

Between the Fear and the Glory

(When people die on the border they call it a happy death)*

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I . Mexico As a State of Mind

In the spring of 1938 Greene travelled around in Mexico, for the purpose of reporting ‘the fiercest persecution of religion anywhere since the reign of Elizabeth.’¹⁾ It was shortly after Mexico had suffered under the regime of President Calles in the name of revolution. Out of this journey came two works: one is *The Lawless Roads*, published in 1939 (in the United States under the title of *Another Mexico*), which is a little too weighty to be categorized as a travel book, and which Greene himself calls a ‘personal impression’ of the human condition at that particular time;²⁾ the other is one of his most important works, *The Power and the Glory*, published in 1940.³⁾ Greene denies his original intention to create a novel out of his Mexican experience, on his moral grounds as a writer that he never consents ‘to appropriate other people’s political sufferings for literary ends.’⁴⁾ He was not quite ready to write a new novel, and what he brought to Mexico with him, he insists, was the proofs of *Brighton Rock*(1938).

Whether he intended or not, the fact is, that in reading *The Lawless Roads* we can detect the rudimentary image of each character in *The Power and the Glory* in the particular people whom Greene actually encountered during his journey. In addition, Norman Sherry, Greene’s authorized biographer, retraced the process of his dismal journey in Mexico, and Sherry’s elaborate research offers us more detailed information about the background of the novel. What should be more significant, however, is not to locate the sources in details but to learn how each real person is transformed into a fictional character in the author’s imagination. The whisky priest, for example, is presumably modeled after Mexico’s famous martyr, Padre Miguel Pro, but this young Jesuit had already died eleven years before Greene went to Mexico and his personality of ‘great courage, devotion and self-sacrifice’⁵⁾ seems quite different from the whisky priest’s in the novel. Then there was another priest in Chiapas about whom Greene only heard, who survived for ten years in the forests and the swamps, and was called ‘a whisky priest’ by the local people. Together with other possible sources, those episodes obviously stimulated Greene’s imagination and contributed to creating the unique protagonist. Nonetheless, considering Greene’s statement, ‘he[the whisky priest] emerged from some part of me, from the depths’,⁶⁾ it should be our primary task to observe the author’s vision embodied in the protagonist, and its correlation with other characters, in order to survey the universe of the novel.

In his retrospect, Greene refers to *The Power and the Glory* as the book that gave him ‘more satisfaction than any other’ he had written,⁷⁾ and it was also the book received by critics

generally with favorable reviews.⁸⁾ Commercially, however, it was not successful for 10 years after its publication and the first edition in England was only 3,500 copies, while in the United States, under the title of *The Labyrinthine Ways*, it sold about 2000 copies. The book had to wait its success after the war in France, thanks to François Mauriac's introduction to the French translation of the book.⁹⁾ This success, unexpectedly however, brought two unfavorable situations to the author. Hollywood made 'a pious film' called *The Fugitive* directed by John Ford which was a complete distortion of the original book, on the other hand, the novel was twice 'delated' to the Vatican by French bishops for its 'paradoxical' elements and dealing with 'extraordinary circumstances.'¹⁰⁾

Whatever factors may have offended pious Catholics, Greene mentions that *The Power and the Glory* is the only novel he has 'written to a thesis',¹¹⁾ which is, a discussion of 'the distinction between good-and-evil and right-and-wrong and the mystery of "the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God."¹²⁾ Greene reflects later that the subject is 'too obvious and open for a novel' but in actual fact the fictional universe he created is so precarious and ambiguous that its title, 'The Power and the Glory' apparently resists being interpreted in intelligible terms, for it is strictly confined to the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, the difficulty in comprehending this novel lies, not in a hypothesis: 'if there be a God', to use Newman's phrase, but in an absurdity: 'since there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity.'¹³⁾ In spite of this audacious challenge to religious dilemma, Greene consistently declares that his professional life and his religious belief are in separate compartments,¹⁴⁾ asserting the difference between religious propaganda and literature, even after publishing a series of so-called Catholic novels. In order to explicate his stance as a writer it is required to examine his view of religion with relation to contemporary society.

In his autobiographical essay, Greene confesses that he, who 'had not been emotionally moved, but only intellectually convinced' since he was received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1926, was ready to use Catholic characters by 1937 and began to observe more closely 'the effect of faith on action.'¹⁵⁾ According to this statement, along with his moral grounds as a writer mentioned above, *The Power and the Glory* did not issue from the experience of his journey, but Mexico just provided his preconceived vision with the concrete materials for him. It was unavoidable to confront the situation where religion and contemporary life were inextricably correlated, as he was witnessing the religious persecution by the socialists in Mexico and General Franco's attack on Republican Spain. To Greene, then, Catholicism became 'no longer primarily symbolic', but closer 'to death in the afternoon', and it was in Mexico that he discovered some emotional belief astir in himself.¹⁶⁾

However, what is essential to note here is that Greene considers the times he lives in not as an exceptionally troubled era but as 'humanity's normal state.'¹⁷⁾ This view demonstrates that Greene finds the cause of human misery inherent in humans rather than primarily in the external world. For this reason, he was once described by Walter Allen as an Augustinian.¹⁸⁾ Although he always utilizes the contemporary 'situation', as in the case that the German VI

bomb is a mere impetus to Sarah's leap to God¹⁹⁾ and the war does not affect Scobie's personal predicament, it seems that, to Greene, the particular external elements are metaphorical agents to reveal a universal human situation. Therefore, one significance of the setting of *The Power and the Glory* is very much akin to Scobie's observation in West Africa: 'human nature hasn't had time to disguise itself' and 'Heaven remained rigidly in its proper place on the other side of death, and on this side flourished the injustices, the cruelties, the meannesses that elsewhere people so cleverly hushed up.'²⁰⁾ While presenting a seemingly particular situation, Greene realizes that order in civilized society is a comforting illusion. Greene perceives that the atrocious violence he witnessed in Mexico is not at all alien to European civilization, as we can see in his utterance of dismay for humanity, 'Perhaps we are in need of violence.'²¹⁾ Greene was then, indeed, in the middle of the world of terror of totalitarianism by Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler. The contradiction immanent in civilization—its susceptibility to brutality is symbolically exhibited in the then oppressed state of Mexico and that is where Greene's view of religion is intertwined with contemporary society.

Modern science has brought the world to where the metaphysical and the spiritual are apparently irrelevant to humanity, and to where rationalism and utilitarianism have contributed to nurturing capitalism. So-called civilized people live in the sphere that has lost its magic and religious sensibility, that is, the very condition of the contemporary world; in this realm lies the gravest psychological predicament of an individual. As is seen in Greene's reproach of the English novel after Henry James for its loss of the religious sense,²²⁾ he believes religious sense is something intrinsic in human nature, without which human acts cannot be elucidated. Just as Greene rediscovered in West Africa 'a quality of darkness. . . of the inexplicable'²³⁾ which was lost to modern civilization, Mexico, especially under religious persecution, was the peculiar milieu where he could still sense 'magic' and immediate 'manifestations of the Faith.' When he calls Mexico 'a state of mind',²⁴⁾ the setting signifies no longer the political situation but the universe that is appropriate for conjuring up 'the numinous'; the source of that religious sense essential to human nature.

Greene adopts his Catholic vision to illuminate 'the tragic destiny of man in his fallen state',²⁵⁾ so that he could add the religious dimension that transcends human laws, including Church laws, to his fictional world. He knows, on the other hand, as is shown in his observation; 'So many years have passed in England since the war began between faith and anarchy: we live in an ugly indifference',²⁶⁾ so that the tragic sense has no longer the power to appeal to the modern mind. That is why he has to expose the protagonist's belief to every possible disbelief, exhibiting the universe as totally indifferent to human existence. The civilized need to be situated on 'the dangerous edge'²⁷⁾ to evoke his emotional belief, where retaining faith could be a matter of life and death. Greene's detailed realism saves the authenticity of the setting and the situation, but his primary purpose is to indicate the possibility for human beings to be reconciled to this indifferent universe, and to suggest that the visible world could be a metaphor of some absolute value.

Thus, on account of his realism, he endures censoring from the Church, whereas on account of his idealism, the work is at risk of being called an allegory. Depicting martyrdom today could be easily parodied, and actually Greene inserts in his plot a tale of a Catholic saint read by a pious mother to her children, paralleling it with the actual pilgrimage of the whisky priest. Normally, in the original meaning of the term, the whisky priest should be the 'parody' of a genuine saint, as is symbolized in the naming 'the picaresque saint' by R.W.B. Lewis,²⁸⁾ but in the development of the story the saint appears to be the parody of a genuine human in the readers' eyes. This ironic effect, which makes the martyrdom of the whisky priest more convincing, is largely attributed to Greene's technique of realistic writing in delineating the characters and the situation. The struggle of the whisky priest is not so much for his religious faith or his vocation, which never falters all through the story, as it is for his physical and spiritual existence as a nakedly exposed individual. His pilgrimage offers neither prospects of victory nor an assured goal but death, the death he experiences as the result of a series of apparently meaningless contingencies. In the process of his escape, however, what is the most significant is the fact that he is confronted with himself every moment. That is where we can detect, with all the peculiar predicament of the protagonist, the human condition beyond any kind of dogma unfolding in the novel. Take, as an example of this, Cedric Watts' perspicacious remark: 'Greene's novel becomes not "a Catholic novel" but a catholic novel, "catholic" meaning "comprehensive, relevant to all people."'"²⁹⁾

The Power and the Glory is too intricate a novel to be read as a mere allegory of the imitation of Christ, as some critics point out,³⁰⁾ and its intricacy lies not primarily in the plot as a story-telling but in Greene's writing techniques textured in it. Most of the strictures concerning this novel³¹⁾ usually reveal an *idée fixe* in terms of Catholicism and themselves are barely aware of Greene's rhetorical device on the textural level.³²⁾ Only close examination of the text can unravel the maze of rhetoric contrived by the author. It is requisite to demonstrate how each detailed representation on the micro-level is woven into the whole design on the macro-level, and eventually how texture and structure are inseparably united with 'a thesis' that Greene mentions.

II. A Vulture's-eye View

The story begins with the appearance of Mr Tench, a dentist who is, unlike Scobie, an unwilling exile from Europe, somehow constrained by his situation, and who lives probably too long 'in the huge abandonment'(15) to feel pain any further. This 'huge abandonment'³³⁾ is an undertone in the universe of the novel accompanied as well with other minor characters called 'the bystanders'. Along with the sinister landscape represented by the frequent appearance of vultures throughout the story, the initial scene, in particular, conveys graphically the ambience of the universe we are to be guided into.

Mr Tench went out to look for his ether cylinder, into the blazing Mexican sun and the bleaching dust. A few vultures looked down from the roof with shabby indifference: he wasn't carrion yet. A faint feeling of rebellion stirred in Mr Tench's heart, and he wrenched up a piece of the road with splintering finger-nails and tossed it feebly towards them. One rose and flapped across the town: over the tiny plaza, over the bust of an ex-president, ex-general, ex-human being, over the two stalls which sold mineral water, towards the river and the sea. It wouldn't find anything there: the sharks looked after the carrion on that side. Mr Tench went on across the plaza. (1)

We do not know yet why Mr Tench is confined to this deserted place but the phrase 'he wasn't carrion yet' and the usage of transferred epithets such as '*shabby* indifference'(Italics are mine) indicates his present circumstances without illuminating his mind. What he could do to show his feeble protest against his situation is to throw a rock at vultures, and even that barely succeeds in chasing only one of them away. The juxtaposition of the vulture and the dentist here is rhetorically effective: one looks for carrion and the other looks into decay. The difference between them, however, is the vulture can enjoy its freedom flying away over Mr Tench's trivial personal drama. Its bird's-eye view furnishes the picture with the prodigious shift of perspective far and up, an immense dimension not only in space but in time. When the vulture passes over the busts of politicians and military men—the representative of absurdity of human acts unchangeable in history, from the sky human existence becomes a meaningless speck. Further, the view expands into the river and the sea, reputed to be symbols of Mother Nature in romanticism, only, this time sharks wait for the carrion. Maneuvering a bird's-eye view in this manner frequently produces the effect of hinting at the Infinite, but the bird which brings it in here is a vulture and there is no sense of release usually obtained by gaining an expanded perspective. The vulture's-eye view only represents the spitefulness of Nature and the sea does not lead spectators to a way out. There is no hint of escape in this particular sequence of images, which is also the premonition of the pilgrimage of the whisky priest.

In the subsequent paragraph, the narrative concentrates on Mr Tench, but without explaining the situation or the stagnation which Mr Tench's life has fallen into. Greene continues to imply it visually, in what is observed by Mr Tench. Soon, however, it is revealed that this method is employed not for exhibiting the personal living condition of Mr Tench alone but for the purpose of introducing the sense of the place into the visual. 'That was the whole world to Mr Tench: the heat and the forgetting, the putting off till to-morrow'(3). What he observes is shot through with imagery of death, and especially when 'the fin of a shark' is compared to 'a periscope' and 'the smoke-stacks' to 'guns pointing at some distant objective'(3), the war at Europe is not actually so far from this peculiar region. Kenneth Allott and Miriam Farris see in Mr Tench 'an embodiment of the decadence',³⁴⁾ and it is true that his numbness carries something more than the personal, representing the sickness of European civilization. For, both in the initial scene and the final scene of the book, he is used as an eyewitness of the

destiny of the whisky priest. He is a reluctant spectator but not the 'engagé' in the story.

Greene has been generally considered as one writer who resumed an orthodox narrative description. To Greene, however, it was always a matter of great importance to attain a narrative style of his own. One of the most important techniques to him was how to limit the point of view to the Jamesian central intelligence as a post-Victorian writer. For, he was in the midst of a literary criticism which developed from the theory of Henry James and the formulation in Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* (1921). Greene confesses the great contribution of James and Lubbock to his apprenticeship.³⁵⁾ Another important technique he tried to achieve was to write a novel that 'was not made with words but movement, action, character.'³⁶⁾ Not comparing 'something concrete to something abstract',³⁷⁾ he could gain the immediacy of the human act. Thus the narrative often functions as a camera-eye panning what characters observe in order to project their psychic state as is seen in Mr Tench's example above. Greene's writing is more artful and experimental than it is given credit for, and therefore, it is necessary to be alert to those characteristics in his narrative technique so as to comprehend his fictional world.

In *the Power and the Glory*, narrative style is apparently omniscient but the proportion of authorial understanding of characters varies depending on the character. In depicting Mr Tench and 'the bystanders', the narrative's point of view comprises the author's prerogatives to demonstrate their motives and psychology that characters do not notice. In introducing Mr Tench's boyhood, for example, the firm hand of Victorian narration can be detected; 'There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in'(7), which can be hardly taken as Mr Tench's perception. The whisky priest, on the other hand, is, most of the time, dealt with in a different manner so as to unfold his interior, while the authorial voice is suppressed. In one of the few studies on Greene's writing style, Dominick P. Consolo observes his narrative style as follows: 'in Greene, the consciousness of a character and the author's omniscience are merely turned off.'³⁸⁾ In the very moments when the whisky priest makes fatal decisions, the narrative avoids illuminating his motive and just shifts to rendering his next action. It reads too abruptly and appears like a gap in the development of the narration, and to make it more complicated, the action of the whisky priest frequently contradicts what is exhibited to readers in the form of interior monologue as his psychological state prior to his action. We hear reasoning and self-analysis by the priest all the time but his actual actions often contradict them. This is partly the reason why Greene receives criticism about his writing technique in characterizations such that of Frank Kermode: 'this endless complaint about God seems to be less to be shaping the book than tearing it apart',³⁹⁾ for, the narrative does not intervene between characters and readers, which is supposed to be a function of the omniscient narrator whom Greene assumes to be.

In his apprenticeship Greene's struggle in mastering his own writing style indicates what his technique aims at. Greene reflects on the reason of his failure in his early novels as 'too much explanation of motive', which means 'no trust in the reader's understanding.' He continues,

'The dialogue is ambiguous and dialogue in a novel as in a play should be a form of action, with the quickness of action.'⁴⁰⁾ Greene does not probe into the motive of the whisky priest deeper than the conscious level when the narrative does render it. Careful reading indicates that what seems to be the priest's inner state is really only his reflective consciousness and reasoning. Greene's intentional omitting of the explanation or the gap between the action and the thought is the technique achieved by the author in order to save the reality of his fictional world. It is not at all a narrative defect, in other words, Greene's narrative exhibits the psychological reality that there is the limit of discourse in explaining one's real motive for any action. Greene did not give up this method but rather developed it even further in presenting his protagonists later on, for Scobie in *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) and Querry in *The Burnt-Out Case* (1961),⁴¹⁾ for both of which he chose 'Author's I' and for which he received the same kind of censures.

Greene was far more alert about human psychology than most of his critics who do not pay attention to his rhetorical device. As is well known, he himself was psychoanalyzed as early as in 1920, Greene was familiar with Freudian interpretation of human psyche at the same time he was suffering from the aftereffects of his treatment.⁴²⁾ He was cognizant that the essence of our ego is a compound of various conflicts which can be resolved into no logical coherency. In his narrative method Greene's perception is manifestly that our decisions are made in darkness and voluntary action does not come from a result of consideration but from uncontrollable impulse. There is a limit to the conscious mind to understand one's real motive and, at the moment of commitment, one acts without reasons, which actually is the moment that reveals one's true self.

It is, therefore, significant to notice that the narrative, in spite of assuming an omniscient point of view, never verbalizes divine grace. In this apparently Godless setting, it is not 'the eye of some sovereign power' that watches 'man's free will functioning'⁴³⁾ but the vulture's eye that is frequently witnessing each contingency the whisky priest becomes involved in. Nevertheless, as omitting the explanation of the motive does approximate the narrative to the truth of human psychology, Greene also certainly hints at divine grace in its absence. Exactly in the same way as the narrative style assumes that omniscience does not intervene in the function of free will, it can, however, be revealed covertly among the implicated patterns of the plot. Thus the effect of irony generated in the rhetorical device encapsulates the core of the novel.

III. Allegory and Realism

The Power and the Glory is called an 'allegory' by some critics such as A.A. DeVitis or F.L. Kunkel,⁴⁴⁾ and Allot and Farris name it a 'mythology.'⁴⁵⁾ Greene himself considers it as a novel 'more like a seventeenth-century play in which the actors symbolize a virtue or a vice, pride, pity, etc.'⁴⁶⁾ Aside from the exact definition of the term, allegory and mythology carry the attributes fundamentally in common in the sense that both are related by symbolic narrative which, without exception, connotes something beyond what it literally means and allows

another interpretation on a different level. It seems to be easy to infuse ironical perspective into allegory, for, irony also emerges in the act of interpretation.

Among the early criticisms of *The Power and the Glory*, Allot and Farris interpret the irony of the plot as the effect from 'the result of an action [which] contradicts its original intention.'⁴⁷⁾ Later, Watts examines the plot contrived by the author: 'as irony dovetails with irony, plot-detail with plot-detail, so the overt and covert plotting of the narrative imply a covert plot in the world.' He insists that the first reading of this novel gives an impression of an incoherent sequence of plot but only with a second reading of the book does a clear, coordinated entity emerge.⁴⁸⁾ Further, Watts observes correctly that 'the apparent defeat of faith is merely a test for the faithful and the ground of new victories for divine grace.'⁴⁹⁾ On the plot-level, apparently the whisky priest is a loser, but on a close examination of details of each episode, it becomes ambiguous who is the true victor.

Allegorical narrative, on the other hand, has a disadvantage in its function that each element corresponds to some implication in the discourse, which conveys a message so ideological that can spoil the reality of the story. The formula one can trace at the very first glance in this novel is transparent: the whiskey priest as a symbol of the sacred value, the lieutenant as secular idealism, the mestizo as Judas, and 'bystandards' as the chorus—the pilgrimage of Christ. And yet in *The Power and the Glory* layers of dramatic ironies operate not to clarify the contrast of antagonistic elements but to render them more ambiguous. Therefore, Greene's statement about this novel could be counted as another irony of his, allowing an interpretation different from the surface meaning.

What saves the whisky priest from being an 'Everyman' is nothing but irony reinforced by Greene's realism. Greene's narrative technique as seen above is ironically akin to the definition of allegory by C.S. Lewis: the way of expressing the metaphysical through the physical and the abstract through the concrete. In *The Power and the Glory*, Greene's realism, his adherence to 'the physical' and 'the concrete', is persistently manifested in the description of 'the lower actuality'⁵⁰⁾ of the whisky priest. There are a couple of representative scenes treated with meticulous explicitness of his struggle for existence. One is shown on the occasion of his coming back to the Fellows, an American banana planter, to ask for refuge, when the priest finds the house empty. While he is concerned about the safety of their daughter, Coral, who swore eternal enmity against anyone who would hurt him, he begins to fight with a dog over a bone with little meat on it. In an attempt to steal the only food in the kitchen, the priest becomes furious and swears at the animal with vulgar expressions, which surprises him because 'they came so readily to his tongue'(173). The subsequent description how the priest robs the bone from the dog and tears off and chews the raw meat is achieved in unrelenting vivid realism.

The other scene is the episode following the situation which forces him to travel accompanying an Indian mother with her dead child. They walk more than 30 hours to the hill where a group of crosses stand up like trees 'left to seed.' The rude Christian symbols made by Indians have nothing in common with the elaborately worked out symbols of the liturgy. The

narrative continues, 'It was like a short cut to the dark and magical heart of the faith'(185). Since the mother will not leave the dead child, as if she were waiting for a miracle, the priest leaves her alone with the body out of fear that he might be captured. When he comes back out of a sense of shame over his lack of responsibility, he finds no one there but a dead child with a small lump of sugar that the mother placed by the child's mouth:

The priest bent down with an obscure sense of shame and took it: the dead child couldn't growl back at him like a broken dog: but who was he to disbelieve in miracles? He hesitated, while the rain poured down; then he put the sugar in his mouth. If God chose to give back life, couldn't He give food as well?

Immediately he began to eat, the fever returned: . . .he felt an appalling thirst. Crouching down he tried to lick some water from the uneven ground; he even sucked at his soaked trousers. The child lay under the streaming rain like a dark heap of cattle dung.

(188)

Greene's persistence in such graphic realism as described above actually functions as what is more than the secondary technique to save the novel from being an allegory. For Greene's idea of realism is based on the antithesis of the method adopted by the writers who were involved in so-called 'experimental novels' after Henry James. They believed it possible to excavate the clandestine significance of human existence in subjectivity, which is exemplified in their obsessively introspective narrative style. Greene deplors that they have deprived fiction of another dimension: 'The visible world for him ceased to exist as completely as the spiritual.'⁵¹⁾ What is essential to note here is Greene's realism does not merely aim at a photographic description to expose the reality as it is, like French naturalism, in rebellion against the romanticized prospect of human existence, but to render the spiritual through the visual. Thus, Greene's realism, as observed before as the definition of allegory, has a double-edged operation which is linked with the concept of irony.

Probably the biggest irony whose undertone persists throughout the pilgrimage of the whisky priest is that Christian paradox, 'I believe because it is absurd.'⁵²⁾ Greene seems to make the most effort to describe the sacrilege of the priest who has to go through purgatory as a mortal. The detailed exhibition of 'the lower actuality' of the priest is 'the relationships with the world',⁵³⁾ which loses its validity only when 'the eternally existing order comes into view.' There is no glory given to him in the course of the narrative, there is only his ambiguous state of mind which 'regards its own finite personality as the most wretched of all.'⁵⁴⁾ Nevertheless, in the technique of Greene's realism, by ridding the whiskey priest completely of divinity, its negation is designed to conjure up what is negated. In other words, absolute irony is required to enter into the paradoxical sphere of faith where human discourse loses its validity. In *The Power and the Glory* realism is not an antagonist but an accomplice of allegory, so that the plot would not become ideological void without the gravity of human existence.

IV. Irony in Juxtaposition

One of the most recognizable patterns in the design of *The Power and the Glory* is the frequent use of juxtaposition. As to characters, for example, the lieutenant, Padre Jose, the saint Juan, mestizo and even an American robber are, respectively, juxtaposed to the whisky priest. As to ideological concept, Catholicism, albeit without dogmatic framework, is juxtaposed to Protestantism and Socialism as the background. The component of each juxtaposition is, at first glance, apparently conflicting, which operates as an impetus to urge the plot towards the culmination of the priest's drama. And yet, again, in the process of interpreting its meaning on the second reading, another irony emerges and cancels the apparent antagonism in what is juxtaposed.⁵⁵⁾ This paradoxical scheme of the author is contrived even in the most conspicuous juxtaposition on the plot-level—the priest as the hunted and the lieutenant the hunter, and it seems too simple an observation to find in the story 'a confrontation between the themes of social justice and faith'⁵⁶⁾ or to construe the lieutenant as 'the devil's agent' against 'God's representative.'⁵⁷⁾

In the characterization of the priest and the lieutenant, Greene provides, so to speak, inverted values with stereotyped personas. The police lieutenant, supposed to be a representative of the new order of the State, is an ascetic who contents himself with the condition 'as comfortless as a prison or a monastic cell'(23) and feels no need of women. The priest, supposed to be a representative of religious faith, is a drunkard, as his common name shows, who, in desperation and intoxication, has intercourse with a village woman. The lieutenant is ready to do anything to change the world for the better, whereas the priest is not completely sure to the end about dying for his faith. The intentional equivocation of those two characters leads us to elucidating something implicit in their juxtaposition.

The similarity of their quality is, indeed, indicated in the discourse at the earlier stage of the drama in the first description of the lieutenant, when Greene makes the most of the prerogative of omniscience. The hatred towards the priest stirred in the lieutenant is compared to what is 'between dog and dog'(19-20) and there is 'something of a priest in his intent observant walk'(23). The priest and the lieutenant have been referred to as 'secret sharers'⁵⁸⁾ or 'doubles'⁵⁹⁾ by some critics, and it is true, as Allen insists, that eventually some sort of 'human companionship' is brought to them. It requires another perspective, however, to see that they bear the same quality of 'men who love and who are moved by love',⁶⁰⁾ because it is questionable whether the term, 'love' is precisely homogeneous in their minds.

The juxtaposition of the whisky priest and the lieutenant is not exactly a balanced one, for, the emphasized similarities are mainly detected in the delineation of the lieutenant, along with the fact that the priest is weighed much in characterization. The priest is a coward who on his execution is 'more afraid of the pain of bullets than of'(233) what comes after, although his faith does not waver to the end. As is shown in his conversation with the lieutenant, the priest knows exactly the quality of the lieutenant's idealism, which eventually starts to waver. In addition, after the priest's execution, his ideal is symbolically smeared by the boy, Luis, who

spits on his revolver. There is a hint of probability that the lieutenant is to be converted from the hunter to become one who is hunted by the unknown.

It is frequently pointed out that the whisky priest is treated as another of Greene's 'double spies' who is 'hunted not only by the police lieutenant but also by God.'⁶¹⁾ The priest, who violates not only the state law but also the Church law, is a 'double spy' in a sense of being chased both from without and within. That element contributes to shape the pilgrimage of the priest into the more complicated and ambiguous drama. The lieutenant, on the other hand, is apparently treated as the embodiment of a more intelligible idealism. Nevertheless, the key thing to note is that he himself does not believe in the authorities of the State and is very much aware of the corruption of the order on his side. The lieutenant is actually disgusted with 'the lower actualities' that he has to endure for his idealism.

The lieutenant walked in front of his men with an air of bitter distaste. He might have been chained to them unwillingly—perhaps the scar on his jaw was the relic of an escape. His gaiters were polished, and his pistol-holster: his buttons were all sewn on. He had a sharp crooked nose jutting out of a leap dancer's face; his neatness gave an effect of inordinate ambition in the shabby city. (17)

He is 'prepared to make a massacre'(65) in order to begin the world anew with children; the world where politicians and even his own chief are to be exterminated.

Thus, the lieutenant, as well as the priest, alienates himself from the established order he is assumed to observe and this is probably the most significant point in common when he is juxtaposed to the whisky priest. Similarly, they are akin in their tolerance towards the American bank robber who is also a murderer. Neither the priest nor the lieutenant shows much concern about a criminal act as a failure to comply with the law. It demonstrates that they take little account of legitimate social value as an institutional practice, whether it be the State law or the Church law, imposed by a particular regime. They are both Kierkegaardian individuals who act only on the order of their own conscience and attempt to transcend the boundary of the social conditioning.

The lieutenant's persistent pursuit is targeted at the whisky priest not because of his violation of the law but because of what the priest stands for; the representation of absolute power antagonistic to the lieutenant's idealism. The lieutenant believes that he can justify his means for his end like Kirillov in *The Possessed* who is also a living contradiction of two extremes. The omniscient narrative compares the lieutenant to a religious mystic and his rigorism exhibited in his great contempt for materialism—money and lust is a reminiscence of an ascetic in the desert. His fanatic faith in atheism lies in the vision of the world where children deserve 'nothing less than the truth—a vacant universe and a cooling world'(65); the world where nothing induces the false hope in children. His idea is based on the simple and clear argument that if there is no creator, 'I am the creator.' The lieutenant's atheism is,

however, approximate to religious faith, in terms of his inordinate ambition beyond human nature, that he could save the world. He is filled with pity and patience, as is manifested in his act on releasing the disguised priest from the jail and his idealization of the innocent, even while he considers the execution of innocent people to be an unavoidable sacrifice in order to obtain his goal.

Although the lieutenant's idealism is under the guise of rationalism, as is compared to that of 'a theologian going back over errors of the past to destroy them again'(23), his drive for revolution interwoven in the narrative course indicates that it actually originates from the traumatic experience of his own childhood—'the immense demands made from the altar steps'(20). In the lieutenant's eyes, priests abuse the poor for their small comforting sins; at the same time they sacrifice nothing themselves. The horror which moves in him when he looks at 'the white muslin dresses'(20) is the core of the lieutenant's hatred and he desires to eradicate everything from his memories that made his childhood miserable—the poverty, superstition and corruption. Greene frustrates the lieutenant's 'sad and unsatisfiable love'(64) by a warning against idealism itself, which invariably is associated with the danger of dealing with humanity as an abstraction and causing revolutionary fanaticism.

In the scene where the lieutenant looks at the newspaper photo of a communion party in which 'a youngish man in a Roman collar sat among women'(19), his perception is skillfully woven into the narrative rhetoric. 'All the faces were made up of small dots'(19): this microscopic point of view demonstrates how the substance of human existence is evaporated into abstraction in the lieutenant's vision. The whisky priest is one of a species that he has to eliminate, while an American robber whose photo is put on the wall next to the priest is treated as a man. The lieutenant utters, 'A man like that. . . does no real harm. . . . We do more good when we catch one of those[priests]'(21-2). The whisky priest remains to be a representation antagonistic to his idealism until he is finally captured and presented to the lieutenant face to face. The lieutenant's hatred thus at least is personifiable, whereas his hidden love takes no form because his idealism, without the physical concreteness of humanity, offers him only 'a vacant universe and a cooling world.' When he captures the last priest, he loses a representation of his hatred, and at the same time, his clandestine love is rejected by the innocence for whom he believes he fights.

An important aspect observed in the counterbalance of their juxtaposition is that what the lieutenant hates most is exactly what the priest divests himself of during his escape. On the occasion of viewing the same photo of the priest mentioned above, the whisky priest manifests his disgust for himself in his younger and ambitious days surrounded by the sleek respected guests of the communion party. When the lieutenant captures his enemy at last and is confronted with him, the priest, for the first time, emerges as a human to the lieutenant's eyes. The hut into which the priest is enticed by the mestizo for an American bank robber lying dying is one of the most symbolic elements in an allegorical design of the plot. It is a reminiscence of the ironical juxtaposition of the robber and Christ in the biblical picture, as well as the place

where the polarity represented in the whisky priest and the lieutenant is converged. In the development of the story this reconciliation seems to occur abruptly; nevertheless, it simply reveals that the idealism of the lieutenant devoid of the immediacy of humanity must be caught up later with physical concreteness.

The theatrical effect of the scene mostly constructed with the dialogues between the priest and the lieutenant generates the maximum homogeneous quality of the hunter and the hunted. Here faith in God and faith in revolution could be even interchangeable with one swing of a pendulum. The difference could be very small, and at the same time, very significant in the sense that the lieutenant's idealism, attempting to exalt the whole world for his ideal, ultimately could end in destroying everything. The priest's degradation, on the other hand, leading him to experience 'the lower actualities' of human existence, expands himself to reach out to everything so as to ultimately unite himself to the world. The legitimacy of any value is equivocal on the edge in *The Power and the Glory* but it is at least evident that this is the universe where a man of true faith, believers as well as revolutionists, have to suffer. This apparent confrontation of religion and revolution is to be combined later into a personality as Father Revas in *The Honorary Consul*(1973), a revolutionist who is ex-priest.⁶²⁾

V. Between the Fear and the Glory

The layers of irony along with the paradoxical inversion of values observed in the pattern and the design of the plot are the artifice in the characterization of the whisky priest as well. Greene mentions in one of his interviews: the paradox within oneself is 'what men are made of'⁶³⁾ and in the pilgrimage of the whisky priest Greene's emphasis is certainly on the precarious phases of human existence rather than on an unfaltering faith. Here as elsewhere, the ironic juxtaposition of antagonistic elements is exhibited in one personality; despair and hope, humiliation and pride, fear and laughter, sacred and profane, cowardice and heroism, the temporal and the eternal, and so on. Since the priest's state of mind shifts all the time between them, which appears to be Greene's failure in delineating a convincing character, there are some unfavorable views of his characterization such as Terry Eagleton's: 'The novel does not everywhere succeed in persuading us of the logicity of this paradox' and the behaviour of the priest is a case in point 'where the effort to sustain the tension leads them[characters] into serious ambiguity and confusion.'⁶⁴⁾

The fear of death, for example, is not conquered by the whisky priest throughout the story and he himself, on the conscious level, is skeptical about the idea of martyrdom. When the priest is completely weary of being 'the slave of his people'(17), he wishes he may be captured soon, or as the priest is confronted with the premature corruption of his daughter, he is ready to accept any kind of death to save her. On the other hand, when death is actually coming closer to him as a fact, his farewell to the world is half-hearted and the narrative goes on, 'nothing in life was as ugly as death'(159). Or, again, as soon as he escapes barely alive to the other side of

the mountains where he finally could settle himself among 'good people', he starts thinking 'Fear and death were not the worst things. It was sometimes a mistake for life to go on'(202). On the occasion of hearing the confession of the village people there, without any more fear of being captured, he is suddenly seized by 'an odd sense of homesickness'(206) for the suffering and the endurance he went through. The moment he wishes death to come, the priest's mind is submerged in the conception of death, which still allows him to see some hope in it, whereas the death confronts him as an immediate fact, when his conception is overwhelmed by his sensation. Thus, even on the morning of his execution, the narrative continues as follows: 'He woke with a huge feeling of hope which suddenly and completely left him at the first sight of the prison yard' and 'Tears poured down his face'(253).

Again, the ambiguity is intentionally textured in the literary rhetoric: the ambiguity of this world and human existence are manifested on two levels, as observed above, realism and allegory, so that the motive of human act is open to several interpretations. The equivocation of the character is ascribed to Greene's narrative method in illuminating the interior of the whisky priest. As was examined before, the function of the omniscient narrative is confined to the description of his reflective consciousness, which makes the priest's action appear incoherent or too abrupt in the context of the narrative. This incoherence also demonstrates that decisions made by the priest in the development of the story are not induced by the rational order of his reason. The moment when he prods himself into the crucial action, his decision transcends what is reflected in his conscious mind as the situation forced on him by his vocation, and then, the apparent necessity is changed religiously into free will, or, psychologically, into an unconscious drive.

Therefore, when the priest gains another perspective of life or himself, it is not exactly because 'his personality develops and changes' as Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan insists.⁶⁵⁾ The same as all the heroes' in mythology, his pilgrimage is an inner journey that is the progress of the revelation of his hidden self, a potential but real self. It is also true theologically, according to Kierkegaard:

The individual regarded as he is immediately, that is, as a physical and psychical being, is the hidden, the concealed. So his ethical task is to develop out of this concealment and to reveal himself in the universal. Hence whenever he wills to remain in concealment he sins and lies in temptation, out of which he can come only by revealing himself.⁶⁶⁾

Following this theory of Kierkegaard's, all the contingencies the whisky priest encounters through his pilgrimage and even sins he committed in the past could be simply the agent for revelation of his real self. His painstaking ordeal parallels the ancient proposition 'to know thyself.'

In the initial scene, the whisky priest is presented from Mr Tench's point of view: 'the round and *hollow* face. . . a small man dressed in a shabby dark city suit, carrying a small attaché

case'(4). His protuberant eyes give 'an impression of unstable hilarity'(4) but this stranger's figure reminds him of a coffin, and Mr Tench, the dentist, detects death in his carious mouth. As is the case observed later by Mr Fellows' daughter, Coral, to whom the priest has 'a tramp's face'(43), the narrative intentionally spares the depiction of spirituality detectable in the face of the priest, and accentuates, instead, the fact that he is a physical being. In the earlier stage of the plot, however, there is a rather conspicuous repetition of the term, 'hollow' or 'hollowness' in delineating the priest, which ambiguously conveys his mental state. The term is literarily significant, for, the epithet 'hollow' is employed by Conrad to depict his enigmatic protagonist, Kurtz and is adopted later by T.S. Eliot for one of his poems, 'The Hollow Men'(1925).⁶⁷⁾ Greene refers neither to this particular work nor its influence on *The Power and the Glory* but it is intriguing to note their intertextuality, because this poem of Eliot's bears the refrain, 'For Thine is the Kingdom', and the two lines in the last stanza, 'This is the way the world ends / Not with a bang but a whimper' correspond perfectly to the last moment of the whisky priest.

Considering the original usage of the term by Conrad, which is apparently incongruous with the portrait of the man such as Kurtz with his monstrous psychic energy, it is presumed that 'hollowness' can paradoxically exist only on the premise that the extravagant human desire for the infinite is aspired to in the void. There seems to be, however, in the description of the whisky priest no trace of the dynamic individual who has 'stepped over the edge'⁶⁸⁾ and risked his life defying the boundary of the mortal.

Mr Tench examines his companion again with surprise. He sat there like a black question mark, ready to go ready to stay, poised on his chair. He looked disreputable in his grey three-days' beard, and weak: somebody you could command to do anything. (11)

On the allegorical level of reading, the priest's hollowness can be construed as his state being a vessel to pour into the absolute value he represents. Kurtz's tragedy was in the fact that he could not find the representation of the infinite outside himself. Those two hollow men are treated in the same way in their anonymity throughout their drama. Nevertheless the difference between Kurtz and the whisky priest is significantly correlated with the concept of the vocation of the latter—an agent of God whose function is completely separated from his personality.⁶⁹⁾ In his case, to find himself in the divinity is, at the same time, to lose himself in it.

The whisky priest's inner journey begins when he rides on the mule going 'towards the swamp, the interior'(14), summoned by a child who mistakes him for a doctor and asks him to see his sick mother. On the *General Obregon* that he missed, which was the only chance for him to escape, a girl sings a song 'about a rose which had been stained with true love's blood'(16). An enormous sense of freedom on the ship is juxtaposed with a sense of abandonment in the priest who plods on into the darkness. The sentimental tune conveyed from the symbol of freedom is,

precisely, an appropriate prelude to his pilgrimage, because it is conceived to be the song of a martyr to love.⁷⁰ The sequence of this symbolic song is furtively inserted after 200 intervening pages, when the priest is ready to surrender himself. He begins to whistle the tune that he himself does not remember where he heard: 'I found a rose in my field'(216).

Since the first appearance of the whisky priest in the story is already preceded by his long fugitive life, his Christian beliefs are represented as the minimum essentials after ridding himself of pious aspiration in the past several years.⁷¹ According to the introspective narrative, the priest 'had nearly reached the state of permanency'(46) and he 'had got over despair too'(69), which is 'the unforgivable sin.' There is the implication that his vigilant scrutiny of himself during his escape in solitude has brought a keen awareness to him of his inner state and his past, whereas the condemnation from the ecclesiastical viewpoint seems no longer real to him. His religious faith is condensed into 'the simplest outline of the mystery'(74). The whisky priest smiles at his unrecognizably disfigured face, which seems to him to be more suitable than 'a buffoon's face'(68) he used to wear at the altar-rail.

Making his escape from the chase of the Red Shirts, he returns to the village where a woman conceived a girl by him; to the scene of his despair. Without scruples about the mortal sin that he committed six years ago, he is aware of his curious state even 'with a shamefaced lightness of heart'(68-9) on his way. Facing his own daughter for the first time, however, he is overcome with the shock of 'human love', whose immediate presence silently demands 'an immense load of responsibility'(75-6) of him. The gap between the narrative and his subsequent reaction demonstrates that introspection is denied by the immediacy of experience. In his reflective consciousness, a theological sin had been resolved by suffering damnation but that was only a conceptual sin; and besides, that might have been the act of his clandestine rebellion against God by violating the commandments. Now he is confronted in the girl with the embodiment of his sin, who already carries premature corruption. 'A regret' he feels is not a contrition for the result of a sin committed with 'just fear and despair and half a bottle of brandy and the sense of loneliness'(75), but his powerlessness to protect his own daughter. When the priest prays helplessly to God; 'give me any kind of death. . . only save this child'(95), it is a revelation to him in 'fear and trembling' never experienced even in the act of committing a sin.

A mystery is revealed to him that it is easier and simpler to save souls as the Father of his people than to save his own child as a father. 'Human love' presented here is analogous to 'pity' in its quality, as we can see from the explanatory narrative as follows: 'The passion to protect must extend itself over a world'(96), as well as be concomitant with a sense of responsibility. A real mystery lies, however, in the fact that without his carnal sin, abstract love for humanity could not have been incarnated in 'human love.' At the secret Mass in the village, his predicament as a parent gives him for the first time 'the immense satisfaction' in talking of suffering to his people without hypocrisy. With all the tortured sense of his own desperate inadequacy, the priest's fatal decision is rendered in a simple action: 'He turned his mule south'(96), to the direction he should avoid. There is no explanation of the priest's inner state

but a vague hint of this reckless choice of his in the previous scene. Maria, who is the mother of his illegitimate daughter and who helps his escape, refers mockingly to the martyrdom of the priest, although the narrative proceeds: ‘That had never occurred to him—that anybody would consider him a martyr’(92). Further, in the subsequent scene, on the mule again, the priest feels ‘the need of somehow ransoming his child’ by bribing God, which seems impossible to achieve without offering himself as a sacrifice. It is only at the very end of his journey, however, that he reveals to himself that the only thing that matters is to be a saint.

The mestizo, who is the most intelligible for its allegorical character, is significant rather as a guide of the priest’s inner journey than as the role of Judas. This universal type of vice is so familiar to the whisky priest in his theological training that he even imagines it as a caricature of the devil made of straw which people burn in the plaza. Since the priest at the very beginning is conscious of this man being an informer, it is possibly the priest that utilizes the mestizo’s vulnerability to temptation as an impetus to his martyrdom. In the scene where the priest falls into company with the mestizo, the narrative is very eloquent in rendering the scrupulous consciousness of the priest. He is supposed to hear the confession of the mestizo, however, such words as ‘proud, lustful, envious, cowardly, ungrateful’, all work on his own conscience and the priest probes himself, ‘he was all these things’(104). What is actually exhibited here is, instead of the mestizo’s confession, the self-accusing confession of the priest, which is precipitated paradoxically in the presence of Judas.

The whisky priest reflects that it is all because of his devilish pride—‘the sin by which the angel fell’(111-12) that his attempts at escape was half-hearted and he was tempted to be the only priest left in the state, and now he offers his shirt to the man who wants to betray him. The ambiguity of his action is elucidated here in the most penetrating insight that permits no self-deception of his motives. In the interpreting of pride in a way reminiscent of the Kierkegaardian concept, the whisky priest, who apparently manifests no pride, can endure any humiliation and disgrace, because his pride cannot endure finding himself failing to satisfy the expectation of his ideal. The priest does not allow himself to be evaluated by anything in this world but his God and that is the reason why he constantly feels himself a failure. It is true, on the other hand, that the relentless scrutiny of his motives by his consciousness is subsumed under a divine point of view. After the mestizo’s confession, the priest is rather dismayed at the banality of human vice. The narrative continues:

It was for this world that Christ had died; the more evil you saw and heard about you, the greater glory lay around the death. It was too easy to die for what was good or beautiful, for home or children or a civilization—it needed a God to die for the half-hearted and the corrupt. (114)

In the dark forest hut, in the face of the inevitable Judas, the significance of sacrifice or the concept of martyrdom is articulated as the act rewarded for its very rewardlessness.

Accompanied by human vice, the priest reaches a realization that ‘Christ had died for this man too: how could he pretend with his pride and lust and cowardice to be any more worthy of that death than the half-caste?’(117) When he assimilates Judas as part of himself, the priest’s inner journey enters a new phase. In the serenity of the night, he identifies himself as a priest to his betrayer.

At the core of the priest’s faith there lies anthropomorphism that he calls ‘the convincing mystery’(119).⁷²⁾ Nevertheless, when his vision, ‘we were made in God’s image’ is illustrated, it is not at all a metaphorical corporeality but graphic images, such as God ‘dangled from the gibbet’, or God ‘contorted itself like a camel in the attitude of sex’(119). God’s image is incarnated even in the ugliest human aspects—it permeates into Judas ‘with the yellow teeth sticking out over the lower lip’, and further, into the priest himself in ‘despairing act of rebellion with Maria in the hut among ruts’(119). This perception, the apparent sacrilege of the divine, just as the same treatment as in the characterization of the priest, is essential for another revelation to him among prisoners. After leaving the mestizo, the whisky priest is arrested in the town, where his ambition was fostered in his younger days, for possessing brandy. It is not yet known that he is a priest. Believing this time would be the end of the ten years’ hunt and feeling his death closer, the priest finds a sort of peace in the cell ‘overcrowded with lust and crime and unhappy love’(149). The place stinks to heaven, and still this living hell is very much like the world. Here again, the priest risks his life in identifying himself as a priest.

Descending into the most profane phase of human reality, he is moved by an ‘irrational affection’(151) for the inhabitants of the prison. Another ‘fear and trembling’ is experienced in the cell, where the priest had the most sublime evoked by means of touching the lowest actualities of human existence. Also, the whisky priest’s confession appeals to the sublime in the prisoners, which is demonstrated in the fact that no one among them betrays him. By being a sinner himself and loving the fruit of his sin, the priest obtains, among prisoners, a sense of companionship that he never experienced in the old days ‘when pious people came kissing his black cotton glove’(152). The priest’s religious sensibility clarifies his candid revulsion towards bourgeois complacency which equates religious faith with established moral obligation or civil virtues. The priest’s weariness directed to the pious woman in the jail is underlined, so much so that he finds it ‘more difficult to feel pity for her than for the half-caste’(156). He condemns conventional faith for its self-deception in the idea of good deeds, founded not on love but on a sense of duty, which, therefore, could be narrow and cruel. On the other hand, the existence of the pious woman, ironically again, provokes the priest into making further confession to expose himself as a sinner beyond redemption.

The same as his nocturnal vision in the forest hut, facing human vice incarnated in the mestizo, the total darkness of the cell in which the whisky priest is confined indicates the most significant sphere of his inner journey. In the darkness smothered in a vile atmosphere, where the visual is completely obstructed, the priest experiences the peculiar world of the audible

alone. The physical world disappears and he gropes into the spiritual world, but then, as human beings are visualized inside the priest's mind as God's image with their detailed features, they become merged into pity and he feels 'an overwhelming responsibility'(157) even for the pious woman. An interesting thing to point out here is that the spiritual is inseparably correlated with the physical. In this living hell, another mystery is revealed to him that he felt no love for anyone in his innocence but he learns how to love in his degradation. Death is 'beginning to attract him by its simplicity'(155) in the complete darkness, and yet, as the next morning comes, the introspective narrative reflects, 'He wasn't a saint. Nothing in life was as ugly as death'(159). By the irony of the situation, the priest is released by the lieutenant who cannot recognize his face, and receives five pesos by his enemy, which is the same amount each of his people contributes to him at the Mass.

As is examined above, the revelations in his inner journey are inevitably inspired in the interaction of the antagonistic values, which, in the same manner, leads to the climactic confrontation between the lieutenant and the priest. Greene prepares a situation which excludes logic presenting a precarious moment of inverted polarity arising from an ironical context. As to religious faith, theological abstraction is foiled by the actuality of human existence and human reason is an incomplete implement to grasp the mystery of humanity. This is where the author's idea conflicts with the Christian tradition and separates itself from existentialism. Catholicism is utilized in order to highlight its secret ritual; nevertheless, when the priest is caught in 'fear and trembling', it is a personal experience through the communion with humanity without the interposition of the Church. Prayers are impotent, salvation is equivocal, and grace is alienated from this world, and still in the very negation emerges the moment of epiphany—the lowest actualities are charged with transcendental vision.

The priest's experience of the numinous is attained not with the help of the metaphysical but of the physical, so that his 'fear and trembling', although its quality is a transcendental one, is plausibly substantiated. The ambiguity engendered by irony contributes to demonstrating a skeptical stance towards the common significance of so-called 'reality' that society believes in, whereas it implies, at the same time, the possibility of the higher integration of humanity with the acceptance of reality. For, the revelations on each stage of his inner journey are not induced from elevating himself beyond human reality to reach a sublime isolation, but by permeating himself into unbearable vulgarity to be united with the whole human existence. Greene depicts a Catholic priest who wavers in his precarious state of mind towards his life and death but the doubt towards his faith is not shown. The predicament of the priest's inner journey between fear and glory is rather existential than theological; however, it is preconditioned on an enigmatic contradiction that a human being is 'a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity.'⁷³

If *The Power and the Glory* is an allegory of the imitation of Christ, it is not that Greene describes the whisky priest like Christ but that Christ might be observed as such when he is

humanized. The whisky priest laughs and weeps unlike Christ, because the absolute being is never supposed to laugh. The priest's frequent laugh during his pilgrimage operates not only to make him human but presumably to make him carry the antithesis of the traditional Christianity that claims the remote isolation of its idols. It is difficult to assert that the priest's laugh, which is rather 'giggles' most of the time, bears the dynamic quality of Zarathustrian laughter that serves to annihilate the gravity of human existence but it certainly manifests that the priest is the ironist who pretends not to take his importance too much to heart. He laughs at himself when he finds the gap between his idealism and the reality he is in, and that requires objectivity to grasp a sense of distance between his inner state and the situation. The giggling he displays even through the quagmire of his escape is a significant quality to relativize the value of reason and a demonstration of his perception of viewing his situation as a farce.⁷⁴⁾

Greene presents martyrdom not as a superhuman act as idealized Christian saints but as a potential capacity in humanity that seeks to release one's self to eternity.⁷⁵⁾ The whisky priest denies the idea of his being a saint until the very end, just as the author denies the description of the apparent saintliness of the protagonist, and yet the priest reaches, eventually, a realization that 'there was only one thing that counted—to be a saint'(253). The Kierkegaardian observation, 'to reveal himself in the universal', or the goal of 'individuation', to use Jungian phrase, is what the priest's inner journey is designed for—a laborious process of self-realization that emerges from his potential self, accepting the most dubious qualities of life. The priest's pride, accusing himself for committing 'the sin by which the angel fell', is actually indispensable for his 'individuation', and without which he could not be the last priest in the state. The dilemma is thus in the fact that pride is the very thing that precludes him from renouncing his ego, when self-realization is to be completed with the paradox of becoming the self by renouncing the self. Greene prepares the reluctant death for the ending of the priest's drama with the ambiguity resonant not 'with a bang but a whimper', which makes us wonder if the priest's death could be called a complete self-renunciation.

In the scene of the priest's execution, the narrative point of view shifts to Mr Tench's as the initial part of the novel, so that we cannot know what comes into the priest's mind at the last moment. The narrative resumes an unfeeling camera-eye report; 'his legs were not fully under his control'(260) probably with fear or the effect of alcohol. Anything to glorify the death of the whisky priest is excluded from the vocabulary with the intentional repetition of the term, 'routine.' 'Everything went very quickly like a routine' and 'the little man was a routine-heap beside the wall—something unimportant which had to be cleared away'(260-61). There is no crowd that is converted by the catharsis engendered from his death, which is supposed to be the function of tragedy, and, therefore, the priest's death does not even denote the role of a scapegoat. This anti-climax is, which undoubtedly has a rhetorical effect in itself, is linked covertly to personal episodes: The priest's death causes nausea and 'an appalling sense of loneliness'(261) to Mr Tench who is supposed to be an uninvolved spectator, and 'the dynamic

love' of the lieutenant is neutralized, which makes his trigger-finger 'flat and dead'(265). Further, the most allegorical significance of the priest's death is firmly planted in the boy, Luis, as is symbolized in his dream, which announces the arrival of another anonymous priest.

The priest's death acquires nothing in reward for his sacrifice, which might be construed as the supreme form of sacrifice from the aesthetic point of view. The red rose 'stained with true love's blood' is, in fact, doomed to be thrown into the ditch recognized by no one in this world. Its beauty resides in the very uselessness of the act—plunging into the moment of life without expecting salvation. The significance of the anti-climactic death of the priest, other than aesthetic interpretation, could be elucidated in Greene's idea of glory:

. . . glory is always surrender. . . . the 'wavering grace' too is glory. But just as the meaning of glory extends far beyond great deeds, so the fear of violence extends to the same borders. Surrender of any kind seems a betrayal. . . for glory is the cessation of conflict: it is private like death.⁷⁶⁾

Greene actually bestows glory on the priest by robbing him of glory in the anti-climax. The possibility of faith is suggested without rendering hope or salvation in the irony conjured up out of the literary context. By the exposure of negation, reveals existence in a greater context.

Notes

*Graham Greene, *Lawless Road* (London: Heinemann & Bodley Head, 1978) 13

1) Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1980) 84.

2) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 84.

3) Graham Greene, *The Power and the Glory* (London: Heinemann & Bodley Head, 1940, reprinted as Collected edition, 1971) Further references to this work in the paper will be from this edition with page numbers in parentheses.

4) Marie-Françoise Allain, *The Other Man*, trans. Guido Waldman (London: Penguin Books, 1981) 118.

5) Norman Sherry, *The Life of Graham Greene*, Vol.I (New York: Viking, 1994) 708-9.

6) Allain, *The Other Man*, 66.

7) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 89.

8) The favorable reviews are, for example, Walter Allen's: 'For the first and almost the only time the representative of the secular interpretation of life, the non-religious, humanist view, is treated with a dignity and seriousness comparable to that accorded to the representative of the religious.' *Tradition and Dream* (London: Penguin Books, 1965) 228; Gwenn R. Boardman's: 'In it[*The Power and the Glory*] he successfully linked religious belief and artistic creation.' *The Aesthetics of Exploration* (Gainesville: Univ. of Florida Press, 1971) 52; Graham Smith's: '. . . in all essential respects the success is positive.' *The Achievement of Graham Greene* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986) 77; Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan's: '*The Power and the Glory* ranks, I would argue, amongst the best novels of the century.' *Graham Greene's Childless Fathers* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988) 27.

9) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 89.

10) Years later when Greene had an opportunity to meet Pope Paul VI, who had read *The Power and the Glory* among his novels, Greene mentioned the fact that Cardinal Pissardo required changes in the book. Pope offered him a counsel that Greene found easy to take; "Mr. Greene, some parts of your

- books are certain to offend some Catholics, but you should pay no attention to that.” Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 89-90. See, also Graham Greene, *A Sort of Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1971) 79.
- 11) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 88.
 - 12) Greene, *Ways of escape*, 80.
 - 13) Greene, *The Lawless Roads*, Epigraph.
 - 14) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 78. Also, his stance as a writer is related in Allain, *The Other Man*, 160.
 - 15) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 78-9.
 - 16) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 78-80.
 - 17) Henry J. Donaghy ed., *Conversations with Graham Greene* (Mississippi: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1992) 22.
 - 18) Walter Allen, ‘The Novels of Graham Greene.’ *Writers of Today*, ed., Denys Val Baker (London: Sedgwick, 1946) 15.
 - 19) Graham Greene, *The End of the Affair* (London: Heinemann & Bodley Head, 1974)
 - 20) Graham Greene, *The Heart of the Matter* (London: Heinemann & Bodley Head, 1971) 35-6.
 - 21) Greene, *The Lawless Roads*, 272.
 - 22) Graham Greene, *Collected Essays* (London: Penguin Books, 1988) 91.
 - 23) Graham Greene, *Journey Without Maps* (London: Heinemann & Bodley Head, 1978) 7-8.
 - 24) Greene, *The Lawless Roads*, 272.
 - 25) Allain, *The Other Man*, 160.
 - 26) Greene, *The Lawless Roads*, 27.
 - 27) Graham Greene, *A Sort of Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1971) 117.
 - 28) R.W.B. Lewis, *The Picaresque Saint: Representative Figures in Contemporary Fiction* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1961) 221.
 - 29) Cedric Watts, *A Preface to Greene* (London: Longman, 1997) 188. The similar viewpoints are shown in some other reviews: ‘What is important to note is that *The Power and the Glory* transcends its ostensible theme of the struggle between the Catholic Church and the particular brand of secularism. . . it takes on a universal meaning: . . . a vision of the universal struggle.’ Allen, ‘The Novels of Graham Greene’, 27. ‘Unlike many of the novels of this period, *The Power and the Glory* represents religion in terms of more general human needs.’ Robert Pendleton, *Graham Greene’s Conradian Masterplot* (London: Macmillan, 1996) 98.
 - 30) ‘The Priest as scapegoat images the high priest, Christ. . . . The events in *The Power and the Glory* preceding the execution of the priest intentionally imitate the actions that led up to the crucifixion.’ Francis L. Kunkel, *The Labyrinthine Ways of Graham Greene* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1959) 117-8.
 - 31) It is represented in Atkins’ question: ‘Are we to believe that Greene, his Church, and his whisky priest, are offering life?’ John Atkins, ‘Altogether Amen: A Reconsideration of *The Power and the Glory*.’ *Graham Greene: Some Critical Considerations*, ed. R.O. Evans (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky, 1967) 183. Or in Frank Kermode’s observation: ‘the paradoxical emphasis on the beauty of sin, especially sexual sin. . . and the perversely high valuation put upon suffering’ Frank Kermode, ‘Mr. Greene’s Eggs and Crosses.’ *Graham Greene: Modern Critical Views*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1987) 40.
 - 32) Watts, *A Preface to Greene*, 166.
 - 33) This is often pointed out by critics: ‘One idea which does reappear with special force is the sense of ‘huge abandonment’ in the fallen world.’ Kenneth Allott and Miriam Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963) 175; ‘. . . “abandon” is a word that recurs significantly throughout the novel.’ David Lodge, *Graham Greene* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1966) 26.
 - 34) Allot and Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, 177.
 - 35) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 16. See also Greene, *A Sort of Life*, 202.
 - 36) Greene, *A Sort of Life*, 202-3.

- 37) Graham Greene, *In Search of a Character* (London: Bodley Head, 1961) 51.
- 38) Dominick P. Consolo, 'Style and Stylistics in Five Novels.' *Graham Greene: Some Critical Considerations*, ed. R.O. Evans (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky, 1967) 72-3.
- 39) Frank Kermode, 'Mr. Greene's Eggs and Crosses.' Bloom, *Graham Greene: Modern Critical Views*, 40.
- 40) Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 22.
- 41) Graham Greene, *A Burnt-Out Case* (London: Heinemann & Bodley Head, 1974)
- 42) Greene, *A Sort of Life*, 103.
- 43) Allain, *The Other Man*, 164.
- 44) 'The novel. . . once again allegory lends the events of the narrative an excitement above and beyond the melodramatic adventure of flight and pursuit.' A.A. DeVitis, *Graham Greene* (New York: Twayne, 1986) 74. ' . . . the Priest represents the soul of Everyman; and the search for the Priest by the police represents God's search for the human soul.' Kunkel, *The Labyrinthine Ways of Graham Greene*, 118.
- 45) Allott and Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, 15.
- 46) Allain, *The Other Man*, 136.
- 47) Allott and Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, 176. Also Consolo points out the element of the irony as follows: ' . . . each is separate yet part of the overall action, functional in itself but dependent for its total meaning on the irony effected through an immediate juxtaposition with another.' 'Style and Stylistics in Five Novels.' Evans, *Graham Greene: Some Critical Considerations*, 75.
- 48) Watts, *A Preface to Greene*, 182.
- 49) Watts, *A Preface to Greene*, 185.
- 50) Kierkegaard's concept of irony could be a help of explicating the correlation of its theme and style in *The Power and the Glory*: 'Finally, insofar as irony, when it realizes that existence has no reality, pronounces the same thesis as the pious mentality, irony might seem to be a kind of religious devotion. If I may put it this way, in religious devotion the lower actuality, that is, the relationships with the world, loses its validity, but this occurs only insofar as the relationships with God simultaneously affirm their absolute reality. The devout mind also declares that all is vanity, but this is only insofar as through this negation all disturbing factors are set aside and the eternally existing order comes into view.' Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony, with Continual Reference to Socrates*, ed. trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1989) 257.
- 51) Greene, *Collected Essays*, 91.
- 52) 'I believe because it is absurd' credo quia absurdum—A common version of Tertullian, *De carne Christi*, 5: "Mortuus est dei filius; credible est, quia ineptum est"; *On the Flesh of Christ, The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, I-IX, ed. Alexander Robert and James Donaldson (Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing, 1885-97), III, 525: 'And the Son of God died; it is by all means to be believed, because it is absurd.'
- 53) See notes 50.
- 54) Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony*, 257-8.
- 55) Some critics refer to the same viewpoint: 'A Second reading of *The Power and the Glory* shows how the most seemingly disparate elements of the plot are coordinated by the changes for the better effect by the priest's presence.' Watts, *A Preface to Greene*, 182. ' . . . its total meaning on the irony effected through an immediate juxtaposition with another.' Consolo, 'Style and Stylistics in Five Novels.' Evans, *Graham Greene: Some Critical Considerations*, 75.
- 56) Maria Couto, *Graham Greene: On the Frontier* (London: Macmillan, 1990) 69.
- 57) Frederic R. Karl, 'Graham Greene's Demonical Heroes.' Bloom, *Graham Greene: Modern Critical Views*, 59.
- 58) Pendleton, *Graham Greene's Conradian Masterplot*, 98-9.

- 59) DeVitis, *Graham Greene*, 75.
- 60) Allen, *Tradition and Dream*, 228.
- 61) Sherry, *The Life of Graham Greene*, 717.
- 62) Graham Greene, *The Honorary Consul* (London: Heinemann & Bodley Head, 1980)
- 63) Allain, *The Other Man*, 19. See also 160.
- 64) Terry Eagleton, 'Reluctant Heroes: The Novels of Graham Greene.' *Graham Greene: Modern Critical Views*, ed. Harold Bloom, 100.
- 65) Erdinast-Vulcan, *Graham Greene's Childless Fathers*, 27.
- 66) Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling & Sickness unto Death*, trans. Walter Lowrie (New York: Doubleday, 1954) 91.
- 67) T.S. Eliot, 'The Hollow Man.' *Collected Poems* (London: Faber & Faber, 1980) 89-92.
- 68) Joseph Conrad, *Youth, Heart of Darkness and The End of the Tether* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1961) 151.
- 69) Greene's viewpoint regarding vocation is reflected here: 'I saw no reason why a man should not be different from his function, that he could be an excellent priest while remaining a sinner. . . . the paradox was an integral part of my universe.' Allain, *The Other Man*, 160.
- 70) This song is certainly reminiscent of one of the famous fairy tales by Oscar Wilde, 'The Nightingale and the Rose', in which a nightingale produces a red rose for love with her heart's blood and dies a furtive death. See Oscar Wilde, 'Nightingale and the Rose' *Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 2003) 278-82.
- 71) The significance of his pilgrimage from this point of view are represented in some reviews: 'Like a hero in tragedy, the priest is gradually stripped of the costume and all the insignia of his rank.' Neil McEwan, *Graham Greene* (London: Macmillan, 1988) 53. 'The whiskey priest, who before *The Power and the Glory* opens has been stripped of his livelihood and the flattery of the pious, in the course of the novel loses his attaché case and suit; he is stripped down to his eternal value, or valuelessness.' John Updike, *The Power and the Glory* (London: Penguin, 1990) Introduction, xi. ' . . . the human value of men like Scobie or the whiskey priest lies in their readiness to reject an orthodoxy in which they nevertheless continue to believe; yet to acknowledge the superior truth of that orthodoxy, in the act of refusing it, is to confront the inadequacy of the sheerly human commitments they embrace.' Eagleton, 'Reluctant Heroes: The Novels of Graham Greene.' Bloom, *Graham Greene: Modern Critical Views*, 98.
- 72) The religious stance characteristic of the author is presented here as well: ' . . . I still believe in magic, even in the art of writing. . . Its sense of magic is closer to the African than the abstractions of the Methodists and Anglicans. I'm inclined to find superstition or magic more 'rational' than such abstract religious ideas as the Holy Trinity. I like the so-called 'primitive' manifestations of the Faith.' Allain, *The Other Man*, 156.
- 73) Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling & The Sickness unto Death*, 146.
- 74) As to his giggle there are various viewpoints: ' . . . laughter based on the recognition of God's image in man, evoked by the preposterous incongruity of it and yet leading naturally to a warmth of fellow-feeling. . . . like that laughter recorded by Dante on the upper slopes of purgatory, the chorus celebrating the release of a captive human soul from punishment and its entrance into paradise. . . . It is the giggle that save both the priest and the novel Greene has written about him.' Lewis, *The Picaresque Saint*, 256-8. 'His growth is in part a movement from childish irresponsibility through adolescent giggling and sins to the maturity of acceptance.' Boardman, *Graham Greene: The Aesthetics of Exploration*, 66.
- 75) Greene's idea about saints are exhibited in the comments such as these: 'The greatest saints have been men with more than a normal capacity for evil, and the most vicious men have sometimes narrowly evaded sanctity.' Greene, *Collected Essays*, 131; 'For me, the sinner and the saint can meet;

there is no discontinuity, no rupture.' Allain, *The Other Man*, 163.

- 76) Greene, *Collected Essays*, 267-8. Here, Greene's idea about 'glory' is revealed in his utterance, although in this essay he actually makes comments on the works of Harbert Read: 'The conflict always present in his work is between the fear and the glory. . . If art is the resolution of a combat, here surely is the source of Mr Read's finest work.' Greene, *Collected Essays*, 266.

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