## Contents

Introduction........................................................................................................................................... 1

1. Life and early influences.................................................................................................................. 5
   1.1 The Catholic novel.......................................................................................................................... 9
   1.2 French Catholic writers.................................................................................................................. 14

2. Unheroic heroes .................................................................................................................................. 19
   2.1 Pinkie or the lost child .................................................................................................................. 20
   2.2 Fathers and fatherhood.................................................................................................................... 29
   2.3 Scobie or the childless father ......................................................................................................... 38
   2.4 Plarr and other exiles ..................................................................................................................... 48
   2.6 Comedians ....................................................................................................................................... 58
   2.5 Pursuer and Pursued......................................................................................................................... 64

Conclusion ............................................................................................................................................... 81

Resumé.................................................................................................................................................... 86

Bibliography ............................................................................................................................................ 94
Introduction

I first came across Graham Greene’s works in Mr. Livingstone’s English literature lessons. As far as I can remember we read *The Power and the Glory*. I am not a religious person, so I was quite suspicious of the book, it being a story about a priest, and a Catholic at that. I was surprised. It was not what I expected – adoration and celebration of the glory and power of the triumphant and the only genuine Church, but existential drama of a humble, weak and in many ways sinful outlaw. The book had asked exactly the same questions I asked myself then. I quickly read some other novels and I knew – this is the author who, not unlike Dostoievki, another of my favourites, whose works are definitively worth reading.

What is so appealing about his books? I think I can say, that all of them, in various ways, deal with the same topic – what makes man really human, what gives life its dignity and meaning. Greene’s characters are people I can identify with, they are different from traditional image of a model hero in a way that they are common, unheroic people who in the eyes of the world appear as shabby, unsuccessful and sinful, people who abound only with one thing – their humanity. Losers in the eyes of the world – and to tell the truth I feel like one myself.

Another aspect beside failure which permeates all Greene’s works is his Catholicism or a religious sense which is typical not only for his ‘Catholic cycle’ but which is present in all his works. As I mentioned above, not only because of my education which was led fully in Marx-Leninist spirit, I am suspicious of any religion and Catholic church especially. Still, Catholicism bears for me a special kind of attraction. Religious belief is a mystery for me and this mystery is often topic of many Greene’s novels.

In my thesis, beside failure, I will try to examine the religious sense which binds the thread of all Greene’s novels, either explicitly in his ‘Catholic cycle’ or implicitly as other books
which deal with ostensibly ‘secular’ subjects are also pervaded by an intense religious feeling. This religious feeling is expressed as a need to believe in the existence of a spiritual dimension in human reality, in a value system over and above one’s mere physical existence which would give objective reality some significance beyond itself.

Jan Čulík in his inspiring study called *Graham Greene, the Poet of Awkwardness*¹ argues that Greene is a Jungian, even if unconscious, and a foremost existentialist reflecting the absurdity of the world his unheroic heroes find themselves in. There certainly is an existentialist feature in his novels but his characters, despite frequently desperate circumstances, never come to the conclusion that life is meaningless, that there is no hope for improvement. Greene is an optimist who believes in life and his characters, the ‘unsung heroes’ to use a term employed by Haim Gordon², are often prepared to fight against all the odds and in this fight they usually lose, but the outcome is not desperation but hope. The message of most his books is that one should never give in, never surrender if he does not want to lose the most precious thing – his humanity.

I would call Greene not a poet of awkwardness but of paradoxes. He finds beauty, love, humanity where other people do not see them – in people who are social outcasts, rootless, unhappy and somehow handicapped, very often physically. As if he followed Tertullian’s creed and believes only because it is absurd, and loves because it is ugly and embarrassing.

To be critical, I think that sometimes Greene exaggerates. Is worldly success always associated with greed, lust for power and manipulation, as Scobie, leading character in *The Heart of the Matter*, suggests: “Point me out a happy man and I will point you either egotism, evil – or else an absolute ignorance” (*HM*, p.117)?

Is it not another paradox that a writer who cherished failure as the only humanising factor was, in the end, so successful, famous and wealthy?

Every writer narrates, in the end, about himself, he is a child of his times and society and is influenced by his family and education. In many of his characters we have an intense feeling that it is the author in disguise who speaks to us. For Greene it is true more than for any other novelist. He discovered most of his themes during his childhood and early adolescence. Consequently it will be thus relevant to look at Greene’s childhood and early

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influences in the first chapters. Then I will briefly describe wider social context and the phenomenon of ‘Catholic novel’ in 20th century literature. In second part I will try to compare characters and find common topics and features they share. There are certain themes which are typically Greenesque.

First of all I will look at the motive of religiosity as manifested in the character of Pinkie, the perverted ‘saint’ of Brighton Rock, the first of renowned Catholic novels. Pinkie embodies another feature typical for particularly earlier novels – the motive of lost childhood.

It is an interesting fact that Greene’s heroes grew older with him. Pinkie, the central character of the book published in 1938 is seventeen-year-old youngster, heroes of the books written in 1950’s and 1960’s, Scobie, Bendrix or Brown, are middle-aged and finally, Monsignor Quixote, hero of his last major novel Monsignor Quixote published in 1982, is an old man in his seventies. As if these characters were author’s alter ego, a disguise, a mask under that there is Greene himself. I think it is the case at least with some characters, because there are actually striking parallels between the plot of a novel and author’s life, as in e.g. The End of the Affair.

Another typical feature is a motive of exile. In fact all of Greene’s heroes are uprooted, often desperate, nomadic people who are deprived of the sense of home and secure existence. They drift either from one place to another unable to find home, which is the case of e.g. Brown in The Comedians, or they live either in spiritual, like e.g. Scobie, or in a political exile like Plarr, the central character of The Honorary Consul.

The motive of the pursuit is another topic I will discuss in my thesis. Inhabitants of Greeneland are frequently pursued either by other people, which is a typical feature of thrillers, by their own consciousness or even by God himself. God as a central active character of a novel, as it is in The End of the Affair, is perhaps Greene’s most original contribution to the world literature.

The most typical feature, however, which can be found in all novels by Greene is the motive of fatherhood. This feature is present in all books, with the possible exception of The End of the Affair, which will be discussed in my work. Greene examines the aspect in its manifold meanings – biological, social and spiritual. Greene’s heroes are frequently either father figures, i.e. literally having begotten the child, or spiritual fathers as priests or
ex-priests, or they are deprived of their fathers and are looking for and often finding substitute ones. Undoubtedly, the father with all implications of the word is the most common type found among the inhabitants of Greeneland. Therefore I will devote most attention to this aspect in my text.

Greene’s was a long artistic life spanning over sixty years of writing. It can be roughly divided into three periods: first starting with popular thrillers like Stamboul Train or Gun for Sale, followed in 1938 by Brighton Rock, which is the first novel of the famous ‘Catholic cycle’ dealing with specifically ‘theological’ problems of saintliness, redemption or damnation. In 1950’s, following the movement in the Church itself, Greene turned to mundane topics and started to write against evils of modern world how he experienced them in third world countries. He embraced the ideology of liberation, an attempt to merge Catholicism with Marxism. Finally, in his last period, in books like Doctor Fischer of Geneva, he returned to more theological topics.

For this analysis I chose six of my favourite novels, viz. Brighton rock (BR), The Power and the Glory (PG), The Heart of the Matter (HM), The End of the Affair (EA) from his Catholic novels, The Comedians (C) and The Honorary Consul (HC) from his later, ‘engaged’ period. In brackets there are abbreviations I will use throughout the text for quotations.

It is difficult to write anything new and original about such a famous author. Tens of renowned scholars in tens of studies have examined his novels from various angles and analysed different aspects of his works. Therefore, it would be preposterous to assume that I will come up with something completely new and original. The only ambition of this work is to discuss some aspects of my favourite novels which I find most appealing. Most of the ideas I have come up with, but I hope not all, can be found in various analytical works. At the end of the thesis there is a list of studies I read.
1. Life and early influences

All the most important things in a writer’s life, as Greene often declared in multiple interviews, happen during the first sixteen years of one’s life. It is definitively true about him. All major motives, such as the strong sense of evil, conflict of loyalties and betrayal, the motive of being hunted which pervade his works can be traced to his early age. And also the strong urge to dissent, not to conform to prevailing social conventions. John Spurling, in his inspiring study *Graham Greene*, claims that Greene never grew up, that throughout his life he remained an adolescent with his strong urge to protest, to rebel against the establishment, regardless of its colour.

To digress, in this sense he reminds me of Egon Bondy who had been strongly anti-communist while communists were in power only to turn into a hard line communist once they lost it. As if he followed Lord Acton’s quote that *power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely*, no matter if the power is seized by communists or capitalists, it *always* has a dehumanizing effect and it is an obligation of a true intellectual to criticise it and rebel against it. This urge to speak up, to protest against injustice explains his political engagement in favour of communist movements in South America, his condemnation of colonialism in Africa and support of dissidents in former Soviet block at the same time. It looks quite contradictory but unifying motive is that he always speaks in favour of suppressed individuals and disbelieves the great words, which only mean to disguise the hunger for power.

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4 Egon Bondy, a pseudonym of Zbyněk Fišer, (January 20, 1930, Prague – April 9, 2007, Bratislava) was a Czech philosopher, writer, and poet, one of the main personalities of Czech unofficial culture. In the late 1940s, Bondy was active in a surrealistic group. From 1957 to 1961, he studied philosophy and psychology at Charles University in Prague. From the 1960s he was one of the main figures of the Prague underground, writing texts for the rock group The Plastic People of the Universe. His non-conformism brought him into conflict with the communist regime. His works were circulated only as Samizdat. Although strongly anti-communist Bondy was always interested in the study of Karl Marx and in the criticism of both contemporary capitalism and totalitarian socialism. His philosophical work concerns ontological and related ethical problems. He attempts to show the relevance of ontology without any substance or grounding. Bondy’s work is very distinctive. He was a close friend of Bohumil Hrabal, another Prague writer, and is one of the most influential Czech intellectuals of the 20th century. After the turnover he moved to Bratislava and became harshly critical of the new regime which resulted in his joining the Communist party, his former enemies. However, in the end he was exposed as a collaborator of Stb, former communist secret police and an active informer about his colleagues from underground.

5 see Wikipedia, free encyclopedia
Greene was born into a well-off upper-middle-class family; his father was a headmaster of Berhamsted School and many of his relatives achieved some kind of a prominence – e.g. one of his uncles gained a knighthood for his work for Admiralty and was one of the founders of Naval Intelligence Service. His paternal grandfather went to the West Indies to manage a sugar plantation. Greene’s elder brother, Raymond, became a distinguished physician and endocrinologist, and younger brother, Hugh Carleton Greene, became Director-General of the BBC.

Perhaps it was exactly this world of bourgeois niceness and success young Greene decided to protest against. It is a paradox that, in the end, a poet of failure and the shady became enormously successful and wealthy.

Greene often described his childhood as particularly happy one and in Greene’s world it is the thing nearest to heaven, although his wife remembers his parents, particularly his mother, as quite cold and detached people. Adolescence, on the contrary, is to childhood as hell to heaven. The crucial time was his thirteenth year when he entered the senior part of his father’s school and was forced to leave comfort and security of a parental house and share the lodgings with other students. In his memoirs Greene remembers this period of suffering and bullying as first crisis of his life and one which revealed the world of his future writing, time when he was suddenly brought to face horror and evil, which was incorporated for him in the school bully called Carter. It was this experience that helped to form his awareness of evil and the consequences of betrayal in human relationships.

Another key theme, beside evil, which goes through Greene’s books and is probably anchored in an early age, is balance of loyalties which finds its historical reference in his conflicting loyalties at public school. His anxiety over whether to be loyal to his father, the headmaster, or to his classmates caused him such a stress that he underwent psychoanalysis when he was sixteen.

Loyalty and betrayal were never a clear-cut thing for Greene. They could be undermined, and their opposite could become a virtue, for no side was always right. It was this sense of the psychologically divided mind and the clouded sympathies within the political and sexual realms that characterized the dark plots and anguished, alienated characters of his novels.
Greene’s attitude to life is explicitly expressed in the somewhat nightmarish and surreal, Alice-in Wonderland-style story *Under the Garden*, where he declares through the character of Javitt his life creed:

“Be disloyal. It’s your duty to the human race. The human race needs to survive and it’s the loyal man who dies first from anxiety or a bullet or overwork. If you have to earn a living, boy, and the price they make you pay is loyalty, be a double agent – and never let either of the two sides know your real name.”

The speech takes us even further into the heart of Greene’s world:

“The same applies to women and God. They both respect a man they don’t own, and they’ll go on raising the price they are willing to offer. Didn’t Christ say that very thing? Was the prodigal son loyal or the lost shilling or the strayed sheep? The obedient flock didn’t give the shepherd any satisfaction or the loyal son interest his father.”

This creed with more or less seriousness can be found in most books Greene wrote. Throughout his novels Greene has little respect for middle class values and its moral code, author’s sympathies are always with the people who violate or disregard what Greene sees as a lifeless suburban respectability. Nomadic, unattached, disloyal, sometimes hunted and threatened – such is typical inhabitant of Greeneland, the name which was given to this specific world by some critics.

After finishing his education at Oxford in 1925 his anti-establishment inclinations found finally expression in his conversion to Catholicism, which was in context of English society a deed of a dissident, if we do not count his short engagement with Communist Party, of course. Greene’s was an unorthodox, rebellious nature, and his conversion itself was an act of non-conformity. Nevertheless, he remained attracted by communist ideas whole his life and tried to lead a dialogue between communists and Catholics as long as they strived for better world for poor, suppressed people. Nevertheless, he remained sceptical. As I have said, he disbelieved great words about ‘paradise’ which both ideologies offer – Christianity in heaven and Communism here on Earth. Throughout his texts the eschatological certainties of both Christianity and Marxist ideologies are always thwarted by the inevitability of human failure. Greeneland is thus an uncomfortable place for

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bourgeois religious piety, Catholic and Protestant, as well as Marxist ideology, precisely because of the optimistic assumptions about human nature and the eschatological utopias that pervade both these positions. His characters are unlikely to be manipulated and seduced by success – failure is the only legitimate form of victory in his novels – *felix culpa* – happy sin. They often discover that their sins or their suffering bring them into analogical relationship with a suffering of God in Christ. Even in Greene’s least religious novels his protagonists experience such a manifestation or Joycean *epiphany*⁷. His reluctant and often degraded heroes are ennobled by the way they come to understand their own failure and/or worthlessness before God or before those to whom they have committed themselves.

His imagination is fixated on tension between belief and unbelief, choosing doubt as the premier virtue of humanity. Orthodoxy, or the right belief, is always open to doubt because there is never one perspective in which to understand truth, and it is inevitably open to mystery. He often highlights the virtue of doubt in the concluding remarks of many of his novels, wherein a priest comments on the possibility of redemption for the hero/antihero. Doubt is thus a two-edged sword for Greene’s characters: it can allow for the unspeakable and mysterious workings of faith to be recognized and honoured, or it can lead to a rationalistic and ultimately sceptical stance toward the human factor.

Another crucial moment in his life was his falling in love with Vivien Dayrell-Browning, a recent convert to Catholicism, whom he wanted to marry. As he admitted it was primarily because of her that he embraced Catholic faith and only secondly as an act of spiritual conversion. What, however, began as an intellectual conversion became, after his experience of persecution of Catholics in Mexico, an emotional conversion as well.

He began to study philosophy and theological treaties. In this respect he owes much to his wife Vivien who introduced him to the circle of Oxford Catholic intellectuals. The Dominican historian Bede Jarret and his books on medieval socialism were particularly important in framing Greene’s political opinions, especially that essential element of religion is poverty and his ambiguous relationship between Catholicism and Marxism,

⁷ An epiphany is the sudden realization or comprehension of the essence or meaning of something. The term is used in either a philosophical or literal sense to signify that the person has ‘found the last piece of the puzzle and now sees the whole picture’ or has new information or experience, often insignificant by itself, that illuminates a deep foundational frame of reference.
which became topic of Greene’s later novels. Greene found, at least partly, in close reading of Jarret’s books religious foundations for a dialogue with Marxist and Communist ideologies whose ideals of social and economic equality appealed to him and treatment of this ambiguous relationship appears in many of his novels.

Another important influence on Greene as a Catholic was the teaching of 19th century convert, Cardinal John Henry Newman. His doctrine of the ontological and metaphysical existence of evil as a fact of life, at least within the human person, subject’s constant interior struggle with his religious experience, the experience of suffering in Christian life as a sign of God’s love and dialectical thought, which echoes Hegelian dialectical thought, formed Greene’s faith and built up spiritual landscape of many of his books.

The main influence and inspiration came from France and the phenomenon of the so called the Catholic novel.

1.1 The Catholic novel
I this chapter I would like to look at the occurrence of religion in literature, and particularly in English literature in wider context and discuss the phenomenon of so called ‘Catholic novel’.

I will also assess the position and development in Catholic doctrine during the twentieth century because we can clearly see parallels of that movement and development of Greene’s writing.

Writing this and following chapters I am greatly indebted to the study Graham Greene Catholic Imagination by Mr Mark Bosco where I found most of the material and ideas.

“After the death of Henry James a disaster overtook the English novel..... for with his death the religious sense was lost to the English, and with the religious sense went the sense of importance of the human act. It was as if the world of fiction had lost a dimension: the characters of such distinguished writers as Mrs. Virginia Woolf and Mr. E.M. Forster wandered like cardboard symbols through a world that was paper thin.”

In these words Greene commented on the situation of English fiction in the 20th century. In countless literary articles he regretted the loss of religious sense, which was for him

intimately tied with Catholicism, the only religious tradition, which, according to him, could still evoke a metaphysical understanding of Good and Evil in the world and within an individual. In his *Collected Essays* he highlights some writers from this point. He comments on Conrad, one of his favourites, that ‘he retained of Catholicism an ironic sense of omniscience and of the final unimportance of life under the watching eyes.’

On Maugham he notes that ‘he cannot believe in God who punishes and he cannot therefore believe in the importance of human action. Rob human beings of their heavenly and their infernal importance, and you rob your characters of their individuality.’ For Dickens then ‘evil appears as an economic factor, nothing more. Christianity is a woman serving soup to the poor.’

Only in James does Greene see an appreciation of the supernatural quality of evil. It will be useful then to sum up briefly the development in English literature which led to this state of affairs.

It was as late as the nineteenth century when British writers began to reflect critically on the relationship between literature and religious belief. This discussion was led within English Protestant heritage and found its expression in such writers such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth and T.S. Eliot, to name just a few. Their works describe religion replaced by Enlightenment rationalism, science, and philosophical idealism. What is left of religious sense are moral allegories of Charles Dickens or George Elliot. The impression that religion had lost its power within British culture gained force in the Victorian elegies. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* expressed disillusionment, confusion and chaos that afflicted the generation of artists which came out of the experience of World War I.

Certain writers offered substitution for the role which was traditionally played by religion: e.g. H.G. Wells placed his faith in science and the machine; G.B. Shaw in an optimistic secular humanism; D.H. Lawrence in the basic instinct of a lost sexual vitality. A number of intellectuals in 1930s and 1940s turned to orthodox religious belief in Anglican Church, most notably T.S. Eliot or C.S. Lewis.

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10 ibid. p.140
11 ibid. p.154
12 ibid. p.113
Surprisingly, after WWI organized religion gained some prestige for many British intellectuals who were looking for cultural institution that could face the chaos, violence and meaninglessness around them. Thus in the early part of the twentieth century, Christianity, along with its rivals Marxism and psychoanalysis, was in the centre of cultural debate.

In this situation emerges a new phenomenon of the twentieth century – the so called Catholic novel. The Catholic novel in Europe originated in the neoromantic and decadent forms of French literature in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a reaction against the dominant discourse of Enlightenment and the antireligious doctrines of the French Revolution. Writers such as Charles Peguy, Georges Bernanos or Charles Mauriac opposed positivist thought and defended the spiritual reality of human life in terms of a distinctly Catholic ontology and epistemology. These authors drew their poetic and thematic material from their common Catholic experience and beliefs, formed their works from the point of view of Catholic dogmas and symbolism.

Catholicism was both a reactionary critique of the state of religious decline in modernity and also a powerful theological, philosophical and artistic alternative to this decline. In terms of plot and theme the French novel shared some key elements which were later adopted by Greene: the idea of the sinner being in the heart of Christianity, the idea of mystical substitution, the implied criticism of materialism and the tireless pursuit of the erring soul by God, the *Hound of Heaven*13. Another basic ingredient which heightens the tension of narrative and plot is the conflict between the corrupt flesh and the transcendent spirit, usually devised as sexual tension.

In comparison to the Catholic revival of France the situation of English Catholicism, as the minority tradition in predominately Protestant England, was far more modest. It was not until the 1840s that Catholicism gained some legitimate status. As Bosco points out, broken tradition of Catholicism produced “a polemical and self-conscious Church”(Bosco, p.45) when it was re-established in 1851. Characterized by such literary figures as Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, and Evelyn Waugh and many prominent intellectuals who had found the

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13 Religious ode *The Hound of Heaven* is undoubtably the most renowned poem by the Catholic poet Francis Thompson (1859 – 1907). Greene knew the poem well and even cruelly parodied it later in his play *The Return of A.J.Raffles*
Anglicanism either intellectually implausible or too compromised by political alliance with the state, English Catholicism proclaimed the triumphant Church; a kind of Catholicism that Greene shunned in his novels.

A vision which Greene embraced in his novels, by contrast, depicts more comfortably the Church suffering, passively enduring damage caused by modernity which was typical feature of French Catholic doctrine. Greene, in fact, thus became a protagonist of French novel in English speaking world.

The Catholic novel as a genre is a phenomenon of the first half of the last century. It has gradually disappeared as Roman Catholicism abandoned its opposition to serious engagement with the modern world after the Second Vatican Council.

To understand this process properly, it will be useful to look at this development more closely.

As Bosco writes, Catholicism before Vatican II was primarily a hermetic, scholastic teaching that stressed the individual status before God in terms of moral concepts and ritual obligations. The revival of Thomistic thought signified a start of a philosophical and theological dialogue between the Church and the world of modernity which found its outcome in the results of the Second Vatican Council which took place from 1962 to 1965.

There has been a dramatic shift in theological emphasis that affected the practice and attitudes toward Catholic belief in a number of important way.

First of all, the Council emphasized a theological ‘perspective form below’, a methodology that stressed God’s manifestation of grace on the horizontal plane of human relationship within and without the Church. The secular concerns of society, even the most profane, became possible ways to the sacred.

Secondly, religious anthropology before Vatican II had stressed the individual’s relationship with God in vertical, one-to-one basis, so that individual salvation was seen as a private affair of piety and charity. Council documents reject this verticalization of relationship to God for a more social, horizontal perspective – a human being is seen as a nexus of social relationship.

Thirdly, there was a reorientation of the sacramentality of Catholicism – God’s grace does not intervene solely in the priest’s function but also through all the baptized members of the
Church community. All forms of human interaction with the world have the possibility of being visible signs of God’s invisible reality.

Fourth, there was a clear rejection of the body-and-soul dualism of human nature that was part of the legacy of Catholic thought. The body is not portrayed as at the war with the soul; rather the body and the soul are sacred co-constituents of human life. Spiritual life must be understood in part as the strivings of the flesh, just as the desires of the flesh must be understood as a possible path for the soul. This emphasis on human body grounded social teachings on the dignity of the human person and the sacramental nature of human work.

Fifth, there was a re-orientation of the Church’s self-understanding and its relationship to the outside world. The documents recognised the need for a critical reading of the ‘signs of the times’ in which the Church might more fully enter into the political and social struggles of people. The Church admits that it cannot claim to be exclusive arbiter of salvation. The Council explicitly states that non-Christian religions may also serve as institutions of salvation.

It is a remarkable how this evolution in Church’s doctrine paralleled with Greene’s creativity. In 1961 he published *A Burnt-Out Case*, first novel, which primary focus is not on character’s personal salvation or damnation but deals with human action derived from political relationships. This novel marks the end of ‘Catholic’ period and is a starting point of his ‘engaged’ novels in which Greene raises his voice in fight against social injustices in different parts of the world.

He returns to explicitly religious themes in his late novels. But even in his most ‘mundane’ works he does not completely abandon the religious themes. There is rather a shift of emphasis on political and social concerns in which justice, salvation, and even the mystery of divine grace can be manifested.

As I have already mentioned above, Greene greatly admired James for his introspective style which he uses in his novels and his appreciation of evil, the lost religious sense. As for a genre Greene owes much to his boyhood reading, second class authors whose form – adventurous stories – he adopted but in a reverse way. His heroes are all but brave, sinless characters. Main influence was, of course, Conrad and his adventurous stories with moral message. It is not without interest that another writer of adventurous literature, R.L. Stevenson, was his mother’s uncle. Main Greene’s achievement was that he succeeded in
endowing a rather ‘inferior’ genre of an adventure story or a thriller with both a psychological and spiritual depth.

But, of course, the main influence and inspiration for Greene were the above mentioned authors of French Catholic revival Leon Bloy, Charles Peguy and Georges Bernanos.

1.2 French Catholic writers
If Greene found in Newman basis for understanding the faith, in French Catholic literary revival he found theological topics for drama of his Catholic cycle novels.

The Catholic literary revival emerged in the 1870s and 1880s as a reaction to the political anticlericalism and the intellectual positivism prevalent in French society. Artists and intellectuals found in Catholicism a mystical, romantic defence against the reign of science. At the same time they denounced the bourgeois Christianity that collaborated too easily with capitalist society. That is why they formulated Catholic ways of thinking that took on a negative, dialectical methodology, often, as Bosco sees it, rivalling their non-Christian contemporaries in cynicism and pessimism. Catholicism was never depicted as triumphant, epistemological certainty or morally uplifting drama; rather, it was described in the middle of fallen humanity, a place of constant struggle. Catholic ways of seeing and valuing were engaged to transform the way in which one lives in that world. Greene was familiar with many of these French novelists and his Collected essays contains substantial articles on Leon Bloy, Charles Peguy, Georges Bernanos and Francois Mauriac.

Leon Bloy was perhaps the most impressive writer of the Catholic revival. His novels convey the wretchedness and despair of sinful heroes and heroines who are assaulted by injustices of life. His works praise poverty as the only legitimate imitation of Christ, and it sees in the mystery of human pain and suffering the image of God’s divine pain.

Greene admired his honesty and self-knowledge, yet he was highly critical of his literary talent:

"One reads him not for his characters, who are pointed only deformity-deep, not for his story, but for the occasional flashes of his poetic sense"\(^\text{14}\)

Greene used one such poetic motto from Bloy as his epigraph for The End of the Affair.

\(^{14}\) Greene, Graham. Collected essays, p.103, 104
“Man has places in his heart which do not exist, and into them enters suffering in order that they may have existence.”

Charles Peguy was influential in developing two important themes: ‘the sinner as the heart of Christianity’ and the idea of ‘voluntary damnation’ as a reflection of Christ’s divine substitution on the cross. Greene’s homage to him can be found in the last pages of *Brighton Rock*, when Rose goes to a priest for confession. She regrets not committing the suicide to join Pinkie in his death and damnation. The priest tells her to comfort her:

“There was a man, a Frenchman, you wouldn’t know about him, my child, who had the same idea as you. He was a good man, a holy man, and he lived in sin all through his life, because he couldn’t bear the idea that any soul could suffer damnation … This man decided that if any soul was going to be damned, he would be damned too. He never took the sacraments, he never married his wife in church. I don’t know my child, but some people think he was a saint.” *(BR, p.246)*

Also Greene’s epigraph for *The Heart of the Matter* is Peguy’s sanctified sinner at the heart of Christianity.

The theme of voluntary damnation was frequent as well. It is suggested in Rose’s wish to join Pinkie in suicide in *Brighton Rock* and embodied in *The power and the Glory* when the whiskey priest prays for his illegitimate daughter:

“O God, give me any kind of death – without contrition, in a state of sin – only save this child.” *(PG, p.82)*

Voluntary damnation becomes more than just a prayer in *The Heart of the Matter* and *The End of the Affair*. In the former Scobie actually carries out the challenge issued by Peguy, deliberately damning himself for the sake of others; in the latter, Sarah struggles with the irony that winning her wager with God makes her life, separated from her lover, miserable. Both dramatic situations depend on this doctrine of substituting oneself for the sake of the other, a participation in Christ’s mystical substitution on the cross, whereby Christ willingly takes the place of sinful humanity.

Greene claims that Georges Bernanos, like Bloy and Peguy before him, denounced the deformity of Christianity into respectable and genteel mediocrity and protested in his works against the collaboration of the French Church hierarchy with the rich and powerful.
As a result, his protagonists are often saint-heroes whose virtues lie in not in super heroic, conventional saintliness but in their human frailty.

Greene most admired Bernano’s portrayal of personified evil. About one of his works, *Under the Sun of Satan*, where Satan appeared as a character, Greene writes that

“This is surely one of the great scenes in literature which suddenly enlarge the whole scope of fiction and like new discoveries in science alter the future and correct the past. Never again will it be possible to write off the infantile devils of Doctor Faustus with their fire-crackers and conjuring tricks.”  

Greene’s attention to the reality of evil at work in the world and his use of a theological scapegoat show great thematic kinship to Bernano’s works.

From all the French Catholic authors of this period, it was Francois Mauriac who was the most influential on Greene’s artistic development. Greene’s respect for Mauriac extended to a lifelong friendship. He was personally responsible for translation of all Mauriac’s books into English and Mauriac was always grateful to Greene for extending his readership into English speaking world, which, as he thought, was an important factor leading to his winning the Nobel Prize for literature in 1952.

There are notable biographical and textual similarities between them. They both wrote about their ‘lost childhood’ as the source of their vocations as artists, they both went through a religious crisis or conversion early in their adult life and they both grounded their writing on a respect for human individuality, mystery and spiritual dimension of their characters. Mauriac himself claimed that his faith was rooted in Catholic Jansenism which emphasizes a moral code and discipline, the reality of sin, guilt and the potential dangers of worldly pleasures.

> Greene, Graham. *Collected Essays*, p.96

> Jansenism was a branch of Catholic thought which arose in the frame of the Counter-Reformation and the aftermaths of the Council of Trent (1545-1563). It emphasized original sin, human depravity, the necessity of divine grace, and predestination. Originating in the writings of the Dutch theologian Cornelius Otto Jansen, Jansenism formed a distinct movement within the Roman Catholic Church from the 16th to 18th centuries, which found its most important stronghold in the Parisian convent of Port-Royal, haven of many important theologians and writers (Antoine Arnauld, Pierre Nicole, Blaise Pascal, Jean Racine, etc.) The term itself was coined by its Jesuit opponents, who accused them of being close to Calvinists, as Jansenists self-identified as rigorous followers of Augustinism. Although several propositions supported by Jansenists, in particular concerning the relationship between human’s free will and the “efficacious grace,” were condemned by the Pope, and the movement thus considered as heretical, Jansenism in itself was never condemned as heretical by the Roman Catholic Church. source: Wikipedia
Greene admired him and found in his personality support for his own understanding of the art of fiction. Greene claimed that Mauriac was important to the English reader because “he belongs to the company of the great traditional novelists: he is a writer for whom the visible world has not ceased to exist, whose characters have the solidity and importance of men with souls to save or lose, and a writer who claims the traditional and essential right of a novelist to comment, to express his views.” As to his craft, his characters “exist with extraordinary physical completeness,” such that we can “wipe out the whole progression of events and we would be left still with the characters in a way I can compare with no other novelist.” Plot is used “not to change characters ... but to reveal characters-reveal them gradually with an incomparable subtlety. His moral and religious insight is the reverse of the obvious: you will seldom find the easy false assumption, the stock figure in M. Mauriac.”

But Greene’s theological ‘given’ is different. He is not a Jansenist, although many critics of the period labelled him as being one. Beside that, he was also found to be a Manicheist, because some of his plots indicate that he believed in substantial existence of evil.

Such characters as Pinkie or devilish Doctor Fischer of his later novel actually seem to be perfect impersonations of sheer evil.

Although Greene’s starting point – the fallen state of humanity, is the same as in Jansenism, but unlike the novels of his French Catholic contemporaries, Greene’s stories do not end in pessimism. As I have already mentioned, he is an optimist. His books portray characters that accept their fate as inevitably linked to a fallen world, but who try to fight with it and make it into the new fate – a destiny. The characters do not flee the world or see a faith as an escape; they come to discover grace in the realm of their finite and often desperate lives.

Greene absorbed from French literary movement the basic elements of a Catholic theological aesthetic and used them in his own literary expression. He shares with these

17 Greene, Graham. _Collected essays_. p.97
18 Manichaeanism was one of the major Gnostic religions, originating in Sassanid Persia. A key belief in Manichaeanism is that there is no omnipotent good power. This addresses a theoretical part of the problem of evil by denying the infinite perfection of God and postulating two equal and opposite powers. The human person is seen as a battleground for these powers: the good part is the soul, which is composed of light, and the bad part is the body, composed of dark earth. The soul defines the person and is incorruptible, but it is under the domination of a foreign power, which addressed the practical part of the problem of evil. Humans are said to be able to be saved from this power (matter) if they come to know who they are and identify themselves with their soul.
authors the theological preference for the prodigal and social outcast to express the principle that Christ came to save ‘that which was lost.’ French fiction concerned with ‘betrayal of the spirit by the flesh,’ Greene’s awareness of betrayal was embodied more in the actions and deeds of the adventure novel.

Greene’s heroes are usually stimulated by moral choice and physical action. But unlike his French counterparts, it is not the protest against emptiness of bourgeois European life that Greene emphasizes in his Catholic novels; rather, it is the horror, the ugliness, an the violence of life in oppressed and dehumanized situations. Whether the gang wars of Brighton, the poverty of Mexico, the corruption of Sierra Leone, or the blitz of London the external horrors of life are startlingly depicted. These novels continue the theological perspective of the Catholic literary revival, but always in terms that gives credit to Greene’s taste for melodrama and action.
2. Unheroic heroes

In this section of my thesis I will look more closely at the main characters of the novels and motives which are so typical for Greene’s writing. There are some common types which can be traced in many of them. Firstly I will examine the motive religiosity and of lost childhood in its typical protagonist Pinkie, the ‘holy’ gangster from *Brighton Rock*. As I have already mentioned above, childhood is for Greene the most important period of life and spiritual and emotional deprivation in young age is a source of evil in some of his mutilated characters.

Another pervasive theme is a motive of a fatherhood in all his disguises – both biological and spiritual sense. None of his heroes has a happy, fulfilling family life, none is a good father to his children, if they have any. Instead they are involved in a series of unhappy relationships, frequently with married women, and often they are frequent visitors of brothels. Again, there is some parallel with writer’s life. Although he was reluctant to speak about it, after the war he separated from his wife Vivien and went through numerous affairs.

Then there is the motive of pursuit which is characteristic especially for his ‘Catholic cycle’. His men, because women appear in his novel only as side characters, with the exception of Sarah from *The End of an Affair*, are repeatedly hunted either by other people, by their consciousness or even by God himself, as Bendrix, the central character of the same novel.

Sex is another topic big topic. Sexuality is almost never depicted as something positive which brings his heroes happiness. On the contrary, it is the source of remorse, misery or reproach. It also an interesting fact that nearly all his heroes are in some way physically disabled or feel physically inferior.

To sum it up, Greene’s characters are a group of really desperate people.

As I said, for me, Greene is a master of paradoxes and all his heroes, or anti-heroes, have a counterpart and the confrontation between them enables Greene to make his point.

In *Brighton Rock* it is Ida Arnold versus Pinkie and Rose, in *Power and the Glory* whisky priest and lieutenant, in *Heart of the Matter* Scobie and devilish Syrian merchant Yusef, etc.

Let us move on to the first topic – the lost childhood.
2.1 Pinkie or the lost child

*The Brighton Rock* was the first of Greene’s novels which had a clear success. It marks the beginning of that phase of Greene’s work in which he clearly presents himself as a Roman Catholic novelist. In this section I will try to analyze, beside religiosity, another noteworthy aspect which is characteristic for Greene’s first works – his preoccupation with the theme of lost childhood. The aspect of pursuit, also typical for this novel I will analyze later.

First, let us sum up the story.

There are three main characters in the book: Pinkie Brown seventeen-year old small-time gangster, his ‘wife,’ waitress Rose, and Ida Arnold, real counterpart of them both who pursues Pinkie relentlessly throughout the novel.

The action takes place in a sea resort Brighton in 1930s and focuses on the depiction of evil which is concentrated in the character of the boy Pinkie Brown.

Pinkie, brought up in the slums of Brighton, is evil possessed youngster who takes revenge on the whole world for his traumatic childhood memories. Similarly traumatic memories are the main stimulus of fanatical lieutenant, the central character of the following novel, *The Power and the Glory*, who shares with Pinkie other characteristics, too.

Pinkie, as most of Greene’s characters, he is a man-without-a-father because he despises his own biological one. In fact, we do not know anything about his father or his family, only that Pinkie was traumatized by weekly sexual intercourses which his parents had enjoyed in a room which he shared with them. This experience makes him loathe sex.

Pinkie’s genuine, spiritual father is Kite, a boss of one of a racketeer gang which terrorises the local bookmakers. After Kite’s murder, Pinkie takes up his place and takes revenge for his death by killing Hale, a shabby journalist, who comes to Brighton on assignment to anonymously distribute cards for a newspaper competition (a variant of ‘Lobby Lud’ in which the name of the person to be found is ‘Kolley Kibber’).

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19*Lobby Lud* was a fictional character invented in August 1927 by the Westminster Gazette, a British newspaper, now out of print. The name derives from the telegraphic address of the newspaper (“Lobby, Ludgate”). Anonymous employees of the newspaper would visit seaside resorts. The newspaper would print details of the town, a description of the appearance of that day’s ‘Lobby Lud’, and a particular pass phrase. Anyone carrying a copy of the newspaper could challenge ‘Lobby Lud’ with the appropriate phrase, and receive the sum of money.
Hale must have been somehow involved in Kite’s murder but the author does not specify this information any more. The reader only gets a hint when Hale wonders: “Razor blades…. the thin wound and the sharp pain. That was how Kite was killed.” (BR, p. 10) “… it was at a station that Colleoni’s mob had killed Kite.” (BR, p. 12)

Hale must die but his sudden death arouses suspicion of his incidental acquaintance, Ida Arnold. She feels that something unjust happened to Hale and decides to find out what. Ida has adopted the role of pursuer and she is excited with the idea: “It’s going to be fun, it’s going to be exciting, it’s going to be a bit of life …” (BR, p. 55)

She substitutes the work of police, which is inactive throughout the novel, and which regards the case closed. Nevertheless, she uses the fear of the police as a means of threat against the Boy to hunt him down. Gradual disclosures and growing fear drive Pinkie, in his effort to save himself, to other crimes: Pinkie marries Rose, a waitress in the pub, who can disclose the gang’s alibi about Hale’s whereabouts at the time he was killed, in order to prevent her from witnessing against him. In fact, this marriage was not necessary, because Rose is absolutely devoted to Pinkie with all the passion of a young plain girl who has been noticed by someone for the first time in her life. Anyway, the circle around Pinkie is closing: Ida, seeing the police indifference, intensifies her investigation and other gang members are getting scared and insecure when they see Pinkie’s inexperience. Pinkie tries to find security in other murders.

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After the demise of the Gazette in 1928 the competition continued in the Daily News, which became the News Chronicle from 1930, in turn being absorbed into the Daily Mail in 1960. Other newspapers such as the Daily Mirror ran similar schemes — “You are (name) and I claim my five pounds”, the most well-known challenge phrase, seems to date from a Daily Mail version which ran after the Second World War.

A special train service, the ‘Lobby Lud Express’, was run to take Londoners to the resorts Lobby visited. Holidaymakers were less likely to buy a newspaper, and since claimants for the prize had to have a copy of the newspaper, the newspaper proprietors hoped the prizes would increase circulation. Another motive was to maintain circulation levels and keep people in the habit of buying the paper while they were on holiday. Some towns and large factories used to leave on ‘holiday fortnights’ (called ‘wakes weeks’ in the north of England); the town or works would all decamp at the same time. Circulation could drop considerably in the summer.

In 1983 an original ‘Lobby Lud’ — William Chinn — was rediscovered aged ninety-one and living in Cardiff.

The Daily Mirror’s ‘Chalkie White’ continues to visit resorts, and the idea has been taken up by local radio stations and other media (often offering lesser prizes). Chalkie White is the name of Andy Capp’s closest friend in a long-running Daily Mirror cartoon strip. source: Wikipedia
Pinkie feels trapped by Rose’s love. Her feelings contradict to his worldview ‘Credo in unum Satunum’\(^{20}\) (BR, p. 220); he is not capable love neither give nor accept, in fact, he is becoming scared of her blind affection. He knows that if Rose sometime awakens from her infatuation and realises that he does not love her, the love of an impulsive girl can easily turn into equally passionate hatred and he will be in big trouble: “It occurred to him suddenly that she might even get up and leave him, go back to Snow’s with her secret for the first comer who questioned her.” (BR, p. 120). He decides to get rid of her – he tries to persuade her to commit suicide together. He intends, of course, only to pretend. But his plan is marred by his persistent pursuer, Ida, who comes in time and rescues Rose. 

The story of three central characters ends with Pinkie’s, in fact involuntary, suicide, when he, in a fit of hysterical fear of being caught, jumps into the river; and with the triumph of the worldly justice of his pursuer Ida and an implied exasperation expecting Rose when she hears Pinkie’s voice from the record saying the words of hatred instead of love.

I think there are three fundamental themes in Brighton Rock. As I said above it is the first of so called Catholic novels which deal with the specific religious problem – the greatness and mystery of the mercy of God, second theme is a pursuit and third the lost child. These problems find their personification in the character of Pinkie, other ones, both Ida and Rose, are subordinate and depended on him.

Before mentioning the latter theme let us examine the religious motive.

You can distinguish three parallel problems in the novel: basically, it is a detective story with a deeper message due to the religious dimension and the third problem arises from the logic of the characters, from Greene’s knowledge of the deep influence of childhood memories on our deeds.

As is typical with Greene, Pinkie is a small-time failure, pitifully aware of his psychological and sexual immaturity. We do not know to what extend this inclination to evil was innate, but for Greene Pinkie is the impersonation of sheer evil. Perhaps while creating the character he had on his mind his school bully Carter whom he dreaded during his school years at Berhamsted. It was because of this character that he was accused of being a Manicheist.

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\(^{20}\) Latin for ‘I believe in one Satan’ – an obviously blasphemous hint to ‘Credo in unum Deo.’
The author gives to Pinkie’s hatred and his effort to take revenge on the world a religious undertone. Pinkie is a Catholic but what is left of his Catholicism are fractions of Latin prayers and he often resorts to theological argumentation and terminology at the most incongruous moments (BR, p. 144, 159, 158, 222). He sang in the choir ‘’Why, I was in a choir once,’ the boy confided and suddenly he began to sing softly in his spoilt boy’s voice: ‘‘Agnus dei qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem’. In his voice a whole lost world moved – the lighted corner below the organ, the smell of incense and laundered surplices, and the music. Music – it didn’t matter what music – Agnus dei, lovely to look at, beautiful to hold, the starling on our walks, credo in unum Dominum – any music moved him, speaking of things he didn’t understand.” (BR, p.66)

Pinkie longs for the tiny confessional box and the priest’s voice as a means of going home and making peace (BR, 143-144) At the height of his misery he actually admits that he had once belonged to the Church: “When I was a kid, I swore I’d be a priest”. (BR, p. 219) and his abstinence from alcohol, cigarettes and sweets (BR, p. 24, 62, 182), his celibacy (BR, p.6, 62, 115) and his religious passion (BR, p. 4,182) give him a priest-like air of rigour not unlike that of the lieutenant in The Power and the Glory, ruthless pursuer of whisky priest, whose fanaticism is determined also by his traumatic childhood.

More about lieutenant in chapter about the motive of pursuit.

But Pinkie’s deep-rooted religiousness serves to magnify rather than extenuate the atrocity of his fall. He recalls the fragmented prayers which surface in his mind as an ironical accompaniment to the most brutal, cruel acts: when he takes the prize-doll believing himself to be holding the mother of God by hair (BR, p.23), when he betrays Spicer to the rival gang and acts as a Judas figure: “He climbed the stairs humming softly: ‘Agnus dei qui tollis peccata mundi…’” (BR, p.129), the group of Jews stood in a bunch waiting... A passion of cruelty stirred in his belly. “He put up his hand and patted Spicer on the back.” (BR, p. 140) After killing him drops the cross-shaped railing over his body (BR, p.163), thus clothing his act in the metaphysical context of Judas’ betrayal and crucifixion. (BR, p.129). Flagrantly sacrilegious acts are entirely deliberate, for Pinkie consciously regards himself as the devil’s disciple: “‘It’s not what you do’, the Boy said,’ it’s what you think’. He boasted: ‘It’s the blood. Perhaps when they christened me the holy water did not take. I never howled the devil out.’” (BR, p.169) Pinkie is thus defined by the narrator in an ironic
variation on Wordsworth: “He trailed the clouds of his own glory after him: hell lay about him in his infancy” (BR, p.88)

Evil is mentioned as a contradiction to Good but throughout the novel the Good is virtually not present. These considerations result in the fact that Pinkie is not alive enough. The weak points are obvious: Pinkie is a construct, an allegory that we understand only with our intellect; some spots, especially dialogues in the first half seem improbable. Especially sophisticated discussions about religion led by two uneducated teenagers such as Pinkie and Rose, are very unlikely.

I think Greene, in character of Pinkie, wants to analyse his thesis that even the deadliest sins can find the God’s mercy and even such a distorted faith as Pinkie’s leads to mercy.

As Sharrock argues in his study, Rose is not a sufficient counterpoint to Pinkie, and probably it was not the author’s intention. She is not a holy sinner, as Pinkie, but rather a holy fool, or one on the way to become one by life of extreme and abject service.

Greene returns to the type in Clara in The Honorary Consul, and she, as well as offering sacrificial devotion, is to some extent a sinner too because she is a prostitute.

Rose is the only one who loves Pinkie. But the affection is one-sided. Pinkie deeply hates her. One of the reasons Pinkie dislikes Rose is that she reminds him of his loathed childhood. He is rough with her because he is afraid of her. Always in his mind is “the frightening weekly exercise of his parents which he watched from his single bed.” (BR, p.124). Woman is seen as a devourer, interested only in getting him in bed.

It is only logical that a plain girl, who grew up in destitution, can fall with all her passion in love with the first man who takes notice of her even if only superficially and neglectfully. Surely she can sacrifice her hitherto existing support, the faith, and become a blind instrument in the hands of her partner who has power over her even only because he does not love her.

Catholic faith is the only thing they have in common. But the stylisation of them according to this idea makes them, I think, sometimes psychologically unpersuasive. It is most

\[\text{21} \text{ compare: Wordsworth, Ode: Intimations of Immortality} \]
\[\ldots\ldots\text{But trailing clouds of glory do we come} \]
\[\text{From God, who is our home: Heaven lies about us in our infancy!} \]

\[\text{22} \text{ Sharrock, Roger. Saints, Sinners and Comedians: The Novels of Graham Greene. New York: University of Notre-Dame Press.} \]

\[\text{23} \text{ According to Christian ideas, "foolishness" includes consistent rejection of worldly cares and imitating Christ, who endured mockery and humiliation from the crowd.} \]
obvious when Rose and Pinkie confront their viewpoints as Catholics with atheist stances that are incorporated in Ida Arnold.

The comparison of the value system, the worlds of believers and unbelievers is quite obvious. Pinkie Brown, a murderer, is a believing Catholic for whom ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’ are metaphysical entities, as opposed to the value system so vigorously upheld by Ida Arnold, where ‘Right’ and ‘Wrong’ are merely the derivative products of a social code of convention and ethics.

This accessible woman, enjoying life without any problems, constitutes in Greene’s novel the mundane, atheistic kind that understands only the worldly justice, and for her there is not any other, as simple fair-play. She lives in the world of where things are either right or wrong and has no sense for Good or Evil, concepts according to which her adversaries, Pinkie and Rose, live.

Pinkie can make nothing of the common sense of fair playing Ida, the big-breasted barmaid who hunts him; nor can his girl Rose. Rose says: „I’d rather burn like you than be like her... She’s ignorant.“ (BR, p. 56) They both belong to those who ‘know’ and stand in contrast to those who ‘know nothing’: “These atheists, they don’t know nothing.” (BR, p. 66) ”But you can see, she (Ida) doesn’t believe a thing...she doesn’t know what a mortal sin is.”(BR, p.150) “She’s ignorant.”(BR, p. 151)

I think, being myself a non-believer, that this feeling is quite common with certain believers who, despite the fact that they very often do not know much about theology, think they have a deeper insight into what is sin and the world order. As if the mere fact that Pinkie is a Catholic gave him some special insight, as if he were a member of some ‘club of the damned’ who knows what a real sin is, the informed sinner, a damned poet, Baudelairean figure with his burden of bitter knowledge versus the blind and confident world...

Ida in her turn regards the sense of sin and the belief in repentance which Rose and Pinkie share as simply monstrous. “That’s just religion. It’s the world we got to deal with.” (BR, p. 67). For Ida death and life are contradictions and distinct categories because there is no

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24 Charles Pierre Baudelaire (April 9, 1821 - August 31, 1867) was an influential nineteenth century French poet, critic and acclaimed translator.
eternity, only the clear limited sense of a present world in which human beings enjoy that life, pursue happiness, and postpone death.

Ida Arnold is a little bit schematized representative of an uncomplicated, animalistic and, unfortunately partially because of that, satisfied attitude to life. She is a literary adaptation of a prototype of a good-natured ignorance and mediocrity: “...she belonged to the great middle law-abiding class, her amusements were their amusements, her superstitions their superstitions .... she had no more love for anyone than they had” (BR, p. 104) She impersonates peace and satisfied enjoyment of life in this world. In this novel she is persistent, relentless and in the end victorious pursuer in the name of fair play.

I have a strong feeling that Greene does not like her, that he trivialises her. His sympathies are, as I feel it, with the ‘holy sinner’ Pinkie which is, morally, quite unbearable.

Erdinast-Vulcan in her analysis impressively notices philological means Greene employs to describe, and in fact ridicule, Ida. He, as a master of language, stresses the incompatibility between sanctity and goodness by oxymoron technique in which adjective denies all values to the nouns and thus negates Ida’s positive attitudes. He writes then about her ‘remorseless optimism’ or ‘merciless compassion’, words which, in fact, are exclusive and negate themselves, only to stress her remoteness from religious virtues and in this way, actually, to deny her good qualities.

Erdinast-Vulcan also points out that another way to stress the disparity between these two worlds, religious and mundane, is to juxtapose two distinct narrative modes – the detective story and the tragedy – reflecting the incompatibility of these two levels of reality, the ethical and the theological.

I would say that this ostensible distinction, which grants Pinkie a priori supremacy over Ida Arnold, is indeed entirely unacceptable by any ordinary ethical code. And that is what I find most disturbing about Greene’s attitude. As Erdinast-Vulcan concludes, and I agree with her, the message of the book is that, in fact, any Catholic is superior to any Protestant or agnostic, not by virtue, but in his knowledge of the nature of life; good and evil are seen as supernatural categories reaching far beyond humanist right or wrong, and that the

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26 An oxymoron (plural oxymorons or, more rarely, oxymora) is a figure of speech that combines two normally contradictory terms. Oxymoron is a loanword from Greek oxy („sharp“ or „pointed“) and moros („dull“). Thus the word oxymoron is, by definition, an oxymoron.
abandoned Pinkie is set up to teach a proper theological view of reality, not only to Ida but to all people in England.

Greene thus in the character of Pinkie explores the concept of the holy sinner and his role which he first encounter in Dostoevski. As I mentioned before, the concept was further studied and developed in France by Leon Bloy and Georges Bernanos.

As Sharrock points out, Pinkie’s function as the worst of sinners who is therefore the most interesting to God is implicit in the whole drive of the Gospel: ‘I come not to bring the righteous but sinners to repentance’ and the whole plot can be read as a parable, e.g. when Ida is interrogating Cubitt he denies Pinkie thrice as Peter does Christ: ‘‘I’ve seen you with him,’ she lied (BR, p. 123) and a cock crows. This biblical cock-crowing is to be heard again in the following novels as well.

Erdinast-Vulcan also notices an interesting fact, that Greene has a habit of giving colour names like his own to some of his important characters; the Boy introduces himself to Colleoni as Mr P. Brown; and another loser, a comic, not a tragic one, is called Brown in The Comedians. Even names Pinkie and Rose indicate that the two belong together. This teasing with proper names declares the author’s personal involvement with the character, and by the act of naming with the names of primary colours it stresses at once the unique individuality of the person in his place in the spectrum.

As I had mentioned before, Pinkie’s hatred is rooted in his traumatic childhood. It makes his crimes more understandable and vivid, but not acceptable. Pinkie bears the stigma of a deprived childhood in the wretched slums of Kemp Town; he is divided not only from decent people but from the big gangster Colleoni by the line which separates poverty from the riches: other people are better dressed and better washed than he is. However, scars of his childhood are never used as a simple excuse for his conduct.

Description of Pinkie as an incorporation if evil, a devil in fact, would not have had the same emotive power without the opposite view of Pinkie as a pitiable lost child, which often emerges from behind the satanic facade. Pinkie sees himself as a Satan, but beside being frightening, he can be pathetic as well. He is referred to as ‘the Boy’ and patronized

\[\text{27 see Luke 5:32, 'I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.'}\]

\[\text{28 e.g. The Power and the Glory, p. 87}\]
by Colleoni, and by the waitress at the café. The police officer treats him like a child: "You’re too young to run a racket if you ask me." (BR, p. 43) Dallow and Cubitt as older men tease him over his attempt on Spicer’s girl and his marriage; the attendant at the shooting-gallery insults him when he asks for more time and tells him he is not providing any phoney alibis.

Pinkie’s extreme youth appears, at first, as yet another daemonic attribute; the older members of his gang are ‘like children before his ageless eyes’ (BR, p.26), and his ‘young ancient poker face’ remains sealed when the others are literally nauseated by their own acts (BR, p.29). His authority over his gang is absolute and his self-control unshakeable. Even his cruelty seems to be congruent with his youth: “He felt no pity at all, he was not old enough for pity” (BR, p.124)

The turning point his reversion to real childhood is marked by his betrayal of Spicer. When Pinkie finds himself in the role of the victim his loses his air of devilry: “Pain happened to him: and he was filled with horror and astonishment as if one of the bullied brats at school had stabbed first with the divider’s” (BR, p.14)

Pinkie acts as any one of his own hopeless victims would: he weeps, prays, begs, and finally runs for his life. From this point onwards, he is gradually deprived of his hardened shell and exposed as a frightened child. When Pinkie comes to Rose for help, he lets her see his ‘smooth, scarred adolescent face’ (BR, p. 147), and cannot find the energy to protest when he is treated by the manageress as “the other child” (BR, p.151). Later on, when he has been cornered into a promise of marriage, he is so terrified of the adult game that he loses his aura of authority and control and looks at Prewit as if he was prepared to accept advice from a man so much older (BR, p.165)

While Pinkie is gradually divested of his daemonic armour and exposed as a child-figure, Rose develops from a pathetic child into a mother figure. Unlike Pinkie, who is horrified by the thought of becoming a father, she takes her pregnancy as blessing. She is absolutely loyal to her husband, who hates her, and is prepared to be condemned with Pinkie and commit what she regards a mortal sin. Rose is not corrupted by loss of ignorance or innocence. In a typical Greenian paradox she becomes a saintly figure precisely because she chooses to align herself with the damned (BR, p.253) Rose’s last confrontation with
Ida brings out the abysmal difference between the cheerful, confident mother-like woman and the shabby child who stands up to her. Ida, the artificial, perfumed violet, to use the simile employed by Erdinast-Vulcan, is defeated by the Golden Rose (BR, p.260). Rose’s unconditional love for Pinkie and her willingness to sacrifice her life and soul for this daemonic child, makes her in fact the prototype of Greene’s father-figure in the novels which follow The Brighton Rock.

2.2 Fathers and fatherhood
The concept of fatherhood is common thread which pervades most Greene’s novels in its manifold implications. In this part of my thesis I will focus on it and I will compare some of his main representatives.

Fatherhood functions in Greene’s work on three interactive levels of reference.

The first and most obvious is to the biological father, the man who has physically begotten a child. None of the protagonists discussed here is a father of a family in literal sense of the word.

The whisky priest in Power and the Glory has fathered an illegitimate child; Scobie in Heart of the Matter has lost his only daughter; Brown in Comedians is himself an illegitimate son, deprived from childhood of any family of his own; Doctor Plarr in The Honorary Consul is the probable father of the unborn baby of his mistress. And I must not forget Pinkie. Rose also bears a child whom he passionately loathes.

The second relates to the metaphorical ‘father’ – the priest. In religion a priest is regarded to be a father in a sense more real than the biological parent. Unlike biological one, it is a very frequent type in Greene’s novels. In fact, priests and priest figures are the most common characters in Greenland – obviously the whisky priest in The power and the Glory, but also Scobie, Doctor Maggiot and Brown in Comedians, Leon and Doctor Plarr in Honorary Consul and even Pinkie, the perverted anti-Christ, they all bear characteristics which make them priest-like.

The third level of fatherhood relates to God, the Father in Heaven. This concept is typical for Greene’s Catholic novels. God as a father who cares but also reprimands, who acts as a ‘Hound of Heaven’, who pursuits his people with His grace and mercy. This Judeo-Christian concept arises from deeply rooted need for metaphysical framework serving as an
ideal reflection of human relationships. When the ultimate source of authority, the patriarchal giver of Law, is beyond man, the validity of the moral code is unshakeable; when the ultimate source of grace, pity and love is beyond human realities, there is always hope.

How does Greene understand the term ‘father’? What makes fathers out of his heroes?

Fatherhood in Greene’s world is not a biological fact, but a state of mind, the attitude of a man towards his fellow creatures. For Greene, the father is a man who takes responsibility for the lives of others, who is ultimately prepared to sacrifice himself for those who appear to be too innocent or helpless to survive on their own. The acceptance of fatherhood usually, at least in his Catholic novels, entails a spiritual crisis, a revision of the relationship between the Father in Heaven and the role of father on Earth. When the metaphysical super-structure breaks down, this relationship becomes more painful and complex: then the father on earth has no Father in heaven, his burden of responsibility is almost too heavy to bear.

In fact, Greene reverses the Christian archetype of the self-sacrifice of the Son into an archetype of the self-sacrifice of the Father as I will show in whisky priest and Scobie.

In the most common meaning of the word, father is a man who begets a child. It is not a very numerous group. As I have already mentioned, there is whisky-priest, Scobie, Plarr and Pinkie. But Plarr and Pinkie fit into this group only nominally because they do not meet the other criteria which make a man father. Pinkie hates and loathes his conceived child and the idea itself of becoming a father scares him. Plarr, in the end, comes to the conclusion, that Charlie Fortnum would make a much better father to the child. So, it leaves us with whisky-priest and Scobie, two biological fathers.

Whisky-priest conceived his daughter, Brigida, with his cook in a state of sin, when he was drunk. He remembers it when he sees her: “They had spent no love in her conception; just fear and despair and half a bottle of brandy and the sense of loneliness had driven him to an act which horrified him.” (PG, p. 66) As it is typical with Greene’s heroes, sex and lust brings no passion or pleasure to the participant while they indulge in it.

This typically Catholic disregard of bodily pleasures can be found in all Greene’s love scenes. Physical love-making in his novels is invariably joyless, unsatisfying and even grotesque. Pinkie is downright horrified by the act, for Scobie the strongest impression is
sweat and he sleeps with his lover from reasons quite mysterious, perhaps pity? Others, like
Bendrix and Brown, are paranoically jealous.

His protagonists do not enjoy their sins, but it is through such sinning that they
personalities grow on significance and gain knowledge of human suffering which makes
them better people and, eventually, spiritual fathers which is, with Greene, as I understand
his novels it, the ultimate peak of humanity.

I will try to outline this process of personal growth by comparison of whisky priest and
Scobie, the characters of a very similar kind.

The story of *The Power and the Glory* is set in Mexico at the time of a religious persecution
in 1920s and 1930s by revolutionary government which decided, following its model in the
Soviet Union, to uproot religion as a backward superstition by means of physical
elimination of its opponents. Priests thus have a choice either to succumb, get married and
renounce their faith, or get executed by Red shirts, which was local military militia. So the
book is a story of the last priest who escapes the authorities and against all the dangers and
his fear still remains faithful to his vocation. In the end his pursuer, idealistic lieutenant, his
counterpart throughout the story, manages to capture him and the whisky priest is executed.
The other day another priest comes. It is a symbolic resurrection of the priest in person of
another anonymous father, it is the author’s assertion of faith: the story of the priest will
continue as faith will, because, unlike the Church it is invincible.

Greene drew from his experience from the journey to Mexico in 1936 where he was sent as
a journalist to write about religious persecution. He was appalled by what he witnessed and
his anger resulted in *Lawless Roads*, a documentary manifesto. Many situations and
characters in *Power and the Glory*, which was published in 1940, are directly taken from
the book, e.g. he learned about whisky priest from an old woman who told him about a
priest who was always so drunk, that once he even baptized a boy as Brigida, probably not
incidentally the name of the priest’s illegitimate daughter in the novel. All the ordeals
which the priest goes through in the book Greene experienced on his own skin, only the
character of idealistic lieutenant is completely fictitious. There was no one like that among
corrupted Red shirts.

Let us now look at the story more closely.
As I have already mentioned, in Greene’s books there is usually an adversary of a central character and it is the conflict between them which illuminates the message of the story. In *The Power and the Glory* it is an idealistic lieutenant. Neither he nor whisky priest have name, which suggests that they represent a type, an idea. That is to say, whisky priest ‘the old’ religion, and the lieutenant is a priest of a new religion which offers to eradicate the spiritual dimension of life and replace it with a more satisfactory material existence. It is obvious which side of the conflict has author’s sympathy.

The novel is written in the best tradition of French Catholic revival. There are clear features I mentioned previously – sinner at the heart of the Church, the motive of pursuit by God, the saint without Church, etc.

Whisky priest is a complex human being. His personality develops and changes before our eyes, and gradually he gains our, or at least mine, sympathy and admiration.

At the beginning of the story, the central hero, whisky priest, is described only from outside as he is seen by the others. Author calls him ‘little man’ or the ‘hollow man’, until he proves himself worthy of a title of priest.

How does he become a priest, a father?

Erdinast-Vulcan comes up with an inspiring idea that the process of the priest’s personal development is marked by his encounters with the children. The children of the novel are the judges who decide who will win the struggle.

The first child who appears on the scene is an anonymous little boy, who has come to find a doctor or a priest and take him to the death bed of his mother. He finds our hero and thus prevents him from escape. He feels compelled to follow the child but he does so with an unwilling hatred (*PG*, p.12) and resignation.

In the next chapter we meet Luis, the little boy who represents the world of tomorrow. Luis’s life is crossed by the priest and by the lieutenant, and it is his soul that is at stake in the struggle between them.

As I mentioned, at the beginning, the central character is a rather pathetic figure, filled with fear and despair, who is only unwillingly drawn by his inner voice not to resign. There is another priest, or former priest, in the novel, Padre Jose, the one who succumbed to the

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29 It is quite a mystery, why Greene calls his central hero whisky priest – throughout the novel he only drinks wine or brandy and probably does not know the whisky at all
pressure, silenced his consciousness out of fear for his life, married his cook and accepts the governmental pension. It is a pathetic creature without any dignity, always desperately worried about his wretched life and a target of ridicule from children. At first, paradoxically, it is the lieutenant who is more of a priest-like figure: “There was something of a priest in his intent observant walk.” (PG, p.24) He is a man of integrity and dedication, his ambition is totally disinterested and he has “the dignity of an idea” (PG, p.24) He has all the attributes which we traditionally associate with the image of a God’s servant: unlike whisky priest he is celibate, ascetic, “His room is as comfortless as a prison or a monastic cell” (PG, p.24) and he is fully devoted to his mission. He feels no sympathy with “the weaknesses of the flesh” (PG, p.25).

His attitudes are moulded by his traumatic childhood memories and he is haunted by them because grew up in destitute and without love in a squalor of poor village. He deeply loves his people, especially children and is prepared to do anything for their future, even against their own will. He, however, also, like the priest, seems to be chained to his people unwillingly. (PG, p.250)

In other words, typical revolutionary, such as for example Trotsky, who at the time when Greene visited Mexico lived there in exile until he was assassinated by Stalin’s spy in 1940. The problem with such individuals is, that they love people in abstract, they do not see and are not interested in individuals and their individual destinies. When reality does not comply with their ideas they do not hesitate to massacre the very people they want to save. The lieutenant takes hostages from among the villagers and does not hesitate to execute them. “You heard what happened at Conception. I took a hostage there... and when I found that this priest had been in the neighbourhood I put the man against the nearest tree.” (PG, p. 76) His intentions, are of course, noble, but stupid villagers do not understand: “Why won’t you trust me? I don’t want any of you to die. In my eyes – can’t you understand – you are worth far more than he is. I want to give you’, he made a gesture with his hands which was valueless, because no one saw him, ‘everything.’ He said in a dull voice, ‘You. You there. I’ll take you’.” (PG, p. 77)

At the beginning it is him Luis looks up to who stands for action, vigour and dedication. As I have mentioned above, it is children who are both victims and judges in this novel. Coral, Luis and Brigida are individualized to represent all other anonymous children in this
“wasteland of despair”, to use Greenesque phrase. It is their verdict – rather than any theological or ideological justification – that really matters. It is their choice which will determine the face of the future.

The lieutenant is well aware of this struggle over the children. He feels a sad and insatiable love for them (PG, p.76), and he knows that “it was for these he was fighting. He would eliminate from their childhood everything which had made him miserable, all that was poor, superstitious and corrupt” (PG, p. 58) The lieutenant has nearly won a disciple for himself; Luis looks at the gun with an expression of devotion (PG, p.58)

But the encounter between Luis and the lieutenant does not end positively for him, he in fact loses the boy: “The lieutenant put out his hand in a gesture of affection – a touch, he did not know what to do with it. He pinched the boy’s ear and saw him flinch away with the pain” (PG, p.58) This is, as I understand it, a highly symbolic gesture. As if this motion of love which is nevertheless inflicting pain and arousing fear in the boy represented all similar revolutions which in attempt to help people improve their lives bring only pain and disruption.

The lieutenant, a model of all similar revolutionaries, for all his good intentions, his integrity and his dedication, is entirely isolated. His inability to communicate with children, his willingness to shoot hostages from those very peasants that he wants to save, are symptoms of that sterility. He knows nothing about the suffering of those people, he has not felt the worries parents have about their offspring and therefore does not recognize their need for a spiritual dimension in their lives, for a belief in a Divine Father.

The lieutenant does not believe in any spiritual reality beyond life. When the arrested priest asks him “…and what happens afterwards?” He answers, ‘Nothing. Death’s a fact. We don’t try to alter facts’” (PG, p.250) I would argue that this conviction of the lieutenant is closely related to the failure and the sterility of his love for children. It does not matter that he is a good man, as the priest realizes. He is much more isolated and alienated among his people than priest.

It seems that Greene reverses the orthodox Christian conventions. Once again, as it was the case with Pinkie in Brighten Rock celibacy or virginity are with dangerous or destructive, while sexual experience – even if immoral – is related to a better insight and understanding of other human beings.
As I mentioned, the book is a dispute between two opposite world views: materialism and religious world view. As Greene admitted, it was the only book written to the thesis. It is clear where author’s sympathy lies and in final discussion between the priest and the lieutenant he proves the destructive element of materialism because it uproots possibility of morality.

I agree that although I am not a believer, this is the role religion should play. Because if there really is nothing after death, then there is nothing to take revenge for and nothing to suffer for. According to whisky priest, and consequently to Greene, ethics without religion is not possible because the source of ethical behaviour is above and beyond human power and if we kill the god anything is possible, as examined e.g. Dostoevsky in his novels and as we experienced it throughout the twentieth century. The twentieth century saw what harm to morality was inflicted by two godless socialist regimes, National socialist and Communist. Not only in my opinion, consumerism in the West, which sees the ultimate goal of life in excessive consumption and which results in modern moral relativism, called post-modernism, is perhaps the final blow to traditional morality as we have known it and perhaps to Western culture as well.

As I said at the beginning, I am not a religious man, I cannot believe in absurdities of Christian faith, like resurrection, virgin birth, etc., but I admit, that human psyche needs something above it, some idea which transcends it, which gives our existence meaning and I agree with Kant, that God is a useful regulative idea, something we cannot say anything about whether it exists or not, but something which we should take as granted in our practical life, and behave as if there really were such entity as God, only for purely practical reasons.

As I have said, the society in which the validity of metaphysical reference is lost will sooner or later disintegrate. The process began in the twentieth century and is even accelerating in twenty-first century by embracing such pernicious ideologies like multiculturalism and feminism that corrode the very basements of our civilization.

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Whisky priest surely behaves as if there were God, in fact he knows that there is one. The novel is pervaded by deep faith. The supreme divine authority is never challenged or doubted throughout the long ordeal of the whisky priest. His faith never wavers and he never questions that authority.

However bitterly and resignedly, he never refuses the call of his duty. He is introduced as a pathetic victim of fate, a man of no substance or significance, but as a story of his pursuit unfolds, he develops and grows in stature until his death.

Paradoxically, the more he loses the external marks of his office (the breviary, the altar stone, the city suit) which have been discarded on his way, the more he becomes the real father to his people. Ironically enough, it is only now, when he no longer looks like a priest, and when he realizes that he had been a failure in his vocation, that the author calls him the priest. Now he is just a small gaunt man in torn peasant’s clothes (PG, p. 78) undistinguishable from other peasants, that even the lieutenant cannot recognize him: “‘Let me see your hands,’ he said. The priest held them up. They were hard as a labourer’s. He stared back at him, looked back at the photograph. The hollow, stubbled face of the man did not resemble the plump priest.” (PG, p. 76) The transformation is complete. He has become a man of his people.

Meeting with Brigida, brings about the ultimate realization of his guilt and unworthiness. “She has been formed by hunger into an appearance of devilry and malice beyond her age” (PG, p. 86) When she hears him cry out with grief at the news about the hostages who died for him, she laughs. Her laughter, shrill and malicious, is an echo of the laughter of the children behind the window of Padre José. It is the hostile, harsh mockery of those children who had been deprived of any hope or grace and there is only degradation and despair for them in life.

The whisky priest, unlike Padre Jose, does not succumb to the despair and the horror of his own guilt. He forces the villagers into acceptance of his authority which is entirely independent of his personal worth: ”He said: ‘What am I saying now? It’s not what you want or what I want.’ He continued sharply, with authority: ‘I will sleep now.... you can wake me an hour before dawn... half an hour to hear your confessions... then Mass, and I will be gone’.”(PG, p. 64)
His child appears to reflect the ugliness of his sin, but he cannot help loving her and his love for this ugly, prematurely corrupt child determines his way for him. He makes a wager with God, the motive which appears in other books and also plays decisive role: “O God give me any kind of death – without contrition, in a state of sin – only save this child.” (PG, p. 82)

Ironically, it is precisely because he has fathered a child, that the priest can be a father to his people. He knows their suffering as one of them, he shares their vulnerability, and he is bound to them by a deep, humble commitment.

The lieutenant, his rival, is a man who loves humanity in the abstract, and shoots innocent hostages on his way to utopia, but whisky-priest is, first and foremost, a father, a man who is committed by a bond of love and responsibility to other human beings.

The final scene is a symbolical resurrection of the priest in person of another anonymous father, is the author’s assertion of faith: the story of the priest will continue as faith will.

As Bosco31 reminds us, there are manifold Biblical symbols and allegories in the novel, but these are not mere artistic devices – they are related to the viewpoint of the priest for whom this world, the world of objects and things, is only a reflection of the spiritual reality beyond it. There are obvious and clear analogies of the plot as an imitation of the Passion of Christ. The vulgar betrayer (who is recognized immediately as Judas by the priest himself); when he thinks of the half-caste, he realizes that “Christ had died for this man, too” (PG, p. 91). This realization enables him to help the man and suffer for him, as Christ had done for his Judas.

Then there is analogy between the temptation to escape to Las Casas and Christ’s temptation in desert, another can be the refusal of Padre Jose to hide the priest which remind us of Peter’s denial and other parallels. Lieutenant is Pilate and the arrival of the new priest is similar to resurrection of Christ.

But priest is far from a saintly figure at the beginning of the novel, and even when he dies as a martyr he remains entirely human. He realizes the grotesque disproportion between the model, Christ, and himself, a shabby, little man.

For whisky priest death is not the end; he lived for others and did something to the people he had met. His death is a victory, and despite the fact that he lost his life he has eventually, or the idea he stood for, won.

2.3 Scobie or the childless father

Title of this chapter is taken from a revealing study by Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan. I am greatly indebted to her for many ideas which I used in this section of my thesis and generally in chapters dealing with the aspect of fatherhood. However, I hope I have come up with some ideas which are originally mine.

There is one episode in *The Power and the Glory* which I consider a preview to *The Heart of the Matter*. The whisky priest meets an Indian woman with her dead child. The woman refuses to let him bury the child. “It occurred to him that she wanted her child buried near a church or perhaps only taken to the altar, so that he might be touched by feet of a Christ.”(*PG*, p.206) The woman follows the priest across the barren mountains, carrying her dead child, until they reached the grove of crosses, where she lays down the body. “Did she expect the miracle? And if she did, why should it not be granted her? The priest wondered. Faith, one was told, could move mountains, and here was faith – faith in the spittle that healed the blind man and the voice that raised the dead.. The priest found himself watching the child for some movement. When none came, it was as if God had missed an opportunity” (*PG*, p.155).

It is this miracle which does not occur which hovers above the entire scene in *The Power and the Glory*. In both novels, that feeling grows out of the unrelieved suffering of children when God, the divine Father, seems to have failed them. The whisky priest is almost constantly aware of a Divine Being to which he is committed to, and it is only at the grave of the Indian child that he feels a momentary wavering of his conviction.

*In The Heart of the Matter*, however, the protagonist’s awareness of his loneliness dominates the entire action and becomes the theme of the novel. Sense of disappointment, this particular feeling dominates the whole story.

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The main protagonist, a police officer Major Scobie, is disappointed and disillusioned with his life and people around him. First of all he is disappointed with himself – he is a social and personal failure, although he tries to persuade himself that in fact he likes it, that he is used to being a loser “It was one of the rules by which he set his life, to be a good loser” (HM, p. 28) He rationalizes it to himself that it is even immoral to be successful and happy: “Point me out a happy man and I will point you either egotism, evil – or else an absolute ignorance” (HM, p.117).

Secondly is he disillusioned by his wife. He does not love her anymore and she knows it, and I think that is why she behaves in is such an unbearable way. Finally, not mentioning all other protagonists and things, he is disappointed by God. Scobie is a devoted Catholic who takes his faith seriously but understands it in a distorted way and, in my opinion, misuses Christ to excuse his own misdeeds.

*The Heart of the Matter* is the third book of a cycle, which definitively established Greene’s position as a Catholic writer, although he personally dismissed such a label and persistently spoke about himself as ‘a writer who happened to be Catholic’. He wrote the book six years after *The Power and the Glory*, at the time, when his marriage was going through its final stage and he experienced in person the process of alienation between husband and wife. It is obvious there is much of Greene in Scobie. Scobie’s ordeal, doubts and hesitations are to a certain extent the author’s own. Not only his marital but also his spiritual. The whole plot revolves around the tension between Scobie’s indomitable religious belief and his refusal to shift his burden of pity and responsibility to anyone else, including God.

The story takes place somewhere in Africa during the Second World War. Major Scobie, a colonial policeman, is deeply disappointed middle-aged man, whose only remaining desire in life is, in my opinion, to be left alone. “It seemed to Scobie later that it was the ultimate border he had reached in happiness: being in darkness, alone, with the rain falling, without love or pity.” (HM , p.128)

To reach peace of mind is impossible for him. Scobie is possessed by a sense of overwhelming responsibility for all people who surround him – especially his wife, the Portuguese captain, later his mistress and his neurosis has its climax in eventually pitying God himself. In his endeavour to make everybody happy and not to hurt anyone, he hurts
everybody and makes everybody unhappy, and, indirectly, kills his devoted servant Ali. He gradually loses his credit as a police officer and a Catholic and finally solves his hopeless situation by arranging a suicide which should look like a natural death.

This, in the nutshell, is the storyline. The most important things, however, occur in Scobie’s mind. His inner dialogues with himself, and then with God, which for me is only as other word for one’s conscience, is what makes the book so exceptional and impressive.

Major Scobie has been living in Africa for fifteen years. He likes it there and does not mind being overlooked in promotion, or at least so he thinks. He has no professional ambitions. His wife, Louise, bears it very hard that her husband is such a failure. She is also embittered middle-aged woman, who hates damp African climate and her continuous whimpering makes hell out of Scobie’s life.

His relationship with Louise is one of unilateral responsibility. He has no illusions about her; Louise is neurotic, unattractive, pathetically literary, patronizing when she can afford to be, and entirely dependent on pride and social acceptance.

Scobie, of course, believes that this is entirely his own fault: “This is what I’ve made of her. She wasn’t always like this.” (HM, p. 21) Her inability to cope with her life, her pathetic unattractiveness and her social failure, arouse his pity and responsibility to the intensity of a passion (HM, p. 21).

Scobie is always ready to bear the burden of other people, to relieve them of responsibility for their own lives and to look after them. He is always in the role of a father to the others. He does not feel that he, too, has a Father to whom he can shift his own burden. He does not have anyone close enough to share his worries with. This is, in my opinion, the source of that unbearable loneliness, that sense of exile which haunts him.

Why does he do it? Why does he not believe anyone, why is he unable to share the burden even with God? What else is religion here for if not to give believers the feeling of security, that they are not alone?

I think, the turning point of Scobie’s life is death of his daughter. It is this traumatic experience he is unable to cope with, because, I think, he feels guilty about not suffering enough. When his daughter died he was in Africa, he did not experience it first hand, and he feels ashamed that he even felt relieved to have been spared. This feeling drives him into this obsessive behaviour, this is the source of his bleeding heart for all the unhappy, ugly
and unattractive. He cannot resist other people’s misery. “Against the beautiful and the clever and the successful, one can wage a pitiless war, but not against the unattractive; then the milestone weighs on the breast” (HM, p. 49)

He does not believe people, that is, in my opinion, main cause of his downfall. All people around him are vulnerable, helpless children who need his protection. His unfulfilled paternal instincts lead him eventually to the abyss.

Scobie wants to make Louise happy at any cost, so because of her he commits his first professional delinquency when he borrows money from Yusef, devilish Syrian merchant, for Louise’s holiday. I think that the real reason was to get rid of her and, to tell the truth, I would not blame him for that. He feels that he fulfilled his duty, of course: “He had done his duty: Louise was happy. He closed his eyes.” (HM, p. 98)

Second offence is when he is overwhelmed by a similar feeling of pity and responsibility, this time towards a total stranger. The Portuguese captain, who has hidden a letter for his daughter in Germany in the cabin seems to him like “an unattractive child, the fat boy of the school” (HM, p. 49) These are his feelings about a man perhaps older than himself!

Scobie’s professional honesty is lost when the captain tells him about his daughter. He pities him, of course: “The Captain moaned: ‘If you had a daughter, you’d understand. You haven’t got one, he accuses as if there were a crime in sterility’” (HM, p.50) Scobie did have a daughter once. He can understand a father’s love for his child. It is still a fresh wound. After seven years!

When Scobie reads the captain’s letter, he comes across the following passage: “My dear, I am growing old... I am not a good man .... You do not know how easy it is for a man like me to commit the unforgivable despair. Then I think of my daughter.... a daughter ..... a daughter may save him at last...” (HM, p.51-2).

These are the words which finally seal Scobie’s decision. ”That had been the turning point, the daughter”(HM, p.54) The daughter is, in fact, as I have already mentioned, the turning point of his whole life. It suffices to mention a daughter and his professional integrity is shattered.

Scobie is appreciated by his superiors as a very conscientious and honest policeman, “Scobie the Just” (HM, p. 18) It is mystery to me, then, how he could even work as a
member of repressive force and gain such a reputation and be such a sentimental man at the same time.

The whole scene is not particularly persuasive. It is certainly moving but I see there several inconsistencies. First of all – why would the captain write the letter to his daughter before he landed and then hide it? Why did he not write it in security in an open sea? Did he intend to send the letter to Germany from the British colony, or to smuggle it into neighbouring Vichy territory? Why did he not then wait until after the search? Scobie – can he speak Portuguese? There is not a single hint that he can. It is probable that he spoke to the Captain in English, but why would the captain write the letter in English? I think it is a little bit illogical. I understand that the scene was invented to show Scobie’s weak point and his gradual decline, but still, I do not believe that any policeman could be like that.

Part 1 of Book 2 is the turning point in the novel. In this section of the novel one can observe a process of transfiguration; the role of the daughter is transferred first to the dying child in the hospital, and later to Helen Rolt. As I have mentioned, Scobie feels guilty for his daughter’s death for not having suffered enough and this feeling has an impact on his subsequent behaviour and suicide.

This personally psychological dimension is undoubtedly an important factor, but the most important factor is spiritual crisis. When the dying child is brought to the hospital, Scobie thinks: “It would need all Father Brülle’s ingenuity to explain that. Not that they would die – that needed no explanation... but that the child should have been allowed to survive the forty days and nights in an open boat – that was mystery, to reconcile that with the love of God”(HM, p. 114)

This is the core of Scobie’s spiritual crisis. He believes in God, but “this God is apparently not human enough to be a father to his creatures” (HM, p. 115) and Scobie takes this burden of fatherhood for those who appeal to his sense of pity and responsibility.

When Scobie looks at the dying girl, she suddenly becomes his own daughter who died shortly after her first communion, when he was not there, beside her. “When he looked at the child, he saw a white communion veil on her head: it was a trick of the light.... and a trick of his own mind... He had been in Africa when his own child died. He had always thanked God that he had missed that.... He thought: this is what parents feel year in a year out...”(HM, p. 118).
Scobie prays for her to finish her suffering: “‘Father’, he prayed,’ give her peace. Take away my peace for ever, but give her peace.’” (HM, p. 119)

God surely hears him and grants him his wish.

This passage is a clear echo of *The Power and the Glory*. The whisky priest, too, has felt the same anguished astonishment at what parents, ordinary human beings, have to go through: “‘This’, he thought’, must be what all parents feel: ordinary men go through life like this crossing their fingers, praying against pain, afraid...’” (PG, p. 90) The whisky priest also makes a wager with God for his daughter’s sake: “He prayed silently: ‘O God, give me any kind of death, without contrition, in a state of sin – only save this child’” (PG, p.111)

Scobie’s wager seems to have been accepted. The girl dies immediately afterwards, smiling, thinking that Scobie is her own father. When the little girl is dead, Helen Rolt enters Scobie’s life. Thin and pathetic and child-like, desperately clutching her stamp-album: “Her arms as thin as a child’s lay outside the blanket“ (HM, p. 115) It seems to Scobie “as though a child had dressed up.”(HM, p. 123) Scobie, immediately and unconsciously, takes on the role of a father to her. As their relationship develops, even when it becomes ‘a love affair’, there is always an element of fatherhood in Scobie’s attitude to Helen. “He thought: ‘If my child had lived, she too would have been conscriptable... It was impossible to think of her being saved from the sea and then flung back.’” (HM, p. 151) She is a little girl for him: “How could a child like that act the part as a woman?” (HM, p. 132).

I cannot understand their relationship – Helen is for Scobie a substitute daughter, he feels responsible for her happiness as if she were his own child. His fatherly instincts need to be fulfilled. I can understand that. What I do not understand is why he sleeps with her. Is it normal to have sex with your daughter? There is no element of lust, at least that is what Scobie says, so is it again out of pity? To make her feel like a woman? I find it totally disgusting to be somebody’s lover for such a reason, and very patronizing and humiliating toward Helen, as well.

In my opinion Scobie is a moral monster, he is a pervert. He likes playing God in other people’s lives, they are, after all, his children, are they not?
It is clear that such a situation is confusing for Helen. She also sees him primarily as a father, she makes an unconscious analogy between Scobie and her real father when she mentions that he is a clergyman who “believes in God and Heaven, all sort of things.” (HM, p. 150)

After becoming lovers, there is a growing resemblance between Helen and Louise. Scobie got rid of one horrible woman only to be bound by another of the same kind – only younger. He is bound to both of them by his pity and sense of responsibility for their pathetic unattractiveness: “She looked ugly, with the temporary ugliness of a child. The ugliness was like handcuffs on his wrists” (HM, p. 152).

As I have mentioned, there is no sensual pleasure or lust in their affair. When Helen lies in bed she seems to him like “a bundle of cannon fodder” (HM, p. 161) The same image was evoked by Louise who looked like “a joint under a meat cover.” (HM, p. 20) When Scobie touches Helen, sweat runs between their touching arms. (HM, p.101) The same happens with Louise: “Whenever they touched sweat started.” (HM, p. 39)

Both women seem to need external evidence of their relationship with other people. Louise collects photographs of herself, her family and her few friends: “Home to her was accumulation. The dressing table way crammed with pots and photographs.... It was as if she were accumulating evidence that she had friends like other people.” (HM, p. 21)

Helen also complains to Scobie: “I can’t even have a photograph to make this place human.” (HM, p. 178)

Scobie himself does not need such reminders. He is ascetic, his office at the police station is entirely bare of personal possessions, as bare as a monastic cell. Erdinas-Vulcan notices there are two symbolical items in his room: some rusty handcuffs hanging on a nail like an old hat and a broken rosary in the drawer. These are symbols of Scobie’s ordeal: he has broken with institutional religion (thus cutting himself off from its guidance and moral support), and chained himself to other people.

Both Louise and Helen appear to resent Scobie’s fatherly attitude. Louise refuses to accept his protective comforting lies: “I’m not a child, Ticky” (HM, p. 56) Helen uses almost the same words when she quarrels with Scobie: “You give me some stamps as though I were your small girl.” (HM, p. 179) And yet, both women are “leaning on their weakness like a pillow,” (HM, p. 79) using emotional blackmail to get what they want and giving very little
in return. I do not know if she realizes that her trip to South Africa is paid for at the cost of Scobie’s professional integrity but she is well aware of her husband’s devotion. She tells Wilson that Scobie does not love her, but he will do anything for her because “he has a terrible sense of responsibility” (HM, p. 79).

Helen is less sophisticated than Louise, but her relative innocence is perhaps even more dangerous because she drives Scobie to write her a self-incriminating letter which puts him at Yusef’s mercy and finally brings about Ali’s murder. When he prays for a miracle that would convince him to leave her and save his soul, it is not her face that he sees. It is the face of “the dying child who called him father: a face in a photograph staring from the dressing table.” (HM, p. 212) He cannot leave this “bewildered child” (HM, p. 212), who is the reincarnation of those other children, not even at the cost of his own damnation. At least that is what he thinks.

Scobie breaks with the dogma of the Church and encloses himself into his own distorted understanding of true religion.

There are two other priests in the novel, but they are not able to help him. Conventional religion does not have answers for his dilemma. Father Rank, himself is a desperate person. Paradoxically, it is Scobie who seems to be the stronger man. When despair grows on him, Father Rank turns to Scobie, the sinner, for help and support. Their roles are reversed: the priest has come to the sinner for confession. Father Clay, another representative of institutionalised church, seems to be as helpless as Father Rank when he has to cope with human tragedies. When Scobie looks at him, he feels that he is a man quite “without resources.” (HM, p. 82) His reliance on the doctrines exposes him as unable to cope in situations where the rules do not help.

Unlike Scobie who is urged by his own moral commitment to defy the conventions and challenge Church’s doctrines. Scobie’s relationship with God becomes more direct and immediate, he is beginning to see Christ as a victim of his own sins. Therefore going to mass in a state of mortal sin would be like “striking God when he’s down” (HM, p.205), or “throwing the child’s face into the filth of the stable” (HM, p. 229).

When Scobie half-knowingly brings about Ali’s murder, he carries the analogy even farther. The broken rosary which he sent Ali with Yusef’s boy as a guarantee of safety has become an instrument of betrayal. As Scobie kneels over Ali’s body, he thinks “Oh, God...
I’ve killed you. You’ve served me all these years and I’ve killed you at the end of them’.

God lay there under the petrol drums...” *(HM, p. 242)* Ali, the faithful servant, had exposed himself to betrayal and death out of his love for Scobie. When Scobie thinks of Christ, it seems to him that it is cruelly unfair of Him “to have exposed Himself in this way... to put Himself in the mercy of men who hardly knew the meaning of the word” *(HM, p. 206)*. Scobie, too, had exposed himself to blackmail when he borrowed the money for Louise or wrote the letter to Helen. Scobie also regards himself as a servant to those who need him: “I must come last... I am the responsible man. It is my job to look after the others. I am conditioned to serve.” *(HM, p. 218)* When Scobie decides to commit suicide in order “to save others - Helen, Louise and You...” *(HM, p. 257)* his relationship to God has changed. “The other voice tells him: there are no capital letters to separate us when we talk together. I am not Thou but simply you, when you speak to me; I am humble as any other beggar.” *(HM, p. 253)* His conception of God changes through his ordeal of love and self-sacrifice. Christ becomes a real suffering being for Scobie. Perhaps in religious sense, when he drives the spirit of his faith *ad absurdum*, he has reached a point where his God is no longer a transcendental omnipotent Divinity. Even God has become a suffering child for him, a child who has to be protected.

This is an unbelievable conceit for me. Waugh argues that Scobie is guilty of sacrilege when he believes that he can offer his own damnation as a sacrifice to God: “We are told that he is actuated throughout by the love of God.... a love, we must suppose, which sanctifies his sins. That is the heart of the matter. Is such a sacrifice possible?.... To me, the idea of willing my own damnation by the love God is either a very loose poetical expression or a mad blasphemy, for the God who accepted such a sacrifice could be neither just or lovable”.33

Scobie is a father on earth without a Father figure in heaven to support him. In this sense, Scobie is a twentieth century hero in that he has lost the metaphysical reference – there is no Father in Heaven who is the ultimate source of moral authority. His spiritual autonomy turns him into an exile.

Nevertheless, I do not think, that Scobie’s suicide is inevitable. Here I do not agree with Erdinast-Vulcan who thinks that it is inevitable. From my point of view, I think Scobie only

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uses religious speculations, perhaps subconsciously, to excuse himself. As I see him, he is a weakling and I do not understand how he can be said to be a good man, which is the case with Erdinast-Vulcan. For me he is an off-putting example of how destructive weakness can be. He is in no way a heroic character like the whisky priest in The Power and the Glory. There is only an outer resemblance — they both feel enormous responsibility for their people and finally die for them. While whisky priest keeps his integrity throughout the story and does not hesitate to risk everything only to fulfil his mission, Scobie collapses under much lesser pressure.

What do I understand by the term integrity? The Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary defines integrity as: “adherence to moral and ethical principals; soundness of moral character; honesty.” The dictionary definition does not mention that a life of integrity is the result of certain basic choices. It is the decision to confront one’s situation, including one’s misfortunes, courageously. This means often confronting other people over matter of principle, about things that are worthy in themselves, such as truth, justice, love, or assuming responsibility for the situations in which I find myself. As I have already mentioned, Major Scobie is a flagrant failure in his personal life. Because he persistently chooses to evade confrontations on matters of principle, he has ruined his career, made irresponsible decisions, and gradually effaced his integrity. Greene shows that the soundness of Scobie’s moral character has eroded slowly, often through minor, cowardly decisions in not so controversial matters. The decisions are cowardly because Scobie relentlessly seeks to evade confronting people, especially his wife Louise, but also his lover Helen, the security officer Wilson, and the corrupt merchant Yusef. Greene also shows how, through minor cowardly decisions, step by step, the little dignity that Scobie has obtained in his honest service vanishes. Together with his persistent shrinking away from confrontation, Scobie expresses a deep pity for others. Greene shows, however, here and in other novels, that pity born out of cowardice is very often ruinous, both to the person who pities and to those who are pitied. Pity is a passive activity, in which the person who pities does not initiate action but is carried along by events.

Scobie’s pity is indeed a passive activity. His nurturing of pity helps him to justify his flight from confrontation and from taking courageous attitude, among them his not confronting Louise with the simple truth that he does not love her at all. Scobie flees from
confrontation; in the process he develops a distorted relation to religion that helps him to justify his flight. Confronting Louise and others on truths and on matters of principle might lead Scobie to a different existence – an existence that eschews ruinous pity or destructive sentimentality. For Scobie, pity is a manner of distancing himself from his fellow human beings. In other words – Scobie does not believe the world, does not feel real respect for other people as his equals. He is not a good man.

2.4 Plarr and other exiles

_The Honorary Consul_ was published in 1973. It is a political thriller which is set at the Argentinian - Paraguayan border at the time of the ruthless dictator Stroessner. On the surface it is a plot about adultery, betrayal, political kidnapping, and a brutal shoot-out. It is a story about the tyranny, corruption, terrorism, and overwhelming poverty that are part of the Latin American political world at the end of the twentieth century. The novel embodies what has come to be known as *liberation theology* although Greene denied having read

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34 It is probably not a mere coincidence that Gustavo Gutierrez’s English edition of _A Theology of Liberation_ was published in the same year as Greene’s novel. Gutierrez called for a new kind of theology that spoke to the Latin American postcolonial situation, emphasizing the need for liberation from the structures of unjust economic exploitation and political domination.

What were the main doctrines of this form of Catholic teachings?

Following the closing of the Second Vatican Council the bishops of Latin America held their own conference in Medellin, Colombia, to interpret and correlate the Council’s documents to the specific situation of Central and South America.

First of all they asserted that the central question of theology’s dialogue with the modern world was not primarily religious faith versus atheism but human dignity versus the subhuman conditions of the majority of Latin American peoples. Salvation in Christ is expressed as liberation from those societal and multinational structures that perpetuate injustice.

Gutierrez articulates three levels of such liberation: a sociopolitical liberation from the conflict of economic, social, and political processes between the oppressed and the powerful nations and classes; a reading of history as the conscious action of humanity’s quest for freedom; and a biblical discourse on God’s action in Jesus Christ who liberates humanity from sin and oppression. Focus is placed both on the sayings of Jesus as proclamations of God’s Kingdom to the poor and on a reading of the cross and the death of Jesus as the central paradigm of persecution and suffering made present in the dehumanized peoples of Latin America.

Gutierrez defends liberation theology against those who see it as a variant form of Marxism. He argues that liberation theology merely employs the contemporary tools of the social sciences that use elements of Marxist analysis to provide a theoretical explanation for the existence of injustice. It highlights rather than Marxism ‘praxis’ as the real meeting place between theology and the social sciences. It stresses the importance of orthopraxis, or ‘correct action’, as the basic norm of Christian faith. Christian praxis was interpreted through the lens of biblical patterns of justice – the narratives of slavery, exile and liberation – so that the hierarchical relationship between God and the world is horizontalized: God – and God’s people – fight alongside men and women of different views to bring an end to oppression. This renewed emphasis on Christian action had an analogous relationship with the Marxist hope for bringing about a just economic and political system. The Nicaraguan priest-poet and government minister Ernesto Cardenal can thus make the imaginative claim in his
any liberation theology texts. Nevertheless, he experienced at first hand the situation in Latin America that produced it, namely, the terrible poverty and oppression of the region, as well as the Catholic Church’s involvement on both sides of the conflict.

The appeal of struggle against oppression and poverty found a warm reception with Greene. He visited Central and South America often in the last decades of his life and wrote many articles and editorials from his travels in which he spoke in favour of the oppressed peoples and their fight against corrupt regimes and condemned sinister role which US government played in this part of the world. He made friends with a number of prominent politicians such as General Omar Torrijos Herrera who took power in Panama in 1968 and in 1984 he published a book of memoirs of their many conversations and travels. He especially admired Fathers Cardenal and D’Escoto, both cabinet ministers in the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and became an passionate advocate of the Sandinistas. He also sincerely tried to find a certain compromise between a Christian vision of socialism and the ideology of Marxism which find its expression in his last major work, *Monsignore Quixote*, which is, in fact, a long dialogue between a communist major and his friend, a Catholic priest.

Nonetheless, Greene remained sceptical of Marxist ideological excesses, so in the end Greene did not fit into any clear category and was criticised as being too Marxist, too Catholic, or just too simplistic.

*The Honorary consul* is a tragicomical story of a botched kidnapping when a group of Paraguayan guerrilla fighters took the hostage British Honorary consul instead of the American ambassador in attempt to require the release of their imprisoned comrades.

It is a typically Greenian novel with classic characters, each of them is a variation of Greene’s antiheroes, fumblers and failures more aware of their own flaws than their accomplishments.

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poetry that Christ sacrifices himself on the cross in the struggle for the liberation of his people, just as the revolutionary guerilla is caught and tortured by the power elite of corrupt government.

Official Vatican pronouncements, including from the Pope, have said that liberation theology is only partially compatible with official statements of Catholic social teaching, and that large portions of it should be rejected. Most of the objections by orthodox Catholic critics are its use of Marxism, specifically forms of dialectical materialism, and some tendencies (represented by Camilo Torres, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and Ernesto Cardenal for example) to align with revolutionary movements.

There are three main characters: Eduardo Plarr, a doctor that helps the poor; Leon Rivas, a revolutionary ex-priest and Charley Fortnum, the mistakenly abducted honorary British Consul. All of them share one common feature – their feeling of exile.

The concept of exile is broader than its geographical and cultural implications. Plarr, like Major Scobie is in spiritual exile, he does not accept any religious doctrines, he denounces the virtue of machismo which is a sanctified value in Latin-American society, and he claims not to believe in love. However, he reluctantly finds himself involved in a political and human affair, in which his profound convictions come under test.

Most of the action unfolds through his consciousness, but the reader is constantly called upon to correct Plarr’s interpretation of what happens to him, for Plarr, like all of Greene’s protagonists, does not seem to understand himself very well.

According to his own definition of himself, Plarr is a man-without-a-father. Henry Plarr, the father, had been a political activist in Paraguay. He had sent young Plarr and his mother to safety in Argentina while he stayed back and was probably imprisoned or killed. Plarr’s link with his father is stronger than he realises. After he finished his medical studies he returned to the little border-town for reasons which are not quite clear even to himself: “Not one of his friends came near to understanding his motive: he would find a hot humid unhealthy climate in the north. ‘Perhaps it’s unhealthy enough for me to build a better practice,’ he would reply with a smile which was quite as unmeaning – or false – as his father’s expression of hope.” (*HC*, p. 25)

The border-line which separates him from his father is not only a border-cross: he has to embrace his father’s values in order to find him again.

Plarr’s initial involvement in the kidnapping appears to be imposed on him against his will. He tries to avoid the telephone call which might involve him still further in the affair, but is impelled to lift the receiver when it rings; “it might be an ordinary patient’s call” (*HC*, p. 35)

His sense of commitment to his patients, and the other commitment of which he is not fully conscious yet, draws him into the tragic affair. He refuses at first to come to the kidnappers’ hide out, but when he hears that their hostage might be dying, he resigns himself to his fate and goes out, knowing that ‘his liberty, perhaps his life’ are lying in
‘hopelessly incompetent hands’(HC, p. 39) Plarr is very much like the whisky priest in *The Power and the Glory*: he cannot refuse the call of his vocation, however dangerous it may be to him.

Plarr’s childhood friend, Father Leon Rivas, is the leader of the kidnappers. “He would never have consented to help them if it had not been for Leon Rivas. It had been Leon whom he had missed almost as much as his father.” (HC, p.41) Plarr’s love for Leon is equated with his love for his father; both men have irrevocably committed themselves to other human beings and would eventually die for them. Both of them are fathers in Greene’s sense of the word.

Leon had wanted to be a fearless *abogado* (lawyer) who would defend the poor and the innocent like Perry Mason. (HC, p.41) He became a priest instead, but now he had broken with institutionalized church and married, having chosen to fight actively and even violently for the poor. Leon, it seemed to him (to Plarr), was struggling back from a succession of failures towards the primal promise to the poor he had never intended to break. He would end as an *abogado* yet. (HC, p. 36).

Leon also belongs to Greene’s regular cast of characters; he is a rebel against the complacency of the institutional Church, a man whose profound faith turns him against formal, orthodox religion.

Plarr’s own commitment is no less profound although he refuses to acknowledge it. He is deeply familiar with the barrio of the poor: “There was nowhere for the water to drain, and yet, as Doctor Plarr knew well, the inhabitants had to walk as much as a mile to find a tap which gave water fit for drinking. The children – he had treated many of them – were big bellied with protein deficiency...”(HC, p. 44)

Plarr initially tries to dissociate himself from Leon’s political struggle: “I’m not like my father” (HC, p. 118). Yet, when he hears that his father might still be alive and might be released if the kidnapping succeeds, he gives them the information they needed.

Charlie Fortnum, the Honorary Consul who had been kidnapped by mistake instead of the American Ambassador, seems at first to be a pathetic little man, an alcoholic who has incidentally been caught up in the action.

“Charlie Fortnum.... had found a reliable weapon in the fight against senility – he had pickled in alcohol some of the high spirits and the naivety of earlier days.”(HC, p.40)
When sober, Charlie Fortnum is a gloomy awkward man who broods over his failures and
thinks of his father whom he had hated, who had tried to turn him into a fearless horseman.
Charlie’s father had also been an alcoholic and had not recognised his own son when the
boy fell off his horse:
“I could see where I lay on the ground, that he did not even remember who I was”(HC, p.64)
Fortnum is a constant source of embarrassment to the Ambassador, he hangs the flag
upside down on the Queen’s birthday (HC, p.60), abuses the privileges of the diplomatic
corps (to which he is not entitled) by importing a Cadillac every two years only to sell it
later at a profit to cover up for the losses on his plantation.
Charlie Fortnum is an old man who had married a young whore only to be cuckolded later
by his friend, Doctor Plarr. These circumstances would put him in the position of the
traditional fool of a comedy or a farce: an old, drunken, not-quite-straight cuckold who is
kidnapped by mistake could feature in any popular or vulgar comedy. Graham Greene turns
Charlie Fortnum into an admirable character. His genuine love for Clara and his need to
protect her, his longing for a child, his deep humility and acceptance of human nature
evoke one’s sympathy and respect.
He tells Plarr: ”I wish we’d had a child... if I had a child I wouldn’t try to make him
conquer fear like my father did. It’s a part of human nature, isn’t it, fear? If you conquer
fear, you conquer your human nature, too”(HC, p.64)
It is his love for Clara which makes him vulnerable; he calls Doctor Plarr to look after her
with complete trust and lack of possessiveness; “She’s so very young... she needs an awful
lot of protection... I loved her the first moment I saw her...”(HC, p.85)
Plarr’s response to this moving confession of love is harsh and cynical: “I’m not quite sure
what the word love means. My mother loves dulce de leche... Only my mother’s love of
sweet cakes isn’t likely to change. She will love them in sickness and health till death do
them part.” (HC, p.85)
He believes himself immune to love. Yet, when Plarr drives home after his first meeting
with Clara, he finds himself obsessed with the thought of her. He cannot understand his
obsession any more than he can his other feelings on other matters: “His thoughts were like
the deliberately banal words of a clandestine letter in which the important phrases have
been added between the lines in secret ink.”(HC, p. 87). Plarr’s thoughts, which have
hitherto been formulated in a dry factual style, take a poetic turn: “Her stomach was like the
site of an old country battlefield where pale grass grew which had abolished the scars of
war and a small stream flowed peacefully between the willows...” (HC, p. 73). Yet Plarr
resists this turn, he is afraid of love: “I will not be the victim of an obsession... It is
possible... if a man is too rational to fall in love, that he may be reserved for a worse fate, to
fall into an obsession?” (HC, p.74)

Plarr meets Clara again a few days later in Gruber’s shop. Gruber is a very minor character
in the novel. He is a refugee from Nazi Germany and has lost both his parents who stayed
behind. Gruber, like Doctor Plarr, is a man without a father. (HC, p. 75) Plarr’s other
obsession, the thought of his father, is reflected in all the other characters who feature in the
story. Plarr sees all men as fatherless children or a childless fathers.

When Clara comes into the shop Plarr buys her a pair of glasses and takes her home. After
having sex with her, he believes his obsession is over, but it has not died, and as the affair
continues, Clara conceives a child. The father may be either Fortnum or Plarr. Thus the
question of fatherhood comes up again and again throughout the novel. “Plarr found he
was ill at ease in the Consul’s company; perhaps he was plagued by primitive sensation of
guilt; perhaps he was irritated by the complacency of Charlie Fortnum who appeared so
modestly confident of his wife’s fidelity ... until Doctor Plarr was almost ready to exclaim,
‘But who do you suppose is the father?’”(HC, p.13) Clara is confident that the baby is
Plarr’s (HC, p.171), but the answer to the question is rather more complex and ambiguous
than a mere biological fact and its resolution in the end is tied up in with the spiritual
development of the characters.

Doctor Plarr believes that he is still attracted to Clara because “a whore remains a
stranger”(HC, p. 90) He likes the ‘clinical atmosphere’ of the brothel where ‘no emotions
of love, anxiety or fear’ disturb him’ (HC, p. 59), and he tries to keep that clinical brothel
atmosphere between him and Clara. He tells Clara not to pretend that she enjoys sex with
him: “You don’t have to pretend anything with me ... be as indifferent as you like”.(HC, p.
83-4) He is, in fact, asking her to pretend that she is indifferent. He never kisses her on the
mouth, “keeping himself strictly within the brothel ritual”. (HC, p. 90) When he realises
that she is making no claim on his feelings he is so relieved that he kisses her ‘close to the
mouth’ (HC, p.91).
Despite this brothel discipline he is slowly falling in love with her. Their first meal together seems to Plarr ‘more intimate... than the sexual act,’ he feels ‘an unaccustomed tenderness’ towards her, and suddenly finds himself looking on ‘an unexpected vista into quite another sort of life’. *(HC, p.91)* He is still not sure about his feelings.

I must say that this is what I find disgusting about otherwise quite likeable character of Plarr is his cynism which is, as I see it, a protection against his own feelings. He is afraid of falling in love, of the commitments which that might involve. “Love was a claim which he wouldn’t accept, a responsibility he would refuse to accept, a demand... Perhaps he had loved his father all the more because he had never used this word or asked for anything in return.” *(HC, p. 172)* He treats Clara as a whore until the end. I find deplorable the fact that he actually buys her for a pair of sunglasses and uses her whenever he feels the urge regardless of her feelings, regardless how humiliated she must feel. He never asks her, he is never interested. He is also not interested in other people’s feelings. He cheats on his sentimental friend Fortnum and betrays him even when he knows how it might hurt him.

Generally, this brothel atmosphere which is present not only in this novel but in many others, is astonishing. Going to brothels and enjoying sex with whores seems quite a common thing in Greeneland. In *The Honorary Consul* all male characters frequently visit the institution, if only for ‘educational reasons’, in *The Comedians* Brown a regular brothel-goer and Jones knows only brothel love, in *The Heart of the Matter* Wilson visits the place after arriving in Africa and even Bendrix in *The End of the Affair* pays for a prostitute. I think that the omnipresence of brothels, and author’s obvious familiarity with their environment, and of course the indispensable adultery, reveals much about Greene and places his morality in a strange light*36.

Plarr’s meeting with his mother reveals the source of his scepticism towards all avowals of love, his abhorrence of sentiment and his deeply-rooted mistrust of women. His mother, an obese pious woman who stuffs herself with sweets, had long forgotten her love for his father – only bitterness is still alive. She observes the formalities of mourning, the black dress and the memorial mass, but the bitterness against his father turns these formalities into a comedy – a word which recurs in Plarr’s thoughts whenever love is the subject. Plarr

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*36 Jan Culik in his study *Poet of awkwardness* writes about newly found diaries which reveal that in 1930s Greene was a regular visitor of London brothels. He was married then with two children.*
regards his mother as a prototype of womanhood. His refusal to love is grounded in this primary betrayal of his father’s memory and in his view of women as a different species. Charlie Fortnum has another self – Mason – to whom he attributes ‘his worst errors and his worst failings’ (HC, p. 106) Mason is not only Fortnum’s other self – he is also that paragon of integrity in the pursuit of justice for the poor that Leon and Plarr used to dream about. “Plarr heard that Leon had become a priest instead of the fearless abogado who would defend the poor and the innocent, like Perry Mason.” (HC, p. 27) Fortnum has none of the glamour of the brilliant fearless advocate, but he is inspired with courage and dignity by his love for his wife and the unborn child. When he wakes up to find himself lying in the coffin inside the mud hut, his first thought is of Clara: “... he was anxious to be back with Clara. Clara would be frightened. Clara wouldn’t know what to do.” (HC, p. 106) Despite the fact that Fortnum thinks of himself as a coward, he is not afraid for himself: “He wondered how Clara was managing in his absence. He had never left her alone for a whole night before.” (HC, p. 111) The reader knows that Clara is spending the night with Plarr, but this dramatic irony does not undermine the respect one feels for Fortnum at this point. When Fortnum realises that Leon is a priest, he forces him into a conversation, repeating the word ‘Father’ as often as he can. He appeals to Leon’s vow of fatherhood which, he hopes, is as binding as his own commitment to fatherhood: “He interjected ‘Father’ as often as he could: it was somehow reassuring. A father usually did not kill his own son.” (HC, p. 117) Both Leon and Fortnum are childless fathers; they both have a sense of commitment to others which drives them to acts which they would not naturally undertake – Leon is a shy scholarly man who becomes a terrorist for his cause and Charlie Fortnum, an alcoholic whose life has been a series of failures, becomes a man of dignity, courage and deep human understanding when he assumes responsibility for the well-being and happiness of others. Another vision is offered by Aquino, the poet. In his poem, “I see my father through the bars” (HC, p. 122), he portrays the father-figure as the source of repression and tyranny. The father is “the school-master, the priest, the police officer, the prison warden..... the general himself.” (HC, p. 122) Aquino’s poems are all about death (HC, p. 122), and it is not surprising that at the end of the story he is the only one of the terrorists who is prepared
to kill for the cause. Aquino is a fatherless child; he is motivated by hatred whereas Leon is motivated by love.

Fortnum refuses to see the attraction of death: “I don’t want to die before my child is born... I only know I would like to live another ten years, at my camp, watching the little bastard grow” (HC, p. 123) By that point in the story, the word bastard – which he uses fondly as a pet name for the unborn child – has lost the edge of double-meaning it might have had before. Regardless of who the biological father may be, it is Fortnum who is prepared to give all for the child. He deserves to be his father.

Plarr realises now that a father should transmit belief in a God or a cause (HC, p. 121), but believes that he is not the kind of man who can inspire belief, that he is not worthy of being a father. The link between fatherhood and belief which is predominant in Greene’s Catholic novels, as well as his admiration for humility, the sense of personal worthlessness, is powerfully and painfully expressed in this novel as well. He regards himself as unworthy of the task because he believes himself to be ‘a cold fish’ who does not believe in God, nor causes or love:

“What effect did it have on a child to have a cold fish for a father? It might have been better if they could have exchanged fathers. A cold fish would have been his own proper parentage rather than a father who had cared enough to die. He would have liked the little bastard to believe in something.... He called across the dirt floor, ‘Do you really believe in God the Father Almighty, Leon?’” (HC, p. 212)

When Plarr decides that his own father who had cared enough to die, he exchanges fathers with his own son, Plarr’s own father is dead, but Charlie Fortnum has by now taken his place and becomes the father-figure for Plarr, he is a substitute for his own dead father.

When Plarr thinks of the years ahead, he has a vision of the child’s life under Fortnum’s care, in which he sees Charlie doing the same things for the boy, as Henry Plarr had done for his son: “He pictured the child as a boy, a boy who resembled two early photographs of himself.. Charlie would be a very kind father....Charlie would call the boy ‘old fellow’ and pat his cheek and turn over the pages of London Panorama before tucking him up firmly in bed. Doctor Plarr suddenly saw the boy sitting up in his bunk, as he had done.” (HC, p. 216)

The man who had become Plarr’s father, who would be the father of Plarr’s child, is lying in the coffin now – he was looking at the bearded face of his father stretched on the coffin
Plarr tries to save Fortnum’s life by an appeal to Leon’s sense of fatherhood: “This is the murder of a man who has done you no harm at all – a man old enough to be my father – or yours. Where is your father Leon? ... we all of us seem to live with dead fathers, don’t we?” Fortnum hated his. I think I may have loved mine...” *(HC, p. 217)*.

Leon tells him of his own father who had been one of the richest men in the bourgeoisie in Paraguay, who had never worked for a poor client, who has said to be a good father because “he left a lot of cash after him”. *(HC, p. 217)* Leon’s own ideological development can also be traced to his attitude towards his father. It seems to me that the rich father who had been an *abogado* (that is a potential defender of the poor), but never worked for a poor man, is not unlike the Church which could have been a source of help and comfort to the poor, but turned itself into a dead monument. Leon joined sides with the poor. He is still deeply religious, but his love of God is not the traditional love of the son who looks to the Father Almighty for protection and guidance. It is like Major Scobie’s love of God - the tormented love of a parent for a mutilated child. His religion is the persistent belief of the twentieth-century man who has lost the Almighty Father and the belief in an orderly world, and yet continues to believe in spite, or because of, the absurdity and the horror. Plarr cynically declares that he “would rather believe in Apollo – at least he was beautiful.” *(HC, p. 218)*

He does not realize the irony of this statement: the motto of Apollo is *know thyself* and Plarr will never reach self-knowledge.

The moment of truth between Plarr and Fortnum leaves both of them defeated. Plarr admits that he has been jealous of Fortnum’s love. Fortnum feels that he has nothing to live for and entrusts Clara and the child to Plarr giving him a pack of unpaid bills to take care of. This simple gesture and Charlie’s request of Plarr – “Promise you won’t tell her that I knew about you. I wouldn’t want her to feel any guilt.” *(HC 242)* reveals the depth of Fortnum’s selflessness, compassion and love.

Plarr believes that Fortnum would make a better father to the child. He has already decided to exchange fathers with the unborn child to Charlie Fortnum who has become his own father now. Plarr remembers his father as “someone tall and thin and straight, walking fast
away from the quay..." (HC, p. 249) But when Aquino tells him of Henry Plarr’s last days, he describes “a small fat man who limped.” (HC, p. 249)

This physical transformation of the father could be ascribed to the passage of time or the discrepancy between the child’s vision of his father and the father’s appearance in the adult world, but when one notes the resemblance between the description of Henry Plarr and Charlie Fortnum’s appearance, the transformation takes on an added significance. Fortnum, too, is an old man who limps since he was shot in the leg. The substitution of Charlie Fortnum for Henry Plarr is now complete. Plarr exchanges his own death for Fortnum’s, he becomes the father-figure in the act of self-sacrifice. Doctor Plarr has become a father in Greene’s sense of the world – the true father, the man who assumes total responsibility for others.

Charlie Fortnum who has returned home to Clara suffers from the sense of deep alienation. He misses Plarr and cannot forgive Clara for her apparent indifference to his death: “It would have been a lot simpler... if she had really loved Plarr...” (HC, p. 259) “She seemed to be betraying Plarr as well as himself ... surely she could have been faithful for a short while to a dead man.” (HC, p. 266) Fortnum makes peace with his father’s memory (HC, p.267), he decides to call the boy Eduardo: “You see I loved Eduardo in a way. He was young enough to be my son.”(HC 268) The reconciliation between father and son is complete when the son becomes a father in his own right.

Both Fortnum and Plarr have found their fathers when they discovered the father in themselves.

2.6 Comedians

Comedian has two denotation – ‘an actor, a person who disguises his real self and plays a part’ and ‘a participant in a comedy’. What sort of people does Graham Greene portray as comedians? Are we not all, people living in so called developed world, more or less comedians? Do not we play comedy with other people, do not we pretend, even to ourselves, that we are somebody better from what we really are? Are we not forced, and is it not expected by the social system, to act in order to sell themselves for the highest price, in other words to succeed? In our contemporary world, many people choose this way, to sell themselves falsely, to bluff. If the bluff succeeds, they obtain wealth, honour, power, and widespread acclaim. We all know successful bluffers who succeeded – those
the world of politics and big business is full of comedians. Bluffing is an indispensable part of capitalism, or the market economy, to use more modern term. Take, for example, advertising – in this system it is usually merely a manner of bluffing that is deemed honourable. Presenting a bluff convincingly is what one needs to get to the top. Hence, the relentless pursuit of success, which often requires accomplished bluffing and is central to this system. Capitalism encourages at least some people to convince others persistently to believe their bluffs. They live as comedians. Those bluffers and comedians who take their bluffing seriously usually do not strive to attain wisdom or truth, or to pursue justice, or love. Furthermore, many of these people no longer care that they are living a bluff; they justify their embracing of deceit as a way of life. But because they do not live authentically they often feel alienated and deeply dissatisfied. Such are the feelings of Brown, the central character of the novel. All his life is one big bluff, a comedy, not a tragedy, because comedy is a rather inferior genre and tragedy will be too noble a word for life he leads. At least that is how he sees himself – as a cynical, detached observer who does not want to get involved into anything. As is typical for all Greene’s characters, he does not know himself and against his will under the reality of paranoid oppressive regime in Haiti he is forced to take sides and to get involved in order to preserve his humanity and maybe even his sanity.

He sees all people around him, including himself, as actors playing their parts. There is a rather comical couple of American missionaries of vegetarianism, Mr and Mrs Brown, who go to Haiti to proselyte their evangelium. There is Martha, Ambassador’s wife and Brown’s lover, whom Brown had cast into the role of a wanton adulteress.

As is usual in Greeneland Brown, like Bendrix in The End of the Affair, is pathologically jealous of Martha and makes hell out of their relationship. He accuses her of being unfaithful to him, and even to her husband (C,p.82), thus paradoxically condemning her obliquely for loving him. He refuses to believe that she has been faithful to him in his absence (C, p.43, 48), and during their last tormented days of love, absurdly suspects her of having had an affair with Major Jones whom he, at the end, provokes to a suicidal mission.

But Brown’s mistrust of Martha is only a projection of his own guilt and remorse; he knows – even when he finally provokes her into an admission of the affair with Jones (C,
p. 256) – that she has been devoted and loyal to him throughout their love, even when he had failed her (C, p.139)

There are other admirable characters like Doctor Magiot, whom even cynical Brown respects and knows that he is genuine not a bluffer. He is the first of the idealistic communists who is prepared to fight for better life. Honesty in Greeneland is paid by death and Doctor Magiot ends up with suicide in order to prevent his being arrested by nightmarish Tontos Macoute, Papa Doc’s secret police.

Doctor Magiot’s authenticity, courage and wisdom help to stress a central theme of this book and other novels by Greene. Today many people resemble ineffectual comedians within an evolving tragedy or a farce of horror and if these comedians do not become aware of their situation and do not attempt to transcend it, they seldom attain wisdom. Indeed, one of the few ways to attain wisdom is to stop bluffing and to transcend the situation that requires such a bluff. I think that Brown, at the end of the story, succeeds in achieving authenticity, thing that Major Jones, the chief bluffer of the book, never manages. He plays his part, out of fear of being exposed as a big-mouth imposter, to the bitter end.

The greatest comedian of all, and the greatest loser at the same time, is also Major Jones. From their very first meeting, when Jones tries to bribe the steward to exchange Brown’s cabin with his own (C, p.11), Brown describes him as a wily character and an obvious impostor. He introduces himself as Major Jones – a title the other passengers are reluctant to use because it is so obviously faked (C, p.22), he uses outmoded slang that seems to have been acquired from the wrong book (C, p.22), and is suspiciously evasive as to the factual details.

But Brown immediately recognizes the fundamental affinity between them. They are like twins. So similar is their life story. He realizes that Jones, like himself, is one of the homeless, the rootless nomads (C, p.20), and that he is as much a comedian as Jones is. Both of them have made a living fairly harmlessly out of the greed of others as rogues: Brown as an art dealer (C, p.64) and Jones as a small-time card-sharpener (C, p.27)

However, the most significant feature in which Brown and Jones resemble each other is their fatherlessness. They are both illegitimate sons who have never known their fathers.
Their roles in the ‘comedy’ in which they are going to take part are contradictory. Sharrock in his interesting study\(^\text{37}\) notices that according to the terminology of classical Greek drama, Brown is the *eiron*\(^\text{38}\), the character that deprecates himself thus making himself invulnerable. Brown insists that he is comedian, that he is not committed to anything, that nothing concerns him, but he will later see how wrong he is.

Jones, on the other hand, is the *alazon*, the imposter who pretends to be something more than he is. More specifically, Jones is the *miles gloriosus* type of alazon, a man of words, not deeds, a braggard who is to be exposed and ridiculed in the course of the comedy.

Parts one and two of the novel establish Jones as the *miles gloriosus*. In part three, however, there is a development in Jones character, a development which lends a different meaning to the word comedian. Brown forces him to play his role to the end and turns him, unintentionally, into a hero.

There is another feature typical Greenesque feature of Brown. Despite his denying it, his sins and disreputable way of living, Brown is another of the priests without the Church, he is, as Martha calls him, “a failed priest, a *pretre manque*“(C, p.225) Brown claims that he is living in a spiritual void created by his sense of fatherlessness: “And my real father? Presumably he was dead but I felt no genuine curiosity about him... yet my lack of curiosity was a hollow where a hollow should not have been. I had not plugged the hollow with a substitute. No priest had come to represent a father to me, and no region of the earth had taken the place of home.” (C, p.222-3) This is the heart of the matter. Brown views life as a comedy, because he had never had a father on earth and he believes he has lost faith in the Father in heaven under whose shadow life is ‘a very serious affair’(C, p.31) Hence, I think, his insistence that life was a comedy, not the tragedy for which ‘I had been prepared ‘”(C, p.31)

According to the literary theory, the traditional tragedy is governed by a belief in a transcendent reality, and its protagonists are endowed with a stature beyond that of ordinary human beings. They engage heroically in a doomed struggle with those

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\(^{38}\) The alazon (Ὀλαζών), in Greek comedy is the opponent of the Eiron (Ἠφέων). They are impostors that see themselves as greater than they actually are, and their usual function in a drama is as blocking humors, characters predominated by one trait that block the romance between the hero and heroine. Two such alazons are the *senex iratus*, the heavy father, and the *miles gloriosus*, the boasting soldier. (from Wikipedia)
transcendental powers (fate, gods), and the inevitability of their struggle, their very mortality, lends them dignity and evokes a catharsis of pity and fear in the audience\textsuperscript{39}.

Brown’s apparent loss of faith in anything beyond the harsh horrors of human reality leads him to view life as a comedy in which “there must be a power which always arranges things to happen in the most humiliating circumstances” (\textit{C}, p.31) He resorts to this credo time and again in an attempt to avoid the seriousness of life; in the face of death: “The corpse in the pool seemed to turn out preoccupations into comedy. The corpse of Doctor Philipot belonged to a more tragic theme; we were only a sub-plot affording a little light relief”\textsuperscript{(C, p.57)}

In the midst of his tormented love affair with Martha he insists: “... we belonged to the world of comedy and not of tragedy...” \textit{(C, p.161)} Brown protests too much. He is still deeply anchored in the spiritual climate of faith. He keeps dreaming of himself as an exile: “I had an odd dream... I was walking by the side of a lake in the moonlight and I was dressed like an altar boy .... then .... I walked on dry pebbles and.... the lake existed only as a gleam on the far horizon of the desert...” \textit{(C, p.74)}, “I fell asleep and dreamt I was a boy kneeling at the communion rail... The priest came down the row ...., but when he came to me he passed me by.” \textit{(C, p.204)}. Brown’s abandonment of faith emerges from his subconscious as a painful exile. He still has a religious ways of looking at various situations. When he goes to rescue Smith from the beggars near the Post Office he tells: “I had to find my way to reach him, and once my hand encountered a stiff inhuman stump... I forced it on one side, and I felt revolted by myself, as though I were rejecting misery. The thought even came to me, ‘What would the fathers of visitation have said to me?’ So deeply embedded are the disciplines and myths of childhood” \textit{(C, p.156)}.

After Jones’ proposal of a lucrative partnership in a transaction with Papa Doc’s government, Brown has a vision of a “high mountain above the desert: from which ‘the devil displayed all the kingdoms of the world’”\textit{(C, p.197)}

Brown’s religious vocabulary is neither casual nor superficially used. Whenever he encounters a moral dilemma he reverts to this ‘myth of childhood’. He is obsessed by the thought of death and nothingness. One of his few treasured belongings is a paper weight shaped like a coffin with the initials R.I.P. inscribed on it. \textit{(C, p.51)} When he stands over

the swimming pool talking to the Smiths in an attempt to divert them and conceal the dead body in the pool from them, he thinks: “If a spirit hovers, as some believe, for an hour or two over the cadaver it has abandoned, what banalities it is doomed to hear, while it waits in a despairing hope that some serious thought will be uttered, some expression which will lend dignity to the life it has left.”(C, p.54)

These thoughts, this craving for seriousness and significance, do no fit a self-avowed atheist; they are indicative of Brown’s deep concern for what lies beyond the mere fact of death. Brown’s obsession with death, his tormented dreams, his religious vocabulary and his painful response to misery and suffering, put in doubt his self-avowed hedonism and atheism.

But if Brown’s spiritual exile was brought about by his sense of fatherlessness, which has haunted him all his life, it is now, towards the end of his life, that he can make his peace with faith and with himself when he finds a father substitute. The two father figures whom Brown chooses to adopt are Mr Smith, the presidential candidate, and Doctor Magiot. Mr Smith and his wife are described at the outset as two disproportionately zealous missionaries for vegetarianism. Brown concedes that Smith is a ‘genuine article’(C, p.12), but portrays him as a rather comic figure; an old man with large innocent hairy ears (C, p.10), who is naively preoccupied with his vegetarian mission (C, p.19), who listens to the stories of the horrors of Haiti with tourist-like incredulity (C, p.15), and adores his militant wife with an old-fashioned gallantry.

Smith carries his absurd goodness and naivity to such extremes that Brown is disarmed of his cynicism and cannot but admire the man who believes so passionately in the integrity of all the world (C, p.160)

As I have already mentioned above, Jones and Brown are like the twins and the interchangeability of the names Brown, Jones and Smith, all of the most common surnames in English language, is not incidental. Not only Brown, but Jones as well, both of them rootless illegitimate sons, find a in Mr Smith their father:

“‘I wish I’d seen more of them’, Jones said.’There’s something about him.’ He added surprisingly,’He reminded me of my father. Not physically, I mean, but, well, a sort of goodness.’

‘Yes, I know what you mean. I don’t remember my father.’
'To tell you the truth my memory’s a little dim, too.’
‘Let’s say the father we would have liked to have.’
‘That’s it, old man. Exactly.’” (C, p.195)

Another substitute-father is Doctor Magiot. He, too, is one of the dedicated who proves Brown Brown wrong by his readiness to die for love. The last letter from Doctor Magiot to Brown urges Brown to accept himself as a fellow-humanist. The letter reads like a father’s will: “We are humanists, you and I. You won’t admit it perhaps, but you are the son of your mother and you once took that dangerous journey which we all have to take before the end. Catholics and Communists have committed great crimes, but at least they have not stood indifferent. I implore you. Take it as the last request of a dying man – if you have abandoned one faith, do not abandon all faiths. There is always an alternative to the faith we lose. Or is it the same faith under another mask?”(C, p.286)

Brown is a comedian, but he cannot remain an indifferent spectator of the drama. In the world divided between observers and doers, between the indifferent and the committed, the term comedian is a title of nobility. The test of belief (C, p.297), the proof of sincerity (C, p.253), is when a man is ready to die for it. Marcel had died for the love of an old woman, Doctor Magiot had died for the love of his people and Jones had died for the love of his role. Brown does not die but, paradoxically, ends up as an undertaker, a man who is there, to use a nice phrase employed by Sharrock, to redeem from nothingness commemoration of those who died for love or integrity.

2.5 Pursuer and Pursued

The motive of pursuit in its numerous variations, beside religiosity, constitutes another characteristic feature part of Greene’s works. Very often the pursuit is interconnected with the religiosity as in Greene’s imagination God is frequently depicted as a pursuer – the Hound of heaven. Sometimes direct as with Sarah in The End of the Affair, sometimes the tool of pursuit is one’s consciousness – as with Priest in The Power and the Glory and Scobie in The Heart of the Matter.

In fact, religiosity and pursuit are inseparable. The theme of pursuit makes the story thrilling, and religious sense endows the narrative with depth and more general message.
In this section of my thesis I will try to analyze the motive of pursuit from different points of views, i.e. whether the pursuit is external or comes from within the character, whether the character is pursuer or pursued, passive or active. I will focus mainly on Greene’s Catholic novels, where as I mentioned above, the aspect is most obvious and forms the main structure of the novel. Therefore I will focus on two novels, *Brighton rock* and *The End of the Affair*, where the motive forms the basic structure of the plot. I have already analyzed *Brighton rock* above, so let us focus on *The End of the Affair* more particularly. *The power and the Glory* makes reference to the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God; in *The End of the Affair* it becomes its subject. Greene attempted to embody this strangeness in the adulterous affair between two people who stand apparently outside of Catholicism.

The story takes place in London during the Blitz and immediately afterwards. In the first part the novelist Bendrix, in whom we can feel Greene himself, narrates the story of his passionate love affair with Sarah, the wife of a senior civil servant in retrospective in ich-form. The relationship abruptly ends after the incident during an air raid, when the two lovers are trapped in a house which is being bombed and Bendrix is apparently killed. After he recovers, Sarah without saying a word, leaves him. Two years has been Bendrix tortured by his jealousy wondering which man now Sarah loves. After those two years he haphazardly meets Sarah’s husband, Henry, and this event moves him to hire a private detective to find out the truth. The private detective, Parkis, succeeds in stealing Sarah’s diary which contains the story of her conversion.

The novel thus presents two competing versions of the end of the affair by shifting from Bendrix’s reconstruction of the past events and the counter version found in Sarah’s diary. It contains the accounts of what happened during that night – how Sarah found Bendrix buried under the front door believing that he had been killed and how she vowed that if he

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40 Graham Greene was 47 years old when *The End of the Affair* was published. He used his own adulterous affair with Lady Catherine Walston, wife of a diplomat, as the basis for the novel. The British edition of the novel is dedicated to „C“ while the American version is made out to „Catherine.“ Moreover, Greene’s own house at 14 Clapham Common Northside was bombed during The Blitz.
is restored to life, she will give him up as her lover and return to her husband. And this she does.

The Sarah’s desperate prayer is undoubtedly climax of the novel: “I knelt down on the floor: I was mad to do such a thing; I never even had to do it as a child – my parents never believed in prayer, any more than I do. I hadn’t any idea what to say… Maurice was dead… I said slowly, I’ll give him up for ever, only let him be alive with a chance.”(EA, p. 93)

The description of the effects of the prayer, Sarah’s search for God, her first and following steps into a new territory, appear sometimes persuasive, sometimes less. The first impulse – the grant of the wish of the desperate prayer - is probably for many believers an attested fact. Because Sarah had been baptised as a child without her knowing it, there had to be a strong impulse to show her the way to faith. Here the impulse is the ejaculatory prayer.

Reading the journal, Bendrix finds out about Sarah’s vow and is relieved to know that she still loves him. Her journal tells him of her visits to Richard Smythe, a rationalist preacher whom she hopes will convince her of the futility of her vow but whose words only make her believe even more strongly. Finally, it is the Smythe who is converted – he falls in love with her and his atheism is shattered. Smythe must have been a poet, indeed, to express his sentiment in such a beautiful sentence: “I’m not a rich man. It’s the only bribe I can offer, giving up my faith.”(EA, p. 119)

At first hating and resentful of the God she now believes in, she later comes to a deeply felt peace. In a late journal entry she begs God to take her peace and give it instead to her ex-lover. Bendrix is sure that he can compete against God he does not believe in and tries to confront her. Sarah avoids him, runs away in the rain, and dies from pneumonia a week later.

At her cremation, he discovers from Sarah’s mother that she was secretly baptized a Catholic at the age of two. After this revelation, coincidences keep piling up that imply Sarah’s intervention: Sarah’s mother arrives just as Bendrix unthinkingly prays to Sarah to stop a seduction of a young girl, the detective Parkis tells of his son’s cure of stomach pains after the boy dreamt that Sarah came and touched him; and the preacher, Smythe, is cured of the strawberry mark on his cheek, kissed by Sarah at their last meeting. In the end,
Bendrix moves in with Henry at his invitation, still hateful and jealous of Sarah’s lover/God in whom he too has reluctantly come to believe.

Once again Greene’s text contains the classic elements of the Catholic revival: the adulterous Sarah at the heart of Christianity; her willingness to give up everything for Bendrix’s life, the upended ideologies of both Smythe and Bendrix; and the amorous God who hounds Sarah and, at the end of the novel, hounds the unwilling Bendrix.

Greene in his novels often writes about various types of love. In *The end of the Affair* he depicts the development of an accidental physical relationship into a deep bond which even transcends the corporality and turns into the love to God. The author, in my opinion, intends to demonstrate that hate can be turned into love and that God is a tireless pursuer and a teacher of love of him and in this way of love as such.

The usual amorous triangle of Henry – Sarah – Bendrix is disturbed by remarkable person – God. Sarah’s personal development is, regardless of miracles, which, in my opinion, actually weaken the impact of the book, psychologically and artistically veracious.

Under the story lay Greene’s opinion about the interminability of the sacraments, in this case the baptism for Sarah had been baptised as two year old and it works.

Most of the book, as I have mentioned, is narrated from Bendrix’s point of view in the *ich*-form. Inevitably is then also Sarah’s husband, Henry, characterised how he is seen by her lover. Bendrix tries to make Henry, whom I quite liked and also Greene not completely dislikes, ridiculous, because he is jealous with him. But later in the novel he finds his way to him.

Every spot, each little remark bears Greene’s mark of his stylistical art ironically characterise people and their jobs. When Bendrix says: “Henry was important, but important rather as an elephant, from the size of his department.”(*EA*, p. 10) Then this characteristic involves both Bendrix malice brought about by jealousy as well as Greene’s own ironical view of civil servants.

Greene lets Bendrix be jealous only of the fact that Sarah spends much more time with Henry than he does. He is not jealous of other aspects of marriage, because he knows, that she does not love her husband. So Bendrix, in his solitude, envies Henry Sarah’s company, but he has no doubts, that she stays with him only out of habit and respectful boredom. But Bendrix is jealous even of this friendly companionship.
Similar relationships between husband and wife are to be found in other couples – in *Comedians* Martha’s, Brown’s lover, marriage, the Scobie’s in *Heart of the Matter*, Charley Fortnum and Clara in *Honorary Consul*, to mention some. Perhaps the images of Greene’s own marriage?

As mentioned above, the reckless and non-committal relationship between Sarah and Bendrix evolves in mutual love and comes into impass for Sarah can not choose between Bendrix and her husband. Lonely Bendrix broods in his room: "Poor Henry. But why should I say poor Henry? Didn’t he possess in the end the winning cards – the cards of gentleness, humility, and trust?" (EA, p. 26) "Love dies, affection and habit win the day." (EA, p. 71) Greene shows that Bendrix is aware of his jealousy. He realises that all his jokes and attempts to make Henry ridiculous are rooted in his loneliness and envy. Bendrix estimates his mischievous remarks correctly: “You look for a weapon” (EA, p. 10) Behind the relationship between Sarah and Bendrix looms gradually the central theme – Sarah’s religious conversion, the transformation of bodily relationship into less egoistic love. The impulse is, quite persuasively, an involuntary ejaculatory prayer. The starting point of Bendrix is depicted parallelly – his gradual evolution from God hater who later succumbs not only to the fact that God exists but also in his hatred.

The second part, Sarah’s diary, is thematically very valuable. Here we find all answers for all contemplations, doubts and ideas, that Bendrix expresses in the first part. However, some sections of the diary are not very convincing and probable. Her remark about pain she inflicts to herself to feel what she makes to others: “I pressed and pressed and I could feel the skin break…” (EA, p. 93). In context, Sarah’s more time repeated self-accusation does not also sound natural and even for the first time it is quite unpleasant: “I am a bitch and fake.” (EA, p. 93, 99) Very artificial and only to wake Bendrix’s jealousy seems to me scraps of the letter Parkis brings to his client: “I have no need to write to you or talk to you, you know everything before I can speak, but when one loves, one feels the need to use the same old ways one has always used.. Dear..” (EA, p. 52) I am not a religious man, but it is difficult to imagine any believer who would write such a letter to God.

The style and formulations of the diary appear sometimes too forced and the ideas seem as if they were someone else’s. When she, for example, depicts how she was bored in the company of Henry’s colleagues one finds the ironical remarks about bureaucratic minds
funny, but such formulations would use maybe Greene or Bendrix, not Sarah: “Henry began a long argument with Mallock full of statistics about whether if widows pensions were raised another shilling they would reach the same height as ten years ago. They disagreed about cost of living, and it was a very academic argument because they both said the country couldn’t afford to raise them anyway.” (EA, 96)

In the third part, which deals with the depiction of Sarah’s posthumous influence on her surroundings, Greene clearly crossed the border of credibility. For example, the cure of Parkis’ son as a result of Sarah’s conversion is hardly acceptable. Even less probable is cure of a birthmark on the cheek of a convinced atheist Smythe by Sarah’s compassionate kiss.

Author tries to give natural explanation to all events, he is aware of the fact the all believers come through their prayers to the conclusion, that God uses miracles very cautiously. Never is it a demonstration of His existence, He never lets himself caught red handed with a miracle. He makes thus belief more difficult for worshippers and provides arguments for atheists. Greene cannot mediate them this experience, because they do not accept the first premise – the existence of God. The granting of a prayer is a miracle for a believer and a clear succession of natural events for people who do not believe. Whenever Sarah feels like breaking her promise God, or a coincidence, comes to help her.

When you accept the first premise – the existence of God – then there is no reason not to accept, that Sarah really saw Bendrix dead and that God her, after her prayer and promise, relentlessly pursues. You can feel the perfection of Greene’s imagination both as an artist and believer in the course of all successive events. Without his inner experience it would not have been possible for him to build whole story on one prayer. Such a prayer is a cry from the deepest depths of one’s soul which calls with all the power and fear for rescue. Such a plea cannot be abolished. The connection is conditioned by the deepest distress and spontaneity. Each deliberation can harm this contact. The searching ones – consciously or unconsciously – can embrace the impulse and take the road. This is Sarah’s story. Sarah experiences her conversion as passionately as her earlier relationships. In a way, the conversion is for her an escape from the necessity to choose between both men. She dies before she gets used to an everyday discipline of belief.
Parallel with her story there is Bendrix’s moral evolution. He starts indeed with egoistic, jealous and materialistic love, but still with love. His hatred is never distinct but always penetrated with love. That is why this attitude is always better than indifference. That is, by the way, explicitly expressed in the end of the novel when Bendrix says that the story should have been ‘a record of hate’(EA, p. 187) but his following words acknowledge the overall impression that right for the start it was not only hate but also desperation or a mangled and – how Bendrix believes – discarded love.

Bendrix’ way to believe is longer then Sarah’s. His hate is primarily jealousy, later defence of his faltering atheism. With reference to Scobie in The Heart of the Matter where Greene says: “Pity is cruel. Pity destroys,” Henry tells Bendrix: “Jealousy’s an awful thing.”(EA, p. 12) With Bendrix love and hate border on obsession. Greene demonstrates on his behaviour what this feature really is: the inability to control oneself which is in fact nervous breakdown. In a way it is a sad alleviation of his negative emotions.

In this work Greene expressed his solid faith. However, one can find here already irony which has become part of his later novels.

After the summary let us come back to the topic of this chapter – the motive of pursuit in novels analyzed in this thesis.

In The Brighton Rock is the motive of pursuit found in many variations and combinations and in fact the whole structure of the story is built on it.

The main focus of the pursuit throughout the novel is always on the central character Pinkie who, in the process of time becomes both pursuer and the pursued. The inner pursuit, with his conscience, is excluded. The fear he experiences is not a projection of his inner experiences but it is rather only his weak hope, even if he denies it. This fear is always quickly transformed into a kind of reaction or action. He tries to silence his fears with another crimes.

The story of Pinkie as a pursuer is the story of individually chased minor characters. First of them is a shabby journalist Hale. He belongs to the characters who are not involved in religious dispute. He is mentioned only briefly in the first part of the story but the story of his pursuit is the starting point of the whole story. Second is Spicer, the one of Pinkie’s gang who fails to distribute the Kolly Kibber card unnoticed and thus jeopardises Pinkie’s alibi.
Pinkie murders Hale and Spicer, threatens to kill Cubitt and plans to kill Rose. He feels threatened by her, because she knows that he is a murderer. He tries to persuade her to a suicide.

But Rose is pursued not only by Pinkie but by her inner contradictions rooted in her faith. When she declined to kill herself Pinkie would be damned due to the suicide, which she has no doubt he will commit, and they would be separated. This hesitation saves her life – Ida comes and rescues her.

Pinkie is chased by Ida and feels threatened by Rose. Simple, passive Rose’s involvement sets in train a divine hunting. On the other hand, Ida’s pursuing of Pinkie is, in fact, conventional chase of the thriller – she tirelessly collects evidence, ‘builds the case’ against Pinkie. Ida as a sort of a vigilante private eye, has another function – her zeal for a fair play and her sheer human curiosity counterpoint the Catholic values of the boy and girl, open in Rose, scornfully suppressed in Pinkie, and throw the novel open to being a debate on human standards. Ida encounters Rose twice, but always in vain – their points of view are too different. Ida’s hearty sensual confidence goes with a common humanist assumption that she knows what is best for other people but she is up against something she does not understand and can only interpret as ‘acting morbid’. Ida functions as a symbol of secularised middle-class society, she appears as the avenging angel of abstract human justice. She is the relentless pursuer who never turns into the pursued.

Greene, indeed, feels sympathy to the poor and pursued, but with Ida, whom he created as a satisfied proletarian, he sees no reason to feel compassion with and that is why he does not give her the part of the pursued.

As a central character and a Catholic Pinkie is the only active pursuer in the all of Catholic novels. In *The Power and the Glory* there are two very dissimilar pursuers – the Lieutenant and the half-caste and two similarly dissimilar chased ones – the whisky priest and Father Jose. There are two characters who are chased by the state power in the novel - the flight of the American gangster is put alongside the flight of the priest, their destinies are interwoven. The gangster is there to contrast the priest, but from lieutenants point of view he is not dangerous: “This American did no real harm” (*PG*, p. 191). In the end of the novel the priest travels to the dying bandit to meet his death.
In the character of the whisky priest, the central hero of the novel, both themes merge: externally he chased by state representative due to his faith and his priesthood and internally he is pursued by his conscience because of the sins he has committed which are the result of the unbearable circumstances. The external chase by the police is intensified by priest’s long time isolation from his people and by growing fear of the villagers of the punishment. His inner loneliness has its source in accusations which isolate him even from God.

The author indicates already at the beginning how desperate was the priest’s flight when the priest, looking at the leaving ship, says: “I am meant to miss it.” (PG, p. 17) He says that again to Coral who advises him:”... you could renounce’ and he replies: ‘It’s impossible. There’s no way. I’m a priest.” (PG, p. 40 - 41) It is impossible for him to escape his vocation.

There is another priest in the novel, Father Jose. Unlike whisky priest he succumbed to the pressure and renounced his faith and saved his life with marriage with his cook. Greene depicts him as physically and mentally broken person: “... a lifetime of self-analysis enabled him to see himself as he was, fat and ugly and old and humiliated” (PG, p. 49). Author excuses compassionately some of the reasons of his uncertainty: “His father had been a peon.” (PG, p.95). His sympathy with him is most obvious when he depicts the humbleness with which he reads the mass: “At the elevation of the host you could see his hands trembling….the wounds bled anew for him over every altar.” (PG, p. 95) Earlier he confided to the priest ‘in the burst of confidence’ about his feelings about reading the mass: “Every time I have such a fear” (PG, p. 95) The encounter of the priest with Father Jose who denies him hideout, is depicted at the start also with sympathy and favourable for father Jose because of his former intimidation. Once, at a priest conference, he sat aback ‘...afraid to be noticed, biting his nails...’ Now, when he sees the priest, he is frightened. “‘O God...’ and sends him away. Gradually he loses author’s sympathy and it stays completely only with priest: ‘Go,’ Jose screeched at him, ‘Go and die quickly..’ and slammed the door to him” (PG, p. 118)

Greene created the relentless and ruthless pursuer of the priest, the nameless lieutenant, without any repellent characteristic traits. On the contrary, some of his features are even likeable. One can feel in his always meticulous appearance his zeal not to show any
slackness to his enemies. His fanaticism is rooted in his desire to build better world without God and priests. He is even more priest-like than whisky-priest himself – his room is as comfortless as a prison or a monastic cell. His hatred is not personal, he tells the priest: “I have nothing against you... as a man... It’s your ideas.” ([PG], p.193) But as I have mentioned in previous sections of the thesis, he is isolated from people he is fighting for. His affection to children is awkward: “The lieutenant put his hand in a gesture of affection ... a touch, he didn’t know what to do with it... he went on alone...a little dapper figure of hate carrying his secret of love.... a lean dancer’s face” ([PG], p. 20, 58) In his conversation with the priest the lieutenant realizes his humility and does not accept priest’s self-accusations, he can’t believe them: “The lieutenant looked up as if the thought he was being mocked.” ([PG], p.191) The end of hunt after the priest does not bring lieutenant feeling of triumph but of emptiness: “He looked back on the weeks of hunting as a happy time which was over now... and odd sour grimace, without triumph and hope.” ([PG], p. 206) Even clearer is this despair shown in his dream before execution: “He couldn’t remember afterwards anything of his dreams except laughter, laughter all the time, and a long passage in which he could find no door.” ([PG], p. 207)

In contrast to the lieutenant the second pursuer, the half-caste, is right from the beginning both physically and spiritually off-putting. It is obvious from the start, and the priest knows that, that half-caste is his Judas who will lead him to his cross. In the end of the novel, when the priest is leaving with the police, the half-caste comes to priest to ask his blessing: “I just want your blessing”. The lieutenant chases him away: “Go...you have done your job.” ([PG], p.197)

The only pursued person in *The Heart of the Matter* is Scobie. His pangs of conscience drive him to deeds which eventually lead to destruction of his career. Greene, however, transfers the consequences back to Scobie’s conscience and that leads to his suicide.

In Scobie’s case external and inner pursuit merge. However, the inner pursuit is inseparable from the religiosity when Scobie feels guilty before God.

In *The End of the Affair* the religious theme is not only inseparable from the motive of pursuit, both themes are even identical, because the pursuer is God himself. In all characters their experiences and thoughts mirror their religious development parallel to their destiny as pursued characters.
Sarah barters due to her prayer her love for Bendrix for God’s love. Her pursuit begins with her ejaculatory prayer. Her religious thoughts are manifested through the growing ardency, that God more and more important for her is becoming which indicates that her pursuer is winning. Sarah’s imploring invocations remind by their rhythm of the litanies and in this way emphasize their intensity: “I believe the legend. I believe you were born. I believe you died for us. I believe you are God. Teach me to love. I don’t mind my pain. It’s their pain I can’t stand.” (EA, p. 118).

During her conversion Sarah hesitates all the time because she wants to come back to Bendrix: “I want ordinary corrupt human love.” (EA, p. 121)

The external pursuit by Bendrix and the pensionary detective is important for Sarah only because she still loves Bendrix.

Bendrix’s love for Sarah includes also egoism, jealousy and hatred, that’s why each ‘coincidence’ which should persuade him of the existence of the pursuer only makes his resistance more intense. Author, when characterizing him, always accentuates such features as these: “I’m a jealous man. I measured love by the extent of my jealousy.” (EA, p.53) His is “a story of hatred”(EA, p.55) This hate, this passion to destroy lead him to decision to hire a detective. Bendrix says to Sarah: “I’d rather see you dead than with another” (EA, p. 54) After he has read her diary he underestimates his enemy. He has no doubts that he will regain her. Their encounter, which he enforces with his pursuit, only assures him in his mistake. He experiences a short time without hate and pursuit: “I hadn’t during that period any hatred of her God, for hadn’t I in the end proved stronger? I was the victor, since Sarah loved me.” (EA, p. 129, 131) Eight days later Henry calls him: “You ought to know. Sarah’s dead.” (EA, p.131) Sarah’s sudden death puts an end to few days of peace for Bendrix; the fight against the pursuer, who took Sarah away from him, commences: “I hate you if you exist”(EA, p. 133) he says to God. Paradoxically, this way he already acknowledges His existence.

Sarah’s mother tells Bendrix that she has always wanted her baptism succeeds: “I always had a wish that it would ‘take’. Like vaccination.” (EA, p.160) Bendrix in his reaction to that uses words which should reject God but one can hear an echo of statement of belief:” ...oh, no, it wasn’t you that took, for that would have been magic and I believe in magic
even less than I believe in You: magic is your cross, your resurrection of the body, your holy Catholic church, your communion of saints.” (*EA*, p.161)

In his plea for adjournment alludes the author clearly to Bendrix’s conversion, which also means that his pursuer has won.

Henry, at the beginning self-confident and without any interest in religion, loses gradually his assurance; he tells Bendrix about Sarah’s death: “She kept on asking for a priest. I’m worried…I don’t know what to believe…” (*EA*, p. 180) Parkis confides in Bendrix: “I don’t mind telling you, Mr. Bendrix, that I prayed very hard” (*EA*, p.175) and Smythe explains similarly:”….when I heard she died I prayed.”(*EA*, p. 141)

In *The Comedians* nearly all characters are in a way pursued. In all cases it is an external pursuit by the identical foe; nobody is hunted by inner contradictions.

The omnipresent pursuer is a totalitarian state represented by its police force – the *Tontons Macoute*.

Greene alludes to the totalitarian form of Haiti from the very beginning: When on board of the ship which heads to the island one of the passengers suddenly breaks out in tears, Brown remarks: “.... a suitable way to approach the dark republic... a country of fear and frustration…” (*C*, p. 38, 43) He recalls Dr. Magiot’s prediction about another doctor: “I (Dr. Magiot) fear a small country-doctor .... I only hope you don’t see.... His name ... one day stuck up in electric-lights over the city...” (*C*, p. 78) Later Brown goes with Smith past the sign: “Je suis le drapeau Haitien, Uni et Indivisible. Francois Duvalier.” (*C*, p. 105) The prediction has come true – Duvalier has become a dictator: “ .... the terror started ... the curfew put a barrier .... the American Mission left and the British ambassador was expelled, and the Nuncio never returned from Rome .... The telephone had ceased to work... (*C*, p. 92) “...in the shabby land of terror..”(*C*, p. 223) Mr. Smith takes the first news about the violence with a polite mistrust: “Mr. Smith laughed politely at what he considered my (Brown’s) picturesque exaggeration” (*C*, p. 99) In a talk on board the ship during which a shooting in Port-au-Prince is taken as a matter-of-course, Greene, through Brown, mentions with a mild irony the disbelief of the democratic couple the Smiths: “‘At night when you hear the shooting in the streets you will think perhaps that …’ ‘Shooting? Is there shooting? What shooting_?’ Brown escalates it with his explanation: ‘I have not often heard shooting. They act more silently as a rule’. ‘Who are they?’ , Mr. Smith asked. ‘The
Tontos Macoute’, the purser broke in with wicked glee. ‘The president’s bogey men. They wear dark glasses and they call on their victims after dark. ‘The gentleman is trying to scare us ... They told us nothing about this at the tourist-bureau’,” says Smith to his wife.’ (C, p. 15) The Smiths’ unwillingness to believe in human cruelty (by Greene’s humour even more emphasised) is contrasted with their courage. After few experiences they stop regarding incidents in Port-au-Prince as ‘a foolish mistake.’ When Mrs Smith unwarily gets involved and tries to prevent Concasseaur from committing one of his cruelties, she is thrown aside by him. Later the Smiths use bravely and helpfully their influence and their money to save Jones from detention. That they thus help him to play his careless fraudulent game belong to their characteristics.

Their engagement depends solely on their decision because as American citizens they are protected from the terror. Despite of that they decide to leave when they hear the loudspeaker appeal to schoolchildren to attend the execution: “All the schoolchildren have to attend. Orders from Papa Doc.” (C, p. 189) Mrs Smiths says to Brown: “We are going to fly to Santo Domingo... Mr Smith despairs of everything here.”(C, 190)

Tontos Macoute use similar methods against Brown as against Haitians. Although he is a British citizen, he does not have the privileged status as the Smiths. He is threatened especially because of his hotel in Port-au-Prince which the authorities would like to confiscate and each pretex to do it is to them welcome. Brown is aware of the danger so he welcomes Smiths to stay in his hotel: “These two clients, it had occurred to me, might be worth a good deal more than the money they paid. A presidential candidate surely had status; he would be under the protection of his embassy” (C, 16) Before Brown leaves the ship, he destroys his correspondence “which might be unfavourably interpreted by the authorities ... concerning the possible sale of my hotel... dangerous references to the political situation”(C, p. 39) When somebody knocks on his cabin door he is nervous “...as though I were already back in the republic and a Tonton Macoute might at the door.” He thinks he knows the reason: “Perhaps Fat Garcia, the head of the Tontons, wanted my hotel. They were after me, I felt certain.”(C, p.92) Interrogation to which is Brown submitted is a model of Greene’s mastery in description of human humiliation: “Captain Concasseur was the leader of the party and he held me at gun-point on the verandah,” Brown’s depiction starts; whether Concasseur shoots him or not depends only on his whim: “I could shoot you
very easily. You would have been resisting arrest. (C, p. 183) Concasseur explains the situation and Brown knows that he does not exaggerate. Brown expresses tellingly his fear: “I could feel my nerve going. It needed an effort to stay upright in my chair, for I had a horrible desire to fling myself at Captain Concasseur’s feet. I knew the move would be fatal.” (C, p. 184)

We come to know that Jones is chased already on board the ship. The captain tells Brown about Jones: “I have received a cable ... the police are interested (C, p. 23) Jones’ instincts are due the continuous danger he lives in very keen and immediately he recognizes the utility of the Smiths. When Brown invites the Americans to his hotel, Jones wants to accommodate there too: “I might join you too” (C, p. 17) Brown comments on it as a ‘safety in numbers’. However, directly from the ship Jones goes to detention. Brow, who awaits him in the hotel, assumes Jones found some other accommodation. The local journalist reacts: “Yes. At the police station ... something incriminating in his baggage.”(C, p. 101) Brown and the Smiths find him in his cell with obvious traces of torture: “His face was criss-crossed with pieces of plaster... his right arm ... bandaged...(C, p. 111)

Immediately after Jones’ dismissal, due to the intervention by Smiths, his steep career among the Tontos starts, which, as is with Jones usual, quickly ends and Jones once again is being pursued by authorities. After denying him refuge on a Dutch ship, he finds shelter in the embassy of Martha’s husband. Finally, Jones falls victim to the pursuit by both Brown, who gets madly jealous with him because of Martha, and by his boastfulness when he, in his pride, accepts the role of a guerrilla leader he boated he used to be in Burma. In the end, paradoxically, Jones, a rogue and crook dies like a hero he has always in his dreams longed to be.

To sum up this chapter about the motive of pursuit. The aspect of a pursuer and a pursued is in Greene’s novel quite common and in both cases it can be both external or inner pursuit. Besides some characters transform from pursuer to the pursued and contrariwise, they change also passive and active roles, some of them suffer from both external and internal chase. Religiosity constitutes essential characteristic feature with most characters. Distinction between the believers and atheists corresponds with their role in the pursuit or at least enriches it. In this way you can find out some groups of characters with the same
role or the combination of both roles. The characters are very different but they bear some common features.

It is true especially about the first group, the active external pursuers. Although the reasons for the chase exactly in this group is utmost varied and characteristic features for the group are also variable, there are still some common characteristics. The reasons for a chase are manifold: sense of justice (Ida’s fair-play), treason (half-caste), participation on a murder (Dallow), jealousy (Bendrix), profession (detective Parkis), service duty intensified by jealousy (Wilson), fanaticism (lieutenant), systematic terror by a totalitarian state (Concasseur and his driver). The common feature they share is their primitivism which has, though, in combination with other specific features completely different intensity and colouring in each character. Ida’s primitivism is connected with her good-naturedness; lieutenant’s primitivism is rooted in simplifications typical for fanatics. With Concasseur and his rogues loses primitivism as a feature its meaning compared to their crimes.

Greene judges the role of active pursuers negatively. It results clearly from the nature of most characters in this group, from their narrowness or primitivism, as much as from their motivation which can be basically always traced back to a sole reason.

The only active inner pursuer is God. It is superfluous to emphasize that Greene utmost positively appraises the objectives and victory of that pursuer. The characters who are chased by Him comprise Scobie (in whose case God uses his consciousness as a means of the pursuit), Sarah, Bendrix, Henry, Smythe and suggestively Parkis (in all these cases God is the direct pursuer). From his doubts and uncertainty suffers also Father Thomas (who is like Scobie chased by his conscience).

Another group is made of pursuers who become the pursued ones. This group comprises characters such as Pinkie, Hale, Spicer and also Dr. Philipot. One can feel that Greene is with this group somehow sympathetic because they must suffer from the chase. With Greene you can always find a appreciation of a moral value of suffering. That is why a reader often sees in his characters who are less guilty than others that they have to bear harsher punishment and stronger suffering, the sign that they will be better assessed than the ones who have caused more evil. So the author lets Hale and Spicer more suffer than Cubitt and Dallow, other members of the gang. Hale participated in not a clear way on Kite’s murder, the first boss of Pinkie’s gang and is rushed to death. Spicer who took no
part on Hale’s murder is killed by Pinkie. On the other hand Cubitt and Dallow survive. Dr. Phillipot commits suicide to save himself from Tontos.

The pursueds who become the pursuers are, on the other hand, the young Philipot and Joseph, Brown’s employee who was crippled by Tontos. They stand up against regime and run to the rebels.

Another group are the ones chased by external forces: namely Magiot, Jones, Brown, all the characters from The Comedians. As I have already mentioned, Greene’s sympathy is always with the victims, and it is the case with this group as well even though is sympathy varies according to other characteristics. The difference is not so big as among active pursuers, e.g. between Ida and Concasseaur, and they are all pursued by the same enemy – the totalitarian state. Despite of that fact the author makes clear moral distinction between them and according to it he distributes his sympathy. Three of them – Haitian citizens (Petit Pierre, Hamit, dr. Magiot) – have Greene’s full sympathy. They are connected not only by common enemy – the regime – by also by conjoint violent death. The destiny of Brown and Jones belong to allegorical part of the novel – both Jones’ violent death and Brown’s survival which both are paradoxical outcomes of their roles as comedians – Jones role as an experienced soldier and Brown, who is throughout the novel obsessed by death lands as an undertaker.

Only one character suffers internally and is an active pursuer at the same time: Bendrix. His suffering is rooted in his jealousy, and although Greene does not sympathise with active pursuers, in Bendrix case he alleviates his rule, because although Bendrix feels sometimes hate to Sarah it is only the other side of love.

The external passive pursuit, but before all the inner one, is reserved for those Greene feels the biggest sympathy and compassion with. This pursuit results in more or less voluntary death. It is the case of two heroes who form the group of externally – internally pursued characters – in our novels they are Sarah and the whisky-priest. These are the ones who, as it is obvious in the novels and as I have written above, enjoy the highest moral appreciation by Greene. As it is common with this novelist, typical Greene’s hero is not a great individual of Greek tragedy. He is, rather, the little man, who is in manner of Greek tragedy immediately placed in a situation, that makes him guilty. This situation is simply his
membership to the fallen world, the stage upon which the drama of redemption is to be played.

The most important aspect of the motive of pursuit is a close connection with the religiosity.

Invariable presence of the element in many of his book is, I think, a symbol of the pursuit of one’s soul, his inner self by God. The hero is often hunted down in his search for a peace that is often found only in death. Later the religious theme becomes more explicit: God is a pursuer from whom there could be no escape, even when despair dictates a way out that looks, from Catholic point of view, as damnation. Caught between pain and pain, tormented by pity, afraid of damnation, Greene’s characters are often the victims only of their unforgettable love for God.

Worth mentioning is also the relationship, and its variations which can be found in all the novels discussed here, between the protagonist and a character who loves him or who is loved by him. Greene is all the time attracted by such relationships which mirror the complexity of human emotions. Such a relationship is between Rose and Pinkie (BR), the whisky-priest and Marie, the mother of his illegitimate daughter (PG), Louise and Scobie (HM), Bendrix and Sarah (EA), Martha and Brown (C).

Rose loves Pinkie but he feels threatened and chased by her because she knows too much about him. The whisky priest is, similarly, chased away from the last village to which he comes by the mother of his child. Louise’s stubborn repeated wish to take him to the confession drives Scobie to the last crime against God which he is not able to cope with anymore and leads him to suicide. Bendrix has Sarah, whom he loves, sleuthed. Martha tells the jealous Brown so often about Jones, that she provokes him to betray Jones.

In other words, as I have mentioned before, love in Greeneland is never happy and the beloved ones are often the cause of many disasters.

The analysis of the theme of pursuit proves that the author his pursuers and pursued never repeats, neither in generally nor in details. The variety of motives and variants presents the possibility to assess certain moral qualities. Greene highly values suffering, victim, engagement and because of that he prepares for his favourite characters a gruesome destiny. That is a psychologically proved fact, because engagement almost always requires readiness to make sacrifices and to face the danger.
Conclusion
In my thesis I tried to analyze certain common aspects I find most appealing in six of my favourite novels by Graham Greene. I looked into his background, wider social and cultural context and in second part I compared some of the main characters and found several common features, the most typical being the figure of the father in its various forms, the motive of exile, lost childhood and finally the theme of the pursuit, which is typical for his Catholic novels. In this concluding chapter I will sum up what I appreciate about his books and, of course, I also have some critical remarks.

As I have already written, according to Greene the most important things in writer’s life occur during his first sixteen years. He definitively found the topics which pervade all his works – his preoccupation with evil, balance of loyalties, betrayal - in early age.

Besides childhood the decisive factor in the process of forming his world view was his encounter with the Catholic teaching. In the context of English society with its prevailing Protestantism, Catholicism gave him frame of reference to express his urge to dissent, to rebel against what he sees as comfortable but lifeless bourgeois mediocrity. According to Greene, Catholicism, unlike too rationalistic Protestantism, has retained a sense of metaphysical Evil and Good, mystery which for an outsider seems to be paradoxical – there is not a abrupt division between a saint and sinner, rather the saint and the sinner conflate, or, as I understand it, the indispensable prerequisite for achieving sainthood is to be a sinner, to have knowledge of sin. Actually, Greene says that it is sin, weakness and failure, not success, which makes us human. A motto of most of his books could then be: failure humanizes, success dehumanizes. Power, glory and success corrupt human being with pride which has the effect that one’s personality becomes a hollow shell, Eliot’s hollow man.

Greene warns and protests against the abuse of power and manipulation by the rich and powerful of the world and always is on the side of the underprivileged and suppressed people.

His sense of justice drove him into an active engagement. Unfortunatelly, his criticism is one sided – it concentrates only on the misdeeds committed by the West. He especially condemns the cynism of US policy which supported oppressive regimes in the South America. Perhaps because of lack of personal experience with the reality of Communist
regimes, as a typical leftist intellectual, he embraced Marxism as a doctrine which could help improve living conditions of poor peoples of so-called developing countries. He put much effort into the project of convergence of Marxism and Catholicism, an idea which was doomed to failure from the very beginning because teaching of Karl Marx and Christian doctrine, apart from certain outward resemblance, are irreconcilable. Marxism namely reduces human personality only on economical level, sees it as a result of objective socio-economical circumstances which can an individual hardly change. It deprives a man of his individuality, because it is lacking the third dimension, the vertical, which gives human life a meaning. Without this vertical the world would be reduced only to a flat two-dimensional chessboard where the human activity would be reduced to mere biological function of eating, excretion and reproduction. According to Christian teaching, and Greene of course, roots of human life are transcendent and the only criterion of one’s deeds should be solely ‘the inner voice’, one’s conscience. A person should listen to it and act accordingly and keep his integrity.

All these ideas are visible landmarks in the country called Greeneland. At the beginning, there is a maxim from Delphes – gnóthi seauthon – know thyself. Greene’s books is the appeal for individualization to achieving one’s personal identity which is out of control of manipulation by organized religions, political parties and ideologies.

However, I would have certain objections. I think that Greene takes his appeal to individuation to extremes. I agree with him in many things and it is true that one should doubt everything, not to mindlessly accept what is said to him because doubt is the beginning of all knowledge. I agree that heretics and dissidents are important for any society because they function as grains of sand in the machinery of established political systems which would otherwise run blindly from force of habit ad infinitum. But society composed only of dissidents would fall apart.

I also agree that it is not possible to love mankind as such, that it is possible to love only individual people and that behind the great slogans about love for mankind there is always manipulation and greed for power. Nevertheless, we do not live as individuals, we are part of a society and we should be loyal at least to our country. In fact, message of Greene’s books is that loyalty to oneself and to people we love should be put above to the loyalty to country or ideology.
This is absolutely unacceptable for me. In certain situations this attitude is called treason and should be severely punished. The flagrant example of such a traitor is Maurice Castle, the hero of the book which is not discussed here, *The Human Factor*. He is a spy and because of his love for a woman he betrays his country and finally defects to enemy. Also Scobie, because of his sentimentality, neglects his duties as a police officer. During the war time he puts above his personal feelings to his service to the country.

I think, that the problem with Greene is that he does not distinguish to whom or which should one be loyal. It makes no difference for him if it is loyalty to a totalitarian ideology, or to one’s fatherland. According to Greene, one should be always disloyal and suspicive of state power, regardless of what state, because they are basically the same, which is simply not true. I think it is obvious that there is a big difference between the system of the former Soviet Union and e.g. Great Britain. Probably not for Greene. For him the arch enemy and the evil force is not the Soviet Union but the USA. His anti-americanism sometimes borders on obsession.

Another thing I find disturbing is the religiosity. To be more precise, I find one thing about religious belief confusing, not only in Greene but generally. As I have declared I do not believe in god and in his son Jesus Christ, but I agree that certain religion or common belief is necessary for the unity of society otherwise it fragments. However, to such extend should one’s religious belief find expression in one’s behaviour, in one’s deeds? In the Czech Republic, perhaps the most atheistic nation in the world, 32%\(^{41}\) people say that they in some way believe in god. In the USA it is perhaps 90%. If there are so many Christians how is it possible that the world is not much better place to live? I understand that man is naturally sinful, but still, there should be some difference, otherwise, what is religion here for?

Last thing I find annoying and which is present in nearly each book is author’s intimate knowledge of prostitutes and brothels. Again, it puts Greene’s Catholicism into a strange light. I know, he is a sinner, and probably proud of that, and a sinner has, paradoxically, more direct access to God’s mercy, etc. However, I still think that Greene as a Catholic should have known better. Again, if he does not follow *some* morality, what is religion here for?

\(^{41}\) according to 2001 census
These are the questions that come to my mind after reading Greene’s novels. I have called Greene poet of paradoxes and perhaps that is why I read him.

However, will people read Greene’s novels in future? John Spurling42 finds three things which guarantee staying-power of his works:

First is that Greene explores real pain and unhappiness of his protagonists. Some of his books have had a powerful effect on those in need of spiritual comfort but also on ordinary reader’s feelings. Spurling highlights the act of confession, “the sharing of one’s pain in itself and regardless of its ritual orthodoxy” as “a movement towards the city called Peace of Mind.”43

The second thing that makes Greene more than a temporary writer is, according to Spurling, what is most contemporary about him: his settings and situations. In spite of its distortions, Greeneland is real. No European writer since Conrad has put “the hot, poor and foully governed places” of the earth on paper as vividly as Greene. Spurling does not say that Greene described them as they are but how they appeared to the European visitor in the middle decades of the twentieth century. They are not mere heightened descriptions, they are, like Conrad’s “moral landscapes”44 Spurling asserts that Greeneland “documents and mythologizes transitional phase of history of the new American hegemony, providing the equivalent to Dicken’s early industrial London, or Chekhov’s pre-revolutionary Russia”45

The third reason is, according to Spurling, one of the central themes of literature, and especially of English literature – the process of growing up, the process leading from dependence and immaturity to responsibility for one’s own actions and the happiness of others. Although it may have been handled with broader sympathy and deeper understanding by greater writers – including Greene’s own masters, James and Conrad – it has never been done with more intimate passion than by Greene.

I would add fourth reason – Greene’s books are simply immensely readable. They describe believable characters asking the questions which one often asks himself. The moral message they include leaves one with an almost archaic feeling of having become a better person in the reading.

43 Spurling 73
44 Spurling 74
45 ibid
This, I believe, is where the strength of Greene’s genius lies and this makes certain that Greene’s characters and dilemmas they solve will appeal to another generation.
Resumé
Název mé diplomové práce je *Antihrdino v románech Grahama Greena*. Ve své práci zkoumám literární dílo anglického spisovatele Grahama Greena.

Práce je rozdělena do dvou částí. V první části se zaměřuji na vlivy, které formovaly myšlení a názory spisovatele a snažím se podat širší obraz doby a kulturní prostředí, které se odraží v díle spisovatele. V druhé části se potom pokouším srovnat hlavní hrdiny šesti jeho románů a najít společné charakteristické rysy, které jsou pro jeho postavy typické.


Graham Greene se narodil v roce 1904 v Berkhamstedu do středostavovské rodiny ředitele internátní střední školy, kterou posléze sám navštěvoval. Greene vzpomíná na své dětství jako na šťastné období svého života, které ale skončilo po dovršení třináctého roku, kdy nastoupil do vyššího stupně střední školy a byl nucen bydlet na internátu s ostatními studenty. Byl to pro něj traumatický zážitek. Zde poprvé se setkal se zlem, které pro něj představoval hoch jménem Carter, který ho šikanoval, trpěl izolací od svých rodičů, které přitom bydleli ve stejném komplexu. Trpěl také traumatem konfliktu loajality neboť jakožto syn ředitele školy byl svými spolužáky instinktivně považován za zrádce. Tyto
potíže vedly k tomu, že mladistvém věku byl poslán na psychiatrické léčení pro své opakované koketování se sebevraždou. Zážitky z dětství – posedlost fenoménem zla, konflikt loajalit, motiv zrady a osamocení a exilu se staly tématem jeho pozdějších děl.

Druhý hlavní inspirační zdroj bylo jeho setkání s Vivien Dayrell-Browningovou v roce 1925, tedy ve stejném roce, kdy dokončil studium a vydal svou prvotinu, sbírku básní Babbling April. Greene se do ní zamiloval a pod jejím vlivem přestoupil ke katolicismu, aby si ji mohl vzít. Jak sám uvádí, konverze to ze začátku byla pouze intelektuální, citovou se stala až po zážitku v Mexiku, kde byl vyslán jako korespondent, aby informoval o pronásledování katolíků v revoluční vládou. Výsledkem jeho cesty byla kniha reportáží Cesty bezpráví, která se později stala podkladem pro jeho slavný román Moc a sláva.

Seznámení s Vivien Dayrell-Browningovou bylo pro Greena důležité i z jiného důvodu. Začal intenzivně studovat katolickou teologii a Vivien ho také uvedla do kruhu oxfordských katolických intelektuálů, kteří měli rozhodující vliv na jeho myšlení. Za všechny uveďme dominikánského historika Bede Jarreta jehoť knihy o středověkém socialismu a jeho nejednoznačný postoj k marxismu měly zásadní vliv na jeho politické názory a jeho celoživotní snahu smířit křesťanství a marxistickou ideologii. Dalším intelektuálem, který na něj měl velký vliv byl kardinál Newman, který konvertoval ke katolicismu v 19. století. Jeho doktrína ontologické a metafyzické existence zla jako faktu života, neustálý vnitřní boj s vlastní vírou a pochybnostmi a dialektické myšlení formovali Greenovu víru a jsou základem spirituální krajiny mnoha jeho knih.

Hlavní inspiraci ovšem Greene nalezhl ve Francii a ve fenoménu tzv. katolického románu.


V této situaci se objevil nový kulturní fenomén dvacátého století – tzv. katolický román. Katolický román má své kořeny v neoromantických a dekadentních formách francouzské


Je pozoruhodné jak se tyto závěry odrazily v Greenově tvorbě. Počínaje Vyhaslým případem z roku 1961 se již jeho romány nezaměřují na osobní spásu nebo zatracení, ale zabývají se lidskou činností odvozenou politických vztahů. V Greenově případě bojem proti zlu chudoby a nespravedlnosti v zemích třetího světa, kde Greene často pobýval a kde našel přátele v tomto boji, ať již to byli nikaragujští Sandinovci nebo panamský generál, který se vzešel diktátu Washingtonu. Největším omylem Greena je jeho angažování na straně marxistických revolucionářů. Marxistická filozofie pouze povrchně vede k osvobození od útlaku a bídy, nakonec v těch zemích, kde zvíří, stávající režim vede k úplné potlačeni individuality a svobody. Pro Greena, snad proto, že neměl osobní zkušenost se životem v tzv. socialistických zemích, říší zla nebyl Sovětský svaz, ale Spojené státy. Neblahý vliv jejich cynické politiky, kdy pod záminkou boje proti
komunismu podporovaly ty nejkrutější diktatury, mohl pozorovat v Jižní Americe na vlastní oči. Greene viděl cestu ve spolupráci katolíků a marxistů, projekt, který neměl šanci na úspěch, protože přes vnější podobnost nelze dlouhodobě smířit materialistický marxismus pro kterého je člověk pouze výsledkem sociálních poměrů, nahraditelným kolečkem v sociálně-ekonomickém systému a křesťanství, které důstojnost člověka odvozuje ze zdroje který je mimo nás a dělá ho jedinečným. Přesto zůstal Greene své vizi věřen až do konce života, což dokazuje jeho poslední román *Mosingore Quichote*. Je vlastně dlouhý dialog mezi katolickým knězem a jeho přítelem, komunistickým starostou, kterí putují postfrankistickým Španělskem. Závěr, ke kterému dospěli je, že ač jsou rozdíly mezi jejich věrami nepřekročitelné, spojuje je to, že nejsou lhostejní a aktivně vystupují proti zlu ve světě. To je podle Greena to hlavní. Aby si člověk zachoval svoji lidskost nemůže mlčet a musí zvednout svůj hlas v boji za lepší svět. Graham Greene to svým dílem dokázal.

V druhé části porovnávám jednotlivé postavy a nacházím jejich společné rysy, které jsou typické pro dílo Grahama Greena. V jednotlivých kapitolách zkoumám ty netypičtější. Je to motiv ztraceného mládí, motiv pronásledování, exilu, religiozity a hlavně postava otce, která je snad pro Greena nejtypičtější, neboť se vyskytuje snad ve všech jeho knihách nejen v těch, které analyzuji v této diplomové práci.

Motiv ztraceného dětství je typický pro první Greenovy romány. Hrdina *Brightonského špalku*, Pinkie, je zlem posedlý mladý gangster, který se za své zkažené dětství, které prožil ve slumu, mstí celému světě. Greene, který dětství považoval za nejdůležitější a nejšťastnější část života, na této postavě zkoumá, kam může vést citová deprivace z raného dětství. Pinkie není ovšem obyčejný delikvent, je to zločin, který zpíval ve sboru a dokonce uvažoval o kněžské dráze. Když mu to nebylo umožněno, odvrhl víru a dal se na dráhu zločinu. Víra je v něm však hluboko uctívá, věří v metafyzické Dobro a Zlo, ve věčné zatracení, atd. v kontrastu ke světské morálce jejich
pronásledovalkyně Idě Arnold, pro kterou existuje jenom tento svět s jeho pojetím spravedlnosti. *Brighton Rock* je vlastně teologická studie konfrontace světa náboženství a sekularismu. V duchu francouzského románu svět náboženství je reprezentován nejhorším z hříšníků, vrahem, přesto ani u takové postavy není jisté zda nedojde ke spasení, zda i v něm se projeví nepochopitelné tajemství boží milost.


V Greenově světě není ovšem otcovství biologický fakt, je to stav mysli, postoj člověka k jeho bližním. Pro Greena je otec ten, kdo na sebe bere zodpovědnost za životy jiných, kdo je připraven se obětovat za ty, kdo se zdají příliš nevinni či bezmocní, aby mohli sami přežít. Přijetí tohoto stavu obvykle, alespoň v jeho katolických románech, zahrnuje duchovní krizi, přehodnocení vztahu s otcem na nebesích a roli otce na zemi. Ve skutečnosti Greene převrací starý archetyp sebeobětování syna na sebeobětování otce.
Nejmarkantnější je to patrně na postavách pátera Chlasta a Scobieho. Zatímco pater se obětuje za své lidi a za svoji víru aby si zachoval svoji integritu a stává se tak hrdinskou postavou, u Scobieho je jeho otcovský komplex spíše projevem neurózy, neboť mu jako jeho děti postupně připadají všichni lidé a nakonec i Bůh sám. Aby je uchránil tak ztrácí svoji integritu a jeho oběť, sebevražda, je zbytečná, neboť jeho slaboštví, neschopnost konfrontovat se s nepříjemnými stránkami života, má devastující vliv na lidi kolem něho.

Dalším obecným motivem je motiv exilu. Typický Greenovský hrdina je nomád, člověk vykořeněný, který marně hledá domov. Žádný z jeho hrdinů nemá šťastné manželství či vztah a když náhodou ano, tak je netrvá dlouho a končí smrtí partnerky nebo je zničen patologickou žárlivostí partnera. Navíc jsou jeho hrdinové pronásledováni. Buď státní mocí, jako páter chlast a všechny postavy z Komediantů, které pronásleduj totalitní stát na Haiti, nebo vnitřně výčitkami svědomí a vědomím vlastní nedostatečnosti, či samotným Bohem, jak se to stalo Sáře a Bendrixovi v Konci dobrodružství.

Obyvatelé Greenelandu jsou prostě skupina zoufalých, nešťastných lidi, kteří se marně snaží nalézt na světě klid a harmonii. Snad v tom tkví kouzlo jeho knih, že se člověk může s jeho postavami ztotožnit, že občas stojí před dilematy, které řeší i Greenovi hrdinové. John Spurling si ve své studii položil otázku, zda se budou Greenovy romány číst i v budoucnu. Našel tři důvody pro ano.


Za sebe dodávám čtvrtý důvod: Greenovy knihy jsou prostě velice čtivé. Popisují uvěřitelné hrdiny, kteří si kladou otázky, které si klade často každý z nás. Morální poselství, které
nesou v člověku zanechává téměř archaický pocit, že se stal lepším člověkem. Proto budou postavy Greenových románů a dilemata, která řeší, oslovovat čtenáře i v budoucnu.
Bibliography


