the Dove, he relates to James's overpowering sense of evil. Greene further maintains that James a social critic only when he was not a religious one so that the evil of his characters comes not from a particular society but from human nature. Mr. Allott and Miss Farris describe Greene's view of life as follows:

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6. Graham Greene, "Walter de la Mare's Short Stories", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, (Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1951) p. 79.

7. Graham Greene, "Henry James: The Private Universe", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, p. 21.

> There is a sentence by Gaughin, quoted approvingly by Greene, that comes near to expressing his main obsessional outlook: "Life being what it is, one dreams of revenge." A terror of life, a terror of what experience can do to the individual, a terror at a predetermined corruption, is the motive force that drives Greene as a novelist.[8]

The nature of this obsession conditions the fact that more often than not it is expressed in terms of good and evil, "of moral Good and Evil which are not natural Good and Bad or Puritan Right and Wrong"[9]. In a collection of letters exchanged between Greene, V. S. Pritchett and Elizabeth Bowen entitled Why do I Write?, Greene expresses the view that it is the duty of every writer to sympathize with his characters. Characters with whom the author does not sympathize cannot be fully realized. The task of the author is to arouse among his readers an understanding and sympathy not only for his most guilty characters but also for those who are the most sanctimonious and the most self-satisfied. In a fallen world such as our own the individual has a right to pity and understanding.

> "------- the creative writer perceives his world once and for all in childhood and adolescence, and his whole career is an effort to illustrate his private world in terms of the great public world we all share ..."[10]

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[8] K. Allott & M. Farris, The Art of Graham Greene, (Hamish Hamilton, 1951), p.15.

[9] T.S. Eliot, "Baudelaire". From Selected Essays 1917-1932. (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1932) p.344.

[10] Graham Greene, "The Young Dickens", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, (Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1951) p.54.

This passage appears in an essay about Dickens, but as it is intended to be applied in a general sense, an investigation of Greene's private world would appear to be advantageous. Greene has written no autobiography as such, but a sufficient number of clues can be found in his essays and travel books to provide insight into his childhood and adolescence where one would expect to find the sources of his obsession.

Little is known of Greene's life before his school days. He was born in 1904, the fourth son of a family of six. His father was headmaster at Berkhamsted, an English Public School, which Greene attended. Greene remembers his father as a progressive and tolerant master, but he hated life at the school nevertheless. However, what was more repellent to his over-sensitive nature was the way of life which the school represented. The prologue to The Lawless Roads supplies the core of his early beliefs. He compares his home and school to two countries, sharply emphasising the border that separates them. In Greene's fiction the border acquires an important symbolic significance.

> One was an inhabitant of both countries; on Saturday and Sunday afternoons of one side of the baize door, the rest of the week of the other. How can life on a border be other than restless? You are pulled by different ties of hate and love. For hate is quite as powerful a tie; it demands allegiance. In the land of the skycrapers, of stone stairs and cracked bells ringing early, one was aware of fear and hate, a kind of lawlessness -

> appalling cruelties could be practised without a second thought; one met for the first time characters, adult and adolescent, who bore about them the genuine quality of evil. There was Collifax who practised torments with dividers, Mr. Cranden with pale bleached hair, a dusty gown, a kind of demoniac sensuality; from these heights evil declined towards Parlow whose desk was filled with minute photographs - advertisements of art photos. Hell lay about them in their infancy.[11]

A passage in Brighton Rock contains the same idea:

> They thought because he was only seventeen --- he jerked his narrow shoulders back at the memory that he'd killed his man, and these bogies who thought they were clever weren't clever enough to discover that. He trailed the clouds of his own glory after him: hell lay about him in his infancy. He was ready for more deaths.[12]

The passage results from an ironical twisting of some lines from Wordsworth:

> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home:
> Heaven lies about us in our infancy![13]

Like William Blake, who first wrote Songs of Innocence and then Songs of Experience, Wordsworth believed that the child is born innocent, and as he becomes more aware of the vanities of the world during the process of growing up, he becomes separated from his original state of innocence. "The world is too much with us," he maintains.[14] His poem,

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[11] Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, (Longmans Green & Co., 1939) p.10.

[12] Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p.88

[13] Wordsworth, Ode on the Intimations of Immortality, ll. 62-66.

[14] Wordsworth, "The World Is Too Much with Us", l. 1.

Michael, is a good example of this idea. Greene, on the other hand, takes the less common view that man is first aware of evil, and develops a sense of good only because he has experienced evil first. In The Lawless Roads he continues to say:

> And so faith came to one - shapelessly, without dogma, a presence above a croquet lawn, something associated with violence, cruelty, evil across the way. One began to believe in heaven because one believed in hell, but for a long time it was hell only one could picture with a certain intimacy ------15

Greene was, he reports, about thirteen years old at the time. It is therefore not surprising that he treats young people who have learnt too much at too early an age with a certain tenderness. The importance of the child in Greene's fiction will be dealt with later in greater detail.

However, what Greene gained from experience he also acquired from his early reading. In an essay called "The Lost Childhood" he recalls with what relish he first discovered the writings of Anthony Hope and Rider Haggard. He confesses, however, that King Solomon's Mines could not finally satisfy. The characters were too ideal; they were not life as one had already begun to know it. But when he read Marjorie Bowen's The Viper of Milan, "the future for better or worse really stuck. From that moment I began to write." [16] He goes on to say why.

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15 Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p.11

16 Graham Greene, "The Lost Childhood," from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, p.15

> It was no good in that real world to dream that one would ever be a Sir Henry Curtis, but della Scala who at last turned from an honesty that never paid and betrayed his friends and died dishonoured and a failure even at treachery - it was easier for a child to escape behind his mask ------- Goodness has only once found a perfect incarnation in a human body and never will again, but evil can always find a home there. Human nature is not black and white but black and grey. I read all that in The Viper of Milan and I looked around and I saw that it was so. [17]

Another theme that Greene found in Miss Bowen's book was the sense of doom that lies over success. Krogh, the Swedish stockbroker of England Made Me, is successful; he has great wealth and position. He is also lonely and unhappy. His wealth cuts him off from the poor from whose ranks he originally rose, and his class cuts him from the rich. Miss Bowen had given Greene his pattern:

> ---------religion might explain it later to me in other terms, but the pattern was already there - perfect evil walking the world where perfect good can never walk again, and only the pendulum ensures that after all in the end justice is done. [18]

As Greene grew older his views of life did not change but only grew more intense. Later in The Lawless Roads he says again:

> Those were primary symbols: life later altered them: in a midland city, riding on trams in winter past the Gothic hotel, the super-cinema, the sooty newspaper office where one worked at night, passing the single professional prostitute trying to keep the circulation going under the blue and powdered skin, one began slowly, painfully, reluctantly, to populate heaven. [19]

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[17] Ibid., p.16.

[18] Ibid., p. 17.

[19] Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p. 11.

He goes on to give further examples from his world: a man rushing into an almshouse to cut his throat; a young boy and girl, both under twenty, who were found headless on a railway track. She was about to have second child, and the responsibility of her first, which she had when she was thirteen, could have been fixed between fourteen youths. The latter episode is introduced into Brighton Rock representing the world into which Pinkie was born and from which he is trying to escape. Greene compares the futility of our existence with a game of Monopoly which was then becoming popular.

> "The object", the rules said, "of owning property is to collect rents from opponents stopping there. Rentals are greatly increased by the erection of houses and hotels -------- Players falling on an unoccupied square may raise a loan from the bank, otherwise property will be sold to the highest bidder -------- Players may land in jail."[20]

Greene himself tried to withdraw from this world. In "The Revolver in the Corner Cupboard" he relates how he discovered his brother's revolver and the use he made of it. Once beyond Berkhamsted Common he placed one round in the revolver, spun the chambers, placed the weapon to his head and pulled the trigger. "The chance, of course," he reports in the essay, "was six to one in favour of life."[21]

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20. Ibid., p. 15.

21. Graham Greene, "The Revolver in the Corner Cupboard", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, p. 173.

Previous to that he had drunk hypo and hay fever lotion, and eaten deadly nightshade. He experimented several times with the revolver but eventually "the effect of the drug wore off". There is no objective evidence to support these assertions and it is possible that a writer, possessing such an imaginative nature as Greene's, might be tempted to exaggerate the importance of such events, writing about them in later life. Nevertheless, his motives for taking the "drug" are not out of keeping with what is known of his life. He regards none of these acts as attempts at suicide. He attributes his desire for the "drug" to the following reasons:

> I was seventeen and terribly bored and in love with my sister's governess - one of those miserable, hopeless, romantic loves of adolescence that set in many minds the idea that love and despair are inextricable and that successful love hardly deserves the name. At that age one may fall irrevocably in love with failure, and success of any kind loses half its savour before it is experienced. Such a love is surrendered once and for all to the singer at the pavement's edge, the bankrupt, the old school friend who wants to touch you for a dollar. Perhaps in many so conditioned it is the love for God that mainly survives, because in his eyes they can imagine themselves remaining always drab, seedy, unsuccessful, and therefore worthy of notice. [22]

Again there is the reference to failure. Greene later confesses that he thinks the boredom was far deeper than the love. "Now with the revolver in my pocket I was beginning to emerge. I had stumbled on the perfect cure. I was going to escape in one way or another -----." It

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[22] Ibid., p.173.

is interesting to place beside this self-analysis T. S. Eliot's interpretation of Baudelaire's ennui:

> Either because he cannot adjust himself to the actual world he has to reject it in favour of Heaven and Hell, or because he has the perception of Heaven and Hell he rejects the present world: both ways of putting it are tenable ----- His ennui may of course be explained, as everything can be explained in psychological or pathological terms; but it is also, from the opposite point of view, a true form of acedia, arising from the unsuccessful struggle towards the spiritual life.[23]

It was Greene's awareness of Heaven and Hell and his continued struggle towards the spiritual life that motivated his trips to Africa and Mexico. Greene visited Africa in 1936. At this point in his literary career he was obsessed with the theme of lost innocence. He compares this idea with the discovery he made in Africa that the closer the natives came in contact with civilization the more corrupt they became. In the record of his trip, Journey Without Maps, he registers surprise that the natives seemed so little concerned by the fact that he was travelling unarmed with a great deal of money. Correspondingly in a description of Freetown, the British capital of Sierra Leone, he discovers that everything ugly and evil in the town is European. He states this in general terms:

> To-day our world seems peculiarly susceptible to brutality. There is a touch of nostalgia in the pleasure we take in gangster novels, in characters who have so agreeably simplified their

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23. T. S. Eliot "Baudelaire", from Selected Essays 1917-1932, p. 339.

> emotions that they have begun living again at a level below the cerebral. We, like Wordsworth, are living after a war and a revolution, and these half-castes fighting with bombs between the cliffs of skyscrapers seem more likely than we to be aware of Proteus rising from the sea. It is not, of course, that one wishes to stay forever at that level, but when one sees to what unhappiness, to what peril of extinction centuries of cerebration have brought us, one sometimes has a curiosity to discover if one can from what we have come, to recall at what point we went astray.[24]

Greene was, he records, attracted by the seediness of Africa, and he admits that, for him, seediness has a very deep appeal. The seediness of civilization, the sky-signs in Leicester Square, the "tarts" in Bond Street, represent for him the sense of nostalgia for something lost. These thoughts are a logical outcome of his early beliefs expressed in The Lawless Roads. He says earlier:

> But there are times of impatience, when one is less content to rest at the urban stage, when one is willing to suffer some discomfort for the chance of finding - there are a thousand names for it, King Solomon's Mines, the "heart of darkness" if one is romantically inclined, or more simply, as Herr Heuser puts it in his African novel, The Inner Journey, one's place in time, based on a knowledge not only of one's present but of the past from which one has emerged. There are others, of course, who prefer to look a stage ahead, for whom Intourist provides cheap tickets into a plausible future, but my journey represented a distrust of any future based on what we are. [25]

The same motives then which drove Greene to experiment with the revolver, to take a "gamble with six chances to one

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24. Graham Greene, Journey Without Maps, (Wm. Heinemann Ltd., Uniform Edition, London, 1951), p.10.

25. Ibid., p.8.

against an inquest",[26] were responsible for his journey to Africa, "not a particular place, but a shape, a strangeness, a wanting to know".[27] Journey Without Maps is not a conventional travel book. With his description of events and experiences Greene has drawn parallels and contrasts from past recollections in order to show the relation between man's development from the primitive and his loss of innocence in childhood. He has chosen as an epigraph to this book a passage from Oliver Wendell Holmes in which our existence is compared to the fragments of a child's map. Greene attempts to piece together the fragments.

Dreams play an important part in Journey Without Maps. They are significant in Greene's fiction, and often serve to interpret a character's past without disturbing the forward trend of the novel. Andrews in The Man Within, Raven in A Gun for Sale, and Rowe in The Ministry of Fear all have significant dreams. Their importance may result from the fact that as a youth Greene was sent to a psycho-analyst, but characteristically he interprets the personages in his own dreams as being representations of Evil; "the man with gold teeth and rubber surgical gloves; the old woman with ringworm; the man with his throat cut dragging himself across the carpet to the bed".[28]

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26. Graham Greene, "The Revolver in the Corner Cupboard", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, p.175

27. Graham Greene, Journey Without Maps, p.32.

28. Ibid., p.220.

Evil, and Good, were represented by Greene as external forces trying to get in. Evil to Pinkie, in Brighton Rock, is seen in terms of sexual pleasure. It was like "something trying to get in; the pressure of gigantic wings against the glass". As he drives Rose to the place where he plans to kill her Pinkie recalls how he withstood it:

> ---------with all the bitter force of the school bench, the cement playground, the St. Pancras waiting-room, Dallow's and Judy's secret lust, and the cold unhappy moment on the pier. If the glass broke, if the beast - whatever it was - got in, God knows what it would do. He had a sense of huge havoc - the confession, the penance and the sacrament - an awful distraction, and he drove blind into the rain.[29]

This novel was written in the same period as Journey Without Maps. Greene, like Pinkie, sees Evil as a force, but this force even penetrated his subconscious.

The Lawless Roads, Greene's description of his journey to Mexico follows the same pattern as Journey Without Maps. Most of the autobiographical material has been examined already. However, the epigraph from Newman's Apologia which Greene prefixes to this book gives a complete picture of his fallen world. As it is significant it will be quoted at length.

> To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways,

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29. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p.322.

> habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and requirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken, of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers of truth, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully and yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, "having no hope and without God in the world" - all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.
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> What shall be said to this heart-piercing, reason-bewildering fact? I can only answer, that either there is no Creator, or this living society of men is in a true sense discarded from His presence ---- if there be a God, since there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity.[30]

Evelyn Waugh in a review of The Heart of the Matter states that, "The children of Adam are not a race of noble savages who need only a divine spark to perfect them. They are aboriginally corrupt ------."[31] This view is similar to Newman's and one with which Greene also agrees. Where he is not aware of man's aboriginal corruption life is purposeless. In describing San Antonio, a

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30. Cardinal Newman, Apologia pro Vita Sua, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1900), pp. 241-242.

31. Evelyn Waugh, "Felix Culpa", Commonweal, July 16, 1948.

town which lies close to the border between Mexico and the United States, he reflects:

> Original sin under the spell of elegance has lost its meaning. Where, I thought, loitering on a bridge above the little tamed river, was there any sign of that "terrible aboriginal calamity" which Newman perceived everywhere? This - during the day - was the perfect ivory tower. The horror and the beauty of human life were both absent.[32]

To him evil is not so much an absence of being or a deprivation of good, but the basis of human nature. Like James, Greene is not purely a social critic. He is a critic of life, but to him life without evil is meaningless. Evil is the way of the world and we can only reach that understanding and sympathy, which to Greene is the essence of Christianity, by suffering and wrestling with evil. The characters in the later novels struggle, and in some cases, succeed. In the earlier novels the force of evil against which the characters have to contend is too strong.

The world of Greene in which this evil exists is a place of violence and brutality. The backgrounds against which his stories are set add to the desolation of his theme. The Ministry of Fear and The End of the Affair both take place in London during, and immediately following, the German blitz. Much of the action occurs among the debris and ruins which have resulted from the bombing attacks. In The Ministry of Fear London is described,

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32. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p.27.

as follows:-

> The stairs were at the back of the flats looking towards Chelsea, and as you climbed above the second floor and your view lifted, the war came back into sight. Most of the church spires seemed to have been snapped off two-thirds up like sugar-sticks, and there was an appearance of slum clearance where there hadn't really been any slums.[33]

The Third Man is set against the remains of post-war Vienna. The sun rarely shines in a Greene landscape, and when it does it brings with it the terrible depressing heat of Mexico in The Power and the Glory or Africa in The Heart of the Matter. The former book opens on that note:

> Mr. Tench went out to look for his ether cylinder, into the blazing Mexican sun and the bleaching dust. A few vultures looked down from the roof with shabby indifference; he wasn't carrion yet. A faint feeling of rebellion stirred in Mr. Tench's heart, and he wrenched up a piece of the road with splintering finger-nails and tossed it feebly towards them. One rose and flapped across the town: over the tiny plaza, over the bust of an ex-president, ex-general, ex-human being, over the two stalls which sold mineral water, towards the river and the sea. It wouldn't find anything there; the sharks looked after the carrion on that side.[34]

The early novels have not the same realistic setting, but in their place more romantic descriptions occur. They

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33. Graham Greene, The Ministry of Fear, (William Heinemann Ltd., Uniform Edition, London, 1951), p.92.

34. Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory, (William Heinemann Ltd., Uniform Edition, London, 1951), p.1.

are, however, intended to serve the same purpose. "Mists", for example, occur often in passages of description.

In the passage quoted from The Power and the Glory the reader is made aware not only of the physical characteristics of the town, but also of the effect which they have on a particular person. Mr. Tench's self-will is so sapped by the squalid atmosphere of Mexico that he cannot even arouse enough energy in himself to leave. Arthur Rowe notices that the people of London have developed special characteristics resulting from the ever-present possibility of an air-raid.

> --------in Clapham where day raids were frequent there was a hunted look which was absent from Westminster, where the night raids were heavier but the shelters were better. The waitress who brought Rowe's toast and coffee looked jumpy and pallid, as if she had lived too much on the run; she had an air of listening whenever gears shrieked.35

Thus Greene's clever use of background description adds tremendously in presenting his sense of a fallen world.

Greene's frequent use of the adventure novel, or thriller, can be attributed to the same reason. Readers of detective fiction make a sharp distinction in their own minds between the forces of good and evil, one chasing the other. In Greene's books, however, there is one great difference. The reader's sympathy is more often directed towards the pursued. Greene also divides

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35. Graham Greene, The Ministry of Fear, p.76.

his fiction into two groups - "entertainments" and "novels". The "entertainments" bear a closer resemblance to the thriller; events move more swiftly and rely more on coincidence to carry them forward, and the characters are less fully developed. The main characters in the "novels" are pursued like those in an "entertainment" but in a less literal manner. Anthony Farrant in England Made Me is pursued by his past, by his own brilliant ideas, and by his failure to make anything out of them. Because of his repeated failures he can never remain anywhere; he has always got to move on. He is a victim of a machine society, represented by his sister, Kate, and Krogh, the financier. The "entertainments", however, are no less serious in content, although the ideas are not as fully explored. The Ministry of Fear is more exciting and the action moves more quickly than it does in The Heart of the Matter, but the theme is just as serious. The advantage of this form, for although they vary in degree all Greene's books are adventure stories, is that Greene can deal with such abstract subjects as sin and God, good and evil, in immediate and everyday terms. Mr. Sylvester, in an article for Commonweal, says that Greene can write of certain things in such a way that the knowing are not disturbed and the ignorant are not aware.[36]

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36. H. Sylvester, "Graham Greene", Commonweal, Oct.25,1940.

II

Greene, however, is not so much interested in the world he describes as in the people who inhabit it. In an excellent criticism of the film version of The Third Man Hugh Ross Williamson sees Harry Lime, the black-marketeer, and not Rollo Martins as the hero. He finds it significant that, following Harry's burial, Anna, Harry's girl, ignores Rollo who stands for all that is fine in American man, and walks away from the cemetery alone. Harry is the hero because in a fallen world so corrupt as this no one can live in it and escape the evil. He goes on:

> It is the human person - not specifically the Christian or the Catholic person, not only the artist or the individualist, but merely the person - who is threatened, oppressed, disintegrated in the modern world. Any true contemporary art must focus on this fact. 37

Greene too is concerned with the person, with the individual. His views in Why Do I Write?, where he pleads for sympathy and understanding of all characters whether they be the most guilty, the most sanctimonious, the most self-satisfied, have already been mentioned.

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37. H. R. Williamson, "The Third Man", The Cinema 1950, ed. Roger Manvell, Pelican Books.

In Journey Without Maps he expresses, as we have seen, an affection for the seedy. He recalls certain characters. There is Major Grant who telephones his brothel a day ahead of time to make an appointment. He orders the type "according as his passion urged him at the moment------- he liked the idea of ordering a woman, as one might order a joint of meat, according to size and cut and price. There was a wealth of dissatisfaction in his indulgence; he knew the world, and all the time he took his revenge for the poor opinion he had of it."[38] There is also Miss Kilvane who "lived in the Cotswolds in a strange high house like a Noah's ark with a monkey-puzzle tree and a step-ladder of terraces"[39] Again in describing a native Greene concludes:

> Already he was intent on joining that odd assortment of "characters" (the Grants and the Kilvanes) one collects through life, vivid grotesques, people so simple that they always have the same side turned to one, damned by their unself-consciousness to be material for the novelist, to supply the minor characters, to be endlessly caricatured, to make in their multiplicity one's world.[40]

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38. Graham Greene, Journey Without Maps, p.75

39. Ibid., p. 76.

40. Ibid., p. 202.

Greene, like Joseph Conrad, admires the courage of his characters who struggle for life and victory, but his irony, also like Conrad's, comes from the fact that he is aware that most of them are doomed to failure. These characters who struggle against the forces of evil in their fallen world are the type of men to whom Stein, in Conrad's Lord Jim, was referring when he said, "A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea. If he tries to climb out into the air as inexperienced people endeavour to do, he drowns.----"[41] They refuse to submit themselves to the destructive element; they become hunted. These characters are the most common in Greene's fiction. Raven, in A Gun for Sale is literally hunted by the police, but also by his past: his father was hanged as a criminal; his mother killed herself in a violent manner; he spent his childhood in an institution about which he has nothing but horrible memories. In the same way Andrews in The Man Within is hunted by the smugglers whom he has betrayed, and by the memory of his dead father whose brutality was one of the reasons for his betrayal of the smugglers. Rowe in The Ministry of Fear is hunted by the fifth column and by the memory of the mercy-killing

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41. Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim, Complete Works Vol.XXI, (Doubleday, Page and Company, New York, 1925), p.214.

of his wife; Pinkie in Brighton Rock by the law and by his past.

These hunted characters who are isolated and withdrawn often come into contact with a force of tenderness and understanding. They are made to feel an interest in what goes on beyond their own existence. Sometimes as a result of this contact, they even join the ranks of the pursuers. Anne's unexpected understanding of Raven's problem as well as her acceptance of him in spite of his hare-lip, which he feels isolates him from the rest of mankind, leads him to become more determined than ever to catch those who "double-crossed" him. In The Confidential Agent D. arrives in England, not only pursued by members of the opposing political party, but also distrusted by his own. He has come from a country which is torn by civil war to a country which is at peace, but he feels that he brings the war with him. He is befriended by Else, a fourteen year old girl, and when she is murdered by members of his own party, D. becomes determined to take the law into his own hands, and he himself pursues those who are responsible for her death. These hunted men have a law of their own: a natural law as opposed to social justice. D. is a follower of this natural law and enforces it when he thinks it necessary. On the other hand, the devasting

effects of social justice are seen in It's a Battlefield. These hunted men are often brutal and violent; many of them are murderers. But they all respond to sympathy and tenderness.

Some of Greene's characters, rather than fighting the evil in the world, try to escape it. Of these, some have already faced it and, horrified at what they have seen, withdraw into an imaginary world of their own making. One of the most pathetic examples of this type is Conder in It's a Battlefield. He is a newspaper reporter, "an unmarried man with a collection of foreign coins, who lived in a bed-sitting-room in Little Compton-street".[42] He has, however, invented for himself a series of fictitious existences all of which possess the security and comfort which he lacks. At one time he is "a captain of industry leaving his director's room in Imperial Chemicals", or again "the man who knew the secrets of Scotland Yard, the crime reporter"[43] To his acquaintances at the newspaper office he appears as a successful journalist with a devoted wife and six children to support.

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42. Graham Greene, It's a Battlefield, (William Heinemann Ltd., Uniform Edition, London, 1951), p.24.

43. Ibid., pp. 22 & 23.

Other characters have refused to even face the world. Physically they have matured, but mentally they still live in a world of their childhood. Minty in England Made Me, like Conder, also lives alone. He is consoled by memories of his childhood days at Harrow and by his early Anglo-Catholicism. Ironically his memories of school are not happy ones, but he prefers to live with them than with the realities of his present day existence. The pleasure he obtains from organising "old-boys'" dinners is singularly pathetic. Wilson and Harris, two ex-public school boys in The Heart of the Matter, are further examples of this type. They invent a game, the object of which is to kill as many cockroaches as possible. The victor is, of course, the one who kills the most. Although the seriousness with which they both take part in this game is amusing, it is also equally pathetic.

There are also those characters who recognize the world for what it is. The hunted men are aware of the evil in the world, but only because they themselves have been affected by it. These characters, on the other hand, are aware of the whole state of mankind. Domassener, the dictator in The Name of Action, and Czinner, the socialist leader in Stamboul Train, have a certain amount of perception, but they are both in a

sense hunted men as well. They are too idealistic in their outlook. The idea that they can improve the state of mankind is doomed to failure from the start. The police lieutenant in The Power and the Glory also belongs to this group. The Assistant Commissioner in It's a Battlefield besides being aware of the evil and injustice in the world, is also aware that he is powerless to do anything about it. Towards the close of the book he says to Caroline Bury, "Well one lives and then, that is, one dies", and Greene comments:

> It was the nearest he could come to conveying his sense of great waste, a useless expenditure of lives.[44]

Scobie in The Heart of the Matter is also aware of the evil in the world and his awareness is sharpened by his strong religious sense. He is not content, however, to leave things in God's hands, and this accounts for the terrible fate that awaits him. It is interesting to note that three of these characters, the Assistant Commissioner, the police lieutenant and Scobie, are policemen. Their work has brought them into such close contact with all types of people that they have developed an awareness of the world which even Greene's priests, with the exception of the whisky-priest in The Power and the Glory, do not have.

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44. Ibid., p. 220.

With the possible exception of Sarah in The End of the Affair it is the men in Greene's novels who are the real protagonists. The women have, however, a special function. The French interpreters of Greene maintain that they are the means by which the men may find salvation. Greene, however, being a Roman Catholic, knows that salvation is not possible without the aid of God. Also some of his women, such as Helen Rolt in The Heart of the Matter, are examples of his obsession with the theme of lost innocence. It would therefore be less extreme to say that the women appear often as forces of good and evil which influence the more active heroes one way or another.

Elizabeth in The Man Within has an awareness almost as great as Scobie's, although it is based on intuition and understanding rather than on experience. She is the force of good which induces Andrews to give evidence against the smugglers at the assizes. He speaks of her voice as being "plain, clear-cut, ringing ------- reality, deliberately sane".[45] He is indecisive; she forces him to act. Milly Drover has the same influence over Conrad in It's a Battlefield. The night they spend together is indirectly responsible for

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45. Graham Greene, The Man Within, (Doubleday, Doran & Co., New York, 1929), pp. 73-74.

Conrad's attempted murder of the Assistant Commissioner. While Rose is part of the world which recognizes the values of Good and Evil which Mr. Eliot mentions in connection with Baudelaire, Ida Arnold belongs to the world which exists by the standards of Right and Wrong, the world of the flesh and physical appetite. She exists, blissfully unaware of the evil state of the world. She has her counterpart in the other two novels. Kay, Milly Drover's sister, remains content as long as she can find a good man with whom to spend the night, and Lucy offers herself to Andrews providing he gives evidence against the smugglers the next day. These are the women who appeal to man's lower and more evil nature.

From these examples it is easy to understand the sharp contrast Greene draws between spiritual love and physical passion. His attitude towards the sexual relationships between men and women is an unusual one. Physical passion among his characters normally results in a sense of failure because it is transitory. It is often represented as evil. For example, after the night spent with Lucy, Andrews feels unclean and has a strong feeling of guilt. Spiritual love, on the other hand, is often regarded as something permanent, but very often the characters involved never get a chance to consummate it because there is no place for it in an

evil world. Andrews and Elizabeth both die before their love is fulfilled, and Michael Crane in Rumour at Nightfall is shot before he can become the husband of Eulelia Monti. Greene's most striking example of the differences between physical and spiritual love and the results of one without the other is found in The End of the Affair.

Children also play an important part in Greene's fiction. He believes that a child lives in a world of its own and according to different values than adults. The process of growing up, when the child gradually becomes aware of the evil around him, is a terrifying one. But what is even more terrifying is the intrusion of the adult world into the child's, and the forcing of a child to live according to adult standards. "The Basement Room" and "The End of the Party", two of Greene's short stories, afford good examples of these beliefs. In the former a child, terrified by the sight of death, unwittingly betrays the houseman whom he idolizes for the killing of his wife. In the latter a child, although he is mortally afraid of the dark, is shamed by adults into playing hide-and-seek with the lights out. He vaguely associates fear of the dark with death in his own mind, and is found dead when the lights are turned on.

In Greene's novels the child serves two purposes. Some characters are realized in their childhood. This

is true of Raven, Pinkie, Minty and Anthony, but most of all of Arthur Rowe in The Ministry of Fear. He loses his memory as a result of an explosion. The state of innocence in which he consequently finds himself is a happy one, whereas formerly he possessed all the fears of a hunted man. The first memories which return are those of his childhood which was a comparatively happy one, but as he gradually remembers how he killed his wife the pain that these latter recollections bring with them can be compared to a child's process of growing up. On the other hand, the experiences of adults are given added importance when seen in relation to a child. Scobie's daughter, Catherine, is dead at the beginning of The Heart of the Matter, but her influence is felt throughout the book. Scobie feels a certain guilt because he was not present at her death, and it is the child-like appearance of Helen Rolt and her occasional resemblance to Catherine that first attracts Scobie to her. The whisky-priest has the same feeling of guilt towards his daughter, Brigitta, in The Power and the Glory. She is not dead, but, he feels, doomed because of him:

> Every child was born with some kind of knowledge of love, he thought; they took it with the milk at the breast; but on parents and friends depended the kind of love they knew - the saving or the damning kind ----- The world was in her heart already, like the small spot of decay in a fruit. She was

> without protection - she had no grace, no charm to plead for her; his heart was shaken by the conviction of loss. [46]

Other children in the same book, such as Coral and Luis, take on an almost symbolic significance.

Children also take on an added importance when we recall that, according to Greene, although a man may develop in one way or another, fundamentally he does not change. Any experience we have gained in childhood remains with us. At the end of "The Lost Childhood" he quotes a poem by A.E. which ends:

> In the lost boyhood of Judas
> Christ was betrayed. [47]

This is reiterated with greater force by Ida in Brighton Rock when Rose says, "People change":

> "Oh, no they don't. Look at me. I've never changed. It's like those sticks of rock: bite it all the way down, you'll still read Brighton. That's human nature." [48]

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46. Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory, pp. 102-103.

47. Graham Greene, "The Lost Childhood", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, p. 17.

48. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p. 266.

Chapter II - The Romantic Novels.

I

To anyone unfamiliar with Greene's work as a whole these three early novels, The Man Within (1929), The Name of Action (1930), and Rumuor at Nightfall (1931), might have been written by a different author. If, however, they are read in relation to his later novels it will be seen that their main difference lies in style and not in theme. The same obsessions occur but find a more subjective and romantic expression.

All three novels have an historical setting which gives them a quality of remoteness and divorces them from the contemporary scene. The plots are relatively uncomplicated in comparison to the amount of action and the speed with which it takes place in an "entertainment" such as The Ministry of Fear, but what little action there is lacks that economy of writing which characterizes Greene's later books. Instead he seems to be concentrating on a development of fine writing. Also in this early period Greene seems chiefly concerned with presenting his main obsessions, and as a result his characters lack vitality, often appearing as mere mouth-pieces for his ideas.

Later, the most imporatant literary influences on

Greene are Henry James, Conrad, Francois Mauriac and Charles Péguy.[5] Mauriac's strong sense of good and evil, and his desire to present man in relation to God, had a deep appeal for the maturer Greene, as did Péguy's conviction that only the sinner is worthy of becoming a saint. Their influence is mainly felt in The Power and the Glory and The Heart of the Matter. Greene's indebtedness to Conrad's sense of irony has already been mentioned. It is present in all his books starting with It's a Battlefield, where the tragedy of the situation results from the fact that a man has been given eighteen years in prison instead of being condemned to death. While James's sense of good and evil also proved an attraction, Greene learned most from his technique. His use of the multiple point of view in presenting a situation is adopted and developed by Greene in his middle period, where the fallen world is seen through the eyes of a group of people rather than a single individual.

In the early period of Greene's fiction, however, Robert Louis Stevenson's historical novels and adventure stories exert a greater influence than the writings of any of these men, with the possible exception of Conrad. Greene's romantic novels recall the mood and setting of Stevenson's The Master of Ballantrae, and Weir of Hermiston.

The excitment and violence of the latter book as well as the lonely and desolate Scottish landscape against which it is set closely resembles the Sussex coast of The Man Within. Both foretell of the tragedies which are to follow, both contain an element of betrayal, and Andrews, like Archie, is the victim of the cruelties of his father. Also it will be remembered how in his essay entitled "The Lost Childhood", Greene records the influence of his childhood reading, especially Marjorie Bowen and Anthony Hope. He relates how Miss Bowen had given him his pattern, "perfect evil walking the world where perfect good can never walk again".[1] The influence of her excellent historical novels is present in his early writings. The Name of Action also owes something to Anthony Hope.

In The Lawless Roads Greene recalls his childhood existence, separated as it was between home and school. "One was an inhabitant of both countries -----" he says. "How can life on a border be other than restless?"[2] The border is always an important symbol for Greene. It

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1. Graham Greene, "The Lost Childhood" from The Lost Childhood and other Essays, p.17.

2. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p.10.

separates two worlds and two sets of values. One world is usually false and artificial while the other is terribly real. Brighton Rock is set against a background of the laughter and enjoyment of holiday-makers. The pavilion and the amusement centres, the dancing and the music on the pier, are all insignificant when compared to the thoughts of Fred Hale, the man who knows he is going to be killed.

> This was real now: the boy, the razor cut, life going out with the blood in pain: not the deck chairs and the permanent waves, the miniature cars tearing round the curve on the Palace Pier.[3]

It also separates the world of Good and Evil from the world of Right and Wrong, natural law from social justice. In the early novels the border is used in a more symbolic manner. It distinguishes between the two sides of what was to Greene the essentially dual nature of man.

In Stevenson's The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Dr. Jekyll confesses:

> With every day ----- I thus drew steadily nearer to that truth, by whose parital discovery I have been doomed to such a dreadful shipwreck: that man is not truly one, but truly two ----- It was on the moral side, and in my own person,

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3. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p. 15.

> that I learned to recognize the thorough and primitive duality of man .....[4]

It was this overwhelming conviction which drove Dr. Jekyll into taking the drug which released the evil in him in the personage of Mr. Hyde. Later he discovers the fact that Hyde acts in opposition to Jekyll and often cannot be controlled. The drug is no longer necessary to summon Edward Hyde; an evil thought will do it just as well. The two halves of the man are almost entirely separate. Greene's handling of the idea of man's dual nature is closely akin to Stevenson's, except in his characters it is normally the evil which is on the surface and the good which demands expression. Andrews, for example, refers to his inner critic. This is in accord with Greene's basic assumption that man is aboriginally corrupt.

Edgar Allan Poe and Joseph Conrad were also concerned with this theme. In Poe's story, "William Wilson", there are two men, but it is obvious that one represents the better side of the other. They bear the same name, and are identical in appearance. The man who is telling the story is wicked and corrupt, but all his evil plans for personal gain are frustrated by the presence of the other. He eventually kills him, only to discover

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4. R.L. Stevenson, The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, (William Heinemann Ltd., Tusitala edition, 1923) Complete Works, Vol.V, pg.58.

that he himself cannot live without the other man. "In me didst thou exist," says the dying man, "and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself."[5]

Conrad's short story, "The Secret Sharer", shows how one character becomes emotionally identified with another. The young captain continually refers to the man he is hiding as "my double" or as "the secret sharer of my thoughts". He feels it is he who is being hunted, and the experience he obtains from his contact with this mysterious visitor helps him to gain the respect of his officers and crew which he lacks as a young man with his first command. Both these ideas are found in Rumuor at Nightfall where Francis Chase and Michael Crane are presented as two aspects of the same man.

It must be remembered, however, that Greene's interest in man's dual nature is based not only on his acquaintance with such literary examples. The conflict between good and evil is one of Greene's main obsessions. In his later fiction he presents good and evil struggling in a fallen world. In his early romantic novels, however, he shows how such a conflict exists in the mind of a single individual.

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5. Edgar Allan Poe, "William Wilson", from Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, Works Vol. 11, (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1914), p. 32.

The action of The Man Within commences with Andrews fleeing from a band of smugglers. Himself a smuggler he has, however, betrayed them to the authorities and during the struggle an official is killed. Several, including Carlyon their leader, escape, and Andrews, knowing them to be men who will take the law into their own hands, runs for his life. He finds his way to a cottage, which is inhabited by a young woman called Elizabeth, and there gains temporary refuge.

Andrews is a coward; he is first seen running away.

> The fear in his mind told him that paths were dangerous. He whispered it out loud to himself, "Dangerous, dangerous," and then because he thought that the low voice must belong to another on the path beside him, he scrambled panic-stricken through the hedge. The blackberry twigs plucked at him and tried to hold him with small endearments, twisted small thorns into his clothes with a restraint like a caress, as though they were the fingers of a harlot in a crowded bar.[6]

The imagery in this passage also indicated that he is sentimental and lustful. But there is another side to

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6. Graham Greene, The Man Within, (Doubleday, Doran & Co., Ltd., New York, 1929), p. 4.

Andrews's nature. He himself knows that he is "embarrassingly made up of two persons, the sentimental, bullying, desiring child and another more stern critic".[7] This stern critic is referred to throughout; its conflict with Andrews's lower nature forms the basis of the book. As an epigraph Greene has chosen a line from Sir Thomas Browne: "There's another man within me that's angry with me."

The two sides of Andrews's nature are represented in three different ways. The other major characters are all seen in relation to Andrews and act as forces which appeal to either his lower nature or the stern critic; he is often the battleground on which they contest with one another. As a child he is torn between his cruel father and his weak, romantic mother. The romanticism of Carlyon contests with the reality of Elizabeth, and the love which he bears for her contrasts with the passion which Lucy awakens.

Andrews had an unhappy childhood but, like Minty's in England Made Me, it represents a certain security to which he often turns to escape the realities of his present existence. Nevertheless his father was brutal and cruel both to his mother and to himself. He had been sent to a good school so that his father could boast of having an educated son. He hated the school,

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7. Ibid., p. 23.

and the romantic side of his nature was excited at the prospect of going to sea. His mother had married his father because she was romantic. Andrews went to sea for the same reason. He was, however, soon disillusioned. The smugglers idealized his father, who was their captain until his death, and Andrews was always unfavorably compared to him. What to him was brutality was admired by the smugglers. This is one reason why he betrayed them, and to this extent the character of Andrews is realized in his childhood. "It's not a man's fault whether he's brave or cowardly," he says to Elizabeth. "It's all in the way he's born. My father and mother made me. I didn't make myself."[8]

However, in betraying Carlyon, Andrews betrayed a close friend. Carlyon seldom appears in The Man Within but his influence is felt by Andrews throughout the book. Andrews reflects how it is he that brings him the news of his father's death, and it is the romantic appearance and ideas of Carlyon that first draw Andrews to the sea. Carlyon appeals to the romantic side of Andrews's nature, but it is the latter's inability to reconcile this romanticism with his father's brutality that results in his betrayal of the smugglers. Andrews thinks of Carlyon as his father, and early in the book he

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8. Ibid., pp. 64-65.

has a dream in which he sees Carlyon and his father dancing round him, so close that he could feel their breath, "Carlyon's cool and scentless, his father's stale, tobacco-laden."[9] Andrews feels remorse when he hears that the authorities have found Carlyon's ship: "He loved the ship. Now I've robbed him of it."[10]

In contrast, Elizabeth appeals to the better side of Andrews's nature. She represents reality and sanity. Carlyon comes to her cottage to look for Andrews; he follows the natural law: Andrews must suffer for his treachery. Carlyon says to Elizabeth: "You will not understand how he has spoiled everything. It was a rough life, but there seemed something fine in it - adventure, courage, high stakes. Now we are a lot of jailbirds, murderers. Doesn't it seem mean to you that a man should be shot dead over a case of spirits? What a dull, dirty game it makes it all appear." Elizabeth answers simply, "Is a man's death and your dream broken worth all this fuss?"[11]

Throughout the book Andrews expresses a desire for peace. Elizabeth asks him, "Is there anything you care for or want?" and he answers, "To be null and void."[12] This

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9. Ibid., p. 16.
10. Ibid., p.282.
11. Ibid., pp.83-84.
12. Ibid., p.72.

desire for perfect peace and security, closely akin to death, is common to many of Greene's characters. Andrews's feelings approach that state in the presence of Elizabeth. She is always calm and serene and at one time she is described as looking like a saint. She hides him from Carlyon, and Andrews is greatly moved by the fact that she drinks out of his cup so as to prevent Carlyon knowing that he is there:

> It touched him where he was most open to impression; it struck straight at his own awareness of cowardice. Kneeling in the dark not only of the room but of his spirit he imagined that with unhesitating intimacy she had touched his lips and defiled her own.[13]

After Carlyon leaves, Elizabeth, with the common sense which Andrews often hates, persuades the latter to go to the assizes at Lewes to give evidence against the smugglers.

It is at Lewes that Andrews first meets Lucy. She is presented in direct contrast to Elizabeth:

> She was pretty and richly dressed with a small, red, pouting, impertinent mouth and curious eyes.[14]

Andrews immediately lusts for her, and it is evident that she appeals to the lower side of Andrews's nature, just as Elizabeth appeals to his better nature which desires peace and spiritual love. She is the mistress of Sir

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13. Ibid., pp. 78-79

14. Ibid., p. 146.

Henry Merriman, prosecutor against the smugglers, and with a curious loyalty and affection for him, she offers herself to Andrews if he will give evidence at the assizes. This forms the climax of the conflict between the two sides of Andrews's nature. It will be remembered that it was Elizabeth who first persuaded him to appear in court. Even the law has no respect for informers, and during the trial Andrews undergoes tremendous humiliation. He cannot explain his feelings for Elizabeth, that she has given him a sense of self-respect, and he is amazed that the court interprets his relationship with her as a lewd love affair. He feels it is the influence of Elizabeth, however, which sustains him through the trial. Nevertheless he still accepts Lucy's offer. He reasons that he has done what Elizabeth wished, and why should he not accept any reward which comes after. In spite of the fact that he hears Elizabeth is in danger from the smugglers, he goes to Lucy's room. This constitutes the second betrayal in the book.

He cannot escape the influence of Elizabeth, however. In Lucy's room he sees her face projected on the wall; it is distorted with fear and pain. When he awakens, after spending the night with Lucy, he feels soiled and guilty. He feels that he "did for a wrong reason what he refused to do for a right"[15], in other words that it was the invita-

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15. Ibid., p. 167.

tion of Lucy and not the influence of Elizabeth that persuaded him to appear at the trial.

Andrews returns to Elizabeth's cottage to warn her. She still has faith in him and scolds him for always making little of the good he does. She admires him for returning to warn her when he is in danger himself. He tries to persuade her to come to London with him, but she will not. This emphasizes the fact that their love is only transitory. The peace for which Andrews longs, and which he gains in the presence of Elizabeth, is only temporary. This is characteristic in Greene. In his later novels it is even more apparent that for his characters there is no peace on earth. Thus for Andrews Fear and insecurity return with the darkness.

There is disagreement among the critics of Greene as to the conclusion of The Man Within. Some maintain that Andrews commits a final act of cowardice in allowing Elizabeth to be killed. Others think that death is the only means by which Andrews can reconcile his two selves, but because of Elizabeth's great influence over him, he cannot choose death without her. This latter view seems more in keeping with the theme of the book. When Elizabeth asks Andrews to leave the house, it is not because she sees danger and wants him to avoid the opportunity of making a coward of himself again, but it is

a technical contrivance to get him out of the house so that she can be killed.

Shortly before she asks him to leave the house she says, "You've proved your courage three times to me. You'll do it once more and then you'll know and be at peace. You've wanted peace. That's the way to it."[16] She knows that is the only answer for Andrews, and she in fact kills herself with the knife which he left with her before going to Lewes. His first reaction on returning and finding her dead is that he betrayed her, but when he sees Carlyon he realizes that through her death he can not only atone for his past weaknesses and the betrayal, but can also reconcile his two selves and gain the peace he has desired for so long. In this way Elizabeth can be regarded as being responsible for his salvation. The smugglers are indirectly responsible for Elizabeth's death, but Andrews tells Carlyon that he will accept the responsibility for it. Their friendship is renewed at the close of the book; Andrews has reconciled his romantic self. When the revenue officers come to take Andrews away, his hand sneaks towards the knife which is in the officer's pocket; it is the same knife with which Elizabeth killed herself. With his death he will have killed his father in him and the two sides of his nature will no longer be in conflict.

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16. Ibid., p. 289.

The character of Andrews has been discussed at length because he is the most interesting and the most fully developed character in the early novels. Greene's ideas which are common to the romantic novels are all put forward in The Man Within, and Andrews is the best expression of them. He is also the focal point of the story and, with the exception of the trial scene which is presented from the point of view of an ideal spectator, the whole action is seen through his eyes. In the fiction of Greene's middle period emphasis is placed on the multiple point of view of the fallen world. There are no central characters but a representative group of people. In his later work, however, Greene returns to many of the ideas only partially realized in the romantic novels. In The Heart of the Matter Scobie has much in common with Andrews. They both, for example, share a desire for peace. Andrews, however, lacks the vitality of Greene's later characters. Mr. Allott and Miss Farris in their study of Greene notice an element of the mediaeval morality in some of his work. This element, present in The Man Within where the two sides of Andrews's nature are represented by other characters which contest with one another, at times tends to give Andrews the appearance of having no existence of his own.

The characters of Elizabeth and Carlyon suffer for the same reason. They are too often presented as symbolic

forces, and are hence unrealistic. Elizabeth is described as resembling a saint, but beyond that she is no flesh and blood individual. Women in Greene are to a certain extent forces which act on the men, but those in the later books, such as Rose in Brighton Rock, exist as characters as well as forces. Carlyon too seems remote and unreal. Although his influence is felt constantly he appears seldom in the book, and exists only in relation to the romantic side of Andrews's nature.

The minor characters in The Man Within are more successful. In his later work Greene manages to characterize a person in a few lines of description or often in a few sentences of dialogue. He describes Acky, the half-witted, defrocked cleryman in A Gun for Sale;

> He belonged to a different class altogether: a good school and a theological college had formed his accent; something else had broken his nose.[17]

That description and the phrase which Acky keeps repeating to himself ("After all, my Lord Bishop, you too, I am sure - in your day - among the haycocks"[18]) are enough to characterize Acky as a cleryman who has been defrocked as a result of unbecoming moral conduct. His bitterness has unbalanced his mind and, after marrying the proprietress of a disreputable hotel, he spends his time writing

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17. Graham Greene, A Gun for Sale, P.118.

18. Ibid., p. 120.

vindictive letters to the bishop. This achievement of Greene's has its beginnings in the early books. Lucy is of the stock from which Kay Rimmer and Ida Arnold are to come in It's a Battlefield and Brighton Rock. Her opening words characterize her immediately. Andrews is furious at being addressed by the prosecutor like a servant. "How dare you 'my man' me?" he says, and Lucy answers him, "Suppose that I called you 'my man'?"[19] She loves fun, is interested in men, but will not tolerate being treated as an ordinary harlot. In demanding as her price Andrews's evidence at the assizes she shows a certain loyalty for Sir Henry Merriman, yet she is consistently unfaithful to him. She accepts the world we live in, and at the same time is determined to get out of it what she can. Andrews feels disgusted with himself after spending the night with her but she laughs at him:

> "Surely you know by this time that the feeling wont last. For a day we are disgusted and disappointed and disillusioned and feel dirty all over. But we are clean again in a very short time, clean enough to go back and soil ourselves all over again."[20]

Lucy is also described as a young and desirable Mrs. Butler. Mrs. Butler is the woman who comes to clean Elizabeth's cottage. Greene's description of her is one

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19. Graham Greene, The Man Within, p. 147.

20. Ibid., p. 234.

of the best in the book:

> She was a little stout old woman who gave the impression of being very tightly pulled together by a great number of buttons that strayed from their normal positions and peeped out from interstices and side turnings in her voluminous clothes. She had small eyes and very faint, almost indistinguishable, eyebrows. Her hair was some of it white and some of it gray and through it wandered stray strands of a very pale metallic gold which looked unnecessarily flippant on an old head.[21]

Later Greene would have economized on this characterization but it is nevertheless excellent as it stands. Mrs. Butler is the woman who tells the court at Lewes that Andrews and Elizabeth are lovers, and renders sordid what he considers beautiful and almost holy.

The resemblance between The Man Within and Conrad's Lord Jim is unmistakeable. Both Andrews and Jim are cowards, and both spend their lives trying to atone for a single act of cowardice. They try to withdraw from the world and ultimately find they cannot escape it. The peace Andrews finds in Elizabeth's cottage is just as temporary as the peace Jim finds in the native settlement. In a world of violence their dreams do not count:

> How could one judge a man when all was said but by his body and his private acts, not by dreams he followed in the world's eye?[22]

Both Conrad and Greene, however, realize that Jim and Andrews are not peculiar cases:

> The commonest sort of fortitude prevents us from becoming criminals in a legal sense; it

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21. Ibid., p. 29.

22. Ibid., p. 238.

> is from weakness unknown, but perhaps suspected, as in some parts of the world you suspect a deadly snake - from weakness that may lie hidden, watched or unwatched, prayed against or manfully scorned, repressed or maybe ignored more than half of a lifetime, not one of us is safe.[23]

Andrews's cowardice is the result of living in a fallen world. He feels "a terror of life, of going on soiling himself and repenting and soiling himself again"[24]. There is no escape. What Greene sees in Andrews he sees in a different way in all his characters. Andrews's remark to Elizabeth, "There's no luck where I am",[25] sounds the note for the rest of Greene's fiction.

III

The setting of The Name of Action is as remote from the contemporary scene as Anthony Hope's Ruritania. Oliver Chant, the hero, goes to Trier, a fictional region in central Europe, to escape from the boredom of his social life in London, and with a romantic desire to take part in a revolution. He is to supply the money which is necessary for its success. Here the resemblance of this book to a revoluntionary romance, such as Hope's The Prisoner of Zenda, ends. The spirit is more closely related to that of Marjorie Bowen's historical novels.

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23. Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim, Works Vol. XXI, (Doubleday Page & Co., New York, 1925), pp.42-43.

24. Graham Greene, The Man Within, p. 235.

25. Ibid., p. 284.

Her Book, Prince and Heretic, deals with the attempt of the Netherlands to break away from the iron rule of sixteenth century Spain. A group of young nobles are in favour of an immediate up-rising, but William of Orange, older and more experienced, is not certain that this move is the best one. "You see the glory of the combat", he says to his younger and more impetuous brother. "I see the anguish of the defeat."[26] Similarly, before the revolution which forms the background in Greene's The Confidential Agent, D. was preparing an edition of the "Song of Roland". To him the hero of the poem is not Roland, who gains fame at the expense of many innocent lives, but Oliver, who exhibits common sense and a concern for humanity. Oliver Chant also learns the price of revolution. His disillusionment with what he finds in Trier is one of the main themes of The Name of Action. The epigraph and the title both come from Hamlet's famous "To be, or not to be" soliloquy. Conscience makes cowards of us all, Hamlet reasons, and "enterprises of great pith and moment" lose the name of action because of irresolution as a result of too much romantic thinking.[27] As a secondary epigraph Greene has placed a few lines from T.S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men", which distinguish between the idea

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26. Marjorie Bowen, Prince and Heretic, (Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1914), p.194.

27. Hamlet, Act III, Scene I, Lines 56-88.

and the reality. The essence of The Name of Action occurs in a conversation between Chant and Anne-Marie Demassener, the wife of the dictator of Trier. "You are one of those who believe that a thing must be right or wrong," she says to him, and the conversation continues:

> "Oh, I know ---- that's not the modern way. We must all analyze now, until there's no white or black, but only a dingy mean. I'm old-fashioned, I admit." He added, with a hauteur which was meant for pride: "There's more glory there." "I admit the mean," she said, "the dinginess. But it's the truth. We can't escape from it."[28]

Chant's first disillusionment comes when he is shown the arsenal of the revolutionaries. Instead of weapons it is equipped with a printing press. The idea of the revolutionaries is not to take up arms against Demassener, the dictator, but to destroy the respect the people have for him. This they will accomplish by circulating vulgar, derogatory pamphlets about the dictator and his wife, Anne-Marie. Chant is disgusted by the thought of winning a revolution in this manner. He is determined that the struggle must be an honourable one, and uses his money to smuggle arms across the border. The manner in which this has to be done is also offensive to his romantic nature. The man from whom Chant has to buy weapons is an American named Crane, and Chant views him

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28. Graham Greene, The Name of Action, (Doubleday, Doran & Co., Ltd., New York, 1930), p. 238.

with distaste:

> For Mr. Crane, the man so essential to arms hidden in dark barges slipping through the night, to barricades and all the details of an adventurous dream, had a fat face and small eyes and was dressed in a mustard-coloured suit with brown shiny shoes and trousers that bagged at the knees.[29]

Chant's method fails, however, and the revolution finally succeeds through the means which he abhors. In spite of the remoteness of the setting the violence of the world intrudes into Chant's romantic dreams. There is little room for idealism in Greene's fiction, even in the early romantic novels. His themes - a force of evil trying to get in, the intrusion of the adult world into the child's, the shattering of romantic ideals - are all different expressions of the same basic principle, namely that no man, no matter how much he tries, can escape from the world in which he lives. This idea, present here, gains more power in Greene's later books.

Chant's expectation is no exception to the popular conception of revolutionaries as consisting of a body of oppressed and down-trodden men. In The Name of Action, however, they are presented as mean and selfish. Joseph Kapper, the leader of the group, is more concerned with his reputation as a poet than with the success of the revolution. He wants to use Chant's money to distribute his verses rather than to buy arms. Peter Torner

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29. Ibid., p. 191.

is an artist whose art consists of obscene drawings, caricaturing the wife of the dictator. Nevertheless there is something of the seedy in these men by which Greene is attracted. Kapper is presented as a man of immense pride, which he uses to conceal a sense of insecurity. Chant scorns the use of his vulgar verses, and "in the silence that followed somebody laughed, as somebody will always laugh at the fall of anything great, even if it is only the fall of a great conceit."[30] Kapper's reaction is pathetic:

> He allowed himself the only gesture of his defeat. "When you have been beaten," he said, "remember that it was I, Kapper ------". The time-worn phrase came readily to Joseph Kapper's lips, but before it could be completed the memory of a solitary laugh, of Chant's careless dismissal of his "scurrilous rhymes," of that circle of uninterested faces, checked him, lit again the lamp of questioning doubt which was borne back, this time by a panic hand, to the corner of his eyes.[31]

The description of Kapper's house with "a broken chair, a wooden table, peeling walls"[32] also tends to belie the proud man who wants to become a famous poet.

Neither is Demassener, the dictator, a ruthless man of blood and iron. He is labelled by outsiders as a man

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30. Ibid., p. 144.

31. Ibid., p. 146.

32. Ibid., p.104

"greedy for power", but in reality he is an ageing man, tired of his responsibilities, who wants to "bind men in clean chains." "I hate freedom," he says. "freedom means freedom for the animial in man."[33] He will allow no music in Trier because music arouses the emotions. The irony is that Demassener, in desiring such a Utopia, is just as romantic as the people whom he is trying to protect from romanticism. He will not allow a mother to take away the body of her son who was shot by the government because "there would have been a procession, speeches. There's no better form of propaganda than a weeping woman."[34] Again, when the same woman, with a certain amount of justice, calls him a murderer, he says to Chant, "There you have an example of the gratitude of these people."[35] Even Chant, himself a romantic, has the foresight to observe, "You will lose. You have the whole world against you."[36] Like Dr. Czinner in Stamboul Train, the tragedy of Demassener is that, in spite of his ideal efforts, the world will go on without being affected.

Nevertheless, Chant has respect for him. He sees Demassener as a lonely man and he

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33. Ibid., p. 71.
34. Ibid., pp. 68-69.
35. Ibid., p. 68.
36. Ibid., p. 71.

> ----caught for an instant a glimpse of what his motive had been in thus seeking an audience; it had been an effort to escape momentarily from the loneliness inevitable to power and to find some understanding in another. The world must have seemed always to Demassener extraordinarily crass, extraordinarily stupid, unable to understand either his motives or his difficulties. And so he had given an example, of how his mind was forced to work for no other reason but that he was the Dictator of Trier, to his wife and a stranger and neither had understood. Chant had a strange feeling that he had failed the man.[37]

Chant later says to Anne-Marie that he is beginning to think her husband is the greatest man that he had ever known. In this respect Kapper and Demassener represent the two sides of Chant's double nature. Demassener loves his wife in a spiritual manner; Kapper considers that the meeting place of men and women is "between the sheets."[38] Chant alternates between the two, and the book ends only when, like Andrews, he has reconciled the two sides of his nature.

His decision is reached only after he becomes filled with self-disgust by an act of his own. This act constitutes the betrayal of the book. It results from his love for Anne-Marie, and is related to his disillusionment. Chant also came to Trier because he saw a picture of Anne-Marie in a London newspaper. His love for her takes the form of a romantic affectation. They first em-

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37. Ibid., p. 69.

38. Ibid., p. 237.

brace in the garden of the Electoral Palace, and the description of the garden with its scented flowers adds to the romanticism of this love. After Anne-Marie leaves him that night, Chant is "still unable to disentangle his desire from the general vague scent of magnolia and of spring."[39] The slanderous pamphlets against Anne-Marie disgust Chant and he decides to leave Trier. He will not aid a revolution whose weapons are so base. She, however, is not visibly perturbed by the verses and pictures. There is a curious reality about her. She is young, beautiful and desirable, and would hence seem more closely akin to the revolutionaries than to her ageing husband; but like Lucy in The Man Within, she is also allied to his beliefs. She tells Chant that the only reason her husband tolerates him is because he considers that he is of no consequence. She laughs at Chant's romantic expressions of love, and, humiliated, he changes his mind and stays in Trier.

Nevertheless, Anne-Marie does become Chant's lover. It is implied from the start that she is not satisfied with her husband, and when she and Chant spend the night in a gasthaus she tells him that Demassener is impotent. This accords with the dictator's belief in spiritual love, and Anne-Marie gives herself to Chant in desperation. The following morning, however, he, like Andrews, has a sense

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39. Ibid., p. 87.

of guilt and feels that he has betrayed Demassener. Anne-Marie scorns the thought of returning to England with him, and in despair he tells Kapper of the dictator's impotence. This is the real betrayal, because Kapper writes a poem about the subject which is sung in the streets, and it is for this reason that the revolution succeeds. The people finally lose respect for the dictator. Chant has an intense revulsion of feeling against himself, Kapper and Anne-Marie. His disillusionment is complete, but while in Trier he has learnt to face the realities of the world. He now recognizes that his feeling for Anne-Marie was lust and not love. While she, like Kate in England Made Me, simply "moves on", at the close of the book Chant returns to London with the wounded Demassener to start a new life.

The disillusionment of Chant is the main theme of The Name of Action, supplemented by Greene's preoccupation with man's double nature and betrayal. Demassener, the idealist who seeks a Utopia on earth and who is doomed to failure, Kapper, whose pathetic pride together with a sense of insecurity places him among the seedy, and Anne-Marie, the realist who represents the transitoriness of physical passion, are all typical Greene characters. Like the main characters in The Man Within, however, they

all lack vitaility. The minor figures are again more successful. They all illustrate Greene's affection for the seedy. When Chant sees Mr. Crane for the first time he wonders, "How shabby --- was the under side of even the most selfless success."[40] Kapper's wife, Bertha, is more concerned with having a mark for the gas meter than with the news of the murder of a policeman. Kapper wants her to place some raw meat over the spot where the policeman was shot in order to disguise the blood after the body is removed:

> It was amazing the confidence which that cowardly and characterless woman had gained from the sense that she was necessary to them. If all his mind had not been filled with disgust and apprehension, Chant would have discerned the pathos in her unwonted confidence. That moment must have been the first in which Bertha Kapper felt herself necessary for any purpose whatever. Her earlier hopeful question, "Have you been out with a woman?" indicated clearly enough that even her sex was unneeded.[41]

The proprietress of the gasthaus is another Mrs. Butler. With vulgar insinuations she tries to persuade Anne-Marie and Chant to take a room instead of sitting in the restaurant:

> The whole of a female figure now appeared trustingly from behind the door clad in a nightdress, which emphasized rather than obscured two enormous breasts ----- "I have a good bed," she added, eyeing them with maternal solicitude. "A drink," Chant said impatiently, "is what we want." The woman looked at him with disapproval. In her youth, she seemed to express, young men were young men, romantic, impetuous. Thinking of the old times she raised her hand with coquetry towards an untidy mass of hennaed hair. "There are hot pipes in the private rooms," she said, "but you will find the restaurant cold."[42]

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40. Ibid., p. 191.
41. Ibid., pp. 107-108.
42. Ibid., pp. 240-241.

These characters have already formed an integral part of Greene's view of life.

Rumuor at Nightfall, like the two previous novels is a historical adventure story. It deals with the attempt of Charles Bourbon on the Spanish throne, but as in the other books, the immediacy of the action is absent, while the main emphasis is placed on the presentation of Greene's ideas. These ideas are similar to those examined in The Man Within and The Name of Action, therefore there is little object in dealing with them at length.

The main obsession of this book, as in The Man Within, is the duality of man's nature; but while in the former book the conflict between the two sides of a man's nature exists in a single character, here the separation of these two sides is even greater. Francis Chase and Michael Crane represent two aspects of the same man. They disagree with one another because they see things from a different point of view, but neither can exist without the other. Francis Chase is a man of action. He is a reporter, who comes to Spain in order to write about the events of the revolution for his newspaper. He hates the almost mediaeval life which he finds there, and attaches himself to the men in power, who are trying to discover the whereabouts of Caveda, the rebel leader.

Michael Crane arrives shortly after. He, on the other hand, is attracted by Spain, with its ancient way of life. He is more retiring and indecisive than Chase, and is afraid of the world. The peaceful atmosphere of Spain, and its remoteness from the outside world of violence, has a deep appeal for him. He is also more attracted by the romantic atmosphere that seems to surround Caveda.

Crane discovers, however, that even the peace he finds in Spain cannot escape the violence of the world. The town where he and Chase are staying becomes a battle-field for the two conflicting parties. The ending of the book seems vague and uncertain. Crane is killed during the revolution, and Greene appears to infer that with his death Chase can become a whole man. In much the same way as Andrews reconciles his two selves, Chase absorbs many of Crane's qualities. He has, for example, developed an admiration for Caveda.

The reconciliation is also brought about through the person of Eulelia Monti. Chase originally regards her with lust, while Crane's feeling for her more closely resembles the spiritual love that Demassener has for his wife in The Name of Action. Crane's marriage to her is prevented by his death, and Chase comes to think of her as the former had done. He and Eulelia Monti feel that, having both known Crane, they have something in common.

The book ends on that note.

Rumour at Nightfall is an unsatisfactory book. As in the two earlier novels, the ideas are presented at the expense of the characters who lack vitality and interest. Even the ideas are more vague and loosely defined than they were before. However, with the publication of Stamboul Train in the following year, Greene enters a new and more successful phase of his career.

Chapter III - The Middle Period.

I

The novels included in the middle period of Greene's fiction are Stamboul Train (1932), It's a Battlefield (1934), England Made Me (1935), A Gun for Sale (1936), and Brighton Rock (1938). In them emphasis is placed on presenting a general picture of a fallen world rather than showing the "terror of life" in a particular individual. There are no central characters, but a representative group of people bound together by pain and fear. With few exceptions, however, the characters are concerned with their own isolation, and cannot perceive that others are just as lonely as they are. Certain relationships form, develop, and come to an end, but the people involved remain constantly unable to understand their fellow men. It is every man for himself, although he is in the same position as his neighbour. "No brotherhood in our boat," says Kate in England Made Me. "Only who can cut the biggest dash and who can swim."[1]

Nor is the action of these books presented through a single character as it was in the early novels. As Greene in this period is more concerned with the fallen world than with any specific character who inhabits it, he

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1. Graham Greene, England Made Me, (William Heinemann Ltd., Uniform Edition, London, 1951), p. 274.

uses the multiple point of view. In England Made Me, for example, each of the seven parts is presented from the point of view of one of the main characters.

In these novels Greene's obsessions are not as apparent as they were in his earlier fiction. He realized that in the early books his ideas were presented at the expense of vitality. After the publication of Rumour at Nightfall reviews such as the following appeared:

> Mr. Graham Greene is an expert story-teller, and he has on this occasion a good story to tell. But he is so resolutely and labouriously romantic that one can believe scarcely a word he says. The (psychological) drama is dressed up in all the colours of carnival; the emotions of his characters are largely theatrical; he achieves definition of falsification. He has, nevertheless, abundant talent.[2]

Stamboul Train is an effort to correct such faults. In it there is too much emphasis placed on technique, but in Greene's next book, It's a Battlefield, technique and ideas become successfully joined. That the latter book closely resembles Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent does not detract from its own value. Greene benefited from a study of Conrad, and he adapted the latter's irony to suit his own purposes.

Stamboul Train is a deliberate imitation of certain characteristics of contemporary fiction. It was written

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2. Gerald Bullett, The New Statesman and Nation, 2:614, November 14, 1931.

with great speed and the action moves at a rapid rate. The characters are not fully developed, events rely on coincidence, and interesting background is introduced for its own sake. Greene labels it an "entertainment". He was more successful with this form than he anticipated. He returns to it several times in his later books.

The greater part of the action of Stamboul Train takes place on board the Orient Express, which travels from Ostend to Constantinople. The train has also a symbolic significance. Mr. Madaule in his study of Greene sees the voyage as a dream between two realities, which are the stops at either end. Occasionally violence breaks into the dream and alters events and the lives of the characters. It seems more logical to interpret the train as a symbol of the world with the passengers being a representative group of people. Some travel the whole way; others get on at various stops. The drama of the book results from the relationships which are formed, but these are of little importance. They do not alter the way of the world or prevent the continuance of the train journey. What happens to each passenger is important to himself alone; each has his own secret and lives his own life.

The four main characters in the book are Myatt, Coral, Czinner, and Mabel Warren. Carleton Myatt is a wealthy

Jew and a director of a firm which processes currants. He is going to Constantinople in order to come to terms with a rival firm. He is very conscious of his race, and is well aware that his money can buy him anything he wants except respect:

> But he recognized with gratitude what money could buy. It could not always buy courtesy, but it had bought celerity. He was the first through the customs, and before the other passengers arrived, he could arrange with the guard for a sleeping compartment to himself. He had a hatred of undressing before another man, but the arrangement, he knew, would cost him more because he was a Jew; it would be no matter of a simple request and a tip.[3]

In his world of business dealings, of rows of mathematical figures, and of luxurious hotels where he can order fine food, he feels secure. He only feels ill at ease in human relationships. Then he meets Coral Musker.

She is a dancer, on her way to Constantinople to take part in a musical show. For her the journey into the unknown has something of the romantic about it. But she is not romantic by nature. She is also aware of the uncertainties which she will encounter, and is afraid of them. Like Rose in Brighton Rock, she is awkward; her clothes are unsuitable; she wears too much powder and it is badly applied; other passengers pity her as they see her thin figure in the white mackintosh. But, like Anne in A Gun for Sale, she is also friendly and

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3. Graham Greene, Stamboul Train, (William Heinemann Ltd., Uniform Edition, London, 1951), p.5.

sympathetic. While she and Myatt are chatting in the corridor, she faints. In a sudden outburst of generosity Myatt offers her his first class sleeper for the night. His motives are a mixture of pity for her because of her friendly attitude, and a desire to justify his race.

> She had not complained of the cold; she had commented on it as a kind of necessary evil, and in a flash of insight he became aware of the innumberable necessary evils of which life for her was made up ---- He determined to be princely on an Oriental scale, granting costly gifts and not requiring, not wanting, any return. Parsimony was the traditional reproach against his race, and he would show one Christian how undeserved it was. Forty years in the wilderness, away from the flesh pots of Egypt, had entailed harsh habits, the counted date and the hoarded water; nor had a thousand years in the wilderness of a Christian world, where only the secret treasure was safe, encouraged display; but the world was altering, the desert was flowering; in stray corners here and there, in western Europe, the Jew could show that other quality he shared with the Arab, the quality of the princely host, who would wash the feet of beggars and feed them from his own dish; sometimes he could cease to be the enemy of the rich to become the friend of any poor man who sought a roof in the name of God.[4]

The doctor who attends to Coral when she faints travels under the name of Richard John, a master in an English public school. In reality he is Dr.Czinner, a Yugoslavian socialist, who is returning to his own country to take part in an uprising. Unlike the conventional revolutionary in fiction, he is an elderly man, tired of his responsibilities. He wonders to himself whether his

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4. Ibid., pp. 23 and 28.

efforts are of any value to his country, and whether he has spent a misguided life. As Coral regains consciousness she thinks that it is she who is bending over him.

> She felt pity for the experience which had caused his great anxiety, and her solicitude went out to the friendliness she imagined in his eyes. She put her hands down to his face. He's ill, she thought, and for a moment shut out the puzzling shadows which fell the wrong way, the globe of light shining from the ground. "Who are you?" she asked, trying to remember how it was that she had come to his help. Never, she thought, had she seen a man who needed help more.5

Relationships are thus formed, and the train moves forward through the night.

Mable Warren gets on at Cologne. Her original intention in being at the station was to say goodbye to her friend, Janet Pardoe, but she recognizes Czinner, and, being a newspaper reporter, she decides to follow him on the chance of getting a good story. She is masculine and aggressive, ruthlessly determined to get her own way. Her Lesbian affection for Janet is a pathetic one. She is drunk and weeping at the station because "no more of a morning would she see Janet in pyjamas pouring out coffee, no more of an evening come into the flat and find Janet in pyjamas mixing a cocktail."[6] Janet will be gone only a week, but Mabel feels that she has lost her. In the back of her mind is the knowledge that Janet cares only for the material comforts which she gives her. The sight of this formidable looking woman, weeping because

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5. Ibid., pp. 23-24.
6. Ibid., p. 35.

her friend is leaving her is a strange one.

Mable is a good reporter and works hard at her job. But all her work, she feels, is for the benefit of her women companions. An exclusive interview with Czinner will give her a greater professional reputation through which she can be more generous than ever to the girl who lives with her at the time. Czinner's refusal to give her the story she wants leads her into betraying him to the Yugoslavian police. Because of her feeling towards people of her own sex she has an intense hatred of men, "of all the shifts and evasions they made necessary, of the way they spoiled beauty and stalked abroad in their own ugliness -----

> But it was not their enjoyment she most feared, it was Janet's. Not loving her at all, or only for the hour, the day, the year, they could make her weak with pleasure, cry aloud in her enjoyment. While she, Mabel Warren, who had saved her from a governess's buried life and fed her and clothed her, who could love her with the same passion until death, without satiety, had no means save her lips to express her love, was faced always by the fact that she could give no enjoyment and gained herself no more than an embittered sense of insuffiency.[7]

Like Demassener in The Name of Action, Czinner is a man who has failed before he started. He loves the poor and is beloved by them; as a socialist in Belgrade

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7. Ibid., pp. 44-45.

he has dedicated himself to their service. He was a witness against General Kamnetz, who was accused of raping a young girl, even though he knew that the jury would never bring in a conviction. Because of his action he was forced to flee to England, andwhile there he planned a socialist uprising, which he is now returning to lead. However, on the train he learns that the uprising had taken place without him , and was unsuccessful. He is determined,nevertheless, to return to Belgrade and stand trial. Although there is little chance of his being acquitted, he wants to plead his case for the benefit of the poor.

In Greene's view Czinner is championing a lost cause, and Greene seems to have little sympathy with such men. Just as he maintains that one cannot escape from the world, he also believes that one cannot change it. Czinner himself at times doubts if his action will be of much value to the poor, but he resolves to act nevertheless. Mabel, on the other hand, has a more realistic attitude. She tells him that after his absence of five years he will have been forgotten. His persistency infuriates her. She had often been bullied by successful men but never by one who had failed. Her information to the police in Belgrade results in the train's being detained at the Yugoslavian border. Czinner is arrested.

Coral in the meantime has become Myatt's lover. Her feelings are a mixture of the warnings of more

experienced women, her own scruples, and gratitude. As in all Greene's books, however, such a relationship cannot last. Myatt loves her only because she was friendly in an otherwise hostile world. Coral imagines herself as his mistress in Constantinople, possessing everything in life which she had previously lacked. This desire for material security is related to the desire for peace which is a common theme in Greene's fiction; and although it may be achieved temporarily, it is never final. Coral steps off the train when it is halted at the frontier. Czinner gives her a letter to mail from Constantinople, but the police see this action and she is detained as his accomplice. She never sees Myatt again. She has that quality of devotion which is later used to characterize Rose in Brighton Rock. As she is leaving the train she glances back at Myatt:

> She was glad later that she had taken that last glance, it was to serve as an emblem of fidelity, an image to carry with her, so that she might explain: "I've never left you."[8]

At the beginning of the book the purser of the ship which has brought the passengers from England calls after Coral as she goes towards the train, "Remember me. I'll

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8. Ibid., p. 167.

see you again in a month or two." Greene goes on to comment:

> But he knew that he would not remember her; too many faces would peer during the following weeks through the window of his office ----- for him to remember an individual, and there was nothing remarkable about her ----- This was the first thing she shared with Richard John ----- a darkness in the purser's mind.9

Richard John is Czinner. Both he and Coral appear, live through their drama, and disappear again. Their individual experiences have been vital to them, but have not affected the world in the least. After Czinner's arrest the train moves on as if nothing had happened.

Coral tells Czinner that Myatt will return for her, but something within her leads her to doubt this assertion. Czinner is at last given his opportunity to speak, but "there was no audience to bear him up; and he became conscious of the artificiality of his words which did not bear witness to the great love and the great hate driving him on."[10] He says later, to two soldiers who are guarding him:

> "Remember, I'm dying to show you the way. I don't mind dying. Life has not been so good as that. I think I shall be of more use dead." But while he spoke his clearer mind told him that the chances were few that his death would have any effect.[11]

Nor does it. He is shot while trying to escape, and Coral takes him to a deserted hut, where he dies soon

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9. Ibid., pp. 3 & 4.
10. Ibid., p. 199.
11. Ibid., pp. 201-02.

after. The only emotion which his death arouses is one of pity.

The destiny which awaits Coral is not much better. She is found by Mabel, and is taken back to the beautiful apartment in Cologne which Janet has vacated. Mabel, however, has got her story and has found herself a new companion. She is last seen in an atmosphere of triumph.

> "Exclusive," Miss Warren said, drumming with her fingers on the rugs, "I want it exclusive. It's my story," she claimed with pride, allowing somewhere at the back of her mind, behind the headlines and the leaded type, a dream to form of Coral in pyjamas pouring out coffee, Coral in pyjamas mixing a cocktail, Coral asleep in the redecorated and rejuvenated flat.[12]

Myatt has not, however, forgotten Coral. The train breaks down farther along the line, and he takes a taxi back to the frontier to inquire about her. He cannot find her, and as he senses hostility because of his race he does not carry the inquiry too far. Apart from occasional feelings of guilt he has satisfied his conscience, and he returns to Constantinople without her. There he is again in a familiar world where he is considered as important as his money, and he loses the feeling of insecurity which he had on the train. He concludes a satisfactory business transaction with Stein, the director of the rival firm, and learns that he is Janet Pardoe's

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12. Ibid., p. 238.

uncle. The discovery that Janet is half Jewish places her in his familiar world, and at the close of the book they are together watching the musical show in which Coral was supposed to take part.

Of the four main characters two, Coral and Czinner, have had adventures which have changed their lives. A third, Mabel, obtained what she sought, and Myatt's adventure is one which he will soon forget. Both he and Mabel have betrayed others, but his betrayal is the worse because in the hostile atmosphere of the train Coral was the only one who tried to understand him. The relationships established on the train have all disintegrated.

The minor characters have relatively little importance in the action of the book, but are presented to add variety and interest to the train journey. Most of them, however, have characteristics of the seedy, and because of the attraction such people have for Greene they cannot be completely overlooked. They are presented in a few lines of description or by means of snatches of conversation heard during the trip. Among them are Mrs. Peters, whose stomach is upset by the German beer, Mr. Opie, the Anglican clergyman who specializes in cricket, and Mr. Eckman, who keeps a Bible chained by his toilet. Some are more fully realized. Q.C. Savory is a clever

satire of an author who idealizes the common man in literature and drops his "aitches" on purpose:

> "Telephone to your grandmother," Mr. Savory exclaimed and looked with a bright nervousness from one to the other. It was his habit when he was quite certain of his company to bring out some disarming colloquialism which drew attention to the shop counter, the apprentice's dormitory, in his past. He was still at times swept by an intoxicating happiness at being accepted, at finding himself at the best hotel, talking on equal terms to people whom he had once thought he would never know except across the bales of silk, the piles of tissue-paper. The great ladies who invited him to their literary At Homes were delighted by his expressions. What was the good of displaying a novelist who had risen from the bargain counter if he did not carry with him some faint trace of his ancestry, some remnant from the sales?[13]

Ninitch, the young frontiersman, is pathetic. He takes great pride in hearing the exciting news about Czinner's arrest so that he can tell it to his wife. His disappointment when he discovers that she has already heard it is intense. Josef Grunlich is a burglar and murderer who takes great pride in his profession, especially in the fact that he has never been caught. Nor is he caught at the end of the book. To Greene evil and violence always exist in the world, and Josef is last seen in Constantinople continuing his his course. All the minor characters, like the principals, are isolated from one another.

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13. Ibid., pp. 254-255.

Stamboul Train was an experiment, but it turned out to be a successful one. Greene's characters are now beginning to exist for their own sake and not merely for the sake of his ideas.

II

The action in It's a Battlefield arises from the shooting of a policeman at a Communist meeting. Jim Drover, the killer, has been sentenced to death, but his relatives are trying to arrange for a reprieve which will lessen his sentence to eighteen years in prison. Jim never appears in the book, but his influence is constantly felt. He is a man of tremendous physical strength, pleasant although not intelligent, and one on whom Milly, his wife, and his brother, Conrad, can rely.

Conrad is a typical Greene individual, isolated from his fellow men by some peculiar characteristic. While Myatt is isolated because of his race, Conrad is isolated by his brains.

> Brains had only meant that he must work harder in the elementary school and suffer more in the secondary school than those born free of them. At night he could still hear the malicious chorus telling him that he was a favourite of the masters, mocking him for the

> pretentious name that his parents had fastened on him, like a badge of brains since birth. Brains, like a fierce heat, had turned the world to a desert round him, and across the sands in the occasional mirage he saw the stupid crowds, playing, laughing, and without thought enjoying the tenderness, the compassion, the companionship of love.[14]

He has managed to exist nevertheless. He depends on his brother and sister-in-law. He admires and is slightly jealous of Jim, and loves Milly from a distance. He has a good job as a clerk, earning twice as much money as his brother, and he is a devoted employee. His existence is lonely, but tolerable.

However, with his brother in prison all the responsibility now descends on him:

> His brother was the only man he loved in the world, and his brother for the first time in his life needed him; strength for the first time needed brains. Before it had always been brains which had needed strength, cleverness which had needed stupidity.[15]

Jim has asked him to look after Milly, and with his acquisition of responsibility has come a tremendous awareness of his own insignificance:

> He was being asked for help, and the only help he had been trained to give was adding and subtracting, multiplying and dividing.[16]

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14. Graham Greene, It's a Battlefield, pp.30-31.
15. Ibid., p. 62.
16. Ibid., p. 68.

The reality of the world has intruded into Conrad's hitherto uneventful existence with a terrible shock.

He considers that with his brother in prison he now has a chance to gain Milly's love, but she only thinks that he is useful because of his brains. "You wouldn't be much good with a gun," she says to him.[17] This casual remark haunts Conrad for the remainder of the book. It drives him into making a desperate attempt to assert himself, to prove to Milly that he is just as good as Jim.

Conrad even feels insecure in his job. He begins to think that everybody hates him because he is cleverer than they. The nephew of the firm's managing director is placed under Conrad so that he can learn business from the bottom. Conrad distrusts him because he has money and influence. The great power of influence makes Conrad feel more insignificant than ever. "Discipline, Drover, discipline", the managing director keeps telling him. Conrad belongs to a system which now seems to be working against him.

In the street Conrad remembers Milly's remark, and raises his hand as if to point a revolver. As yet he does not know what he wants to shoot at, but it is not long before he finds out. Events, which to the average person would seem insignificant, increase his bitterness.

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17. Ibid., p. 73.

The world seems to him to be unjust. What was tolerable before has now become a living hell. It is not the world which has changed, however, but his view of it.

A girl, laughing, passes him in the street, and "he became suddenly conscious that complete happiness had brushed his coat, had nearly knocked the umbrella from his arm."[18] Conrad is excluded from this happiness. He enters a flower shop, and at great expense buys a dozen saffron roses for Milly. Once back in the street, he sees that they have given him pink roses. His fury and disappointment are intense. It seems as if everybody were in league against him. He then passes a gun shop. If he uses the gun, he thinks to himself, he will be a murderer, but then Jim is a murderer. He has always wanted to be like Jim. Perhaps then Milly will have more respect for him. Again he is frustrated, because having no license, he cannot buy a gun.

Finally in utter loneliness, and with a sense of sheer despair, he persuades Milly to let him sleep with her. There is no physical attraction, no lust. She shares his feeling of despair, and they come together as two individuals trying to gain comfort from one another. This is a common event in Greene's fiction, and one which is doomed to end in unhappiness. Conrad wakes during the night, and hears Milly crying. He thinks enviously of Kay, Milly's sister, peacefully sleeping in the next room

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18. Ibid., p. 123.

after having given herself to some man.

Like Andrews after sleeping with Lucy, Conrad has a sense of uncleanliness and of guilt. The night he spends with Milly constitutes the major betrayal in the book, and he is determined to atone for it. The following day he managed to buy a revolver illegally. He still has no clear idea of its use, but he knows that it must be used against "others who had made the rules by which he suffered ----

> -----it was unfair that they should leave him so alone and yet make the rules which governed him. It was as if a man marooned must still order his life according to the regulations of his ship; ----- And now what? Conrad thought. What is this for? A joke to tell Milly, something with which to frighten people who push me on the pavement, who want my job, who call "Conrad, Conrad," across the asphalt yard, who threaten me, who hang my brother, who do not (that was the worst crime) take me seriously, as a man, as a chief clerk, as a lover. You cannot frighten me with the name of murderer; a murderer is only Jim; a murderer is strength, protection, love. When a cannibal ate his enemy, he received his enemy's qualities: courage or cunning. When you lay with your brother's wife, did you not become, receiving the same due as he received, something of the same man, so that if you were weak, you became strong, clever, you became stupid? For an instant last night he had been his brother, be became capable of killing a man.[19]

He still has no clear idea of its use until he sees the Assistant Commissioner of police.

At the beginning of the book the Assistant Commissioner goes to a party where he hears a woman telling a

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19. Ibid., pp. 182-183 & 184.

story of someone who had tied a pram on top of a taxi. Afterwards, while waiting for the Underground, he recalls the story, and tells it to a ministerial secretary who is with him. They both laugh heartily. Conrad overhears them. He has previously seen the Assistant Commissioner in court, at his brother's trial, and the fact that a man so closely connected with his brother's fate can laugh at such a stupid story fills him with disgust. Now he sees the Assistant Commissioner walking along the street. A word from him, he thinks, and Jim will live. He approaches him, but the Assistant Commissioner walks by without a word. This enrages Conrad, and he recalls his earlier disgust. He now knows the use he will make of his revolver. For now, to Conrad, all the injustices of the world which he has experienced are represented in the person of the Assistant Commissioner. He follows him, and tries to shoot him. His thoughts are a confusion of future boastful words to Milly and hatred towards mankind. However, he becomes so overwrought that he is run down by a car before he has a chance to fire. He dies in hospital, and his last thoughts are of Milly bending over him saying, "What was the use, Conrad, what was the use",[20] and finally of no one beside his bed. He died as he had lived, lonely and isolated. As a final irony it is discovered that the revolver he intended to use was loaded with blanks.

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20. Ibid., p. 227.

Conrad's bitterness and sense of isolation, as well as his futile attempt at self-assertion, all result from his inability to see anything except from his own warped point of view. In all probability his death would not have resulted if the Assistant Commissioner had spoken to him in the street. The latter, however, did not recognize him, and thought he was a beggar. Many of the other characters share this quality of Conrad's. They are isolated and incapable of understanding one another. This is, in fact, the theme of the whole book. The epigraph of the book comes from Alexander Kinglake, the historian, and reads, as follows:

> In so far as the battle field presented itself to the bare eyesight of men, it had no entirety, no length, no breadth, no depth, no size, no shape, and was made up of nothing except small numberless circlets commensurate with such ranges of vision as the mist might allow at each spot ----- In such conditions, each separate gathering of English soldiery went on fighting its own little battle in happy and advantageous ignorance of the general state of the action; nay, even very often in ignorance of the fact that any great conflict was raging.

Greene uses this "battlefield" theme throughout the book. The prison where Jim Drover is kept is divided into blocks, each one representing an improvement over the one before:

> They walked on, and the chief warder, pointing at one great cube of stone after another, began to explain to the secretary the geography of the prison. "That's Block A. The new prisoners all go there. If they behave themselves, they get shifted to that one there, that's Block B. Block C, the one we passed, that's the highest grade. Of

> course, if there's any complaint against them, they get shifted down."[21]

The match factory, where Kay Rimmer works, has the same divisions:

> "In the courtyard the manager pointed. 'That's Block A. The new employees go there for the simplest processes. Then if they work well they move to Block B, and so to Block C. Everyone in Block C is a skilled employee. Any serious mistake and they are moved back to Block B."[22]

The resemblance between the two is contrived, but nevertheless serves to illustrate the subjection of the individual to arbitrary laws. The notion of the battlefield even extends to a tea party. Beale, the ministerial secretary, is circulating among the guests. "It's a battlefield," he says to the Assistant Commissioner. "Back and forth into the lobby. I know for certain he had no tea."[23]

The men in prison and the girls in the match factory know only the battle in their own immediate Block. The Assistant Commissioner, however, is one of the few characters in the book who is aware of the great conflict which is raging. He says to Caroline Bury, a woman who to a certain extent shares his views:

> "The truth is, nobody cares about anything but his own troubles. Everybody's too busy fighting his own little battle to think of the next man."[24]

The affinity of It's a Battlefield to Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent has already been noticed. The characters

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21. Ibid., p.15.
22. Ibid., pp.25-26.
23. Ibid., p. 5,
24. Ibid., p. 217.

of the Assistant Commissioners in each book are quite similar. Both men have been in the East, and feel ill at ease in London. They seem at the mercy of their subordinates, and they both have a benevolent attitude towards man in general. This passage from The Secret Agent could be applied to Greene's Assistant Commissioner equally well.

> His nature was one that is not easily accessible to illusions. He knew that a department is at the mercy of its subordinate officers who have their own conceptions of loyalty. His career had begun in a tropical colony. He had liked his work there. It was police work ----- But he did not like the work he had to do now. He felt himself dependent on too many subordinates and too many masters. The near presence of that strange emotional phenomenon called public opinion weighed upon his spirits, and alarmed him by its irrational nature. No doubt that from ignorance he exaggerated to himself its power for good and evil - especially for evil; and the rough east winds of the English spring ---- augmented his general mistrust of men's motives and of the efficiency of their organization. The futility of office work especially appalled him on those days so trying to his liver.[25]

The relationship between Surrogate, the Communist, and Caroline Bury in Greene's book also parallels that between Michaelis and his great lady in Conrad's.

The presence of Joseph Conrad's charactertic irony in Greene's novels has also been noticed. Conrad's ironic sense comes largely from the fact that, while admiring the struggle of his characters to maintain themselves

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25. Joseph Conrad, The Secret Agent, Complete Works Vol. XIII, (Doubleday, Page & Co., New York, 1925), pp.99-100.

and their dignity in a generally indifferent world, he knows they are often doomed to a species of failure. Greene's attitude follows more or less along the same lines. Both Dr. Czinner in Stamboul Train and Conrad Drover are good examples. The former's futile efforts to serve the poor result in his inglorious death in a deserted hut. He wants to return to Belgrade to plead his cause before the whole world, and finds himself addressing a few artificial words to police officers who are simply not interested, and to two soldiers who do not know what he is talking about. Conrad Drover wants to avenge himself against a society which he considers has grievously wronged him, and he dies pathetically after attempting to kill a man, who is in no way responsible for his plight, with a revolver which is loaded with blank shells.

The final irony of the book comes, however, when Jim's reprieve is granted. This means that when he gets out of prison both he and his wife will be middle-aged. "Do you think any woman can be faithful for eighteen years to a man she sees once a month?" the prison chaplain asks the Assistant Commissioner. He goes on to relate how Jim tried to kill himself, and adds, "There's only one comfort; he's got a brother. They're devoted to each other. He'll look after the wife." [26]

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26. Graham Greene, It's a Battlefield, p.232.

At that moment Conrad lies dead in the hospital. The Assistant Commissioner does not know yet that it was Conrad who had tried to kill him.

Both Conrad and Milly have considered the possibility of Jim's reprieve being granted.

> If Jim died they would be marked for a long time with horror; but they would live nevertheless. There would be consolations in time; they would be able to talk naturally together; some sort of a life might be painfully constructed. But if Jim lived, they would be condemned to a kind of death themselves. The end of the eighteen years would be always in their sight, chilling any chance of merriment, the flat end to every story.[27]

Milly is young and pretty and she loves her husband. But the loneliness of her position is made clear when her sister, Kay, says, "It's rotten for you, Milly. You haven't had a man for three months. It's not healthy."[28] It is with a sense of despair that she allows Conrad to spend the night with her.

All the other characters are related to the "battlefield" theme in one way or another. Kay is promiscuous, satisfied only by sleeping with a man. She joins the Communist party because "there would be fifty men to one woman -----

> Greta would spend the evening with one boy at a cinema, Norma at a church meeting with a few pale men from a choir; art, politics, the church, Kay Rimmer had tried them all.[29]

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27. Ibid., p. 129,
28. Ibid., p. 141,
29. Ibid., p. 27.

Her way of life illustrates what Milly would lack by waiting eighteen years for her husband.

Surrogate, the Communist, has a different attitude towards Jim's position. Practising a speech under a bust of Lenin, he praises the sacrifice which Comrade Drover has made for the party. He is a sensualist, but every time he sleeps with a woman he feels unfaithful to the memory of his dead wife, whose picture stands beside his bed. Mrs. Coney is the wife of the murdered policeman. She wants to be left alone, and is frightened and bewildered by all the publicity. She does not want Jim's death, but will not sign the petition because her husband disapproved of it. A normally weak woman, she becomes stubborn when she realizes the power of her position.

It's a Battlefield is a "novel" not an "entertainment". It has fewer characteristics of the contemporary thriller than Stamboul Train. It is an attempt to blend the ideas of the early novels with the technique which Greene acquired in writing the latter book. The world he presents is a hopeless one, and the characters are desperately unhappy, largely because of their own lack of awareness. The Assistant Commissioner, although aware of the great conflict, knows also that there is nothing that he can do about it.

> But the Assistant Commissioner, like Pilate, washed his hands; justice is not my business; politics are not my business. God help the men responsible for the way that life is organised; I am only a paid servant doing what I am told;

> I am no more responsible than a clerk is responsible for the methods of the business he serves.[30]

"I don't want justice," Milly says at one point in the book, "I've seen enough of it. I was in Court every day."[31] Even the prison chaplain reflects this feeling. He is appalled by the fact that Jim's reprieve has been granted, and tells the Assistamt Commissioner he wishes to resign. "I can't stand human justice any longer," he says. "It's arbitrariness. It's incomprenhensibility."[32] At present Greene still writes about the wasteland, but even in this book there is a hint of man's relation to God which later plays such an important part in his fiction. The Assistant Commissioner says, "I don't mean, of course, to be, to be blasphemous, but isn't that very like, that is to say, isn't divine justice much the same?" "Perhaps," answers the chaplain. "But one can't hand in a resignation to God."[33]

III

In The Lawless Roads Greene records that, although he loathed Mexico, he preferred it to the "graceless, sinless, empty chromium world", because there at least "you lived under the shadow of religion - of God or the Devil."[34] It is this empty world which is presented in

30. Ibid., pp. 190-191.
31. Ibid., p. 116.
32. Ibid., p. 230,
33. Ibid., p. 230-231.
34. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p. 249.

England Made Me. The destitution and hopelessness of this book exceeds even that of Brighton Rock, Greene's most violent novel.

The world is that of Swedish high finance, "these five floors of steel and glass, the fountain splashing beneath the concealed lights, the dividends, the new flotations, the lists closed after twelve hours."[35] It is success and material wealth, represented by Krogh's. Krogh himself is, however, a lonely man. His richness has isolated him from all personal contact. When he goes to the theatre he books the seats on either side of him; because of his position he must be seen in public, but because of his ignorance he dares not speak to anyone. He has commissioned a statue to be placed in the main hall of his building. It was executed by Sweden's leading sculptor; it is therefore suitable to Krogh's. But Krogh himself cannot understand it. He is the victim of a world of his own making.

> He rose and his coat caught an ash-tray and spun it to the floor. His own initials were exposed, E.K. The monogram had been designed by Sweden's leading artist. E.K. - the same initials endlessly repeated formed the design of the carpet he crossed to the door. E.K. in the waiting-rooms; E.K. in the board-room; E.K. in the restaurants; the building was studded with his initials. E.K. in electric lights over the doorway, over the fountain, over the gate of the court. The

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35. Graham Greene, England Made Me, p. 40.

> letters flashed at him like the lights of a semaphore conveying a message over the vast distances which separated him from other men. It was a message of admiration; watching the lights he quite forgot that they had been installed by his own orders. E.K. flickering across the cold plateau a tribute from his shareholders; it was as close as he got to a relationship.[36]

Krogh has risen to his position by astute business management and dishonest dealings. He was once a common labourer in Chicago, and he sometimes looks back with nostalgia on those happy days, which were free from the weariness and anxiety that he now experiences. The loneliness of success becomes more apparent to him when he tries to enter into conversation with a group of construction workers. "I worked on a bridge myself once," he says,[37] but they ignore him. Standing by his enormous car in full evening dress with a fur coat over his arm, he no longer has anything in common with the foreman and his "torn grey trousers ----- the fingers blunted, twisted with rheumatism, the stump on the left hand." [38] Only Kate Farrant, one of the few people who can understand Krogh, knows how he has been hurt. She reflects:

> ----- poor devil, what a long and tiring way he's come, and they wouldn't take any notice of him, wouldn't recognize that he was one of their own kind, they humiliated him.[39]

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36. Ibid., p. 42.
37. Ibid., p. 207.
38. Ibid., p. 208.
39. Ibid., p. 209.

Kate also belongs to the world of Krogh. She is his secretary and his mistress. Her confession of sterility seems to symbolize the world of which she is a part. She is one of Greene's more realistic characters. She recognizes the evil in the world, but tries to get what she can out of life. She does not love Krogh, but is ready to marry him so that she cannot be forced to testify against him, should the irregularities in his business be discovered. At the end of the book, after her brother has been brutally murdered at Krogh's wish, she makes no effort to avenge his death by revealing Krogh's dishonesty. What would be the use. "There's honour among thieves," she thinks. "We're all in the same boat."[40] She just moves on to a job in Copenhagen.

Her devotion to her job is also motivated by a desire to provide for her twin brother, Anthony. Their relationship is a strange one. It is a variation of the theme which so interested Greene; that of the divided mind. Because they are twins they share one another's thoughts, and are often closely emotionally identified to one another. Kate recognizes Anthony's weak nature, but loves him nevertheless. "One can't help loving oneself," she thinks.[41] Kate also considers herself responsible

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40. Ibid., p. 273.
41. Ibid., p. 177.

for Anthony because she is the older of the two by a few moments. This idea has also been previously dealt with by Greene. In his short story, "The End of the Party", written in 1929, he examines the feelings of young Peter Morton for his brother, Francis:

> Already experience had taught him how far their minds reflected each other. But he was the elder by a matter of minutes, and that brief extra interval of light, while his brother still struggled in pain and darkness, had given him self reliance and an instinct of protection towards the other who was afraid of so many things.[42]

In his youth Anthony had run away from school. Kate, who was attending a girl's school nearby, met him in a deserted barn and persuaded him to return. She has blamed herself for this action ever since, because she feels that Anthony's inability to adjust himself to the world has been a consequence of it. Her desire to atone for the wrong she has done him leads her into getting him a job at Krogh's.

Anthony Farrant's attitude is expressed in the epigraph to England Made Me, taken from Walt Disney's The Grasshopper and the Ants: "All the world owes me a living." He comes from a good English family. He is gifted and has clever ideas. He discovers, however, that good looks and charm are not enough to make him successful. As a

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42. Graham Greene, "The End of the Party", from Nineteen Stories, (William Heinemann Ltd., London, 1947), pp.33-34.

boy, while skinning a rabbit he cut his face. When asked about the scar which has resulted, he tells fantastic stories about his exploits in the East. These inventions illustrate his desire for a success which he can never attain. He wants wealth without working for it; he wants fame without deserving it. He wears a tie from Harrow, one of the best known public schools in England, to which he has no right.

> I told the fellows at the club how I was on the pavement when the coolie threw the bomb. A cart had broken down and the minister's car pulled up and the coolie threw the bomb, but of course, I hadn't seen it, I'd only heard the noise over the roofs and seen the screens tremble. I wanted to discover how many whiskies they'd pay for. I was tired of being left out of every bridge four; I didn't know where to turn for a little cash. So I said I was badly shaken and they paid for three whiskies and we played cards and I won over two pounds before Major Wilber came in, who knew I had not been there ---- So I went on to Aden.[43]

Anthony and Krogh envy one another's qualities. Anthony wishes he had Krogh's success, and Krogh, while disbelieving everything Anthony says, nevertheless admires his charm. This illustrates one of Greene's favourite obsessions, that of man's failure to understand his neighbour. For neither Anthony's nor Krogh's position is enviable. Each one is as lonely as the other. While admiring the other's qualities, neither is by nature capable of assuming them. Anthony tries to interest

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43. Graham Greene, England Made Me, pp. 13-14.

Krogh in clothes which he thinks are more suitable; Krogh feels uncomfortable in them. Anthony persuades Krogh to leave the theatre in the middle of a performance, because he feels it is ridiculous to remain if it is not enjoyable. Krogh feels uneasy because his absence will be regarded as a matter of national interest.

Their worlds are entirely separate. The differences between them can be best seen in relation to young Andersen, who works in one of Krogh's factories. Andersen's father also works for Krogh, and has been dismissed. The son, who thinks that a word from the great financier himself will reinstate his father, comes to Stockholm to speak to Krogh. The latter refuses to see him. To Krogh young Andersen is no more than a figure in one of his financial statements. Anthony, on the other hand, appreciates Andersen's position, and is horrified at the violence with which the young man is thrown out of the hotel where Krogh is spending the evening.

Kate accuses Anthony of being innocent of the way of the world. His refusal to accept the world's realities results in his unhappy position. In spite of the fact that he is himself an imposter, he possesses an odd sense of respectability. He has lived with many women, and the

day he spends with Lucia Davidge is one which he enjoys but will soon forget. Kate's matter-of-fact acceptance of Krogh as her lover, however, fills Anthony with disgust. He even considers that his job is not respectable. When he learns that his sister is to marry Krogh, he decides to reveal the dishonesty of the firm to its English branch. His fate is thus settled for him. He cannot be allowed to leave Sweden. He is asked to take part in a game of poker, and in doing so he is literally playing for his life. If he loses he will not have enough money to return to England, but if he wins he will have to be killed. The irony of the book occurs when, for the first time in his life, he is successful, and wins the game. He is murdered that night.

Because of Anthony's inability to adjust himself to the world, for him death is the only logical result. Even he and Kate are finally separated. Their lives no longer have anything in common. When he leaves the poker game, Kate knows that he is going to be killed, but she makes no attempt to warn him. She too realizes that he will be better off dead. Her last words to him are, "Oh, go to hell."[44]

All the other characters in <u>England Made Me</u> indicate in one way or another Greene's sense of their utter helplessness. Minty, the newapaper reporter, has tried to

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44. Ibid., p. 261.

make a "home from home"[45] in this empty world. This brings out the significance of the title, because Minty, like Anthony, is also an Englishman. Had Anthony lived, his existence would very likely have been the same type as Minty's who lives in a dirty, gloomy room and whose only comfort is in his memories of childhood, although even they are not particularly happy ones. In his room are an old-fashioned photograph, a missal, and a statue of the Madonna. These represent his life at public school and his early Anglo-Catholic religion. He also takes pleasure in organizing annual Old Boys' dinners. He actually went to Harrow, and is annoyed with Anthony for wearing a tie to which he is not entitled, but his resentment fades when he realizes that Anthony is, like himself, isolated.

> Up the long flight of stairs to the fourth floor, treading upwards from Purgatory (left behind on the other bank the public lavatories with the smutty jokes, envy and the editor's dislike, mistrust, the nudist magazines) to Paradise (the house groups, the familiar face flannel, the hard ascetic bed), mounting unscathed, I, Minty ----- he hurried upward, fourteen more stairs, to the fourth landing, to security, to home - the brown woolen dressing-gown hanging on the door, the cocoa and water biscuits in the cupboard, the little Madonna on the mantel-piece, the spider under the tooth glass.[46]

Minty's great need for friendship is most keenly felt in his delight when Anthony and Lucia come to his room.

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45. Ibid., p. 274.

46. Ibid., pp. 144 & 145-146.

He makes a pathetic attempt to make them feel at home, but when he realizes that their visit is only motivated by a desire to use his bed, his disappointment is intense. Nevertheless, he feels desperately alone after Anthony's death. He has had few friends. There was Sparrow with whom he had nothing in common, but who shared with him the torments of the other boys at school; "they were friends because they had no other friends."[47] There was Connell, who at school had given Minty a bar of chocolate and invited him to tea; he died a week later. There was Baxter, who "let him down when it came to the point," and there was Anthony. "This was the fourth friend. There wouldn't be any more."[48]

Fred Hall's only emotion is an intense loyalty to Krogh. The fact that his smoking in the lavatory of an aeroplane endangers the lives of all the other passengers makes no difference to him. He and Krogh were once labourers together, but Krogh's acquired wealth and influence have not embittered Hall. As an expression of his dog-like fidelity to Krogh he has bought him an expensive pair of gold cuff-links. He considers that he alone can protect Krogh, and is jealous of Kate's influence with him. The additional presence of Anthony is more than he can bear, and he takes the same sadistic delight in killing him as he did in brutally

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47. Ibid., p. 267.

48. Ibid., p. 266.

assailing young Andersen. The only emotional outlet he knows takes the form of wanting to "blow off steam".[49]

Lucia Davidge is also a victim of this sterile world. In answer to Anthony's comment about the world being dreary she says, "No. It's good. There's always this."

> 'This' was their kiss, the closer embrace, the half-reluctant effort which took them to the bed.[50]

But it is all she has to live for; she cannot forget the "good times" she has had, "once in Coventry, and once at Wooten-under-Edge."[51] What she considers advanced ideas on "freedom", "birth-control", and "sex" are nothing more than pathetic. However, she is more to Anthony's liking than Kate.

At the end of the book, in spite of the fact that a man has been brutally murdered, little has altered. The empty world remains the same. Its success, and Krogh's, is unchanged. Its seediness continues. While Kate moves on, Minty stays with "the missal in the cupboard , the Madonna, the spider withering under the glass, a home from home."[52] The individual in this world has no more significance than Minty's spider. Even a relationship as close as Anthony's and Kate's cannot last. She, the more realistic of the two, realizes this:

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49. Ibid., p. 215.
50. Ibid., pp. 168-169.
51. Ibid., p. 156.
52. Ibid., p. 274.

> Standing at the corner of the classroom, she thought, listening to that cry; it wasn't a question of knowing each other well in those days; it was as if one were bearing a monstrous child who could scream or laugh or weep audibly in the womb. I would have welcomed an abortion in those days; but is this how one feels when the abortion has been successful? No more pain, no more movement, nothing to fear and nothing to hope for, a stillness indistinguishable from despair.[53]

IV

A Gun for Sale is Greene's second "entertainment". It has more of the characteristics of the thriller than any of Greene's books to date. Like The Man Within, most of the action takes the form of a pursuit, but it is a contemporary novel not an historical one. The action is fast and exciting, but the ideas are no less profound.

Raven, the "hero" of A Gun for Sale, is a hired assassin. The owners of a British steel corporation have engaged him to kill the minister of war of a foreign European state. This action, they hope, will promote a war, which in turn will cause the value of armament shares to rise, to their benefit. Raven is paid in stolen bank notes, and immediately the police are on his trail.

Raven's betrayal by his employers comes as no surprise to him. He has been brought up in an atmosphere of

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53. Ibid., p. 181.

mistrust. His father was hanged as a criminal, and his mother committed suicide. One of his earliest memories is of "the kitchen table, the carving knife on the linoleum, the blood all over his mother's dress."[54] He spent his childhood in an institution where he was taught religion. The Christmas story has no appeal for him; it is too remote and unreal. The only event in the life of Christ which has any meaning for Raven is His betrayal. "They put him on the spot, eh?" he says early in the book.[55]

Like most of Greene's characters, Raven is isolated from his fellow men. He holds a grudge against the world, not because he is poor, but because he lacks human sympathy. In It's a Battlefield emphasis is placed on the arbitrariness of justice; in this book Greene deals with the selfishness and insensitivity of big business interests. Just as Conrad Drover is aware of the power of influence, Raven knows there are "wheels within wheels". He is not, however, part of the "big organized battalions."[56] His hare-lip, he feels, separates him even more from personal relationship. "If a man's born ugly," he says to Anne, "he doesn't stand a chance. It begins at school. It begins before that."[57]

Raven learns also that there is no sympathy even among his partners in crime. He goes to a disreputable

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54. Graham Greene, A Gun for Sale, p.156
55. Ibid., p. 14.
56. Ibid., p. 66
57. Ibid., p. 53.

physican to have an operation performed on his hare-lip, and finds that the doctor too is ready to betray him to the police.

> He was touched by something he had never felt before: a sense of injustice stammered on his tongue. These people were of his own kind; they didn't belong inside the legal borders; for the second time in one day he had been betrayed by the lawless. He had always been alone, but never so alone as this.[58]

Ironically, Raven is guilty of the same crime. The minister he has murdered was a socialist, a man who served the poor and the isolated like himself. He discovers this later, and becomes more determined than ever to seek revenge on those responsible. For Raven, like Conrad Drover, is not content to accept his lot of isolation. The hunted man became the hunter, and he chases Davis, or Cholmondeley as he is known to him, from London to the midland town of Nottwich. This determination is also strengthened by Raven's meeting with Anne.

She is going to Nottwich to take part in a musical review, and she encounters Raven at the station where he demands her ticket. He forces her to accompany him to the site of a new housing project where he intends to kill her. Their conversation, however, softens him, and when Anne says, "But I'd be on your side",[59] he starts to confide in her. Her unexpected sympathy for his posi-

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58. Ibid., p. 33.
59. Ibid., p. 58.

tion bewilders Raven; he has never been treated in such a manner before. He has always mistrusted a "skirt" but Anne has touched him where he is most susceptible. Like Elizabeth in The Man Within, who tries to convince Andrews that he is not a coward, Anne tries to convince Raven that he is not repulsive. She has no horror of his hare-lip.

Anne's boyfriend is Mather, the policeman who, unknown to her, has followed Raven to Nottwich. He prides himself on being the enemy of insecurity, on being part of a great organization which is sharply opposed to the "law" which Raven obeys. Anne is torn between the two after meeting Raven. She discovers that Davis, the man who has betrayed Raven, is one of the backers of her musical show. She is uncertain what to do.

> She believed in Fate and God and Vice and Virtue, Christ in the stable, all the Christmas stuff; she believed in unseen powers that arranged meetings, drove people along ways they didn't mean to go; but she, she was quite determined, wouldn't help. She wouldn't play God or the Devil's game; she had evaded Raven, leaving him there in the bathroom of the little empty house, and Raven's affairs no longer concerned her. She wouldn't give him away; she was not yet on the side of the big organized battalions; but she wouldn't help him either.[60]

However, Raven has told her that Davis and the people who work with him are responsible for the minister's

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60. Ibid., p. 66.

death. She as yet does not know that it was Raven himself who killed him. The sight of the people on the streets, their despair at the expectation of the war which is certain to result, determines her action. Raven is hunting these men; he must be given the chance to finish his hunt first. She longs for Mather, but he, she remembers, "was on the other side; he was among those hunting Raven down."[61] Determined to get information on her own, she accepts Davis's invitation to dinner. But she makes him suspicious. He imprisons her in a house, owned by Acky, the defrocked clergyman, and his prostitute wife.

Following a series of exciting events, including a scene at a jumble sale where both Raven and Mather see Anne's handbag carried by Acky's wife, Raven rescues Anne, and they take shelter in a deserted shed. This scene is the climax of the book. Raven confides in Anne. He tells her about his childhood, and as he does so his bitterness seems to leave him. He responds to her friendly attitude. "We're friends, aren't we?" she asks him. "We are in this together."[62]

Raven tells Anne about his experiences as if they were dreams. Dreams play an important part in Greene's fiction, because to him they represent man's continual desire to escape from reality. Even Raven's dreams, however, are not free from recollections of his nightmare

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61. Ibid., p. 67.
62. Ibid., p. 161.

world. His interpretation of psychology is also characterized by his peculiar outlook on life.

> "I couldn't understand it all," Raven said. "But it seems as if you told your dreams ----- It was like you carry a load around you; you are born with some of it because of what your father and mother were and their fathers ----- seems as if it goes right back, like it says in the Bible about the sins being visited. Then when you're a kid the load gets bigger; all the things you need to do and can't; and then all the things you do. They get you either way ----- It's like confessing to a priest. Only when you've confessed you go and do it all over again."[63]

This view of life is common to many of Greene's characters. Andrews in The Man Within sees it in the following way:

> He felt no fear of death, but a terror of life, of going on soiling himself and repenting and soiling himself again. There was, he felt, no escape.[64]

Finally Raven senses that he can tell Anne what is really troubling him. "It feels good to trust someone with everything," he says[65], and he tells her how he killed the war minister. This confession leads to Anne's betrayal of Raven. She tells the police that he is going to Midland Steel to take revenge on Davis and Sir Marcus, his employer.

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63. Ibid., pp. 159-160.
64. Graham Greene, The Man Within, p.235.
65. Graham Greene, A Gun for Sale, p. 166.

That afternoon the town of Nottwich is having a gas attack practice. Everyone in the street must have a gas mask. Raven obtains one, and thus manages to reach the offices of Midland Steel without being recognized. He kills both Davis and Sir Marcus, but with the help of Anne's information the police find him. He is shot, and as he dies all his bitterness returns, greater than it was before, because the only person he has ever trusted has also betrayed him.

> He was only aware of a pain and despair which was more like a complete weariness than anything else. He couldn't work up any sourness, and bitterness, at his betrayal ------ he had been marked from his birth for this end, to be betrayed in turn by everyone until every avenue into life was safely closed: by his mother bleeding in the basement, by the chaplain at the home, by the soft kids who had left it with him, by the shady doctor of Charlotte Street. How could he have expected to escape the commonest betrayal of all: to go soft on a skirt ----- The only problem when you were once born was to get out of life more neatly and expeditiously than you had entered it. For the first time the idea of his mother's suicide came to him without bitterness, as he fixed his aim at the long reluctant last and Saunders shot him through the back through the opening door. Death came to him in the form of unbearable pain. It was as if he had to deliver this pain as a woman delivers a child, and he sobbed and moaned in the effort. At last it came out of him and he followed his only child into a vast desolation.[66]

Like Conrad Drover, he dies with a sense of utter loneliness.

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66. Ibid., pp. 220-221.

Raven's tragic existence, like that of most of Greene's characters, results from his inability to see beyond his own immediate needs and desires. To him the shooting of the war minister is nothing more than another death and a means to earning his living. He cannot, like Anne can, see the greater implications involved. She says to him, "You remember what I told you, that they can't invent gas masks for babies to wear? That's the kind of thing he'll (the murderer) have on his mind. The mothers alive in their masks watching the babies cough up their insides."[67] Even if Raven were aware of the results of his action, it is doubtful that he would be greatly concerned. To him war is nothing new; he has been at war even since he was born. To Anne, on the other hand, his action is a terrible one. She has been able to sympathize with him until then, but her sympathy cannot extend beyond that point. Raven's attitude towards her betrayal, therefore, should not be taken literally. After hearing his terrible confession, she no longer feels capable of saving the world.

Thus the irony of the scene in the shed is apparent. It is Raven's trust in Anne which leads him into confessing his crime to her. It is also their conversation which makes him more determined than ever to find the

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67. Ibid., p. 155.

men responsible. His desire for revenge is at first motivated by hatred because they "double-crossed" him. Now love and understanding influence him as well. Unfortunately he does not live to see the favourable results of his pursuit of Davis and Sir Marcus.

Raven thinks he has been betrayed because he has "gone soft". When he learns this, he immediately thinks of "the little plaster child lying in its mother's arms waiting the double-cross, the whips, the nails."[68] Raven's continual identification of himself with Christ is the seed out of which grows one of the most important themes in Greene's later work, the idea that only those who have reached the abyss are ready for salvation. But first his characters have to learn humility. That is something Raven does not have.

Success grows out of failure, Greene thinks, but he also believes that the reverse is true. The unhappiness and insecurity of success which he notices in Marjorie Bowen's novels is also present in A Gun for Sale, especially in the characters of Sir Marcus and Buddy Ferguson. Sir Marcus is the owner of Midland Steel, the man behind the assassination of the European war minister. He is very rich, but is in no position to enjoy his wealth. He is so old that he has to be careful in whatever he does so that he will not suddenly die.

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68. Ibid., p. 219.

> A little greed (for his milk), a little vice (occasionally to put his old hand inside a girl's blouse and feel the warmth of life), a little avarice and calculation (half a million against a death), a very small persistent, almost mechanical, sense of self-preservation; these were his only passions.[69]

Buddy Fergusson is a medical student who organizes the "rag" on the day of the gas attack practice.

> Like a great beast which is need of exercise, which has fed on too much hay, Buddy Fergusson was aware of his body. He felt his biceps; he strained for action. Too many exams, too many lectures, Buddy Fergusson wanted action. While they surged round him he imagined himself a leader of men. No Red Cross work for him when war broke: Buddy Fergusson, company commander, Buddy Fergusson, the daredevil of the trenches. The only exam he had ever successfully passed was Certificate A in the school O.T.C.[70]

Buddy, however, is nothing but a fraud. He has a great reputation with women, but when he takes one out he does not know how to behave. His true nature is revealed after Raven forces him into a garage and orders him to remove his gas mask and his clothes.

> "Strip!" Raven said, and obediently Buddy stripped. But he was stripped of more than his gas mask, his white coat, his green tweed suit. When it was over he hadn't a hope left. It was no good hoping for a war to prove him a leader of men. He was just a stout flushed frightened young man shivering in his pants in the cold garage. There was a hole in the seat of his pants and his knees were pink and clean-shaven ----- He was keeping fit, but it was a dreadful thought that he had been keeping fit for this; to stand shivering and silent in a pair of holey pants, while the mean thin under-nourished city rat, whose arm he could have snapped with a single twist,

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69. Ibid., p.215.
70. Ibid., pp. 181-182.

put on his clothes, his white coat and last of all his gas mask.[71]

V

The distinction that Greene makes between the two worlds in Brighton Rock has already been noticed. On one hand there is the holiday world of Brighton; on the other the violence and brutality of the race course gangs. The luxurious world of Mr. Colleoni, the leader of one gang, contrasts sharply with the desolation and pain of Pinkie's world. Finally the world of Right and Wrong is distinguished from the world of Good and Evil. The tragic fate of Pinkie, the boy gangster, results from the fact that he aspires to one world but cannot escape the other.

Pinkie's character is best revealed in a conversation with Dallow before his marriage. He has a strange loathing of sex, and hates physical pleasure of any kind. This is in part a result of his great pride, which he believes sets him apart from other men, but is also derived from his childhood experience. "The world's got to go on," says Dallow, and all Pinkie answers is, "Why?"[72] To him being born is to enter into a world of pain, fear, and unhappiness, where a

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71. Ibid., pp. 191-192.

72. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p. 220.

girl places her head on a railway line because, at the age of fifteen, she is going to have her second child. The idea that one is born because of one's parents' desire to have a few moments "fun" fills him with repulsion. He can never forget how he watched his parents' "Saturday night exercises" from his bed in the same room. He tells Dallow that in his youth he wanted to be a priest, and in view of his loathing of the flesh, this is not surprising.

Pinkie is determined that his gang should take over the monopoly of the race courses from Mr. Colleoni's, and to achieve his end he is continually driven along a road which becomes more and more violent. There is, however, a considerable gap between his desires and his achievements. After his marriage he demands a room in the hotel where Mr. Colleoni is staying, and is refused admittance. "You can't damage a business like mine," says Mr. Colleoni,

> --- and suddenly sitting there in the rich Victorian room, with the gold lighter in his pocket and the cigar-case on his lap, he looked as man might look who owned the whole world, the whole visible world that is, the cash registers and policemen and prostitutes, Parliament and the laws which say 'this is Right and this is Wrong'[73]

Pinkie, who before his meeting with Mr. Colleoni, has been seen pressing his only pair of pants, does not

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73. Ibid. p. 84.

realize how far apart their worlds are.

There is something incongruous in his character, because his desire to live this type of life is out of keeping with his puritanical hatred of physical comfort. It nevertheless represents security, and Pinkie has also the wish to attain peace which is so common in many of Greene's characters. He continually repeats the words of the Agnus Dei to himself, "Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem." Pinkie's great pride in himself results in his insensitivity to the position of others. This limited view point alone, as we have seen in the characters of Conrad Drover and Raven, is enough to make his existence an unhappy one.

Brighton Rock is also the first of Greene's novels in which the religious element is prominent. With the exception of Jules Briton in It's a Battlefield, Pinkie is Greene's first Roman Catholic character. His religion has a certain nostalgia for him. It represents what was happy about his childhood, and what small amount of peace and security he had then.

> When he was thoroughly secure, he could begin to think of making peace, of going home, and his heart weakened with a faint nostalgia for the tiny dark confessional box, the priest's voice, and the people waiting under the statue, before the bright lights burning

> in the pink glasses, to be made safe from eternal pain. Eternal pain had not meant much to him: now it meant the slash of razor blades infinitely prolonged.[74]

Pride, however, even enters into Pinkie's religion. He tells Rose that he used to be a choir boy, but it is with a sense of pride that he does so. Being a Roman Catholic he is aware of the state of his soul, but he takes pride in the idea of his own damnation. He has evolved a creed of his own: "Credo in unum Satanum."[75] Greene has endeavoured to create a character of pure evil. Pinkie does not learn humility, therefore he does not merit salvation.

Rose and Ida are important in completing an understanding of Pinkie's character. Ida Arnold is the woman with whom Fred Hale spends his last moments before being killed by Pinkie's gang. She is pleasure loving, and in Pinkie's mind is always associated with the sensual song he hears in the bar and with the smell of wine on her breath.

> She was cheery, she was healthy, she could get a bit lit with the best of them. She liked a good time, her big breasts bore their carnality frankly down the Old Steyne, but you had only to look at her to know you could rely on her. She wouldn't tell tales to your wife, she wouldn't remind you next morning of what you wanted to forget, she was honest, she was kindly, she belonged to the great middle law-abiding class, her amusements were their amusements, her super-

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74. Ibid., pp. 143-144.

75. Ibid., p. 220.

> stitions their superstitions (the planchette scratching the French polish on the occassional table, and the salt over the shoulder), she had no more love for anyone than they had.[76]

The police seem to be satisfied with bringing in a verdict of accidental death in the case of Fred Hale, but she is not. Her philosophy of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"[77] makes her determined to get to the bottom of the mystery of his death.

The above description of Ida indicates how far her world is from Pinkie's. He is repulsed by everything she stands for, her carnality, her attachment to the "middle law-abiding class", her superstitions. Her faith in ouija boards is far from resembling Pinkie's knowledge of hellfire and damnation.

Fred Hale worked for a newspaper. His job was to pose as a mystery man, Kolley Kibber, and to leave cards giving clues to his identity in various places in Brighton. To provide an alibi for his gang, Pinkie orders them to continue to place the cards after Hale's murder. Spicer, one of the gang, leaves one under the cloth of a table at Snow's restaurant.. Pinkie realizes that such a spot is dangerous, and because all his gang are afraid to recover the card he goes to Snow's him-

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76. Ibid., p.104.

77. Ibid., p. 54.

self. There he meets the little waitress, Rose. She tells him how she found the card, and her casual remark, that the man who left it was unlike the photograph of Kolley Kibber circulated in the newspapers, dooms her. Pinkie says to her as he leaves, "I'll be seeing you. You an' me have things in common."[78] This statement is truer than he knows. They are bound together from now on.

They are bound together both in their common origin and in their religion. Pinkie eventually has to marry her in order to keep her from being a witness against him. There is great irony in their whole relationship. First, because Rose, with her intense loyalty and passionate devotion to Pinkie, would never give evidence against him. He discovers after their marriage that she knows more about him than even he realized. However, because of his very nature, he cannot trust anyone. Also, with his great hatred of sex, he ultimately finds that he has to depend on a woman for his very existence. After he marries Rose he feels that there is no escape, and after he loses his virginity be becomes like other men and no longer has any power over them.

Pinkie and Rose both come from Nelson Place, which is the poorer section of Brighton. Pinkie aspires

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78. Ibid., p.33.

to the world of Mr. Colleoni, but cannot escape Nelson Place. His relationship with Rose makes that impossible. When he calls on her he seems to be returning to a world he had hoped to leave a long time ago.

> Every step was a retreat. He thought he had escaped for ever the whole length of the parade, and now extreme poverty took him back: a shop where a shingle could be had for two shillings in the same building as a coffinmaker's who worked in oak, elm or lead; no window-dressing but one child's coffin dusty with disuse and the list of hair-dressing prices. The Salvation Army Citadel marked with its battlements the very border of his home. He began to fear recognition and feel an obscure shame as if it were his native streets which had the right to forgive and not he to reproach them with the dreary and dingy past.[79]

Rose, like Pinkie, is also a Roman Catholic. They both believe in "Hell, flames and damnation."[80] They are both aware that in being married without the sanction of the church they are entering a state of mortal sin. Rose is late for the marriage ceremony because of a sudden desire to go to confession. She wants to be in a state of grace before she is married. She gets as far as the door of the church, but then goes away because she realizes that it will not do any good. Such is her devotion to Pinkie that she is willing to enter a state of mortal sin for his sake. She senses Pinkie's need for her, and even he recognizes that they complete one another.

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79. Ibid., p. 187.

80. Ibid., p. 66.

Ida is thus considered an outsider by both of them. Her world is foreign and hateful to Pinkie, and Rose looks upon her as being "not one of us". "Right and wrong," she says to Pinkie. "That's what she talks about. I've heard her at the table. Right and wrong. As if she knew."[81] Ida belongs to the world of the "middle law-abiding class" from which Pinkie is trying to, but cannot, escape. Her ideas of right and wrong, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth", result in her persistent pursuit of Pinkie which leads to his death. Ida may belong to the world of Right and Wrong, but for both Pinkie and Rose the world is made up of Good and Evil. "All you need is a bit of experience," she says to Rose:

> The Nelson Place eyes stared back at her without understanding: driven to her hole the small animal peered out at the bright and breezy world: in the world were murder, copulation, extreme poverty, fidelity and the love and fear of God: but the small animal had not the knowledge to deny that only in the glare and open world outside was something which people called experience.[82]

Pinkie dies at the end of the book. The tragedy of his existence is one which is common to Greene's individuals, that is his failure to communicate with and understand other men. His desire for peace and security result from his inability to adjust himself to the world in which he lives. That the world is

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81. Ibid., p. 150.
82. Ibid., p. 163.

basically an evil place Greene will not deny, but he does not believe that the individual is only the victim of circumstances. Few of his characters who have been dealt with so far are able to perceive that others are in the same position as they are. They are like the passengers in Stamboul Train, all going on the same journey, but unable to share its pleasures and pains with one another. Few are able to see the whole picture as it is presented in the epigraph to It's a Battlefield. In the latter book the Assistant Commissioner is aware of the whole situation, but also realizes that he cannot do anything about it. In The Heart of the Matter Scobie is also aware, and, trying to do something about it, comes into conflict with God. Greene seems to suggest that we must leave the state of the world to God, but at the same time have faith, and seek a relationship which is permanent with Him. Brighton Rock is the first indication of this view.

In this book Greene's individuals no longer live in the "graceless, sinless, empty chromium world" of England Made Me. They are living "under the shadow of religion",[83] whether it be that of God or the Devil. A denial of God, Greene believes, is preferable to a complete lack of awareness of His existence. Therefore,

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83. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p.249.

in spite of the violent ending of Brighton Rock, there is in this book an element of hope. This is present largely in the character of Rose. When Pinkie speaks to her about their religion and their belief of the torments of Hell, she adds, "And Heaven too."[84] Pinkie half remembers a quotation, "Between the stirrup and the ground, he something sought and something found"[85] but it is Rose who supplies the missing word, "mercy". Pinkie's only chance of salvation is in yielding to Rose's love for him, but this he cannot do. Instead he drags Rose down with him. She is even willing to kill herself for him, and fully aware that suicide will place her in a greater state of mortal sin than ever, she resists what seems to her like a temptation to do good. There is a passage in the gospel of St. John which states that, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."[86] Rose is willing to do even that. The priest who speaks these words to her in an endeavour to comfort her after Pinkie's death, goes on to say, "A Catholic is more capable of evil than anyone. I think perhaps - because we believe in Him - we are more in touch with the devil than other people. But we must hope, hope and pray."[87]

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84. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p. 33.
85. Ibid., p. 119.
86. St. John XV, 13.
87. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p. 332.

Rose places her hope in Pinkie's love for her, and in the possibility that she is with child. She returns to her lodgings to listen to the record Pinkie made for her just after their marriage. She has not heard it before. Pinkie in a moment of rage had recorded, "God damn you, you little bitch, why can't you go back home for ever and let me be?"[88] The book ends as she returns towards this, "towards the worst horror of all."[89] What hope she has will be completely destroyed, but it has existed nevertheless.

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88. Ibid., p. 236.

89. Ibid., p. 333.

Chapter IV - The Later Novels

I

In his later fiction Greene returns to the technique of his early novels, and shows the fallen world through the eyes of the principal characters. In The Confidential Agent (1939), The Ministry of Fear (1943), The Third Man (1950), and The End of the Affair (1951), all the events are presented from the point of view of one person. In The Power and the Glory (1940) the priest is the central character, but in order that he may be seen more objectively, his actions are sometimes presented from the point of view of others. The same is true with Scobie in The Heart of the Matter (1948).

Most of the characters in Greene's fiction who have been examined so far are able to see events in the fallen world only in relation to their own personal lives. They are unable to understand that the pain and fear which they feel is common to all men. The main characters in Greene's later books, however, are older men who are more experienced. They are horrified at the loss of innocence in childhood, and feel pity for those whom they think suffer needlessly. Pity is one of the main obsessions in the later novels. Greene also examines the effect that pity has on those who experience it. "Pity is a

terrible thing," says the detective in The Ministry of Fear. "People talk about the passion of love. Pity is the worst passion of all: we don't outlive it like sex."[1]

In the concluding pages of Brighton Rock the priest tells Rose about a certain man:

> "-------a Frenchman, you wouldn't know about him, my child, who had the same idea as you. He was a good man, a holy man, and he lived in sin all through his life, because he couldn't bear the idea that any soul could suffer damnation ------ This man decided that if any soul was going to be damned, he would be damned too. He never took the sacraments, he never married his wife in church. I don't know, my child, but some people think he was - well, a saint."[2]

This man is Charles Péguy. One of his best known works is Un Nouveau Théologien. In this book Péguy sees Christianity as a city to which a bad citizen belongs and a good one does not. Only the sinner is capable of becoming a saint. In his later "novels", The Power and the Glory, The Heart of the Matter, and The End of the Affair, Greene examines this theme at length. A passage from Péguy is used as an epigraph to The Heart of the Matter:

> Le pécheur est au coeur même de chrétienté ----- Nul n'est aussi compétent que le pécheur en matière de chrétienté. Nul, si ce n'est le saint.[3]

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1. Graham Greene, The Ministry of Fear, p. 206.

2. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p. 331.

3. Charles Péguy, Un Nouveau Théologien, (La Nouvelle Reveu francaise, Librarie Gallinard, 1936), p. 204.

The "entertainments", on the other hand, continue to develop the theme of the hunted man. The hunted man in Greene's fiction always carries a secret knowledge with him, something which, he feels, isolated him from other people. Raven's knowledge is of his past childhood, Conrad Drover's is an inferior feeling because of his intelligence, and D's. in The Confidential Agent is of the horrors of war. D. has come to England from a European country which is torn by civil war to negotiate with men in the British coal industry. Like Czinner in Stamboul Train, D. is an educated man, but he also belongs to the party of the poor and the oppressed. In The Confidential Agent a series of exciting events follow one another in even more rapid succession than they do in A Gun for Sale. D. is relieved by being in a country where there is peace, but this feeling does not last for long. Not only does he discover that he is not even trusted by his own party, but L., the agent of the rival party, arrives in England on the same boat. All the terrible memories of the war return to D.; he cannot forget that his wife was killed, and that he himself once lay under the debris of his bombed house.

> He carried the war in his heart: give me time, he thought, and I shall infect anything - even this. I ought to wear a bell like the old lepers.[4]

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4. Graham Greene, The Confidential Agent, (William Heinemann Ltd., London, 1939), p. 17.

Else, the little servant girl of the London boarding-house where D. is staying, comes from the same class as that which he is fighting to protect. She is fourteen years old, and, although she still possesses qualities of innocence and belief, D. is horrified to see how quickly she has become aware of human corruption. She tells D. that after she leaves the boarding-house, she will go to the flat of a friend. "She always said as how I could go to her - to be her maid. I wouldn't have anything to do with the men, of course. Only open the door."[5] Else has that passionate devotion which is characteristic of Rose in Brighton Rock. D. trusts her, and gives her some documents to keep for him. When she is murdered by members of his own party, D. determines to revenge her death.

Rose Cullen, like Else, has also become aware of the evil in the world at an early age. Her father is Lord Benditch, the man whom D. has come to England to see. Lord Benditch has devoted his energies to the acquisition of wealth, and shows more interest in his mistresses than in his daughter. A lonely man himself, D. sympathizes with Rose, and they fall in love.

As D. is himself suspected of Else's murder, the pattern of the second part of this book resembles that

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5. Ibid., p. 62.

of A Gun for Sale, where the hunted man is also the hunter. The world with which D. is in conflict is that of big business. He knows that power and influence are important, but his party lacks them. For example, K., D's. fellow agent, is bought by the rival party because L. is chancellor of the university, and has promised him a position. D. fails to get the contract for the coal, but he also succeeds in preventing the other party from getting it.

At the close of the book D. returns to his own country with Rose. He has little hope because he knows that the chances of his surviving the civil war are few, but in the meantime he has Rose. She cannot be faithful to him after his death, as he is faithful to the memory of his wife. "You'll be dead very soon," she says to D., "you needn't tell me that, but now ---"

> He felt no desire and no claim: happiness was all about them on the small vibrating tramp. To the confidential agent trust seemed to be returning into the violent and suspicious world.[6]

D., like Andrews and Raven, is a hunted man, possessing the same sense of fear and pain that they do. Unlike them, however, he also feels sympathy and pity for others. This characteristic is even more apparent in Arthur Rowe.

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6. Ibid., p. 286.

The events in The Ministry of Fear take place in England during the German blitz. Against this background Greene presents a tremendously exciting story based on the theft of some secret documents by the Nazi Fifth Column. Arthur Rowe attends a charity bazaar, and enters a tent to have his fortune told. "Don't tell the past," he says to the woman. "Tell me the future."[7] His use of this phrase causes the fortune-teller to give him the correct weight of a cake which is being sold to the person who comes closest to guessing it. Unknown to Rowe the cake contains microfilms of the stolen documents, and, when he wins it by accident, the Fifth Column attempt to recover it. Rowe discovers that they are even prepared to kill him if necessary.

However exciting these and the following events may be, the main material of the book lies deeper, and results from the pity that Rowe feels for others. He has been recently released from a mental institution where he was placed because he killed his wife who was suffering from an incurable disease. The thought of his wife's death, however, is still with him. He begins to feel that he killed her because he pitied himself at having to see her suffer, and not because he was feeling sorry for her. He cannot think of the past without pain, and for that

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7. Graham Greene, The Ministry of Fear, p. 8.

reason he utters the phrase which results in his winning the cake.

When a man appears in his rooms to demand the cake, Rowe has a great feeling of uneasiness. In The Ministry of Fear evil intrudes into everyday life; it appears at tea parties, at seances, at book sales. It is no longer restricted to the lawless world of A Gun for Sale or Brighton Rock. When he drinks his tea, Rowe recognizes the taste of the same type of poison he gave to his wife. His first reaction is one of anger that this should be done to him. He is, after all, a murderer himself.

Rowe determines to solve the mystery of the cake. His investigations take him to a seance which is conducted by Mrs. Bellairs, the woman who told his fortune at the bazaar. During the seance a man is killed, and Rowe is clearly implicated in his death. He appeals to Willi and Anna Hilfe, two Austrian refugees who are connected with the organization for whose benefit the bazaar was held. They advise him to keep out of sight.

Rowe has now become a hunted man. He takes refuge in an Underground where he spends the night. He has a dream in which memories of the past and events of the present become confused. He dreams that he is a boy of eight, confessing to his mother, who is now dead, that he

killed his wife. Later Rowe recalls how, as a child, he had killed a dying rat because he could not bear the sight of its pain. "What ever came over you I don't know," his nurse had said.

> Not one of them guessed that what had come over him was the horrible and horrifying emotion of pity.[8]

These incidents indicate Greene's belief that a man's nature is formed as a child, and also illustrate the relief that his characters obtain from childhood memories.

Later in the book, Rowe is asked by a stranger to deliver a suitcase of books to a room in a hotel. When Rowe opens the suitcase, a bomb explodes. As a result he loses his memory, and finds himself in a nursing home, where he is known as Richard Digby. Dr. Forester, the superintendent of the home, knows Rowe's real identity. He is a member of the Fifth Column, and, as the bomb failed to kill Rowe, Dr. Forester is keeping him in the home so that he will be unable to reveal any information. Greene draws a parallel between Rowe's regaining his memory and a child's growing up. At first Rowe is confused by what he sees around him, but it is not long before he becomes aware of the evil and the violence in world.

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8. Ibid., p. 73.

Having no recollection of his past, Rowe is a happy man, but, as he "grows up" and begins to remember, each memory brings pain with it. Johns, Dr. Forester's devoted assistant, tries to tell Rowe about the war. When Rowe asks about the Fifth Column, Johns explains:

> "They formed, you know, a kind of Ministry of Fear - with the most efficient under-secretaries. It isn't only that they get a hold on certain people. It's the general atmosphere they spread, so that you feel you can't depend on a soul."[9]

The world into which Rowe is "growing up" is the world of Raven and D., and when he sees Poole, who was the man who came to his rooms to demand the cake, he is disturbed by his presence although he does not recognize him.

Rowe discovers a copy of Tolstoy's What I Believe, in which he reads:

> "Remembering all the evil I have done, suffered and seen, resulting from the enmity of nations, it is clear to me that the cause of it all lay in the gross fraud called patriotism and love of one's country ----"[10]

Rowe disagrees with this philosophy:

> The old man in the beard, he felt convinced, was wrong. He was too busy saving his own soul. Wasn't it better to take part even in the crimes of people you loved, if it was necessary hate as they did, and if that were the end of everything suffer damnation with them, rather than be saved alone?[11]

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9. Ibid., p. 140.

10. Ibid., p. 154.

11. Ibid., p. 155.

Rowe sees that certain passages in the book had been noted, but that the marks have been erased. He loses respect for Dr. Forester, who "dared not hold his opinions openly"[12], and he plans to disobey his orders. Rowe, or Digby, is still "growing up".

> Digby still felt like a schoolboy, but he now knew that his headmaster had secrets of which he was ashamed: he was no longer austere and self-sufficient. And so the schoolboy planned rebellion.[13]

He visits the sick bay in order to speak to a friend.

In It's a Battlefield the world was shown to consist of a number of Blocks existing on different levels. The same idea occurs in The Ministry of Fear, where the world is represented by the happy nursing home and the violence of the sick bay. Rowe discovers the true nature of the world when he visits the sick bay and finds his friend in a strait-jacket.

> It was like the underside of a stone: you turned up the bright polished nursing home and found beneath it this.[14]

Dr. Forester discovers what Rowe has done, and reveals his identity to him. He hopes that Rowe will commit suicide as a previous patient had done upon receiving the same information. Rowe, however, does not yet know that he killed his wife, and will not be "fully grown" until

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12. Ibid., p. 159.
13. Ibid., pp. 159-160.
14. Ibid., pp. 163-164.

he does. At the moment he feels "the untired courage and the chivalry of adolescence."[15] He escapes from the nursing home, and goes to the London police.

As Rowe and the police trace the evidence which will lead to the capture of the members of the Fifth Column, Rowe slowly continues to regain his memory. The two events run parallel throughout the book, and are compared to the following of an unexplored map, an idea which appears earlier in Greene's fiction.

> A screech owl cried over the dark flat fields; their dimmed headlights just touched the near hedge and penetrated no farther into the wide region of night: it was like the coloured fringe along the unexplored spaces of a map, Over there among the unknown tribes a woman was giving birth, rats were nosing among sacks of meal, an old man was dying, two people were seeing other for the first time by the light of a lamp; everything in that darkness was of such deep importance that their errand could not equal it - this violent superficial chase, this cardboard adventure hurtling at forty-five miles an hour along the edge of the profound natural common experience of men.[16]

Willi Hilfe is discovered to be the leader of the Nazi group. Anna is torn between loyalty to her brother and love for Rowe, and she finally turns to the latter. The relationship that exists between Anna and Rowe is a strange one. He feels that she loves him as Richard Digby, and not as Arthur Rowe. She does not want him to know that he killed his wife, and he there-

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15. Ibid., p. 176.

16. Ibid., pp. 214-215.

fore feels he cannot tell her that Willi has already revealed that fact to him. With this knowledge Rowe is now "fully grown", and he realizes that one cannot have maturity without unhappiness, fear and pain.

> A phrase of Johns' came back to mind about a Ministry of Fear. He felt now that he had joined its permanent staff. But it wasn't the small Ministry to which Johns had referred, with limited aims like winning a war or changing a constitution. It was a Ministry as large as life to which all who loved belonged. If one loved one feared. That was something Digby had forgotten, full of hope among the flowers and Tatlers. [17]

In his study of Greene, Paul Rostenne states that on Greene's advice the serious themes of his books were omitted when they were adapted for the films. The screen versions concentrated on portraying the exciting adventure stories, rather than on the presentation of Greene's main obsessions. As The Third Man was originally written for the films, it lacks many of the serious thoughts which are characteristic of Greene's maturer fiction. In his preface to The Third Man Greene explains how this "entertainment" came to be published in book form.

> To me it is almost impossible to write a film play without first writing a story. Even a film depends on more than plot, on a certain measure of characterization, on mood and atmosphere; and these seem to be almost impossible to capture for the first time in the dull

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17. Ibid., p. 267.

> shorthand of a script. One can reproduce an effect caught in another medium, but one cannot make the first act of creation in script form. One must have the sense of more material than one needs to draw on. The Third Man, therefore, though never intended for publication, had to start as a story before those apparently interminable transformations from one treatment to another.[18]

Now that The Third Man has been published, however, there are certain elements in the book which cannot be overlooked. In the first place, it is a characteristic Greene "entertainment". The action, which is fast and exciting, includes a chase through the sewers of Vienna, a dramatic scene which takes place on a ferris wheel at an amusement park, a confusion of identity, and the death of a man who later turns out to be very much alive. Secondly, The Third Man possesses a "hero", in the sense that Raven and Pinkie are "heroes", in the person of Harry Lime.

In A Gun for Sale Raven is the victim of big business interests. In this "entertainment" the situation is reversed, because Harry Lime, a man who has made great profits from selling drugs on the black market, is presented sympathetically. Like Sir Marcus in A Gun for Sale, Harry is unconcerned by the fact that others will suffer because of his desire to acquire great wealth.

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18. Graham Greene, The Third Man, (William Heinemann Ltd., London, 1950), pp. 3-4.

His attitude is best expressed in a conversation with his friend, Rollo Martins. They are in a car of the Great Wheel at the Vienna pleasure park. Rollo says to him, "Have you ever visited the childrens' hospital? Have you ever seen any of your victims?"

> Harry took a look at the toy landscape below and came away from the door ---- "Victims?" he asked. "Don't be melodramatic, Rollo. Look down there," he went on, pointing through the window at the people moving like black flies at the base of the Wheel. "Would you really feel any pity if one of those dots stopped moving - for ever? If I said you can have twenty thousand pounds for every dot that stops, would you really, old man, tell me to keep my money - without hesitation? Or would you calculate how many dots you could afford to spare? Free of income tax, old man, free of income tax."[19]

Greene, however, sees Harry's ambition as a desperate attempt to achieve security in an uncertain world. Like Anthony Farrant in England Made Me, Harry is an imposter, clever and versatile, who wants to be recognized for what he can never be. Rollo Martins, his devoted friend, remembers him as a boy. He tells the detective that Harry could have been a composer if he had worked at it. After whistling a tune he says, "I always remember that. I saw Harry write it. Just in a couple of minutes on the back of an envelope. That was what he always whistled when he had something on his mind. It was his signature tune."[20] The detective knows that it was not

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19. Ibid., pp. 123-124.

20. Ibid., p. 23.

Harry who wrote it.

Harry's girl friend, Anna Schmidt, possesses the same qualities of loyalty and devotion as Rose in Brighton Rock and Else in The Confidential Agent. When Rollo, who has idealized Harry, discovers the bitter truth about him, he says to Anna, "Was he laughing at fools like us all the time?" The conversation continues:

> "He may have been. What does it matter?" she said ---"If he was alive now, he might be able to explain, but we've got to remember him as he was to us. There are so many things one doesn't know about a person, even a person one loves - good things, bad things, we have to leave plenty of room for them."
> "Those children ---"
> She said angrily, "For God's sake stop making people in your image. Harry was real. He wasn't just your hero and my lover. He was Harry. He was in a racket. He did bad things. What about it? He was still the man we knew."
> ----"But you still love him. You love a cheat, a murderer."
> "I loved a man," she said. "I told you - a man doesn't alter because you find out more about him. He's still the same man."[21]

Rollo Martins comes to Vienna to see Harry, but when he arrives he discovers that Harry has been killed by a car. Because of his great admiration for Harry, Rollo decides to discover the identity of the third man, who, according to all the witnesses, was present at the accident, but whom nobody knows. Parallel with his search, however, comes the gradual discovery of Harry's dishonesty. When he learns that Harry is alive, Rollo

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21. Ibid., pp. 100 & 101.

determines to see that justice is done, and that he is punished for his crime. Rollo feels that Harry's deception of him is like a betrayal. He assists the police in their attempt to capture Harry, and eventually shoots him. This is the real betrayal in the book. Even Rollo comes to regret what he has done, and to realize the truth in Anna's words. "You win," the dective says to him after Harry's death. "You've proved me a bloody fool." "I haven't won," Rollo answers. "I've lost."[22]

In the book Rollo and Anna walk away from Harry's funeral together. Greene, however, was persuaded by Carol Reed, the director of the film version, to change the ending, and to have Anna ignore Rollo and leave the graveyard alone. The latter ending seems more logical. They have nothing in common, and Rollo has betrayed the man whom Anna continues to love.

II

The Power and the Glory, the first "novel" of Greene's later period, takes place in Mexico in the 1930's. At that time the Roman Catholic Church was being ruthlessly persecuted by the state, and the "hero" of the book is a priest, who is fleeing from the police. He is not, how-

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22. Ibid., p. 141.

ever, an ordinary priest. The people call him a whisky priest because he is often drunk. The story is based on fact. In The Lawless Roads Greene records that such a priest existed and comments, "Who can judge what terror and hardship may have excused him in the eyes of God?"[23] This statement indicates the manner in which the priest is presented in The Power and the Glory.

The book is divided into four parts. In Parts II and III all the action is seen from the priest's point of view. Part I contains a group of characters through whose eyes the priest is seen objectively, and who show the world against which the action is set. Part IV returns to these characters to indicate what effect the priest's death has.

The destitution and hopelessness of Mexico is presented through the character of Mr. Tench, the dentist. The oppressive heat has drained all his energy and willpower, and he lacks even a desire to leave the country. The police lieutenant, like Czinner and D., feels that he is fighting for the poor, and especially for the poor children.

> He would eliminate from their childhood everything which had made him miserable, all that was poor, superstitious and corrupt. They deserved nothing less than the truth - a vacant universe and a cooling world, the right to be happy in any way they chose. He was quite prepared

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23. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p. 161.

> to make a massacre for their sakes - first the Church and then the foreigner and then the politician - even his own chief would one day have to go. He wanted to begin the world again with them, in a desert.[24]

He delights in the religious persecution because he feels that the Church's preaching is based on superstition, and is largely responsible for the wretched state of the poor. There are others, however, who still have faith, but it seems that this type of faith is one for which Greene has little regard. To these people faith exists in holy pictures and religious stories. The romantic lives of the martyrs, as they are presented in the book which a Mexican mother reads to her children, bear little resemblance to the wretched existence of the whisky priest.

Padre José is a priest who has complied with the regulations of the state, and has married. He is now a pathetic man, for even children have lost respect for him. They mimic his wife. "José, José," they call. "Come to bed, José."[25] The Mexican mother says to her husband that she would rather die than leave the Church, even though the only priests in the state are Padre José and the whisky priest. "Oh, of course," he answers. "That goes without saying. But we have to go on living."[26] This expresses the attitude of most of the people in Mexico.

Children play an important part in The Power and the Glory. Luis is bored with the romantic stories which his

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24. Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory, pp.70-71.
25. Ibid., p. 33.
26. Ibid., p. 30.

mother reads to him, and admires the police lieutenant. When he learns, however, that the whisky priest has been executed, he spits on the lieutenant's revolver. The remote events recorded in the stories have now acquired a reality. Coral Fellows illustrates Greene's obsession with the theme of lost innocence. She lives on a banana plantation, and, as her father is irresponsible and her mother is a hypochondriac, a large share of running the plantation falls on her shoulders. Her growing sense of responsibility comes at the same time as her first menstrual pains.

> An awful pain took her suddenly in the stomach - she missed a load and tried to catch up in her calculations; the sense of responsibility for the first time felt like a load borne for too many years. Five hundred and twenty-five. It was a new pain (not worms this time), but it didn't scare her; it was as if her body had expected it, had grown up to it, as the mind grows up to the loss of tenderness. You couldn't call it childhood draining out of her; childhood was something she had never really been conscious of.[27]

The priest takes temporary shelter at the plantation where Coral hides him. She is later killed by an American bandit, and shortly before his own execution the priest has a dream in which she serves him communion. Luis is the person who shelters a new priest, who, at the close of the book, comes to take the whisky priest's place. Mr. Madaule thinks that Greene, in giving the children in The Power and the Glory an almost symbolic significance, had in mind the idea expressed

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27. Ibid., p. 65.

in the Bible, that one has to be as a little child before entering the kingdom of Heaven.

The priest is distressed by Coral's early awareness of evil and is reminded of his own daughter. He slept with Maria, a Mexican peasant woman. Like Conrad and Milly Drover, they came together out of loneliness and despair, and the child, Brigitta, exists as a witness to the priest's shame and degradation. He has a terrible feeling of guilt because of his knowledge of the pain and fear which she will experience.

The priest feels that he is of no use to his people, but he remains with them, although he endangers their lives in doing so. The police take out hostages, but the people, however, do not betray the priest. They are not noble people, but they feel that, in spite of his sins, the priest is still a man of God. The prison chaplain in It's a Battlefield tells the Assistant Commissioner that one cannot hand in a resignation to God. The whisky priest also discovers that this is so. He is a hunted man, pursued by the police, but it is God, and not the state, who is the actual hunter. The Power and the Glory resembles Francis Thompson's poem, The Hound of Heaven, in which a man who is trying to escape from God ultimately realizes that he cannot. Each time the priest tries to leave the

country, some event occurs which prevents him from doing so. In the first section of the book he comes to the river port to take a boat to safety. A small boy appears, however, and asks the priest to come to his mother who is dying. When the priest actually does escape over the border to a state where the Church is no longer persecuted, he returns, although he knows it is to certain death, because the dying American bandit has sent him a message which reads, "For Christ's sake, father ---"[28]

The priest is not acceptable to God, however, until he learns humility. Before the religious persecution he lived in material comfort in a successful parish, pesessing a complacent and self-satisfied attitude. While he is pursued by the police, he loses, one by one, all the relics of his past existence. Only when he has nothing is he fit to enter God's kingdom. A feeling of hopelessness and despair accompanies the priest's degradation. He feels that even Padre Jose is a better Christian than he. The priest pities the half-caste, who is the Judas of the book, the man whom he knows will betray him to the police. He realizes that the half-caste will have no use for the reward when he receives it. He even considers that the half-caste's

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28. Ibid., p.232.

sins are trivial.

> How often the priest had heard the same confession - Man was so limited: he hadn't even the ingenuity to invent a new vice: the animals knew as much. It was for this world that Christ had died: the more evil you saw and heard about you, the greater glory lay around death; it was too easy to die for what was good or beautiful, for home or children or a civilization - it needed a God to die for the half-hearted and the corrupt.29

The priest in disguise goes to the capital of the state, where he spends his last money on wine with which to celebrate Mass. He loses even that because he is arrested for carrying spirits. He tries to take shelter in Padre Jose's house, but is turned away from the door. He destroys his last relic, a piece of paper on which is recorded a speech he gave to a religious organization in his old parish. "It was like the final surrender of a whole past."30

The scene in the prison indicates the extent of the priest humility. He enters into conversation with a woman who was arrested because she kept religious pictures in her house. He recognizes her complacent attitude towards religion as being similar to the one he had held, and pities her for it. She is horrified by the atmosphere she finds in the prison. She thinks it is

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29. Ibid., pp. 123-124.
30. Ibid., p. 152.

disgusting that a young man and woman should sleep together in the presence of others. The priest, however, understands their feelings and sympathizes with them:

> Somewhere against the far wall pleasure began again: it was unmistakable: the movements, the breathlessness, and then the cry. The pious woman said aloud with fury, "Why won't they stop it? The brutes, the animals!"
>
> "What's the good of your saying an Act of Contrition now in this state of mind?"
>
> "But the ugliness ----"
>
> "Don't believe that. It's dangerous. Because suddenly we discover that our sins have so much beauty."
>
> "Beauty," she said with disgust. "Here. In this cell. With strangers all round."
>
> "Such a lot of beauty. Saints talk about the beauty of suffering. Well, we are not saints, you and I. Suffering to us is just ugly. Stench and crowding and pain. That is beautiful in that corner - to them. It needs a lot of learning to see things with a saint's eye: a saint gets a subtle taste for beauty and can look down on poor ignorant palates like theirs. But we can't afford to."
>
> "It's a mortal sin."
>
> "We don't know. It may be. But I'm a bad priest, you see. I know - from experience - how much beauty Satan carried down with him when he fell. Nobody ever said the fallen angels were the ugly ones."[31]

In the prison the priest strikes a bargain with God. If he is allowed to escape from prison, he will leave the state. As he has been arrested for carrying spirits, and the authorities do not know he is a priest, he is released. He goes to the banana plantation where Coral had previously sheltered him. It is deserted

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31. Ibid., pp. 168-169.

except for a half-starved dog which is eating a bone. As the priest beats the defenceless animal in an effort to get food for himself, he thinks, "This was human dignity disputing with a bitch over a bone."[32] He later meets an Indian woman with her dead child, and he accompanies her to the Indian burial ground. When he sees the simplicity of the woman's faith, he realizes how far he had at first been from God.

> Faith, one was told, could move mountains, and here was faith - faith in the spittle that healed the blind man and the voice that raised the dead.[33]

The priest finally escapes over the border, and takes shelter with a Lutheran family. He does not remain there long, however. Fate, in the person of the half-caste, appears, and asks him to return to minister to the dying American gangster. The priest knows he is being led into a trap, but returns nevertheless. After the priest's arrest, an interesting conversation takes place between him and the police lieutenant. Like the scene in A Gun for Sale, when Raven confesses to Anne, and in The Ministry of Fear, when Rowe finds the passage from Tolstoy, this conversation contains the main idea of the whole book. While Brighton Rock deals with God's mercy, The Power and the Glory deals with the love of God. The priest asks

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32. Ibid., p. 187.
33. Ibid., p. 201.

the police lieutenant why he wants to give wealth to the poor if he hates the rich.

> "But why should we give the poor power? It's better to let him die in dirt and wake in heaven - so long as we don't push his face in the dirt."
>
> "I hate your reasons," the lieutenant said. "I don't want reasons. If you see somebody in pain, people like you reason and reason. You say - perhaps pain's a good thing, perhaps he'll be better for it one day. I want to let my heart speak ------ You never talk straight. You say one thing to me - but to another man, or a woman, you say, 'God is love.' But you think that stuff wont go down with me, so you say different things. Things you think I'll agree with."
>
> "Oh," the priest said, "that's another thing altogether - God is love. I don't say the heart doesn't feel a taste of it, but what a taste. The smallest glass of love mixed with a pint pot of ditch-water. We wouldn't recognize that love. It might even look like hate. It would be enough to scare us - God's love. It set fire to a bush in the desert, didn't it, and smashed open graves and set the dead walking in the dark. Oh, a man like me would run a mile to get away if he felt that love around."
>
> "You don't trust him much, do you? He doesn't seem a grateful kind of God. If a man served me as well as you've served him, well, I'd recommend him for promotion, see he got a good pension ---- if he was in pain, with cancer, I'd put a bullet through his head."
>
> "Listen," the priest said earnestly, leaning forward in the dark, pressing on a cramped foot, "I'm not as dishonest as you think I am. Why do you think I tell people out of the pulpit that they are in danger of damnation if death catches them unawares? I'm not telling them fairy stories I don't believe myself. I don't know a thing about the mercy of God: I don't know how awful the human heart looks to Him. But I do know this - that if there's ever been a single man in this state damned, then I'll be damned too." He said slowly, "I wouldn't want it to be any different. I just want justice, that's all."[34]

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34. Ibid., pp. 258-259.

The priest, however, cannot escape God's love. Nor can he achieve it without first experiencing the depths of human misery and despair. His last thoughts are of his great failure. It has already been noticed that this view is a common one in Péguy's writings, but it is also a development of Greene's early beliefs. It will be remembered that in The Lawless Roads he said, "One began to believe in heaven because one believed in hell --"[35]

The police lieutenant cannot understand the priest's point of view, but he is still greatly affected by his contact with him. He has finally caught the man he was pursuing, but he is left with a strange feeling of emptiness. The police lieutenant, Czinner, Demassener, and to a certain extent, D., all want to improve the state of the poor. In The Power and the Glory Greene seems to infer that their desire must end in failure because it is not based on faith in God. The book ends on a note of hope as another priest arrives to take the place of the one who has been executed.

III

In Journey Without Maps Greene records the appeal that Africa had for him. Scobie, the hero of The Heart

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35. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p. 11.

of the Matter, expresses the same attitude:

> Why, he wondered, swerving the car to avoid a dead pye-dog, do I love this place so much? Is it because here human nature hasn't had time to disguise itself? Nobody here could ever talk about a heaven on earth. Heaven remained rigidly in its proper place on the other side of death, and on this side flourished the injustices, the cruelties, the meannesses that elsewhere people so cleverly hushed up. Here you could love human beings nearly as God loved them, knowing the worst: you didn't love a pose, a pretty dress, a sentiment artfully assumed.[36]

Scobie's awareness of the "great conflict",[37] his ability to see people as God made them, and his pity for them are characteristics which are largely responsible for his downfall.

As Scobie is a man of great integrity, the consequences of his allowing his high standards to become corrupt are the more terrible. His personal disintegration can be seen in several stages. First, there is his professional delinquency. Scobie is Assistant Commissioner of police in Freetown, a West African port. At the beginning of the book he is compared to Aristides the Just, a statesman of ancient Greece, but gradually he becomes no better than a criminal himself. There is nothing inevitable about his professional downfall. In searching a Portuguese ship for smuggled diamonds, he discovers a hidden letter which is addressed to the cap-

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36. Graham Greene, The Heart of the Matter, p. 30.
37. Graham Greene, It's a Battlefield, epigraph.

tain's daughter. It is Scobie's duty to send the letter to the London censors, but after reading it, he is convinced of the captain's sincerity, and destroys it.

Scobie also borrows money from Yusef, the Syrian, in order to send his wife away for a holiday. She hates Africa; she is even ridiculed by the other English speaking people in Freetown. Her only pleasure is obtained from reading "advanced" authors, which wins her the derisive nickname of "literary Louise". Scobie has that quality common to so many of Greene's characters, that is a desire for peace, a state of mind where there are no worries and no responsibilities. Louise's unhappiness makes it impossible for him to achieve this peace of mind. Scobie also has a feeling of guilt because he no longer loves his wife. He is a convert to Roman Catholicism, taking his new faith with great seriousness, and he feels obligated to fulfil his marriage vow and make Louise happy.

> He would still have made the promise even if he could have foreseen all that would come of it. He had always been prepared to accept the responsibility for his actions, and he had always been half aware too, that from the time he made his terrible private vow that she should be happy, how far this action might carry him. Despair is the price one pays for setting oneself an impossible aim. It is, one is told, the unforgiveable sin, but it is sin the corrupt or evil man never practises. He

> always has hope. He never reaches the freezing-point of knowing absolute failure. Only the man of good will carries always in his heart this capacity for damnation.[38]

Secondly, there is Scobie's adultery with Helen Rolt. She is a survivor from a shipwreck, and arrives in Freetown while Louise is in South Africa. Her husband was killed in the wreck, and, as she is a young woman who seems to Scobie to need protection, he feels a sense of responsibility towards her. She reminds him of his daughter, Catherine, who died when she was still a small girl. In one of Greene's short stories, "The Hint of an Explanation", the narrator says to a man he meets on a train that he cannot understand why God allows children to be corrupted and feel pain. His companion, who turns out to be a priest, answers that God may use the suffering of a child to strengthen the faith of an adult. Scobie has the same lack of understanding as the narrator of this story. When he hears that a young girl, who was also in the shipwreck, is about to die he thinks:

> It would need all Father Brûle's ingenuity to explain that. Not that the child would die - that needed no explanation. Even the pagans realized that the love of God might mean an early death, though the reason they ascribed was different; but that the child should have been allowed to survive the forty days and nights in the open boat - that was the mystery, to reconcile that with the love of God. And yet he could believe in no God who was not human enough to love what he

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38. Graham Greene, The Heart of the Matter, p. 60.

> had created ----- What an absurd thing it was to expect happiness in a world so full of misery ----- Point me out the happy man and I will point you out either egotism, selfishness, evil or else an absolute ignorance.[39]

Scobie becomes Helen's lover in order to protect her from suffering. She had attracted the attention of Bagster, a worthless Airforce officer, and Scobie considers that an illicit relationship with himself is better than one with Bagster.

When Louise returns from South Africa, Yusef blackmails Scobie by threatening to tell his wife about Helen. Scobie therefore has to assist Yusef in smuggling contraband diamonds. This results in the murder of Ali, Scobie's faithful native servant, who is suspected of giving information to Wilson, an agent sent by the British government to investigate the smuggling. Scobie feels that he himself is directly responsible for Ali's death. He could not trust Ali because he lacked trust in himself and Ali would not have been killed if Scobie had not been an adulterer. When Yusef asks Scobie to summon Ali to the waterfront to be murdered, and to send a token so that Ali will know he is being summoned in good faith, it seems significant that Scobie sends his broken rosary.

Scobie now finds himself in a dilemma. So great is his pity for both women, he feels that he cannot leave

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39. Ibid., pp. 121-122 & 125.

one without hurting the other. Louise asks him to go to Mass with her. He has already refused several times, but he dare not do so any longer lest she suspect that he is not in a State of Grace. He goes to confession although he knows beforehand what the answer will be.

> The trouble is, he thought, we know the answers - we Catholics are damned by our knowledge. There's no need for me to work anything out - there is only one answer: to kneel down in the Confessional and say, "Since my last confession I have committed adultery so many times etcetera and etcetera": to hear Father Rank telling me to avoid the occasion: never see the woman alone (speaking in those terrible abstract terms: Helen - the woman, the occasion, no longer the bewildered child clutching the stamp-album, listening to Bagster howling outside the door: that moment of peace and darkness and tenderness and pity "adultery"). And I to make my act of contrition, the promise "never more to offend thee", and then tomorrow the Communion: taking God in my mouth in what they call the State of Grace. That's the right answer - there <u>is</u> no other answer: to save my own soul and abandon her to Bagster and despair.[40]

Scobie, however, is unwilling to do this, to push innocence back where it properly belonged - under the Atlantic surge." "Innocence must die young if it isn't to kill the souls of men,"[41] he thinks, but he is not willing to save his own soul at the expense of another's. Scobie goes to Mass and accepts Communion while in a state of mortal sin.

Scobie talks about loving God, and undoubtedly he does so; but he cannot completely trust Him. He feels

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40. Ibid., p. 235.
41. Ibid., p. 241.

that he cannot leave Helen's fate to God, and therefore takes the responsibility on his own shoulders. He suffers from a kind of spiritual pride, and this accounts for his downfall. Scobie's final act is his suicide. He pretends that he has a heart ailment, and takes an overdose of medicine which kills him. He believes that he is damned, and offers his damnation as a sacrifice for others. Greene, however, is not prepared to say whether Scobie is damned or not. He simply infers that Scobie's actions may have a different significance in the eyes of God.

Ironically, Scobie's death, and, in fact, all his actions, have little effect, and what effect they have is negative. He has killed himself rather than hurt either of the two women, but he succeeds only in hurting both. Shortly after his death Helen allows Bagster to sleep with her, and Louise is filled with bitterness, not only because Scobie was unfaithful to her, but because he was also unfaithful to his religion.

In order that Scobie may be seen objectively, part of the action of The Heart of the Matter is also seen from Wilson's point of view. Wilson attended a boys' public school in England. Because of his own unhappiness at school, Greene has developed a biased, and often unfair, attitude to public schools in general. He feels that they teach their students to live according to

false values. Greene's characters who have attended public school are seldom able to adjust themselves to the outside world. Wilson, like Minty in England Made Me, belongs to this group. His pastime takes the form of competing with Harris, also a former public school boy, to see who can kill the greater number of cockroaches. Wilson is also interested in poetry, but is ashamed to admit the fact to anyone except Louise. She is contemptuous of him, but feels that they nevertheless have something in common. He is one of the few people who accepts her. Wilson hates Scobie because he considers that he cannot understand his wife.

Yusef is also a good character study. The English people are envious of Scobie's integrity, but Yusef admires him for it, because it represents justice in a form that he can understand. For this reason, Scobie's downfall is a great shock to him, but he benefits from it nevertheless. Louise is a shallow, self-centred woman, who is embittered by her husband's infidelity. Neither she nor Helen are aware of the suffering which Scobie experiences.

The irony of The Heart of the Matter occurs when Scobie is awared the Commissionership. It was partly to compensate for his former failure to attain this appointment that induced him to send Louise to South Africa. When she learns the news, Louise says, "Life is so happy, Ticki."

> And that, he told his loneliness with defiance, is my reward, splashing the whisky across the table, defying the ghosts to do their worst, watching God bleed.[42]

IV

The End of the Affair is perhaps Greene's greatest technical achievement. Only once before, in The Third Man has he presented the action of a book through the eyes of a narrator, but the detective who tells the story is an outsider; he does not take part in the main events which concern Harry, Rollo and Anna. Maurice Bendrix, however, besides being the narrator of The End of the Affair, is also one of the principle characters, and develops as the story progresses. He is a professional writer who wishes to introduce the character of a civil servant into his next novel. In order to obtain information about such a character, he invites Sarah Miles, the wife of a government employee, to dinner. Bendrix and Sarah fall in love, and she becomes his mistress.

These events are recollected by the narrator as the story progresses. The book itself opens at a period several years later, after Sarah has left Bendrix. He meets Sarah's husband, Henry, who tells him that she is

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42. Ibid., p. 257.

being unfaithful. Although Sarah has left him, Bendrix is still jealous, and he hires a detective to find out who Sarah's new lover is. It is not long before Bendrix discovers that it is God.

Parkis, the detective, finds Sarah's diary which he gives to Bendrix. The middle section of the book records passages from the diary, so that, although Bendrix is still the narrator, he is also seen from another point of view. In reading the diary he discovers why Sarah left him. In Greene's novels the women are either better or worse than the men; they influence the men for good, or for evil. Sarah is Greene's most interesting female character. She realizes that her love affair with Bendrix is not enough to fill the emptiness in which they live. Like Pinkie and Rose in Brighton Rock, she and Bendrix complete one another. One critic[43] goes so far as to say that they are two aspects of the same person, which, in view of the situation in Rumour at Nightfall, is an interesting interpretation, but one which seems exaggerated in this case.

The sexual relationships between Andrews and Lucy, and Conrad and Milly, were secondary themes to the main ideas of The Man Within and It's a Battlefield, but the

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43. G.L. Arnold, "Adam's Tree", a review of The End of the Affair, Twentieth Century, October, 1951.

love story in The End of the Affair is a major issue. Greene's attitude towards sex is unusual; it seems to amount to a belief that love without God is not enough. Both Sarah and Bendrix seem to be living in a spirital waste land. Their feelings alternate between sexual abandon and remorse. Sarah is the first to realize that the security they find in their love is only temporary, and she tries to find permanent peace with God.

> I know he is afraid of that desert which would be around him if our love were to end, but he can't realize that I feel exactly the same. What he says aloud, I say to myself silently and write it here. What can one build in the desert? Sometimes after a day when we have made love many times, I wonder whether it isn't possible to come to an end of sex, and I know that he is wondering too and is afraid of that point where the desert begins. What do we do in the desert if we lose each other? How does one go on living after that?
>
> He is jealous of the past and the present and the future. His love is like a medieval chastity belt: only when he is there, with me, in me, does he feel safe. If only I could make him feel secure, then we could love peacefully, happily, not savagely, inordinately, and the desert would recede out of sight. For a lifetime perhaps.
>
> If one could belive in God, would he fill the desert?
>
> I have always wanted to be liked or admired. I feel a terrible insecurity if a man turns on me, if I lose a friend. I don't even want to lose a husband. I want everything, all the time, everywhere. I'm afraid of the desert. God loves you, they say in the churches, God is everything. People who believe that don't need admiration, they don't need to sleep with a man, they feel safe. But I can't invent a belief.
>
> All to-day Maurice has been sweet to me. He tells me often that he has never loved another woman so much. He thinks by saying it often, he will make me belive it. But I believe it simply because I love him in exactly the same way. If I stopped loving him, I would cease to believe in his love. If I loved God, then I would believe in His love for me. It's not enough to need it. We have to love first, and I don't

know how. But I need it, how I need it.[44]

When she finds Bendrix buried under a door after an air raid, Sarah prays to a God in Whom she does not believe. If Bendrix is alive, she vows to leave him.

Another reason for Sarah's appeal to God becomes apparent after her death. Her mother tells Bendrix that, as a child, Sarah was baptized into the Roman Catholic faith. Sarah seems to have been unaware of this fact, but, like the whisky priest, she cannot escape her God. The baptism, as her mother hoped, seems to have "taken".

To Greene, Sarah's agony of mind, and eventual humility, with the conviction that she is "a bitch and a fake,"[45] are necessary before she can enter the kingdom of Heaven. Sarah suffers greatly after her vow. She wants to break her promise and at the same time she is struggling to believe. She goes to a rationalist thinker, hoping that he will be able to convince her that her vow is meaningless, but she leaves with greater faith than she had before. She sees Bendrix again after two years, and makes up her mind that she will return to him. Her husband, however, begs her to remain with him. Like the whisky priest, who finds that some force will not allow him to leave Mexico, Sarah finds that she cannot break her vow to God. In a letter she writes Bendrix shortly

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44. Graham Greene, The End of the Affair, (William Heinemann Ltd., London, 1951) pp. 107-108.

45. Ibid., p. 119.

before her death, she says:

> I love you but I can't see you again. I don't know how I'm going to live in this pain and longing and I'm praying to God all the time that he won't be hard on me, that he won't keep me alive ----- he's got mercy, only it's such an odd sort of mercy, it sometimes looks like punishment. Maurice, my dearest, I've got a foul headache, and I feel like death. I wish I weren't as strong as a horse. I don't want to live without you, and I know one day I shall meet you on the Common and then I won't care a damn about Henry or God or anything. But what's the good, Maurice? I believe there's a God - I believe the whole bag of tricks, there's nothing I don't believe, they could subdivide the Trinity into a dozen parts and I'd believe. They could dig up records that proved Christ had been invented by Pilate to get himself promoted and I'd believe just the same. I've caught belief like a disease. I've fallen into belief like I fell in love. I've never loved before as I love you, and I've never believed in anything before as I believe now. I'm sure ----- I fought belief for longer than I fought love, but I haven't any fight left.[46]

Bendrix cannot escape God either. He does not come to believe in Him as Sarah does, but is aware of Him only because of His intrusion into their love. At first he regards God as a rival lover, and tries to prevent Him from having Sarah. He persuades Henry against giving her a Catholic burial, and she is cremated. Even though he has destroyed her body, however, Bendrix cannot prevent God from gaining her soul. In her diary he reads how she bought a crucifix, and, while gazing at it, thought of Henry and Richard Smythe, the rationalist.

> Let me think of the strawberry-mark on Richard's cheek. Le me see Henry's face with

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46. Ibid., pp. 177-178

> the tears falling. Let me forget me. Dear God, I've tried to love and I've made such a hash of it. If I could love you, I'd know how to love them. I believe the legend. I believe you were born. I believe you died for us. I believe you are God. Teach me to love. I don't mind my pain. It's their pain I can't stand. Let my pain go on and on, but stop theirs. Dear God, if only you could come down from your Cross for awhile and let me go up there instead. If I could suffer like you, I could heal like you.[47]

After Sarah's death, Smythe tells Bendrix that his strawberry-mark has been healed, and Parkis, the detective, tells Bendrix that his son has been cured of a serious fever. Both men attribute these cures to Sarah's influence. They think that she has interceded for them in heaven. Faced with this evidence, Bendrix can do nothing but admit that God has won. He doesn't even hate Him any more. All he wants is to be left alone.

> O God, You've done enough, You've robbed me of enough, I'm too tired and old to learn to love, leave me alone forever.[48]

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47. Ibid., pp. 143-144.

48. Ibid., p. 237.

Chapter V - Conclusion.

In an article on Greene, which appeared in 1943, Morton Dauwen Zabel comments:-

> But where once - in James, Conrad, Dostoevski, Dickens, Defoe or the Elizabethans - it was society, state, kingdom, world, or the universe itself that supplied the presiding order of law or justice, it is now the isolated, betrayed, and indestructible integrity of the individual life that furnishes that measure. Humanity, having contrived a world of mindless and psychotic brutality, reverts to the atom of the lonely man. Marked, hunted, Ishmaelite, or condemned, he may work for evil or for good, but it is his passion for moral identity that provides the nexus of values in a world that has reverted to anarchy.[1]

All Greene's individuals experience what Mr. Allott and Miss Farris call a "terror of life"[2]; they have common emotions of fear and pain. In his early novels Greene deals mainly with the dual nature of man, and later becomes concerned with the themes of lost innocence in childhood and pity. These, however, are all aspects of his major obsession, which is the conflict between good and evil.

Most of Greene's characters are isolated. Raven and Pinkie, for example, are lawless men, pursued by the police; but they also feel isolated because of something which is inherent in them, with which they have been born. They have both grown up in an atmosphere of horror and and violence - for Raven life is represented by his mother's

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1. Morton Dauwen Zabel, "Graham Greene, The Nation, July 3, 1943.
2. K. Allott and M. Farris, The Art of Graham Greene, p. 15.

terrible suicide, and for Pinkie by the girl who placed her head on the railway track. They feel that when they are born they begin to die, and they want to get it over with as soon as possible.

Many of Greene's characters are unable to understand one another. Greene himself realizes that this is a natural characteristic of man in general, but he also feels that it is the duty of the novelist to sympathize with all the people he creates. In Brighton Rock Ida's point of view is presented as well as Pinkie's, and in The Power and the Glory the police lieutenant gives his reasons for wanting to persecute the Roman Catholic Church. Greene's characters also have a desire for peace. Some, like Coral Musker in Stamboul Train and Pinkie in Brighton Rock, want the material security they have previously lacked, while others, like Scobie, want a state of mind, a feeling of freedom from everyday cares and responsibilities. "You haven't any conception of what peace means," Scobie says to his wife.

> It was as if she had spoken slightingly of a woman he loved. For he dreamed of peace by day and night. Once in sleep it had appeared to him as the great glowing shoulder of the moon heaving across his window like an iceberg. Arctic and destructive in the moment before the world was struck; by day he tried to win a few moments of its company, crouched under the rusty handcuffs in

> the locked office, reading the reports from the sub-stations.[3]

These characters may gain it temporarily. Andrews, for example, finds peace in Elizabeth's presence. Such a feeling, however, cannot last for long because, for Greene, the world is "a Belgium fought over by friend and enemy alike; there is no peace anywhere where there is human life ---".[4]

Greene was converted to the Roman Catholic faith in 1926. His religion, however, is of less significance in his writings than one would at first suppose. While at Oxford he met Vivien Dayrell-Browning, and was converted only a few weeks before he married her. Ten years later, in Journey Without Maps, he records, "I had not been converted to a religious faith. I had been convinced by specific arguments in the probability of its creed."[5] The foundations for his intellectual acceptance of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church were, however, laid at a much earlier date. Even as a boy at school he had made certain observations, recorded in The Lawless Roads, which form the basis of his later beliefs, and in "The Lost Childhood" he states that Miss Bowen had given him his pattern although "religion might later explain it to me in other terms."[6] Thus, although no one who was not a Catholic could have written The Power and the Glory or The Heart of the Matter, where the

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3. Graham Greene, The Heart of the Matter, p. 59.
4. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, p. 36
5. Graham Greene, Journey Without Maps, p. 263.
6. Graham Greene, "The Lost Childhood", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, p. 17.

intricacies of Roman Catholic practices are dealt with at length, the fact remains that his view of life did not result from his conversion. In Why Do I Write? Greene speaks of himself as a writer who is a Catholic, and not as a Catholic writer.

The religious element in Greene's later novels also owes much to his reading of Péguy, and, Greene confesses in Why Do I Write?, to his reading of François Mauriac. Greene's handling of the religious themes is quite different from Mauriac's, but both men are obsessed with the conflict between good and evil which exists in the world. The love of God also plays an important part in the fiction of Greene and Mauriac, who realize that it is not by good works alone that one is permitted to enter His kingdom. Brigitte Pian in Mauriac's La Pharisienne comes to realize her former spiritual emptiness only after she has experienced love.

> In the evening of her life, Brigitte Pian had come to the knowledge that it is useless to play the part of a proud servitor eager to impress his master by a show of readiness to repay his debts to the last farthing. It had been revealed to her that our Father does not ask us to give a scrupulous account of what merits we can claim. She understood at last that it is not our deserts that matter but our love.[7]

The attempt of his characters to assert themselves in a hostile world has resulted in Greene's being labelled

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7. Francois Mauriac, La Pharisienne, translated from the French by Gerard Hopkins, (Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1946), p. 203.

an existentialist by certain French critics. Admittedly Greene does insist that his characters are not simply victims of the world in which they live; they possess a certain amount of free will. Conrad Drover's pathetic death, for example, results not only from his sense of injustice, but also from his inability to perceive that other people, such as the Assistant Commissioner, are not persecutors, but, in a sense, just as isolated as he is. Similarly, Scobie's downfall is not inevitable. His nature is such that he refuses to help himself at the expense of other people; he is willing to risk damnation if there is a chance of others being saved. The existentialists as a whole, however, insist on the complete freedom of man, so that, because of Greene's emphasis on the subordination of man's will to Divine grace, such a label cannot be taken too seriously. Nevertheless, in La Peste, a novel by Albert Camus, who is one of the best known of present day French existentialists, there exists an interesting chapter in which the main idea is quite similar to Greene's obsession with the suffering of children and the incomprehensibility of such suffering to adults. A small boy dies of the plague and his last moments are spent in great pain. The priest, Father Paneloux, endeavours to console Dr. Rieux.

> "Why was there that anger in your voice just now? What we'd been seeing was as unbearable to me as it was to you."

> Rieux turned towards Paneloux. "I know. I'm sorry. But weariness is a kind of madness. And there are times when the only feeling I have is one of mad revolt."
>
> "I understand," Paneloux said in a low voice. "That sort of thing is revolting because it passes our human understanding. But perhaps we should love what we cannot understand." ------
>
> ------ "No, Father, I've a very different idea of love. And until my dying day I shall refuse to love a scheme of things in which children are put to torture."
>
> A shade of disquietude crossed the priest's face. He was silent for a moment. Then, "Ah, doctor," he said sadly, "I've just realized what is meant by 'grace'."[8]

The priest has also learnt from the child's death. In an earlier sermon he spoke about the wrath of God, and how He had sent a plague to punish His people. In another sermon which he preaches shortly after this tragedy, he speaks of God's love.

> "My brothers, the love of God is a hard love. It demands total self-surrender, disdain of our human personality. And yet it alone can reconcile us to suffering and the deaths of children, it alone can justify them, since we cannot understand them, and we can only make God's will ours. That is the hard lesson I would share with you today. That is the faith, cruel in men's eyes, and crucial in God's, which we must ever strive to compass. We must aspire beyond ourselves towards that high and fearful vision. And on that lofty plane all will fall into place, all discords be resolved, and truth flash forth from the dark cloud of seeming injustice."[9]

Most critics of Greene tend to overlook the note of hope that exists in his later books. Bendrix in The End of the Affair ends by hating God, and asking him to leave

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8. Albert Camus, La Peste, translated from the French by Stuart Gilbert, (Hamish Hamilton, London, 1948), p. 203.

9. Ibid., p. 212.

him alone for ever, but to Greene even this is better than a complete denial. Both Pinkie and Scobie die believing themselves damned, but, Greene infers, only God is in a position to judge them. The priest in Brighton Rock says to Rose, "You can't conceive, my child, nor can I or anyone - the ----- appalling ------ strangeness of the mercy of God."[10] The world of these books is no longer the waste land of England Made Me. In the Power and the Glory, after one priest dies, another arrives to take his place, and in The Lawless Roads Greene says, "God didn't cease to exist when men lost their faith in Him ----- He had Eternity on His side."[11] Newman in his Apologia Pro Vita Sua concludes that the human race is implicated in "some terrible aboriginal calamity"[12], but continues to say that, in order to exist in such a state, one must have faith. In My Confession Tolstoy records the great spiritual struggle which had taken place within him. He began to consider that things which had always been self-evident were now meaningless. He even contemplated suicide. After a tremendous inner conflict, however, he came to the following conclusion:

> Since mankind has existed, wherever life has been, there has also been the faith that gave the possibility of living. Faith is the sense of life, that sense by virtue of which man does not destroy himself, but continues to live on. It is the force whereby we live. If Man did not believe that he must live for something, he would not live at all. The idea of an infinite God, of the divinity of the soul, of the union of men's

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10. Graham Greene, Brighton Rock, p. 331.
11. Graham Greene, The Lawless Roads, pp. 44-45.
12. Cardinal Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua, p.242.

> actions with God - these are the ideas elaborated in the infinite secret depths of human thought.[13]

Greene has developed the same attitude towards faith, but he is also acutely aware of the tremendous responsibilities that faith brings with it.

Artistically, however, Greene seems more convincing when dealing with evil than with good. In discussing Oliver Twist he says that Dickens tried to construct characters to represent virtue

> --------- and, because his age demanded it, triumphant virtue, but all he can produce are powdered wigs and gleaming spectacles and a lot of bustle with bowls of broth and a pale angelic face ---- How can we really believe that these inadequate ghosts of goodness can triumph over Fagin, Monks and Sykes?[14]

Greene's own characters create the same impression. In The Man Within Lucy is more appealing than the saintly Elizabeth. The last part of The End of the Affair, where minor miracles occur as a result of Sarah's intercession in heaven, is less satisfying than the earlier sections which deal with the devastating effects of her love for Maurice Bendrix. But Greene is most at home when dealing with the seedy and the down and out. He has already created a memorable gallery of such characters, such as Conrad Drover, Anthony, Raven, and Rose. In a review of The Cherry Orchard Greene says, "How right Tchehov was to put

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13. William James, The Varities of Religious Experience, "Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1902), p. 184.
14. Graham Greene, "The Young Dickens", from The Lost Childhood and Other Essays, pp. 54 & 55.

hope into the mouths of the weak, the futile, the unbalanced."[15]

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15. Graham Greene, review of The Cherry Orchard, The Spectator, September 5, 1941.

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