

## 摘要

二十世纪三四十年代，英国小说家格雷厄姆·格林（1904~1991）创作了三部宗教巨著：《布莱顿硬糖》（1938）、《权力与荣耀》（1940）和《问题的核心》（1948）。它们通常被称为格林的“宗教三部曲”，反映了格林对处于动荡不安的社会中空虚失落的人们的命运的关注。

身为罗马天主教徒，格林一方面寄希望于天主教，力图借助宗教来拯救人类灵魂和日益堕落的社会；另一方面，他又深受存在主义和人文主义的影响，他的主人公大多被教会视为不可救赎的罪人，然而他们不向邪恶屈服，为心灵的宁静做勇敢的抗争。格林认为写作的宗旨在于净化人的心灵，利用上帝的力量唤醒喧嚣社会中人们的宗教感及人性。格林并不是所谓的“天主教小说家”，而是“写小说的天主教徒”。

本文从社会和历史的角度出发，依据文本分析，围绕格林的“宗教三部曲”的主题，探讨小说家的宗教观。

论文包括前言、四个章节和结论。前言介绍了天主教和其它思想流派对格林的影响及其在三部曲中的体现。

第一章综述了格林的宗教思想。格林执着于天主教的“邪恶”主旨，认为人在恶欲的诱惑下迷失了自我；但他并非盲目遵循天主教义，而是宣扬上帝仁慈的同时，赞颂人的爱心、信仰与不甘沉沦的反抗。

第二章通过《布莱顿硬糖》，剖析了格林的地狱观。格林描述了主人公平

奇的一步步堕落，探讨了邪恶世界中的冷漠人性，说明罪恶使人走向地狱的深渊。

第三章结合《权力与荣耀》，阐述格林的天堂观。<sup>(格林认为人类通过自身努力，可以洗涤罪过升入天堂。小说中的神甫在正统眼光里是罪无可恕的，然而通过思想转变与最终的牺牲，他获得了上帝的恩典，成为一位圣徒。)</sup>

第四章围绕《问题的核心》，介绍格林对“炼狱”的理解。<sup>(由于上帝的怜悯和自身的善良，主人公斯科比虽犯过失，最终得以在炼狱中涤罪。格林认为人类就像斯科比一样生活在炼狱中，只有依靠信任、爱心、勇气和抗争，人们才能得到救赎升入天堂。)</sup>

结论部分总结了格林作为杰出的英国现代小说家的艺术成就。虽为一名天主教徒，格林的创作只是将自己的宗教观与艺术思想如实呈现给读者，并未宣扬天主教义。他从人性的观点出发，批判社会的邪恶，赞扬人性的美好。

总而言之，格林在近七十年的写作生涯中，通过自己的杰出作品，成为评论现代宗教、文化和政治冲突的最优秀的作家之一，也是人们公认的二十世纪主要的英国作家之一。

论文关键词：<sup>宗教</sup>三部曲；天主教；宗教观；人性论，<sup>神曲</sup>，<sup>宗教文学</sup>。

## Abstract

In the 1930s and 1940s, the British novelist Graham Greene (1904~1991) produced three religious masterpieces—*Brighton Rock* (1938), *The Power and the Glory* (1940), and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948). They were usually called Greene's "religious trilogy", which revealed his concerns about human destiny in the tempestuous modern era in which man became empty and lost.

As a Roman Catholic, on the one hand, Greene built his hope on Catholicism, trying to save human souls and the degenerating society with religion; on the other, he was profoundly influenced by existentialism and humanism: most of his characters were regarded as sinners by the Church, but they did not succumb to evils, but fought bravely for their peace of mind. Greene claimed that his purpose of writing was to purge man of his sins with the strength of God and to revive the religious sense and humanity in both man's heart and the chaotic world.<sup>1</sup> He was not a so-called "Catholic writer" but "a writer who happens to be a Catholic"<sup>2</sup>.

Guided by the social-historical approach and based on text analyses, this thesis is a thematic study of Greene's "religious trilogy", with the focus on his religious aspects in these novels.

The thesis consists of four chapters besides Introduction and Conclusion. The Introduction is a survey of Catholicism and other schools that ~~has~~ influenced

Greene's general religious thoughts, which are reflected in his trilogy.

Chapter One analyzes Greene's religious ideas. Obsessed with evil, Greene saw human beings get lost with the temptation of evil. However, Greene did not follow the Catholic doctrines blindly. While holding that God was loving and merciful, he thought highly of human love, belief and brave struggle in the wicked world.

Chapter Two discusses Greene's concept of Hell as reflected in *Brighton Rock*. By tracing the stages of Pinkie's descent to damnation, Greene gave a thorough exploration of human nature in a chaotic world, illustrating that evil dragged one downward to the abyss of Hell.

Chapter Three, focusing on *The Power and the Glory*, is devoted to Greene's view on Heaven. By means of man's effort, he could attain the possibility of redemption and get access to Heaven. The priest in the novel was an unforgivable sinner in the Orthodoxy views. However, Greene allowed him to obtain God's Grace and become a saint through spiritual transformation and eventual sacrifice.

Chapter Four involves the concept of Purgatory as represented by *The Heart of the Matter*. Despite his sins, Scobie's suffering in Purgatory suggested God's merciful response to his goodness. Greene held that human beings, just like Scobie, lived in a world of Purgatory. Only by cherishing love, courage, trust and struggle in his heart, could man prepare himself well for redemption and paradise.

The Conclusion summarizes Greene's achievement as a major modern British writer. Despite a Catholic, Greene just conveyed his religious aspects and literary ideas to the readers as a novelist instead of propagating for Catholicism. Focusing on humanism, he exposed the evils of society and praised the beauty of human nature.

In short, in his writings, which had spanned nearly seventy years, Greene became one of the finest literary commentators on religious, cultural and political tensions in the modern era, and was generally acknowledged as a leading British writer in the twentieth century.

Key words: Trilogy; Catholicism; Religious aspects; Humanism

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论文作者签名：彭香丽 日期：2003.5.20

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论文作者签名：彭香丽 导师签名：g Tm 日期：2003.5.20

## Introduction

Graham Greene (1904~1991) was born in an upper-middle-class family that was large, prosperous, and well-connected. His childhood had left him a general impression of happiness. Yet as soon as he entered school, he was bored by the gloomy public life and felt strongly the indifference among people. This had a profound influence on his works, which featured in the recurrence of seedy backgrounds and obsessed characters in Greene's novels. As Kenneth Allot and Miriam Farris pointed out that "characters recur in his books: the lonely, isolated man perpetually engrossed in his own childhood, like Andrews in *The Man Within* or Arthur Rowe in *The Ministry of Fear*..."<sup>3</sup>

The first half of the twentieth century, when Greene grew up and strove for maturity, witnessed an uncertain and disturbing period in history. Two successive world wars and the Great Depression crushed the material wealth and shattered moral conventions. Cultures, values, and ideologies had undergone immense transformation. Many British intellectuals in time of crisis were drawn towards various "isms", for instance, W. H. Auden (1907-1973) turned to Communism, while Evelyn Waugh (1903-1966) converted to Catholicism. What happened to Greene was that he accepted Communism and Catholicism almost simultaneously. But he got rid of the former very soon; for the latter, he devoted for a life-long time.

His conversion to the Catholic Church was closely related to his personal experience. At twenty-two, he met his future wife, a Roman Catholic. Greene decided that he ought to learn the nature of the belief she held if he were to marry a Catholic. Although the initial motive was only an expectation of a marriage, the eventual outcome proved a larger significance. He became finally convinced of the existence of God and was converted to Catholicism. "It offered him as a writer the grand cosmic backdrop he wanted, the religious sense which would supply ulterior significance and importance to the obscure lives of futility and defeat that he insisted on for his post-Victorian characters."<sup>4</sup>

Greene hung in doubt among various political and religious beliefs which, on the one hand, was due to his immaturity, but most importantly, it was because he was spiritually lost among social and ideological crises. Finally, he built his hope on Catholicism, trying to revive the religious sense in human hearts and relocate the significance of literature in the contemporary world.

Greene started his literary creation in the 1920s. Brief and stylistically plain, he persistently clung to traditional forms of novels and made extensive use of his life experience. His novels were featured with few characters, simple structure and precise language. He followed traditional style but manipulated moral issues within a religious frame.

Greene's writings displayed various influences on him. Undoubtedly, his



conversion to the Catholic Church had above all had a deep influence on his thoughts and his works, which manifested his exploration of human relations to himself and to God. The existence of evil in the world was a fact strongly recognized in Catholic doctrines, and this idea was found running through almost all of his novels, which projected the issues of poverty, deprivation, injustice and cruelty in the world. Greene was preoccupied with the acute awareness of human original corruption. Many of his characters were criminals, failures, or people who had lost their beliefs. They lived in squalid, shabby surroundings and had to suffer great pains for their sins.

Greene admired Baudelaire's poems as well as T. S. Eliot's, and the latter's *Waste Land* impressed him deeply, which depicted the city as a squalor and corrupt land. Thus appeared in Greene's works a "Greeneland"---a blighted, tainted, and oppressive landscape almost entirely conquered by evil. Human beings were invariably lost in that landscape. Those who tried to do good seemed repeatedly to be striving against hopeless odds.

In spite of his Catholicism, Greene was profoundly impressed by existentialism and humanism. He held that as human beings, people should forge their values and meanings in an inherently absurd world. Obligated to make one's own choices, one had to confront the anguish of this responsibility. His characters were usually downtrodden people whom the society condemned as criminals or

sinners, who could not desist the longing for God's grace, for a lost ideal and for the peace of mind. Their behavior typified the eternal struggle for the possession of the soul that had been going on in human mind, between the forces of light and of darkness. The Devil might appear to be triumphant, but not forever. Greene regarded one's struggle to find peace in one's mind as a courageous effort, and praised the love and humility that saved one from damnation. If his characters showed traits of sin, corruption, egoism and other demoniac elements, they also presented with equal force the attributes of love, charity, self-sacrifice, and fidelity to a given commitment. One's soul would be sanctified if he faced his faults bravely and tried to gain some understandings of truth. As Frederick R. Karl surmised, "the violence of many of Greene's novels is perhaps predicated on this belief: that only violence or stress or chaotic conditions can upset a man's complacency and create out of his former indifference the kind of belief necessary for his salvation."<sup>5</sup>

Greene distinguished two classes of fictions he had produced: the novels and the entertainments. Some critics further divided Greene's novels into "Catholic novels" and "political novels". The former, such as *The Power and the Glory*, *The Heart of the Matter*, focused on the characters' religious concerns; while the latter, like *The Quiet American*, *The Comedian*, explored the consequences of political terrorism and the characters' ideological naiveté. In the entertainments, such as

*Stanboul Train, A Gun for Sale*, Greene placed more emphasis on plots and settings, but also touched religious and moral themes in different perspectives. Sometimes the blending of the two classes of fictions was more evident, and they both were reflections of his concerns about human conditions in the modern world. In a sense, they were mutually supplementary. "Very often what the novels lose, the entertainments gain: movement and space, a feeling of power and imagination. But as often the novels gain what the entertainments lack: a deep insight into those dark corners of behavior that Greene loves to uncover...what in the entertainments is a religious sense becomes in the novels a religious theme."<sup>6</sup>

In the 1930s and 1940s Greene produced his famous religious trilogy---*Brighton Rock* (1938), *The Power and the Glory* (1940), and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948). They were respectively Greene's most strenuous, most satisfying, and artistically, his most assured. As extraordinary works of art, they each were packed with strong religious sense, sharp insights, poetic images, compelling scenes and intricate narrative twists. These novels showed Greene's affection for the primitive things. He often turned away from relatively civilized society to inspect human life in some cruder and more exposed conditions: a dark corner of Brighton, the jungles and prisons of Tabasco, the coast of West Africa---all places where, as Scobie told in *The Heart of the Matter*, "human nature hasn't had time to disguise itself"(HM, p. 25); places where there openly

flourished “the injustices, the cruelties, the meanness that elsewhere people so cleverly hushed up”(HM, p. 26). In these primitive scenes, we encountered the heroes of Greene’s troubled universe: the murderer, the priest, and the policeman. All three figures, in different embodiments, appeared in these three books. They tended more and more to resemble each other, representing the interwoven attributes of the Greenian man. If one would be sure of the destination of their fates, Pinkie Brown was damned, and it was his special mode of triumph; the Mexican priest was redeemed, sainthood at last gleaming through his bloodshot eyes; and the final end of Major Scobie was in doubt, as difficult to determine as his own ambiguous last words, “Dear God, I love ...”(HM, p. 313).

Medieval people had divided the afterworld into three---Hell, Purgatory and Heaven. Pinkie was a proud citizen of Hell; Scobie’s suffering was that of a man in Purgatory; and the laughter in *The Power and the Glory* celebrated the entrance of a soul into paradise. In Greene’s mind, this world was like Purgatory, a place of suffering and preparation. Man had to fight against various evils, repent whole-heartedly, and redeem devoutly within his heart before preparing himself for Heaven, otherwise he would fall into the abyss of Hell, losing all hopes of redemption and sanctity. In his novels, it was remarkable that usually the sinners gained God’s mercy and won the chance of ascending paradise.

The shocking ideas he presented in his novels surprised and even stunned,

from time to time, both the non-religious readers and the faithful believers of Catholicism. For many Catholics he had ventured too much into the things that led to damnation; to non-Catholic readers his sense of sin was disagreeable, and his preoccupation with evil and squalor seemed to have been exaggerated and over-emphatic. He was sometimes charged with being an obsessive and narrowly Catholic novelist. But a close reading of his "Catholic novels" would lead inevitably to the discovery of the broader humanism at the center of his novels. Whatever the religious elements, they were wholly undogmatic and far from orthodoxy. In the novels, Church's authority in eschatological and moral matters was doubted. The whisky priest in *The Power and the Glory* achieved sainthood through what the Church considered sins. Talking about Scobie's suicide, Father Rank in *The Heart of the Matter* denied the Church's authority: "The Church knows all the rules. But it doesn't know what goes on in a single human heart."(*HM*, p. 315) A Catholic as he was, Greene did not like certain doctrinal aspects of Catholicism but set out to debunk them. His commitment was not religious, in spite of their hints about Catholicism. As Greene himself said, the Catholic element was there just to make the novels more realistic. Greene repeatedly spoke up for the downtrodden people who suffered in a world of injustice and inequality. He displayed great courage in opposing orthodoxy complacencies. Greene's viewpoint and the presentation of his themes demanded

that he hold what he believed to be human capacity for love, pity, and God's capacity for mercy. In his writings, he epitomized many large-scaled problems and issues in the twentieth-century culture and ideology, such as violence, betrayal, belief and anxiety. His works reflected Greene the man, and in particular his ideas and thoughts, and the age which had shaped them. As he himself claimed, he was a novelist who happened to be a Catholic rather than a "Catholic novelist".

Anyway, despite the dispute over the role of Catholicism in Greene's work, he was generally agreed as a leading English writer in the modern era. "He is certainly one of the few contemporary novelists who please the ordinary reader as well as the intellectual."<sup>7</sup>

## Chapter One

### A Writer Who Happened to Be a Catholic

Graham Greene wrote as a moralist as well as a realist, concerned with the moral complexity and the actual experience of life. His greatest achievement lay in his books, such as *The Power and the Glory* and *The Heart of the Matter*, in which he achieved a careful balance of the two sides, and in which he combined the skills of writing (with all the irony, humor, excitement and commitment to plot of a truly popular novelist) with a sensitive and profound treatment of important moral issues.

Greene set himself two tasks. First, to embody, in his fictions, the moral constitution of the world; and secondly, to take such specimens of people who bore unmistakable characteristics of the times as heroes in his fictions.<sup>8</sup> His talent was fully demonstrated when he chose to deal with fallen man and the possibility of redemption in his well-known Catholic trilogy: *Brighton Rock*, *The Power and the Glory*, and *The Heart of the Matter*. They contained his own understanding of God's way with man and man's way in the materialistic world.

In *The Other Man* (1981) Greene compared himself to a double agent, for as a writer he served two sorts of readers who were in an almost permanent state of conflict. On the one hand Greene was a consistent best-seller, capturing the imagination of an enormously wide and varied audience throughout the world;

while on the other he was considered by many critics to be the best and most serious novelist in Britain today. Few writers had so successfully combined immense popularity with complexity and craftsmanship. As a Catholic, Greene had to consider it an important element for the significance of his fiction shedding Catholic light on the characters; meanwhile, as a writer, he had to pursue his artistic aim and maintain his moral standard.

### **1.1 Obsession with Evil and Sin**

Greene was concerned with the nature of the spiritual world. His commitment to the Catholic religion did color his view significantly, which declared that human beings were born with original sin. Man had to suffer various pains brought by his existence. Like William Golding, Greene was intimately concerned with the nature of evil and sin, which he believed redeemable with the touch of Grace.

Greene held that “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 gray.”<sup>9</sup> One of the distinctive features of Greene’s novels was his readiness to seek and discover the ominous and the dangerous within human nature. His characteristic world, the “Greenland”, was full of bleakness, seediness, gloomy atmosphere, suffocating background and



solitary figures. To Greene evil was a summation of social wrong and institutional injustice which had deprived people of human sensibilities. It was an omnipresent, all-penetrating force that distorted the world. Only God's mercy could save people from the cruel world.

His first pre-eminent Catholic novel was *Brighton Rock*, since it was for the first time that the concepts of sin, grace, mercy and ultimate redemption were clearly dealt with. In the novel, the discussion of good and evil dramatized the struggle of Pinkie in this world and his descent to Hell.

Pinkie was a juvenile devilish gangster on the way to evil, devoid of all pity, mercy or compassion. The novel described Pinkie as "Hell lay about him in his infancy."(*BR*, p. 12) He was a Roman Catholic and had knowledge of Hell, Flames and Damnation. But still, he traveled over the wicked path he had intended to follow. Greene pointed out that the social sin of injustice and exploration underlay the "evil" actions of Pinkie, who was trapped by poverty and sucked into a criminal world.

Following *Brighton Rock* appeared two of Greene's more mature religious novels. Once again in *The Power and the Glory*, Greene depicted a situation where religion had been proscribed, where cruelty, corruption and evil had full sway. Crime, lust and unhappiness filled the land of Mexico state, which was a world of sin and suffering. The issue of evil was thus more sharply raised in this

novel. The protagonist was a whiskey-priest who had gone corrupt. So sinful was he that he himself was fully aware of his own evils. While young, he suffered from the venial sins of pride and complacency. As he grew older, so did his sins increase. He indulged in mortal sin, for he had slept with a woman (it is forbidden for a priest), and fathered a child whom he loved with all heart. Evil had entered his body, and he had even forgotten how to repent. His state of mind, like that of Pinkie, was of a man who believed in the reality of hell. However, he maintained his creed to love others. Hence, the battle between the forces of the evil and the good took place in the soul of the priest. Finally in his death, evil was defeated, and the good forces transformed the whisky priest into a saint. Greene had explored how the innermost evil and sin could be ultimately transformed by the latent sources of sanctity.

The sins of the fallen angels---pity, pride and disobedience to the divine law---were the overwhelming sins that beset the protagonist of *The Heart of the Matter*. Scobie had faith in his own puny intelligence and tried to do what was 'right' in his mind. This set him on the steeply inclined road to destruction. Out of hidden pride, he assumed the status of a father figure and lacked a sense of discrimination. He had committed various acts of evil intentionally or unintentionally. Scobie had lost all hopes, since he could not escape from the sins. According to Catholic doctrines, this sin of despair was related to the loss of faith.

Scobie aggravated his sins by choosing to commit suicide, an ultimate and unforgivable sin. As a man of Purgatory, Scobie had something of both Pinkie and the whisky-priest in his character. He was, like Pinkie, involved in crimes and was always aware of his sins; he had, like the whisky-priest, a plodding desire to do good and an innate belief to love God. Such a man was capable of good as well as Evil. The attributes of sinner and saint met in him and sometimes it was impossible to tell one from the other. His career exemplified man's obsession with evils and man's need for divine forgiveness. Scobie's suffering in Purgatory was probably God's merciful response to his desire for love.

Catholic critics sometimes objected that Greene's works had underestimated the positive aspects of religion and of the world around us, that he had failed to acknowledge all things bright and beautiful, and that he had not been forceful and faithful enough in pushing forward the Catholic concepts. In fact, Greene's vision of fallen man was not pessimistic. In his novels, most characters were usually bestowed with some sort of new hope, or expectations for the future. Greene held that religion or faith was made to transcend despair in a complex way. He expected that his religious novels could remind people of existing evils and revive the fading humanity in their hearts.

Although Catholicism pervaded the plots of his novels, Greene did not write to elaborate his religion or to justify the activities of religion, but to endow a

larger significance for human experience. Man, in Greene's eyes, swayed between heaven and hell. Greene could not prevent his eyes from seeing the demoniac as well as the angelic elements in man, and he did not lose sight of the divine mercy as well. He took man to the abysmal murky depths of the hell in order to touch the zenith of redemption. Through travail and pain, man could perceive beauty in revolting ugliness.

Besides the trilogy, many of Greene's other works were also related to Catholic dogma and belief, which had given vivid descriptions of sin and the presence of God, of sufferings and strong probabilities of miracles. Fewer artists could produce something vibrating with life, if they did not have definite and passionate beliefs in something.

## **1.2 A "Disloyal" Catholic in Writing**

The Catholic Church proclaims that other religions, and even the world are not perfect. Man is born to sins. None but Roman Catholicism possesses the perfect truth from God, and it is the tool for universal salvation. Man can generally be redeemed if he holds a good intention to believe in God and Catholic doctrines. However, one kind of people is definitely excluded the possibility of redemption. Those who know clearly that Catholicism is the indispensable way to redemption,

but would not like to converse and insist on his own beliefs, as well as those who do not stick to Catholic morality, and even breach Catholic doctrines seriously, would be doomed to destruction and attain no hope of salvation.

Despite a Catholic, Greene did not blindly follow Catholic doctrines; instead, he held a critical view towards the Church. He did not presume that Catholicism was completely true but used Catholic morals to comprehend man and society. Orthodoxy was questioned at every step in Greene's fiction, and he continually cast doubt on the Church's authority in eschatological as well as moral matters.

In an interview he said, "I am sympathetic to a religious belief but I can't wholeheartedly be a Catholic."<sup>10</sup> To him, what was regarded as Christian values, e.g. pity, became the beginning of sin which led to corruption; while what was considered mortal sin by the pious, e.g. suicide, would not necessarily bring about damnation. He admitted the promise of the virtuous' going into Paradise; but in his eyes, those who were regarded as sinners in the Church's eyes, were not necessarily damned as long as they held hope, trust, love, and courage in their hearts. Greene questioned the traditional concept of divine punishment as well as the role of the Church, whose moral authority was seen in his novels as undermined by the overriding power of love. Greene's subverting Catholicism was not to deny it but to emphasize humanism. Not Catholicism, but a strong inner sense of identity with the criminals and outcasts, determined Greene's preference for the suffering sinners

over the satisfied average persons. Once he claimed that “the greatest saints have been men with more than a normal capacity for evil, and the most vicious men have sometimes narrowly evaded sanctity.”<sup>11</sup>

According to Christian doctrines, the conduct of a sinner is an important factor in the charting out of his fate; his redemption is closely related to his conduct as a human being. Kindness and charity play an important role in shaping his fate. Greene’s novels, however, did not emphasize right conduct so much as sin and guilt, and they attempted to achieve a balance between evil and sin on one side, and the mercy and redemption for the sinners on the other. In his novels he had given his sympathetic protagonists a sharply divided mind, e.g. the intentional sinning and the natural goodness were the two dominant points in Scobie for which God sentenced him to Purgatory.

As for the charge that Greene was a narrowly ‘Catholic novelist’, it ignored the broader humanism which was the real center of his works. In his novels, the religious element was wholly undogmatic and a long way from any orthodoxy Catholic. Indeed, Greene had frequently incurred the public disapproval of the Catholic Church for what he had written. Greene stated that as a novelist he was writing fiction for his own principles, and confessed that he felt a “disloyalty” to his Church for safeguarding his loyalty to his imagination<sup>12</sup>. But his membership of the Catholic Church, he said, did “present me with grave problems as a writer if I were

not saved by my disloyalty.”<sup>13</sup> On account of this disloyalty, his novel *The Power and the Glory* was once considered a heretical work and had provoked strong condemnation from the Holy Office at the Vatican. “I write novels about what interests me”, Greene refuted those criticisms, “...and the thing which interests me most is discovering the humanity that exists in apparent inhuman characters.”<sup>14</sup>

Many of Greene’s sympathetically drawn characters were those in a state of doubt or even of unbelief towards Catholicism. The driving force of faith seemed to be uncertain for Greene. He was therefore particularly attracted to characters who embodied some forms of paradox, such as “holy atheists”, “Catholic agnostics”, and “sinful saints”. Such paradoxes were part of the loyalty and betrayal themes central to Greene’s work. In *A Sort of Life*, he claimed, “If I were to choose a single epigraph for all the novels I have written, it would be taken from Browning’s *Bishop Blougram’s Apology*:

“Our interest’s on the dangerous edge of things.

The honest thief, the tender murderer,

The superstitious atheist, demireps

That love and save their souls in new French books—

We watch these in equilibrium keep

The giddy line midway.”<sup>15</sup>

In Greene’s mind, the “dangerous edge of things” was what the world had always

been--a paradox that one carried within oneself: a sinner with some sort of saintliness in one's heart.

Greene was a writer who was just converted to be a Catholic. Catholicism was not an adequate theme to account for his writing. It was a frame of reference, against which he illustrated his faith, and with which his characters struggled to verify their humanity. He created situations in his fictions that tested the teachings of the Church---some extreme situations which showed that for an omnipotent God each individual was a special one, to whom no man-made rule could apply. Greene believed that only in the impossible and the unhappiness could the inexplicable power of God be most likely felt and bestowed. Greene's evil characters seldom lost their humanity in being evil. Despite personal degradation, they had a vision of saintliness and were capable of stirrings of humanity. They put up with sufferings willingly, endeavored to do good and even sacrificed themselves for others, and always cherished love and humility in their mind. Scobie, Pinkie and the whisky priest, all recognized how far short they had fallen of the ideal, how mortal they really were. The whisky priest, however, retained the capacity to cling to his faith and came to God through what the Church considers sin. It was the firm unassailable belief in the mercy of the Lord that saved him from the sin of despair. He was broken-hearted before his death but he did not know that the Lord was near the afflicted who would bestow him with salvation. Even Pinkie, in spite of being



the foremost in Greene's evil creatures marching towards hell, was sometimes enlightened by faint, momentary flickers of remorse or tenderness. And Scobie, who committed suicide in *The Heart of the Matter*, could be eventually saved by God's grace for his overwhelming love.

Based on existentialism and humanity, Greene's works tried to illustrate modern people's anxiety and despair caused by social crises. He proved in his works that the Christians could regain their royal dignity even on the very edge of damnation, as long as they held confidence and a positive attitude towards their life. His characterization of the sanctified sinners, who committed sins while being capable of repentance at the same time, had greatly enriched and widened the scope of English novels.

## Chapter Two

### *Brighton Rock*---A Descent to Hell

Greene converted to Roman Catholicism in 1926, but did not feel an emotional attachment to his faith at the time. It was not until the year 1938 did he begin to let his Catholicism help shape his fiction in *Brighton Rock* (1938).

In an essay on Francois Mauriac, Greene stated his belief that “with the death of Henry James the religious sense was lost to the English novel. This was a ‘disaster’, for ‘with the religious sense went the sense of the importance of the human act.’”<sup>16</sup>

In *Brighton Rock* Greene made an attempt to restore this religious sense to British literature. In doing so, he made his criminal characters risk not only arrest and imprisonment as in the usual thrillers, but also eternal damnation.

#### 2.1 A Hellish World---Brighton

“Catholicism in Greene is usually seen in relation to a universe of pain and brutality.<sup>17</sup>” For Greene, evil was not a mere abstraction; rather, it loomed almost as a creative force. His fictional world was bleak, gloomy and depressing, externalizing the inner sufferings of the characters.

*Brighton Rock* (1938) marked the climacteric of Greene's obsession with evil, in which he demonstrated his distress at a fallen world where, as he commented on Majorie Bowen's writing, "Perfect evil walking the world where perfect good can never walk again<sup>18</sup>". In his earlier novels, themes like pursuit, betrayal, murder, corruption, cruelty and injustice gave an effective and recognizable dimension to the evils which man had to confront. Now, without losing this dimension, Greene added an eschatological aspect to his presentation of evil: *Brighton Rock* and the "religious novels" that followed dealt overtly with the question of Sin, Damnation and Salvation. They had a spiritual intensity, a depth of meaning, which set them apart from Greene's entertainments.

The central figure of the story was Pinkie Brown, the Boy, who, at the age of 17, established himself as the leader of a race-course gang after the death of Kite, the former leader, who was slashed to death by a rival gang. Pinkie's first task was to arrange the murder of Fred Hale, a reporter, who had given Kite away. Knowing that he was in danger, Hale tried to find someone to stay with him for safety and succeeded in picking up Ida Arnold, a big friendly woman. But in the few minutes while she was tidying up, Fred was killed. Ida was determined to track down the murder. Driven desperately by Ida's pursuit, Pinkie found it necessary, like Macbeth, to go on covering one killing with another and worse, he was obliged to marry, in spite of his repulsion, a pathetic 16-year-old waitress

named Rose, a slum-born Roman Catholic, for fear that she might have given evidence against him. After the marriage, Pinkie led Rose pitilessly on to a fake suicide pact in order to shut her mouth forever, but he was thwarted in time by Ida. In the final struggle Pinkie was blinded by his own vitriol and jumped over a precipice to his death. The novel concluded with Rose carrying the baby of the dead killer home.

This bare summary of the novel made it clear that *Brighton Rock* could be read as one of Greene's entertainments. But as the interplay of characters unfolded itself, the real significance of the story emerged from its spasms of violence. Its religious theme, its examination of Roman Catholicism and its subtle and horrifying study of evil, made it Greene's first Catholic novel, his first enquiry into the ways of man and God. It would lead on to his more mature works: *The Power and the Glory* and *The Heart of the Matter*.

There were two kinds of reality in the setting of Brighton where, behind the cheerful holiday crowds on the promenade, the sunshine, music and gaiety, we were soon made aware of the dark world in which razors slashed, pain and death creating a harrowing and bleak intensity. When stripped of its outer coat, Brighton became the hotbed of vice, the origin of all evils and the reminiscence of a more malicious world. The seediness of places like Nelson Place, Peacehaven and Billy's lodgings was underscored by the use of images like the flapping gutters,

the glassless windows, a rotting discolored face, the basin full of stale water, the insect buzzing through stale air, a dead-white leg, images which evoked a squalid, misshapen and decaying atmosphere. Greene offered a tangible and odorous world of sin and suffering. The gangs in it, with distorted, virus-affected minds, saw the world in an abnormal view while seeking pleasure in destruction and torturing. Detached to the world, ignored by people and despised in society, they were psychologically numb and humiliated, insensitive to anything but perverted pleasure.

Brighton was a place where evil threatened goodness, where God's power had yet to reach. Mr. Prewitt, a shady lawyer in the novel, claimed that, 'Why, this is Hell, nor are we out of it'. (p. 48) He was thinking of his own suffering, but his remark was applicable to Brighton as well. It was under such circumstances that Pinkie grew up. Look at how Pinkie was described, "He trailed the clouds of his own glory after him: hell lay about him in his infancy". (p. 88) There was no scruple such as mercy, compassion or pity in his morality. His mind was filled with pictures of the hideous school playground, the dead fire and of the vicious instructions of Kite, his evil mentor.

The sordid experience of Brighton made evil and damnation the only palpable spiritual aspects for Pinkie. It was his territory where he could no more get away from than he can get away from evil. As Frederick R. Karl rightly

observed, "*Brighton Rock*, whose background seems more suitable for Dante's *Inferno* suffers or Milton's proud demons than for inhabitants of contemporary England, is full of demonic characters, with Pinkie as a juvenile Satan and his followers as fallen angels."<sup>19</sup>

## 2.2 An Evil Figure---Pinkie

The most astonishingly evil figure in *Brighton Rock*, was seen in the Boy Pinkie. He was the most powerful embodiment of sin in Greene's novels when he granted this seventeen-year-old criminal with the capacity to choose evil, and to take a bitter pride in the prospect of his own damnation.

The plot traced the stages of Pinkie's descent to damnation. Unlike those young people enjoying a healthy state of mind, Pinkie's appearance suggested nastiness, depression and hostility. He was described in serpentine terms, with a flickering tongue and venom coursing through his veins. His face had a "starved intensity, a kind of hideous and unnatural pride". (p.4) This infernal pride was the source of his murderous strength. It allowed him to be totally unconcerned about anyone else.

As a Chinese saying goes, one's eye is the reflection of his soul. In depicting Pinkie's appearance, Greene deliberately focused on his eyes, presenting the

responses of his eyes on different occasions and thus bringing into the working of his mind with sharp insight. Pinkie's eyes were invariably associated with death and mercilessness, "his gray eyes had an effect of heartlessness like those of an old man in whom human feeling has died." (p.8) He had "gray inhuman" (p.15) eyes which were "dangerous and unfeeling" (p.27) and "ageless"(p.24). "when you met him face to face he looked older; the slaty eyes were touched with the annihilating eternity from which he had come and to which he went." (p.21) The eyes would seem natural if they were on the face of a savage gangster. But when Greene placed them on "the too young face" (p.26), his purpose was to show the penetrating power of evil and its corrupt effect on human mind. The eyes were the externalization of Pinkie's vision of life, gloomy and grimy, devoid of vitality. Young as he was, Pinkie had exhausted all vivacity of spirit and human feelings. His understanding of the world had far surpassed his age; hence there was only death and nihilism in his eyes. "Hell was something he could trust." (p.67) The disharmony between a young face and a pair of deadly eyes indicated that in Pinkie goodness had been swallowed by wickedness, that his mind had been taken over by an irresistible desire to commit evil.

The evils in environment accounted for part of Pinkie's viciousness. Brought up in a family, suffered from poverty, sickness and starvation, Pinkie was indifferent to the sight of difficulties in life, but engaged deeply in the

surroundings of evil. Bitter childhood memories of his loss of innocence kept recurring to him, and brutality colored everything. As a child, Pinkie had watched the lovemaking of his parents on Saturday nights. This was a forbidden act in Catholic doctrines. Young Pinkie felt humiliated and abandoned like “a soul in purgatory watching the shameless act of a beloved person”. (p. 38) The effect of the primal scene, of discovering parents engrossed in the sexual act, was presented as a major crisis of Pinkie’s pre-adolescent emotional life. Greene suggested that, with the disgusting shadow and wicked environment imposed on Pinkie’s life, he could not but choose evil.

Denied of family warmth at an early age, Pinkie was adopted by Kite, the leader of a street mob, who gave him fatherly attention and made him a mediocre little gang. The death of Kite came as a heavy blow on Pinkie, who then assumed the leadership and was eager to exhibit his ability by avenging Kite’s death.

Pinkie’s bitterness of the loss of the dearest person in life expressed itself through anger against vulnerable characters, on whom he sought to impose torture. Seeing a crippled child heading toward him, he pushed him away. ‘She loves me ...she loves me not’, he played this children’s game carelessly and tore the wings and legs off a fly. He wielded a razor, carried a vitriol bottle, and jested crudely over his victims. A poor businessman, Brewer, cried out “be human” in agony towards Pinkie, which laid bare Pinkie’s inhuman character. “There was



poison in his veins...He was ready for more deaths.” (p.87)

Now that he had shifted all his distorted hatred toward Hale, his evil was fully developed and demonstrated in the ruthless pursuit and murder of his enemy. The opening sentence of the novel reminded the readers of a typical Greene thriller: “Hale knew they meant to murder him before he had been in Brighton three hours.” (p. 1) Like a cornered rabbit under the fierce stalking of a skillful hound, Hale had no escape. There were two images in sharp contrast here: the isolated and desperate Hale who was well aware of the impending death, and the brutal and cold-blooded killer Pinkie. Each image naturally produced in the readers’ mind different effects. While Hale elicited a kind of sympathetic concern, Pinkie evoked disgust and horror.

The weapon Pinkie used to kill Hale was rather symbolic. Pinkie and his fellow gangsters shoved a long stick of the sugar “Brighton Rock” down Hale’s throat, which was able to suffocate him and disposed at the same time. Forced to grow up too soon, and denied of all the normal satisfactions of childhood, Pinkie took his revenge by turning a child’s sweet, the seemingly harmless object, into a murder weapon. The sugar thus became a kind of undetectable poison produced by the young devil.

Pinkie’s perverted idea about sex made him a devil to Rose. His disgusting childhood memories left in Pinkie’s memory an abnormal horror of sexuality and

made him feel repulsive to anything related to sex. According to Christian ethics, marriage reflected divine will and was necessary, while the act of sexual love was sinful and should not be encouraged. Pinkie was, in one sense, a puritan. He did not drink or bet, and in his notion of purity, the sexual act meant the loss of purity, a purity conditioned by his Catholicism upbringing. Pinkie's perversity was culminated when he talked Rose into marrying him to prevent her from giving evidence against him, which he saw as the highest point in his sins. To Pinkie, the marriage served "only as a last resort to close her mouth and give him time" (p.101). His desire to retain his virginity was destroyed by Rose, so he hated Rose. She seemed so young and vulnerable that he could not pass up the opportunity to hurt her. Pinkie told his gang that Rose must be silenced by marriage to keep the murder a secret, but this reason was only his excuse for engaging in a long process of subtle torture. Rose's vulnerability stimulated in him the sense of compensation.

Despite his young age, Pinkie was masterly at finding ways to enhance his sadistic pleasure. He pinched Rose's flesh so hard that his fingernails almost met; he teased Rose with the idea that he might burn her with a splash from his bottle of vitriol. Their Catholic background became a useful way of establishing a quick bond between them, and he enjoyed frightening her with talking about the flames of hell, hoping that his words would increase the torment as he relentlessly

tempted her to violate her Catholic faith.

But something was not quite right with his plan. Rose loved him too much, and she liked receiving pain almost as much as he liked giving it. She knew that he was a murderer, yet she wanted to be near him, and she was excited by the thought that her dangerous relationship had put her religious faith and her life at risk. Pinkie's evil nature was sharply set off by Rose's faithfulness to him.

In a conventional sense, Rose embodied love with her angelic charity and Pinkie hate with his satanic egoism. They were in fact two sides of the same coin. He saw her as his necessary counterpart.

"He was aware that...she was something which completed him ...what was most evil in him needed her: it couldn't get along without goodness ...She was good, he'd discovered that, and he was damned: they were made for each other". (p. 126)

He was drawn to her, and what attracted him was her potential as a victim. It was satisfying to him that they would damn together and that they made such a natural pair.

Greene was famous for the great care he showed in choosing characters' names, as he said, "...to change the name is to change the character<sup>20</sup>". Pinkie and Rose were remarkably matched by their names. The name Pinkie Brown was a color containing elements of different colors, which implied that human nature was not single-sided; rather, it was a mysterious mixture. Rose, the color of pink,

suggested unselfish love and pure good, which was opposite to Pinkie's brutality and evil. Rose was a symbol of goodness and innocence, while Pinkie evil and sin. However, they made up a double. Their marriage implied that good existed side by side with, or was attached to evil. The existence of one implied the simultaneous existence of the other.

Despite a Catholic himself, Pinkie behaved in total defiance of the Church's doctrines and he was dedicated to his own creed, "*Credo in unum Satanum*" (p. 220, "I believe in one Satan"). He conceived of himself as a super-criminal. Committing crimes and revealing cruelty were the way by which he asserted his existence. He committed mortal sins by killing Hale, Spicer and trying to murder Rose. The struggle between Rose and Pinkie was the war of heaven and hell. From a theological perspective, it was hell that finally defeated heaven. Greene's obsession with evil was fully exhibited in the presentation of Pinkie, whose fate Greene showed much concern about. *Brighton Rock* was, therefore, a tentative exploration of human nature in a fallen world.

Pinkie's predicament was that of a vulgar little Macbeth, driven further and further into evil by his fear of being discovered. Every move that Pinkie made---from the killing of Hale, through the further necessitated murders, and detested courtship and marriage, to the climax in which he blinded himself with vitriol---had a convulsive inevitability. It derived from the inexplicable power of

evil that Pinkie believed in: "*Credo in unum Satanum*". He brought death and despair to his victims like an annihilating force and consequently visualized hell for them. He brutally suppressed his inner tendency towards the good and showed his immense strength to join Satan.

Both Pinkie and Rose were Roman Catholics and their faith strongly colored their view of life. They had spent a good deal of time discussing what kind of reception they, and the human race in general, might expect after death.

" 'But you believe, don't you,' Rose implored him, 'you think it's true?'

'Of course it's true,' the Boy said. 'What else could there be?' he went scornfully on. 'Why,' he said, 'it's the only thing that fits. These atheists, they don't know nothing. Of course there's Hell. Flames and damnation,' he said with his eyes on the dark shifting water and the lightning and the lamps going out above the black struts of the Palace Pier, 'torments.'

'And Heaven too,' Rose said with anxiety, while the rain fell interminably on.

'Oh, maybe,' the Boy said, 'maybe.' "(p. 52)

Pinkie believed in Hell, Flames, and Damnation, but about Heaven he could only say "oh, may be." The certainty of damnation did not terrify him, and he accepted it with an almost self-satisfied air. Pinkie was not capable of seeking salvation through confession and repentance. He despaired of being forgiven and was repulsive of asking for forgiveness. This despair made him commit more sins

as he produced a feeling of resistance to the idea of mercy. He tried his best to ward off the benign grace of the Almighty. His despair led him to the ultimate sin, the sin of committing suicide. His end created a sense of compassion for the damned boy.

Pinkie and Rose's drive through the rain was the climax of the story, and it was here that Pinkie experienced the miraculous presence of God in his life.

"An enormous emotion beat on him; it was like something trying to get in; the pressure of gigantic wings against the glass. *Dona nobis pacem*. He withstood it...If the glass broke, if the beast---whatever it was---got in, God knows what it would do. He had a huge sense of havoc---the confession, the penance and the sacrament---and awful distraction, and he drove blind into the rain." (p. 228)

Pinkie was pursued ruthlessly both by God and by the secular forces of Ida and the police, just as the whisky priest was hunted both by God and the police lieutenant in *The Power and the Glory*.

Fortunately, Pinkie's fake suicide plan failed, and it was he who was bound to die. But this was not portrayed as a triumph of good over evil. Pinkie disappeared as a winner, for he died satisfyingly, knowing that he had willed his own destruction and damnation. He would fall down a cliff rather than surrender to his pursuers. That leap into the abyss was also his final flight from God. Once he speculated that even the worst life of crimes might be redeemed by a

last-minute plea for mercy, but he was too proud and too bitter to seek repentance “between this stirrup and the ground”. (p. 132) When he jumped over the edge, the flames of hell were already rising to greet him, with his face literally steaming as the result of an accidental splash from his bottle of vitriol.

### 2.3 Walking Towards Hell

With Pinkie’s final plunge off the Peacehaven cliffs, “it was as if he’d been withdrawn suddenly by a hand out of any existence---past or present, whipped away into zero---nothing”. (p. 243) If this was the hand of God, there was no suggestion of divine forgiveness, or of God bringing Pinkie into His presence, for the hand has “whipped” him away “into zero---nothing”.

After Pinkie’s death, Rose regretted not having killed herself as Pinkie had wanted her to. A priest then told her the story of Charles Peguy, a saint who, against God’s justice, took sides with the damned.

“ ‘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.’ She listened with astonishment. He said, ‘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. I think he died in what we are told is mortal

sin---I'm not sure: it was in the war: perhaps ...It was a case of greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his soul for his friend.' "(p. 246)

The priest's message here was what we would meet in all of Greene's writings, a belief that in the end it is by love that we would be judged. The Priest told Rose that no one could understand God's mercy, and Pinkie's soul might be saved. However, there was little point in arguing with this notion and the novel gave the concept absolutely no support. First of all, the priest's wisdom was called into question when he told Rose that because Pinkie loved her, there must have been some good in the Boy. The priest knew only what Rose had told him about Pinkie and understood their relationship no better than Ida did. Pinkie not only did not love Rose but was incapable of love. His marriage, which might have saved him, was not a selfless act and love did not enter into it at all. More important, there was no indication in the novel that Pinkie had any intention of seeking God's mercy or enjoying the pleasure of salvation. Pinkie was not Charles Peguy. The analogy only emphasized the priest's ignorance of Pinkie's character. Peguy had chosen damnation for the sake of others, whereas Pinkie chose it for vainglory. It was evident that not once did he pray, repent or confess. Pinkie had deliberately and willfully evaded God's mercy.

The Catholic Pinkie was certainly attached to Satan's camp. When asked by a fellow gang member if he believed in the Catholic religion, Pinkie replied in



Latin: *Credo in unum Satanum*. To the ignorant man's ears, Pinkie's creed sounded like something a priest might say. When he was much younger, Pinkie fantasized about becoming a priest – he liked the idea of celibacy. In a way his fantasy had come true. He served evil with the enthusiasm of a true believer. Life was a horror to him. Having lived in hell, he was not even capable of conceiving that there could be any good in this life. Passing near an alley one day, Pinkie saw an old woman sitting on the ground absorbed in prayer. He was appalled by her ugliness, but what bothered him even more was the thought that the souls of such people might also be saved by their prayers. If the old woman was one of the saved, he preferred to be among the damned. When he won a doll at a shooting booth, he thought that it resembled the Virgin Mary, so he had a good time dragging the Mother of God along by the hair, and pulling the strands out, one by one. Satan seemed to have acquired a halo for him and it appeared as if it were Satan who had defeated God and His angels and threw them on the road to Hell. Religion was useful only as a way of making him feel wicked.

In his essay “Frederick Rolfe: Edwardian Inferno”, Greene wrote, “...he should be priest or nothing, so nothing it had to be...If he could not have Heaven, he would have Hell, and the last footprints seem to point unmistakably towards the Inferno.”<sup>21</sup> This was an almost exact delineation of Pinkie the juvenile criminal, whose behavior was clearly marked as a pointer towards Hell that was in

store for him, barring the inexplicable mercy of God. R.O. Evans, also denied his salvation that, “Salvation, however, requires a conscious effort of the will, and Pinkie finds in the instinct of death there is no time, though for him there has always been plenty of time to make an effort of will directed towards evil. The metaphysics of *Brighton Rock* requires an act of will for both good and evil”. Furthermore, “Greene never allows any real possibility of saving Pinkie. As a moralist he could not do so, and in the end Pinkie gets what he deserves.” “Pinkie has fled [God] down the nights and days and successfully evades Him.”<sup>22</sup>

Towards the end of the novel, the focus shifted from Pinkie to Rose. Greene directed our attention to her salvation which her love and selfless devotion made it attainable. Rose was the center of innocence. God could after all pick and choose. She was as destined to salvation as Pinkie was to damnation. Rose had to go on living heartbroken.

After Pinkie’s death, the priest implied to Rose through the story of Charles Peguy that it was only by love and sacrifice, that a human being could reach salvation. He asked her to make her coming child a saint and then “a sudden feeling of immense gratitude broke through the pain – it was as if she had been given the sight – a long way of life going on again. (p. 332)” This sight of life “going on again” was hopefully the resurrection. In earthly failure, God saw potential salvation; in vain success, He saw weakness; in Satanical pride, He saw

the capacity for humanity; in hesitation and denial, He saw the possibility of faith. Only indifference, Greene claimed, could destroy God.

The novel's title referred not only to the sticks of rock, but also, to human nature. Ida Arnold said to Rose:

“ ‘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.’ ...

‘Confession ...repentance,’ Rose whispered.

‘That's just religion,’ the woman said. ‘Believe me. It's the world we got to deal with.’”(p. 198)

Human nature was reassuringly consistent in Ida's view, while it was tainted with original sin according to the Catholics. Confession and repentance might briefly cleanse that taint, but for the world at large, the corruption remained.

Greene, like some of his predecessors and contemporaries, believed in the dark side of human nature. He inherited the literary interest in presenting social reality from traditional novelists, and at the same time attached a strong religious significance to his observation. He observed human behavior not only as a social critic, but also as a believing Catholic, which enabled him to explore the diversity of human evils and show concerns for human destiny through his writings. His exploration of human nature and the dark side of society proved his acknowledgement of the importance of religion and faith in shaping one's life.

His bold presentation of evils, on the other hand, illustrated his unconventional religious belief. Greene intended to show through the parable-like story of Pinkie that man was created in God's image, but out of man's will, he was tempted by evil, went astray and got lost.

In Greene's next novel, which was set in Mexico, the priest, Pinkie's counterpart, seemed hell-bent on damnation but would accept humbly the offered mercy. Finally he turned back from the rim of Inferno and rushed towards Paradise. The evil was all there, as in *Brighton Rock*, but in *The Power and the Glory* the readers would discover the out-soaring spirit rising up to heaven. Greene's fiction swung between the agony and the ecstasy, the two poles of his obsession with human nature struggling "between vice that really demands to be called satanic and virtue of a kind which can only be called heavenly".<sup>23</sup>

## Chapter Three

### *The Power and the Glory*---Pilgrimage to Heaven

God's Grace, or the Catholic view of heaven, was an issue to which Greene tried to find an answer in the turbulent twentieth century. Many of his novels touched upon this issue, and his trilogy actually centered on this theme.

The issue of Heaven, based on redemption, had stressed the healing and repairing of sin. In western Christianity, salvation had been seen largely as redemption from sin. It was acknowledged that Jesus Christ had himself crucified so as to redeem the punishment men were doomed to. Thanks to the grace of Him, people were endowed with power to love God and love their neighbors as themselves.

This idea was clearly reflected in Greene's Catholic novels, which portrayed the spiritually tortured sinners on their way to sanctity and Heaven. His protagonists were mostly sinners, who were in desperate spiritual disturbance and infinite agony. In *The Power and the Glory*, Greene overtly dealt with the theme of damnation again, suggesting the protagonist's revival of his soul. With the mysterious grace of God, they were saved for their love of God and of His people. Initially proud as they were, having undergone self-humiliation through their experiences, they accepted divine justice and following the steps of Christ,

ultimately sacrificed themselves for others.

### 3.1 The Battle between Sin and Conscience

On Greene's visit to Mexico in 1938 to finish a report commissioned by the Catholic Church on religious persecution under the new revolutionary socialist regime, he discovered a situation in which the struggle between secular and religious value had become a matter of life and death. The journey of Mexico affected Greene profoundly, resulting in one of his finest achievements---*The Power and the Glory*.

The title of the novel was taken from the Anglican version of the Lord's Prayer: "For thine is the Kingdom, The Power and the Glory. For ever and ever, Amen."<sup>24</sup> It was applied to the priest, the only representative of Church and God in an anti-cleric society. "Power" and "Glory" also referred to the confrontation between the two protagonists, the lieutenant and the priest. The lieutenant manipulated political power to reach his goal while the priest achieved the final glory in his death as a martyr. The novel was universally regarded as Greene's proclamation of Christianity's inevitable triumph over the forces of militant secularism.

The story took place in Mexico, where the practice of Catholicism was

announced illegal. Priests were either outlawed or forced to renounce and conform by marriage. The only clergyman who performed his obligation was a whisky priest, who lived as a fugitive, with a reward of seven hundred pesos on his head. He had chances of escaping by ship, but stopped every time to hear the confessions of dying people. In his loneliness, he slept with a woman and had a child. Hunted by the police lieutenant, he first found shelter on a banana plantation, where he made friends with a little girl, Coral. Then he reached the village where his woman and illegitimate daughter were living. There he was sheltered and protected, and he drank and preached to the villagers. To escape the pursuit, he decided to make for another town. But on the way he was recognized by a half-caste, who sought every chance to betray him for the reward. The priest managed to get rid of the half-caste's follow and arrived at the town, where he was caught and put into prison for carrying alcohol, where he gained a spiritual self-recognition after talking with the prisoners. Next morning he was set free by the lieutenant who failed to recognize his prey. The priest continued his escape, trying to flee to another state where religion was still in practice. The half-caste came over to him again, asking him to hear the confession of a dying American gangster. Knowing that it was a trap made by the police, the whisky priest nevertheless proceeded because his conscience could not risk allowing any man to die in a state of mortal sin. He was captured and executed. But on the very night

of his death, another priest appeared and knocked at Luis' house, a boy who had been moved by the martyrdom of the dead priest and welcomed the new priest with a devout kiss.

The priest was trapped in a highly dangerous situation. His duty was to serve his parish, the Catholic community in Mexican state, where any active priest might be arrested and shot. He also had a duty to stay alive so as to continue his service of God. In his constant fleeing from a place to another, he underwent a journey of spiritual discovery. Greene created something original here by making the chase into a metaphor for spiritual experience.

The epigraph from Dryden established the theme of pursuit: "Th'inclosure narrow'd; the sagacious power/ Of hounds and death drew nearer every hour."<sup>25</sup> The lines summarized Greene's settled view of human experience. They were peculiarly appropriate to *The Power and the Glory*, which comprised the adventures of the hunted priest---whom the hounds of power caught up with and to whom death did come at last.

Greene called *The Power and the Glory* a pilgrimage, and there were flashbacks along the journey to a time when the priest acted his role in a state of freedom as a respected member of society.

"A youngish man in Roman collar...You could imagine him petted with small delicacies...He sat there, plump, with protuberant eyes, bubbling with harmless feminine



jokes...a well-shaved, well-powered jowl much too developed for his age. The good things of life had come to him too early.” (pp.21-22)

But, as soon as the persecution began and he was left alone, he abandoned all the old rules. There were no longer any Church officials who could reprimand him, only the threat of death from his adversaries looming. He was able to act on his own and decided that fasting was unnecessary and that he could give up regular prayers and daily Mass. As he explained near the end of the novel, he was possessed by a sort of pride. He stayed in the godless land not because he was brave but he wanted to live by his own rules. It gave him the chance to be the Pope in one little corner of the world, to be the sole keeper of all the mysteries of his religion. But this grand ambition turned into nothing more significant than a personal surrender to petty vices. He drank heavily, played card tricks, slept with a woman and made her pregnant. His state of mind, like that of Pinkie, was of a man who believed in the reality of hell because evil had entered his body.

“A virtuous man can almost cease to believe in Hell, but he carried Hell about with him. Sometimes at night he dreamed of it...Evil ran like malaria in his veins.” (p. 227)

In his escape, the priest first appeared as he “...sat there like a question mark, ready to go, poised on the chair. He looked disreputable in his grey three-days beard, and weak...(he had) an air in his hollowness and neglect, of somebody of no account who had been beaten up incidentally, by ill-health and

restlessness---dark suit, sloping shoulders, serious mouth.” (pp. 14-15) Later he is “in torn peasant clothes”, “a man in a shabby drill suit” with his “eyes to the ground and the shoulders hunched as though he felt exposed” (p.20). His looks suggested that he was a pathetic victim of fate, a man of no substance or significance, not worthy of his role as a priest. With such an image, the priest felt himself abandoned in a godless country, a world that looked like a hell around him.

He was pursued by the lieutenant on the one hand and by God on the other, and he was fleeing not only from the police but also from his own self. Time and again we saw the priest ineptly trying to perform his duties, or hiding from the police, while the lieutenant was seen plotting his campaign, taking hostages, always in single-minded pursuit. Several times their paths crossed, but never did the lieutenant recognize the priest. In this book the natural pursuit was sure to fail, and it was only the supernatural pursuit, God’s hounding of the priest that was to succeed. The priest voluntarily chose capture and death after he was actually safe. He could have escaped the law of the land, but he could not escape the law of his conscience.

The sin of the priest was of a far more serious nature than the sin of Pinkie. Like Pinkie, he was an angst-ridden character. He longed for peace. But for him, peace lied either in the safety outside the church or in the finality of capture and

death. Neither meant a freedom from his fear of pain. He was a man of God and knew how far short of the glory of God he had fallen. His anxiety arose from his fear that he could do nothing to redeem himself and that his damnation was a certainty. The priest being a man of God was aware of the enormity of the sin that he had committed. He called himself a miserable sinner many times and understood that evil and sin had become a part of his life.

The sense of sin was most reflected in his trying to save his illegitimate daughter, Brigitta, who was corrupted by the evils of the human world.

“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.”(p. 81)

At the first sight of his daughter, the priest was overwhelmed by “an immense load of responsibility: it was indistinguishable from love”. (p. 67) He wanted to drag her back from desertion at all cost, but he felt powerless. He tried to console her with all the love he had, but she shunned him and “screached at him in her ancient voice” (p. 81). He was not able to endear his own daughter, let alone save her soul. From then on, whenever he thought of his daughter, an intense sense of pain stemmed from his helplessness.

Thus in his progressive understanding of his sins and his persistency in carrying out his responsibility, he walked step by step towards Heaven.

altar-stone and his breviary in fleeing; the soles of his shoes (signs of rank in Mexico) wore out; the uppers and the rest of his clerical costume went next. He abandoned his last priestly possession, an old scrap of paper with notes for an address to parishioners, when he was arrested for carrying brandy. His thoughts stripped him of pride, and of ignorance of the appalling nature of the world, as he moved among the poor, and later learned what prison was like.

As his former sanctuaries were sealed off from him, his sense of uselessness was more acute. During the imprisonment night, the priest had a nightmarish dream, in which he found himself incapable of saving his daughter, which implied his helplessness. As he woke up, he was filled with the sense of helplessness and inadequacy. Everything so far he had experienced proved his uselessness. He could do nothing to save his corrupt daughter; he meant a danger to the people wherever he appeared. This acute sense of sin and futility became an important factor in his spiritual transformation.

Crowded into a pitch-black cell, crushed between unseen odorous bodies---murderers, thieves, old men and women, crying babies, even a copulating couple somewhere announcing their orgasms with whimpering cries of pleasure---the priest was touched suddenly "by an extraordinary affection. He was just one criminal among a herd of criminals. ...He had a sense of companionship which he had never experienced in the old days when pious people came kissing

his black cotton glove". (p. 128) It was by seeking God and finding Him in the darkness and stench of prisons, among the sinners and the rats and the rascals, that the whiskey priest arrived at the richest emotion: the feeling of companionship, and especially the companionship of the commonly guilty and the wretched. This was a central scene in the book and one of the most effective passages Greene had ever written. The dark stage of the prison was provided for the priest's meditation.

The priest's night in prison was his epiphany, the moment when he found true love and was identified with the sins of mankind. His spiritual progress reached its climax at this point. As a young priest in an affluent parish he had been self-complacent, but now in his greatest degradation, he exchanged his isolation for the bond of human affection. If God were to be found, his mercy would be found in these people. In the death of his old conceited self, the priest was purified and became spiritually profound. He embraced the ugliness as an instrument of grace and redefined this place of heat and darkness, as the place of God's beauty and glory, as the home for which he had longed.

"It is in this setting that the priest finally loses his pride and learns instead the power of love and humility."<sup>26</sup> Despite his sins, he was not separated from God. He believed that it was God that intended him to remain as the only priest in the state, that God's love was superior to anything and accessible at any place. Even in a place like the prison there was love, and that very love was the symbol

of God's mercy. The horror and stench of the cell became a kind of Purgatory, in which the priest had a communion with his suffering fellow prisoners who contributed to his sanctity. As Kunkel pointed out, "by accepting humiliation, the Priest ascends to the sanctified heights of martyrdom."<sup>27</sup>

The priest had a dialogue with God at the night when he was awaiting execution. He attempted to strike a bargain with God, offering his soul for damnation if the soul of his daughter could be saved. 'Damn me, I deserve it, but let her live for ever.' (p. 204) This bargain was a measure of the priest's power of love. It was the same intense love described by the priest in *Brighton Rock* as "greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his soul for his friend" (*BR*, p.332). It was also a measure of the priest's humility, for he learned that he was incapable of loving all mankind, but could only love his own child. Then at that night he had a strange dream. In a cathedral, Coral, the girl who had helped him, appeared and filled his glass with wine. The cleric then tapped a message in Morse code, which Coral interpreted as "News". Evidently it was good news, and the priest woke "with a huge feeling of hope". It was a dream, but it hinted that after his death, Coral would offer the priest his salvation. Like Beatrice with Dante, she might guide the priest's pilgrimage towards heaven.

The last encounter between the priest and the lieutenant further illustrated what Greene conceived as God's glory. It was the decisive moment for the priest's

salvation. Knowing that he would walk into the entrapment, the priest nevertheless answered the call of his duty, also the call of God's decree willingly. After he was caught by the lieutenant, the priest carried a thought-provoking conversation with him. In their meeting, we found the lieutenant had some likeness to the priest. "There was something of a priest in his intent observant walk---a theologian going back over the errors of the past to destroy them again." (p. 24) He was a man of action and vigor, indifferent to his personal future and ready to do everything for the happiness of his people. He offered a new kind of Church, one stripped of faith, superstition and hope, based solely on the material needs of the people. This was a church of the world, and the lieutenant was its ascetic priest. He simply transferred the values of the clerical orders to his own: no indulgence in sensory pleasure, no swerving from the path of righteousness, no guilt about the commission of a bad act in order to ensure a future good, no qualms about effacing self in favor of the public welfare. He was a loyal defender for his government, while the priest was a loyal soldier to God. They both demonstrated loyalty to their beliefs and were chained to their missions. Because of such similarities, eventually they acknowledged each other. "You are a good man"(p.140), the priest said in astonishment when the lieutenant gave him five pesos out of pity at the moment of his release from the prison. And, "You aren't a bad fellow" (p.201), the lieutenant conceded grudgingly, during the long

conversations after the final arrest.

However, they were essentially different. The lieutenant stood for socialism and materialism while the priest was the representative of the spiritual force. Enslaved by his view of world, the lieutenant associated all the misery of his people with the rule of Church. He discarded any spiritual requirements and saw no hope in the salvation of the people beyond the simple satisfaction of basic physical needs. As a man of the people, the lieutenant was willing to die to affect his ideas – justice and equality for his people. However, “the lieutenant is a man who loves humanity in the abstract, and shoots innocent hostages on his way to Utopia, but the whisky priest is, first and foremost, a father, a man is committed by a bond of love and responsibility to other human beings.”<sup>28</sup>

The roles of the hunter and the hunted became reversed after the lieutenant had succeeded in catching the priest. The lieutenant was bewildered by the priest’s assurance in his faith as he told the lieutenant:

“ ‘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 ---if there’s ever been a single man in this state damned, then I’ll be damned too...’ ”(p. 200)

This plea for damnation was in fact a plea for salvation. It was with purpose that Greene had the priest captured when he tried to save a damned man. His self-sacrifice was a mark of his devotion and the culmination of suffering love.



The priest's death was an offer of love and humility, which left us in no doubt that this slovenly and sinful protagonist had attained beatitude.

On the morning of the priest's execution,

“He felt only an immense disappointment because he had to go to God empty-handed, with nothing done at all ...He knew now that at the end there was only one thing that counted---to be a saint.” (p. 201)

The more Greene's whisky-priest upbraided himself for his failure, the more he expressed the virtue of humility. He did not know that he had changed people's lives for the better. A second reading of *The Power and the Glory* showed how the most seemingly disparate elements of the plot were coordinated by the changes for the better with the priest's presence. He had touched the hearts of people and brought them to God unconsciously. Tench, Luis, Coral, some of the villagers---all had been touched by grace. Even the mestizo grudgingly observed, ‘You may be a saint for all I know’, and sought his blessings. His adversary, the lieutenant, had also been influenced by his religious belief. At last a new priest arrived in town at the very night of the execution and was greeted with reverence by the boy Luis. All these taken together suggested the unfathomable power of God's grace. Greene seemed to indicate that, even though the whiskey priest was no spiritual luminary, his simple courage and trust in the world had helped him bring some rays of light of spirituality in the lives of those he had encountered.

As the priest's last hour approached, the lieutenant suddenly had a sense of emptiness and disorientation. "He looked back on the weeks of hunting as a happy time which was over now for ever. He felt without a purpose, as if life had drained out of the world." (p. 206) After the priest was executed, the lieutenant fell asleep in his chair. "He couldn't remember afterward anything of his dreams except laughter, laughter all the time and a long passage in which he could find no door." (p. 207) It seemed that the lieutenant was the trapped man, the prisoner; and the laughter he heard associated readers with the laughter recorded by Dante on the upper slopes of Purgatory. It was a chorus celebrating the release of a captive human soul from punishment and its entrance into paradise. In the ultimate analysis the lieutenant's power was a symbol of his weakness, while the priest's weakness was an insignia of his power. Greene indicated that the confrontation between materialism and spirituality was omnipresent. The ultimate triumph belonged to the priest and the only kingdom was in God's eternity.

Pinkie in *Brighton Rock* and Major Scobie in *The Heart of The Matter*, were never seen to smile, much less to laugh. The former was in a constant state of fury, the latter of apprehension. It was the laughter that distinguished *The Power and The Glory*---laughter based on the recognition of God's blessings on man for his warm feeling towards fellow brothers.

The story of the priest often presented a parallel to the life of Christ. The

priest would think it a joke if someone called him a saint, but the book had been hinting as much all along, in the pattern and style of the priest's adventures. The priest preached to the poor, the meek and the downtrodden; he was tempted in the wilderness; he was betrayed, tried, and executed eventually. The mestizo with the two yellow fangs symbolized Judas. The priest recognized him as a betrayer and that he was leading him into a trap. He yet went into the trap, knowing that God did not mean him to escape, that it was his fate to stay and die in Tabasco. Both Christ and the priest were executed for their faith. Like Christ who resurrected after his death, the priest also revived as a new priest arrived after the execution. This mediocre sinner formed himself slowly in Christ until he resembled him. He was not the Son of God who redeemed the sins of mankind, but he could redeem himself and be a witness to the Christian way in an unchristian world. As the priest came to his end, we found the glory of the Father shining in this drunken priest. He was miraculously saved from pride, conceit and self-satisfaction. His deliberate dedication to the Christian principles led to his final sainthood. He died as a martyr, returning to God with all the power and glory.

In this novel, the religious impulse served to find in human nature or to introduce into it a kind of beauty and goodness. The priest slowly realized that his destiny was not divorced from the fate of the poor and the destitute, but had deep links with them. It was this feeling of identity that made him spurn the safety and

return to give absolution to a dying gangster, knowing fully well that it would be suicidal for him to do so. He could not afford to see anybody damned and this was the finest instance of his charity, which was almost divine in its magnitude. The corrupt yet essentially human, the suffering servant of the Lord, had been touched by the grace.

The repentance of the sin by the priest was not in the mire of remorse, but in more humane actions. His act of self-sacrifice showed that he had put more emphasis on real human actions. He had bartered away his own salvation for the sake of that of his daughter and this was real penitence. When the priest in his heart made a sincere confession, the process of moral regeneration and spiritual salvation was complete. Since he was contrite, God would have mercy.

The ending of the novel was an affirmation. The boy Luis was aghast at the murder of the priest and became a zealous convert. He spit on the police lieutenant, who was once an object of awe and devotion in his mind, and welcomed a new priest with a kiss. The kiss was the sign of veneration and devotion. The new priest might be regarded as a miracle which ensured the whisky-priest's sainthood. Even though viewed as a coincidence, it highlighted the continuance of the power and the glory of God that the priest symbolized.

The novel assured us from the very beginning for the spiritual transformation of a sinner into a martyr and a saint. The priest's career presented a contrast to

Pinkie's. While Pinkie had no definite desire for forgiveness and descended to the abysmal depths, the whisky-priest showed evidence of a positive desire to be redeemed by his humility and repentance. Wandering about in a decay-saturated world, Pinkie was appalled and brutalized, but the priest found in decay and corruption the image of God. Pinkie had a great contempt for things human, but the priest found in man's life "the enormous privilege" which made the angels jealous. Being so, the corrupt priest easily identified his own condition with the fallen state of humility.

From the orthodoxy point of view, the priest was a drunken coward, a bad priest, and an unforgivable sinner. His achieving sainthood would be a sacrilege for the Catholic Church. Thus the novel was severely criticized by the Catholics after its publishing. However, Greene stated his belief that a novelist's integrity depended on his freedom to write what interested him. In his mind, glory was attained by people who struggled to do the right thing, who tried to bring about justice in the political realm. Greene's work suggested that, in today's world, true glory belonged to those simple but courageous people who, through their small daily deeds, challenged the prevailing, unjust, powerful regimes. Sometimes they would fail, but the failure would never mar the glory shining in them. Through the virtues of belief, trust and love, they attained God's mercy and came to terms with their salvation.

## Chapter Four

### *The Heart of the Matter---Suffering in Purgatory*

Greene exploited one of the great paradoxes of Catholicism in his works. On the one hand, Catholicism specified mortal sins: those sins punishable by an eternity in Hell; On the other hand, it offered to such mortal sinners various means of avoiding Hell. The best route was confession accompanied by contrition, and a sincere resolution not to sin again; these entailed a readiness to undertake any penance given. As Pinkie reflected, "You could be saved between the stirrup and the ground, but you couldn't be saved if you didn't repent." (*BR*, p. 132) God could see into one's innermost being. A person might (thanks to God's grace) gain admission to Heaven even if he was clearly heading for Hell in the other people's eyes. No doubt, many sinners must atone by years of suffering in Purgatory; nevertheless, Purgatory was a preparation for Heaven. Archbishop M. Sheehan's *Apologetics and Catholic Doctrine*, offered the following definitions. Hell was "an abode of eternal suffering" in which the wicked experienced both "the pain of loss" and "the pain of sense"; Purgatory was "an abode of purification" in which souls had to experience both the pain of loss and extreme pain of sense, before they finally ascend Heaven, "an abode of perfect and everlasting happiness".<sup>29</sup>

#### 4.1 A Tortured Soul in Purgatory

“I wrote a book about a man who goes to hell---*Brighton Rock*---another about a man who goes to heaven---*The Power and the Glory*. Now I have simply written one about a man who goes to purgatory.”<sup>30</sup>

---Graham Greene

*The Heart of the Matter* was Greene's novel about Purgatory. In the novel, there were no savage eruptions that characterized *Brighton Rock*, and none of the rhythmic pilgrimage through anarchy of *The Power and the Glory*. The incidents involved---not proscribed outlaws but---persons of significance and authority whose intimate knowledge of each other provided much of the hero's tragic dilemma. What the novel served to expose was not the habitation of a society or the nature of the human heart (as Father Rank said in the epilogue, “no one knows what goes on in a single human heart”); but going beyond all that, the absolute mystery of the individual destiny.

The story was characteristic of Greene in its blend of seedy locations and highly personal experience. The setting was Freetown in Sierra Leone, West Africa, where Greene had worked as a secret agent during World War II. The locale was as squalid as Mexico and Brighton: the humidity, the tedium, the

tropical diseases, the rubbish; the climate for “meanness, malice, snobbery”(p.31). It was another picture of Hell, another province of ‘Greenland’. Here one found it so easy to believe in sin and corruption. Greene set down the inbred pettiness of an isolated community, where the boredom, meanness and malice were vented in intrigue, rumors and scandals.

The protagonist Scobie was a scrupulous, sensitive police officer and a pious Catholic. A just and incorruptible man as he was, he was passed over for promotion. Then his troubles began with his attempt to alleviate the painful disappointment of his wife Louise. His feeling of guilt about her was due partly to his failure to be promoted; but it was rooted more deeply in another failure, an inability any longer to love his wife, though he pitied her and felt protective towards her; and it went back, too, to the moment when Scobie was unable to be present at the death of his child. Out of pity and responsibility, he borrowed money from a Syrian trader for Louise’s journey, and this set Scobie in a series of dilemma. While Louise is away, Scobie fell in love with Helen, a nineteen-year-old widow, though again love was confused with pity in Scobie’s heart and he became incapable of reconciling the emotional demands made on him by both women, as well as incapable of reconciling his infidelity with his conscience. He was a man clearly given to self-accusation, and his sense of guilt thickened as the story moved forward. Louise returned and asked Scobie to go to



the Holy Communion with her. Buried by his own passion and knowing that he must stop wounding God and both women, he committed suicide eventually.

Although he worked with conscientiousness Scobie had no belief in human justice.

“...In the dark narrow passage behind, in the charge-room and the cells, Scobie could always detect the odor of human meanness and injustice---it was the smell of a zoo, of sawdust, excrement, ammonia, and lack of liberty. The place was scrubbed daily, but you could never eliminate the smell. Prisoners and policeman carried it in their clothing like cigarette smoke.”(p.15).

He saw the world around him full of misery and unhappiness, and knew that it was absurd to expect happiness in such a squalid world, yet this clear-sightedness did not relieve him of the haunting sense of responsibility to promote the happiness of others, whether they were the innocent or even the wicked. According to Catholic doctrines, no one should doubt the power of God, but here even God entered the story almost as a character and became a victim of Scobie's pity, for his final decision to kill himself was as much due to wishing to spare God further suffering, as to spare Louise and Helen further unhappiness. This sense of pity and responsibility led Scobie to a spiritual egotism which was a form of pride, as he was not only his fellow brothers' keeper but pretended to be God's keeper as well. He chose to trust himself rather than God. “Suicide was Scobie's inevitable

end, the particular motive of his suicide, to save even God from himself, was the final twist of the screw of his inordinate pride.”<sup>31</sup>

Scobie had something of both Pinkie and the whisky-priest in his character. Pinkie, the whisky-priest and Scobie represented, according to R. W. B. Lewis, the murderer, the priest and the policeman, ‘the dramatis personae of Greene’s recurring drama and his troubled universe’.<sup>32</sup> Scobie was, like Pinkie, involved in crime and he had, like the whisky-priest, a plodding desire to do good and an innate love of God. Such a man was capable of Good as well as Evil. We witnessed in Scobie, as in Pinkie and the whisky priest, a conflict between evil and faith in human nature. He was tormented by his love of God because he could not reconcile it with his love of human beings. The only way out for him was to kill himself but, as a Catholic, he could not do it without wounding God.

“Why, why did he have to make such a mess of things?”(p. 320) This was the hopeless and embittered question raised by Louise, Scobie’s wife. Not “Why did he?” but “Why did he have to?” That Scobie had made an appalling mess of things could not be denied. The novel was the progressive account of it, from the first moment when he was passed over for promotion, through the disappointment of his restless, vaguely artistic wife---a disappointment so great that Scobie made a dubious if not illegal transaction with the diamond-smuggler, Yusef, to get enough money for her trip to South Africa; through the adulterous affair with the

widow Helen; through the now rapid deterioration of his public and private life; through the agony---for his Catholic temperament---of receiving the sacrament in a condition of mortal sin; to the still graver sin of despair and an extreme mortal sin for a Catholic---suicide, by which Scobie ended his career. Scobie had the ingredients of a genuine tragic hero. He was presented as a good man, quite better than most, with an inviolable sense of justice irritating to some of his colleagues. He was an able man and within limits a forceful one; and he was a devout Catholic with special religious intensity. But he had a fatal flaw by which Scobie called down ruin on himself: an excess of the quality Greene called pity---an inability to put up with the disappointment or suffering in others. He felt it peculiarly incumbent upon himself to relieve the pain, which led him to the extreme of wishing to damn himself so that others should not suffer in this world, in the manner of the whisky priest and Charles Peguy.

The “heart of the matter,” as a phrase, occurred after the opening of the novel’s second part, when Scobie, momentarily alone and looking up at the stars, wondered whether “If one knew, he wondered, the facts, would one have to feel pity even for the planets? If one reached what they called the heart of the matter? ...the haunting images, the terrible impotent feeling of responsibility and pity.” (p. 117) Less than ten minutes later, unknowingly---though he did suddenly feel cold and strange---Scobie reached the “heart” of the matter and gave up the

peace of his own soul. Coming in from his reverie, into the resthouse where they had brought the stretcher-cases from a torpedoed ship, Scobie was asked to stand watching over two victims who were lying unconsciously on two beds divided by a screen. One was a six-year-old girl. Looking at her, Scobie thought again of his own dead daughter; and he began to pray. "Father...give her peace. Take away my peace for ever, but give her peace." (p. 118) The prayer echoed that of the whisky priest in *The Power and the Glory* who would rather offer his peace for that of his daughter. We were to find that God did exactly that. He gave the child the peace of death---a release from suffering, but Scobie's peace was taken away for the remainder of his early career. This was the book's major turning point. The human agent through whom God acted was the patient on the other side of the screen, "the young woman lying unconscious on her back, still grasping the stamp-album."(p. 139) It was Helen Rolt, whom pity and loneliness would drive Scobie to make love to, in an affair that so tormented Scobie's Catholic conscience that only an overdose of tablets could rescue him. The "heart of the matter", undoubtedly, was to offer the peace of his soul out of pity for the weak and the wounded. Pity, a controlling emotion in his life, resulted in his moral and physical destruction.

In a letter to the French Christian existentialist Marcel More, Greene put Scobie's case plainly enough: "Obviously one did have in mind that when he

offered up his peace for the child it was genuine prayer and had the results that followed. I always believe that such prayers, though obviously a God would not fulfill them to the limit of robbing him of a peace for ever, are answered up to the point as a kind of test of a man's sincerity and to see whether in fact the offer was merely based on emotion."<sup>33</sup>

The first step Scobie had taken towards destruction was when he inspected a passing ship suspected of smuggling diamonds. He found a letter of the Portuguese Captain to his daughter in Germany. Correspondence with people in adversary nations was seen as an act of treason since the war was still going on. The captain stated how he loved his daughter and begged Scobie to let him go. Struggling between discipline and conscience, finally touched by intense pity, Scobie burned the letter secretly instead of performing his duty. However, his inside cried that he was guilty and that he had joined the ranks of the corrupt police officers, "They had been corrupted by money, and he had been corrupted by sentiment. Sentiment was the more dangerous because you couldn't name its price." (p. 54)

The overdose of sentiment in his wife brought Scobie a step further to his doom. Although pretending an apparent affection for Louise, he was inwardly closed to himself. However, he was pitiful for the pain Louise suffered from. Love had turned into pity, a sense of mechanical responsibility disguised in the form of

passion. To make her happy and hence have peace for himself, he borrowed money from a sly money-trader, which triggered off a series of events that carried Scobie ruthlessly to his doom. In the incidents that followed, he lost his professional morality and surrendered himself to evils. In the deserted and fallen world, Scobie was not able to find peace.

With the departure of his wife, Scobie fell in love with Helen, which drove him further to despair. His love for her was only another facet for his pity. He realized that Helen and Louise were actually the same and that he had to be responsible for the happiness of both. After a quarrel with Helen he wrote her a note, "I love you more than myself, more than my wife, more than God I think." (p. 173) Now that Scobie placed Helen over God, he was showing the first sign of his spiritual corruption. The note fell into the hands of Yusef, who blackmailed Scobie into smuggling diamonds for him. Thus, the note turned into an instrument of actual sin, an embodiment of Scobie's desertion of God, who had been reduced to the secondary position in Scobie's world. Scobie's love of Helen was irreconcilable with his Catholic conscience. In the novel Louise remarked to Wilson: 'We don't die for love...except, of course, in books.' (p. 102) But Scobie was going to die for love, which had brought him into a state of mortal sin, as he reflected, "This was what human love had done to him---it had robbed him of love for eternity."(p. 280) The sense of pity and responsibility had overshadowed

Scobie's love of God, and eventually led him to the desertion of God.

Louise returned from her journey and insisted on Scobie going to Communion with her. Scobie was now trapped in the dilemma. He could neither free himself of the responsibility towards Louise nor repent his sin in the confession and give up Helen. He realized that his vows to Louise and Helen were incompatible with each other, and he must not hurt God for both women. At last he went to the Communion with Louise but was overtaken with terror, for he chose a mortal sin by taking Communion without repentance, which was regarded by the Catholics as a sacrilege to God. He prayed sorrowfully, 'O God, I offer up my damnation to you. Take it. Use it for them' (p. 217), and even at this moment, he still thought of sparing his wife and mistress. He reasoned that by killing himself he would stop inflicting pains on those he loved---Louise, Helen and God, "O God I am the only guilty one because I've known the answers all the time...I know what I'm doing. I am not pleading for mercy. I'm going to damn myself, whatever that means." (p. 280-81)

Now Scobie had totally given up to despair and sin. He believed himself to be a member of "the devil's party"(p. 219) and told Helen that "I've damned myself." (p.223) He believed that if he killed himself, he would stop inflicting pains to God; but by committing suicide, he abandoned the love of God, and would be condemned to damnation.

In Catholic conceptions, human qualities such as pity, compassion, and responsibility were virtues. But in the novel, the virtues got distorted and transformed into their opposing force---vice. Scobie had to walk all the way to suffering due to an excess of pity.

#### **4.2 Divine Decree**

While it was true that the relation between man and God was one of Greene's major preoccupations, it was not difficult to see that in his novels a sinner's conduct or action was important in determining his fate. The redemption of sinners in Greene's novels was quite related to their worth as human beings. There was something evil in Pinkie's nature which made his damnation certain, just as there was something noble in the whisky priest's nature which made his salvation certain: despite his sins, he was blessed with one of the best virtues for a Christian---love. In Scobie's case, considering his sins, one had to take into account his virtues which were more important than his sins. Scobie curiously combined the traits of both Pinkie and the whisky-priest. He was such a curious amalgam of evil and good that it was not an easy task to label him.

In *The Heart of the Matter*, Catholic doctrines of sin were dealt with on a more elaborate scale. Scobie loved the world, loved West Africa down to its



vultures and ugly roads, but could not commit himself to it. Nor could he accept his dilemma as an essential part of human life. He was both selfless and self-absorbed. Haunted by his inadequacy he nonetheless felt sufficiently superior to assume he could take on responsibilities for all the 'objects' of his pity. Pity was rendered as a destructive element, the alliance of pride. Scobie was presumptuous as he even considered God a failure. A Catholic seeing God as a failure could not but be sinful, and this would damn him. Scobie had sinned against all hopes. He seemed to have lost his chance of redemption and grace, as the sin of adultery and deceit, coupled with the sin of tacit murder of his servant, goaded Scobie to the mortal sin of despair and of suicide, which led an apparently definite avenue to Hell. Would he be sentenced to Hell by divine decree?

Despite a sinner himself, Scobie was not absolutely deprived of God's grace. There were signs of divine love when he committed suicide. On the verge of death, he seemed to see "someone outside the room ... seeking him, calling him"(p. 257). As he fell dying, a medal bearing a saint's name dropped out of his pocket. These signs suggested that God did not completely give up a sinner and there remained at least a hope of Purgatory for Scobie.

Scobie believed that in committing suicide, he was damning himself, while in the end Father Rank, a priest, denied his damnation, as what a priest did in *Brighton Rock*. In the epilogue Greene had characteristically added some words to

warn against drawing hasty conclusions. "For goodness' sake, Mrs. Scobie, don't imagine you---or I---know a thing about God's mercy. ...The Church knows all the rules. But it doesn't know what goes on in a single human heart. (p. 263)" Again, the institutionalized Church was opposed in the name of the religious mystery; the incomprehensibility of God's mercy and grace was the aspect insisted upon. The sinners might be saved: God would possibly take Scobie's love (of God, or of fellow-humans) as a redemptive quality. Here Greene offered the prospect of a redeemed sinner, of the salvation of a man, who, by Catholic standards, had been corrupt and destructive.

Like Rose in *Brighton Rock* and the whisky priest in *The Power and the Glory*, Scobie was deliberately determined to damn himself out of love for others. He loved human beings as nearly as God might have loved them, aware of the worst possible traits in them. "Here again, love is the agent of grace and redemption and it is surely significant that Scobie dies with the word 'love' on his lips."<sup>34</sup> At the bottom of his heart, Scobie always prayed for God's love and mercy. It was suggested that Scobie really have loved God, and that God might be the only being he loved. The night before he encountered the dying child and Helen, we heard Scobie murmuring the incomplete phrase as he fell asleep, "O God, bless..."(p. 109) and later, another incomplete phrase as he fell senseless and dying, "Dear God, I love ..." (p. 257) Nobody could be sure of the objects of

those verbs. They were an overflow of Scobie's Catholic conscience, which embodied his deep-rooted Catholic beliefs and keen love for God.

In Greene's novels he had given his sympathetic protagonists a sharply divided mind, a more than uneasy conscience, e.g. the intentional sinning and the natural goodness were the two dominant points in Scobie. The uncertainty of his fate proved the incomprehensibility of God's grace. "The implication of *The Heart of the Matter* is that human action, as such, doesn't really matter much at all. The ethics and aspirations of sinful humanity are at best but poor things. It is the relation between man and God that is important."<sup>35</sup>

Since Greene regarded sin as omnipresent in human life, and therefore felt sympathy for those who both knew and suffered from their sins, he had to find an opening in his faith whereby a man could possess sane reasons for feeling terrible guilt and yet at the same time possessed sufficient virtues for salvation. In the way of Christ Greene found that opening. God's pity for man was so great that He was willing to sacrifice Himself for us. If a man pursued a similar path, however falteringly and darkly, he would be in some part exonerated. "And then against all the teaching of the church," said Scobie, "one has the feeling that love---any kind of love---does deserve a bit of mercy."(p. 98) This was not to say that Greene went so far as to deny the church's precepts. Scobie and the whisky priest were both shown as committing the sin of pride in not trusting God to provide for the

well-being of those they loved and in setting their own imperfect judgments above the judgment of God. But their sins paradoxically became their virtues if the root of sin was love. There was, after all, a vast difference between the sin that grew out of love and the sin that grew out of hate. Moreover, since evil was omnipresent in the human world, our possible hope of heaven was in such sins as those mixed with love. The Priest and Scobie committed sins out of love for others, and behaved as Christ had done. Therefore, in God's court, they would be pardoned by His Grace.

The interlacing of sin and virtue in Scobie created the paradox of his personality. Scobie was a good man who loved others but not wisely and because of love, was led into evil. Even his worst sin, suicide, was the outcome of his humanity. Scobie was a good Christian in spirit though he violated the rules of the Church. In an evil world where the possibilities of peace and happiness were rapidly eliminated, Scobie, like the whisky-priest, adopted the pattern of life which enabled him to go through his blighted life meaningfully.

Greene presented a weak man with great burden, the burden of pity and responsibility, sin and damnation. *The Heart of the Matter* should be reckoned as Greene's masterpiece precisely by providing a terrible tension between the divine grace and the sinful human---a somber and disturbing modern version of the Greek tragic tension between fate and freedom. Like a typical Greek tragic hero,

Scobie was fixed in his character, not capable of resisting what would turn out for him. Only the infinite mercy of God, who could see through the innermost recesses of human heart, would save him from the doom of Hell. There was a continuous effort at exposing the limitations of human capacity of perception and judgment. Scobie was buried by his sense of pity, but at the same time it held the hope of eventual salvation for him. Since his pity was borne out of love and compassion for others, his act of despair was also an act of atonement, not borne out of evil or hatred of God, but out of the love for God. "Despair is the price one pays for setting oneself an impossible aim. It is, one is told, the unforgivable sin, but it is a sin the corrupt or evil man never practices ... Only the man of goodwill carries always in his heart this capacity for damnation." (p. 247) Scobie's fate might be judged in this light: his suffering in Purgatory was probably God's merciful response to his desire for love and willingness to share others' sufferings. His last incomplete phrase persuaded us into believing that by a miracle of divine mercy his mortal sin might be transformed by love. Greene held that the ultimate test of any human action was whether it was occasioned by man's surrender of himself in love to others; the ultimate test of a man's sanctity was his possession of the gift to love others as God loved him.

Greene made his characters commit sin, since they were too weak to resist the temptations, but they had the desire to overcome their sins. They degraded

because various limitations and frustrations were against these weak, sinful, but potentially good men. Pinkie was perhaps the sole exception that did not seem desirous of being redeemed. But the lives of the whisky priest and Scobie represented a sharper and profounder vision. They discovered the healing touch of God's Grace when they were in the heart of darkness. We were shown that before they could hope for redemption, they had to imitate their lives in the way of God, willingly going through suffering and travail, cherishing love and courage in hearts, risking everything without hesitating even to commit suicide for the sake of others. Their lives had performed the drama of man's redemption in the real world of Purgatory, revealing the hidden, radiant mercy of God behind even the most wicked, brutal, and sinful actions. This was the core of Greene's religious vision.

## Conclusion

As a converted Catholic, Roman Catholicism undoubtedly played an important role in Greene's writings. Talking of the religious influence on Greene, P. H. Newby pointed out that "the breadth, variety, and sympathy of this interest, in a career already spanning more than fifty years, have made him a pre-eminent English novelist of the late twentieth century."<sup>36</sup> Catholicism, with its rites and rituals, was not a prop in the movement of Greene's plot, but a metaphor for his depictions of human anguish.

Greene's novels were about suffering, seediness, and sin. He held that "human beings were born with certain tendencies for which they were not responsible."<sup>37</sup> Seediness was "the most honest representation of the nature of things."<sup>38</sup> Evil with its consequent affliction was a real and necessary part of life for him. The world was corrupt, seedy and oppressive, full of lifeless landscapes, which established a so-called "Greeneland". Some of his characters sought after evil and corruption intentionally, with Pinkie as a representative; while others were subject to it, such as the whisky priest and Scobie. They committed sins and were consequently driven by worldly morality as well as divine justice.

Oppressed by their own imperfections, Greene's characters regarded pains as their natural state. Scobie claimed "the loyalty we all feel to unhappiness---the

sense that that is where we really belong” (*HM*, p. 118); the whisky priest said, “Pain is part of the joy”, and felt in the terrain of peace that “he had no right to such luxury” (*PG*, p. 194). Going beyond passive acceptance, they often sought out punishments that could relieve their overwhelming sense of guilt. The priest abandoned his life for other sinners; Scobie ruined himself for sparing those he had injured.

Influenced by existentialism and humanism, Greene believed that man was neither totally depraved nor intrinsically sinful. No matter how mortal his sins were, he had the capacity to reach God’s Grace, as long as he located in himself a precious feeling of trust, courage, and a love of God. Sin held within it the seeds of virtue, and out of evil bred sanctity. This had become a characteristic of his works. William Blake found eternity in a grain of sand; a Graham Greene character is more likely to find it in ten grains of cocaine.<sup>39</sup> Greene acknowledged the mercy of God, holding that God was loving and merciful. Although man was weak and susceptible to evil and sin, God would bestow the “fallen” with redemption and sanctity. Man would suffer all kinds of tortures, go through spiritual transformation, and eventually come to Heaven by God’s love. It was worth noting that in Greene’s novels, the divine mercy always showed favor towards the most squalid and pain-racked human conditions. Even some unforgivable sinners who could never gain God’s mercy in the Church’s eyes had



finally got the chance of salvation. This was why the Catholic Church could not put up with Greene.

Despite his efforts in depicting man's spiritual world with religion in his mind, Greene had time and again denied the label of a "Catholic writer". In his introduction to the *Collected Edition of Brighton Rock* he wrote, "Many times since *Brighton Rock* I have been forced to declare myself not a Catholic writer but a writer who happens to be a Catholic."<sup>40</sup> And, "I would claim not to be a writer of Catholic novels, but a writer who in four or five books took characters with Catholic ideas for his novels."<sup>41</sup>

It was, in a way, surprising that so many critics had evaluated the contribution of Greene solely from Catholic criteria of sin and salvation. It should be noted that Greene's concern, as a writer, was more with humanity than with God or religion.

We could easily discover in his so-called "Catholic novels" the broader humanism at the center of his novels than religious dogma. The Catholic doctrines proclaimed that man was born to sins. One should suffer in one's life, and lay one's hope on the next world---Heaven. Remain obedient to God, try to put up with the sufferings, and redeem all one's evils in his heart, till one can finally touch God's grace. Those who committed sins were doomed to Hell, losing all hopes of redemption and sanctity. Greene held the same extreme idea when he

was young, but as he became mature, in his novels, it was usually the sinners who had gained God's mercy and attained the chance of ascending paradise, as long as they fought against various evils, redeemed their sins, cherished the feeling of compassion, trust, love and courage towards their fellow brothers, and repented devoutly within their hearts. Greene's characters seldom behaved as a docile Roman Catholic. The whisky priest, for example, was tortured in this world of Purgatory for his sins at first, but after his identification with the downtrodden people and his brave sacrifice for a dying sinner, he was welcome by the angels of Heaven. Scobie followed the same route and prepared for himself the coming salvation. These characters had aroused severe criticisms and disputes, especially from the Catholic Church.

In "Why Do I Write", Greene defended his right to be "disloyal" to the Church by asserting that he wrote "from the point of view of the black square as well as from the white"<sup>42</sup>, because as a novelist he was writing fiction instead of propaganda. As to those who followed religious doctrines blindly, the novelist should question their beliefs and awaken in their hearts the mystery and wonder of life. This was the political task of literature. Greene was a novelist who happened to be a Catholic and Catholicism only functioned as a tool for him to depict human situation. Disloyalty to Catholicism had helped him liberate human experience from confines of ideological moulds.

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Greene was one of those writers who had offered a distinctive vision or world-view: just as we speak of the Dickensian world, "Greeneland" was his characteristic imaginative terrain. In his writings, Greene succeeded in gaining both critical acclaim and a vast international readership. He could combine the grippingly readable and the revealingly intelligent. As one of the finest literary commentators on religious, cultural and political tensions in the twentieth century, he had offered searching analyses of the contradictions between the religious and the secular outlooks. Religiously haunted, Greene presented an extraordinary fictional world of saints and sinners, and at the basis of his work there was a deep and passionate concern about human situation. His exploration of the mysterious nature of God, man and the world was enlightening and outstanding, as summarized by R. W. B. Lewis:

"All the truth of things, for Greene, lies hidden in the darkness. Scarcely less mysterious is Greene's achievement of making visible in that darkness, and exactly by means of it, the unforgettable dramas of extraordinarily living human beings."<sup>43</sup>

And William Golding declared:

"Graham Greene was in a class by himself ...He will be read and remembered as the ultimate chronicler of twentieth-century man's consciousness and anxiety."<sup>44</sup>

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Graham Greene, "Francois Mauriac" in *Collected Essays*, p.93.
- <sup>2</sup> Graham Greene, from the Introduction of *Brighton Rock*, p. 4.
- <sup>3</sup> Kenneth Allot & Miriam Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, p. 13.
- <sup>4</sup> Cedric Watts, *A Preface to Greene*, p. 54.
- <sup>5</sup> Frederick R. Karl, "Graham Greene's Demonical Heroes," p. 63.
- <sup>6</sup> A.A. Devitis, *Graham Greene*, p.52.
- <sup>7</sup> P. H. Newby, *The Novel 1945-1950*, p. 33.
- <sup>8</sup> Paul O' Prey, *A Reader's Guide to Graham Greene*, p. 154.
- <sup>9</sup> Graham Greene, "The Lost Childhood" in *The Lost Childhood and Other Essays*, p. 17.
- <sup>10</sup> Greene, Graham, *The Lost Childhood and Other Essays*, p. 327.
- <sup>11</sup> Graham Greene, "Frederick Rolfe: Edwardian Inferno", in *Collected Essays*, p. 131.
- <sup>12</sup> Graham Greene, *A Sort of Life*, p.29.
- <sup>13</sup> *ibid*, p. 31-32.
- <sup>14</sup> R. W. B. Lewis & Peter J. Conn, "Interview with Philip Toynbee", in *Graham Greene: The Power and the Glory: Text, Background, and Criticism*, p. 457.

- <sup>15</sup> Graham Greene, *A Sort of Life*, P. 85.
- <sup>16</sup> Graham Greene, "Francois Mauriac" in *Collected Essays*, p.91.
- <sup>17</sup> Kenneth Allot & Miriam Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, p. 148.
- <sup>18</sup> Graham Greene, "The Lost Childhood" in *Collected Essays*, p.17.
- <sup>19</sup> Frederick R. Karl, "Graham Greene's Demonical Heroes", p. 53.
- <sup>20</sup> Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape*, p. 18.
- <sup>21</sup> Graham Greene, *The Lost Childhood and Other Essays*, p. 94.
- <sup>22</sup> Robert O. Evans, "Satanist Fallacy", pp. 161, 162, 167-168.
- <sup>23</sup> Haim Gordon, *Fighting Evil: Unsung Heroes in the novels of Graham Greene*, p. 268.
- <sup>24</sup> quoted from Xue Hao, "The Communion between Saints and Sinners: The Religious Aspects in Graham Greene's Novels", p. 68.
- <sup>25</sup> quoted from R. W. B. Lewis & Peter J. Conn, *Graham Greene: The Power and the Glory: Text, Background, and Criticism*, p. 436.
- <sup>26</sup> Paul O' Prey, *A Reader's Guide to Graham Greene*, p. 77.
- <sup>27</sup> Francis L. Kunkel, *The Labyrinthine Ways of Graham Greene*, (New York: Paul P. Appel, Publisher, 1973) p.115.
- <sup>28</sup> Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, *Graham Greene's Childless Fathers*, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1988), p.35.

- <sup>29</sup> A. F. Cassis, *Graham Greene: Man of Paradox*, p. 257.
- <sup>30</sup> Gene D. Phillips, "Graham Greene: On the Screen---An interview", in *A Preface to Greene*, p. 207.
- <sup>31</sup> Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape*, p. 121.
- <sup>32</sup> R. W. B. Lewis, "The 'Trilogy' ", from *Graham Greene: The Power and the Glory: Text, Background, and Criticism*, p. 71.
- <sup>33</sup> Quoted from Marie-Beatrice Mesnet in *Graham Greene and the heart of the matter*, London, 1954, p. 102.
- <sup>34</sup> Paul O' Prey, *A Reader's Guide to Graham Greene*, p. 85.
- <sup>35</sup> Cates Baldrige, *Graham Greene's Fictions: The Virtues of Extremity*, p. 159.
- <sup>36</sup> P. H. Newby, *The Novel 1945-1950*, p. 98.
- <sup>37</sup> John Cornwell: "Why I Am Still a Catholic", from *Graham Greene: The Power and the Glory: Text, Background, and Criticism*, p. 471.
- <sup>38</sup> Kenneth Allot& Miriam Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, p. 187.
- <sup>39</sup> A. F. Cassis, ed., *Graham Greene: Man of Paradox*, p. 224.
- <sup>40</sup> Graham Greene, Introduction of *Brighton Rock*, p. 4.
- <sup>41</sup> Graham Greene, "In Search of a Character", from *The Lost Childhood and Other Essays*, p. 26.
- <sup>42</sup> Graham Greene, "Why Do I Write", from *The Lost Childhood and Other*

*Essays*, p. 153.

<sup>43</sup> R. W. B. Lewis, "The 'Trilogy'", from *Graham Greene: The Power and the Glory: Text, Background, and Criticism*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>44</sup> Paul O' Prey, *A Reader's Guide to Graham Greene*, p. 374.

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