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# Graham Greene's Work in the Time of the Cold War

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Podpis

## Poděkování

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## Abstrakt

Tato práce zkoumá vliv politického prostředí na tvorbu anglického prozaika Grahama Greena ve druhé polovině jeho tvůrčího života. Zaměří se na proměnu stylu psaní autora, psychologický a morální vývoj charakterů hlavních hrdinů a na celkovou charakteristiku Greenovy poetiky. Práce v úvodu definuje kontext období studené války ve Spojeném království a nastíní politickou situaci v zemích, které se vztahují k životu a tvorbě Grahama Greena. Jádrem práce bude interpretační analýza románů *The Quiet American*, *Our Man in Havana*, *Loser Takes All*, *A Burn Out-Case*, *The Human Factor* a *Monsignore Quijote*. Práce zohlední životopis autora, zejména Greenův autobiografický pohled *A World of My Own*.

## Abstract

The thesis studies the influence of the political environment on the work of the English writer Graham Greene, especially in the second half of his productive life. It will focus on the change of the writing style, psychological and moral evolution of the characters and general characteristic of the Greene's poetics. In the introductory part, the thesis will define the context of the period of the Cold War in relation to the United Kingdom and outline the politic situation in the countries, that are regarding the literary production of Graham Greene. The core of the work will be the interpretation and analysis of the novels *The Quiet American*, *Our Man in Havana*, *Loser Takes All*, *A Burn-Out Case*, *The Human Factor* and *Monsignor Quixote*. The thesis will also take into consideration the biography of the author, particularly Greene's autobiographical diary of his dreams *A World of My Own*.

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## Introduction

In this thesis, I will be dealing with both literary and historical materials from the vast collection of Graham Greene, who is one of the greatest British authors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His work is very significant amongst the world greatest writers and outlines a vast field of themes and historical events and contains some great thoughts about the human being and its problems in the history of mankind.

Successively, I will define the basic features and themes of Greene's literary world, outline his basic ideas and principles. After that I will analyse six novels from the second part of the author's life. The period of these works is around 1950's and further. I will be considering the impact of the political situation on these novels, as well as Greene's personal life that could have possibly influenced the character of the main themes appearing throughout most of the stories.

The fundamental works that I will analyse and deal with are novels written from 1950 until 1990. Namely it is about these: *The Quiet American* (1955), *Loser Takes All* (1955), *Our Man in Havana* (1958), *A Burn-Out Case* (1960), *The Human Factor* (1978) and lastly *Monsignor Quixote* (1982), which was one of Greene's final works written in his 80's. I will also include Greene's autobiographical view *A World of My Own: A Dream Diary* (1992).

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse novels mentioned above using the facts from the life of Graham Greene as well as concerning the historical events on whose background the stories have the settings.

Graham Greene is an author that is appreciated amongst the society and the passion and love for his work is not reduced just for England. His themes are touching a vast number of spots in the world not only geographically but politically and sociologically as well. Greene is indisputably one of the greatest authors of his generation. Not only for the extensity of his work, but especially when it comes to his style of writing. Brilliant stories with even more brilliant and well thought ideas offers the reader both relaxation and thrill. A thrill that is not just in the book itself, but also reminds us our real life.

To understand his novels, we need to know something about his personality and life experience. If we consider Graham Greene's experiences and think about the actual and historical context of his work, it seems that many of his novels, short stories or travelogues have their roots in Greene's real-life experience. That is something very rare, if we consider the fact that most of his texts comes out of the real events and his own both professional and subjective

experiences. Graham Greene's works transcend to many national topics and reflect many historical events in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Although his focus is very extensive, we can divide it into several distinct categories and themes that are constantly repeating in each book from his workshop. The main connecting thing for all his novels, short stories etc. is a struggle with his own past and childhood.

Another issue that resonates in almost every story and needs to be mentioned here is his struggle with Catholic religion and religion in general. In the next chapter *Graham Greene's life experience*, I will introduce this issue more deeply.

Another big Greene's theme is the question of human responsibility and irresponsibility. He asks how it is possible that people do such terrible things like wars or genocides. This is also more deeply analysed in one of the final chapters of this thesis called *Human responsibility and irresponsibility*.

Lastly, I would like to mention the motive of a theatre play, which appears in numerous examples. That relates to frequent quotations of William Shakespeare, the iconic character of the world of literature, who has inspired uncountable number of authors including Graham Greene.

We must also mention his pathetic and ironic voice, that is present in his entire work and which he puts into mouth of his characters. Probably this comes out of his scepticism for the world around him and for the society. Probably it comes partly from his origin, because the British tends to be ironic and their humour is a little different from the rest of the Europeans.

Finally, his heroes and anti-heroes are full of ideas and wishes that the society should bring some sort of redemption to them – but it doesn't come. His world is full of false hope, that tomorrow will be better than today. Graham Greene says: It simply won't, but we must learn how to get on with it.

The simplicity of the events going on in his novel is so tempting, that it reminds me the real life more than just a fiction. And it really is the real life that Greene considers as a basic element of his stories. The element that creates and helps to create the characteristics of his heroes.

# 1. A brief familiarization with the author and context of his work

## 1.2. Graham Greene's life experience

To understand Graham Greene's philosophy and themes that he is dealing with and that define his style and entire work we must have a look at his vast bibliography that contains not only novels, short stories, but also essays and critics. The texts are based on his background, mostly having their roots in his childhood experience. There is a big stress put on his struggle with Catholicism, also for the education and activities connected with the late period of his career, which means travelling and reporting about political situations in various parts of the world. In his work, he defines his opinions about religion as well as about the politics and makes his statements towards the current social issues.

Greene was always in the heart of the events. He was always part of the action, in some cases he was even a visionary, for example in the case of the Vietnam War which he basically predicted in his novel from 1950's *The Quiet American*. We can find many examples that confirm this statement, which I will be doing in the part of the analysis in this thesis. Now we must briefly outline the author's biography and I will be focusing on his life experience that leads us to the main themes often used in the novels that I will be analysing in the following chapters. There is a brief introduction to Graham Greene not only as the author, but also as a strong and rich personality.

Graham Greene was born in 1904, Berkhamsted, UK. Being the fourth out of six children, he probably suffered from a lack of the attention and it was difficult for him to assert himself. However, as he was risen in such a big social group, his prosocial skills and attitudes were well developed and matured enough, so the ground for his future social themes was found. Although it may seem to us as a quite happy childhood, it wasn't that case at all. That was predominantly caused by the attitude of his parents and their quite distanced and cold relationships. Especially the distance between him and his mother was the biggest trauma he suffered from in his early childhood.

Later, when he started the school attendance, it all went even deeper. His mother did not give him enough love, nor his father did (he was a headmaster at the Berkhamsted school where Graham was studying) and so he was looking for distraction somewhere else. From the early age Graham found his passion in reading books. During that time, he was reading authors like

Rider Haggard or R. M. Ballantyne, which was very influential for him as a future author as well as for the personality and mental development of the boy himself. He was so interested in literary world that it even let him to the exclusion of school attendance, which put him into a trouble not only for once. Avoiding school classes and the consequences that he had to carry together with the fact that he was the headmaster's son put him into a quite tricky situation in terms of the relation to the other pupils. He was often offended by the other boys and had difficult position in the school, which made him even more stubborn.

These were the forming factors for his later career as a writer. These troubled years brought the themes of treachery and betrayal into Greene's works as well as the need and the desire of his characters to be recognized by others, especially when it comes to the relationship – father – mother – child. That would be the example of Wormold and Milly in the novel *Our Man in Havana*. Another aspect of unhappy childhood is in Greene's general perception of children as such. I will closely analyse this problem in chapter 3.1. that is dedicated only just to the Greene's attitude towards his children's characters as well as the basic characteristics of children's character in general by his conception.

His problems in puberty let him even to a suicide attempt, when he swallowed twenty aspirins or tried to play the Russian roulette. These circumstances forced his older brother Raymond to convince his father to send Graham to London for psychoanalysis sessions, where he spent six months of psychiatric treatment. This treatment was based on making his own dream diary, which also appears later in his work, for example in one of his very last and post-mortem published work, a dream diary *A World of My Own*.

After this rather dark period of his life, which is, according to Greene himself, full of bore, appears another experience, that is projected in a high number of Greene's novels - the aspect of a religion, to be more precise it is the Christianity that stimulates Greene's philosophical needs. (Čulík 2002: pg. 44) He is constantly trying to evaluate the Christianity as such, but he usually ends up disappointed and unable to find the balance between him and the church.

This became almost a defining feature of his work and holds a very special place in the author's workshop. Most of his characters are searching for the answers about their religion, especially the Catholicism. Greene is very sceptical about the Catholics and negative when it comes to the evaluation of the moral qualities of the Catholic church and its members in general.

We can often see Greene's love for everything exotic. That is the reason why his stories have their settings in distanced countries or exotic landscapes; Kongo in *A Burn-Out Case*, Cuba in *Our Man in Havana*, Vietnam in *The Quiet American*, or Cuba in *Our Man in Havana*.

Together with the criticism of the Catholic church also this diversity of landscapes is another typical feature of Greene's novels and has its base in his passion for travelling and exploring the remote spots in the world. The remoteness of these places pretty much sums up the whole Greene's philosophy that appears in the characteristics of his characters. They are mostly distanced from the society around them as well as they are far away from their own characters. He sees it as a tool how to find the genuine uninvolved and uninfluenced character of our real personalities. That is visible on *M. Querry* in the novel *A Burn-Out Case*.

During his travelling period, he was also often confronted with the aspect of death. Not only on the example of others, but also on his own. That built the base for the themes that are dealing with the biggest existential issue: the threat of death vs. maintaining the moral qualities and principles. This experience is often projected in characteristics features of the main protagonists and very often they fail in this final question. However, Greene admits that deciding in this type of situation is not easy at all for an individual. On the contrary, he emphasizes the difficulty of overcoming our own fear of death.

We could highlight many more things from his life, but for this thesis it will be enough. We have explained the main and the most basic themes, their roots and their probable causes, now I will put them into practice in the next part of this work, where I will outline these issues in several chapters. I will go through six different titles that will gradually show these theories mentioned above in practice.

### 1.3. Greene's brief bibliography

As an author, Greene is one of the most productive writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His bibliography on the official website [greeneland.tripod.com](http://greeneland.tripod.com) contains over 70 titles, including essays, short stories etc. There is an extraction of that list, that consist of the most important and significant titles, mostly novels. The works below are lined up in the linear order by the year of their publication.

- 1929 *The Man Within*. London: Heinemann
- 1932 *Orient Express*. New York: Doubleday
- 1938 *Brighton Rock*. London: Heinemann
- 1940 *The Power and the Glory*. London: Heinemann
- 1943 *The Ministry of Fear*. London: Heinemann
- 1948 *The Heart of the Matter*. London: Heinemann
- 1951 *The End of the Affair*. London: Heinemann
- 1955 *Loser Takes All*. London: Heinemann
- 1955 *The Quiet American*. London: Heinemann
- 1958 *Our Man in Havana*. London: Heinemann
- 1961 *A Burn-Out Case*. London: Heinemann
- 1966 *The Comedians*. London: Bodley Head
- 1969 *Travels with My Aunt*. London: Bodley Head
- 1973 *The Honorary Consul*. London: Bodley Head
- 1978 *The Human Factor*. London: Bodley Head
- 1982 *Monsignor Quixote*. London: Bodley Head
- 1992 *A World of My Own*. London: Bodley Head

## 1.4. Greeneland

Greeneland is a term that describes the environment where the stories take place. The explanation of this feature may come out of Greene's philosophy and his attitude to life and experience that he put into his writing. As he was maturing in fast modern world full of people who are rushing through their lives without noticing the real sense of existence, he was struggling with that feeling of nonsense and ignorance. That is why he created his own world, which reflects every one of these attributes of the modern age and gives his characters the opportunities to deal with the issues he considers as the most important in people's life.

Greeneland is a place, where life becomes more intense and the life experience of the characters becomes something more than just a file of certain rules and knowledge. Meanwhile in the real world, you can break the rules and sometimes run away from the consequences, in Greeneland you can only put these effects back, but never escape from them. To some extent, Greene did not create a new world. He is just reflecting the old one only with some different regularities and principles including the time perception.

The time perception in Greeneland is also different. For example, in the novella *Loser Takes All* Greene intently plays with the time perception of the characters as they are drawn through the story. The time flow is very different here as the main characters Cary and Bertram approach a certain point in the narration, when every piece of their old life breaks apart and they are thrown into a stream of events and actions that happens only in 9 days. However, to them it seems as if they spent their entire life on the ground of Monte Carlo.

Greeneland can be either a place full of irony and humour or some very dark and sad environment, where love is betrayed and all the positive human properties are mercilessly trampled and put into the dust of Greeneland. That corresponds with Graham Greene's life periods, or at least periods of his writing (as he was referring that his work can be divided into *follies* and some more *serious stories* dealing with serious human issues including war, death, responsibility and criticism of Christianity).

## 1.5. The context of the Cold War

In this chapter, I will briefly introduce the context of the Cold War with regards to Graham Greene's work. The aim of this chapter is not to elaborate any deep historical analysis. However, it is important to have some brief knowledge about that topic to understand the circumstances of the author's working environment and the possible affects that could have had an influence on Greene and on his career and personal life as well.

In the time of the second period of Greene's life and career as an author we must consider several factors that had an enormous impact on his novels and style of writing. The early 50's was a time of changes. These tempting years, also known as the age of rock'n'roll and the era of unbound art and society moves, hid some serious issues that had to be solved. The Afro-American people in the USA still had to sip from different faucets than the whites or women still lacked their right to vote and participate in the politics. Luckily a few years later Martin Luther King came with his fight against the segregation. But not only America suffered from this racial issue. The problem was even worse in South Africa, where the apartheid is somehow present until these days. Greene as a sensitive author tried to integrate these themes into his work. The apartheid issue is partly visible in *The Human Factor*.

Although life was not easy for everyone at the time, there was even some bigger threat in the air – The Cold War. I will not be dealing with historical facts. That is not the intention of this work. However, I want to point at some aspects of this hidden conflict that may have influenced the work of Graham Greene.

As it is generally known and as I mentioned in the previous chapter, Greene was involved in the politics of the Great Britain. It is evident in his work. Sometimes even more than the author means. The events in Cuba, which later escalated in very dangerous Cuban Crisis, were the inspiration for the novel *Our Man in Havana*. This conflict, if we can even name it like that, was very specific. Officially there was no direct fights, but there was a very fine line. The nuclear threat from the rising nuclear powers like the USA or the Soviet Union was very tempting and present at the time. That is also what Greene mentions in his novel that takes place during the Cuban crisis – *Our Man in Havana*. Although Greene tries to ridicule it, the situation was very serious and there was a potential risk of the 3<sup>rd</sup> world war that would have had probably fatal consequences for the entire planet.

From the 1950's we can see almost a constant struggle between the major powers, like the USA, the UK, France or Russia, escalating in the conflicts, for example in Easter Asia. The

example of that would be another event reflected by Greene that took place in Vietnam in the 1950's, which was the colonial war. The US functioned as a third party supporting the rebels, which made the ground for later Vietnam War. Greene becomes a predictor in certain way of these struggles, as well as the narrator and chronicler of these events by writing his famous novel *The Quiet American* which was made into a not less famous movie in 1958, directed by Joseph Mankiewicz and Audie Murphy starring in the role of Pyle.

A significant role in Greene's life played not only Christianity, but also the idea of communism. He was very attracted by this theory. It is obvious from his novel *The Human Factor* where he puts the main protagonist Castle in the role of double agent and finally he decides for communist country Russia as the best possible solution. But as he was more and more confronted with the Soviet Union and its practices, he gradually changed his mind about the communism in general. We can see that in his late work *Monsignor Quixote*, where he puts in contrast communism vs religion.

Cold War also meant that the Great Britain lost its colonial power in many parts of the world. Greene reflects that as well in his books, including titles like *The Quiet American* or *A Burn-out Case*.

## 2. The analysis of themes appearing in selected novels

### 2.1. The importance of moral aspect and responsibility in *The Quiet American*

*The Quiet American* is a story that sets in the far east of Asia, mostly in Hanoi, Vietnam. It describes the period of the decline of the British and French colonialism in Vietnam and the entrance of Americans at the time. It is a quite predicative work in the context of the Vietnam War that broke up later, but these events chosen by Greene are prior to that. Not only the criticism of the colonial powers is present in this novel, but also a disbelief in a new type of colonialism represented by the Americans (also called the third party), who were trying to infiltrate into the system and take the significant role and power in Vietnam at the time by supporting General Thé.

Choosing this new theme, Greene touches the colonialism issue, political involvement and war conflict problems that are predominantly caused by selfish and cruel colonial politics of both British and French governments. Dealing with these issues, Greene moves his focus on more serious topics, concerning not just the questions of religion or human responsibility, but including the question of the human involvement as well (as he like to call it in the novel with the French term *engagé*).

For Greene, therefore for the main character *Fowler* as well, it is very important to stay aside of these political parties, memberships, competences etc. He wants to stay neutral, because that is the only way to see things clearly for him. He must decide what is the truth and what is the lie and his crucial aim is to stay unengaged and not to become a part of the system.

According to Greene's theory projected into *Fowler* there is a big demand on a reporter when he wants to report about a conflict he must stay neutral. He can't stay on one side or on the other one, he is bound by his profession to stay in the middle of the battlefield. No matter what it takes, although it can be risky and dangerous, even life-threatening, a reporter must keep his neutral statements. But is it even possible? Greene answers that question in the very end of the story, when Fowler finally loses his independence and let Mr. Heng murder Pyle. "*Sooner or later a man must choose his side, if he wants to maintain his humanity.*" (pg. 152)

Also, Fowler's wife makes her statement about the independence of the individual in relation to the reality, when she writes a letter to Fowler. "*You write that we have always tried to tell the truth to each other, but Thomas, your truth is always so temporary.*" (pg. 104)

She picks the motive of a temporary truth which can't be equal to everybody. There are always several viewpoints that we can consider, however we must follow just the only one of them.

That leads us also to think about the moral statements that the characters hold and represent. Greene puts them into very difficult situations, because that is the moment when the truth appears. The same principle appears in *The Human factor* two decades later.

The moment of truth is present when the character is confronted with the violence in the actual reality. For Fowler, it is the bomb attack and wounded people all over the place, for Castle it is the murder of his colleague, but principally it is the same thing. We must be confronted with the violence directly, unless we do not take it seriously and we can't see the reality clearly. That is the moment when we must make our statements, but for Green it is also the moment when we lose that battle between our moral statements and the natural desire to stay alive. Only the individual that is free of his morality has the advantage in this case, as well as Pyle does. He does not see the torn off limbs at the square, he only sees the (sub) reality that is created by the power which is defining his every single step in Vietnam. This subordination is maybe some kind of a justifying factor for him. The scene when Pyle is directly confronted with the violence of the politics shows his immaturity for this type of negotiation and action, despite his maturity on the field of empty phrases and seemingly important political acts. However, when he is confronted with the reality of a brutal power which can destroy a human being in one second, he is acting like a little child. And there comes a matured *Fowler* with his black humour and traditional British sarcasm and he captures with an apt remark. *You have your third power and national democracy all over your right shoe!* (Greene 1991: pg. 143)

Formally, the novel is divided into three parts. The composition of the story itself is retrospective. We find very important to mention this, especially if we consider that Greene starts with some new topics in his entire work and so it is essential for him to start with a new composition as well, which is not very typical for Greene's novels. He usually uses more classical composition based on the linear construction, however this new attitude corresponds with his desire to focus on more serious and complicated issues that resonate throughout the entire world after the WWII. We can even consider *The Quiet American* as a milestone in Greene's production.

The novel begins with an opening letter dedicated to René and Phuong, which is either a dedication or some sort of an introduction to the story itself. Greene claims that no events or characters are based on some living humans or actual events, but at the same time he declares that some parts are based on the truth in fact. At this point he begins a game with the reader. He seemingly presents a story that is completely made up by him, but he immediately disturbs this statement. As every Greene's book, also this one begins with a quotation of a famous author, in this case there are two authors mentioned - Byron and A.H. Clough.

The plot begins with the final passage, when Pyle is murdered and Greene gradually leads the reader to understand the circumstances around Pyle's murder and the reasons why he was murdered.

Up to this time, Greene dealt mostly with simple human subjects, but now there is a different aspect in it – politics. It is not the religion or the importance of love that should trigger Greene's and reader's attention. It is the politics, the evil power that reigns over the human life and basic human feelings and social needs. Politics which is impersonal. Greene perceives This inhumanity as a very fundamental problem which can have far-reaching consequences.

The example of that is Pyle, so called *the quiet American*. Pyle is a representative of a new power that comes into Vietnam as a third party to undermine the traditional colonialist power and bring a new one which is not obvious, but still very present in the real life of the local people. The British or the French were always visible and somehow predictable up to these days, but this is changed with the presence of the third party.

The locals do not consider the colonialism as a positive thing, but over the past centuries it became somehow domestic and the local people accepted it and learned how to deal with it. But when the society is divided like in Vietnam in the 1950's and there are different parties and fractions that raised from the public dissatisfaction all over the country it is a significant problem that needs to be solved. That is the motivation of the third party - to play exactly the game that they want to play. Pyle, as the representative of the third party (Americans) is a great candidate for that. Not only for his quietness, but also for his cold mind. Unlike Fowler, who is a quite passionate character in fact and who hates Pyle's cold and inhuman behaviour.

Another impersonalised character is Phuong. Phuong is a mindless character, who does not remind us a human character at all at some passages. She behaves almost like a robot in some cases. She lacks the basic human feelings like love, passion etc. She is the example of the majority, that resigned on everything and that is trying literary only to survive. She is the

representative of a new generation that does not care about the higher principles, but it only tries to make some profit. She is even unable to feel love.

The main protagonist, British journalist Thomas Fowler, must face to a very new question – to be *engagé* or not to be? That is the question and big struggle for him. Fowler is an example of a man, who tries to escape from his past and the way he picks is through going to the war as a reporter. The word reporter is very important for Greene. To report about war, or anything else, is highly correlative of reproducing the events as they really are without any personal or political view is crucial. Reporters should be objective, without any subjective interests and they should be referring about the situation as it really is without prettifying of the reality. That is very important for Fowler as well as it is for Graham Greene. He considers himself as an uninvolved individual. He is only a reporter, not a writer, so he does not want to create a fiction and tries to serve the information and facts as they are, not as the government or anybody would wish.

Thomas Fowler has abandoned one thing in his life – love. Love is something that bothers him, which applies for another character from different Greene's novel *The Burn Out Case* Querry. But unlike Querry, Fowler can feel this disposition, but he does not want to confess it to himself, which is obvious on the example of his lover Phuong, whose character is rid of any warm and positive human feelings. So here we have the “old” motive from the first part of Graham Greene's production – the motive of love. As ever, it is neither the pure love that we tend to expect in our own relationships, nor the romantic love that we can see in the novel from the romantic era etc. Its purity is interrupted and destroyed into very difficult and hardly visible fragments. It is a picture of love that is not just fragmented and unfilled, but it is also somehow decayed, selfish and calculative. This fragmentation must be present, because it reflects the state of mind of the characters.

Although Fowler claims he loves Phuong, we can't really see the real feelings as such. They are simply unrecognizable. Almost it seems as if he pretended his attitude, because it is much easier thing for him to do than express his real feelings. The fragmentation makes it even impossible. To love somebody, means that you give something from your own personality, but Fowler is very empty in this regard and so he simply has nothing to offer. Just his sexual potential which is very rich as we get to know in his narration to Pyle during the mission in Phat Diem. In this regard Fowler is totally different from Pyle, but the love that they offer to Phuong is quite similar. Everyone follows his own interests.

However, Pyle behaves like he has something to offer and he has – his wealth and materialistic welfare which is certainly bigger than the Fowler's. Pyle's offer is naturally more valuable for the young Vietnamese woman thus she accepts the offer and follows Pyle into his world. That is also the sign of her emptiness. Her moral qualities are reduced just to these kinds of savage decisions, partly made by her sister that implies her moral statements into her younger sibling. But can we judge Phuong? Can we say that she is a "gold-digger"? Maybe that is what Greene wants. He wants the reader to embody into Phuong, because that is the way how to see thing as they are in reality.

As it is mentioned above, Phuong is a part of the majority. She belongs to the new generation of young people and she wants to escape from that poor country, which is destroyed by the war, to the richer environment in America. It is this American dream she wants to live.

That concludes all three characters. This desire to follow their own goals, regardless the comfort and perspective of the other person. Fowler does not want to be politically involved, but his failure is inevitable. Pyle wants to prepare the ground for the third party, but also fails and pays the highest price for it - his life. And finally, Phuong, she abandons her goal as well and after Pyle's death she returns to Fowler. That picture of the eternal triangle reminds us the one which is described in *The End of the Affair*. The presence of the death is again the determining factor that brings everything back together in fact, but inevitably fallen apart and in high state of fragmentation.

Aside these three main characters, there are several secondary characters who help the author to create the final characteristic of his heroes. The most significant is Mr. Heng who becomes the moving power in the final events of the story. He is the type of the shadow character whose characteristics is reduced just into his name. An unknown and dark identity who represents the spirit of the local people.

Another side character is Granger, a journalist from some popular western newspaper, who is not able to subsume into the society in Hanoi and he stands out with his European manners that he is not willing to give up. He is hopelessly tragicomic character.

General Thé is a mystery character as Mr. Heng and his presence is reduced just to the existence of the name and the results of involvement of the US government into the colonial conflict. He is present in the violence and in the bomb attacks that are the moving power for Fowler's action and final involvement.

Interesting is the often-mentioned reference to the book by York Harding that is most likely the cause of Pyle's deformed philosophy. Greene shows how dangerous can be the

influence that an author or philosopher can have on his readers. It is very important to show the relativity of the truth for Greene which is shown on this example as well. The worst thing happens, when someone takes some thought of somebody else as a dogma and tries to act according to it without any further thinking.

Another feature that appears in Greene's entire work is the importance of the first name. The first name is reserved for the cases that hold some special place in the story or are used predominantly in the situations that connect a character with another one. More information on that theme will appear in the chapter *The Importance of the First Name in the Novels of Graham Greene* later in this thesis.

## 2.2. The motive of entertainment and relativity of truth in novel *Our Man in Havana*

In the very beginning the author claims, that no events happening in this novel are based on true, that no character appearing in the story has the pattern in real life of any living person. However, at the end of this short proclamation there is summarized almost everything that this novel touches in one sentence. Greene writes that he truly believes that the real boss of the British intelligence force is not like the mythical person he describes. The reader must go a little bit deeper here to understand the thoughts behind these words. In fact, Greene accepts that there is some secret intelligence agency like he described, but in the real world it is much worse. This is the most important thing for understanding not only this novel, but the whole Greene's work and the context of that period of his writing.

Although Greene does not want the readers to make any judgements about either the fiction characters or the real ones. He just wants to make us think about what may become the truth and how it is possible to do that conversion: fiction into reality. We may consider this as the main intention of this novel, in other words, the aim is to let the reader think about many unwritten phrases, incomplete sentences and making his own opinion based on the presented facts.

However, at the same time, Greene points out some themes he feels that need to be discussed in the society and he stresses the important themes for the reader as well as for himself (the aim we can observe in most of his works throughout his very productive years of creation). Specifically, these themes are: love, pessimism, criticism of Catholic church and human

responsibility. That is what we must search for, although for most of the time it stands behind Greene's brilliant writing style and his humorous description of the situations which are in fact not humorous at all.

If we focus on the character of *Jerome Wormold* we may find very difficult to truly understand his real feelings and acts that he is doing. Although his life may seem to us as a dream life from a Hollywood movie, but that is not the reality when we go deeper into his character. When we are reading Greene's novels, we must be careful and very realistically oriented in our final deductions and judgements.

Wormold is a very sad man left with his young daughter alone after his wife decided to leave with another man. Only the fact that he lives on a sunny island of Cuba is a somehow extenuating circumstance. Someone would hardly understand how it is even possible that living in this exotic heaven could cause any dark thoughts. Well, at the end of this story, Wormold's dark thinking goes so far that he is willing to kill, which is a horrible thing to do in the paradise to be honest. We must understand and see the context clearly. Greene tries to explain that we all have the evil inside our personalities, but it is mainly our decision whether we let it come out or suppress it inside. However, sometimes it is almost inevitable to do so. Like in the case of poor Wormold. We can proclaim that he is a tragicomic character with all attributes needed: a man in his quite late years, left by his wife, caring about his daughter etc. This tragical comic brings something humorous but dark as well. We can find some inspiration for this contrast in the work of the greatest writer of history – William Shakespeare. Speaking about Shakespeare, there are several direct references to this genius throughout the novel. Greene points to this great author in *The Lamb Stories* that are used for coding and then decoding the secret messages sent from Wormold to the office in London and next by using special headlines for chapters, for example *The London Intermezzo*.

From this point of view, we can even consider *Our Man in Havana* as a play but with sort of an exaggeration. If we accept that everything happening in the plot is a play in theatre, then it gives us another completely new perspective how to observe this spectacular story. We can either accept it or refused it, but those who accept it will be rewarded with much more pleasure while reading it. It is obvious that the author wants to play this game with the reader. It is distinguishable when Greene intersperses the particular chapters with passages taking place in London, naming them *The London intermezzo*. That expresses everything. He wants to show, and then the plot itself corresponds with that as well, that everything can be taken to the level of some drama play. Except just one thing - the life itself. You can play a game with

government, you can trick your companions, but you can never play with someone's life or with your own life as well. At this point he stops this game and becomes serious. The human irresponsibility is what triggers Greene's attention. The irresponsibility of the people who take other people's lives for granted and inconsiderably deals with them is something that he cannot accept as an author as well as a human being.

The greatest example of the human irresponsibility is the whole plot of this novel. To gain money – which is very pragmatic need – Wormold decides to create his own world where everything is a joke. Unless it touches people's lives. Greene wants to tell us that making fun is certainly an enjoyable thing to do, but it can be very tricky. It is shown when Wormold makes up both his own agents and the secret facility for the weapon production in Oriente. By doing this he literally creates his own reality, but it has far-reaching consequences, more serious and dangerous than he ever expected. The question what is a false and what is the truth is the crux in *Our Man in Havana*. There is a very fine line between these two elements and we shouldn't cross it irresponsibly as Wormold does.

What I find particularly funny here is the absurdity of this whole trick. Wormold creates his device in Oriente from the disassembled vacuum cleaner (which may exist, maybe not - the author does not say, but it is rather a fiction than something based on reality). And to be even more absurd, the production name of that vacuum cleaner is nothing more alarming than *Nuclear reactor*. Greene combines two utterly different terms making them so ridiculous and funny – a harmless vacuum cleaner with nuclear power. If we add the third element – a human imagination – you get a completely absurd and “dangerous” military device in Oriente.

This is the game Greene wants to play with us as well as with his characters. A game full of absurdity where only the most adaptable character survives.

Having outlined this issue, dealing with Wormold can be tricky. And even trickier may be dealing with Milly, Wormold's daughter. It is interesting to see how influential can a side character be. We must be very careful every time when Milly appears on the scene, because it indicates that something will happen soon. In fact, we suspect her as the main reason why Wormold decides to start his cooperation with the British secret force. Of course, we must consider that the events take place in the 50's, which means in the times when woman could not participate in the politics at all or do male occupations etc. However, that does not stop Milly to have a considerable influence on her father. She does it through her nice appearance and gentle character. Somebody would see her as an innocent child, but that is not true. In fact, she is the one who pushes Wormold to do all these dishonest things, such as lying, frauds and

eventually a murder. She opportunisticly uses her power that she is gifted and she is mercilessly manipulating with her poor father, who naturally wants the best for her. Partly because he promised it to his ex-wife, but also for his own ego that tells him he must be a good father. It is a question whether he is, but one thing is known for sure - he tries his best to give Milly the best possible life conditions. It means for Greene that she would visit a Catholic school and would be risen by nuns who instil good catholic manners into her young soul. Although I do not see that they would do that perfectly as Milly's character is quite often very calculative, pragmatic and somehow unpredictable and her quotes are often full of prodigality. For example, it is obvious in the very beginning of the novel when Wormold expects her arrival from the school. She appears with some servant carrying her huge packages of purchased goods, which is not the typical behaviour of the modest Catholic girl. Her handling with father's financial means is just simply not honest and fair and does not correspond to what people are told in the church on Sunday mornings. Another sign of her „not so Catholic behaviour“ is her simple wish to have a horse, which seems to be innocent. But it causes all the future problems that Wormold and so the other characters (Beatrice) will have to face.

This is also one of the characteristic of this novel. Greene wants to point out that it really does not matter whether you are a good Christian or a bad one. The important for him is that the person can be responsible for his or her sins. In Wormold's and Milly's case, we can see it in the very end of the story. Everyone must pay for their sins, but unless you are punished there is no human trial that could judge you except yourself. When people take their life into their own hands they must be prepared to carry the consequences. In fact, there is only one character that is described as a religious person – Milly. The others seem to be either without any faith. Of course, the Cuban people are naturally religious (at least most of them) but it is the kind of religion that is present mostly in the countryside or in the countries with strong relations to the religious culture, regardless if they are Catholics, Protestants or Muslims. Wormold admits that he has no faith in God, he just wants to fulfil his promise that he had given to Milly's mother, his ex-wife, before she left him. That is the only reason he has in fact.

Another big topic, apart from the religion and its effect on the characters, is people's responsibility for their acts and sins. When captain Segura treats his prisoners inhumanly using torturing methods to get the information he wants, there is a consequence for him. The punishment is the Milly's refusal to his purpose to marry him, or her negative attitude to his personality as such. She just uses him for her own reasons and goals – to stable her horse (paradoxically bought with the money that come from the British secret forces).

Captain Segura is a kind of a very shadow character. He is present in many situations only in the fear of other characters. He plays the role of the evil side, but he is certainly not the biggest evil in the whole novel. Reader may find quite difficult to read him. He oversees the local police and he really holds the power over the town. Havana and its surroundings is under his control and he naturally does not like when he sees other figures that break the rules of his reign - the foreign agents who want to snoop around and making from his native town and country some territory for the secret military establishment. He is one of the few truly honest character, although in his own way.

Another questionable and quite complicated character is Dr Hasselbacher. He represents the old generation that has its roots in the era of WWI. The importance of this figure is not obvious at the first look. The old doctor has his secret – his past. We can understand from the narration and indications that he was part of the German army in the WWI and participated on killing, but nothing more. Everything around him seems to be hidden in shade and behind the curtain. He becomes part of the Wormold's game, but he pays the highest price of all – he dies. That is the moment when Wormold finally realises he did something he shouldn't. The consequences of something that was a little trick and fun in the beginning can be so far-reaching that they have the power to even destroy someone's life, to kill. That is also the escalation of the plot. Then it runs down very fast and towards the end. Wormold, the seller of the vacuum cleaners, to revenge Dr Hasselbacher's death kills the other agent Carter - Wormold would never thought he would be able to kill somebody. However, we must sympathize with him, although he is a murderer in fact. That is important thing for Greene. To sympathize with his characters even if they did something wrong, because we never know the reasons why somebody does something. There is always a reason, as well as the consequence that we must accept and be reconciled with.

There is one thing that almost all characters have in common – the engagement with the system. Everyone has their own place in the infrastructure of the establishment. Wormold becomes a part of the British forces additionally, but the story ends with him accepting his role in this system and becoming a part of the secret ministry. It is the same destiny as it appears in *The Quiet American* for Fowler. Wormold's companion Beatrice is sent to do her job (which will be the same as in Havana) somewhere in the Middle East. There is one more important thing about Beatrice. Out of the whole novel, she is the only character who does not really care whether the device in Oriente is real or false. She does not care about the existence of Wormold's other agents neither. The important thing for her is the relationship – interpersonal

relationship and human feelings, which is in contrast with the characteristics of Hawthorne. We do not know, whether the relationship between Beatrice and Wormold is love, or just sympathy that ties her to Wormold, but one thing we know for sure - Greene wants to show on her example that the most important are finally these interpersonal relationships. That is what really counts in life, even in the highly ironic and pessimistic world of Greeneland.

This last paragraph I will outline the importance of the whole establishment which is represented by the British government. In the whole book, there are very few mentions of the British secret force. No names, no data given by the author. For naming the institution, he just uses the word *They* which is so ambiguous that we cannot make any definitions or conclusions based on this. For us it is the sign of mystery. Something that is hidden behind the curtain and for the story as such it is not important at all and maybe even undesirable to reveal it for both the reader and the heroes as well.

### 2.3. The critics of modern materialistic lifestyle and welfare in *Loser Takes All*

*Loser Takes All* is a novella and the shortest story that I deal with in this thesis. Despite the length of this story, it reveals another new topic in Graham Greene's focus eye. Next to the old and often mentioned themes like Christianity and human responsibility it brings something more ordinary, however not of a less importance. Greene emphasizes his critical view on the matter of human materialism and welfare which has an enormous impact on the quality and shape of people's lives.

There are two important characters; a young couple Cary and Bertram, both loving each other and planning their marriage. Except these two main protagonists, there are several other characters that are not less important for the meaning of the story. This feature of a character importance is typical for Graham Greene. He provides the reader with a story that cannot be based just on one or two major characters, but is created by a composition of several different actors who influence each other and thus create another branch of the plot.

In *Loser Takes All* is this type of character represented by Mr. Dreuther, the chief of the bank where Bertram works as an accountant. He plays rather a shadow role as he is seemingly quite distanced for most of the time, but his impact on the whole plot is very significant and

thus has a huge influence on the life of the young couple as well. In fact, Mr. Dreuther is the one who pushes the story into its final composition and gradation. He is a typical rich individual who lives in his own world which is full of money and unnecessary welfare. His selfishness is so significant that, even though he promises Bertram to come to his wedding and basically organises it, he eventually forgets about his promise and does not come. His ignorant behaviour is an example of the modern materialistic age. Greene wants to show that money does not necessarily mean everything and a rich man does not have to be necessarily the most honest character.

This picture of a man who is rid of his morality is crucial theme of this novella. We must consider the time of publishing. In the 1950's there was a huge crisis of moral values in the world. It was a decade after WWII and the society was becoming more materialistically oriented as the people were gradually reaching both social and financial welfare. Human qualities were defined by financial means and money played a huge role in social categorization. People's moral values and the reminiscences on the terrors of the past war were slowly but surely fading away. Greene was aware of this problem and projected it into his story.

Cary and Bertram are the victims of this ignorance. However, also they are affected by this drift towards the money. They are poor but happy in the very beginning of the story. Before Bertram is offered to go to Monte Carlo, the home of roulettes and casinos, they are happy with the little they have together. Their only aim is to have a decent wedding and then spent a happy life together. But suddenly, an opportunity to gain a significant amount of money appears on the screen and Bertram starts his desperate hunt for welfare. As an accountant in a big company, he is sort of a grey mouse. His salary is not so bad, but not so high either. Certainly, he does not earn enough that he could afford holiday on French Riviera or a trip on a private boat. But here comes the irresponsibility of his employer who does not even know his name correctly – in fact he does not care about Bertram as a person at all. Mr. Dreuther's unexpected generosity, when he offers to Bertram that he would organise a wedding in Monte Carlo, is a product of his actual temper and it reflects just his temporary mood. However, he does not care about Bertram and Cary at all.

Dreuther sends the couple to Monte Carlo to an expensive hotel and promises to arrive on a private boat named *Seagull* in two days. And here comes the play with time perception. Beside the already mentioned criticism of modern materialistic lifestyle and selfishness of rich individuals Greene reveals his conception of perception of the time.

Every character in the story perceives time differently. Mr. Dreuther's perception corresponds to his social status and his general attitude to other people and life in general. He simply does not care about it. His ignorance in this regard is obvious when he promises to come in a few days but he comes after almost 2 weeks. There is not said how he spent this period but in the end when he approaches the coast of Monte Carlo there is no evidence of guilt or shame that he should be feeling. Important is the length of the 9 days which he spent out on the sea. It seems like he does not even perceive it as 9 days, but only just like several hours of delay.

However, from Cary's and Bertram's point of view these 9 days last like the eternity. During these 9 days they marry each other, become poor, then rich, lose their love to each other and then gain the love back again. For them it is as if they would spend the whole life, but objectively it is only 9 days.

Greene probably wants to stress the subjectivity of time perception and the relativity of time conception in general. He might have been inspired by the modernists from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We know that authors like James Joyce or Virginia Woolf tried to deal with that matter as well, so there is a possible connection.

If we go back to the story itself, we can recognize the stress which Greene put on the behaviour of Bertram and how money and good luck in casino revealed his deep and true characteristics. It is like Sigmund Freud's theory, but Greene replaces money and motivation to become rich instead of sexual impulse, but it works in the same way.

The character of Bertram is initially positive. He is a middle-aged gentleman, who lost his first marriage and who wants to start a new life with a new young woman he loves and wants to spend the rest of his life with her. However, this seemingly romantic and idealistic relationship suddenly suffers a great depression when Bertram wins a huge amount of money in the casino. It is not just a good luck that drives him to play the roulette, it is an obsession. An unhealthy and mad obsession with his "*system*" how to "*break the bank*".

This obsession to break the rules of the casino does not apply just to Bertram. It affects all players coming into the casino. Almost as if the place was somehow predestined to destroy people's lives. It all starts just with a little play. Then you want more and more and suddenly you are trapped in the circle of winning and losing. If you are on the winning streak you are happy, if you have a bad luck you are mentally and physically down - that is the life in casino. In the morning, you do not know whether you will be able to afford lunch in the noon or whether you will sleep in the hotel or on the street in the evening. Everything depends on fortune or

misfortune and this uncertainty destroys your mind and you gradually lose your sense for normality and rationality.

This is the picture of the modern life according to Greene. A modern human being is a gambling creature, who plays with its own life. The highest prize is your mental health. He shows this on the example of Bertram and stresses how easily you can get trapped in this mechanism from where the way out is very difficult if not impossible. Although Bertram finally finds his way out he never comes back to normal. You will always carry this experience with you. However, at the same time when Bertram finds out that his fortune and welfare is not as valuable as his relationship with Cary, there is another character trapped in casino – thou young French guy Philippe who tries to seduce Cary and replace Bertram's role, but the power of casino is much stronger. In the finale, Bertram passes his addiction to Philippe and so he becomes a new victim of this dangerous game in which the winner is also the loser. You win money and welfare, but you lose your humanity and relationships with other people. That is the tragedy of gambling.

A different case is Cary. Although she is little bit vain and spoiled, she does not allow the power of casino to change her character and remains the same for the whole story. Her effort to stay the same person is visible in her behaviour when Bertram becomes successful. Of course, she could make a profit on his fortune, but she wants the old and poor Bertram who she had known before they came to Monte Carlo. This attitude is the most romantic in the whole story and she is probably the most non-materialistically oriented person of all.

The finale of the novella itself is also romantic and there is a kind of hope for the reader left here by Graham Greene's optimism. Although Bertram got rich, he eventually came back, got rid of his obsession and started to live with Cary again as a normal couple. That is the message Greene wants to leave – we can make decisions in our lives.

## 2.4. The aspect of religion vs. colonialism in *A Burn-Out Case*

This novel from the early 1960's is opening Greene's controversy about the Catholicism and the issue connected with its impact in colonial territories. Through Query's, Rycker's etc. characters he asks again the same questions which he had asked before the 1950's. However, his observation of the religion is now perceived from a little bit different point of view. He does

it by adding another factor that we have already mentioned – revealing the theme of the colonial issues. Greene combines these two different problems and joins them into one which escalates into a tragical death of an individual.

The plot is set in Kongo, in one of the leprosaria established in a deep jungle. The leprosarium is very distanced from any village or city and the closest agglomeration is over 3 days of travelling on the road, or by the boat on the river. It is led by a monastic order of priests and monks from France and Netherlands. The medical help is secured by Dr Colin. The story begins with the arrival of a famous architect from Europe, Querry, who tries to escape from his past which contains two major traumas – lost love and religion rejection.

As we have mentioned already in the previous chapter, a very new topic appears in the 1950's Graham Greene's novels. He focuses on the colonial issues from the political point of view in *The Quiet American*, meanwhile in *A Burn-Out Case* he connects this theme with Christianity. Greene gives the reader a story of a man who tries to escape from his past life, spent by basking on the glory and vanity, to the jungle of Kongo at time of the French colony. He connects the subject of a rich European individual with the collectivistic society of leper people in a deep rainforest. The leper people are the example of a human kind as such for Greene. He presents this kind of society because he wants to show the incompleteness of people and he tries to connect it with a European man, the wealth and fame in the contrary to the importance of life in the leprosaria.

The main character is reduced to his surname only, Querry, which is a quite typical feature for Greene's heroes. We get to know only the first letter from his first name, M. Querry. That corresponds with the author's intention. To show a personality, a character, who is enough impersonalised and who got rid of any purpose in his life. But at the same time, only he is the cause of this state. (Čulík 2002: pg. 289).

Querry comes to the leprosaria in Kongo with the intention to disappear from the rest of the society. Greene does not tell us who Querry really is, but from some fragments that writer provides us with we can recognize that Querry is an architect and a man who lost his life in Europe. His life was full of false joy, money and luxury as we can imagine during the reading. He is the type of a vain man who uses his means just for himself, but suddenly he finds out that he does not want to live this life no longer and he tries to escape from it. But these things are untold directly in the narration, Greene gives the reader enough space for his own imagination and judgements. There are several ways how we can perceive the character of M. Querry.

If we consider him as a positive one, we must sympathise with his effort in leprosaria. He comes there to escape from his life and from his profession that connects him with his past. He wants to destroy that connection no matter what happens. But for the need of the sick and poor people treated in harsh conditions Querry lets Dr Colin to persuade him for building the new hospital. Later it becomes the main Querry's intention as he finds another goal in life, which is as simple as just to build a hospital and that gives to his life new proportions. No more unnecessary opulent churches or cathedrals for the rich Catholic church in modern Europe or USA, no credits and no money. Just the simple purpose and wish for better life of leprotic people - that is the only thing that Querry cares about in his new period of life and which characterises his innovative approach to this new life as such.

The aspect of the colonial issue is evident the existence of the leprosaria itself. It is not only a place for the *burn out cases* (as Greene calls the wounded people), but also a place for another Europeans, who are trying to follow their own interests (monks, Querry). By doing that, they are confronted with the aboriginal people thus they have an enormous impact on them, not only by teaching about the Christianity, but also by treating them with the modern medicine. The ambassador for the modern approach to healing is Dr Colin. He tries his best to cure the leprosy, but in the eyes of the locals it is always the matter of magic, mystery, spells etc. This is very well evident in the presence of the old god Nzamba. Although the locals are colonised and thought by the Christian monks, they have not given up their belief in this old god. This is an example of intransitive cultural difference, which tells that even if we bring our modern God, our church and habits into a completely different world, even if we present our culture and screw it on the original pagan habits, we just cannot assimilate the original habitants of the land we are trying to colonise. We are foreigners forever, even if we give the savage people education or medical cure and means for better life. The culture is theirs and we have no right to take it from them. That is the main issue of colonialism and that is the moment when our religion and our desire to own primitive nations and their land comes into the clash. And that is the moment when the expanding European mentality (represented by monks) meets the will to merge with the new world (Querry).

The struggle between colonialism and Christianity is very much visible on the example of father Thomas. He comes to a completely different environment than he was used to in Europe. His big problem is that he fears of the unknown. Greene transforms that into Thomas's fear of the dark. Father's biggest problem is to assimilate with the new culture. He even doubts his mission and his purpose in leprosaria, which is surely something that should not happen to

a devout like him, because who else should be surer about the good will and helping others than a member of Catholic church? Greene is being captious in the description of father Thomas and projects into this character his scepticism for Catholic church. Father Thomas is one of the negative characters. Together with Mr. Rycker he represents the institution that stays in its old-fashioned rules and habits and fears everything innovative and new. He is stuck in his own narrow mind and can't reach anything else than his routine.

We know many examples from history when Christians came on a savage land and basically destroyed the local people's culture and their habits. Although we are told in schools in modern Europe or USA that stealing the land from other cultures and destroying their religion and habits was wrong, but the human kind is incorrigible. Even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century we are making the same things as we did two hundred years ago. The only difference is that we do not kill the local people directly, but we kill them by teaching them our European habits instead. Seemingly it is not as brutal as it used to be, but still there is some violence behaviour leading to death of many uneducated and uncivilised tribes. Their minds are not able to understand certain things that Europeans can do, this is evident on the example of local god Nzamba as it is already mentioned few lines above. This god holds his position and he is more powerful than the Christian God in fact. At least in the middle of nowhere and in the place where destruction is the only thing that remains and rules, either it is the destruction of the human bodies affected by the leprosy or the destruction of houses, facilities, etc.

However, there is a possible salvation for people living in the leprosaria and Greene makes it through the earthly way by building a hospital. Paradoxically the salvation comes with someone who abandoned his own belief and the religion as such. Our saviour is Query. Not fathers, not Rycker - the most religious man in Luc, but it is the architect, who is trying to escape from God, and Dr Colin, who does not care about God at all. Rycker's and fathers' religion is somehow rotten, almost as if they would pretend it. And in some cases, it is just pretending in fact. Maybe it is because they find it a lot easier for them to live and work and trust instead of dealing with life struggles. But for Query it is clear. He denies God and everything around the church, except being helpful to those who really need him.

So Query, instead of the absolute isolation from the society and resignation, is now the future promise for the leprosaria and hundreds of poor people who are dying in poverty and terrible conditions. The salvation is the construction of a new hospital and Query finds his second breath and another purpose in this world which he had no longer seen in his past life in Europe.

Very important in this reconnection and restoration of the emptiness in Query's life is Deo Gracias. A character who is given this very symbolic name, a boy who survived his leprosy, but he must carry the consequences of that disease – his mutilation. Deo Gracias is very important from the moral point of view. Thanks to him, Query realises that there is something more than just the materialistic side of the life itself. Very helpful for this Query's rebirth is the incident when Deo Gracias runs away to the forest and does not come back. Query decides to search for him and he finally finds him and saves his life. That is the cracking point in Query's way to self-salvation.

This story is very important for two reasons. The first reason has been partly mentioned already. Thanks to this, Query realises that local people, although they are crippled by the leprosy, dirty, ill and uneducated, have their own world. World where the pagan god Nzamba has his place and power and where is a kind of happiness and great hope as well. But on the other hand, this noble rescue operation has fatal consequences for Query's peaceful life in leprosaria later in the story. It is a milestone between his old character and his new one.

Another feature that connects these two characters (Query and Deo Gracias) is the motive of both mental and physical suffering. Deo Gracias is a type of a *burn-out case* as well as Query is, but each from a different reason and with a different diagnosis. Deo Gracias does not feel pain physically thus he is completely cured (according to Dr Colin's opinion). Query is the same case. Although it is not in the physical level, but it lies in his mind. Query is not able to feel any human feeling, he can't accept and give love, the most powerful of human feelings. He even hates laughter, which represents the total emptiness and resignation as we have already mentioned before.

Like the most of Green's characters, also Query struggles with the misunderstanding society represented by Mr. and Mrs. Ryckers. Mr. Rycker is the example of a man who hides his real face behind the curtain. This owner of nut oil production company builds around himself a wall of religiousness to hid his real thoughts and mindset. He pretends he is the most religious man in the city of Luc and project this into his acts as well. Greene shows his deformed morale. It is especially evident on the relationship with his wife, Mrs. Rycker, and his attitude to women as well. We assume that Greene also describes and thus criticizes the general attitude of the Catholic church for the marriage as such. According to this, a good catholic marriage should look like the perfect stereotype model which is present in the society from the medieval times. A woman is at lower level than a man and she should be non-assertive. The assertiveness of Mr. Rycker and his vulgarity towards his wife is taken to the extreme when Greene describes

their sexual life. It seems almost like a sexual assault or at least total ignorance for the feelings (both physical and mental) of the other person (Mrs. Rycker). The consequence of that relationship is that Mrs. Rycker, who is pictured as a little dull and submissive character, tries to escape from all of this by falling in love with Query. At this point, Greene uses this motive of threesome again, like he used to do for example in *The End of the Affair*. As always, this triangle has a tragical ending as well, because this type of love just can't function on its own.

When reading *The Burn-Out Case* we must have in our mind several things. Firstly, we need to know a little bit from the author's preceding work. Only then we can recognize the leap that Greene does here. Not only his focus, but also his statement towards the religion is changed. *The critical point is represented by retreat from dogmatic orthodoxy towards more personal conception of the religion; the religious climate remains, but there is a critic instead of a believer.* (Čulík: pg. 285)

In the conclusion, we can recognize Green's old motive of unfilled love. In combination with the motive of a new life (Mrs. Rycker's pregnancy) this all leads to the destruction of M. Query, not only physically when he is shot by Mr. Rycker, but also mentally when he is caught up by his past life even in such a remote place like leprosaria in deep jungle in Kongo can be. Greene wants to highlight that you can hide wherever you want, but you can't run away from your past. The consequences when Query tries to do just that is his absolute destruction.

## 2.5. The importance of guilt and punishment in *The Human Factor*

As it is already mentioned in the introduction part, Greene's work can be divided into two major categories - so called entertainments and the stories with more serious theme. This book is considered to fit in the second category. The reader is confronted with some very serious issues there - the question of racism (apartheid in South Africa), betrayal, murder, etc. At the same time, there are also present typical Greene's questions and doubts about the Catholicism, his memories on his childhood – after all, the home of the main protagonist Maurice Castle is Berkhamsted – or we can find the issues concerning the importance of human responsibility and the consequences which occur when people are irresponsible.

Graham Greene gives us a story which contains lots of similarities with his own life. It is a quite late work, he wrote it in the last part of his writing career, thus all his fears and doubts

about the human beings resonate here and that is creating a spectacular story with profound sense for Greene's well-known topics. Although it contains the themes so typical for Greene, we can clearly recognize the author's great maturity of the whole book.

The major theme in *The Human Factor* is the humanity. Humanity which does not always lead to a human behaviour and acts and which is no longer the main feature of a human being as it should be. The main protagonists are treated and treat others sometimes very inhumanly, thus we can no longer recognize the "bad" and the "ugly", or the good and the evil side. Everything is blended and there is an absence of any sharp edges that we could possibly recognize – this also changes all the time and no character is truly evil or good. Especially the evil behaves very insignificantly in this novel. Is it the British side or the Russians? Is it inside Castle or around him? Is the evil present in every one of us? Greene's answer is: Yes. Everyone holds his own past, the memories for the childhood, parents etc. This blend creates the whole personality and if the history of mankind is evil (wars, genocides, etc.) the soul of a person thrown into this evil world is influenced and "poisoned". To deal with this trauma we must take our lives as a play, a theatre performance in Greene's case. His frequent references to Shakespeare are the example of this attitude.

Considering the evil and the good, Greene also wants to show that every side has its own pros and cons. Nothing is black and white only. There are always several different views on the certain matter, not only one or two which would be significantly easier for us to decide and judge, but that is the intention – to show this difficulty of making these statements, decisions and dangerous one-sided evaluations. The heterogeneity of characters is crucial and thus the presence of numerous different perspectives is very important as well. This is also the reason why the story is told from different points of view and contains more than one omniscient narrator in fact. One side is Castle's, the other is represented by the government (in personification of Dr Percival, or Daintry), or the Sara's point of view which is the most humanlike from all of them. To understand every single one of them, it is important to know the story behind every actor in this game, or play as Greene likes to call it. The game which is maybe even more serious than the real life itself.

On the contrary to the other Graham Greene's work we can see similarities with his earlier novel *The End of the Affair*. The difference between these two works is almost three decades, which is a quite long time, however they have a lot in common. Not only the same names of the main protagonists – Sara X Sara, Maurice X Maurice, but also the tragical tone that sounds through the both stories. The characters are full of false hope which results in very

tragic endings. In *The End of the Affair* there is absolutely no chance to get better in the end, no salvation for the characters, just the definitiveness of the death is the only thing that they can be sure about. Whereas in *The Human Factor* the word *maybe* describes the best the state of the relationship in the end, but that seems even worse than the death in *The End of the Affair*. The human being needs some sort of a certainty. The death in the first case is definite and final. But in the second case the unfilled love is one of the worse punishment of all. Castle passes through the absolute isolation from Sara and knowing that the person you love is somewhere alive but so untouchable for you is maybe the worst punishment. This punishment comes as a revenge for the sins, which is even worse than death and far worse than prison in Castle's case. He is in fact buried in Moscow, not free at all and bounded to his small flat full of desire to see his beloved again, but this desire is unanswered.

As it was before in *Our Man in Havana* and *The Human Factor* contains some elements of a theatre performance. This motive of a dramatic conception which has no happy ending neither for the spectators nor for the actors as well is present also in this novel. One may feel depressed after finishing the reading. We can recognize one typical feature for Greene: the emptiness which reminds us a performance of seemingly unimportant human being who is put into danger and then humiliated and punished for his or her sins.

The interesting thing is the way how Greene expresses this. He leads his characters through some very complicated and demanding situations often connected with the presence of death. He plays with them and changes their roles, either their social role or the role in the performance itself. His characters are confronted in situations that are morally demanding and examine their real moral values whereas these values are not quite all right and always somehow disordered or displaced. However, he does not blame the characters directly, he blames the society which allowed these deviations to come out and develop, concretely the religion, schools, government, etc. that stand behind the human irrationality and irresponsibility of actions.

Another feature is a constant movement in the development of the characters within the plot which has a significant impact both on the reader and the protagonists as well. Their characteristic gradually changes its shapes and the reader must be careful and aware of that, because a sudden move can have quite significant consequences. Castle is a notable example. In the beginning, he is just an ordinary elderly man who works for the undercover service with his fellow agent Davis. We perceive him as a positive character, but is he only the "good" one? The answer is ambiguous. To decide it we must know Castle's motivation and background and

that corresponds with Greene's thesis. We can't judge just from the first look, we must make some analysis and find something more about the person we want to make some opinion about. Castle is seemingly a polite old agent, who works in his office day after day, very week in the month, has his calmness and wife, child, dog and decent house in the countryside. However, this picture of a good and ordinary man is gradually broken when we find out that he is a doubler (double agent) working both for the British and for the Russians as well. And being a doubler in Cold war is a very serious crime, in Britain it is even punished by a death penalty. So, to save his own life (one has already been wasted in Davis' case) he has to let his wife in the country and escape to Moscow. When Castle is escaping from his house in Berkhamsted, there is one interesting and harsh scene of killing castle's dog. Finally, it is Castle who pulls the trigger as cold as a cucumber an Englishman would remark.

Let's have a look at Davis' case. Davis has the shame that he shares the same office with his colleague Castle, a hidden double agent - but we do not know this information until it is revealed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the novel. Davis is just in his middle age and unluckily happened to appear in this secret office, but he has no further intentions except dating with a nice secretary Cynthia who he is in love with. This is his big problem which seems to be fatal for him as he is blamed for delivering messages to the Russians. The interesting thing about this case is that he is not actually blamed from anything officially. Everything happens on the base of some shady deductions based on seemingly unimportant information. Of course, Davis does not behave like he should in this very sensible occupation like the secret secretary is. However, does it justify the organisation to make any harsh punishment? Or even worse, to take Davis' own life? That is the big question which resonates through the whole case and becomes one of the big themes in this novel. The importance of human guilt and the consequences that occur when breaking some of the rules of the department. If a life of a person is in danger, there is absolutely no space for mistakes, but Davis makes them and he is punished for that. Although we know the reasons why Davis is murdered, we must sympathise with this poor character whose humanity is one of the greatest of all protagonists in the story. Greene wants to highlight what happens when the absurdity begins to influence people's lives. The absurdity which is present in every level of the human society even in these serious matters. He builds in contrast these things and confronts them with the human irresponsibly which inevitably results in totally absurd situation. The whole act seems to us quite "funny", at least the circumstances of it when Dr Percival describes the way he wants to kill Davis. Funny but awful at the same time. The true action

begins with the death of Davis. In fact, he is the impulse for everything else, despite his seemingly unimportant role in the plot.

Now we will analyse our main character. Maurice Castle is a man in his late middle age whose mind closely connected with Africa. Not just the continent itself, but with the people living there – the black people. Despite his colour he feels to be more African than European which is punctuated by the fact that he falls in love with a black African woman with European name Sara. The circumstances of their familiarization are not literary explained, however we can deduce them from various glimpses that Greene outlines in the text. Their love seems to be truly real, although it comes from the poor conditions and dangerous situations that are mentioned several times when Castle goes back to the past in his thoughts. To understand this love, we must consider the racial point of view. At the time (1970's) these kinds of relationships were not as normal and ordinary as it seems to us in 21<sup>st</sup> century when the world is very diverse and the racism is not so socially accepted. The perception of the black people was not at that level of equality as it is now which is quite remarkable from the various hidden or obvious references in the story.

However, Castle brakes this cliché and marries Sara and adopts her black son Sam whose origin is not directly expressed, but we can figure it out again from some fragments appearing in the text. Sam is likely to be a child born in very difficult situation – a criminal assault or a ravishment maybe, but Sara loves him despite these circumstances as well as Castle does despite it is not his own child. Sam is not the typical child character which is one of the feature of Greene's children in general. He does not behave really like a child despite his very low age. When he speaks with his step-father his answers are not like you would expect from such a little boy. His character quite dark, regardless his skin colour of course. For example, in the beginning when he speaks with Castle about the existence of a dragon. Almost every child naturally believes in dragons and thing like that. However, Sam is not that case when he denies it. Another important thing which relates to his origin and race is that not for once in the story he calls Castle as his dad. Sam is almost distanced from the human feelings which are maybe the fades of Greene's own childhood when he was distanced from his schoolmates and surrounding world as well, but not as dramatically as Sam is. It is very depressive, because there is obviously the loss of hope, which is very important for childhood, loss of ideals that there will be some better future. Sam is a very tragic character as he was ripped out of the children society and since then he was confronted only with the world of adults. He is very sad character and probably the saddest of all.

Generally, we can consider most of the characters as sad personalities or at least with some negative attitude to the life. Either it is Castle, Daintry, who is in fact very sad in his loneliness, or Sara, who finds her sadness in her past when she was living in South Africa, which is in this case also connected with childhood memories. Sam's sadness is quite different, although it is not less evident. The sadness is mostly caused by the life and life conditions that the characters have chosen to live in. We can say that from Graham Greene's point of view, the childhood experience is very important and probably the biggest factor that involves and shapes an adult human mentality and personality as such. Childhood is something very sensible and children personalities can be dramatically changed in this period of life. That is evident in the Castle's memories on his own childhood which appears in the text for several times.

Greene also depicts the importance of the interpersonal relationships. However, these relationships are somehow twisted, as it is in *Our Man in Havana* as well. Either it is the wedding of Daintry's daughter where we can see an absolute alienation of one person from another. Daintry is unable to even remember the name of his son-in-law and that corresponds with Greene's image of absurdity – Daintry is involved in so many unimportant things that he completely loses his connection with his closest family. Another example of this disorder in the interpersonal relationships - Castle's mother. She does not behave like a real mother or grandmother, as Daintry she is unable to express her positive feelings and the relationships with he only son Castle is not really what the society considers as normal. We have here two people – mother and son – who should be the closest, however they are more distanced than colleagues in the office (Davis and Castle). Like two strangers. Her cold feelings are unable to touch her own son and that is a huge trauma which Castle must deal with. But Greene has no mercy for this. His statement is clear in the finale when mother abandons her own son. That is Greene's intention; to show that there is no salvation and that nothing can be done to make things right again which corresponds with the human irresponsibility and blindness.

Considering the role of the characters, we have not mentioned one yet; the mysterious and shadowy C from the secret department. C is a symbol of the hidden power that controls everything. There is a similar motive which appears also in the famous novels about agent 007, James Bond. But Greene, unlike Flemming, uses his character more ironically. C is not the same entity as M in Flemming's books, the super clever and powerful character, but C is more like a human with all his errors and mistakes. Greene shows that even this sort of profession can be somehow humanised. As it is in *Our Man in Havana* in the case of the chief, the motive

of the big boss who cares about everything and makes the decisions that can be either right or wrong.

Another interesting feature, not only for this novel but for the whole Greenland, is the importance of names. Especially the first name is reduced and so most of the characters is called by their surnames. That can be done to prove the depersonalisation of the society, or to show the signs of collectivism. Greene often talks about communism, which is based on collectivism, and the individuality as such has no place there. The suppression of the individual and its stance to the society around is highlighted as something which is not exactly designed to fit in the modern society. And when someone is called by his first name, it is kind of a privilege.

With the end of the story comes also the theme of human loneliness. Loneliness of a person who has been sent far away from home. Castle becomes a stranger in a strange country, lost in the cold of Moscow and his hope whether he will ever see his beloved again is more utopic than real. That represents a symbolic reading of Robinson Crusoe, but there is no “happy ending” here in Castle’s case.

## 2.6. Balancing the religion and communism in *Monsignor Quixote*

During the analysis, we must have in mind that at the time of creation of this novel Graham Greene was in his 80’s. The explanation why he used this Don Quixote pathos and motive lies maybe in the story itself. When reading this book, we find some features of existentialism which is based on the theme itself. Cervantes overtook the time when he wrote Don Quixote, because we can see it now as a huge milestone in existentialism. After few centuries Greene picks *father Quixote* and the motive of fighting the windmills too and placed this mythical character into an analogous situation in present times and even into the same background as Cervantes did with the original version. We must mention that Greene was not the first one who did that. His inspiration probably reaches to the 1930’s when existentialism was penetrating into the European environment. This topic becomes important especially for the Spanish existentialists e.g. Miguel Unamuno, a rector of the university in Salamanca, who also works with the theme of Don Quixote and his hopeless fight with the windmills. In short, in 20<sup>th</sup> Century becomes Don Quixote often mentioned character and the authors tend to work with his potential more often.

In these two Greene's novels (*The Human Factor* and *Monsignor Quixote*) we can see a certain balancing of his two big, different and seemingly unconnectable themes – religion vs. communism. Religion on one side, as something that triggered Greene's attention throughout his whole productive life, and communism on the other side for contrast. Although in the case of *The Human Factor* and the main protagonist of that novel, Castle, it was not the religion that was put into the contrast with a political ideology, but a certain sense of human responsibility and guilt.

In *Monsignor Quixote*, we are confronted with two different theories, or thesis. We have the theme of Catholicism and communism balancing together on the acrobatic rope and evaluating each other. Both are represented by two different individualities.

First, we have a communist mayor of an old town Tobosso, named as his alleged ancestor Sancho Panza from the famous Miguel Cervantes' book. His character is more secular than any other character in this novel. Despite his past, when he was studying to be a catholic priest, he is an absolute materialist. This change in life opinions may refer to Graham Greene's own life experience with Christianity. But unlike in other books, here we find something like reconciliation between the religion (represented by father Quixote) and Greene (partly represented by Sancho).

The second main character is no one else than a descendant of the famous Don Quixote de la Mancha. Father Quixote is an old individual, who loves his old presbytery and tries to live a blameless life. He is the type of the old-fashioned priest, who truly cares about other people and tries to be helpful.

Greene shows these completely different characters, as he tries to balance two different and seemingly incomparable things: religion (represented by Catholicism) and communism. As we know from his life, he always struggled between these two. It is not just the critics of Catholic church that he tries to deal with but also his attitude towards the left wing political thinking. That is obvious already in *The Quiet American*. Fowler tries to be unengaged, but finally he must choose his side. However, in *Monsignor Quixote* Greene tries to make compromises. Throughout all novel there are dialogues between Sancho and father Quixote that are concerning this reconciliation. Greene is not as strict and irreconcilable as he always was to his heroes.

This novel stands out of Greene's work. The plot is very secondary, the situations that Sancho and father Quixote go through are here just to provide background for the philosophical dialogues that Sancho and father constantly provoke. The text is full of shorter or longer

philosophical essays, that are very gently connected into one piece, creating a seemingly united plot.

Both Sancho and father Quixote have lost their belief in the institutions. There is important to stress the word *institutions* because they have not lost their belief in the philosophy (in the case of Sancho – communism) or religiousness (Christianity of Quixote). That is important for Greene. The institutions can be wrong, they can even destroy your opinion about them, but if you truly believe in something, they cannot take it away from you. They can take away your material possessions, your books, your place (presbytery in father Quixote's case) but your mentality and philosophy remains.

Father Quixote doubts the Church, but he never doubts his own belief. As well as Sancho, he stays loyal to communism as a philosophy. In his imagination, communism is not the only way of thinking, he also accepts father Quixote's Christianity. That is the aim of this novel. To say, that there are diverse ways how to take your life and your life philosophy and nobody can judge anybody. You can only judge yourself. Only that is possible. No more one-sided decisions and judgements.

Having this in mind, I am concerned that Greene picked up Don Quixote motive in this narration to balance and evaluate his whole life work and experience. It expresses his attitude as an 80-year-old man towards the society and towards himself as well. As Don Quixote, also Greene fought his whole life with wind mills hoping to change something but at the end he only finds out that everything was as hopeless as Don Quixote's effort. It brings the feeling of lost hope, which is expressed in the death of father Quixote at the end of this story. Greene wants to reach the final absolution as he was trying his whole life to find and blame a concrete sinner, but eventually he finds out that there is not only one solution, but we must consider many things together to come up with some opinions and statements. The truth is reversible and it depends on which side we are.

### 3. Selected common features of the analysed novels

#### 3.1. The analysis of the children characters

In this regard Graham Greene was one of the authors interested in that issue and holding the importance of childhood and the development of character. He has that idea in his mind and worked with it in his novels and short stories quite often. He was convinced that the shapes of the human personality are predominately made in the initial period of human life. He inspected childhood as something that is very dynamic and that may have a significant impact on the future character of a person, whether it is the morality, or immorality, the ability or inability to have social interactions, potential deviations or anything else in this regard. The crucial thing is that it is shaped particularly in that very immature age.

However, sometimes can be the structure of the children psychology disturbed. That is the place where the later deviation has its roots. Greene tells us that if we must analyse some character, we must know his or her background as well, otherwise the analysis would be somehow incomplete or even false. The typical example of this would be the character of Pinkie from *Brighton Rock*. This character is full of immaturity. His childhood in fact disabled him from being normal adult person, his adulthood is influenced by his childhood so closely and so badly, that he just never grows up – that is his tragedy.

To understand Greene's interest in these issues we must consider his own childhood which was not the happiest of all. Growing up in big family he struggled with the lack of patience from his parents. He was raised more by his nanny, housekeeper or other servants than his real mother and father. His mother was very busy with the managing the operations in the house, while his father was away in his office as the director of the local school.

Although his family was not the most ideal in the world, Greene consider it to be the most forming factor of his entire existence. The town of Berkhamsted where he was growing up, his mother the, his busy father and his siblings. These are the formative factors, that created such a complex personality. Another chapter that co-created this thinking about childhood as the crucial factor was Graham's school experience, which for him meant something traumatizing. He was sent to the dormitory, where he suffered the most from bullying and totalitarian regime that was governed there. He simply hates that period of his life. In his later work, it is evident. In his memoirs he literary writes about the unbearable situation, which he

tried to solve by truancy, or even he tried to commit a suicide (the famous Russian roulette, or swallowing twenty aspirins). This period had a massive impact on his thinking about childhood as such and we can say that it formed his negativity about the institutions like dormitories, Catholic school etc. He claims that the world around us is evil and can easily transform or even destroy the delicate childish soul.

Another big theme concerning Greene's work with children characters is the conflict between good and evil, or to be more precise and concrete between positive and negative. I will demonstrate this theory on the concrete example from his novel *Our Man in Havana*, on the character of Milly, Wormold's lovely and only child. In her characteristics, you can find both positives and negatives combined into very interesting mixture that gives the reader completely unique experience with the childhood. Milly is on the first look very gentle and well-behaved girl. Being raised by her caring father and nuns in the Catholic school she is very unlikely to be anything else than an innocent virgin. However, there is another Milly. Milly that is outside these „institutions“. Milly who is selfish to her father (when she forces him to buy her a horse although he cannot afford it), who is coquettish (with captain Segura) and who is generally not such a Catholic good girl as she claims to be on the public.

Another example would be the character named Sam in *The Human Factor*. Sam is very different from Milly. Not just by the age, but also by the race. Sam is a black child that was born in the UK. He is not struggling with the lack of awareness, nor with the religious issue. He is destined to fight in the society for his own place because of his skin colour. That is the new topic in Greene's philosophy. The race issues. Off course, nowadays black people have equal rights, but in 1970's and back it was not like today. Sam's colour gives him some predication, his destiny is somehow predicted – to be always treated unequally. That is his tragedy, that is what makes him sad (not just him but also us).

Greene's child characters are not described idealistically at all, that is obvious, however Greene goes even further when he stresses the dark side of them as the dominant feature of their characteristics. „*There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in.*“ (Greene). These „*future door*“ term is nothing else than the traumatic situations, that inflicts the childish soul and rape it to make it more mature. That is childhood for Greene, dark and unhappy serious period of life that can disable us from being better people in the future, that is the connectivity, that is the main issue to be observed.

### 3.2. The importance of the first name

When reading Graham Greene's novel, one of the most significant feature that a reader will recognize is the presence of the second names. Greene uses frequently only the surnames, in special, exclusive cases is present also the first name. This exclusivity is reserved only for few destined characters. Some of them are named just by the first letter of the first name, like in M. Querry's case in *The Burn-Out Case*.

The usage of the surnames may be caused by the author's intention to make the stories more general. He tries to avoid first names, because he does not want reader to think specifically just about a certain person and create some prespecified relationship, which means also creating prejudices.

Personally, I see some parallel, or connection to much older author from totally different environment – Franz Kafka. Graham Greene is one of the authors, who works with motive of irrationality and absurdity. That is also what Kafka did, for example in his novel *The Process* Kafka names his character only by his first letter K. Kafka goes even further here, when he absolutely rejects personal properties given by naming the character. Green is much more open in this regard, but we can see a certain connection and maybe even inspiration in this.

This is only a theory, which is based on my speculation, but I find it very interesting. I have not find any further information that would give more explanation on this. However, I see here a certain similarity.

### 3.3. Human responsibility and irresponsibility in Greene's novels

This theme is also one of Greene's favourite. He deals with this in almost every book or short story. As an author, he views this matter as crucial. The characters that I was dealing with previously, were put into situations, where they had to make tough decisions. They were often forced to give up on their sense for responsibility. Due to the pressure of the environment, typical Greene's character becomes to behave irresponsibly and his or her acts start to be somehow irrational rather than normal and predictable.

Generally, Graham Greene sees the irresponsibility of people as a product of the modern age. We must quickly react to the changes in social discourse to stay within the society or at

least stay in touch. However, if you refuse to be irresponsible, they are forced to leave the society and they are observed as something that does not belong here.

Greene basically says, that we can see the irresponsibility all the time on daily basis. The politics is a fitting example and this Greene's statement and theme has its extent into the present. We can see the irresponsible behaviour of the most important world's politicians, which can have an enormous impact on our lives. That is scary and irritating at the same time. Greene shows his level of advancement, consciousness and sensibility for these social issues. However, no matter how serious or desperate a situation is, there is always some way out. And here is suitable to quote one of Greene's statements: *Life is absurd. Because it is absurd, there is always hope.*

## Conclusion

The aim of the thesis is to find and define certain aspects of Graham Greene's work in the second period of his productive career, especially we have chosen novels concerning the issues of the Cold War or novels that are somehow related with this hidden conflict between some of the major global powers.

As we have already mentioned in the Introductory part, the main purpose of the thesis is to put stress on selected novels. Initially, we have outlined some issues and themes that might have influenced Graham Greene as an author, e.g. the Cold War, his childhood or explanation of so called Greeneland. After this section, we started to approach slowly the main body of the thesis which is the detailed analysis of selected novels.

In the following chapters, we are deeply analysing some of the author's most famous novels. The very first one is *The Quiet American*. We are trying to find some features of the period and provide a thorough analysis of the characters described. We are also trying to objectively concern both historical and author's personal background.

Gradually, we are introducing and interpreting novel by novel, including one novella *Loser Takes All*. The aim is not to provide a mere analysis in terms of the style of writing or method, but we focused preferentially on the characters and their possible relations to the author himself and to anything concerning his life and experience.

We can proclaim that most of the novels are closely connected with Graham Greene's life experience as well as his attitude towards Christianity and some political issues, e.g. during the Cuban crisis or the conflicts in Vietnam in 1950's. Most of the works are equipped with Greene's personal thoughts and opinions on certain matters and he used to project his personal statements into his characters. Interesting is also his work with the proper names as he is using mostly the first name for a female character, meanwhile for male characters it is the surname that is being used most commonly. He also often uses name *Sara* for his women as well as for the men he tends to use surnames beginning with the letter *B* (such as Bendrix, Bertram etc.).

We can generally say that Graham Greene's novels need to be read with a special attention to these tiny details (like names etc.) and with a certain knowledge about the author himself in relation to the concrete period when the novel was written. That provides the reader with another dimension of reading experience. We can even consider it as something like a story within another story.

Finally, in the very last part of this thesis, we are taking a closer look at some interesting aspects that appears throughout all of the analysed novels, such as a role of a child character or the already mentioned importance of the first name.

We are convinced that Graham Greene as British and world-class author offers a vast field of issues and items to be analysed more thoroughly. His work contains so many titles and so many different and interesting characters that naturally cannot be included in this thesis, but this offers a fantastic opportunity for the future study of this remarkable and very important author of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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