Dedicated to the memory of our friend
Bernard Diederich, 1926-2020

“Friendship is something in the soul. It is a thing one feels. It is not a return for something.”

— Graham Greene, The Heart of the Matter
Contents

Introduction ............................................................. Donna Gessell and Jon Wise viii

Articles
Graham Greene as Publisher ................................................................. Judith Adamson 1
“Quite a Good Spy”: The Emergent Graham Greene ................................ Frances Peltz Assa 13
Graham Greene and Bridges Across Cultures .................................... Thomas Halper 40
Nordahl Grieg’s Friendship with Graham Greene ......................... Johanne Hanson 59
Catholic Adaptation, Irish Conversion: The Postcolonial Graham Greene in Neil Jordan’s The End of the Affair ................. Jerod R. Hollyfield 71
The Shadow Within: Solving the Mystery of A Day Saved ......................... Emma Kemp and Philip Hornbrey 90
A Hint of the Eucharist: Desecration, Morality, and Faith in “The Hint of an Explanation” ............................................ Frances McCormack 98
Rose and the Modern “Religious Sense” in Graham Greene’s Brighton Rock ........................................... Katherine Walton 239

Features
Chapter 8: The Comedians from Seeds of Fiction: Graham Greene’s Adventures in Haiti and Central America 1954-1983 ........................................ Bernard Diederich 255
Greene & Hitchcock: A Marriage Made in Hell? Or, the What-ifs & the Why-nots .............................................. Quentin Falk 266
Making Sense of Greene’s Panama: A Fuliginous Process ................ Creina Mansfield and Donna Gessell 271
Book Reviews

“Greene on Greene”

Richard Greene: *Russian Roulette: The Life and Times of Graham Greene* ........................................... Mike Hill 282

“It’s Like Waiting for a Bus”: Two Books about *Our Man in Havana*

Christopher Hull: *Our Man Down in Havana: The Story Behind Graham Greene’s Cold War Spy Novel* ........................................................................................................ Creina Mansfield 285

Sarah Rainsford: *Our Woman Down in Havana: Reporting Castro’s Cuba* .............................................. Jon Wise 287

Professor Cedric Watts’s Book ................................................................. Mike Hill 289

Graham Greene’s The Last interview and Other Conversations ......................................................... Jon Wise 291

New Shade of Greene

Introduction to *Lucius* .............................................................................. Mike Hill 293

*Lucius, Prologue* (Transcribed by Mike Hill) ................................. Graham Greene 295

Call for Papers ................................................................................................. 304
Maps and Illustrations

Photo of Greene with Peter Ustinov, 1987 ................................................................. 41
Map of the Congo River, Leopoldville, Coquilhatville, and Iyonda .................. 91
Map of Mission stations on the Ruki-Momboyo tributary of the Congo River ....... 93
Photo of page 1 of the manuscript of Greene’s diary from Belgian Congo .......... 95
Photo of examples of original name blotted out, and replaced with “Tony” .......... 96
Photo of page 22 from Greene’s revision of Reid’s typescript .......................... 101
Photo of sheet added by Greene when revising Reid’s typescript .................. 102
Photo of Greene’s diagram of the circle of leprosy ............................................. 122
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Joyce Stavick Graham Greene Studies Scholarship Fund

Joyce Stavick, now Professor Emerita, retired from the English department at the University of North Georgia July 2020. To recognize her work in establishing the journal *Graham Greene Studies*, she has been honored by a scholarship established in her name. The Joyce Stavick Graham Greene Studies Scholarship will be awarded each semester to a qualified student who has served as an intern on the journal. The first recipient of the scholarship in Spring 2021 is Emily Stewart. The scholarship is managed by the University of North Georgia Development Officer for the College of Arts & Letters.
Introduction

After a brief hiatus, *Graham Greene Studies* returns.

*Graham Greene Studies* remains an international, peer-reviewed and disseminated journal of scholarly research pertaining to the life and work of Graham Greene. Conceived by Professor Joyce Stavick, Department Head, English, at the University of North Georgia, it was intended to be published biennially. However, transitions have taken place, 2019 has come and gone, and the chaotic nature of 2020 has taken its toll on the production schedule.

One of those transitions resulted in a new co-editor for *Graham Greene Studies*. On Joyce’s retirement last July, Dr. Donna Gessell was asked to take over as co-editor. Donna first presented on Greene in 2018 when UNG hosted the Transatlantic Studies Association conference. As a third on a panel with Joyce and Creina Mansfield, her paper “‘No Heights and No Abysses’: Greene’s Morality in *The Comedians* Simplified,” marked her entry into Greeneland. At the next TSA conference, held at the University of Lancaster, she joined Creina and Chris Jespersen on a panel, reading her paper “Graham Greene in Panama: Memoir, Story, and Reality.” Donna and Creina combined their papers to produce “Making Sense of Greene’s Panama: A Fuliginous Process,” which was published on the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust website. A version of that paper appears in the Features section of this volume of GGS.

And what an operation it has been: after picking up the pieces, we formed a partnership to identify more pieces to make a whole that continues the standard set by the first volume. Key are two UNG student interns who have become dedicated volunteers: Emily Stewart as Editorial Assistant and Chelsea Beatty as Layout Editor.

Fortunately, during the hiatus *GGS* has flourished in both readership and submissions. Our digital database records instances of access by 657 readers from 144 countries, the top three of which are the United States, Great Britain, and India. Another database statistic lists the top three downloaded articles: Motonori Sato’s “The Invisible Japanese Gentlemen: Graham Greene’s Literary Influence in Japan,” Kevin Ruane’s “Graham Greene in Love and War: French Indochina and the Making of *The Quiet American*,” and Cedric Watts’s “Darkest Greeneland: *Brighton Rock*.”

From the numerous submissions, through the peer-review process, we include nine articles, three features, and five book reviews. These are paired with a chapter from Bernard Deiderich’s *Seeds of Fiction: Graham Greene’s Adventures in Haiti and Central America 1954-1983* and the Prologue from Graham Greene’s unfinished novel *Lucius*.

The results are as varied as was Volume 1: once again, the majority of contributors are not UK nationals, and subjects vary widely.

Adapted from a talk she gave at the 2016 Graham Greene International Festival, Judith Adamson writes from her own first-hand experience of knowing Greene in her article on his decades-long publishing career in “Graham Greene as Publisher.” Frances Assa also examines another one of Greene’s careers: this one within the context of MI6. In her article, “Quite a Good Spy: The Emergent Graham Greene,” she acknowledges that “he never publicly admitted or denied whether he continued to act for British intelligence after he left the service.” She then goes on to argue how “there is a great deal of circumstantial evidence that Greene was contributing to MI6 in many of his frequent journeys.”
Greene in cross-cultural contexts is explored by two authors: Thomas Halper, in his “Graham Greene and Bridges across Cultures,” uses The Quiet American, The Comedians, and The Third Man to show how Greene “addressed the understandings and misunderstandings with perception, elegance, and wit.” More tightly focusing in, Johanne Hanson pens “Nordahl Grieg’s Friendship with Graham Greene” to make the case that “although they met only three times before Grieg’s untimely death in 1943, he seems to have made a lasting impression on Greene, who would often mention him in letters and interviews throughout his life.”

In a closer cross-cultural examination, Jerod R. Hollyfield formulates “Catholic Adaptation, Irish Conversion: The Post-colonial Graham Greene in Neil Jordan’s The End of the Affair.” While examining it as “an adaptation of British literature by an Irish filmmaker that reconstructs its source text’s London narrative,” he argues that its structure “allows it to interrogate the complex web of relationships among colonial discourse, Irish independence, and the global film industry.”

Another two articles deal directly with Greene’s use of Catholicism in his writing. Frances McCormack uses medieval German folklore to explain nuances of meaning not evident to non-Catholic readers in her “A Hint of the Eucharist: Desecration, Morality, and Faith in ‘The Hint of an Explanation.’” She argues that “Greene’s narratives, while they depict more complex moral dilemmas, are populated by characters whose psyches are battlegrounds (often between their own divided loyalties) and by the looming threat of damnation and the notable absence of God.” Likewise, Katherine Walton, in “Rose and the Modern ‘Religious Sense’ in Graham Greene’s Brighton Rock,” explores Rose’s character, arguing how “the nuanced treatment that Greene affords Rose supplies Brighton Rock with a particular metaphysical ground, one which neither Pinkie, in his inability to feel contrition, nor Ida, in her esoteric humanism, is able to access.”

Another article that sorts out new meanings, this time for a short story seldom dealt with by scholars, is “The Shadow Within: Solving the Mystery of ‘A Day Saved’” by Philip Hormbrey and Emma Kemp. Through their careful reading of this story that was originally produced for a BBC radio broadcast, they “discover that, far from being unsatisfying, the story contains a very dramatic revelation: Robinson and Fotheringay are not in fact two separate characters but one and the same man.”

Perhaps the most unusual, yet fascinating article is “Graham Greene’s Congo Journal: A Critical Edition” by Michael Meeuwis. Using a table format, he compares Greene’s diary manuscript text, reproduced verbatim and unaltered, with Greene’s handwritten revisions to his secretary’s typescript, as well as with Greene’s footnotes to the galley proofs. The results show Greene’s creative process while presenting detailed day-by-day activities of Greene’s life from 31 January to 7 March 1959.

Volume 2 Features begin with “Chapter 8: The Comedians” from Seeds of Fiction: Graham Greene's Adventures in Haiti and Central America 1954-1983 written by Bernard Diederich. The reprint honors Diederich, who died in January 2020, and his friendship with Greene, which included Diederich’s influential introductions to left-leaning leaders in Central and South America. In another Feature, Quentin Falk comments on Greene’s career with film and his lack of collaboration with Hitchcock, who was only five years his elder. In “A Marriage Made in Hell? Or, the What-Ifs & the Why-Nots,” Falk explores Greene’s refusal to work with Hitchcock—for
better or for worse. “Making Sense of Greene’s Panama: A Fuliginous Process,” co-authored by Creina Mansfield and Donna A. Gessell, returns to Greene’s relationship with a Central American leader, showing how it became—and how it almost did not become—fictionalized.

Book Reviews includes reviews of five books. Last year’s publication of Richard Greene’s *Russian Roulette: The Life and Times of Graham Greene*, or *The Unquiet Englishman: A Life of Graham Greene*, brings Mike Hill’s exploration in his “Greene on Greene” review. Next is “‘It’s Like Waiting for a Bus’: Two Books about *Our Man in Havana* make the wait worthwhile.” This double feature includes reviews by Creina Mansfield of Christopher Hull’s *Our Man Down in Havana: The Story Behind Graham Greene’s Cold War Spy Novel*, and by Jon Wise of Sarah Rainsford’s *Our Woman Down in Havana: Reporting Castro’s Cuba*. In another review, Mike Hill assesses Professor Cedric Watts’s book, *Covert Plots in Literary and Critical Texts: From William Shakespeare to Edward Said*, discussing two of its essays, each dealing with a Greene novel: *Stamboul Train*, or *Orient Express*, and *The Power and the Glory*. Fittingly last, Jon Wise reviews John R. MacArthur’s *Graham Greene’s The Last Interview and Other Conversations*. A compilation of four interviews that took place during the last decade of the author’s life, the book features interviews by Anthony Burgess, John Mortimer, and Martin Amis, as well as one conducted by the editor himself. The MacArthur interview is noteworthy because, as “almost certainly the last,” it appears here first, in print form and unabridged.

Also appearing for the first time is the Prologue to Graham Greene’s unfinished novel *Lucius*. Our “New Shade of Greene” feature also includes Mike Hill’s “Introduction to *Lucius*.” He relates how, in researching the second volume of the bibliography with Dr. Jon Wise, he came across the manuscript: “The archive at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas includes a file containing around 50 foolscap sheets in Greene’s mature handwriting—clearly an unfinished novel, of about 23,000 words.” Thanks to Hill’s transcription, we present *Lucius*, “a substantial but unfinished story written in the late 1950s, of a schoolmaster blackmailed by a timid schoolboy.” We offer the piece as yet-to-be explored territory in Greeneland.

In July 1963, *The Sunday Times* published an article by Greene entitled “Security in Room 51.” It has never been re-published. It is a humorous recollection of the time he spent working in London for the secret services after his return from West Africa in early 1943. The British Secret Intelligence Services (SIS) as it was then called, now MI6, shared a large house in a fashionable part of Central London with their American counterparts—the Office of Strategic Studies (now the CIA). The work was dull and routine on Greene’s “Portugal desk”; his most vital asset was a card index of agents and contacts on the Iberian Peninsula. “Security” for the most part seemed arbitrary but did dictate that all secret documents had to be locked away overnight, due mainly to the ever-present threat of a bombing raid. When on overnight fire-guard duty, any documents left out negligently had to be collected and deposited on the night-duty officer’s desk. Culprits were reprimanded and fined.

Ever the practical joker, Greene found a way of prizing his fingers through a gap in a buckled steel cupboard in an OSS office and extracting Top Secret papers, much to the chagrin of the Americans the next day. It took several weeks for the source of the prank to be discovered. But Greene was not sacked or even censored; a notice circulated to the entire department simply notified fire-guard
officers that “in future the steel cupboard in room 51 is to be regarded as a safe and documents locked in the cupboard are to be regarded as secure.”

This little wartime reminiscence is revealing. Aside from the opportunity Greene took to lampoon his transatlantic cousins, “security was a game we played less against the enemy than against the allies on the upper floor,” the experience with SIS also provided satirical material that he used to great effect in Our Man in Havana (1958) and more tellingly in The Human Factor (1978).

Norman Sherry in his biography fleshes out what life was like in SIS headquarters with the aid of the memories of journalist and satirist Malcolm Muggeridge, who worked alongside Greene during those months. One is left with the impression of an amateurish, “clubby” and even leisurely existence. Nevertheless, the importance of what they were doing was not wholly lost on Greene who, while welcoming the visits of Professor Norman Pearson, an American academic and a prominent counter-intelligence agent, “carefully guarded from his eyes my card index of suspected German agents working in Portugal.”

But it was the Head of Section 5, their boss, the notorious double agent Kim Philby, who stood out, acknowledged by both Muggeridge and Greene as charismatic and a dominating influence in their lives at the time.

Elsewhere in his writings and twice in this short piece, Greene makes the point, “I hope if he (Philby) reads this essay he will accept the salute of genuine affection.”

Philby’s flight to Moscow was revealed to the public on 1 July 1963. Greene’s recollections for Sunday morning readers of his wartime “jolly jape” masked his true purpose: to take a public stance against the opprobrium being heaped upon the head of a former friend with whom he used to share a drink in the Red Lion behind St. James’s Street between air-raid sirens.

This must have shocked his readers in the binary Cold War era of nearly sixty years ago when the Cuban Missile crisis, just nine months previously, had rocked the world. How could one of the country’s leading novelists choose the moment of the spy’s cowardly defection to remember him with “affection”? Did Graham Greene really believe that it was the writer’s duty always to be “a piece of grit in the State machinery,” to perceive integrity in Philby’s actions even if many anonymous agents were to die as a consequence of the spy’s betrayal? Sixty years on one suspects that Greene would have been applauded by libertarians for defending the likes of Edward Snowden and Julian Assange in the face of the rule of law. However, as the author Nicholas Shakespeare recently wrote, Greene always took sides in spite of his “unsettled personality.” Almost certainly he would have deplored many of the current world leaders for whom duplicity and self-aggrandizement are the norm and integrity and truthfulness are conspicuous by their absence.

Another writer who similarly came down on the side of integrity and truthfulness was Bernard Diederich. A close friend of Greene’s, he was a well-respected journalist who covered Caribbean and Central American politics. This volume is dedicated to his memory.

Donna Gessell & Jon Wise, 2021
Graham Greene as Publisher

Judith Adamson

On 11 October 1933 Graham Greene turned down a publishing job with Ian Parsons, then a junior partner at Chatto & Windus. He said he did so “very reluctantly, because I’ve always wanted to be in a publishing office.” There was still a half-year to go on the lease of his flat in Oxford, and his wife Vivien was expecting their first child in December. Had he been in London he told Parsons, “I could have gone gently on with my own work of an evening.”

He had tried a similar arrangement between 1926 and 1929 when he wrote The Man Within in the mornings and sorted grammar, redundancies, and clichés at The Times from four in the afternoon until midnight. In A Sort of Life, he said his sub-editor’s job “was a symbol of the peaceful life” (131), but he also said that by the time Charles Evans took The Man Within and agreed to pay him an advance of £600 for a couple of years, he had decided that his writing was handicapped by his hours in Printing House Square.

To save money, he and Vivien moved to Chipping Campden at the end of 1929, then to Oxford where he wrote full time. That year The Man Within sold over twelve thousand copies and made him a celebrity. The possibility of living entirely by one’s pen seemed assured. However, The Name of Action and Rumour at Nightfall did not live up to expectations, and his biography of Rochester was rejected at the beginning of 1932. In December, Stamboul Train was a best seller. But even before the threat of J. B. Priestley’s lawsuit obliged Heinemann to reprint some twenty pages and rebind 13,000 copies of the book, Greene was in financial trouble with Evans, who would make him no further advances until the losses of their agreement had been recovered. That was not to be until the publication of Brighton Rock in 1938.

When Ian Parsons offered him the job at Chatto & Windus, Greene knew what a dicey business it was to make a living as a novelist. At the same time, after some financially rough years, he was earning a regular, if modest, income as a reviewer for The Spectator, and that spring MGM bought the film rights to Stamboul Train, enabling him to return to London. So one wonders if he was serious when he told Parsons that he had always wanted to be in a publishing office or if he was cunningly hedging his bets.

When three years later he accepted Parsons’s offer of the literary editorship of Night and Day, which was published by Chatto & Windus and owned mostly by its partners and printers, Greene’s circumstances were very different. He had become part of London’s literary scene. He entertained at his house in Clapham, London, badgered his agent to place his literary reviews and articles almost as quickly as he wrote them, had become a scriptwriter and film critic, and was working as a sometime scout for the publisher Bobbs Merrill and as a reader and proofer for James Hamilton. In 1976 Parsons told Norman Sherry that at Night and Day Greene was “a

model literary editor, hardworking, completely conscientious, and with such a large circle of gifted literary friends that not only the book pages, but many of the features, were of an exceptionally high order.”

Greene was competitive, ambitious, and hard-nosed at business, and when he became a full-blown publisher at Eyre and Spottiswoode at the end of the war, he quickly proved his mettle. Since wartime paper rations remained in effect until 1949, Greene went to Amsterdam to buy paper for their best sellers, one of which was the profitable Bible. He brought in Mervyn Peake and R. K. Narayan. He signed up François Mauriac and started a thriller list as well as a reprint list of neglected masterpieces called The Century Library. He asked Orwell, Pritchett, and de la Mare to suggest titles and to write introductions. And as he had done when he edited the *Oxford Outlook* as an undergraduate, he chased literary editors for reviews and obliged agents to get books advertised.

Dorothy Glover was commissioned to design book-jackets and became indispensable as the imaginary Mrs. Montgomery in one of Greene’s most memorable pranks. Whatever amusement that elaborate joke was for him, it indicated his early and restless boredom with the mechanics of publishing life. His ambition to rise above it is evident in his morning office routine. On 15 March 1952, Douglas Jerrold, Eyre and Spottiswoode’s chairman, wrote in *Picture Post* that Greene would ring his bank manager first thing, then his stockbroker, his insurance agent, his literary agent, and his film contacts. When he spoke to literary editors about reviewing Eyre & Spottiswoode’s books, he also lined up reviews for his own and made sure Heinemann sent whomever a copy of his latest. Of course, his own publishing interests were, in part, what made him valuable to Jerrold, who thought him to be an excellent businessman. Greene knew about production from watching his own books through the process, so he kept a careful eye out for libel, misprints, and what went on dust jackets. His type preference was Mono Goudy for its clarity and blackness. It also had the advantage of making a book slightly longer.

But he and Jerrold rarely agreed on much else. Both Catholics, as was the press’s owner Oliver Costhwaite-Eyre, Jerrold was so rightwing politically that he admired Mussolini and helped charter the plane that flew Franco from the Canaries to Morocco to launch his attack on the Spanish Republican government. In the autumn of 1948, when Greene agreed to release Anthony Powell from his Eyre and Spottiswoode contract for *John Aubery and his Friends* because the press had not published it within the requisite time, Jerrold said he had no right to make such a decision. Graham thought it “a bloody boring book” anyway and used the occasion to resign. In a letter to Powell on 14 December 1948 he said that the “case really [only] brought matters to a head”—which could be interpreted as Greene’s having had enough of his publisher’s job.

Footloose again, he bragged to Catherine Walston from Paris on 22 January 1949 that his books were “in every shop—a whole display in the Rue de Rivoli” and that three people were

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writing monographs about him “for three different publishers.” His two great films with Carol Reed would win prizes in 1948 and 1949, and from then on his political reporting fueled his novels and paid his travel expenses. It is easy to follow that progression from 1950 to 1956—Vienna, Indochina, Kenya, Indochina again, Cuba, Haiti, Vietnam, Poland, Cuba again. By June 1957 when he met Max Reinhardt, the balance that satisfied his restlessness and fed his fictional imagination was well established and he had a secure economic base.

The two met at a luncheon soon after Reinhardt bought The Bodley Head from Sir Stanley Unwin on a fifty-fifty basis with Ansbacher’s Merchant Bank. Getting Greene to join the board of his new company and to help revamp its list was a coup for Reinhardt, who was ten years younger than Greene and eager to succeed. He had grown up in Istanbul in a large family of secularized Jews who owned a shipping, insurance, and trading conglomerate, been educated there at the High School for Boys run by the British Council, then sent to HEC in Paris where his uncle, Richard Darr (who treated him as a son), had opened a Parisian branch of the family business. Reinhardt was expected to work with him when he graduated, but Hitler put an end to that. On the eve of the Second World War, Darr had to return to Istanbul and Reinhardt went alone to London, which was where he wanted to live anyway. He was twenty-three and carried an Italian passport.

He rented an office in the accountancy firm of Spicer and Pegler and after the war bought from them a company called H. Foulks Limited (or HFL), which published accountancy textbooks for a correspondence school of the same name. Within two years he had turned this money-losing venture into a profitable enterprise. Then, on the suggestion of his two squash partners, Ralph Richardson and Tony Quayle, he started Max Reinhardt Limited to publish theatre books. Richardson and Quayle sat on the board of the new firm whose first book, *Ellen Terry and George Bernard Shaw: A Correspondence*, turned Reinhardt from a successful printer of accountancy texts into a real London publisher. He was so quickly respected that in 1953 Sir Frances Meynell sold him his beloved Nonesuch Press and in 1956 he was asked by Boy Hart, a friend of Richardson’s and a director of Ansbacher, to buy The Bodley Head with them. Reinhardt maneuvered the sale brilliantly and got Priestley to sit on his board of directors along with Richardson, Quayle, Richard Pegler, Charles Evan’s son Dwyre (who was a director of Heinemann), and Francis Meynell; from Ansbacher he got Hart and George Ansley.

The account of Greene telling Reinhardt when they met that he missed publishing and was looking for something to do after he had written his five hundred words a day is deeply entrenched. But it misses the back story. Among the thousands of Reinhardt’s papers used to write his biography were a few letters from Derek Verschoyle to Hart dated as late as 10 November 1956 when Reinhardt and Hart were negotiating to buy The Bodley Head from Unwin. Verschoyle was *The Spectator*’s literary editor in the 1930s when Greene was its film reviewer. He

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had published one of Greene’s earliest essays there, “Death in the Cotswolds,” and Greene had published Verschoyle’s piece about Malvern in The Old School. They knew each other fairly well. Verschoyle had recommended North Side to Greene when the family moved to London and he worked for MI6 during and after the war. It was Verschoyle who suggested to Hart that Ansbacher should buy The Bodley Head. One of the letters implied that he and Hart had discussed the possibility of Ansbacher buying the firm with Greene, Verschoyle’s idea being that he would manage the press himself with Greene as his adviser (48-49).

Hart evidently preferred Reinhardt as a business partner, and Reinhardt was so quick on the uptake that their deal with Unwin was struck before the end of the year. So at the beginning of June 1957 Hart arranged the Ansbacher luncheon where Reinhardt asked Greene to sit on The Bodley Head board. Since the Stamboul Train affair Greene had disliked Priestley, who had already joined the board, but he liked Reinhardt immediately and permanently. His letters to Reinhardt came two or three a week. He suggested books; Reinhardt followed them up. Greene was a superb scout. He knew the foreign and British publishing scenes well; he read reviews and met authors everywhere he traveled. He suggested British editions. He checked translations for what he called “translator’s English” and thought up better titles. He picked out interesting scholarship that might be republished, scholars who might be of use as ghost writers or editors of particular editions. He supplied quotes for dust jackets. He helped Reinhardt get books they wanted. He passed along the latest literary gossip and his own hunches about what was worth printing. He knew children’s books, read manuscripts, and replied to even the most recalcitrant authors. And he took on Priestley over a new edition of Ford Madox Ford knowing that Priestley was not enthusiastic. “I admit I am a fanatic on the subject of Ford and would like to see a revival of his work” he told Reinhardt on 23 September 1957, who told Priestley they would do what Greene wanted (64).

In 1958 the possibility of publishing Lolita arose. In December 1955 Greene had named it one of the three best books of the year in The Sunday Times and was denounced for doing so by its editor in chief, John Gordon. Greene and John Sutro then created the John Gordon Society Against Pornography, their shenanigans making Lolita an instant cause célèbre. Greene was ecstatic about publishing Lolita in Britain. Frere at Heinemann had turned the novel down in case of an obscenity charge; he had been in the dock in 1953 over Walter Baxter’s The Image and the Search and had not wanted to make a return visit. On 13 October 1958 Priestley said he would resign if Reinhardt published muck like that. Reinhardt sided with Greene, only to discover that because of contractual problems they would have to publish jointly with Weidenfeld & Nicolson, which he refused to do. Greene insisted that Nabokov wanted them to have the book because of his advocacy of it in 1955. So Reinhardt made a larger offer to Nabokov, and because of the pornography law Greene said he would sign the contract himself. If prosecuted, publishers were taken to court but not allowed to defend themselves. Greene, however, would be allowed to argue the novel’s literary merits in his own defense and he was highly excited by the prospect (64-67).
Lolita was a gamble they lost. Weidenfeld outwitted the law by printing a very short first run, and when no writ came from the Director of Public Prosecutions they went ahead with 200,000 hard copies that quickly sold. Priestley muttered smugly that the book would only encourage dirty old men. Greene, who had failed to maneuver the deal, was bruised and angry. He had wanted to challenge the obscenity law, a privilege that went to Allen Lane with Lady Chatterley’s Lover in 1960. And Greene had been trying to impress Reinhardt. “We were right not to publish with them,” he told Reinhardt privately; “The way we were treated was very unsatisfactory. I’m going to the Nice casino” (66).

Before Lolita became an issue, Greene discovered that Charlie Chaplin was writing his autobiography and told Reinhardt they must buy it. Two telegrams were sent to Chaplin at the very beginning of December 1957: from Greene—“Am now connected with publishing house The Bodley Head and would be delighted if allowed to make competitive offer for your autobiography” (68), and from Reinhardt—an appreciation of Chaplin and an offer for £10,000. Greene had defended Chaplin against the McCarthy Act so when by 8 December no reply came, he felt he could send another telegram: “Shall be in Switzerland end of February. Could I drop in on you and seriously discuss your autobiography” (68). Reinhardt sent a letter promising to make the book universal and to do it full justice. There was still no reply. At the beginning of March 1958 Reinhardt drafted a letter for Greene to sign saying the two of them were coming to Switzerland. Could they invite Chaplin to dinner? This time there was a reply. Chaplin said he had just begun to write, was finding the process slow, and if Reinhardt wrote again to make sure he put his name on the front of the envelope. Chaplin never opened mail unless he knew who had sent it (68).

Reinhardt began to telephone regularly and on 20 March put his name prominently on the front of another envelope. He and his wife Joan were going to Vienna with Greene. Could they stop by? Joan and Chaplin’s wife Oona discovered they had attended neighboring schools in New York. When the women retired Chaplin read what he had written to Reinhardt and Greene. Next morning Greene told Reinhardt the autobiography was going to be wonderful. He told Chaplin he did not believe in many things, but he did believe in good writing, and what Chaplin had read to them was first rate. Chaplin agreed that Reinhardt should publish the book. Because Chaplin was uneasy about contracts, Reinhardt agreed there need not be one until the writing was finished (69).

Reinhardt immediately arranged joint American publication with Simon & Schuster in New York and urged Chaplin on with a much larger advance. Chaplin liked the advance but worried about taxes. Reinhardt said Chaplin could make a gift of his incomplete manuscript to a trust company in Lichtenstein from which Reinhardt would buy the copyright for £50,000. In a letter dated 26 October 1992, Reinhardt explained this to Greene’s niece, Amanda Denny:

Greene thought it would be an interesting experiment to form a small company which would acquire the world rights of books, and I suggested we call it Solítas (Societé Litteraire Anglo-Suisse), which name appealed to Greene immediately. The partners were Graham, Oona
Chaplin, and a relative of mine [Oncle Richard]. The first books we bought were Graham’s four children’s books, and we appointed Verdant [Greene’s holding company] as our agent. Solitas then instructed Verdant to sell them to The Bodley Head, and the Swiss company made a small profit on the deal which was distributed to the three parties. We had great fun over the whole project, which proved profitable. (69)

The arrangement sounded fine to Chaplin but it did not make him write any faster. He refused to use a secretary saying he preferred to write in longhand. Then he claimed he could not write without Reinhardt being in the room with him. Reinhardt went to Vevey. Chaplin read what he had written and they discussed it. “Chaplin was very touchy,” Reinhardt recalled; “He didn’t like being criticized” (70). And he was uneasy working alone. Greene went to cheer him on. Reinhardt went back. In November 1960 they turned up together and escaped with half the typescript. The rest arrived in London fairly soon after. It was about a quarter of a million words which Chaplin said he would reduce to 150,000. Greene read it at the end of the month and told Reinhardt on 5 December, “I treated it quite cavalierly. It took about a fortnight to get through and I have only made rough corrections, but I find that I have shortened it by about 15,000 words. I’d like to talk about these to you in general terms, and how best we should make suggestions to Chaplin” (72). On the 29th Reinhardt congratulated him “on his editing job. I had not realized you had worked so much on the typescript and how very much you have improved it. I have added a few more corrections and I hope that Charles Chaplin will accept our recommendations” (72).

Chaplin readily agreed to Greene’s cuts and despite what some have heard differently, including from Greene himself, other than these cuts, the manuscript is surprisingly clean of Greene’s hand.

This does not mean that the book was otherwise without Greene and Reinhardt’s touch. In June 1961, and still without a contract, Reinhardt got Chaplin to agree to stop revising by the end of the year. By November Reinhardt still had no contract and on Chaplin’s word that The Bodley Head had world rights to the book, he was arranging for serialization in The Sunday Times. He then told his board they should make a final offer to Chaplin of half a million American dollars. Only Greene was not shocked by the amount. The board agreed to the then-enormous sum but not until Reinhardt agreed to borrow it from his own bank, Ansbacher being unwilling to underwrite it without a proper contract. Even Chaplin realized the impossibility of borrowing so much without his signature. So on 25 November 1961 he wrote Reinhardt what he considered to be sufficient: “Dear Max, For your business convenience, this is to confirm our verbal agreement whereby you will have the world publishing book rights of my autobiography on the conditions we have discussed, subject to contract. This, of course, does not include the stage, film and serial rights. Yours, Charles Chaplin” (72).

By the beginning of 1962 Simon & Schuster and The Bodley Head were sharing their editors’ corrections. On 22 May Greene was reading “the proofs of the first part ... with enormous pleasure” (73). But Chaplin was still not satisfied with the rest. Reinhardt sent his new chief editor, James Michie. Two days later Chaplin sent Michie back to
London. Michie recalled that Chaplin “was an impossible monster of egotism” (73). Reinhardt then sent him a typist he insisted Chaplin use. She used to sneak into the village to telephone Reinhardt. Then the telegrams began. “I am really at the end of my tether. I am leaving for a holiday on Friday 21st Sept. and hope I do not have a breakdown before I get there. Please come to my rescue and arrive as soon as possible, and stay as long as possible” (74). Reinhardt returned to Vevey within the week.

It took Reinhardt until 25 October 1963 to get Chaplin to agree to the serial rights on paper, by which time the galleys were being pulled. Reinhardt remembered that at one point when he, Greene, and Chaplin were together in the south of France, Chaplin suddenly got up and said he was going, which he did, leaving his luggage behind. Reinhardt had no idea why he was upset and when the telephone rang repeatedly (Reinhardt presumed from Chaplin) he was too angry to answer it. Then Chaplin’s lawyer, Maître Paschoud, arrived and said Chaplin had not understood a particular line in the contract. “Tell him to cross it out” (74), Reinhardt said. And that was the end of it.

There were four sets of galleys and Chaplin kept changing one while another was in progress. In April 1964 he was still giving Reinhardt corrections on the telephone for the serialization proofs and still needing almost daily assurance from Reinhardt that his rights were well protected. When *The Sunday Times* published the first installment of the serialization, the editor of *Izvestya* rang Lord Thomson to ask if he could print 1,000 words of the second installment. Russia was not yet part of the International Copyright Agreement, so having assured Chaplin that his rights were protected, Reinhardt now had to tell him he could not stop *Isvestia*. Chaplin paused only a second before replying, “Get them to pay us in caviar, Max. And make sure it’s beluga” (76). The book was launched at the Savoy in September 1964 with many kilos of beluga caviar, plenty of champagne, and Oona Chaplin telling everyone “that no one else living could have managed to deal with Charlie through these past years as Max did” (76).

Publishing requires the close integration of editorial, marketing, and financial concerns, and without The Bodley Head team, which at that point was tightly controlled by Reinhardt and operating almost seamlessly, he and Greene might not have succeeded so well. That said, Chaplin’s biography was their first joint publishing coup. It gave the firm international stature and made it money. Like Greene’s film collaboration with Carol Reed in which two men acted as one *auteur de cinema*, Greene and Reinhardt worked together brilliantly. Greene’s editorial skills were indispensable and, as the Solitas enterprise shows, he and Reinhardt were both astute at business.

Meanwhile, back at the firm, Greene and Priestley had argued about publishing *Candy*, Terry Southern’s Rabelaisian satire based on *Candide*. It had been published in France, banned, and reissued under the title *Lollipop*. This time Ansbacher’s George Ansley, who was then Chairman of The Bodley Head board, agreed with Priestley: *Candy* was a very naughty book which they must not touch. Greene insisted on publication but by the time he and Reinhardt made an offer the book had gone elsewhere. Ansley considered this his personal victory and decided he really must get more involved in literary decisions. “Dead against any control by
the Board of the choice of books” (84), Greene thundered at Reinhardt. But Ansley’s ambition was larger than choosing books. In 1961 he and Lionel Fraser, who was Chairman of Tillings, the industrial conglomerate that owned the majority of the Heinemann group, made a deal to merge it with The Bodley Head. Although at the time Heinemann had the best fiction list in English, by the end of the 1950s the firm was close to bankruptcy because its system was designed for long runs of hard cover books and the directors had failed to deal with the paperback revolution by either selling or refitting their printing works at the Windmill Press. Instead, they had bought up smaller publishers, among them Secker and Warburg and Rupert Hart-Davis (77-78).

In trying to fix the Heinemann problems the year before, Greene’s friend Frere, who was then Heinemann’s chairman, had—without telling his directors—arranged with Fraser to sell the company to McGraw-Hill in New York. When Warburg and Hart-Davis found out, they convinced Fraser behind Frere’s back that to sell the company to the American firm was anti-British. Frere evidently also didn’t alert Fraser to the seriousness of Heinemann’s financial situation, and when it became known at the final meeting with McGraw-Hill (to which Frere was not invited) the deal fell through. After that Fraser didn’t trust Frere. He bought the rest of Heinemann and placed several of his Tillings’s people in high positions at the publisher’s office where Frere was soon ostracized (78).

The plot continued in 1961 when Fraser contrived with Ansley to merge Heinemann with The Bodley Head. The new conglomerate was to operate under a holding board with Fraser as chairman and the two subsidiary companies being run, the Bodley Head by Reinhardt, and Heinemann by Peter Ryder from Tillings. Frere would be president of the merged companies and allowed to look after his own authors including Greene, and Greene was to be on the holding board as its literary adviser, which would give him counsel over all the Heinemann authors, including himself and Priestley (78).

Reinhardt did not like the deal because it meant losing tight control of The Bodley Head, but Greene insisted it would be beneficial and encouraged Reinhardt to accept it. Did Greene conspire with Frere and Ansley in this? On 18 May he passed the plan off to Catherine Walston as “my great merger” with “myself on the board of the Heinemann companies and Frere back in control with me.” He then further bragged, “I’m really becoming a tycoon!” On Sunday 28 May it was Greene who gave Fraser his approval in principle for the merger. He then met Reinhardt at the Brompton Grill to toast his success with champagne. The next day Greene approved Fraser’s proposed press announcement. But on the Tuesday Reinhardt discovered that, as with the McGraw-Hill deal, Frere had never told the Heinemann directors about the merger. They were hostile to it, and in a letter to Frere on 16 October of the following year Greene said that his “presence on the [new] board was considered undesirable by other members of the Heinemann group” (79). It was probably Dwye Evans who complained the most. He had been on The Bodley Head board with Greene when the Chaplin contract was discussed and said it did not matter how much they agreed to pay Chaplin because Heinemann would get the book. Greene had answered him: “If you think
that then you shouldn’t be on this board” (79), and Reinhardt paid Evans to resign. Be that as it may, Fraser got scared and backed out.

Greene was outraged. He moved his books to The Bodley Head taking Eric Ambler, George Millar, and the very profitable Georgette Heyer with him. Priestley refused to move. Heinemann “made me,” he said. “I must stand by them now” (82). Reinhardt soon convinced Priestley to leave The Bodley Head board. Greene expressed no such loyalty to Heinemann, although he and Frere continued to be close friends, as did Frere and Reinhardt. When his reasons for moving were publicly questioned, he famously wrote to the Observer in July 1961 that he refused to be associated with a bus company, that “authors are not factory hands, nor are books to be compared as commodities with tobacco, beer, motor-cars and automatic machines.” Frere left Heinemann a year later and joined the board of The Bodley Head (80).

So a new chapter there began. “Writing is a lonely process,” Reinhardt said at the time, “but with support and encouragement writers learn to trust their publisher, and out of trust is bred loyalty, to the benefit of both” (80). But who benefited more? Reinhardt was a benign enabler. From his school days he had wanted to be a British subject and as an adult he thought of himself as an English gentleman. The fact that he was one of the brilliant immigrants who revitalized English publishing after the war meant nothing to him. He was horrified if anyone suggested he was an immigrant, and although he had an accent, he was always surprised. He called his authors his friends and could not have taken more pride in their books had he written them himself. Caring for his authors was his life and Greene was his top catch.

Like most writers, what Greene wanted was a publisher who would do what he said, and perhaps this was what he thought he would find at Chatto & Windus in 1933 when he told Ian Parsons he had always wanted to be in a publishing office. His scheme to rescue Frere and move himself into a position at Heinemann where he would have been in control of his own work and of those authors he championed suggests this. Would he have preferred such a partnership with Frere? In a letter to his brother Hugh on 17 May 1971, he said he continued to turn to Frere for editorial advice, that he “couldn’t trust Max’s judgement but I do trust Frere.”

However, in 1961 it was Reinhardt and not Frere who was in a position to give him the publishing support, financial and otherwise, that he wanted, to provide him with the kind of publishing freedom few novelists of his generation had.

Very soon after the failed merger Reinhardt found a way to buy the remaining Anshbacher stock in The Bodley Head. He and Greene then connived for years without success to get his back titles transferred from Heinemann. The battle stalled in a sort of Mexican standoff with the joint publication of Greene’s Collected Edition. The first four volumes appeared on 6 April 1970 in their now familiar dark green jackets that Reinhardt insisted be designed by The Bodley Head’s John Ryder and Michael Harvey, revised and with new introductions by Greene. Reinhardt estimated that producing those initial 5,000 copies of *England Made Me*, 4,500 of *It’s a Battlefield*, 7,000 of *Brighton Rock* and 7,000 of *Our Man in Havana* reduced his 1970 profits by about £7,000 (86).
Depending on whether real price or purchasing power is being measured, that would mean from £90,000 to over £200,000 today. It represented a good deal of Reinhardt’s profit for that year.

Even after Greene left The Bodley Head board and moved to France in January 1966 when Reinhardt’s uncle told him he had to leave England for tax reasons, their friendship and publishing relationship persisted uninterrupted. Reinhardt continued to provide endless personal kindnesses to Greene, and Greene continued to suggest books Reinhardt should publish, to write introductions and blurbs for many of them, and to negotiate contracts for writers he thought worthy. And being the good businessmen both he and Reinhardt were, they knew how to recycle everything—stories into editions, editions into collections, collections into selections—the possibilities for profit were as many as they could imagine.

Of course, not all their publishing schemes were great successes. Among other strange stories in Reinhardt’s archive is that of Mary Connell’s little book Help Is on the Way. In 1983 Greene sent Reinhardt a novel by this Texan writer and artist. It had been rejected by Knopf. The Bodley Head reader judged it “fairly pedestrian ... heavy-handed even ... an honest attempt ... but nevertheless a chore” (168). Connell took Reinhardt’s rejection with equanimity but continued to send him letters addressed to “Dear Max of the House of Reinhardt” or “Max Reinhardt, an Angel [which] is higher than a prince, and even higher than a sheriff” (168). Greene too was persistent, and a year and a half later he suggested Reinhardt publish a small selection of her poetry. In desperation Reinhardt turned Connell over to his wife, Joan, and told Greene they would print a very small book of Connell’s poetry under the Max Reinhardt Ltd. imprint which, Joan suggested to Connell politely, “We often use ... for books in a special category” (168). Then Greene discovered that Connell’s brother was Jim Wright, the majority leader in the House of Representatives. So Reinhardt got off the hook by selling the book to a small American distributor and having it passed around Washington cocktail parties along with Greene’s endorsement on the front cover and on the back his favorite Mary Connell lines, “Am I kissing wrong frogs?/ Or am I kissing frogs wrong?”

Then came the endgame, which took all their combined strength as friends and publishers.5 The Bodley Head had joined Cape and Chatto & Windus in 1973, keeping its own editorial, publicist, and rights people while sharing their sales, distribution, and management departments. Reinhardt was the largest shareholder of the merged outfit and things seemed pleasurable until the 1980s. By then publishing had changed from the model Reinhardt and Greene had followed whereby the advances paid to authors represented a portion of the royalties they expected the book to earn in hardback. By the early 1980s agents were demanding larger advances or moving their authors elsewhere, book chains wanted larger discounts, and a sale or return policy was pretty standard. The consortium had no paperback imprint at the time,

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5 What happened that led to the sale of The Bodley Head to Random House NY and the setting up of Reinhardt Books is one of the most interesting stories in modern British publishing.
profitable library sales were falling because of government cutbacks, and its problems were exacerbated by several large expenses incurred shortly after the merger—the price of a new warehouse, computer system, and the expensive refurbishment of 32 Bedford Square for Cape where Greene’s nephew, Graham C. Greene, was in charge. Carmen Callil said that when her profitable firm Virago joined the group in 1982, she saw “pretty fast that it cost her more to publish a book through the service company than it had when [she] was alone” (145).

In the next five years things got increasingly contentious between the partners, and Reinhardt lost his shares to Tom Maschler and Graham C. Greene. When in may 1987 they sold The Bodley Head to Random House in New York without his consent, Greene encouraged and helped him set up Reinhardt Books, which became their last imprint. During the very tense months they plotted their way against what had been done to Reinhardt; London’s trade journals, literary, and business columns were rife with comment. Finally, on 13 October The Times’s literary editor, Philip Howard, reported that Reinhardt, “Graham Greene, Alistair Cooke, Maurice Sendak and other valuable and distinguished authors [were] striking a blow for the old-fashioned small publisher against the big new conglomerates” (171). The Reinhardt Books list was not going to be a big list, but it would be a classy one. Reinhardt had lost The Bodley Head but won “a notable victory for the publisher as civilized literary friend and mentor as opposed to publisher as Big-Bang, whizz-kid accountant” (171). On 28 October The Independent called him “a particularly British kind of hero” and said that a shudder of glee went through London’s publishing circles at his decision to carry on “as though a national treasure (Graham Greene) had somehow been airlifted out of New York, spirited away and brought home safe and sound” (172).

And so at Reinhardt Books, as at The Bodley Head, Greene continued to publish his own books (starting with The Captain and the Enemy) and to instruct his old friend about what WE should publish. Both were old men when they regrouped under the Reinhardt Books imprint and added The Bodley Head to the list of publishers from which they schemed to get back Greene’s rights. And both were unwell.

In starting again Reinhardt made a protest against the commercial pressures on editors and authors and returned to the ideal literary relationship he had had with his writers before and for a few years after the merger. It was based on the principle that the author should call the tune. Greene wanted that too, and their success in getting Reinhardt Books off the ground in 1987 showed their loyalty to that publishing principle as much as to each other.

Professor Judith Adamson has written many books, including *Graham Greene and Cinema, The Dangerous Edge*, a political biography of Graham Greene, *Charlotte Haldane*, a biography of JBS Haldane’s first wife, and *Max Reinhardt: A Life in Publishing*. She edited and introduced *Love Letters*, the thirty-year correspondence between Leonard Woolf and Trekkie Ritchie Parsons, and selected and introduced the essays in Graham Greene’s much acclaimed last book, *Reflections*, which she recently re-edited for the new Vintage edition. She lives in Montreal where she is a Research Scholar in Residence at Dawson College.
“Quite a Good Spy”¹: The Emergent Graham Greene

Frances Peltz Assa

Introduction

While Graham Greene wrote about his wartime service for Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), more commonly called MI6, he never publicly admitted or denied whether he continued to act for British intelligence after he left the service, and it will be years before the relevant government records are opened to the public. As meticulous as he was, Greene did not always succeed in covering his tracks. I will show that there is a great deal of circumstantial evidence that Greene was contributing to MI6 in many of his frequent journeys. I discuss the personal issues that led to his reengagement with the agency and some of the dimensions of his work. I further propose a hypothesis concerning Greene’s involvement in 1967 with the Cold War in the Middle East.

At the close of the Second World War, Greene returned to civilian life with no thought about continuing his association with MI6. He became a director at the publishing house of Eyre and Spottiswood and pursued his interest in film by writing screenplays and even producing. I show that his return to the MI6 fold, as with everything in Greene’s life, was motivated by very personal needs—mainly as an escape from the emotional strain of his love affair with Catherine Walston.

Greene’s interest in conflicts across the globe were at first not primarily political. The Catholic aspects of these conflicts were what drew his attention: the Church as martyr (in Mexico) or participant in conflict (Viet Nam, Poland) and spiritual release (Kenya). The role of the Church in political conflicts remained a primary interest throughout his life. With the start of the Cold War, Greene found himself acting on the world stage. It has been shown that his efforts on behalf of Castro helped to change British policy and contributed to the downfall of Batista. I argue that Greene also played a role in Britain’s jockeying for influence in the Middle East vis-à-vis the United States and Russia in 1967.

Greene’s fiction has served to document many international struggles thanks to his passion for accuracy and research. His fiction will therefore always be a kind of record of the real events captured therein. The knowledge he gained from his MI6 experience makes The Quiet American assigned reading in many American history courses for the background of America’s military intervention in Viet Nam. But even Greene’s comic work was influential. Our Man in Havana, which added only slight exaggeration to some of the more bizarre practices of espionage, was probably English literature’s first Cold War black comedy, a genre that became popular as people coped with the unfathomable risks and it” (Donaghy 145). Donaghy quoted Penelope Gilliatt in a 1979 article on Greene in The New Yorker, which Greene strongly criticized for accuracy, leading to her resignation from the magazine.

¹ “I was actually quite a good spy. Once, when I was going to stay at the embassy in Poland, a silly man had asked me to take in a tape recorder disguised as a wristwatch, and the ass produced some huge thing as big as a wireless. I left him to
consequences of the nascent nuclear age.

The full story of Greene’s involvement in espionage has yet to be written. The outlines of this story give us a better grasp of some of the hidden dimensions of Graham Greene, a quintessential twentieth-century visionary.

**Greene’s MI6 Background**

Greene’s original interest in joining MI6 during the war, as with his return in 1950, arose out of emotional distress. Early in the war, after his wife Vivien and his two very young children were evacuated from London, Greene was living with his lover Dorothy Glover in the center of the city. Both worked as volunteer air raid wardens during many nights of the blitz. His extramarital relationship caused him a good deal of stress, which he later described to his sister Elizabeth: “Things can be hell I know. The peculiar form it’s taken with me the last four years has been in loving two people as equally as makes no difference, the awful struggle to have your cake and eat it, the inability to throw over one for the sake of the other.”

Greene’s solution was escape. Elizabeth worked for MI6 and recommended that he be recruited. In March 1942 (after training) agent 59200 was sent to the busy port of Freetown, Sierra Leone, where he was to curb shipments of industrial diamonds to the Axis powers and obtain intelligence on nearby Vichy French movements. In his spare time he managed to write a suspense novel set in England and peopled with Nazi spies—*The Ministry of Fear*. He reported to his superior 2,000 miles away in Lagos, who in turn was managed out of London by Kim Philby. Philby headed a subsection of Section V, which was responsible for counterespionage in the Iberian Peninsula. Bored with his work at Freetown and disappointed with what he saw as the ineptitude of his superior in Lagos, Greene was reassigned to work under Kim Philby with five other agents at MI6 offices in St. Albans in February 1943. Their offices moved to London in July.

Spain and Portugal were ostensibly neutral in the war, but their ports were teeming with German and British spies. Greene was in charge of the Portugal desk. Spies working for German Intelligence, the *Abwehr*, were often sent to England via Portugal, and Greene’s duties included identifying them so they could be detained upon entering England as well as running some double agents. Greene and the others used information from the top-secret codebreakers at Bletchley Park.

According to Nigel West, Greene was a senior and highly trusted member of the very few who were entrusted with the most important secret of the war—that the British had broken the “Enigma” cypher used by Germany for virtually all its military and diplomatic communications, a breakthrough that allowed Britain to anticipate many German operations. Later in the war Philby’s team would succeed in contacting German members of the

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5 “Graham Greene and the Secret Service” (2002) and remarks made at West’s speech to the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust.
Abwehr, including Wilhelm Canaris, who were attempting to assassinate Hitler. The attempt by Wilhelm Canaris on Hitler’s life has become one of the great stories of the Second World War.

The level of Greene’s assignment is not unexpected, given his family history. He was the nephew of Sir William Graham Greene, a founder of the Admiralty’s William Greene Naval Intelligence Department, who was still active during World War II. During the First World War, Sir William was one of the inner circle of advisors of First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill. Young Graham Greene spent his summers at his bachelor uncle’s home, Harston House, although his uncle was often away. Greene was greatly impressed by him. He modeled the imposing commissioner in It’s a Battlefield on his uncle, while he made Harston House the setting of scenes from The Ministry of Fear and the short story “Under the Garden.”

In 1963 Kim Philby was revealed to be a Soviet spy, one of the infamous “Cambridge Five.” He had worked his way into positions of grave importance. With regard to the team’s involvement in the German plan to assassinate Hitler, there is evidence that Kim Philby worked to undermine the plan in order to prolong the war because the Soviets did not want Britain to make a separate peace with Germany. Once the assassination attempt of 20 July 1944 failed and the participants were executed, Philby is believed to have kept Britain in the dark about the remaining Germans who continued assassination efforts.6

Toward the end of the war, Philby used every means possible to get himself appointed to head the newly created Section IX charged with leading Britain’s anti-communist operations—a dream position for a Soviet spy if ever there was one. He offered Greene a promotion if he came to work for him. Instead, Greene left SIS for a job at the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office in May 1944, just a few weeks before the German assassination attempt. One would expect that Greene would have wanted to see how the assassination plans unfolded. Was the resignation motivated by Greene’s suspicions of Philby’s treachery? Did Philby expose his leanings during their many conversations over lager in pubs at lunchtime and after work? He once blurted out to Hugh Trevor-Roper: “Of course, every attempt at historical analysis is nothing once you compare it to Marx’s Eighteenth Brumaire!”7 Nonetheless, Philby was enormously careful to not let slip anything of real importance, and Greene probably did not know that Philby was employed by the NKVD (renamed KGB in 1954; called KGB hereafter.) When asked about his resignation, Greene was vague, as he always was in discussing his work for MI6. He claimed that he “didn’t want to be promoted” and that, bored with the routine of his office job, he had transferred to the Foreign Office because they offered to send him to France after the invasion (which they didn’t do.) Greene also attributed his resignation to his dislike of the underhanded way Philby had obtained his advancement, saying “I thought he was thinking of moving up his friends to


guard his flanks as it were, for personal reasons. One knows now that they were not personal reasons.”

Greene was at the Foreign Office less than a month when he was released to half-time work, and he immediately joined the publishing house of Eyre and Spottiswoode as a company director. The family took an apartment in Oxford, but his visits home were “infrequent.”

For the most part, Greene stayed with Dorothy in London although his emotions for her had cooled. He had long wanted to learn the publishing business and even thought about laying down roots at the publishing house that might provide a prospect for his four-year-old son Francis. Moreover, he liked the idea of a steady salary as he had worried that he was losing his ability to write fiction. Nevertheless, he began work on *The Heart of the Matter*, did book reviews for publications, and became involved with the film industry—a lifelong interest.

**Greene and Catherine Walston**

Greene was now on the verge of forging two important relationships that would influence his return to espionage: his friendship with the producer Alexander Korda and his love affair with an extraordinarily beautiful, wealthy, married socialite from Cambridge, Catherine Walston. Greene had met Walston at party given by John and Elizabeth Rothenstein, who were Catholic, in the autumn of 1945. John was director of the Tate Gallery. The following Good Friday the Rothensteins and Catherine visited the Greenes at Oxford. Elizabeth had piqued Catherine’s interest in Catholicism and had introduced her to Greene’s writing. Catherine took instruction and when she was ready to convert in September 1946, Elizabeth wrote to Greene to ask him to be Catherine’s godfather. He agreed. Vivien attended the baptism and first communion alone. In November Catherine paid another visit to the Greenes and in February 1947 urged Greene to see a house for sale near her, in the village of Linton. To save him the journey home, she offered to have a pilot collect Greene and fly him back to Oxford. Catherine came along.

In a letter to Catherine, Greene recalled how he fell in love with her on the flight back home: “A lock of hair touches one’s eyes in a plane with East Anglia under snow and one is in love.” He had suddenly experienced “an extraordinary happiness” and their affair soon began. The house at Linton, which was fewer than ten miles from Catherine’s home, was obviously unsuitable for a family with small children—it was decrepit, drafty, and had steep staircases. Moreover, as Vivien did not drive she would be isolated in the tiny town. Greene went ahead and bought the house anyway. Unhappily, Vivien prepared to move, but just as suddenly Greene sold it.

Nine months after the flight with Catherine, Greene and Vivien separated. Vivien had become aware of the affair when she opened a returned love letter to Catherine. At first, Greene denied that the love letter meant anything. When Vivien replied that she could tell that his feelings for Catherine were real, he gave up the act and told her he was going to leave her. According to Vivien, he said “I am going to leave you. We’ll be going...

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9 R. Greene, 163.
11 Sherry, vol. II, 188.
12 R. Greene, 169-70.
13 Sherry, vol. II, 228.
away together—leaving here.” But Greene’s dream of starting a new life with Catherine was at best a chancy proposition. From that time until the middle of 1950, Greene would continually, but unsuccessfully, pressure Catherine to marry him.

Greene and Alexander Korda

Two months before separating from Vivien, and just after completing The Heart of the Matter, Greene was hired by Alexander Korda to write a script for a film to take place in Vienna. Soon Greene was residing at Vienna’s Sacher Hotel and working on The Third Man.

Greene first met Alexander Korda in 1936 when he was the film reviewer for The Spectator, a post he held from July 1935 until he left for Freetown. During that time Greene established himself as a preeminent film critic. After reading Greene’s withering review of Korda’s adaptation of the H. G. Wells’s novel The Man Who Could Work Miracles, Wells wrote to him to invite him to his home for lunch. Speaking of the movie Wells wrote: “We’ll say no more about the damned disgraceful thing. I’d like to meet you. You’d be good for me ... Yours ever, H. G. Wells.” Wells then introduced Greene to his friend Korda who, despite the fact that Greene had called him “a publicity man of genius ... [who] has not yet revealed a talent for films,” immediately hired Greene to try his hand at scriptwriting. (Greene continued to write scathing reviews of Korda’s films, even the one he had himself scripted.)

Very early in his career, Korda had connected with British intelligence. He had been a leading filmmaker in his native Hungary under a communist government but was condemned to death when rightwing conservative groups came to power in 1919. He “was rescued through the intervention of Brigadier ... Maurice, a British intelligence agent.” Thereafter he directed films in Germany, Austria, France, and Hollywood between 1927 and 1931. He relocated to Britain in 1932 where he started London Film Productions “with the quiet assistance and support of both Colonel Claude Dansey and the Special Intelligence Service, and Robert Vansittart of the Foreign Office. With their secret funding and support, he was able to build the only British film studio to successfully compete in the international market, producing films equal in quality and appeal to those made by Hollywood itself.”

As Nazi Germany’s aggressions were threatening to embroil Great Britain in war, Greene’s newfound friends Korda and Wells supported their friend Winston Churchill in his battle against

15 Greene scripted Twenty-One Days, a film based on a story by John Galsworthy. Spectator (4 September 1936).
17 Peirce indicates that by the time Korda arrived in England in 1932, Dansey had already begun to construct a shadow intelligence network named “the Z organization,” beginning with the film industry for cover and expanding to other areas.
the appeasers. For this rebellion, Churchill was all but shut out of the Tory party.\textsuperscript{22} When the war began, Korda released \textit{The Lion Has Wings}, a stirring propaganda documentary film that extolled the Royal Air Force. In response, the Germans threatened to “bomb Denham,” Korda’s film studio.”\textsuperscript{23} Once in power, Churchill sent Korda back to Hollywood to make propaganda films in order to engage an isolationist America in England’s struggle. There, Korda recruited Lawrence Olivier among other British nationals and produced films about England that were so inspiring that a congressional committee questioned whether he was an unregistered British agent, which, of course, he was. Korda was awarded an OBE for his work in Hollywood.

The Cold War and the making of \textit{The Third Man} in Vienna

Korda’s decision to locate \textit{The Third Man} in Vienna was probably a function of his SIS activity. Vienna was the heart of post-war anti-Soviet SIS operations.\textsuperscript{24} SIS historian Nigel West writes that the frontline of SIS’s world-wide network, now committed to fighting Communism, was in the two zones of occupation shared with the Soviets; “the most dramatic post-war intelligence battles were fought in (and under) the Allied sectors of Germany and Austria.”\textsuperscript{25}

At Churchill’s directive, MI6 Chief Stewart Menzies launched Britain’s Cold War anti-Soviet counter-espionage initiative in Vienna and Berlin even before the war ended: “As early as the summer of 1945, a number of MI6’s most experienced officers and Balkan experts were already well established in the British Zone in Austria posing as the British ‘Civil Liaison Office’.”\textsuperscript{26} By the summer of 1948, Senior British officers with the Special Operations Executive (SOE) were boarded at the Sacher Hotel where Greene stayed for five weeks. One of them claimed that Greene “usually breakfasted in his room on pink champagne.”\textsuperscript{27}

Korda’s close friend Brendan Bracken, who had served as the head of Ministry of Information during the war and had been, like Korda, a member of “Churchill’s gang,” suggested that Korda get some background on Vienna by contacting an Austrian who had produced some outstanding pro-Soviet propaganda for Bracken at the Ministry when the Soviets were England’s ally.\textsuperscript{28} Peter Smollett, whose given name was Hans Peter Smolska, had returned to Austria from England after the war. At their invitation, Smollett flew to London to discuss the film project over dinner with Bracken and Korda at Korda’s suite at the Claridge Hotel. Smollett’s contribution to the plot included details of the tainted penicillin that had actually been used in the film.

\textsuperscript{22} During this time Churchill worked on a script for Korda.
\textsuperscript{23} Paul Tabori, \textit{Alexander Korda} (London: Oldbourne Book Co. Ltd., 1959), 216.
\textsuperscript{24} Korda stated that he chose Vienna for the simple reason that he had accumulated royalties there which could not be moved abroad, but it certainly wasn’t the only place where Korda had frozen royalties.
\textsuperscript{27} Dorril, 120.
\textsuperscript{28} Tabori, 221. “He was one of Alex’s closest friends—according to some people the closest.” Churchill saw that Alex received his knighthood in the middle of the war “after he had gone to the States and before he returned to London to settle.”
been administered to Austrian children with catastrophic results, and his personal anecdote of smuggling his anti-fascist comrades out of Vienna through the sewers in February 1934. One of these comrades had been Kim Philby.29

What Greene and his colleagues did not know at the time was that Smollett happened to be a Soviet spy. Unknowingly, Brendan Bracken had placed Korda and his group under direct observation of a KGB operative whose double identity was exposed only after KGB files were made public with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Smollett was long in his grave. Based on an account by Smollett’s godson, Peter Foges (a film and television producer), Smollett began working for the Soviets at about the time he fled to England in 1934.30

On his way to Austria to work on the story of The Third Man in February 1948, Greene had stopped in Prague then in the throes of anti-communist demonstrations. Soon thereafter, the Cold War “officially” began when the Communist Party crushed the Czech rebellion and took control of the Republic. With this coup, the Soviet Union manifested itself as the menace about which Churchill had famously warned in his Fulton, Missouri speech of 5 March 1946, when he coined the expression “iron curtain” and spoke of the need to guard against “communist fifth columns” imbedded throughout the West.31

The Third Man has, of course, become a film classic. It won the Grand Prix for best feature film at the 1949 Cannes Film Festival.

The End of Their Affair, and the Re-emergence of a Spy

In early March 1950 Greene and Walston confronted her husband Harry with their desire to marry. As Harry

Greene and Smollett shared another mutual friend, H. G. Wells’s lover Moura Budberg, who had worked for a time with Smollett and also worked for Korda.

In recognition of his espionage work in London, the Soviets had returned the Smolska ski binding factory in the Soviet sector to him after the war, allowing Smollett to live quite comfortably in Austria. Foges speculates that “Harry Lime—the movie’s charismatic, morally squalid central character, played memorably by Orson Welles—was partly based on the British double agent [Philby] but also at least partly on the sinister Smolka.” Certainly not. The prototype, if there was one, has been the subject of much debate. It makes little sense that either Philby or Smollett would have inspired the malevolent Lime at this point in time, as Philby was not known to be under suspicion until he was asked to resign in July 1951, and even then he maintained his innocence and seems to have continued working in some capacity for SIS, while Smollett’s double identity was not exposed until after his death.

Two months later the Soviet Union would begin its blockade of Berlin.

29 Peter Foges, “My Spy” (2016), https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/roundtable/my-spy. Foges relates that their anti-fascist work in Austria in 1933, resisting the Dohlfuss government’s brutal attacks on union workers and leftists, had influenced both Smollett and Philby to join the NKVD. Philby arrived in Austria fresh out of Cambridge. These activities brought him in contact with Smollett and his friend Litzi Friedmann, whom Philby married and brought to safety in England. Smollett soon followed. In England, Smollett worked as a correspondent for several European papers and for a time went into business with Philby, running a small news agency. He succeeded in making a name for himself with his journalism and came to the attention of Brendan Bracken. In 1941, with Russia suddenly Britain’s ally, Bracken asked Smollett to create pro-Soviet propaganda, which he did lavishly, with hundreds of programs on BBC radio (with the help of fellow spy Guy Burgess a senior BBC producer) including the movie USSR at War, and even a spectacle for ten thousand people at the Royal Albert Hall which included readings by Laurence Olivier and John Gilgud.

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31 Two months later the Soviet Union would begin its blockade of Berlin.
would not capitulate, they agreed to a temporary compromise in which they would stay away from each other for a while, but then take two holidays together, including one to Italy. Greene prayed that their love might find favor with God because “I literally can’t contemplate life without you.”

During the six-week separation prior to their trip to Italy, Greene wisely turned to his brother Dr. Raymond Greene who had helped Graham when he was a suicidal teenager. Greene asked Raymond to talk with Catherine to assess the probability of her leaving Harry and marrying him. Catherine admitted to Raymond that her life would be more peaceful if she broke with Graham, that she felt “responsible for him,” and that his “sexual energy” was “rather a nuisance.” In Raymond’s opinion, Catherine would never leave Harry. He told his brother that Catherine was unconsciously putting on an act with Graham and not telling the truth about a great many things.

Catherine herself confirmed some of Raymond’s opinions. She told Greene that she doubted that she could start a new life if she abandoned her family. She pointed out that Greene had tried it and failed. The irony of her saying this could not have eluded Greene, since he had left Vivien and his children for her. Greene pleaded with her to stay in his life (“If we crash there’s only tarting & self disgust & three women a week”). With the illusion of marriage to Catherine gone and his marriage over, Greene sought distraction elsewhere.

Actually, Elsewhere was Korda’s yacht, and Korda invited Greene to join him on a Mediterranean voyage. It was on this particular voyage that Greene apparently decided to work once again for SIS.

In August 1950 Catherine joined Greene briefly on the Elsewhere, which hosted other MI6 fellow travelers including Vivien Leigh, the wife of Laurence Olivier, who had kept his ears to the ground for Korda in Hollywood and Pamela Churchill, the wife of Winston Churchill’s son Randolph. Photographs of Catherine and Greene taken on board the yacht show Greene looking like the happy schoolboy he had never been. Catherine disembarked at Nice, and Greene remained on the ship, ironically working on the completion of The End of the Affair.

At Antibes, the Elsewhere picked up Korda’s sixteen-year-old nephew, future writer and editor Michael Korda, on holiday from school. Michael was in awe of Greene, who took the budding writer under his wing. In Michael’s view, the writer he observed as he completed The End of the Affair was not pining for his mistress. Rather, he recalled Greene as almost boyish and talking eagerly about espionage. As they breakfasted together at a small dockside café, Greene “from time to time ... looked suspiciously at the people passing by, or at the fellow-patrons who sat down and ordered coffee and a croissant. Spies and informers were on his mind. He talked about his wartime espionage experience, and about international politics.”

34 Sherry, vol. II, 331.
36 Even the yacht would be employed by MI6. In the summer of 1954 Greene and Korda took it on an MI6 mission to photograph the coastline of Yugoslavia, then under Tito’s communist dictatorship. Being a film producer who was siting locations was a good cover for such photography. See R. Greene, 229.
Greene, playing at spying, seemed curiously ebullient to young Michael Korda. His high spirits were undoubtedly due to a proposition he’d just received from his younger brother Hugh, then the head of the Emergency Information Services in the Malay peninsula which acted as cover for the British Secret Service. Hugh was urging Graham to join him as he worked on what was dubbed the “emergency”—the terrorization of British colonials by Chinese communists.38 Hugh’s job was to counteract Russian propaganda by using “intelligence from the secret agencies, principally SIS ... against the Russians and their surrogates.” According to Nigel West, Hugh was proving “highly effective” in using “radio and pamphlets to undermine the Chinese Communist insurgents.”39

Hugh’s proposal offered the danger and distraction Greene craved plus a chance to see his closest brother and reconnect with his old friend Maurice Oldfield who, as SIS Station head in Singapore, was responsible for Malaya. Greene had got to know Oldfield through his sister Elizabeth. During the war Oldfield had worked for Security Intelligence Middle East (SIME) which shared the same station house in Cairo as SIS where Elizabeth and her soon-to-be husband Rodney Dennys worked. Oldfield would become Chief of MI6 in 1973 and was the person to whom Greene would give his information, whether from assignment or otherwise gathered during his travels.40 But at this time, it appears that Korda was Greene’s acting MI6 contact, as Greene revealed in a 1951 letter to Catherine: “The old firm has asked Korda if I’d do a job for them. I don’t know what. K’s arranging meeting when I get back from Evelyn [Waugh’s].”41

Greene flew to London to prepare for the journey to Malaya. He visited with Vivien and the children and even considered a reconciliation if Catherine absolutely refused to marry him, but he concluded that there was no going back.42 Separated from wife, family, and lover, Greene was intensely lonely, untethered and despairing. His travels to areas of conflict to obtain information for MI6 became an antidote. Danger had always rekindled his spirits and his will to live.

A year later, when The End of the Affair proved to be so successful that Greene’s portrait graced the cover of the 29 October 1951, issue of Time Magazine, the accompanying article expounded: “He simply writes, and between times travels—to get away. Last year he flew to Malaya to get a look at the life of English rubber planters in a peninsula overrun with Communist guerrillas—and while he was about ... spent 2½ days in the jungle with Gurkha troops, tracking guerrillas. ... Last week he was back in London—packing his bags for Indo-China.”43

The Gentleman Amateur

Prior to the greatest scandal to rock MI6—the “Cambridge Five” double agents who passed enormously important information to Russia—MI6

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39 West, 95-96.
40 Nigel West confirms that “even after the war ... Greene retained a connection with the intelligence services, [sending] reports to Sir Maurice Oldfield following his many travels and meetings with powerful people.” Qtd. in Yan Christiansen, ed., “Graham Greene and the Secret Service,” A Sort of Newsletter. The Newsletter of the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust (Autumn 2002), 9.
41 Sherry, vol. II, 487.
42 Sherry, vol. II, 335.
had been less than scrupulous in vetting recruits. As Nigel West put it, the “friends,” (another sobriquet for MI6) bore the “time-honoured image of cosmopolitan gentleman amateurs.”

Typically they had completed “Oxbridge” and came from the upper classes or had ancestors who’d served in the military or government. The fact that they may have been leftists or communists at university was discounted as being fairly typical of students in the thirties. The spy ring only came to light with the disappearance of MI6 agents Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess in 1951.

Greene, a Balliol, Oxford man, was of an earlier generation. Although he had joined a communist group for a week or two in order to take advantage of a travel offer, he was basically a conservative liberal who hailed from a distinguished family that served in government. With this background he had the “right stuff.” In addition, he had demonstrated an acute ability to observe and analyze events, players, and the ever-questionable reliability of informants during his wartime intelligence work. He was personable, amusing, and if he was a bit eccentric, that merely underscored his essential Britishness. During the war Greene had considered himself an “officer” of the agency—in a different category from agents who work abroad at risk to themselves because of their deception. In a letter to Auberon Waugh he wrote: “I was never an MI6 agent. You should know the difference between an officer who lives in perfect safety and an agent who leads a dangerous career. I was always in perfect safety.”

Perhaps in the field and exposed to danger, as he would be in Viet Nam, he felt more of a spy, which he now called himself on several occasions.

It is likely that Greene was too independent minded to ever accept an assignment that conflicted with his own beliefs. Although he was anti-American with regard to U.S. foreign policy, he was as yet accepting of British policy. He was critical of the Soviet Union. In an interview in 1950, Greene was asked his opinion of prelates who might wish to prescribe how far a Catholic writer should stray from church doctrine. In response, Greene compared the Soviet Union to Nazi Germany: “You can’t prescribe for them without imitating Moscow. Do you know what happens,’ he said pointedly, ‘when you wish the world to be neat and orderly and precise, a closed untroubled place? You try to make it that way. And when people don’t respond (and they don’t), you end up with Belsen.”

Greene’s post-war MI6 assignments involved assessing events on the ground for a realm now shorn of much of its influence and power in the cold war standoff between the superpowers America and Russia and wary of the new communist People’s Republic of China. As Britain was very invested in China,

44 West, 119.
46 See for example Yvonne Cloetta and Marie-Francoise Allain, *In Search of a Beginning: My Life with Graham Greene* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), 138; Marie Francoise Allain states Greene made the following inscription in a book to her parents: “from Graham, the aged spy from Indochina.”
because of Hong Kong, its policy towards China was cautious.

Greene’s renown allowed him to be in the enviable position of doing what intellectuals of the time most coveted— influencing world opinion and politics. As early as 1944, Mary McCarthy sniffed out his growing influence and tried to squelch it. Writing for The Partisan Review, the premier outlet for the newly gelled postwar American intelligentsia, i.e., the “left,” she decreed in an essay entitled “Graham Greene and Intelligentsia” that Greene was not a true intellectual—he simply used the “rhetoric” of one. However, Mary McCarthy’s club of intellectuals was not one he aspired to join. “I wouldn’t want to belong to an intellectual elite,” he told interviewer Marie Francoise Allain; “I don’t dislike intellectuals. I have friends who could be called intellectual. But to my mind the intellectual is often academic and sometimes a shade pretentious.”

If he had a political philosophy, it was the simple yet moral liberal democracy he was raised with: “I find it hard to be 100 percent behind someone or 100 per cent against him; If there is one moral principle clearly in the forefront of my mind it’s Tom Paine’s assertion that ‘we must guard even our enemies against injustice,’ whether it’s perpetrated by a democratic government or by a dictatorship.” To this kernel of political belief he added ideas that reflected his native emotional inclinations, which had been given shape by his personal interpretations of Catholicism. Greene’s strength as a novelist was, in my opinion, his ability to unite a keen rationalism and realism with the sense of the vagaries of the emotional side of a situation, and the charity for which he admired the saints. He rejected what he called Philby’s “chilling certainty,” the certainty of the Marxist.

In and out of Malaya and Viet Nam, 1950-1954

Greene’s cover during his assignment in Malaya was that of Life Magazine journalist. During his three-month visit, he interviewed British farmers and British and Vietnamese railroad men who struggled to keep the lines working under the threat of saboteurs. His article for Life sympathizes completely with the hardworking colonials. To Greene, the communists in Malaya were “the enemy”—destructive, ideological patsies who had no real roots in the country, and his opinions were completely in line with those of the Foreign Office, as one would expect if he was on an intelligence assignment. From his comment to Marie-Françoise Allain that “my

49 The five novels are The Quiet American (1955—set at a time of insurgency against French rule in Viet Nam), Our Man in Havana (1958—a comedy about espionage at the time of an insurgency against a dictator in Cuba), The Comedians (1966—taking place during the murderous dictatorship of Papa Doc in Haiti), The Honorary Consul (1973—set in the right-wing dictatorship in Paraguay with terrible human rights abuses), and The Human Factor (1978—set in England with flash backs to South Africa concerns about espionage during the cold war).
50 Mary McCarthy, “Graham Greene and the Intelligentsia” (Partisan Review Spring 1944), 228.
51 Allain, 106.
younger brother Hugh was in charge of psychological warfare, so I had all the easier access to the documents the Communists left behind them,” he appears to have dug rather more deeply than required by a popular magazine.54

From the Malay peninsula, Greene prepared to move on to the much more dangerous situation in French-controlled Viet Nam by meeting with the Director of Intelligence Services in Malaya and possibly his superiors stationed in Singapore.55 Viet Nam concerned the British because the then prevalent “domino theory” held that once the communists won the fight against the French in Viet Nam, the British protectorate of Malaya could be toppled next. The British “were looking for a non-communist path for Vietnam, giving special attention to the Catholic leadership of the country,” a project that “had the potential to outrage the French.”56 Indigenous Catholics were more supportive of independence than allying with the French.57

In A Sort of Life, Greene insouciantly wrote that he went to Viet Nam to “drop in on an old friend from his war days.”58 His MI6 contact was Trevor Wilson, working undercover as the British consul in Hanoi.59 Consular assignment was a typical cover for MI6 agents, as was journalism.

At the time of Greene’s arrival, the newly appointed French High Commissioner of Viet Nam was General de Lattre, a war hero of the first order. Many honors and numerous streets in French cities consecrate his memory. De Lattre was suspicious of Wilson whom he rightly believed to be encouraging a Catholic, anti-French, non-Communist “third force” at Phat Diem. It is possible that MI6 sent Greene to Viet Nam to check up on Wilson, or to step in if Wilson was prevented from operating effectively.

Greene arrived in Saigon on 25 January 1951. During his ten-day visit, Greene and General de Lattre became friendly. De Lattre recognized that Greene the writer could help his cause. He lent him a car and driver, flew with him to Hanoi from Saigon, and even put an airplane at his disposal which Greene used to investigate various Catholic military centers.

In October 1951 Greene returned to Viet Nam again under cover as a journalist for Life, but he received a less cordial reception from de Lattre than previously. The general now suspected that Greene, like Wilson, was a spy as reported by French intelligence and had him followed. Finally, at a cocktail party the general asked him outright if he was spying for the British.60 In response to Greene’s denial, the General correctly said: “I understand that no one ever leaves the British Secret Service.” Greene was later remorseful about his interaction with the revered de Lattre, who soon left for Paris and died of cancer within a few months. In Ways of Escape he wrote, “I felt a meanness in myself. He deserved better company.” The general chose to believe “my friend” Graham Greene rather than his intelligence service until French intelligence misidentified an innocent telegram to Greene as a coded message.61 De Lattre’s replacement, Commander-in-Chief Raoul Salan,  

54 Allain, 106-07.
55 R. Greene, 205.
56 R. Greene, 208.
57 R. Greene, 215.
58 G. Greene, 136.
59 Sherry, vol. II, 482.
60 G. Greene, 142.
allowed Greene greater leeway. Wilson left Viet Nam at Christmas, while Greene remained until February keeping company with American journalist Leo Hochstetter who was thought to have CIA connections and is believed to have been the inspiration for Arlen Pyle.

During another trip to Vietnam in January 1954, Trevor Wilson was back, posing as a leather goods dealer and working under Greene’s authority. Both were watched by the French security, who knew exactly what they were doing. Greene witnessed fighting in the decisive battle of Dien Bien Phu and presciently concluded that the French loss “marked virtually the end of any hope the Western powers entertained that they could dominate the East. The French with Cartesian clarity accepted the verdict. So too, to a lesser extent, did the British” (regarding Malaya.)

Greene soon worked his knowledge of the situation into The Quiet American (1955) which suggested the inevitable failure of American involvement in Viet Nam.

Greene wrote analyses of the Viet Nam situation for a number of publications in Britain, France, and America. In his opinion, war against Ho Chi Minh’s forces would be drawn out, perhaps indefinitely, and would necessarily result in independence. The West had missed an opportunity with Ho Chi Minh, who had attempted to work with the French before joining with communist forces. Greene predicted that the United States would take a lead military role in Viet Nam, which would be a mistake. He cautioned against an insistence that Western democratic institutions should be imposed on Viet Nam: “We in the West are dominated by the idea of adult suffrage, but adult suffrage means chaos or corruption in a country like Vietnam with no political traditions, a majority of illiterate peasants and no political parties, as we know the term. Political parties in Vietnam, apart from the religious sects ... have no platforms, no records of membership, no contact with the working class.”

To Marie-Françoise Allain, Greene admitted that “he had played a sort of ‘go-between’ role ‘on a mission to contact Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi, once the French had pulled out.’” Greene could hardly dissemble to Allain. She had a copy of the French translation of The Quiet American, inscribed by Greene to her parents on 16 September 1959 as follows: “from Graham, the aged spy from Indochina.”

**Kenya, 1953**

We do not know whether Greene visited Nairobi in late August 1953 as a “gentleman amateur” or pursuant to an official request. The situation had some of the hallmarks of the Malay emergency although without communist insurgents. In any case, Greene’s writing about the conflict reveals the personal moral beliefs which underlay his political opinions. The Mau Mau were attacking British rule by terrorizing both British farmers and their fellow tribesmen. Entire families of British farmers had been hacked to death with machetes. Greene rejected the lenient views of some leftists who argued that the terrorists had been “excluded from effective political power.” In his eyes, intolerable atrocities against hard

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63 G. Greene, 159.
64 Among them, Paris Match, 12 July 1952, The Sunday Times, 21 and 28 March 1954,
65 G. Greene, 166.
working ordinary people who loved Africa and had no other home was inexcusable. He reported that many of the farmers espoused hopes that their unused land would be distributed to their black neighbors. The killers were not heroes. “Heroes should behave like heroes,” he wrote. In fact, Greene compared the Mau Mau and their terrorist tactics to the Nazis. After attending the criminal trials of perpetrators, he took a harder line than the government regarding one defendant who was acquitted. This Mau Mau leader had terrorized his own people as well as the colonists, and Greene wrote that regardless of the acquittal, it would be best if he were exiled from Kenya.

As with Viet Nam, Greene saw Catholicism as a sort of solution. Noting that some of the Mau Mau had accepted Catholicism prior to their execution, he thought that the certainties of religion could prove more helpful than “the indiscipline and indecision of British justice and government. ... We have lost the power of clear action because we have lost the ability to believe,” Greene wrote. The convicted Kikuyu tribesmen had turned to Catholicism to replace their “lost tribal discipline” and willingly accepted the Catholic sacraments in place of their own tribal sacrifices: “For good or ill, the future of the Kikuyu seemed to me to depend on religion.”

Two Weeks in Poland, November 1955

Although Greene was highly professional in concealing his work for MI6, at times the alert reader may pick up the trail, as Greene’s bibliographers Jon Wise and Mike Hill did regarding Greene’s visit to Poland in late 1955. In a file marked “Kim Philby” at the Greene Archive in the Burns Library in Boston, they found what appears to be a copy of a report written by Greene to his contact at SIS about his trip to Poland. Wise and Hill conclude that the specificity of detail as well as the tone of the document mark it as written for a governmental agency like MI6.

Ostensibly, his purpose was to gather information about the country under communist rule and particularly the Pax movement, the government-sponsored secular “Catholic” organization. The organization was mistrusted by many Polish Catholics who were deeply suspicious of the true motives. ... Taken together, [documents in two different files] add weight to the long-held theory that Greene continued to work for British intelligence after he officially left the service toward the end of the Second World War.

.... The Kim Philby file contains an eight page concisely written document about the visit. It is carefully cross referenced and ends with a series of pen portraits of various people Greene encountered in Poland, including various people opposed to the Pax movement and those who appeared to be working for the government. The writer suggests that his [179] notes might be worth retaining ‘in case the names crop up at any time on visa applications.’

Clearly the tone of this document suggests it is not intended as preliminary work for the future newspaper articles. It is not

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66 G. Greene, 175.
67 G. Greene, 178.
68 G. Greene, 181.
69 Email conversation with Jon Wise.
surprising that Greene should continue to be used by MI6 for intelligence gathering of this kind. The professional manner in which the document is composed suggests an experienced hand at work. However, it leaves one to conjecture why this report should be included in a separate file marked Kim Philby. The fact that the writer included names “in case they show up on any visa applications” seems to cinch the conclusion that the Poland document was for government use. Greene gave further details of this trip to Marie-Françoise Allain in 1979. He told her that the confrontation between the Catholics and the communists was “serious,” and that the Communists were considering “seeking a way to infiltrate the Church and set up a “Polish National Catholic Church.” This must have been anathema to Greene, believing Catholics would be unable to voice their criticism. The dilemma reappears today as the current Pope has decided to allow Communist China to appoint its Bishops.

The second half of the fifties brought changes to the gentleman spy. Alexander Korda died in January 1956, and Greene would contribute intelligence directly to Maurice Oldfield. (He would also share the information with his sister Elizabeth and brother-in-law Rodney Dennys, who retired from the service in 1958.) He hired a new secretary in 1959 who had a Foreign Office background and the necessary commitment to confidentiality. His relationship with Catherine had cooled, more to her chagrin than his. And most importantly, at the close of the decade he met Yvonne Cloetta, the woman to whom he would commit the rest of his life.

**Cuba, 1957-1958**

Greene had visited Batista’s Cuba several times in the early fifties enjoying the exotic bar and casino life for which it was famous. “I enjoyed the louche atmosphere of Batista’s city and I never stayed long enough to be aware of the sad political background of arbitrary imprisonment and torture,” he wrote. Greene’s dislike of Batista’s dictatorship was sharpened by his role as an American prop. On the other hand, Greene was not a particularly great fan of Fidel Castro and his rebellion, even before Castro turned to communism.

Greene began to write his spy comedy *Our Man in Havana* during a three-week trip to Cuba in November 1957. By this time the United States had soured on Batista and discontinued arming him. Seeing an opportunity for profit, and erroneously believing Batista’s government to be stronger than it was, the British secretly allowed fighter planes to be sold to Batista. Carrying a suitcase full of warm clothes for the rebels and hoping for an interview, Greene flew to Santiago with someone who might put him in contact with Castro, who was ensconced in the nearby mountains. He told his companion that he was travelling to Santiago because he planned to write a book set in that city, but this seems to have been a cover for intelligence gathering. Norman Sherry reports that MI6 knew about this visit, as well as his

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71 R. Greene, 325.
73 Greene did not strike up a friendship with Castro until 1966. See R. Greene, 373.
74 R. Greene, 293.
trip to Cuba the following year to film the novel, and that he had met with a representative of the Foreign Office prior to his departure. Sidestepping Batista’s spies and henchmen, Greene managed to meet with friends of the rebels, but he was unable to meet with the fighters themselves since it was too dangerous for them to leave their strongholds. They informed Greene that the government was secretly buying fighter planes from Britain and asked Greene to help the rebels’ cause by doing what he could to dissuade Britain from allowing these sales.

On his return to England, Greene discussed the secret private arm sales with his friend Hugh Delargy, a Labor MP. Delargy pursued the matter in the House of Commons in March 1958 but was stonewalled. When Greene returned to Cuba in October 1958 to shoot Our Man in Havana, he probably acquired more information about the sales because two months later Delargy was able to batter the British government with details of a planned shipment of a hundred tons of rockets, calling it “a dirty deal done behind the backs of the British people and of Parliament.” The government stopped the sales, and Batista fled to the Dominican Republic less than a month later.

Was Greene operating independently of the Foreign Office in gathering this information for Delargy? The FO does not always have the same opinion as the ruling party. Richard Greene cites historian Christopher Hull “that Greene and Delargy may have contributed modestly to Batista’s downfall by adding, at the last moment, to his international isolation—a straw for the camel’s back.”

It should be noted that in the early days of Castro’s regime (when Castro still had diplomatic relations with the United States and before his attraction to the Soviets) Greene’s celebrated prescience could not have been less perceptible when he suggested in a letter to The Times of 19 October 1959 that the British government should sell jet fighters to Castro. “Surely your Washington Correspondent’s suggestion that Castro might employ his jet fighters against Miami, that is to say, the United States, shows a certain sense of unreality,” he wrote.

After the failed Bay of Pigs “invasion” of Cuba by the United States in 1961, Soviet Premier Khrushchev began to install surface-to-air missile sites on the island, which initiated what came to be called the Cuban Missile Crisis. CBS News journalist Roger Mudd, among others, reported on President Kennedy’s speech announcing an American naval quarantine of Cuba to prevent the landing of a Russian flotilla headed to Cuba with missiles. Mudd then described an announcement by a Defense Department spokesperson who held up a series of “enlarged aerial photographs, proof,” he said, “of the presence in Cuba of operational medium range missiles. If one of the missiles is launched it would probably carry a nuclear warhead. It could hit any spot in the Southeast United States south of Washington and that we would have no way of intercepting it or issuing a warning about it. When the spokesman was asked what was being done to prepare the people, his words

76 R. Greene, 295.
77 R. Greene, 297-99.
78 R. Greene, 298 citing Hull 156-58.
“civil defense” were interrupted by a roar of laughter.”

Greene would have appreciated the journalists’ sense of humor. But the situation at the time was gravely frightening: the crisis was the first generally regarded as having the potential to start a nuclear war between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Cold War in The Middle East
In 1951 highly secret information decrypted from certain KGB messages by a super-secret American intelligence operation dubbed “Venona” indisputably fingered Donald Maclean, a Foreign Office friend of Kim Philby, as a spy. Within days, Maclean and another Foreign Office friend of Philby, Guy Burgess, suddenly disappeared. They could only have been tipped off from someone very highly placed with respect to American intelligence. Soon the press and the government were searching for a person aptly dubbed “The Third Man” in reference to a plot twist from Greene’s hugely successful 1949 movie. Suspicion immediately fell on Philby, who was at the time MI6 chief in Washington. Philby was in the news for quite some time, bantering with the press after an accusation from an MP, but there was a dearth of direct evidence. Harold Macmillan, then Foreign Secretary, when pushed to give a public statement said: “I have no reason to conclude that Mr. Philby has at any time betrayed the interests of this country, or to identify him with the so-called ‘third man’ if, indeed, there was one.” However the Americans, like MI5, believed in his guilt, and Philby was sacked in order to protect Britain’s “special relationship” with U.S. intelligence.

Yet Philby still enjoyed a loyal following among his high-level close associates at MI6 who continued to believe in his innocence, including his close friend Nicholas Elliott. In 1962 Elliott arranged for Philby to work in Beirut as a stringer for the Observer and the Economist and, incredibly, to be put on the MI6 payroll. Philby, once again, dutifully began sharing information he skillfully obtained from British intelligence with the KGB until an influential woman named Flora Solomon stepped forward to give MI5 direct evidence of Philby’s KGB ties. She reported that many years earlier he had attempted to recruit her as a spy. At long last, the jig was up. Elliott volunteered to interrogate him and flew to Beirut on 10 January 1963. Philby confessed to spying, but he skipped out on the opportunity to make a full confession in return for immunity from prosecution by escaping, or being allowed to make his escape, to Russia during a pause in the interrogation.

A few years later, on 4 September 1967, Graham Greene published an open letter in The Times in which he objected to the conviction and sentencing of two Russian writers, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel. As their sentences had been handed down nineteen months earlier, the story was hardly news at the time of Greene’s letter. Greene went on to complain that Russia continued to refuse his request to donate his Russian royalties to the families of the writers, and the Great Betrayal (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2014).

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81 Macintyre gives a full description of the events leading up to Philby’s exposure. See Ben Macintyre, A Spy among Friends: Kim Philby
82 Macintyre details the interrogation and “fade” of Philby, 252-78.
and he pledged not to visit the country until they did. This was also not a recent matter. The strangest thing about the letter was its conclusion, for which Greene was widely criticized. With unusual hyperbole he made the following unrelated observation: “If I had to choose between life in the Soviet Union and life in the United States of America, I would certainly choose the Soviet Union, just as I would choose life in Cuba to life in those southern American republics like Bolivia, dominated by their northern neighbor, or life in North Viet Nam to life in South Viet Nam. But the greater the affection one feels for any country the more one is driven to protest against any failure of justice there.”

Greene’s statement can hardly be said to be consistent with his previously expressed sentiments. The comments certainly seemed foreign to Greene when he was asked to explain them by Marie Allain, more a friend than journalist, in a 1980 interview. Greene retorted: “That’s not what I said. Besides, it was an ironic remark.” His distancing himself from these opinions suggests that he had been asked to write The Times piece rather than having done so spontaneously.

Given the timing of this letter, as discussed below, I believe it was meant to be an opener to Russian officials. The next thing to happen was that Greene received a letter from Moscow written by none other than Kim Philby, with whom he probably had not been in touch since the war. Unlike Elliot and numerous others, Greene had not been a close friend of Philby’s. Philby praised Greene’s comments and expressed the hope that conditions might change and allow Greene to visit with him “when we could talk like in old times.”

Greene’s letter was published on the eve of a journey he had planned to Israel just three months after the 1967 “Six Day War”—six days that completely shifted the balance of power in the Middle East. I believe a British gesture to Russia through Greene was part of a plan to strengthen Britain’s diplomatic position in the Middle East when Russia’s credibility in the region was at an all-time low due to its role in the Arab losses of the 1967 war. As Philby put it in his 1968 memoir, with understatement, the Soviet Union was “interested in a very wide range of Middle Eastern phenomena. Enjoying a

“If I had to choose between life in the Soviet Union and life in the United States of America, I would certainly choose the Soviet Union, just as I would choose life in Cuba to life in those southern American republics like Bolivia, dominated by their northern neighbor, or life in North Viet Nam to life in South Viet Nam. But the greater the affection one feels for any country the more one is driven to protest against any failure of justice there.”

83 Sherry, vol. II, 461. “September 4, 1967, “Sir—This letter should more properly be addressed to Pravda or Izvestia but their failure to publish protests by Soviet citizens at the time of the Daniel-Sinyavsky trial makes it doubtful that mine would ever appear. Like many other English writers, I have royalties awaiting me in the Soviet Union, where most of my books have been published. I have written to the secretary of the Union of Writers in Moscow that all sums due to me on these books should be paid over to Mrs. Sinyavsky and Mrs. Daniel to help in a small way their support during the imprisonment of their husbands.

84 Allain, 91.
86 R. Greene, 489.
wide margin of priority at the top of the list are the intentions of the United States and British governments in the area.”

The British knew that they had something to offer the Russians in the Middle East that was very valuable at this time: diplomatic access and credibility.

As a result of the Six Day War, the British were far better placed for diplomacy than the Soviets. While the Arab League had imposed an oil embargo against Britain immediately after the Six Day War, this was reversed within a couple of months because Britain was buying oil from other countries. Meanwhile, Russia’s political standing in the Arab world was now grave. The Soviet Union had lured her two client states Egypt and Syria into a war against Israel that turned into a military debacle, as shown by the investigative work of Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez in *Foxbats Over Dimona* (“Foxbats” were Soviet MiG-25 supersonic interceptor and reconnaissance aircraft.)

Soviet influence over Egypt had grown steadily since 1955 when Egypt’s President Nasser turned to Russia for huge purchases of arms because the West had placed an arms embargo on the region. The Soviets also sold Czech arms to Israel. According to the authors, the Soviets’ attitude toward Israel dramatically changed for the worse in December 1965, when Israel leaked information that it now had military nuclear capability, developed at its reactor in Dimona. The Israelis did not anticipate that this information would spur the Soviet Union to do everything in its power to undermine Israel’s nuclear capability, including military aggression against Israel. With recently declassified Russian and American documents and interviews with Russian high-level officials and naval personnel, Ginor and Remez show that the Soviet Union had armed Egypt and Syria and pushed them toward hostilities with Israel in order to destroy Israel’s nuclear reactor at Dimona. The result was the Six Day War.

The Soviets began this process by falsely advising Egypt that Israel was planning to attack Syria. In response, Egypt moved its forces toward the Israeli border, alarming the Israelis. The Soviets also began to amass a fleet of naval vessels in the Mediterranean powerful enough to conduct a major invasion of Israel. It included ten submarines (at least one carrying nuclear arms) and forty-three warships with a lesser force, including nuclear, in the Red Sea. By 1 June 1967, all these forces were put on “battle alert” to wait for Israel to make a preemptive strike, while the United States withdrew its Sixth Fleet from the Mediterranean. Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Russian Communist Party, boasted to his Polish and East German counterparts that this military build-up would soon result in a “decisive blow” to American interests in the Middle East.

When Egypt shut down shipping to the Israel’s Red Sea port by closing the straits of Tammuz, the Israelis attacked.

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87 Philby, 152. Greene wrote the introduction to the book. During lunch with Greene in the South of France, Elliott spoke “pretty sharply” to Greene over his preface to *My Silent War*. See Lewis, 454.

88 With the September 1 “Khartoum Resolution,” the Arab League agreed to continued belligerence against Israel but lifted the ban. Still, the Suez Canal, through which Britain had done much shipping, was now an impassable watery junkyard, a limited hardship on Britain.

By the end of the first day, Israeli fighter planes had destroyed the Soviet-built Egyptian air force on the ground in the Sinai and routed the Egyptian troops. Alarmed, the Soviets suspended their plan for a naval landing on Israeli shores, to the disillusionment the Egyptians. Nasser demanded a ceasefire to abate further losses unless the Egyptians received immediate Soviet military assistance. Premier Kosygin then used the Washington-Moscow hotline for the first time since the Cuban crisis of 1962 to warn President Johnson’s administration that the Soviet Union would invade Israel if the Israelis did not agree to an immediate ceasefire. President Johnson discounted the threat, and the Israelis continued their advance for another few days until they reached the Suez Canal. The Egyptians regrouped on the other side of the canal, supported by Soviet naval units at the Canal’s northern entrance.

During the war, Israel was attacked by Syrian aircraft artillery. Once the Egyptians were no longer a threat, Israel destroyed the bulk of Russian-made Syrian aircraft at their air bases, and successfully began a ground incursion to capture the Golan heights, from which Syria had regularly shelled Israeli villages below. During that battle, “all the Soviet warships in Mediterranean including missile launching ships were ordered toward the Syrian coast, escorted by several submarines.” These were not deployed. By the time of the ceasefire, Israel controlled the Sinai up to the Suez Canal—land that had previously been held by Jordan west of the Jordan River, eastern Jerusalem, and parts of the Syrian Golan Heights—and the Soviets had a lot of explaining to do to Syria and Egypt.

Ginor and Remez write that the Soviet role in the events of the Six Day War received little notice because the Soviets effectively kept their role in this huge military defeat under wraps. Nevertheless, the losses had severely damaged the Soviet Union’s stature with its satellites. Even Castro was unnerved, and “Kosygin hastened to Havana to placate these anxieties.” At the same time, having removed the Soviet ambassador from Israel, the USSR had handicapped their own ability to serve their Arab clients diplomatically. With the sudden shake-up in Middle East, Russia was now in need of a diplomatic foothold. Kim Philby’s friend Graham Greene had done much for Castro in helping to reverse the sale of weaponry to Batista. For the British, Greene had proved himself a reliable “go-between” in Viet Nam, as discussed above.

Within days, Premier Kosygin was shaking hands with President Johnson in Glassboro, New Jersey in a new phase of diplomacy. What role did the British hope to play in the Middle East? I suggest that Greene’s journey to Israel was meant to acquaint him with the current conditions, and possibly to suggest to the Russians and the Israelis that he might be a useful player in any further diplomacy.

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90 Ginor and Remez 195.
91 Ginor and Remez 196.
92 Ginor and Remez 209
93 President Johnson invited Kosygin to a summit to improve relations between the countries and to work on an agreement limiting missile systems. While an agreement was not reached, the friendliness of the conference at Glassboro was noteworthy as a sign of improved relations and dubbed the “spirit of Glassboro.” See James Robbins, This Time We Win: Revisiting the Tet Offensive (New York: Encounter Books, 2010).
Greene’s Israeli contact for his journey was none other than the architect and hero of Israel’s victory, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, who even confirmed Greene’s hotel reservations by telegram, although it must be stated that Dayan was a great fan of Greene’s novels. Greene was ostensibly traveling to Israel to cover the aftermath of the war for the Weekend Telegraph. On his arrival, Greene had dinner with the Dayan family who arranged his travels through the Sinai in the company of Dayan’s daughter, the writer Yael Dayan, and her husband, Dov Sion. Not only was Sion a top agent in the Mossad, the Israeli Secret Intelligence Service; he was also well known to both British and French intelligence services. Sion had been stationed at the Israeli Embassy in London between 1959 and 1963 where he had been in steady touch with British intelligence. He was a Brigadier General in the Israel Defense Forces, after serving in the British Army in World War II and then in the War of Independence. At their wedding, which occurred immediately after the Six Day war, Sion’s best man was the war hero and future Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, while Israel’s founding father and first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, was also in attendance. Sharon and Ben Gurion were Sion’s substitute family, as his entire family had been killed in Czechoslovakia under the Nazi regime a few months after he had immigrated to Palestine in 1939 at the age of 18. Certainly Greene’s contacts in Israel was far superior to any the Soviets now had.

Sion took Greene behind military lines and from there another Mossad agent traveled with him as far as the Suez Canal. While at the Canal, they found themselves targets of Egyptian fire, and Greene’s guide was wounded by shrapnel. They hid behind sand dunes for hours in the scorching sun until they could make their escape.

Back in England, Greene would have communicated his thoughts and impressions to Maurice Oldfield and his brother-in-law, Rodney Dennys, who was now retired. While information confirming Greene’s role in secret Anglo-Russian diplomacy has not yet come to light (and of course if Greene was doing his job, there would be no such evidence extent), there is an assembly of facts that suggest he was deployed. Foremost, he was in close and friendly contact with Israel’s Defense Minister. Second, the Soviet Union was severely concerned with its loss of influence in the region, and with satellites outside the region, such as Cuba, as a result of a war it had taken steps to provoke. Third, Kim Philby, living in Moscow and working for the KGB, had suddenly been in contact with Greene, just weeks after the Soviet clients lost the war.

**Visits to Latin America and life in Antibes**


95 However, in a personal conversation, Dennys’s son Nicholas Dennys is doubtful that Greene was gathering intelligence in Israel because he is not aware of any information being shared with his father.

96 Jon Wise states in a personal communication that the Georgetown University Archives show that from 17 September to 18 October 1967 Greene “seems to have been [on] a fact-finding mission at first, getting opinions of Israelis about current status, etc.” while the journal notes at Boston College may have more detail. This writer has not seen the journal entries for those dates.
Greene’s political interests had often been mixed with his Catholicism. In Vietnam, his interest was the Catholic priest who headed a “third force.” In Kenya, he saw Catholicism as a factor that might restrain the terrorism of the rebels. In Cuba, Greene praised Castro for his tolerance toward the church. Where the church was regressive, as in Haiti, Greene ignored it. When Pope John XXIII, the son of a Lombardy sharecropper, was elected, the direction of the Church changed dramatically. He held his office only four and a half years before his death, but his views, if not his years, were expansive, and the 1963 encyclical “Pacem in Terris” addressed the Church’s view of communist activities. In Latin America, for the first time, the Church allowed that communist rebels could be a welcomed development against repressive dictators. Thereafter, Greene traveled to Peru, observing the activities of priests who defied the dictator General Alfredo Stroessner. The resulting novel The Honorary Consul was published in 1973.

Journalist Bernard Dietrich, with whom Greene traveled in Haiti in the fifties, introduced Greene to leftist Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega and General Omar Torrijos of Panama who was attempting to nationalize the Panama Canal. Greene was an unrecognized member of the Panamanian delegation in Washington, DC at the signing of the treaty that returned the Canal to Panama in 1978, standing in the photo-shot with President Carter. Soon afterward he quietly negotiated the release of two kidnapped delegates of the Bank of England captured by Salvadorian guerrillas, and later helped to mediate the release of a South African ambassador kidnapped by rebels, presumably with the consent of the Foreign Office. Except for Argentina and the Falklands, Latin American countries may not have been areas of particular interest to Britain, and Greene’s interest in these regions may have been largely personal and an outgrowth of his interest in the capacity of the Catholic church to play a positive role in modern times.97

Yvonne Cloetta was quite clear that Greene “to the very end ... worked for the British Services.”98 She explained that he maintained it was not politics that really interested him at all; it was the people he met, and the principles they lived and died for. Greene wrote that what triggered his stands was not an intellectual conviction, but emotion, particularly anger: “It was anger induced by what I saw in Vietnam, in Haiti, in Mexico, that made me write The Quiet American, The Comedians, and The Lawless Roads. It’s the people I spoke to, the on-the-spot witnesses, not the abstract principles or reported facts, that prompted this need to write which then became a necessity.”99

At Antibes, Greene and Cloetta enjoyed his many friendships from the publishing world (he was a partner in The Bodley Head with Max Reinhardt). They saw Charlie and Oona Chaplin in Switzerland, and Greene personally shepherded Chaplin’s autobiography to publication. And until the end of his days, he continued to enjoy the company of spies. Yvonne described this particular clique as a “fraternity.” She

98 Cloetta, 144.
99 Cloetta, 100.
added: “All in all, Graham lived and breathed that atmosphere. It was a world he frequented. The greater majority of them were former SIS people, in France or England, starting with his sister.”

Cloetta named some members of the “fraternity”: former British consul Paul Paulson, a former Yugoslav agent named Popov, Ronnie Challoner, and Sir John Cairncross. Greene had met Cairncross in June 1943, soon after he came to work for Section V. Cairncross had worked at Bletchley Park. He was revealed to be a Soviet spy, one of the Cambridge Five, who had provided the Russians with top secret information deciphered from the German Enigma cipher, contributing to the Russian victory at the Battle of Kursk. After the war he was privy to highly classified nuclear secrets which he gave the Russians. In 1964 he confessed his treason to MI5 but was not publicly identified as the “fifth man” in the Cambridge spy ring until 1979. Cairncross had not associated with the Cambridge spies, although he did share the same handler, Yuri Modin, whose book about them gives a lengthy account of Cairncross’s great significance to Russia.

Also at Antibes, Greene continued to see Moshe Dayan, Dov Sion, and Yael Dayan. Sion was assigned to the Israeli Embassy in London and Yael, a novelist, worked for the BBC when Hugh Greene was its director. Hugh’s wife at the time, Elaine, became Yael’s literary agent. Sion was instrumental in the negotiations between Israel and Egypt that resulted in the return of the Sinai to Egypt in the 1979 Camp David Accords.

Greene steadfastly refused to visit Russia as long as dissidents were persecuted. When reforms were made under Mikhail Gorbachev’s premiership, Greene and Cloetta arrived in Moscow in September 1986 with plans to see Kim Philby. The meeting was arranged by an official of the Russian Writers’ Union, presumably an agent of the KGB. In Richard Greene’s opinion, Russia was “aggressively courting Graham Greene, and using Philby, whose value was otherwise exhausted, as bait.” Greene visited with Philby, seeing him for the first time since the forties, at his bugged apartment, and the following evening at a Writers’ Union event. Back home, Greene immediately planned a second visit that occurred in February 1987. He went alone. In addition to his seeing Philby, he participated in a Forum for a Nuclear-Free World, which was basically a huge public relations event for Gorbachev’s policies of glasnost and perestroika with the West. Western writers, statesmen, and intellectuals by the hundreds were invited to present their thoughts. Norman Mailer, Gore Vidal, Yoko Ono, Gregory Peck, John Kenneth Galbraith, Peter Ustinov, Armand Hammer, and Daniel Ellsberg were among the many notables in attendance.

At the conference, Greene was asked to give an impromptu speech to the huge crowd. The Times reported that Greene addressed Gorbachev and spoke about

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100 Cloetta, 142-43.
101 Cloetta, 141-42.
102 R. Greene, 152.
103 Lewis, 458-59.
104 Cloetta, 164.
105 Interview by this writer with Yael Dayan.
106 R. Greene, 488.
the Church and communists working together against dictatorships and cruelty in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Chile.

Cloetta relates that Greene met with Gorbachev at the Kremlin during this visit. Greene told her that the premier made an enigmatic comment to him. “I have known you for some years, Mr. Greene,” he said. Cloetta wrote: “I am inclined to believe that Gorbachev was referring not to Greene’s books, but to his dossier.”108

While staying at the Metropol Hotel in Moscow in 2015, I snapped a picture of a photo that hung in a hallway. It was of the elderly Graham Greene chatting with actor Peter Ustinov at the 1987 Nuclear conference.109 Ustinov had acted in the film version of Greene’s novel *The Comedians*, but he also had another association with Greene. During the war, Ustinov’s father “Klop” Ustinov worked for MI6 in Portugal. Klop Ustinov assisted Greene’s unit by getting to know the Nazi intelligence (*Abwehr*) agents and deciding which Abwehr agents might be “turned” to work for the allies as double agents. It was Klop who had interrogated Paul Fidrmuc, a con artist who had scammed MI6 by inventing agents, thereby inspiring James Wormold’s deception in *Our Man in Havana*.110 Klop could never have foreseen that his son would act in a movie that mined his war experiences.

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108 Cloetta, 143.
109 The photo has since been replaced with one of more recent celebrities.
In the summer of 1987, Greene and Cloetta visited Russia again, seeing Philby and his wife at dinner in Moscow. Another visit was made in February 1988 when a documentary about Philby was aired on Russian television. Philby appeared on the program and spoke highly of Greene and his writing for ten minutes, especially *The Quiet American*. “I wouldn’t say that our views coincided, but he belonged to those few, who at least sympathized with me,” he said. At a dinner in Philby’s honor, Greene showed his skepticism of the new Russian freedoms when he asked a wealthy entrepreneur how he was able to obtain “independence from state control when no one else can?” The obvious answer was that he was very well connected. Philby died of a heart attack three months later.

Seeing an uncertain future, Greene declined an invitation to a Soviet celebration of his 85th birthday in October 1989, but he visited in October 1988 and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Moscow.** It is ironic how Russia pursued Greene, while Philby, a fervent communist who had risked his life to betray his country for Russia, was regarded as a “has been.” Philby’s life in Russia was not easy. He missed England and became an alcoholic. He may never have received the recognition that came to him late in life except for his claim to fame in knowing Graham Greene. While many questioned the propriety of Greene’s visits with the traitorous Philby, the reason was probably simple and very characteristic of Greene: charity.

** Greene’s Fiction and Cold War Espionage

Greene wrote three novels and a screenplay that depicted the world of Cold War espionage—a true Greeneland if ever there was one—where betrayal and deceit were commonplace. In *The Quiet American* (1955) Pyle’s spying emerges quietly as Fowler comes to understand that the young, patriotic American who is among those secretly planning America’s own way in Viet Nam. But rather than deceitful, Pyle is depicted as deadly sincere in his allegiance to an American ideology, just as Philby was to his.

Perhaps because its physical setting was anything but grim—bright sunlight, candy-colored cars and buildings—*Our Man in Havana* (1958) became the world’s first Cold War black comedy. But Greene saw the comedy in most situations, the more ludicrous the better.** The invention of agents by Wormold was, of course, taken from actual events in Portugal during the war. When Wormold confesses, C (for Chief of MI6) attempts to avoid embarrassment to the firm by promoting Wormold to a teaching post and recommending him for an OBE, lampooning the way the firm sometimes preferred to handle these matters. Greene’s comedy seems never to age. The scene in which the Russians attempt to poison Wormold at a dinner resonates today with their attempted murders of Sergei Skripal and Alexei Navalny.

After *Our Man in Havana*, black comedy became the most pronounced cultural treatment of the nuclear threat of the Cold War, a genre that culminated

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** R. Greene, 493-96.

** For example, a call for censorship of *Lolita* inspired him to create the John Gordon Society which hosted a riotously funny debate. See Sherry, (2005), 37-44. The sheer oddity of the pairing had him start the Anglo-Texan Society with a barbeque honoring Texan independence for 1,500 people. See R. Greene, 273.
in Stanley Kubrick’s 1964 movie Dr. Strangelove, or How I Stopped Worrying and Loved the Bomb (which was based on suspense novel, not a comedic one). Peter Sellers’s portrayal of the bizarre Dr. Strangelove may have been inspired by Greene’s depiction of the equally strange C in Our Man in Havana, who wears a heavy black monocle, covering an eye “made of glass; pale blue and unconvincing, it might have come out of a doll which said ‘Mama.’” Strangelove wears dark spectacles and has a false arm, an unruly device that insists on exploding into a “Heil Hitler” salute. Another possible offshoot of Greene’s Cuban comedy may have been “Spy vs Spy,” Mad Magazine’s brilliant cartoon, which was the brainchild of Cuban political cartoonist Antonio Prohias who had “soured” on Castro’s Cuba with its nationalization of a formerly free press. After Prohias was accused by Castro’s government of working for the CIA (was he interrogated by the real life Ventura, the model for Captain Segura?), he fled to New York in 1960. Even though Greene has the reader chuckling from page one onward, the world of MI6, ultimately, is not comic. Wormald’s ingenuous antics are taken seriously by the real spies who cause the deaths of his best friend and an innocent pilot.

Greene’s interest in the Cold War spy novel continued with The Human Factor (1978) and its depiction of the angst and terror of Cold War politics. It put the business of MI6 front and center and knowledgably depicts how the discovery of the Cambridge Five changed the service, as MI6’s internal security employs some brave new ideas from the world of technocrats like Dr. Percival. In his hands they become an instrument of death of the innocent Davis. We see how crass, cruel, and inhuman some of the “friends” can be, especially as contrasted with Castle’s sincere idealism and love of family. The novel also drew a cameo portrait of Stewart Menzies, whose tenure as chief was badly tarnished by the double spying of his trusted Kim Philby. He is portrayed as a kindly, distracted old-timer who hunts at his country house in Luckington. It also presents a fair, if somewhat grim, picture of how the KGB handled and resettled the British defectors. Nevertheless, Greene’s theme is not only the corruption of those involved in spying, but the tragedy of those, such as Castle, who did so for humanistic reasons. In this respect Castle in no way resembles Philby, who in cold blood identified British agents to the Soviets for execution and worked to prolong World War II.

A writer is a kind of spy, as Greene himself stated to Michael Korda: “The great advantage of being a writer is that you can spy on people,” Greene told me as I took another tiny sip of my martini. “You’re there, listening to every word, but part of you is observing. Everything

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113 That movie was based on the 1958 book Red Alert by Peter George. Kubrick originally intended the movie to be serious, as was the book, until the huge absurdities of nuclear policies at the time urged him toward comedy.
114 Graham Greene, Our Man in Havana (New York: Penguin, 1958), 44
115 The year 1959 also saw the start of the satirical Rocky and Bullwinkle television cartoon series, with Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale who, working for “Fearless Leader,” try to undermine the good deeds of Rocky and Bullwinkle. Since the series went into production in February 1958, it seems to have arisen almost simultaneously with Greene’s novel.
116 See Wikipedia article on Antonio Prohias.
is useful to a writer, you see—every scrap, even the longest and most boring of luncheon parties.” Greene’s spies are partly composites of people he has scrutinized. What he often adds to make his novels quintessentially Greenean is something that is irrelevant, even counterproductive to the spy—charity: the sorrow for the innocent pilot mistakenly killed, or for Castle, exiled from his beloved wife and child. That is why, as good as he was, espionage could never have been a full-time career for Greene.

Frances Peltz Assa studied law at the University of Wisconsin and holds a BA in Psychology from the University of Chicago. After retiring from a career as a federal civil rights lawyer, she began research into the lives and works of various twentieth-century novelists and writers, especially Graham Greene, Vladimir Nabokov, H. G. Wells, and critic Edmund Wilson. She has published a number of articles on the works of Nabokov and has presented papers on Greene and Wells.

117 See Korda.
Graham Greene and Bridges across Cultures

Thomas Halper

Perhaps no modern English-speaking novelist has explored the bridges across—or better yet, the chasms between—cultures with the persistence and moral seriousness of Graham Greene. In book after book: *The Power and the Glory* (1940), *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), *Our Man in Havana* (1958), and *The Honorary Consul* (1973) for example, he has addressed the understandings and misunderstandings with perception, elegance, and wit. This essay focuses on three of his best-known novels, all turned into movies, where the topic is explicit and takes center stage: *The Quiet American* (1955), *The Comedians* (1966), and *The Third Man* (1949).

Addicted to the recklessly exotic—he traveled to Liberia, Mexico, Malaya, the Congo, Cuba, and Vietnam long before they became tourist destinations—Greene was “not an ordinary man, not a comfortable man, not a reliable man—but an adventurer, with all the vices and virtues of an adventurer.” In his books, set in that “baffling landscape, at once harrowing and seedy [known as] Greeneland,” he occupies a sometimes awkward duality as a skeptical outsider, deeply sympathetic to the suffering, often exploited local populations.

All three of Greene’s novels, each set in locales whose decadence and corruption is magnified in lurid close-ups, point to a failure of moral courage in a time of stress that permits civilized behavior to erode nearly to Hobbesian standards. It may superficially appear that these are political novels, but instead they are moral studies in redemption and betrayal that are merely played out in political terms, as the cultures collide.

*The Quiet American*


so his descriptions, especially of the expatriate community, ring true. Fowler, deeply cynical, is covering the war between the French and Vietminh Communist guerillas, when he encounters Alden Pyle, an American CIA agent with a “young and unused face[that] seemed incapable of harm.” Pyle is taken with an idea he found in books by a prominent academic to the effect that Southeast Asia’s future lies not with Communism or colonialism, but instead with a combination of traditions called the Third Force. Fowler dismisses the idea, adding, “I was tired of the whole pack of them,” speaking of Americans.

Fowler, unhappily married with a wife in England, lives with Phoung, twenty and beautiful, a former dance hall girl, and in his words, “wonderfully ignorant” of the world. Decades younger, she is perhaps his last real love—or at least an object of desire. Jaded and passive, he describes himself as a “man of middle age, with eyes a little bloodshot, beginning to put on weight, ungraceful in love.” Pyle meets Phuong and is immediately smitten (though his French is so poor that Fowler is enlisted as interpreter), telling the older man that he is in love with her and wants to marry her. “Saving the country and saving a woman would be the same thing to a man like that,” Fowler observes. Phoung chooses Fowler over Pyle, but when Pyle tells her that Fowler’s wife refuses to grant him a divorce, she switches her attention to Pyle, who offers marriage and a secure, comfortable life in the United States.

At this point, a bomb in a busy Saigon square leaves a horrendous scene of death and gore that sparks a decision in Fowler, who believes (accurately) that Pyle had imported a plastic used in the explosive and that the Vietnamese general responsible for the massacre represents Pyle’s Third Force. “A woman sat on the ground with what was left of a baby on her lap,” Fowler says. “Go home to Phuong and tell her about your heroic dead,” he tells Pyle; “there are a few dozen less of her people to worry about.” Pyle explains, lamely, that the bombing was supposed to target a military parade, which was cancelled, hence the unexpected presence of civilians who were killed, but offers no sympathy for the victims. To Fowler, Pyle is a dupe of a general, who is “only a bandit,” so naïve that he cannot even see that he was duped. Later, over drinks, Pyle tells Fowler: “It was a pity, but you can’t always hit your target. Anyway they died for the right cause. … In a way you could say they died for democracy.” Pyle’s absence of outrage outrages Fowler. For him, the war seems an exercise in killing women and children.

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6 On the other hand, former CIA officers have alleged that when in Saigon, Greene spent most of his time drinking with French colonials bitter at what they took to be America’s abandonment of their cause (Phillips and Wilkoe 2009, 101).
7 Graham himself had worked for the Secret Intelligence Service, as had his sister; his uncle helped to found Naval Intelligence; his brother worked for Japanese intelligence. Thus, he and much of his family were steeped in intelligence.
8 While in Indochina, Greene found himself in a car with a member of an American economic mission, who lectured him on the necessity of a Third Force (Greene 1980, 163).
10 Greene, The Quiet American, 12.
11 Ibid., 12.
12 Ibid., 40.
13 Ibid., 162.
14 Ibid., 157.
15 Ibid., 179.
The war also provides an opportunity to eliminate his rival for Phoung, as he becomes involved in a plot to assassinate Pyle, telling himself that the death will save innocent lives. By this time Fowler has written off Pyle as believing that some ideas are worth killing for—“before he died he had been responsible for at least fifty deaths”—on the bogus theory that the end justifies the means. In this, Fowler overlooks that his own involvement in Pyle’s assassination is justified by his belief in self-determination, the ends justifying the means, a belief that evidently survives the promise of Communist dictatorship.

Fowler escapes punishment for political reasons, reunites with Phoung, and is informed by his wife that she has finally agreed to a divorce. The book ends with Fowler thinking, guiltily: “Everything had gone right with me since [Pyle] had died, but how I wished there existed someone to whom I could say that I was sorry.” (In the 1958 movie, which Greene detested, Phoung simply returns to her life in a dance hall, leaving a despondent Fowler alone.)

Pyle and Fowler, an American and an Englishman, each bring to Vietnam values, opinions, and beliefs from their home country. The American, optimistic, full of his country’s renowned can-do spirit, is “determined ... to do good, not to any individual person but to a country, a continent, the world.” In Fowler’s eyes, Pyle’s enthusiasm for democracy gives him a moralistic self-importance that is unmoored to everyday reality, a license to try anything. Later, he says to Pyle, “I hope to God you know what you’re doing here. Oh, I know your motives are good, they always are ... I wish sometimes you had a few bad motives, you might understand a little more about human beings. And that applies to your country, too, Pyle.” Fowler’s British identity, though flawed by condescension and self-pity, was sufficiently open to Vietnamese society to permit some modest degree of cultural amalgamation. Pyle on the other hand, was resistant to intercultural influence, though he imagined himself an ally of the Vietnamese. He is not a bad man who wishes to bring destruction to Vietnam, but in his ignorance, self-righteousness, and arrogance, the result is the same.

Fowler concedes that he “began—almost unconsciously—to run down everything that was American. My conversation was full of the poverty of American literature, the scandals of American politics, the beastliness of American children. ... Nothing that America could do was right. I became a bore on the subject of America.” In this, Pyle reflects Greene’s well-known antipathy to everything American.

It is here that Fowler condemns Pyle for his commitment to the Third Force, a bookish theory cut off from “the fury and the mire of human veins,” and his teaching “perhaps public relations or theatre craft, perhaps even Far Eastern studies” (Greene 1955/1973, 31, 23. There is nothing inherently bad or absurd about storing Coke, being big, or taking courses in theatre craft, and portable hospitals probably accomplish much good. However, connecting them with America evidently is enough in Greene’s eyes to make them and Americans ridiculous.
indifference to its consequences. “I laugh at anyone who spends much time writing about what doesn’t exist,” Fowler says, “mental concepts ... isms and ocracies. Give me the facts.” Yet readers wonder, would Fowler have nations conduct foreign policies without overarching theories? Would it really be preferable to rely simply on humane impulses and hunches, unencumbered by strategic concerns? We suspect that Fowler’s problem is not that Pyle’s theory is inadequate, but that it extends to all theories. “He never saw anything he hadn’t heard in a lecture hall” he says of Pyle, “and his writers and lecturers made a fool of him.” Of course, theories can do no more than imperfectly explain the world, and some theories can lead to very bad results. But to write off all theories and the academia that produced them with a blanket denial of their utility, may be indistinguishable from praising ignorance. As the reader never learns much about the Third Force or what Pyle actually does—there are mentions of medical work—we are left with his damning commitment to academic abstractions, perhaps a variation on the famous British preference for intelligent amateurs over expert specialists. Adhering to theories, like other good intentions, paves a road to hell. Except, apparently, for the Communists, who draw from their own sacred texts, some generations old and written by men who never heard of Vietnam, and never earn Greene’s ire.

In Fowler we hear the experienced, world weary European, appalled and disappointed by an America cursed by the defects of youth: naïveté, shallowness, self-absorption, and above all, innocence. “Innocence” Fowler observes, “is like a dumb leper who has lost his bell, wandering the world, meaning no harm. You can’t blame the innocent; they are always guiltless. All you can do is control them or eliminate them.” “I never knew a man” Fowler says of Pyle, “who had better motives for all the trouble he caused.” In its treatment of Pyle, the novel is a variant of the American innocents abroad theme, addressed earlier by such writers as Henry James (“Daisy Miller”) and Mark Twain (Innocents Abroad), now “seen from a particularly sour European viewpoint.” With its relentless assault on innocence, it is no wonder that The Quiet American became “a standard text for the anti-war movement, which embraced it as a prophetic masterpiece about the perils of blind idealism run amok.” Greene repeatedly makes the point that innocence is not goodness, though it is often mistaken for it, yet he appears immune to its notorious appeal of purity.

Is America’s blundering innocence a warrant for the Communists to eliminate the innocent, as Fowler helps them eliminate Pyle? Fowler does not make the connection. He deplores the killing of civilians, as at the Saigon square, and expects the Communists to prevail, but he does not pause to consider the massacres and

21 Ibid., 94, 95.
22 Ibid., 32.
23 Ibid., 37.
24 Ibid., 60.
imprisonments this will entail. Indeed, the Communists are portrayed as the only political force that genuinely cares about the peasant, whom they would treat “like a man, like someone of value.”

Against this view, Greene offers only Pyle’s foolish anti-communism, a straw man. The baton of world leadership is passed to a callow America unprepared for its responsibilities. The cliché in the end is too pat.

Fowler, for his part, insists on a neutrality that he considers essential for journalists. “I’m just a reporter,” he says. “I offer no point of view, I take no action, I don’t get involved. ... The human condition being what it was, let them fight, let them love, let them murder. I could not be involved.” It seems never to occur to Fowler that under Communism, neutral reporting would be impossible. In the end, when he colludes in Pyle’s death, the pretense of neutrality is exposed.

The cynicism also seems a cover for Fowler’s profound sadness. An atheist who “envied those who could believe in God,” he is spiritually empty, and his preoccupation with relationships bespeaks merely a dread of being alone. With an earlier mistress he “was afraid of losing love. Now I’m only afraid of losing Phuong.”

Watching Pyle and Phuong dance, Fowler reflects, “Always I was afraid of losing happiness,” yet never do we see him happy; he exists in a cocoon of anxiety.

As Pyle’s lack of experience poisoned his good intentions, so Fowler’s excess of experience leaves him without good intentions at all. Indeed, he is capable of a treachery that brings down Pyle, a treachery that Pyle could hardly imagine let alone perform. Is this an act of vengeance on the part of the Old World against the New, punishment for the audacity of being new? As Pyle’s blinkered morality leads to carnage, Fowler’s leads to Pyle’s murder. But where Pyle could not predict the consequences of his actions, Fowler understood his perfectly well. Yet when we recall (as Greene does not) that the Americans in Vietnam were protecting French interests, using techniques borrowed from the British suppression of counterinsurgency in Malaya, the distinction between Old and New Worlds begins to break down.

None of the three main characters could properly be called good. Fowler is revealed as selfish and cowardly; Pyle is innocent in ways that unintentionally menace innocent bystanders; Phuong, thinly sketched, is callow, vain, and given to drinking milk shakes and nasty, sclerotic authoritarian bureaucracy. As late as 1984, Greene confessed to “a lingering hope that in certain areas of the world, under certain conditions, there will be a kind of Communism which is acceptable.” Ignoring Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, and others, he found South American dictators more cruel and more violent (Kynch 1984, 4, 6), excepting his friends Omar Torrijos of Panama, Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, and Fidel Castro of Cuba. Populist dictators on the left aroused his admiration (Greene 1963, 1984).

27 Greene, The Quiet American, 97.
28 In a 1967 letter to the London Times, Greene wrote that if forced “to choose between life in the Soviet Union or life in the United States, I would certainly choose the Soviet Union” (Greene 1991, 136). By 1971, he reported that he was “in greater sympathy with communism than ever before, though less and less with the Russian version” (Greene 1971, 132). Greene had earlier declared that “As a Catholic, I must admit to being anti-totalitarian and anti-Communist” (Greene 1953), though he later announced that “there is no reason why a Communist should renounce his Catholic faith” (qtd. in Duran 1994, 91). These expressions of support were made long after Communist idealism had been replaced by a
spending time with picture books of the British royal family. Each is also fundamentally rootless, culturally. Fowler and Pyle are literally far from home; Phuong is en route to trading her Vietnamese identity for that of an imagined pampered Western woman.

If the clash between the Englishness of Fowler and the Americanness of Pyle illustrates the chasm between two similar societies, their relation to Vietnam suggests a vastly wider divide. Each in his own way condescends to Vietnamese customs, and despite their feelings for Phuong, neither sees her as a full human being. She lies at Fowler’s “feet like a dog on a crusader’s tomb” and is “[i]ndigenous like a herb” or perhaps is like “a bird; they twitter and sing on your pillow.” Phuong, in short, is for him a lovely, exotic object of desire, an obedient, passive fantasy, and little more, though he later advises Pyle not to “think of her as—as an ornament.” “I just don’t want to be alone in my last decade, that’s all,” Fowler says; “To lose her will be, for me, the beginning of death.” He also tells Pyle that Phuong, as a typical Vietnamese woman, would “love you in return for kindness, security, the presents you give,” suggesting a transactional relationship inappropriate for mature adults. The two men vie for her, and she is content to be their trophy. As for the Vietnamese, Pyle seems to regard them as children incapable of complex thoughts. When they are killed by the bomb, he sees them as sacrificed for democracy.

Greene, well known for his fondness for radical, anti-colonialist movements, has the militants defending their actions, but despite the dialogue, they remain undeveloped stick figures. He seems more interested in the cultural conflict between a Brit and an American than with the far different Vietnamese.

The Comedians

The Comedians, featuring Westerners in the Haiti of Papa Doc Duvalier, again reveals the confusion and suffering endemic to members of one culture incapable of grasping another. Haiti, in one of the earliest colonial strikes against a European power, evicted the French and Napoleon’s army a century and a half earlier, a “turning point in history” that was “unprecedented in its challenge to slavery and colonialism.” However, Haiti’s subsequent history of elite rule, profound poverty, and pervasive corruption have contributed to a level of exploitation and indifference to local suffering and death that is not entirely unlike a very harsh colonialism. When Memmi pronounced that “the colonized lives for a long time before we see that really new man,” its application to Haiti was an enormous understatement.

As with The Quiet American, Greene had spent a good deal of time on location, which he called the

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33 Ibid., 120, 14, 12.
34 Ibid., 156.
35 Ibid., 104.
36 Ibid., 81.
37 Ibid., 104.
38 Ibid., 176.
41 Albert Memmi, Dominated Man: Notes toward a Portrait (London: Orion, 1968), 88.
“Nightmare Republic.” The story, told by an Englishman named Brown, who owns a hotel in Port-au-Prince inherited from his mother, begins on a tramp steamer bound for Haiti. On board are Brown, Major Jones (an Englishman who regales passengers with tales of daring-do in Burma in World War II), and the Americans Mr. and Mrs. Smith (he ran for president on the vegetarian ticket in 1948). Brown, middle aged and without family, has scratched out a dishonest living with forged paintings before acquiring the hotel, which political violence has made a money loser. Jones, involved in a shady business scheme, runs into trouble with the authorities, is rescued by Brown, and joins youthful rebels who are taken with his stories of military exploits. The war stories, he admits to Brown, were just so much false bravado and tall tales, but he unexpectedly rises to the challenge and fights heroically with the rebels, leading to his death by the police. Ever the pragmatist and survivor, Brown flees to the Dominican Republic where he finds a job as assistant to a funeral director. The violence in Haiti makes it “a fine prosperous little business” for the undertaker.

The innocents here are the Smiths. When introduced, they seem likely to play the fools, but later they save Brown from the fearsome Tonton Macoute security police and reveal decency, ingenuity, and courage. Still, Greene could not let their absurd and destructive American naïveté escape our notice. As they are about to leave the island, they are besieged by beggars, for whom Smith empties his wife’s handbag as an effort at generosity. “Men with two legs kicked men with one,” Greene wrote, and “men with two arms grasped those who were armless by their torsos, and threw them to the ground.”

On the other hand, Brown, cynical, bored, incapable of optimism, seems the polar opposite. The only thing he appears to care about is his lust for a diplomat’s wife, an affair doomed by her refusal to leave her family, an affair that makes him miserable. “Everything was just as before,” he says: “After ten minutes we had made love, and after half an hour we had begun quarreling.” As Brown, “obstinate in my self-hatred,” attributes base motives to others, so he also attributes them to himself even when they are inaccurate and unfair. For example, he insists to his lover that he is driving Jones to the rebels because he is jealous of her affection for him, when actually it is his distaste for the brutal Duvalier government that is his chief motive. For his mother, too, when he runs across a World War II resistance medal in her effects, he wonders: “My mother must have gone into the streets ... unless it was her lover who gave” it to her. Notwithstanding the self-deprecation, Brown repeatedly does the right thing; for example, he rescues Jones, risking torture and death from the dreaded Macoute. Yet of the book’s main characters, only he—not the bogus hero or the silly vegetarian or the bumbling revolutionary—fails at redemption.

And what of Papa Doc’s Haiti? It is a failed state overseen by an entrenched oligarchy willing to do anything to maintain its privileges and position. The tiny elite, headed for life by a lunatic, sadistic president, has empowered a

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45 Ibid., 238.
46 Ibid., 174.
47 Ibid., 234.
 brutal state security apparatus that preys on the opposition, real and imagined, and terrorizes the populace. After years of this, violence and corruption have come to permeate nearly every facet of life. Greene does not indulge in social science analysis, but the point is made in other ways. Poverty and backwardness are conveyed with descriptions of electrical blackouts, voodoo rituals, beggars’ twisted and missing limbs. Life for ordinary Haitians is an unending, Sisyphean struggle. Presiding is the unseen but terrifying Papa Doc, with his pompous officials seeking bribes and, above all, the Macoute free to beat, rape, and kill to their hearts’ delight. A youthful would-be revolutionary Brown encounters is a hopeless romantic, and a local black journalist is described, with racial undertones, as having “the quick movements of a monkey, and he seemed to swing from wall to wall on ropes of laughter.” Only a Communist doctor, dignified and brave, who is martyred by the Macoute, is wholly admirable. There is sympathy for the Haitians, but Greene’s story is not theirs, and so his sympathy does not enable him to speak for them as an insider. In the end, there is no way to bridge the gap between the cultures.

Brown, like Fowler, lives a life of more or less constant anxiety. It is partly a function of the circumstances in which they find themselves: Fowler, situated in the midst of a burgeoning civil war, fears his mistress will leave him; Brown, at the mercy of corrupt officials and predatory Macoute, is also rootless. He has been elsewhere and could be anywhere. In some sense, this is liberating; but it also breeds a bottomless insecurity. Brown’s flimsy ties to his hotel and his lover, in their inadequacy, only highlight his rootlessness. As with Fowler, for Brown “tradition and convention offer no moral solace.” Both are cynical, alienated from the larger society, given to self-medication by alcohol. Of course, anxiety and alienation were buzz words among mid-century intellectuals, but Greene seems to be saying that, at least for certain people, the phenomena are not merely the spiritual debris of modern life but inhere in the human condition.

And yet ultimately, Brown and Fowler do try to break through the defeatist bonds that encase them—Brown by helping Jones join the revolution and then leaving the country and Fowler by plotting against Pyle and committing to Phuong. Both characters, in this sense, understand that even in their circumscribed situations they are free to act in a wide range of ways and actually do act. What they do is not conventional nor, given their temperaments and personalities, predictable, and yet in the final analysis, it is in character.

In The Comedians the characters, like actors on a stage set in a jungle, are more than a little ludicrous. Jones plays a war hero, Mr. Smith a presidential candidate, the young revolutionary a Baudelairean poet. Is there something the book. (Diederich 2017, 145). The movie drew mixed reviews and generated only $5.2 million at the box office.

48 Following the appearance of The Comedians, Duvalier ordered the publication of an attack on Greene as an opium addict, racist, pervert, swindler, and torturer. (Haiti, Department des Affaires Etrangeres 1968). Bernard Diederich believes Duvalier was more infuriated by the movie, for which Greene wrote the script, than

inauthentic about their role playing? Perhaps. But as they discard the roles and exhibit genuine bravery and kindness, the question loses its bite. Even Brown, wrapped in the role of the cynical spectator, ultimately becomes involved and does the right thing. Yet if Haitians in the form of Papa Doc and his fearsome Macoute are the authors of much of the characters’ misery, the United States also comes into its share of blame, for America supports Duvalier as a bulwark against Communism. As the murdered doctor explains to the Smiths, “we live under the shadow of your great and prosperous country. Much courage and patience is needed to keep one’s head.”

For Greene, no friend of America, the bridges across cultures are sorely in need of repair.

**The Third Man**

According to Greene, *The Third Man*, which began as a film and ended as a book, “was really the treatment which I did before writing the script,” and “was never written to be read but only to be seen.” As with *The Quiet American* and *The Comedians*, *The Third Man* is a first-person narrative, this time by the head of the British military police in Vienna, a character named Colonel Galloway (in the film he was Major Calloway; a real-life Major Galloway had helped Greene in Vienna). Rollo Martins (in the film, he was named Holly Martins), a hack writer of pulp Westerns and down on his luck, comes to “the smashed dreary city” of postwar Vienna, a “sad, decaying no-man’s-land” divided into British, French, American, and Soviet zones with the center under joint control. It is winter, and there are serious shortages of everything: food, fuel, medicine, all feeding an insatiable black market. This is not the Vienna of Mozart or sachertorte mit schlag.

Martins is invited to Vienna by his old friend, Harry Lime (modeled partially on Greene’s old friend Philby), who promises him a writing job with a medical charity, only to go to his apartment and be told by a porter that Lime is dead, “run over by a car.” Galloway tells him that Lime was “about the worst racketeer who ever made a dirty living in this city,” but Martins remembers Lime from school days—“he was the best friend I ever had”—and almost strikes Galloway in anger.

Martins could have flown home, ending the tale, but inconsistencies in the accounts of Lime’s death plus implausible coincidences whet his curiosity, especially his inability to identify a mysterious third man at the accident scene. He gets in touch with Lime’s girlfriend, Anna Schmidt, an attractive, small-time Hungarian actress, who adds to his suspicions by admitting that she also wondered if the death had really been caused by an accident.

After another suspicious murder, Galloway decides that he can trust Martins and tells him that Lime had organized the theft of penicillin from

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54 Oddly, Galloway repeatedly describes in detail events where he was not present.
58 Ibid., 25.
59 Ibid., 23.
military hospitals, diluted it, and sold it on the black market. As a result, many people, including many children, had died or gone mad. Martins concludes that Lime had staged his own death to avoid prosecution and was actually the unidentified third man at the accident scene. With Greene's brilliantly executed plot twist, “What happened to Lime?” becomes “Where is Lime?”

Martins meets Lime at an old amusement park in the Soviet zone, and Lime offers him a job, but Martins finds that he detests his corrupt old friend and tips off Galloway. They decide to talk Lime into leaving the Soviet zone so he can be arrested, but Lime surmises that the police are involved and makes for the sewage system. Martins follows him; Lime shoots a policeman; Martins takes the policeman’s gun and wounds Lime seriously, and then kills him to put him out of his misery. His last words—“Bloody fool”—are ambiguous. Is he referring to Martins or himself? Lime is buried again, this time for real, and Martins and Anna walk out of sight, hand in hand. (In the movie Martins watches sadly as Anna walks away.)

One theme Greene explores is how misleading appearances may be. Martins believes Lime, ever playful with “a look of cheerful rascality [and] geniality,” is a good man, and then learns he is not; Martins believes Lime is a dead man, and then learns he is not. In Vienna, once renowned for high culture but now a broken-down den of thieves, things are not what they seem to be. Indeed, the city has a lawless quality that reminds the reader of Martins’s wild west. The traditions of the old empire are gone, replaced by an obsession on short term survival that involves taking advantage of every opportunity. Vienna has become “a city that has lost its raison d’etre.”

A second theme in The Third Man is friendship and betrayal. Greene, particularly in his relationships with women, was a serial betrayer, often in cruel and humiliating ways, and his continuing relationship with Philby suggests that he did not always consider disloyalty a bad thing. In a Greene short story, “Under the Garden,” a character declares: “If you have to earn a living, boy, and the price they make you pay is loyalty, be a double-agent and let neither of the two sides know your name.” Thus, it is hardly surprising that he raises the issue of betrayal with Fowler and Pyle in The Quiet American, and that in The Third Man misplaced loyalty is central. Martins and Lime have been friends since childhood; Martins had always looked up to Lime, whom he thought smarter and more charming. Perhaps this explains why Lime invited him to Vienna, to bask in the glow of hero worship. Martins’s initial reaction on hearing bad things about Lime is to defend his friend’s good name; when they finally meet, Lime offers him a well-paying job. But later Martins asks Anna: “Was he laughing at fools like us all the time?” When forced to choose, Martins’s considerations of friendship were trumped by considerations of humanity. Lime had acted unforgivably simply in the pursuit of money;

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60 Lime had earlier fled to the Soviet zone, presumably because the Soviets were deeply involved in Vienna’s black market; see Karl R. Stadler, Austria (New York: Praeger, 1971), 263.
61 Greene, The Third Man, 117.
62 Ibid., 103.
65 Greene, The Third Man, 86.
friendship could not overlook acts so grave in their consequences. Martins is determined not merely to decline Lime's offer, but to destroy him. Does betrayal pay? In betraying Lime, as Fowler betrayed Pyle, Martins gets the girl. On the other hand, Lime, betrayed by Martins, is shot dead in a sewer, and many patients betrayed by Lime simply died. Each character feels betrayed by another, and the larger society is betrayed worst of all.

With the question of evil raised in the context of friendship, what ought the proper response be? As the political authorities have failed, pursuit of justice takes a personal turn. Self-destructive Anna does not exactly give Lime absolution, but she refuses to turn him in. “He was no good at all,” Martins tells her. “We were both wrong. ... He was Harry,” she replies. “He was in a racket. He did bad things. What about it? He was the man we both knew … a man doesn’t alter because you find out more about him,” as if Lime had not hidden his crimes and she was to blame for not uncovering them. Martins replies that Lime had not simply been guilty of “occasional bad manners,” but he cannot dislodge her stoic acceptance. Yet Lime had betrayed her by informing the Russians how to find her and return her to Hungary (“The price of living in this zone ... is service. I have to give them a little information now and then.”) “She loves you,” retorts Martins bitterly. “Well, I gave her a good time while it lasted,” answers Lime. For all his genial charm, he is cold to the core.

Where Anna seems embalmed in ennui, Martins eventually summons the courage to confront the evil that his friend embodies as the press of evidence moves him from disbelief to a lethal anger. What is the source of this courage? Is it something he acquired from churning out cheap Westerns, which typically ended with good guy-bad guy confrontations? Is it simple decency provoked by outrageous evil? Greene leaves it to the reader to speculate.

All this is played out in a context of competing cultures facilitated by the setting in Vienna, the nexus of East and West in transition to who knows what. The amoral, opportunistic Lime views the suffering of war as a fortuitous opportunity to make money and damn the consequences. In the book’s most famous scene at an amusement park, Lime and Martins ride a Ferris wheel that leaves them suspended high above the ground. Martins confronts Lime about the diluted penicillin. “Have you ever visited the children’s hospital? Have you seen any of your victims?” “Don’t be melodramatic,” answers Lime. Looking down from the Ferris wheel at the tiny people below, he asks: “Would you really feel any pity if one of those dots stopped moving—forever? If I said you could have twenty thousand pounds for every dot that stops, would you really, old man, tell me to keep my money—without hesitation? Or would you calculate how many dots you could afford to spare?” Lime here is echoing Stalin, who was said to have remarked that a single death is a tragedy, but a million deaths is a statistic. The conventionally ethical Martins is so appalled by the greed of his life-long friend that later he is literally ready to shoot him. Perhaps Martins was recalling the Nazis, who only a very few years earlier had also sought to dehumanize portions of the population.

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66 Ibid., 86, 87.
67 Ibid., 105.
68 Ibid., 104.
they intended to kill. For Martins, the dots do not cease being persons merely because their individuality cannot be discerned.

Lime, while repeatedly a topic of conversation, does not make his entrance until page 102, over three-quarters into the novel. The delay cannily creates an overwhelming sense of anticipation and foreboding, and Greene does not disappoint. For it highlights Lime’s worldview as a kind of amoral relativism that permits certain acts in postwar Vienna that perhaps would not be allowed in more stable and prosperous circumstances. Beliefs cannot be validated, everything is in flux, and so individuals are free to follow the path that best fits their immediate goals or personalities; the breakdown in traditional authority, with the police and bureaucracy outmanned or corrupt, carries with it a breakdown of traditional ethical standards or perhaps any ethical standards. To Lime this response is obvious realism, as plain as the smile on his face, but to Martins this is simply rationalized sin. A breakdown in authority, far from permitting us to act as we will, makes adherence to traditional ethics even more imperative, for the institutions that customarily backstop our behavior may be too weak to have much impact. Greene does not have Martins reach this conclusion after abstract or theological contemplation. Rather, the experience of ordinary life evidently has set boundaries he is unwilling to cross. He is much more an everyman than a philosopher.

Martins’s decency is also expressed in his capacity to love, as illustrated by his feelings for Anna. Lime, on the other hand, merely uses her as if she were a disposable object. Yet Greene shrinks from the bromide that love is all, for Lime seems quite happy despite his inability to love while Anna (fatalistic like Phuong) finds that love brings only sadness. For him, happiness is related to greed, and so his successful penicillin operation left him happy enough.

Martins, like Fowler and Brown, might be termed a failure. In the great social competition, they fall short: Martins is broke, Fowler an empty shell, Brown a drifter who alienates his lover and cannot undertake an important trip without his car breaking down. It is how these failures respond to opportunity that is Greene’s preoccupation—opportunities presented by other cultures. Martins is offered money by the corrupt Lime; Fowler sees a chance to slow the progressing Third Force and cement his ties to Phuong; Brown can help the wounded Jones. In their responses they reveal their true character. Greene then, invites us to rethink the notion of success. Lime with his money or the Macoute with their power might at first glance appear winners, but as they worship false gods, their victories are only transitory; Lime is shot and the Duvalier regime is eventually overthrown. In the end, this allows a thin slash of light to penetrate the darkness and leave us with hope, a thing with feathers.

**Colonialism**

_The Quiet American_ and _The Comedians_ explore colonialism, in the former during its incipient collapse and the latter in its apparent long run effects. In both novels the Western that the influence of colonialism persists for a long period after the colonial power has formally withdrawn. As a leading postcolonial theorist put it, “the postcolonial remains; it lives on,
outsiders and the locals each construct misshapen identities of the other, as a distinguished Iranian postcolonial theorist put it, in a kind of “third space” community they share. In “the mutual construction of their subjectivities,” each set of characters is defined by its history in which opposition to the enemy is central. But it is not only the mixing of very different cultures that proves so inflammatory; it is also the radical differences in power and the emotional consequences of these differences. In *The Quiet American* there is an undercurrent of optimism; the uprising against the colonial exploiters holds the promise of a more just society, free of foreign domination. *The Comedians*, on the other hand, depicts the consequences of postcolonialism as catastrophic; instead of serving as a momentous historical turn toward justice, the defeat of the French merely lead to another, perhaps worse form of oppression.

An important undercurrent in Greene’s narratives is the deliberate perversion of language. Habermas tells us that ideally, communication will be mutually intelligible and non-coercive so that rational arguments will carry the day. But for Greene’s people in charge, what language communicates is a ceaselessly transformed in the present into new social and political configurations” (Robert J. C. Young, “Postcolonial Remains,” *Reviewing Imperial Conflicts*, ed. Ana Cristina Mendes and Cristina Baptista [Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2014]), 11. See also Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 1989), 2 and Matthew G. Stanard, “The Colonial Past Is Never Dead. It’s Not Even Past,” *European History Handbook*, ed. Harriet Rudolph and Gregor G. Metzg (Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, December 2016), 151-74. By this logic, the United States, which began as British colonies, would be both postcolonial and colonial.

commitment to control. Hence, the purpose of official lies is less to persuade the audience than to illustrate the officials’ power; we lie; you know it; and there is nothing you can do about it. The more blatant the lie, the more powerfully it intimidates. Not only is there no incentive to be truthful; there is no incentive even to be subtle. Thus, when Haitian officials in *The Comedians* take Americans to visit Duvalierville, a vast area marked for a pricey development, the fact that it is merely ugly rubble demonstrates the power of the government. It can displace vast numbers of people, show no justification, and remain untouched by the consequences.

Do Greene’s novels fall beneath the postcolonial umbrella? Greene is plainly preoccupied with the legacy—cultural and otherwise—of colonial domination and exploitation, which he damns as dehumanizing and immoral. His sympathies lie with the subaltern excluded from power and suppressed by imperialism, and he praises their efforts at resistance. The element of colonial desire is also present in the sexualized relationships of Westerners with subaltern women, Fowler with Phoung and Brown with his favorite prostitutes. Greene does not subscribe
to the once popular notion that history is what took place in the West, but his perspective and concerns, reflecting his own experiences, are unavoidably Eurocentric. In the end Greene’s focus is not on the victims of colonization. Rather, they provide the context for the stories of the European protagonists. Postcolonialism however, is not merely a matter of sympathy for the oppressed.

_The Third Man_, set in cosmopolitan Vienna, which Greene calls “simply a city of undignified ruins,” features dominant outsiders and often desperate locals who share a more or less common culture; indeed, the Viennese, who had greeted _Anschluss_ euphorically, had themselves been dominant only a few years earlier. Yet the postwar asymmetrical power relationship with the victorious Allies echoes the colonial arrangement as the various players cooperate and conflict, driven by their own desires and the distorted identities they have each built of the other. Colonialism may have brought about a “universal psychic ‘migrancy’ and a sense of dislocation,” but Greene teaches us that total war may carry with it its own psychic migrancy and dislocation.

What is the nature of the bridge between colonizers and the colonized? Colonialism, as a practical matter, focuses on managing heterogeneity, as the colonizers use carrots and sticks in an unceasing effort to maintain control. Of course, only a tiny culture found on a remote island could claim monolithic purity; in the real-world individuals from different cultures continually interact, incrementally altering their own cultures in the process. As Bhabha writes, “all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation.”

In Greene’s novels, however, the hybridity that Bhabha postulates exists only at a surface level, and the principle of essentialism is honored. The Westerners develop a taste for the local cuisine and are able to carry on simple conversations in the local language; the locals, more vulnerable, absorb the Western etiquette and become relatively facile in the Western language. But neither substantially sheds its views of life, humanity, or fate. There are adjustments of convenience, but little more, and the opportunities for material profit or humanitarian hubris lend the sometimes-unacknowledged cultural conflicts a special edge. As Gandhi put it, “the entrenched discourse of cultural essentialism merely reiterates and gives legitimacy to the insidious racialization of thought which attends the violent logic of colonial rationality.”

All this has implications for agency. Group identity, especially for the subaltern, heavily influences the thought and conduct of Greene’s characters. At the same time, novels normally require characters making choices, sometimes bursting through identity shackles; Greene, a consummate moralist, makes these assertive choices central, but it is the Westerners’ choices and not the subalterns’ that count.

Yet there is something in the postcolonial narrative that may well

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76 Greene, _The Third Man_, 14.
77 David Richards, “Framing Identities,” _A Concise Companion to Postcolonial Literature_.
79 Bhabha, 37.
80 Ghandi, 123.
have appealed to the moralist Greene, for at the core of postcolonialism is a fable of worthy subalterns exploited by foreigners deficient in everything but technology and military might. It is a powerful narrative, no doubt, but it is not entirely convincing. It is certainly true that colonialism’s defenders conceived it as “an effective and legitimate tool of moral and material progress,” as it Christianized and civilized the heathen. And it is equally true that all colonial regimes were exploitative; that was their reason for being. However, it is an error to treat them alike; some were very much worse than others. The crimes of the British in India, for instance, pale beside the horrors of King Leopold’s Belgian Congo; indeed, the crimes of the British pale beside those of Greene’s Papa Doc. Though some colonial regimes offered nothing to the subaltern but misery and death, others may have laid the groundwork for future progress by improving infrastructure, educating elites, valuing technology and innovation, introducing the concepts of political freedom and democracy, and so forth. Of course, these and other developments might be rejected as foreign imports, but to the extent that they contributed to longer and healthier lives with less drudgery and more comforts, many of those directly affected might consider them improvements.

The gains experienced by the local people were nearly always the byproduct of the colonists’ self-interested behavior. Some postcolonial theorists regard this as a fatal flaw: “The chief argument against globalization is that global culture and global economics did not spontaneously erupt but originated in and continue to be perpetuated from the centers of capitalist power.” But this is classic ad hominem, attacking not the argument but those who made it. If colonists built roads, their purpose was to get their goods to market or facilitate military control, not to knit societies together or enhance the opportunities of ordinary people. This does not, however, negate the positive impact the roads might have had. Nor is there much acknowledgement among postcolonial theorists of how global investment and supply chains have stimulated economic growth and raised living standards nor how foreign aid has improved health, education, and other areas of daily life. None of this was born of altruism. But if only altruism deserves praise, we shall all wait in silence.

What, then, of precolonial societies? “They were democratic societies, always,” answered a prominent postcolonial theorist, indulging a sentimental fantasy; “they were cooperative, fraternal societies.” In truth however, precolonial rulers, like rulers generally, were likely driven by self-interest, some being indigenous imperialists. Glorifying the precolonial period, moreover, ignores the troublesome fact that its economic, psychological, and cultural traditions and the behaviors and institutions they supported were major obstacles to

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83 Ashcroft, et al., 101.
modernization\textsuperscript{87} that depressed living standards.\textsuperscript{88} The arrival of colonists, in short, did not disrupt peaceful, prosperous utopias governed by platonic wise men and women. Then, as today, as Thucydides famously observed: “The strong do what they will, and the weak suffer as they must.” By failing to emphasize (or sometimes even to concede) that precolonial eras may have been times of terrible poverty and exploitation and that sometimes colonization helped to lead to modernization, much of postcolonialist thought simply looks in the wrong direction, contrasting the human costs of past colonialization with an imagined precolonial period of enlightenment and passing over colonization’s significant future benefits.

Greene, with his fondness for authoritarian populist rulers on the left, perhaps shared the Manichean view of noble revolutionaries and oppressive colonists. In \textit{The Quiet Man}, for instance, the violence, terror, and economic incompetence of Communists is the gorilla in the room that Greene never seems to notice. Meanwhile, with Pyle the point is relentlessly made that for the West, even good motives lack exculpatory value. They are not simply inadequate; they are positively toxic. On the other hand, the good motives of the revolutionaries in \textit{The Comedians}, particularly a Communist doctor, are sufficient to win praise; they may be naïve romantics, but their innate goodness contrasts strikingly with Papa Doc’s brutish oppressors, perhaps the easiest political target then extant.

Greene wrote before the great flowering of academic postcolonial discourse, but an obvious problem bedeviling this discourse stems from its birth in literary studies. Mountains of scholarly research have established the value of literary studies beyond any need to demonstrate it here. But analyzing literature as a means of verifying postcolonial propositions recalls the story of the man who lost his keys in the ditch but searches for them under a streetlamp because that is where the light was. Consider the example of Edward Said, “commonly regarded as the catalyst and reference point for postcolonialism,”\textsuperscript{89} who built his influential analysis of orientalism on his reading of Western novelists (Austen, Conrad, Flaubert), travel and anthropological writings (Burton, Renan), opera (Verdi), and the American media.\textsuperscript{90} From these sources Said generated a number of provocative hypotheses. But the nature of his source material meant that none of the hypotheses was ever rigorously tested by empirical data despite the existence of these data; indeed, it is difficult to imagine Said even entertaining the idea. Said looked at comparative literature to validate his views because he was a specialist in comparative literature, but that was not where the answers to his questions were found.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{88} This view is routinely dismissed as blaming the victim. However, blame and victimhood are different, unrelated categories. Sometimes, a victim, say, a drunken driver, is blameworthy; sometimes, a victim, say, a person injured by a
\item \textsuperscript{89} See Ghandi, 64 and Tahrir Khalil Hamdi, “Edward Said and Recent Orientalist Critiques,” \textit{Arab Studies Quarterly} 35 (2013), 130.
\end{itemize}
studies is dominated by such specialists, for example, Bhabha and Spivak, but the problems of extrapolating from literary material come in crowds.

In the first place, absent the discipline imposed by empirical research, the key cultural concepts are so imprecise and squishy—for example, “national allegories” or “catachresis”—that they hamper rather than facilitate analysis. The meanings of concepts are illustrated anecdotally, but because they are not operationalized, we have no way of ascertaining their relationship, if any, with other concepts. The postcolonialist’s ideas may be potentially insightful and expressed eloquently, but to accept or reject them on this basis would be merely to decide after hearing an effort at marketing.

Second, the assumption that the celebrated intellectuals whom Said or others examine provide expert guidance connecting imperialism to culture is certainly problematical. Perhaps, had a different set of intellectuals been chosen, a different set of inferences might have resulted. Indeed perhaps, the focus on intellectuals is itself mistaken, for the intellectuals’ defining quality, after all, is how different they are from the ordinary people whose culture the theorists purport to explore. Arguably, a better source might be popular works, which represent a much wider base. Said, as is typical, points to his designated intellectuals to show that “colonial rule was justified in advance by Orientalism, rather than after the fact.” But is this confusing what Marx called the superstructure for something much more fundamental? If the novels had not been written, would the colonial story have been much different? It is hard to believe that the postcolonial theorists’ intellectuals shaped the colonial system more than the system shaped them. These intellectuals may propose explanatory ideas but can hardly validate them.

Third, the claim that colonialist discourse is Eurocentric and self-justifying seems stupefyingly obvious. We all tend to view the world from our own perspective, and so Europeans will naturally tend to be Eurocentric. And given humanity’s well-known tendency to dress self-interest in the common good, European discourse will often provide an altruistic rationale for conduct driven by baser motives. Who has read Kipling’s “The White Man’s Burden” and not thought the same? Said, in his polemic, castigates Europeans for this moral failing. But is there any reason to think that this behavior is peculiar to them? Said himself is unable to free himself from the Arab point of view. Thus, he writes that the Middle East is “the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies,” utterly ignoring the enormity and longevity of Spanish and Portuguese colonies in Latin America.
not to say the centuries-long Arab colonization of Spain. Even his Middle East is drawn to Arab outlines, excluding the Ottoman Turks, who played a major role for centuries, as well as the Persians.  

Oddly too, while postcolonialists decry poisonous Eurocentrism, they often make exceptions for certain European thinkers who provide “much of the theoretical foundations” for their scholarship. Many are inspired by Marx, ignoring the colonialism practiced by nations governing in his name. Others are influenced by Foucault’s insight that knowledge discourse may become an instrument of power and Gramsci’s observation that cultural hegemony may facilitate elite control over the masses. Evidently, there is good Eurocentrism and bad Eurocentrism.

What would Greene have made of postcolonialism? At a personal level, he does not seem to have been overflowing with the milk of human kindness. His cousin wrote that “his brain frightened me. It was sharp and clear and cruel.” She said: “Apart from three or four people he was really fond of, I felt that the rest of humanity was to him like a heap of insects that he liked to examine as a scientist might examine his specimens.” Anthony Powell wrote in his journal, “I think [Greene] was completely cynical, really only liking sex and money and his own particular form of publicity.” Greene himself observed that “there is a splinter of ice in the heart of every writer.” “I’ve betrayed so many people in my life,” he confessed, a biographer noting that at one point Greene “was married to Vivien, living with Dorothy, purportedly involved with a possibly non-existent Claudette Monde and in love with Catherine Walton.” Only sporadically was he interested in his children. All this is to say that we may doubt his deep empathy for the subaltern.

Yet if his life did not conform to traditional Christian morality, Greene remained committed to its principles, at least in the abstract. Hence, his and futile worship of neutrality and objectivity. These traditional scholarly icons are particularly inappropriate in this area of study, as they were devised in the West and serve Western colonial interests.

Said also effectively defines Europe as Britain and France, omitting Germany which does not fit his template, as it produced extensive Orientalist scholarship but was a very minor colonizer in the region that concerned him.  


Marx also expressed the heretical notion that imperialism may be a necessary precursor to socialism (Brewer 1980, 52-60).

The notion that truth is socially constructed did not deter Said from claiming as objective truth Arab oppression and exploitation. See Said, 3, 7.

An obvious rejoinder to these criticisms is that postcolonialists are engaged in a struggle against oppression, poverty, and exploitation, and therefore should not be confused with conventional academics, who disdain moral engagement with the world, preferring an arid

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sympathy for the colonized and his antipathy for the colonizers.\textsuperscript{107} Plainly, he would agree with one postcolonial theorist that “colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies.”\textsuperscript{108} In the end, despite his presumed contempt for its impenetrable jargon and endless scholarly bickering, he might have found the general drift of the postcolonial argument irresistibly persuasive.

Conclusions

The unbridgeable gaps between cultures are for Greene an obvious, indelible, and consequential fact of life, although one often camouflage by platitudes and ignorance. Martins and Lime, Fowler and Pyle, Brown and the young Haitian revolutionary seem at first to inhabit different planets and to speak different languages. We each, like Greene’s characters, have different opinions, beliefs, and notions about how the world works. But Greene’s interest lies less with individual characters than with the cultural types they represent; in this perhaps presaging Samuel Huntington’s famous “clash of civilizations.”\textsuperscript{109}

In each novel the cultural gap exists at two levels: between two prototypical Westerners, and between the Westerners and their rather exotic environments. \textit{The Quiet American} pits the culture of the naïve, ambitious American against that of the seen-it-all, cynical Brit, with each misunderstanding that of inscrutable Vietnam. \textit{The Comedians} features two Brits representing different cultures, one world weary and the other a bogus-blownhard-turned-hero; they also are set off from corrupt and idealistic Haiti, writhing under the brutal and lawless rule of Papa Doc. Finally, \textit{The Third Man} posits a conflict between two Westerners, one embodying amoral greed and the other common decency; the setting, Vienna, like a magnificent creature beset by predators, provides opportunities for both good and evil. Each pair of protagonists in the three novels, though superficially friendly (at least at first), represents clashing cultures that inhibit mutual understanding and empathy. When we encounter them, they do not truly understand each other, nor do they even grasp the need for this understanding. Eventually, after a great deal of suffering—nearly all by third parties—they begin to understand this as the beliefs and opinions that barricaded them against reality and gave them a sense of intellectual security crumble before the onslaught of events.

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\textsuperscript{107} Like Said, Greene spoke of truth telling as his first obligation, while fabricating important facts about his own life. To establish his bona fides, Said wrote of his childhood in Jerusalem, when he actually grew up in Cairo, and Greene spun tales about youthful games of Russian roulette.


“Scandinavians are terribly Scandinavian”: Nordahl Grieg’s Friendship with Graham Greene

Johanne Elster Hanson

Introduction

“A friendship can be among the most important events in a life, and a way of escape, just as much as writing or travel, from the everyday routine, the sense of failure, the fear of the future” Graham Greene claims in his second volume of autobiography, *Ways of Escape*. One such escape was Greene’s friendship with the Norwegian writer Nordahl Grieg. Although they met only three times before Grieg’s untimely death in 1943, he seems to have made a lasting impression on Greene, who would often mention him in letters and interviews throughout his life. When *Ways of Escape* was published in 1980, Greene dedicated an entire chapter to his Norwegian friend, something that prompted readers in both England and Norway to write to Greene and reminisce about a man they remembered with fondness.

Nordahl Grieg

The youngest of four children, Grieg was born in Bergen in 1902 into a literary household. Grieg’s father Peter had studied at Oxford and worked as a highly respected English teacher in Bergen. He would often read aloud to his children or recite Shakespeare to pass the time during long walks. Young Nordahl directed puppet theatre and wrote plays, poetry, and journalistic articles—even his childhood letters to his older brother Harald had a distinct literary flavor. (Harald Grieg went on to become the director of Gyldendal, one of Norway’s largest publishing houses.) In a city where the population was of mostly Hanseatic origin, the Griegs were proud to have British ancestors; they got their surname from Alexander Grieg, who came to Bergen from Scotland in 1777 and later earned a living exporting lobsters to his old homeland.

As soon as he was old enough to travel on his own, Nordahl Grieg sought inspiration for his writing outside Norway, and he continued to do so all throughout his life; he went to sea at age eighteen, studied in Oxford in the early 1920s, spent prolonged periods of time in northern Norway writing romantic odes to the rough, wintry landscape, and traveled to China as a journalist during the civil war in 1927. Ten years later he reported on another civil war that resulted in the book *Spanish Summer*. In the early 1930s he went to Moscow where he became a convinced Stalinist, an ideological shift that greatly influenced his writing in the last decade of his life.

However, the only country Grieg kept returning to with some regularity was Britain, despite how his first impression of the island in the west was far from favorable. When he sailed out on the cargo ship *Henrik Ibsen* in 1920, the first stop on the way was Newcastle. Grieg wrote home to his family: “I have made a note of not having seen a single normal-looking person in England. ...
Here is ugly as a nightmare, coal smoke and small, terrible houses, not a pretty line or color in the entire city. ... The air is raw, cold and clammy.”

If anything, young Grieg’s crass descriptions of working-class Newcastle demonstrate how there would still be many years before he discovered his political project and became a communist.

Instead, his lifelong bond with Britain was formed during his stay at Wadham College three years later. Grieg attended Oxford University from 1923-1924 as the fourth ever recipient of the Norwegian Oxford Scholarship. His letters home from this period, written from his elegant rooms just a stone’s throw away from the Bodleian Library, reveal a far more favorable impression of the country he now lovingly termed “Merlin’s isle.” He liked to impress his father by writing him letters in English, which Peter Grieg then corrected and returned to his son. Grieg wrote of how he loved “the spirit” of Oxford and described his time there as the best of his life.

Grieg has in fact made a lasting impression on Wadham College; his 1925 poem “In Wadham Chapel” was made a hymn in 2010 and has been sung in the chapel on Remembrance Sunday ever since. During the 2018 Evensong, held on the centenary of the First World War, Johan Nordahl Brun Grieg’s name was read out as one of the university’s lost “Wadhamites.”

After his stay at Oxford, Grieg would return to England for two protracted periods of time: in the early 1930s to work on his book about English poets, and again in 1940 when Norway was occupied by Nazi Germany. It was in England that he married his wife Gerd Egede-Nissen, and England also became his last permanent home, as it was from an airstrip in the little village of Binbrook that he, on 2 December 1943, boarded the Avro Lancaster that was eventually shot down over Berlin.

First meeting: 1932

Despite his premature death, Grieg was well connected within the literary world, and his time spent in England meant that he became intimate with writers on the British literary scene: he met a young Malcolm Lowry in 1931, corresponded in 1936 with Aldous Huxley, and dined with T. S. Eliot in London in the early 1940s. However Graham Greene was the only English writer with whom Grieg remained in touch—from their first meeting in 1932 until Grieg’s death in 1943.

When they first met in September 1932, both men were going through times of unrest. Greene was at the very onset of his literary career. After the success of The Man Within in 1929 he had optimistically quit his position as sub-editor of The Times. However, when his second novel The Name of Action turned out a commercial and critical failure, Greene and his wife Vivien were forced to rent out their comfortable home in West Londo and move to the country house “Little Orchard” in Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire.

When his third novel Rumours at

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4 Hoem, 63-69.
5 I was present at that year’s Evensong. Grieg was also mentioned by the chaplain during her address.
Nightfall was published in 1931 to poor reviews, Greene began doubting his abilities as a writer: “Very depressed about my work and the future,” he wrote in his diary on 15 June 1932. By the time Grieg went to visit him in September, Greene had just handed over the manuscript for Stamboul Train to his publisher, and his diary entries consisted exclusively of variations of “Still nothing from Heinemann.”

That summer, Grieg had returned to Oxford for the first time since his university days to work on his book about the English poets John Keats, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Charles Sorley, Wilfred Owen, and Rupert Brooke. Grieg struggled with his work; in a letter to his best friend Nils Lie he claimed that “this book about the English is becoming the biggest nonsense you can imagine.” He also complained to his brother Harald about the small typeface in the books he was studying: “Even with glasses the eyes hurt like the devil. God knows if [the book] will not end up The Young Dead by one of them!”

His finances were reduced to nothing, he was getting nowhere with his work, and it was in this state of dejection that he, in September 1932, first encountered Graham Greene. On 12 September Greene wrote in his diary that Francis Ratcliffe, an old school friend from Berkhamsted, “drove over with a young Norwegian poet, Nordahl Grieg.” Their unexpected meeting seems to have been a welcome change for both men, and Greene later wrote in Ways of Escape that “to me he certainly brought a measure of hope … carrying it like a glass of akvavit down the muddy lane in Chipping Campden.”

In his diary Greene detailed his first encounter with Grieg, describing the Norwegian writer as “charming with his accent, his courtliness, his unexpectedness, which I could not follow closely enough.” In Ways of Escape Greene later wrote that “I can’t remember what we talked about that first time, when he came to ‘look me up,’ as he put it as sole explanation.” From his diary however, it seems they discussed Norway; Grieg suggested Greene should take up a lectureship at the University of Oslo (“an idea too good to be obtainable” Greene noted) or at least give a talk at the Anglo-Norse Society. Grieg painted a charming picture of Oslo as somewhere “surrounded by forests,” albeit filled with “stupid Norwegians drinking heavily, blindly admiring of England.”

Despite the abruptness of Grieg’s visit, Greene later claimed he immediately felt “caught up” in Grieg’s intimacy. This feeling seems to have been mutual; on 16 September Grieg related their meeting in a letter to Nils Lie, who was also Greene’s Norwegian translator. In his letter Grieg described Greene as “an unusually nice and

7 Ibid., 420.
8 Ibid., 427.
10 Harald Grieg, Nordahl, min bror, 174
11 Graham Greene, Diary entry for 12 September 1932, Box 37, Folder 1, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, Texas, USA.
12 Greene, Ways of Escape, 26
13 Greene, Diary entry, 12 Sept. 1932.
14 Greene, Ways of Escape, 21
15 Nordahl Grieg, Letter to Nils Lie. 16 September 1932, Brevs. 509, Box 1, National Library of Norway, Oslo, Norway. My translations throughout.
16 Greene, Diary entry, 12 Sept. 1932.
17 Greene, Ways of Escape, 21-25.
sympathetic fellow.” Struggling as he was with his book, Grieg admitted to Lie that he was often envious of other writers, but that The Man Within “seemed to me to be a sort of comfort, here was something that could not be reduced, something noble.”

It is likely that Grieg had been introduced to Greene’s writing through his brother Harald, who had recently published Greene’s debut novel The Man Within in a translation by Lie. Grieg mentioned Greene in a letter to Harald that autumn: “I am really happy that you are publishing him, for he is England’s best young writer at the moment.”

Soon after his visit to Chipping Campden, Grieg relocated to Windrush Mill in Cotswold, hoping this would give him the peace needed to finish his book. He had never lived in a more tranquil place, and in letters home he described how the mill wheel’s beat was like “a heart in the night.” Grieg wrote to Greene from Windrush Mill on 21 September. Still hoping that Greene could give a talk at the Anglo-Norse Society, Grieg wrote of how he had contacted them. (The talk came to nothing.)

In his letter Grieg also praised Greene for his international reputation: “I heard the other day that Byron had a feeling of a sort of posthumous fame when he heard he was read in Norway. You may safely have the same feeling.” He went on to describe Greene’s third novel Rumours at Nightfall, which had not fared well with the critics, as “extremely interesting indeed” and complemented Greene on his “tremendous power of creating atmosphere.” However, he also admitted that the book’s Spanish setting, a country about which Greene knew nothing, was “less convincing” than the English setting of The Man Within.

About these perceived literary failures, Greene later wrote that he had made the mistake of taking inspiration “from [Joseph] Conrad at his worst,” thus coming up with overelaborate phrases such as “a clock relinquishing its load of hours.” Coincidentally, Grieg had finished translating Conrad’s novella Typhoon only a year before he traveled to England to work on his book, and so what Greene called “bastard Conradese tortuosity” may very well have been a topic of discussion during the two men’s initial meeting.

Grieg rounded off his letter by inviting Greene and Vivien to come and visit him at Windrush Mill: “How glad I should be to see you!”

Their letters were rarely properly dated, and Greene later wrote in Ways of Escape that it was “as though only the day of the month was important and the mere years could be left to look after themselves.” One of Greene’s first letters to Grieg, in which he invited the Norwegian writer to tea, was simply dated “Tuesday.”

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19 Hoem, 159.
20 Harald Grieg, Nordahl, min bror, 182.
21 Nordahl Grieg, Letter to Graham Greene, 21 Sept. 1932, MS1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43, Graham Greene Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, USA.
22 Greene, Ways of Escape, 18.
23 Sherry, The Life of Graham Greene Volume One, 411.
It seems the two men did not find the time to meet again while Grieg was in England. Toward the end of 1932 the Norwegian writer finally finished his book and traveled home to celebrate Christmas in Bergen. He now wanted to go to Moscow and study Soviet theatre. This drastic change of scenery may have been prompted by Grieg’s restlessness or his need to place his writing within a larger ideological framework. Patrick Salmon has argued that in 1933, Grieg merely “transferred his earlier romantic attachment to [Fridtjof] Nansen and Kipling to a new hero, Stalin.” Now, Grieg traveled east to find new meaning with which to charge his writing.

**Correspondence in the 1930s**

Greene counts it as unlikely that the two met again before Grieg’s London exile during the war years, but what he called “the dreamlike atmosphere” of the Norwegian writer’s friendship remained. They corresponded throughout Grieg’s stay in Russia and the Baltics in 1933-1934 and discussed everything from literature to failing love affairs. “It was a matter of messages” Greene later wrote in *Ways of Escape*, “warm and friendly and encouraging and critical, mostly in other people’s letters. The only time I visited Norway he was away living in Leningrad, but the messages were there awaiting me. Nordahl Grieg, like a monarch, never lacked messengers.”

On 18 July 1933 Greene sent Grieg a typed letter from Woodstock Road, Oxford: “I’m writing to you out of the air into the blue, vainly hoping two things, that this letter may reach you, that you may be somewhere on the borders of Sweden next month.” Greene had decided to set his next novel, what ultimately became *England Made Me*, in Stockholm. The plan was to travel there in the late summer and then continue to Copenhagen.

Grieg got back to his English friend in a letter dated 5 August: “I was very glad to get your letter. I am—alas—on the other side of the Baltic, but still things can happen—let us be in touch with [one] another.” Grieg was spending the summer of 1933 traveling around the Baltic Sea as he needed to renew his residential permit to the Soviet Union. He implored Greene to take a trip to Finland while in Scandinavia, which would bring him closer to the Baltics, and asked him why he did not go to Norway as well: “You have got many friends there now.”

Greene arrived in Sweden with his brother Hugh on 18 August. He soon received another letter in which Grieg apologised for not being able to travel to Stockholm, and once again invited Greene to the Baltics in unidiomatic English: “But I assure you, that you before or later must come to Estonia, and please come now.” He tempted Greene with the good weather, cheap currency, and the beautiful “native girls” whom they could buy with just a few

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31 Nordahl Grieg, Letter to Graham Greene, 5 Aug. 1933, MS1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43, Graham Greene Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, USA.
pieces of chocolate. Greene was characteristically keen on the latter—he mentioned the girls twice in his response to Grieg, written from Hotel Esplanade in Stockholm on 24 August (“O damnation, I wish I could come, but I can’t.”) He was unable to afford tickets to Estonia for both himself and Hugh, and later wrote in Ways of Escape: “How I wished I had borrowed, begged or stolen the necessary funds and replied to at least one of those messages—‘I arrive on Saturday.’”

After a short stay in Stockholm, which Greene disliked due to what he called the “extreme formality” of the Swedish capital, the Greene brothers decided to travel to Oslo rather than Copenhagen. In his travel essay “Two Capitals,” printed in The Spectator on 20 October 1933, Greene described Norway in poetic terms as “a little patch of careless culture at the edge of the sea and of the forest.” Although he misspelled everything from the Norwegian currency to the name of Oslo’s main thoroughfare Karl Johans Gate, Greene nonetheless gave a charming portrayal of Oslo—the capital was presented as an alluring city where “nobody dreamed of going home till four.” Everyone appeared to be intoxicated, thus confirming Grieg’s initial warning about his countrymen’s drinking habits.

Grieg was also right about Greene having many friends in Norway at this point; in Oslo he met and befriended Nils Lie and his wife Ingeborg. He got along very well with the Norwegian couple, and even dedicated his fifth novel It’s a Battlefield to them. (Grieg later wrote to Greene of how he had read the book with “great interest,” but that “the communist scene was very unconvincing.”)

Through Nils and Ingeborg Lie, Greene was also introduced to the Norwegian writer Sigurd Hoel, a colleague of Harald Grieg and one of the country’s most important authors in the interwar years. Greene kept in touch with the Norwegian couple after his return to England, and even planned to go to Lapland with Lie the coming year—however, Lie fell ill. (Grieg wrote to Lie in November 1933: “What a shame if you can’t go to Finnmark with Graham!”) Greene too was disappointed and wrote to Hugh on 11 March 1934: “Isn’t it maddening that Lapland is off? ... I’m just turning over in mind, but have said nothing to Vivien yet, about Moscow, not an Intourist trip but an individual one. If Nordahl Grieg is still there, it might be amusing.”

However Greene only got around to traveling to Moscow in the 1950s, many years after Grieg’s death. The end of Nils and Ingeborg Lie’s marriage in 1934 also became a topic in Grieg and Greene’s correspondence. “As to Nils and Ingeborg it is just hell,” Grieg wrote from Moscow on 3 June; “I feel it, however, as an epoch of my life is finished; you will understand what I

32 Nordahl Grieg, Letter to Graham Greene, 20 August 1933, MS1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43, Graham Greene Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, USA
34 Greene, Ways of Escape, 23.
35 Ibid., 36.
37 Nordahl Grieg, Letter to Graham Greene, 3 June 1934, MS1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43, Graham Greene Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, USA.
38 Grieg, Et varig vennskap, 63.
mean, in fact you were a link between them; and if you had been in Oslo those days, only remembering [sic] them of their identity, it would probably never had [sic] happened." At one point broken down and written to Greene at five in the morning, detailing how she had arrived back from Moscow on Christmas Eve after having served as Grieg’s secretary for almost a year, “dirty, tired and full of longing,” only for Lie to tell her he had found someone else. Greene later described this episode in a letter to Hugh, adding dryly that “Scandinavians are terribly Scandinavian.”

Veien Frem: 1936

Grieg returned to Norway from Moscow in late 1934, and there appears to have been little contact between the two writers until early 1936 when the converted Stalinist had just founded the political journal Veien Frem—(The Way Onwards.) On 20 February he wrote to Greene and announced just this: “I have just started a new, very left periodical to fight the rising wave of fascism and reaction in Norway.” As it happened, the first edition of Veien Frem had advertised future contributions from internationally renowned names, among them Graham Greene. “Are you angry?” Grieg asked coyly in his letter. “If you forgive me for old day’s sake, please then send me an article, something hair-raisingly [sic] good. We—Nils is on the ‘staff’—need it very much. Please do it!”

It is not known what Greene thought of this boldness on Grieg’s part, but the second edition of Veien Frem did indeed feature a contribution from the English writer, in either Grieg or Lie’s skilled translation. The short story “Brother,” which had been published in The Basement Room and Other Stories the year before, was indeed hair-raising in its depiction of a group of young communists who take refuge in a French bar and can, in some ways, be seen as a testament to Greene’s own communist sympathies. The proprietor in “Brother,” while initially hostile toward the harrowed Reds (one of whom is fresh out of a concentration camp), ends up sympathizing with his uninvited guests. Grieg must undoubtedly have been pleased with the story’s depiction of the brotherhood that comes to exist between the proprietor and the young communists, even when the latter don’t pay for their cognacs: “We are all comrades here. Share and share alike.”

Second meeting: 1940

In the years between 1936 and 1940 there appears once again to have been a lull in the two men’s correspondence. Greene was preoccupied as the literary editor of the short-lived magazine Night and Day, and when it folded in late 1937, he made a long-awaited journey to Mexico. Grieg was in Spain covering the civil war, and afterward threw himself headlong into the writing of a political novel, the main character of which was a young Englishman.

After the German occupation of Norway in April 1940, Grieg fled to London. In Ways of Escape Greene describes what is most likely their second meeting, which took place in the spring of 1940 at the Charing Cross

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40 Nordahl Grieg, Letter to Graham Greene, 3 June 1934.
41 Greene, A Life in Letters, 67.
42 Nordahl Grieg, Letter to Graham Greene, 20 Feb. 1936, MSt1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43.
Hotel. Grieg had just helped smuggle the gold from the Norwegian Bank out of his occupied home country. Immediately following his dangerous adventure, Grieg phoned Greene from the hotel and invited him over. Interviewed by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation in 1976, Greene sniggered when he described the following scene: “When he arrived with the gold I went and saw him at the Charing Cross Hotel, and the room was full of Norwegian exiled politicians and what not, they were sitting on the bed, he was lying on the bed, they were sitting on the floor, and Nordahl was telling his adventures.”

He elaborated further on this meeting in Ways of Escape: Grieg’s hotel room was filled with people “sitting about on the bed, the dressing-table, the floor, propped against the mantelpiece,” but the Norwegian writer still managed to make “a private corner between bolster and bedpost,” talking “of anything that seemed at the moment to matter—Marxism or the value of history or the Spanish war and Hemingway’s new book.”

It appears that Greene was still just as “caught up” in Grieg’s intimacy as he had been during their first meeting almost eight years before.

**Last meeting: 1943**

After this meeting, Grieg “disappeared again from my view,” as Greene later wrote. Grieg’s partner Gerd joined him in London where they married in June 1940. Due to their support for the Norwegian resistance in London, Vidkun Quisling had sentenced them both to death if they ever returned to Norway. Herr and Fru Grieg therefore continued to aid the resistance primarily from London, where they stayed at the South Kensington Hotel—a focal point of the Norwegian exiled milieu.

Meanwhile, Greene was away in West Africa working for the MI6 and writing his novel The Ministry of Fear.

The two men’s final meeting took place in the company of Nils Lie in the autumn of 1943. Greene wrote in Ways of Escape: “A few months before his death we met once more and spent a long evening with other Norwegian friends, an evening of which, because I never imagined it could be the last, I remember only talk and talk, then an air-raid siren and some gunfire, and talk again.”

There is another account of this evening, which gives us more insight into what was actually discussed. After Grieg’s death, Nils Lie described Grieg and Greene’s last meeting in a letter to Grieg’s sister Johanne: “I remember an evening with Graham Greene, who is a wonderful person and a sincere catholic.” Greene had apparently been pessimistic about the future. “Against this, Nordahl placed his indomitable belief in humanity” Lie wrote, “so contagious that he veritably converted the catholic.”

Grieg was made a captain during his London exile and was eventually allowed to join RAF bomber fighters as a correspondent on a raid over Berlin. Half past four in the afternoon on 2 December 1943, the Avro Lancaster carrying Grieg took off from Binbrook. He left behind a short note, written that same day and addressed to his wife: “My

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46 Greene, Ways of Escape, 25.
47 Ibid.
own. If the worst should happen, then this is a loving kiss to you, my Gerd. You must live, and be good to everyone, that is what I would have wanted the most. Your own Nordahl.”

His squadron soon hit bad weather over Holland and Germany before German bomber planes retaliated. Bomber Command suffered one of its greatest losses that night, and three of the squadron’s four war correspondents were reported missing—among them Nordahl Grieg.

“Nordahl Grieg was an omen or a myth, and he remained a myth,” Greene later wrote of his Norwegian friend. “Even his death was to prove legendary, so that none will be able to say with any certainty, ‘In this place he died.’”

Greene was right; Grieg’s remains have yet to be located, but some believe he is buried at the British War Cemetery in Berlin.

**After Grieg’s death**

On 8 May 1945, the day Norway was liberated by the Germans, Prime Minister Johan Nygaardsvold gave a celebratory speech from his London exile. He began by quoting from Nordahl Grieg’s famous poem “17 May 1940”:

Bare to-day is the flagstaff  
Where Eidsvoll’s trees show green,  
But never as now have we fathomed  
What the blessings of freedom mean.

Grieg was hailed posthumously as a national hero and viewed as one of Norway’s greatest poets during the war years, and yet his romantic yet clearly politicized writing soon went out of vogue in Norway, and his reputation faded. However, Grieg was not forgotten. Greene first wrote about his Norwegian friend in the Anglo-Scandinavian journal *The Norseman* in March 1944. When this text was republished in 1980 in *Ways of Escape*, the ageing writer received numerous appreciative letters concerning his chapter on Grieg.

The first letter came in December 1980 from Tuva Hansteen, daughter-in-law of Viggo Hansteen, who had been one of Grieg’s closest friends. Hansteen had worked as a lawyer for the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions and was executed by German soldiers in September 1941—the first openly political murder to be carried out in occupied Norway. When the news of Hansteen’s death reached him, Grieg wrote in a letter to his sister that there “is something in me that is dead because there is something that can never be happy again.”

In her letter to Greene, Tuva Hansteen detailed her experience of reading about Grieg in *Ways of Escape*:

“I opened it and my eyes fell upon the name of Nordahl Grieg! I read the chapter at once—standing there in the shop forgetting everything around me.” About Grieg, Hansteen wrote: “I feel I know him through my husband. ... He remembers his father and Nordahl Grieg playing chess. After the death of my father-in-law Nordahl Grieg wrote a beautiful poem in memory of him.” She rounded off her letter by thanking Greene for what she called a “wonderful portrait of a dead friend—and let us

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49 Skjeldal, 386.
51 I use G. M. Gathorne Hardy’s translation, found in *War Poems of Nordahl Grieg* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1944), 22.
52 Skjeldal, 335.
53 Tuva Hansteen, Letter to Graham Greene, 9 Dec. 1980, MS1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43, Graham Greene Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, USA.
hope that his omen will be able to defeat the bad omens of Europe and of the world to day [sic].

A year later, in April 1982, the Norwegian daily newspaper *Aftenposten* printed an interview with Greene entitled “Our man in Antibes,” in which the English writer enquired after his old friend Nils Lie: “Tell me, is Nils Lie still alive? I met him that one time I was in Oslo, in the 30s. The last I heard of him was from Nordahl Grieg.” At this point, Grieg had been dead for almost forty years.

The interviewer could give no answer, but soon after Greene received a letter from Jens Folkman, a friend of Nils and Ingeborg’s son Mikael. Folkman kindly informed Greene that Lie had died four years previously in 1978. He expanded on Lie’s “very strong position as a reader and translator in the publishing house of Gyldendal” and included copies of Grieg’s war poems. An avid reader of Greene’s work, Folkman also thanked the English writer for “all the pleasures you have bestowed upon me during the years.” Greene’s response on 10 May was short but appreciative: “How very kind indeed of you to send me photographs of Nils Lie and the material on my friend Nordahl Grieg.”

It was not just Norwegian friends of Grieg who contacted Greene after the publication of his memoir; in November 1982 Greene received a letter from Alison Augustin, the daughter of Dorothy Hawke. Hawke had met Grieg on a train from Verona to Köln in 1922 when they were both traveling through Europe with friends. A widowed socialite, she was fourteen years Grieg’s senior, and the young Norwegian was immediately smitten with her. After Hawke departed Köln unexpectedly, the twenty-year-old Grieg frantically searched the city for her and afterward wrote her a long, adoring letter in unidiomatic English: “What do you think about me, if you think? Yesterday I took a very quick and rude farewell, and disappeared forever. ... I was really so fascinated over meeting you, that I should be very sorrow if you only should be ships that pass in the night.”

Evidently Hawke did not view the young writer as rude, and they began a correspondence and subsequent romance that would last, on and off, until Grieg met his future wife Gerd in 1935. During his time at Oxford University, Grieg and Hawke would often holiday together, and she even typed up his thesis on Kipling, kindly polishing his slowly improving English. When he later published his play *A Young Man’s Love* in 1927, it was dedicated to Hawke. She owned copies of all Grieg’s Norwegian books, each with a personal handwritten dedication, and it was she who introduced him to the poets that he would later write about in *The Young Dead*, the book he was working on when he first met Greene.

In her letter to Greene, Augustin wrote of how “charmed” she was by Greene’s descriptions of Grieg and detailed the Norwegian writer’s relationship with her mother: “While

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55 Jens Folkman, Letter to Graham Greene, 27 April 1982, MS1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43, Graham Greene Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, USA.
their close friendship lasted probably some three years—perhaps 1924 to 1927—she continued to adore him and clearly considered him the most exciting man she had known. ... She too was shattered at the news of his death.”

She described how Grieg always asked her mother to join him during his time in Russia, much like he had done with Greene, and Augustin’s words of how it was one of her mother’s “greatest regrets that she did not do so” certainly echoed Greene’s lament in *Ways of Escape* of how he wished he had “begged, borrowed or stolen” the money needed to visit his Norwegian friend.

**Epilogue**

When Greene died in 1991, he had for many years been considered one of England’s finest writers. Meanwhile, Grieg’s impassioned writing seemed strangely out of place in peacetime, and his work soon disappeared off the literary map, only to reemerge in the aftermath of the terror attacks in Norway on 22 July 2011. And yet when Greene first encountered Grieg in 1932, it was the young Norwegian who was the more experienced writer of the two, with several successful publications under his belt.

What was it that drew them to each other? Perhaps Grieg’s insistent letters imploring Greene to come with him to Lapland, to Tallinn, to Moscow, to his ski-hut on the outskirts of Oslo, provided the English writer with the escapism he so often sought. Perhaps they recognized in each other their own fascination with danger, which led Greene into war zones and Grieg to his death. Perhaps the two men, who met at a difficult juncture in both their lives, simply got along well. In *Ways of Escape* Greene elaborates further on the nature of their friendship:

> Each of our meetings was separated by a space of years from the next, yet I would not have hesitated to claim friendship with him—even a degree of intimacy. I was unable to read his books—for only one had been translated into English (in any case his poetry would have been untranslatable)—and so he struck me less as a fellow author with whom I must talk shop than as a friend I had grown up with, to whom I could speak and with whom I could argue about anything in the world.”

Greene was unable to read Grieg’s work, and so their friendship was not based on literary merit but on their many conversations, by letter and in person, in the brief decade they knew each other. Greene later wrote: “There were always arguments where Nordahl was and never a trace of anger.” Grieg was the only man Greene had ever met “with whom it was possible to disagree profoundly both on religion and politics and yet feel all the time the sense of goodwill and an open mind.”

Grieg’s “goodwill” and “charity” that Greene described as being “of greater value than the gold of the National Bank,” seemed always to have an encouraging effect on the English writer and might help explain why the troubled Catholic and the Stalinist heathen kept in touch for so long and always tried to meet up in some corner of the world.

Greene’s writing certainly makes it clear that he, long after Grieg was gone, could still remember the feeling of intimacy.

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58 Alison Augustin, Letter to Graham Greene, 18 November 1982, MS1995-3, Box 70, Folder 43, Graham Greene Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, USA.


60 Ibid., 25.

that the Norwegian writer had inspired and which Greene described as being as impersonal “as sunlight.”

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62 Ibid., 21.
Catholic Adaptation, Irish Conversion: The Postcolonial Graham Greene in Neil Jordan’s *The End of the Affair*

Jerod R. Hollyfield

During his four-decade film career, Academy Award-winning writer/director Neil Jordan has transcended conventions and crossed national boundaries to create an oeuvre of critically acclaimed films in a variety of genres. However, despite his reputation as an internationally recognized author and filmmaker whose projects have received financing from both American and European production companies, Jordan has come under fire as the quintessential example of the “schizophrenic identity” of Irish directors who migrate to Hollywood after local success, a filmmaker who, according to Michael Patrick Gillespie, has seen his Irish cinematic sensibilities “continually fighting against ingestion into a larger American ethos.”

Regardless of such critiques, Jordan has remained, first and foremost, an Irish artist, injecting his interpretations of the struggle for Irish identity into both his films and fiction directly and metaphorically, traits that position him as a seminal figure for understanding how the all-encompassing reach of global economic entities such as Hollywood affects filmmakers still contending with the legacies of colonialism.

As Kevin Rockett writes, whether working in Ireland or Hollywood, Jordan’s work seems to “focus on notions of transgression, perceived normality and appearance. Put simply, Jordan allows his characters to explore and challenge borders so that they may be comfortable with their own identity. These borders are most often of a sexual nature, but are necessarily social and cultural.”

stalker thriller *Greta* (2019) concern outsider protagonists attempting to solidify their identities in alienating establishment cultures, extensions of his Irish outlook to his Hollywood work.\(^4\)

In a body of films so concerned with formulating a coherent Irish identity, Jordan’s adaptation of Graham Greene’s 1951 novel *The End of the Affair* (1999) initially appears as an anomaly. Detailing a four-year long affair between author Maurice Bendrix and Sarah Miles, the wife of a British civil servant, against the backdrop of London in the beginning and aftermath of World War II, the novel never deviates from its English setting, eschewing direct references to Britain’s relationship with the colonial holdings, including Ireland, over which the waning Empire was losing its supremacy. Jordan’s adaptation of this particular Greene text appears even more peculiar considering that Greene neither shied away from discussing the implications of colonialism in works such as *Journey Without Maps* (1936), *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), and *The Quiet American* (1955) nor remained an isolated English author as he frequently traveled to colonial territories such as Kenya, Malaya, and French Indochina, especially during the early 1950s when he was writing *The End of the Affair*.\(^5\) As a longtime admirer of Greene, Jordan aimed to faithfully translate the novel to film in contrast to Edward Dmytryk’s 1955 Hollywood adaptation starring Deborah Kerr and Peter Cushing.\(^6\)

Yet while Jordan’s film appears to maintain an overarching fidelity to Greene’s novel, its status as an adaptation of British literature by an Irish filmmaker that reconstructs its source text’s London narrative allows it to interrogate the complex web of relationships among colonial discourse, Irish independence, and the global film industry. Discussing the pervasiveness of fidelity criticism that aspires to comparative analysis of films and source texts in adaptation studies, Anne-Marie Scholz deliberates on the intricacies that such a methodology overlooks: “Concrete material interests, political and ideological differences, and power relations based upon such variables as gender, nationality, and class all mould the ways texts are transformed into other media and received by audiences in very concrete, materialistic ways.”\(^7\) Consequently, Jordan’s choice to maintain general fidelity to the novel situates the adaptation as a deferential yet subversive take on Greene with an embedded Irish positionality that highlights the ambivalent relationship between Greene’s cultural role in the Empire and his appeal in Ireland as well as other nations under imperial dominion. Though a vocal critic of empire, Greene still maintained an elite status in British culture that diluted his indictments of colonialism. As Elleke Boehmer writes of Greene and his contemporaries such as George Orwell and Evelyn Waugh: “Bourgeois, Britain-centered, and basically still imperial in their perceptions, the 1930s writers did not come close to committed anti-colonial critique. In theory they sought challenges to the system, but in practice

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\(^4\) *The Good Thief* is a remake of Jean-Pierre Melville’s *Bob le flamber* (1955).


\(^7\) Anne-Marie Scholz, *From Fidelity to History: Film Adaptations as Cultural Events in the Twentieth Century* (Berghahn, New York, 2013), 3.
they stayed just this side of cultural frontiers. Most of their work, therefore, both illustrates and enacts the difficulty of escaping the confines of British male class privilege and its assumptions of global authority.”

Boehmer’s critique is even more applicable to Greene given what Mark Bosco refers to as the author’s shaping “by the literary heritage of the Victorian and Edwardian age that was a staple of his early reading” and included such luminaries of colonial-adventure writing as Joseph Conrad, H. Rider Haggard, and G. K. Chesterton. For Jordan, Boehmer’s discussion of the relationship between male class privilege and global authority serves as the central preoccupation of his adaptation. Contrasting Greene’s more overt colonial narratives, The End of the Affair seems a text more concerned with portraying a semi-autobiographical account of Greene’s struggles with Catholicism and his romantic triangle with aristocrats Catherine and Harry Walston during a stint in Capri than discussing the twilight years of British imperialism. Through the adaptation process however, Jordan applies what Kevin Rockett, Luke Gibbins, and John Hill see as a hallmark of Irish cinema—not disowning Irish romanticism and mysticism, but prying “open these fissures, exposing the ideological fault-lines in the landscape.”

Fully aware of Greene and his contemporaries’ roles within English colonial discourse, Jordan connects the veiled traces of the Empire present in the novel’s imagery and its conflicts between reason and Catholicism to rupture fault lines and magnify them as pointed critiques of British colonialism, responding to the imperial power that continues to assert political and cultural influence over his native Ireland.

Although Jordan’s adaptation of Greene’s novel fosters discussion of the author’s anti-imperialist gestures within the context of colonial discourse, his choice to adapt a novel by Greene and not the other colonial writers Boehmer references also provides him the opportunity to address the role of global capital so vital to the cultural hegemony of Hollywood filmmaking, which, along with the British film industry, has been responsible for the majority of filmic representations of the Irish. Unlike many of his British contemporaries, Greene worked steadily in the film industry both as a critic and a screenwriter. Writing for numerous publications, including The Spectator and Sight & Sound, Greene crafted a definition of what he called “the poetic cinema” in his criticism, a type of film that would break middle-class movie audiences away from, as Greene wrote,
“the crackling of chocolate paper, the whispers of women with shopping baskets, the secret movements of courting couples.”

Echoing Boehmer’s assessment of Greene for his contradictory status as an anti-colonial imperial writer, Greene’s film criticism held a subtle disdain for those outside his role in the Empire and permitted Greene to, as Judith Adamson writes, “cross the border of his own social position and reach those whose lives his class controlled.” As a critic, Greene divided films into two categories: movies—those films that existed solely as escapist entertainment—and cinema, those films that, while simple, held up to the greatest aspirations of art by presenting the reality of life in its purest form. Noting in many of his writings that director Carol Reed was particularly adept at employing the camera to capture the reality of life, Greene began his screenwriting career in earnest with film adaptations of his own novels for the filmmaker: *The Fallen Idol* (1948), for which he earned an Academy Award nomination, and *The Third Man* (1949)—endeavors that won him widespread critical acclaim.

Through his views of cinema as a didactic tool to shape the lower classes, Greene’s film career illustrates the claims of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri concerning the fundamental role the media play in what they deem a contemporary “Empire” governed by global capital: “The communications industries integrate the imaginary and the symbolic within the biopolitical fabric, not merely putting them at the service of power but actually integrating them into its very functioning.” For Hardt and Negri, the vitality of the new corporate Empire hinges upon the ability of communication tools such as cinema to instruct and indoctrinate citizens about the cultural factors that define the biopolitics governing every facet of their lives. As an author who wrote about empire during the postwar transitional period from a nation state-based colonialism to the Empire of global capital, Greene—and his aesthetic theories—suggest early manifestations of the foundations of Empire that are “formed not on the basis of force itself, but on the basis of the capacity to present force as being in the service of right and peace.”

Harnessing Jordan’s strong sense of Irish identity and his artistic experience in both fiction and film media, his adaptation of *The End of the Affair* responds to such past and present iterations of imperial force by portraying cinema’s role in the transitional period of empires as an underlying mechanism of control, directly challenging Greene’s idea of poetic cinema. As Jordan told *Salon* in 1999, “Greene was tremendously jealous of movies, wasn’t he? He hated Hitchcock, didn’t he? And it’s a terrible pity, because if Hitchcock had done some of Greene’s things—of course, he never would have, because so much of the broader world enters into Greene, and Hitchcock was about pure form.” Jordan’s film substitutes the stark reality Greene so admired in films

15 Ibid., 4-5.
16 Ibid., 5-8.
17 Ibid., 52-53.
19 Ibid., 15.
with a veiled sense of mysticism and Hitchcockian detail to form while using Hollywood financing to support its director’s vision. Funded with British and US investment and distributed by Columbia Pictures, the $23 million production conforms to the conventions of the Hollywood prestige picture and the British heritage film boasting—in addition to Jordan—Academy Award nominees Ralph Fiennes, Stephen Rea, and Julianne Moore as its leads and respected *Batman* (1989), *12 Monkeys* (1995), and *Harry Potter* (2002, 2005) cinematographer Roger Pratt. Working within Hollywood, Jordan creates a subtle, simultaneous critique of colonial discourse and global capital to forge a depiction of Irish identity within a narrative and economic system that largely ignores its presence. In adapting Greene’s novel to film, Jordan cultivates a through line of imperial force from the British Empire to contemporary Hollywood, greatly altering the last two books of the novel by reframing the narrative’s preoccupations with the Catholic faith and the state of the British Empire after World War II through the lens of an Irish perspective that not only criticizes Britain’s suppression of Irish-Catholicism but also refracts literary and cinematic stereotypes of the Irish in his construction of postwar London.

**World War II and Greene’s crumbling empire**

Narrated by its protagonist, Maurice Bendrix, Greene’s *The End of the Affair* unspools its eponymous extramarital liaison between Bendrix and Sarah Miles against the London Blitz and its aftermath. Yet unlike other novels set during the time period such as Mary Renault’s *The Charioteer* (1953) and Ian McEwan’s *Atonement* (2001), *The End of the Affair* focuses not on the soldiers directly affected by the war through battlefield confrontations, but on characters whose interaction with the period is peripheral as a result of their socioeconomic position. Injuring his leg in an unnamed accident, Bendrix receives exemption from serving in the military during the conflict, making a living as a writer who probes the society of English bureaucrats. Conducting research for a novel dealing with the lives of civil servants’ wives, Bendrix meets Sarah and her husband Henry, a high-ranking, bland official in Widow’s Pensions and the Ministry of Home Security. From the beginning of the novel, Greene establishes his central characters as members of the professional class to which he also belonged, who, despite their often anti-colonial leanings, earned their livelihood as government officials or, in the case of Bendrix, were direct beneficiaries of its authority. As a result of their social status, the violence of World War II has a subdued effect on Greene’s characters, functioning instead as a nuisance mentioned only when it passively encroaches on the outer boundaries of their personal lives. When passing by Eastbourne Terrace, where he and Sarah began the affair during the war six years earlier, Bendrix meditates on how the bombings changed the appearance of the block:

> Half of it was gone—the half where the hotels used to stand had been blasted to bits, and the place where we made love that night was a patch of air. It had been the Bristol; there was a potted fern in the hall and we were shown the best room by a manageress with blue hair; a real Edwardian room with a great gilt double bed and red velvet curtains and a full-length mirror. (People who came to Arbuckle Avenue never
required twin beds.) I remember the trivial details very well.\(^{21}\)

Bendrix begins describing the block after its destruction in an air raid, but his thoughts quickly shift to a personalized account of how the now-destroyed hotel appeared to him in the moments before the consummation of his affair with Sarah in the Edwardian room with its direct connection to the sovereign. Bendrix admits his details are trivial, yet behind his description lies an idealization of the past not uncommon for those of his social position. Now facing the postwar world in a British society losing the Empire that made it an international force, Bendrix finds his social status and inner circle in flux. Though he masked the effects of the war during his affair with Sarah, its end result has forced him into a state of denial that looks upon the past in greater detail than the precarious present.

As Bendrix’s affair and the war rage on, he adopts a sense of collusion with the conflict, perceiving it not as a violent struggle that will change the scope of the world, but as an excuse that works in concert with him to prolong his sexual liaisons with Sarah. Greene writes:

War had helped us in a good many ways, and that was how I had almost come to regard war as a rather disreputable and unreliable accomplice in my affair. (Deliberately I would put the caustic soda of that word ‘affair’, with its suggestion of a beginning and an end, upon my tongue.) I suppose Germany by this time had invaded the Low Countries: the spring like a corpse was sweet with the smell of doom, but nothing mattered to me but two practical facts - Henry had been shifted to Home Security and worked late, my landlady had removed to the basement for fear of air-raids, and no longer lurked upon the floor above watching over the banisters for undesirable visitors. My own life had altered not at all, because of my lameness (I have one leg a little shorter than the other, the result of an accident in childhood); only when the air-raids started did I feel it necessary to become a warden. It was for the time being as though I had signed out of the war.\(^{22}\)

Bendrix does acknowledge the war’s death and destruction. Nevertheless, he emphasizes how its impact relates to his relationship with Sarah, not how his relationship with Sarah relates to the conflict. Writing about the couple’s insularity, Craig E. Mattson and Virginia LaGrand discuss how the relationship typifies a “modern eroticism” with “a simplistic and narrow focus that abstracts its participants from the world. When sexual love draws down its enjoyers into a singular focus on themselves, Greene seems to be suggesting, it creates a realm increasingly sealed off from awe, desire, and, indeed, human society.”\(^{23}\) As long as the war continues, it permits Bendrix to enjoy his illicit romance made possible by the class position of the couple. With the other characters’ attentions devoted to the war in either Henry’s capacity as a government official or his landlady’s role as a subject fearing for her life, Bendrix exploits its consequences, his status made possible

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 57.

by his (and his lover’s) role in the machinery of the Empire.

When the horrors of war finally do intrude on Bendrix and Sarah’s relationship, the couple remains enveloped in their own desire, which makes the subsequent dissolution of the affair after a Blitz attack much more harrowing for Bendrix than the war’s violence. As Bendrix and Sarah make love to the sound of dropping bombs, Bendrix says: “No, the V1’s didn’t affect us until the act of love was over. I had spent everything I had, and was lying on my back with my head on her stomach and her taste—as thin and elusive as water—in my mouth, when one of the robots crashed down on to the Common and we could hear the glass breaking further down the south side.”

Even with the presence of death mere feet from his bedroom, Bendrix remains fixated on his personal life, not letting the violence affect him until it blasts through his apartment complex: “I never heard the explosion, and I woke after five seconds or five minutes in a changed world.” Bendrix admits that the world has changed after his near-death experience, but the alterations to his life come not from the war’s potential to turn him into a casualty, but from Sarah’s sudden decision to end their affair directly after the attack. Rebuffing Bendrix’s pleas for her to stay until after the All Clear, Sarah exits, curtailing future encounters with Bendrix by using her husband’s fabricated presence at home as an excuse.

Alone in his room and nursing his physical wounds, Bendrix ruminates on the destruction of his relationship: “Henry. Henry. Henry—that name tolled through our relationship, damping every mood of happiness or fun or exhilaration with its reminder that love dies, affection and habit win the day. ‘You needn’t be so scared,’ she said, ‘love doesn’t end.’” For Bendrix, the travesties of the war continue to assume a minuscule position in his life, completely dwarfed by his affection for Sarah. Yet the effects of the war and his affair make lasting impressions on Bendrix’s psyche. While both eventually end, their repercussions for Bendrix define the uncertainty of his future, leaving him adrift and damaged by the constraints of the war that force him into a life of aimlessness.

Although Bendrix and Sarah elevate their relationship above the changing landscape of Britain during the war, Greene justifies their self-involvement through his choice of constructing the narrative from Bendrix’s self-reflexive point of view, allowing Bendrix the opportunity to explain the extent to which his love for Sarah consumes him. As he recalls the desolation and heartbreak the end of the relationship caused, Bendrix writes: “We remember the details of our story, we do not invent them. War didn’t trouble those deep sea-caves, but now there was something of infinitely greater importance to me than war, than my novel—the end of love.”

Acting not only as a narrator but also as the author of the story his audience reads, Bendrix realizes that his wanton disregard for the horrors of war could appear callous and harm the believability of his story. Therefore, he tries to blunt any criticism by portraying the end of his love as the dwindling of a desire imperative for humanity that eclipses work, art, and war. Greene conceives his protagonist not as a selfish...

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24 Greene, 70.
25 Ibid., 71.
26 Ibid., 73.
27 Ibid., 35.
man immune to other’s suffering, but as a romantic trying to prolong the existence of a love dying in the war-ravaged imperial center where it came to fruition.

**Imperial point of view and narrative slant in Jordan’s London**

In adapting *The End of the Affair* to the screen, Jordan utilizes Greene’s choice to write from Bendrix’s point of view as his primary tool to engage the novel’s colonial politics, subtly portraying the film’s lead characters as sequestered from the rest of the world by the physical and economic power of London’s urban milieu. Though the film preserves Bendrix’s central role in the narrative, it complicates his perspective by embracing the limitations of the film medium’s point-of-view capabilities to dilute Bendrix’s agency. Since film narration must navigate the camera’s perspective, even those stories told in first person are forced to communicate through an amalgamation of visuals and voiceover. In the words of adaptation theorist Brian McFarlane, cinema merely offers a “precarious analogy” to the subjective perspective of a novel’s first-person narration: “The device of oral narration, or voice-over, may serve important narrative functions in film (e.g., reinforcing a sense of past tense) but, by virtual necessity, it cannot be more than intermittent as distinct from the continuing nature of the novelistic first-person narration.”

By seizing onto cinema’s limited potential for subjectivity, Jordan creates a dual narrative structure in his adaptation: one belonging to Bendrix (Ralph Fiennes) detailing the events of his affair with Sarah (Julianne Moore) and the other belonging to Jordan’s camera, limited to recording the events in front of its lens. Jordan’s narrative strategy takes full advantage of what Seymour Chatman defines as the “slant” of a narrative, a term that goes beyond point-of-view and grapples with “the psychological, sociological, and ideological ramifications of the narrator’s attitudes, which may range from neutral to highly charged.”

Given Jordan’s anti-colonial preoccupations, he adopts a slant through his shot design that generates an additional voice in the narrative, presenting an alternative to Bendrix’s point of view that challenges his protagonist’s imperial complicity and is absent from the novel.

Jordan primarily implements the camera’s slant to critique Bendrix’s and Sarah’s roles in the British Empire during scenes of their sexual encounters. When the couple consummates their relationship in the Miles home, Jordan shoots their physical interactions through straight-on angles with a camera that dollies throughout the room. Bendrix and Sarah remain central to the frame, but Jordan also moves the camera to position his characters in the center of the room’s lavish decor, including the blue velvet couch on which the couple lies, a liquor cabinet stocked with a variety of exposed bottles, and a side table displaying a stack of magazines featuring British royals. As the couple inches closer to climax, Jordan dollies forward into a close-up, shifting the focus of his camera away from the room’s decor and onto the lovers’ faces when they reach orgasm.

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Through his use of slant via the dolly shot, Jordan frames his characters contained by commodities—narrative information elided in the novel. The couple is able to forget the world around them and concentrate solely on each other. Nonetheless, Jordan depicts their bliss as a willful ignorance of a social stature gleaned from colonial exploitation, a correlation he buttresses with the scene’s long takes that shift the camera’s gaze from the room’s decor to the couple’s mid-coitus facial expressions.

Consequently, Jordan’s use of slant to critique Bendrix and Sarah’s colonial abetment becomes even more charged as they argue about fidelity during their second sexual encounter in the film. Shooting the scene with close-ups of the characters and shot-reverse-shot, Jordan homes in on Bendrix and Sarah in bed as they debate Henry’s influence on their love. During the couple’s argument, Jordan punctuates their sentences with the sounds of sirens and distant bomb explosions occurring outside the confines of their room. As the argument progresses, culminating in a sudden surge of love making, the sounds of the blasts escalate, and the room begins to shake violently with white plaster falling from the ceiling. The aural and spatial disturbances from the air raid notwithstanding, the couple remains engrossed in each other, ignoring the events outside their room. Through the juxtaposition of the violence occurring in the city and the couple’s sexual activity, Jordan underscores his characters’ disregard for the events affecting the lives of those around him. With England’s population embroiled in the horrors of war, Bendrix and Sarah reveal ambivalence toward the conflict, their class position superseding any semblance of civic mindedness. However, while Bendrix’s point of view in the novel attempts to justify his fixation on Sarah in a time of war, Jordan’s film provides its protagonist no such opportunity, presenting him simply as a man insulated by his privilege despite the violence of the war around him.

In perhaps his greatest deviation from Bendrix’s narrative authority in the novel, Jordan uses the camera’s slant to directly convey Sarah’s perspective, completely stripping Bendrix of control over his own story. Though Greene constructs Book III of the novel as a series of excerpts from Sarah’s diary that Bendrix hires private investigator Parkis to commandeer, Bendrix remains in narrative control, bookending Sarah’s journal entries with his own editorial asides. Jordan’s film, however, endows Sarah with her own sense of narrative agency, integrating Sarah’s perspective on the couple’s lovemaking by recycling the same blocking from scenes Bendrix narrated. Stylistically, Jordan recreates the previous scenes from opposite angles as Sarah now narrates her own perceptions: reversing shot-reverse shot to focus on Sarah’s reactions rather than Bendrix’s dialogue and placing Sarah instead of Bendrix in the foreground of the frames. As a result, the camera’s slant, removed from the action of the narrative, creates two versions of events with two distinct perspectives, a stylistic device similar to that used in Akira Kurosawa’s film Rashomon (1950).

In her discussion of the film’s illustration of Bendrix’s “masculine jealousy,” Candida Yates calls into question the effect of Jordan’s shift in narrative agency to Sarah:

The idealization of Sarah reduces her emotional significance within the narrative in relation to Bendrix’s emotional drama. A section of the
narrative is told from her point of view and is narrated by her in the form of a voice-over. However, what we see is his vision of what she is saying and so her story is mediated by his interpretation of events. In giving his interpretation of her story, Bendrix also steals her narrative, something that reinforces Bendrix’s theft of the diary within the story itself. This scenario illustrates recent feminist debates in film studies about whether recent representations of a ‘new’ more feeling-ful masculinity in popular culture signify a meaningful cultural shift, or whether these popular images of emotional masculinities represent something more superficial.30

Although Yates’s critique lends itself well to a feminist reading, it overlooks other political motivations for Bendrix’s theft of Sarah’s narrative and the film’s visual repetitions of scenes in Sarah’s retelling. The adaptation embraces a viewpoint that Greene’s novel denies Sarah, but it also serves as a way for Jordan to metaphorically integrate an Irish perspective directly into a work that ignores its existence. In its construction, empire relies on masculine strength to assert its control over colonized territories, othering the colonized by equating them with the feminine counterpart to the dominant male, an ideology at the core of the “muscular Christianity” that shaped the late British Empire in which the male body became the central metaphor for accepted political and religious ideologies—especially important to a Catholic writer such as Greene.31 As the female protagonist of the film, Sarah also acts as a female colonized by her marriage to Henry, forced into an Empire-sanctioned contract with a civil servant on whose finances she remains dependent. In cultivating this Irish perspective, Jordan employs the gender of Greene’s characters for the purposes of colonial allegory. Through this revisionary use of slant, Jordan presents the same events that unfold in Greene’s novel with an approach that calls attention to Bendrix’s narrative monopoly, wedging Sarah’s previously silenced voice into the adaptation to expose fissures in the source text’s colonial underpinnings.

In this gendering of England and Ireland, Jordan increases the violence of the raid that injured Bendrix and ultimately marks the end of his affair with Sarah. Rather than execute the Blitz as an attack that merely lacerates and bruises Bendrix, Jordan orchestrates the explosion as a torrent of action that the character barely survives. When the bomb hits the apartment complex, it explodes in a ball of fire, violently knocking Bendrix two floors below his apartment amid a shower of debris. Instead of thinking Bendrix is dead from the bombing as she does in the novel, Sarah rushes to his body to find him not breathing and bleeding profusely, making his revival appear much more miraculous than in Greene’s narrative. Through the amplified violence, Jordan directly attacks the masculine connotations of the British Empire as he increases the prominence of his female character. In Jordan’s film, Bendrix is unable to shield himself from the war that will eventually destroy Britain’s prowess, nearly dying as a result of one of its attacks. To survive, he

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must rely on Sarah’s mystical presence to resuscitate him, a role Jordan grants to his female character that Greene previously denied her.

With the narrative firmly in his control through his use of slant to provide alternative perspectives on the Empire presented in the novel, Jordan also accents Greene’s uninterrogated references to Britain’s imperial scope. British colonial endeavors remain on the periphery throughout the novel, but Greene often makes veiled references to Britain’s status as an imperial power as the narrative progresses. When visiting Henry and Sarah’s home for the first time two years after their affair ends, Bendrix surveys Henry’s study, noting its decor: “I doubted whether the set of Gibbon had once been opened, and the set of Scott was only there because it had—probably—belonged to his father, like the bronze copy of the Discus Thrower. And yet he was happier in his unused room simply because it was his: his possession. I thought with bitterness and envy: if one possesses a thing securely, one need never use it.”

Bendrix’s narration reveals that all the items he mentions carry connotations of the British Empire’s strength. Sir Walter Scott’s Romantic works, written during the formative years of the Empire’s expansion, note British pride in cultural heritage (albeit appropriated from Scotland). Through the inclusion of the Discus Thrower, Greene links England to the Greek and Roman Empires of the classical age, a comparison he ambivalently ties to Britain’s current postwar status through his inclusion of Edward Gibbon’s *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

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32 Greene, 13.
realization that he holds no authority over his wife.

Despite Jordan’s critiques of Greene’s depiction of the British Empire, he maintains a sense of fidelity to the novel’s original text, emphasizing Greene’s few apparent criticisms of colonialism. When Bendrix contemplates his first encounter with Sarah, Greene writes: “We saw each other for the first time, drinking bad South African sherry because of the war in Spain.”

Though Jordan limits Bendrix’s narration in the film, Bendrix delivers the line in its entirety in voiceover as he writes his account of the story on a typewriter. By preserving Greene’s sentiment, Jordan strengthens his critique of colonial possession in the film, portraying his characters as servants of Empire who only consume products from colonial territories when their European counterparts are not available. Likewise, Jordan faithfully records the scene in the novel when Bendrix asks Parkis about the name of his son. Greene writes:

‘He’s called Lance, isn’t he?’
‘After Sir Lancelot, sir. Of the Round Table.’
‘I’m surprised. That was a rather unpleasant episode, surely.’
‘He found the Holy Grail,’ Mr. Parkis said.
‘That was Galahad. Lancelot was found in bed with Guinevere.’...
‘I hadn’t heard.’

Through retaining the exchange, Jordan repositions Greene’s ironic barb meant simultaneously to attack lower-class knowledge of British legend and to compare Bendrix and Lancelot’s affairs as a critique of colonial discourse.

Within the context of Jordan’s adaptation, the lines imply Bendrix and Parkis’ inability to understand the Empire to which they belong. While Parkis (Ian Hart) displays ignorance concerning the mythic foundations of the Empire (embodying what S. K. Sharma refers to as an example of the “Dickensian grotesque”), Bendrix touts a knowledge of Arthurian legend that, when coupled with Jordan’s portrayal of him as a man insulated by the spoils of imperialism, situates him as a character living in fantasy and unable to deal with the colonial power crumbling around him.

Catholic Mysticism, Irish Nationalism, and Cultural Imperialism

As one of the most prominent Catholic writers of the 20th century, Greene attempted to come to terms with the brutality of World War II and the nation’s challenged spiritual life in the waning Empire by, according to Darren J. N. Middleton, constructing a version of a mystical God with a “seemingly ironic nature and activity that poses problems” in line with early biblical accounts that “seldom shy away from thinking of God as terror.”

Converting to Catholicism during his relationship with Vivien Dayrell-Browning, Greene took his faith seriously, studying scripture and attending mass on a regular basis. From the 1938

34 Greene, 25.
35 Ibid., 77.
publication of *Brighton Rock* to the release of *The End of the Affair*, Greene’s novels spearheaded a resurgence in the tradition of the “Catholic novel,” a movement that began as a response to the secular Enlightenment thought of the 18th century. As a genre, it also has its genesis in English Catholics’ struggles to defend their adherence to a foreign faith and justify its validity, making it integral to understanding a time in which anticolonial movements were burgeoning in the British colonies. Working with many characteristics of Enlightenment-era Catholic novels, Greene reinterpreted the form, achieving a Catholic perspective that, as Bosco writes, “is never offered as a comforting way out of the discomfiting realities of modernity.” Taking into consideration this breakdown of Britain’s dominion, *The End of the Affair* serves as the endnote to Greene’s career as an author of overtly Catholic novels as well as his quest to understand the changing landscape of empire through an explicit religious lens.

Given what Mary R. Reichardt perceives as Catholic literature’s “adaptability to many time periods and cultures, genres and styles,” Greene’s status as both a writer of Catholic novels and an enduring cinematic voice makes *The End of the Affair* a potent text for adaptation, especially for a secular Irish filmmaker such as Jordan. As an avowed atheist who told Michael Sragow in an interview promoting the film that “God is the greatest imaginary being of all time,” Jordan exhibits a particular fascination with Catholicism in his adaptation. Despite the increased prominence of Catholicism in the film, Jordan’s discussions of the faith appear far more concerned with its role in Irish culture than its doctrinal veracity, a connection overlooked by many critics such as David Sterritt who, even in a highly complementary review, found the material unexpected territory for the “decidedly secular” Jordan. In contrast to such critical confusion, the Irish constructed a nationalist narrative woven around the Catholic Church in which to be Irish was to be Catholic regardless of actual religious affiliation. This identification was so strong that Ireland, though never a theocratic state, came the closest of all Western nations during the 20th century to embracing the model due to Britain’s continuing and pervasive influence over it. As Jocelyn Evans and Jonathan Tonge write:

> Nationhood and nationalism may outgrow its religious associations, and the Catholic Church in Ireland has never been as unpopular as at present, but religious affiliations may remain. Catholic identification, as distinct from adherence to the tenets of faith, may be important as a civil or even “secular” religion, particularly so in Northern Ireland, where it remains a communal badge and

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39 Ibid., 7.
43 Sragow.
where anti-Catholic sentiment was apparent over many decades. Conquered by a British Empire espousing Protestant doctrine, Irish-Catholic subjects suffered a dual subaltern status within Britain’s imperial endeavors, persecuted for their nationality as well as religious beliefs beginning as early as the 1366 Statutes of Kilkenny, which, according to Suzanne J. Crawford O’Brien, “suppressed Irish language, laws, customs and even modes of dress and haircuts and was chiefly directed at those Norman settlers who had ‘gone Native,’ intermarrying and becoming part of Irish society.” Thus, Irish-Catholics were subjected to increased ill-treatment under English rule, stripped of their land, plagued by regulations when serving in the army, and seen as inferior to their Protestant counterparts. As the subjugation of Irish-Catholics at the hands of the British continued, pro-Catholic sentiments merged with national identity to create a strong sense of Irish nationalism that led to violent political struggles such as the 1916 Easter Rising and later actions by groups such as the Irish Republican Army. Largely because of these irrevocable links between Irish nationalism and the Church, the tradition of the Catholic novel in which Greene wrote never took root in Ireland, its examination of transcendent experience inhibited by the political realities of censorship boards and outcry from traditionalists.

The case of the Irish illustrates Boyle’s call to examine the relationship between Catholicism and the postcolonial world within the context of “the locations in which different postcolonial strategies germinate and take shape and the capacity of these strategies to then access and mold the geopolitical agendas pursued by different nations.” This postcolonial positioning of Catholicism is especially important to a filmmaker such as Jordan who rose to fame at a time ripe for deconstruction and reassessment of Irish Catholicism and nationalism in literature and cinema. As Seamus Deane writes: “The nationalist narrative, which told the story of seven hundred years of English misrule (finally brought to a conclusion by the heroic rebellion of 1916 and the violence of the following six years, and now culminating with the unfinished business in the North), has lost much of its appeal and legitimacy save for those who are committed to the

49 Kevin Whelan, The Tree of Liberty: Radicalism, Catholicism and the Construction of Irish Identity 1760-1830 (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 6-10.
53 Pramaggiore, 3.
IRA and armed struggle.” Coming of age during this forging of Irish identity, Jordan, in the words of Maria Pramaggiore, demonstrates in his work a “focus on the destabilizing effects of these profound cultural shifts at the level of individual character.” In his version of *End of the Affair*, Sarah becomes the conduit through which Jordan channels these Irish cultural shifts, adapting the character Michael G. Brennan calls the most intriguing female in Greene’s fiction as a result of her love quadrangle that involves not only two men awash in imperial masculinity but also the Almighty that the Empire often invoked to justify its colonial enterprises. Echoing Deane’s criticism of the Irish nationalist narrative, Jordan appropriates the Catholicism of Greene’s novel to address both Irish-Catholic struggle during British rule and Irish nationalism through Sarah’s personal struggles with Catholicism as well as Bendix and Henry’s manipulation of her faith.

Although maintaining what Pramaggiore views as a “painstaking faithfulness” to Greene’s novel, Jordan’s adaptation sharply deviates from the source text’s treatment of Catholicism, evoking the conflicts between the religious and secular worlds in a much more blatant manner. The first half of Greene’s novel deals solely with the particulars of Bendix and Sarah’s affair until the pivotal moment when Bendix recovers from the explosion that blasts through his apartment complex. Viewing Bendix’s survival as a miracle that calls her atheism into question, Sarah relates the words she silently prayed after thinking her lover dead: “Let him be alive, and I will believe. Give him a chance. Let him have his happiness. Do this and I’ll believe. But that wasn’t enough. It doesn’t hurt to believe. So I said, I love him and I’ll do anything if you’ll make him alive. I said very slowly, I’ll give him up forever, only let him be alive with a chance.”

Suddenly thrown out of the atheistic worldview she shares with Bendix, Sarah enters a conflict of the unknown, vowing to keep the promise she made to God after her “prayers” are answered. In the wake of Bendix’s survival, Greene represents Sarah’s religious struggle to answer the question she poses to herself—“Why did this promise stay?”—through the integration of two characters she visits: Richard Smythe, a rationalist street speaker and Father Crompton, a Catholic priest. Sarah seeks to answer her question, but she dies of a lung disease before she gains clarity, leaving Bendix and Henry ignorant of her true beliefs and forced to decide whether they should give her a Catholic burial or simply cremate her body, which they ultimately do. Only after Bendix has dinner with Sarah’s mother—Mrs. Bertram—does Greene reveal that Sarah was baptized Catholic and that her mother “always had a wish that it would ‘take.’ Like vaccination.”

By remaining ambiguous about Sarah’s faith after Bendix’s survival, Greene creates a manifestation of the conflicts facing religious believers fueled by postwar British anxieties, especially during a period in which conversion to Catholicism in Britain surpassed the spike after World War I and would not

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55 Pramaggiore, 7.
56 Brennan, 93.
57 Pramaggiore, 131.
58 Greene, 95.
59 Ibid., 106.
60 Ibid., 164.
peak until 1960. Though Sarah doubts her faith throughout the final days of her life, in due course she decides not only to embrace religion but also to sacrifice her love for Bendrix to honor its power—what Brennan calls her “physical self-annihilation”—making her an ironic Catholic martyr to initiate the eventual conversions of her lover and husband.

Directly contradicting Jordan’s secular perspective that its reviews dwelled upon, the film eliminates Sarah’s crisis of faith from the adaptation, streamlining the narrative by renaming the priest character Father Smythe and completely excising the novel’s Smythe. In addition, Jordan removes Mrs. Bertram from the film, opting for Sarah to relay her Catholic baptism to Bendrix long before her death. As a result, Jordan depicts Sarah not as a woman torn between rationalism and religion, but as a lapsed Catholic whose faith is reignited by Bendrix’s survival after the bomb blast. Jordan’s expunging of Sarah’s conflict between faith and rationality appears peculiar, but it endows the film with the ability to sidestep what Bosco calls Greene’s “religious interiority” that has no correlative in the film medium. Instead, Jordan immerses the narrative in Irish mysticism to construct Sarah as a “Gothic double” indicative of Ireland’s role within Greene’s England. With Sarah’s faith resolutely established early in the film amid Jordan’s motif of a gloomy London mired in pervasive rain, Bendrix and Henry’s final decision to cremate her ceases to stem from their ignorance of her wishes. Instead, her cremation becomes a vigorous attempt by her partners to erase her rekindled Catholicism, permitting them to maintain a memory of Sarah that acts in concert with their atheism. Whereas the Bendrix of the novel foregoes suppressing Sarah’s diary as his own conversion commences, the film’s Bendrix becomes an active force of masculine dominance, a facet of the plot Jordan further highlights by creating the aforementioned double vision of Sarah via the film’s narrative repetition. Through Bendrix and Henry’s stifling of Sarah’s beliefs, Jordan parallels the English assertion of control over the Catholic spirit of Irish nationalism.

Writing about the singularity of Ireland, Fredric Jameson finds in Irish modernism a radicalism in which character and aesthetics create “a space no longer central, as in English life, but marked as marginal and ec-centric after the fashion of the colonized areas of the imperial system. That colonized space may then be expected to transform the modernist formal project radically, while still retaining a distant family likeness to its imperial variants.” In the adaptation’s revisions to Greene’s modernism, Sarah’s cremation serves as the efforts by two men complicit in the Empire to annihilate the revolutionary potential of her faith, destroying a body steeped in doubleness and with it the radical familiarity to which Jameson refers. Plagued with mutability as a result of her death, Sarah’s legacy now rests completely in control of her male lovers, leaving just the singular lasting images of her they decide to construct, a

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62 Brennan, 97.
63 Bosco, “Catholic Imagination,” 52.
64 Pramaggiore, 126.
65 Pramaggiore, 13.
decision Jordan accentuates by ending the funeral scene with a long shot of smoke rising from the crematorium. With Sarah’s Gothic doubleness extinguished, the crematorium becomes her final resting place in a scene that alludes more to the stark violence of the Holocaust than the resistant Irish mysticism Sarah embodied.

Irish Perspectives on the Global Empire

When Columbia Pictures released The End of the Affair in December 1999, Jordan was experiencing a pivotal moment in his career that would define the choices he has made as a filmmaker in the 21st century. Launching one of the most high-profile relationships between a European director and an American film company after Jordan signed a three-picture deal with DreamWorks SKG, his first film for the company, In Dreams, opened the previous January to lackluster reviews and an anemic $11.2 million domestic box-office performance.67 Even with Academy-Award nominations for Moore's performance and Pratt's cinematography, The End of the Affair also became a failure for the studio, earning $10.6 million domestically and receiving minor notices from critics and review boards enamored with a wave of unconventional American films produced in Hollywood’s mounting Indiewood culture such as Sam Mendes’ American Beauty, Paul Thomas Anderson’s Magnolia, and Spike Jonze’s Being John Malkovich.68 Jordan found himself at a turning point, electing to direct smaller, more personal projects with increased control.69 Jordan’s professional decisions in the aftermath of The End of the Affair exhibit a sharp rebuke to studio filmmaking and address the neocolonial strains of the globalized world that, as Gillespie indicates, have unique implications for an Irish filmmaker not applicable to the cinemas of other colonized nations: “Globalization ... has made these distinctions even more difficult to enforce as the Irish move toward a more cosmopolitan worldview. ... This trend only increases the obstacles to the formation of a national cinema.”70 Similarly, in her work on cultural pathologies, psychologist Geraldine Moane has found that the Irish are “culturally more vulnerable to the forces of globalization, and psychologically more vulnerable to exploitation” as a result of the nation’s history of colonization.71 Within this context, Jordan’s adaptation of Greene’s novel allows the film to operate as a prescient critique of globalized media entities through both its engagement with Greene’s own film career and the source text’s references to the movies.

Though cinema does not play a prominent role in Greene’s novel, the author uses references to film to differentiate the classes of his characters. To initiate his relationship with Sarah, Bendrix invites her to a screening of a film adapted from one of

67 Rockett and Rockett, 272.
68 Indiewood is a term that, for Michael Z. Newman, encapsulates niche independent films that both resist and are a symptom of corporate Hollywood filmmaking due to their distribution and financing within the Hollywood system and its boutique distribution companies. See Newman’s Indie: An American Film Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).
70 Gillespie, 239-40.
his novels after she told him earlier at dinner that Henry has an aversion to the cinema. Despite the importance of the movie house to beginning their affair, even Bendrix appears reticent to attend, lamenting the inherent “stock clichés of the screen.”

Through his characters’ disdain for film, Greene reveals a class bias similar to that expressed in his theoretical work on “poetic cinema,” treating the medium as useful to placate and educate the masses not firmly entrenched in the higher echelons of the British class system.

With Greene’s class-conscious posturing on the movies as an entry point, Jordan infuses his portrayal of the movies in the adaptation with a layered critique of both Greene’s film theory and the oppressive force Hollywood cinema exudes in a global economy. When Bendrix and Sarah visit the cinema in the adaptation, they incessantly mock the film meant to be the adaptation of Bendrix’s novel. However, rather than include stock footage or a shoot a film-within-a-film, Jordan has his characters watch Basil Dean’s 21 Days Together (1940), an adaptation of a John Galsworthy novel with a scenario by Greene. Through his characters’ snide comments on a film conceived by Greene himself, Jordan censures the author and his insights into cinema as an art form. Using Greene’s own work against him, Jordan demonstrates the ability of the cinema to create visual cues that break down class barriers by instituting criticisms of those immersed in colonial ideologies. Greene can dismiss cinema as an art of the lower classes. Nevertheless, Jordan consciously, albeit subtly, exposes that Greene earned his esteem in part by participating in the very medium he often belittled.

At the same time, Jordan’s intentionally global casting in his adaptation of a distinctly British story further deepens his commentary. Even though The End of the Affair enjoyed largely positive reviews, it raised the ire of many critics in the United Kingdom. In addition to time-honored gripes about the film’s fidelity to the novel, critics pounced on its alleged lack of period authenticity, anathema for any project making gestures toward the stalwart heritage film genre popularized by postwar adaptations of canonical British texts such as David Lean’s iterations of Dickens. Likewise, several reviewers took issue with the casting of American Julianne Moore as Sarah and Jordan fixture and fellow Irishman Stephen Rea as Henry, fixating on their overdone accents. According to Yates, “the UK press responded like angry cuckolds, and put up a more spirited jealous defence of the object, the object being Graham Greene, and in particular, Greene as a signifier of Englishness.” Although Yates connects the British press’ response to the novel’s and film’s representations of masculine perception, such criticisms also relate to Jordan’s subversive use of the globalization of the film industry to craft a distinctly Irish perspective. In rewriting the nationalistic ideology of the heritage film, Jordan repositions Greene’s decidedly British love triangle as a story of faith and betrayal performed by British, American, and Irish actors in which the character holding the highest position within the colonial project is played by Rea. As a result, Jordan shifts Greene’s

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72 Greene, 43.
73 Rockett and Rockett, 226.
74 Yates, 231.
commentary of the waning days of the British Empire into the globalized world. Such play with the industrial and artistic contexts of the adaptation further interrogates Englishness and its lingering effects on Ireland in Jordan’s depictions of audience interaction with cinema in the film. As she attempts to cope with ending the affair, Sarah slips into a theatre to see a newsreel of Churchill on V-E Day. Though Jordan maintains the camera’s focus on Sarah as she comes to realize the war that fostered her affair with Bendrix has come to an end, he also fills the frame with an audience of common people who remain transfixed on the pro-British patriotic images gracing the screen. Through the audience’s reaction, Jordan expresses the potential of communications media to control the populace that Hardt and Negri deem so vital to the endurance of their conception of Empire. Distributed to movie houses and disseminated to the population, the newsreel with its one-sided interpretation of war mutes colonial ideology in favor of the unbridled nationalism that would subsequently spawn the civil liberties atrocities of the Cold War and decolonization. By exposing the power of cinema to indoctrinate in a film for Columbia Pictures (an arm of global media conglomerate Sony), Jordan turns the communicative power of the corporation to shape ideology against itself.

In adapting Greene’s novel to film, Jordan has integrated an Irish perspective into a work of empire written during the transitory period in history that saw the fall of nation-based imperialism and the rise of global capital. Through the adaptation process, Jordan employs both a work of colonial discourse and financing from a global media entity to evoke the repressed influence of past and present imperialisms, writing back to the powers that have had significant consequences for Irish identity, both economically and artistically. However, Jordan serves as merely one of the many film artists working today who find themselves in between their national cinema traditions and the opportunity to make commercially viable films for an international market reeling from the remnants of colonial rule and under the thumb of a globalized Empire that all too often champions demographics and marketability over artistic vision.

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Solving the Mystery of “A Day Saved”

Emma Kemp
Philip Hormbrey

In February 1934, Graham Greene flew from Croydon airport to Paris on assignment for The Spectator magazine.¹ The flight made a great impression on him; in a letter to his brother Hugh on 28 February he declared, “I have now become passionately addicted to flying,”² and shortly afterward he would draw on his experience of air travel when he wrote “A Day Saved.” The story was created for radio and first broadcast by the BBC on 22 June 1934³ before being published in an anthology of Nine O’Clock Stories by Fourteen Authors,⁴ but has received little attention since.

Rooted in the genres of detective and spy fiction, the plot of “A Day Saved” is deceptively simple: the narrator, named Robinson, follows another man in order to take something from him. Robinson sticks to his quarry “like a shadow” (even when the man decides to take a plane instead of a boat, thus saving the titular day) and openly admits that he is prepared to commit murder to get what he wants. Yet ultimately, Robinson’s quest proves a futile one. He never discovers what the “thing” he seeks is and takes no real action to obtain it. Nor does he ever learn his target’s name although he speculates it could be “Jones or Douglas, Wales, Canby, Fotheringay.”⁵ (For ease of reference, we will subsequently refer to the man as “Fotheringay” as this is the name Robinson most often gives him.) As a straightforward tale of detection therefore, the story seems unsatisfactory; no mystery appears to have been solved, there is no obvious revelation. As a “John Buchan style” chase, “A Day Saved” fails too; there is quite simply not enough action. Robinson’s mission begins in the shadows, comes to nothing, and remains shrouded in shadow at the end. Yet Greene is rarely superficial; there are always depths to his shadows, and he knows very well that a detective story must contain clues leading to a solution. In this paper we will follow the clues Greene embedded in his narrative to discover that, far from being unsatisfying, the story contains a very dramatic revelation: Robinson and Fotheringay are not in fact two separate characters but one and the same man.

Neither of the previous two academic articles that address the story penetrate the mystery sufficiently to reach this conclusion. Mengham⁶ makes an interesting comparison between “A Day Saved” and “The Man of the Crowd,”⁷

⁴ Graham Greene, Nine O’clock Stories by Fourteen Authors (London: Bell & Sons Ltd, 1934), 69-79.
Edgar Allan Poe’s short story in which a detective who prides himself on being able to tell any man’s character from his face is defeated by a man with such anonymous features that nothing can be read in them. In Fotheringay, Greene creates a character of similar blandness, and “A Day Saved” does echo aspects of Poe’s tale, but far from declaring his own story’s secrets insolvable, Greene gives us the answer to what lies behind Fotheringay’s face in his last line. In an earlier article, Steven E. Colburn comes tantalizingly close to solving the mystery, understanding that Greene is playing with concepts of identity and suggesting that the point of the story is how easy it is to blur perceptions of self and other, but he does not take the final step and see that Robinson and Fotheringay are one.

In this paper, we will trace our own steps to that conclusion. We begin by looking at “A Day Saved” in the context of Greene’s preceding work, arguing that the short story represents a distillation of the theme of the divided self that had preoccupied Greene in his first three novels. We then examine how the medium of radio might have impacted the story’s message before coming to our main thesis: when Greene applied the word “shadow” to Robinson, he intended it to carry a very specific psychoanalytical meaning, for “the shadow” is the name Carl Jung gave to the hidden and darker side of any psyche.

If we follow Greene’s own advice and adopt the shorthand method of looking at his epigraphs to understand what the first three novels are about, we quickly realize that all of them are ways of exploring the duality implicit in human nature. In The Man Within, the epigraph comes from Sir Thomas Browne: “There’s another man within me that’s angry with me,” and neatly encapsulates Greene’s desire to show that man’s most primal conflicts are never with an external other but located firmly within himself. “A Day Saved” will continue this theme, but whereas in Greene’s first novel the internal struggle determines the protagonist’s outward actions, we will see that Robinson (“the man within” within our short story) is angry specifically because he is powerless to control Fotheringay’s actions.

The title of Greene’s second novel, The Name of Action, comes from Hamlet, Shakespeare’s classic exploration of how a man may be paralyzed by his thoughts from taking action, and the epigraph is taken from T. S. Eliot’s “The Hollow Men” whose titular men also represent a “Paralyzed force”:

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\begin{align*}
&\text{Between the conception} \\
&\text{And the creation} \\
&\text{Between the emotion} \\
&\text{And the response} \\
&\text{Falls the Shadow}
\end{align*}
\]

This epigraph is particularly significant since it, like “A Day Saved,” explicitly mentions “the Shadow” and lends itself to a Jungian interpretation, for it is in our creative or emotional states that Jung locates the most obvious signs of the shadow part of the unconscious making itself conscious. The July 1929 edition of The Criterion includes a review by Alan Porter of Jung’s writings

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that serves to emphasize the affinities between *The Hollow Men* and Jungian symbolism. Like “the Shadow” of Eliot’s poem, a shadow does indeed fall between the conception of the journey in “A Day Saved” and its subsequent creation as a story told by Robinson, a narrator whose violent outbursts of emotion toward the apparently autonomous actions of the man he is shadowing seem to exist in a kind of limbo in which, like the hollow men or like Hamlet, he seems incapable of exerting any direct effect. Fotheringay too resembles the hollow men, being so bland he might be “a shade without color.”

The epigraph to *Rumour at Nightfall*, Greene’s third novel, develops the same theme:

> I my companions see,  
> In you, another me,  
> They seemed others, but are we;  
> Our second selves those shadows be.\(^\text{13}\)

In this novel Greene experiments with a different way of representing man’s duality, locating it not within a single character but splitting it between two cousins. “A Day Saved” will continue this technique with a difference; Robinson, whose movements literally mirror Fotheringay’s as does the reflection in this epigraph, is not a separate character but one that only seemed an Other.

Thus, in his early work Greene first introduces the concept of the man within who is against us, then he plays on Eliot’s (and Jung’s) idea of the shadow that negotiates the space between our unconscious self and our acting self, and finally he embodies aspects of the “man within” externally in a “second self” which manifests its traits independently. In “A Day Saved” Greene will bring all these techniques together to personify a second self that is predicated on a Jungian understanding of the psyche.

While the Jungian subtext of the story may have been missed by most of Greene’s original radio audience, we suggest that they would still have understood the final revelation. When the story is spoken out loud, as it was intended to be, the words come alive and would have been far easier to understand.

The text of the story first published in *Nine O’Clock Stories by Fourteen Authors* shows how Greene enjoyed the opportunities for playing with his audience that the new medium provided. This text includes several sentences that are cut (for obvious reasons) from later editions, including “You should pull me up, correct me, but how can you with all these waves of air lapping between me speaking and you listening”\(^\text{14}\) and “I should like to ask all who are listening to me.”\(^\text{15}\) In these asides made by Robinson directly to the listener, we can see Greene deliberately including his audience in the story while at the same time teasing them with their powerlessness to interrupt or answer the question. Further, by inviting the listener to correct his narrator, Greene highlights Robinson’s potential unreliability even as he hides this behind Robinson’s apparent honest


\(^{15}\) Ibid., line 73.
transparency, a transparency implied by both his willingness to correct himself and his desire to seek help from the audience. Listeners will shadow the unreliable Robinson through the story just as Robinson shadows Fotheringay and, if they shadow closely enough, they should spot the final “tell.”

At the very beginning of the story, Robinson tells the audience, “I had stuck closely to him, as people say like a shadow” before immediately refuting that identification: “But that’s absurd. I’m no shadow. You can feel me, touch me, hear me, smell me. I am Robinson” (although, of course, a radio audience can only hear him). At the end of the story Robinson repeats this refrain in words that mirror the original so closely that the listeners will surely remember them. This time though, Robinson puts the words in Fotheringay’s mouth, imagining that Fotheringay will be the man forced to reassure himself that he is not a shadow: “You can smell me, you can touch me, you can hear me, I am not a shadow: I am Fotheringay, Wales, Canby, I am Robinson.” [Our emphasis.] The repetition is more than a device of narrative symmetry, it IS the reveal. Fotheringay is indeed the name so pointedly added to the end of the list. Fotheringay IS Robinson and, on air, the storyteller could have given the word “am” such emphasis that listeners would have understood this immediately.

However even on the page there are peculiarities which should suggest to the reader that this is not an ordinary detective story. Robinson, for example, does not know what it is that he so “dearly, desperately” wants to take from Fotheringay, but he thinks that it might be carried “in a pouch” or in an incision under the skin or, very oddly indeed, “even closer to his heart than the outer skin.” That the mystery “thing” could be located so close to the heart should alert us at once to the fact that what Robinson is looking for is likely to be metaphysical rather than a literal object. We might posit that this “thing” could be the soul given that the soul is traditionally located in the chest and given the belief of Carl Jung—on whom our analysis rests—that “modern man is in search of a lost soul.” The object is certainly meant to be a clue, but in this tale of shadows and shadowing it is the motif of the shadow and, particularly, the concept of the Jungian shadow that we must follow most closely.

Greene was well-versed in Jungian theory. Following his breakdown at the age of sixteen, his parents sent him to live with a part-time psychoanalyst Kenneth Richmond, a follower of Jung’s, who would certainly have introduced the teenager to one of Jung’s most important concepts—the shadow. In analytical psychology the shadow is an unconscious part of the personality, the unknown dark side. For Jung the shadow personifies “everything the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself,” “all those unpleasant qualities we like to hide,” the hidden, negative, “inferior, primitive, un-

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16 Ibid., 143.
17 Ibid., 143.
18 Ibid., 146.
19 Ibid., 143.
20 Ibid., 143.
21 Ibid., 143.
adapted, and awkward” aspects of the personality. Jung believed that the more these aspects of the self were repressed, the more likely they were to burst out, and the “blacker and denser” the shadow would be. For this reason the shadow could not simply be ignored, but Jung thought it was possible for a self-aware person to integrate aspects of it into the conscious personality thereby partially controlling its negative impact.

If we apply Jung’s concept to “A Day Saved” we can see that Robinson bears an almost textbook resemblance to the Jungian shadow. He is (for most of the story) a hidden presence and, like the hidden part of our psyche, he evinces no values and has no sense of good and evil, prepared to kill his quarry without any qualms of conscience “at night, between two stations ….” By giving Robinson this murderous intent, Greene makes literal Jung’s warning that the unconscious will turn against us if suppressed, while Fotheringay’s complete obliviousness to Robinson for much of the story suggests his unconscious is very well suppressed. Robinson, in confessing his capacity for murder, also exhibits another characteristic Jung ascribed to the shadow: a lack of self-reflection. He tells us that he would kill the man he is shadowing only “if it became necessary ... for I am a gentle creature.” Greene knows that his audience will hear the irony, but his narrator is oblivious to it.

Robinson’s understanding of time is a further indication of his shadow status. He sees at once the futility of Fotheringay’s “saving a day” by taking the plane instead of the boat and gives a long explanation of why such a saving means nothing. And he also, in two sentences that were dropped after the first publication, acknowledges that time passes differently for him, saying “I went on and on. I grew more tired every hour, the only thing I knew was this: time was short for him and had been very long for me.” As well as playing with a sense of menace here—Fotheringay’s time will be short indeed if Robinson carries out his plan to kill him—Greene is also referencing the ideas of Henri Bergson who postulated that there is a difference between external measured time and internal, experienced time. We could say that Fotheringay lives in a world of external measured time, while Robinson’s existence is slowly eked out in the internal realm. This also resonates with Jung’s belief that the unconscious points in two directions at once; on the one hand it gazes “back to a preconscious, prehistoric world of instinct, while on the other it anticipates the future.” Thus, if Robinson is a Jungian shadow, his experience of time potentially spans millennia.

In yet another affinity with the shadow, Robinson is awkward and negative, refusing the invitation to enter the house of Fotheringay’s friends. And in perhaps Greene’s most subtle identification with the shadow, Robinson repeatedly tries to rid himself of assumptions not grounded in fact. When he observes that Fotheringay “met a friend,” he quickly corrects himself: “I

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26 Ibid., para 131.
28 Ibid, line 34.
29 Graham Greene, Nine O’clock Stories “A Day Saved,” line 173.
30 Henri Bergson, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Online.
do not know that it was a friend, I know only that it was someone he greeted with apparent affection,” 32 and he repeatedly insists that in telling his story he wishes “to be exact. All I want in the world is to know.” 33 Jung’s theory was that the unconscious side of the personality can only become conscious by means of an “encounter with empirical facts ... which quicken it to life.” 34 Thus we can read Robinson’s insistence on facts as another of Greene’s jokes; Greene has already personified the shadow; now he gives it the very attribute that Jung says might enable it to leap into consciousness.

In personifying the Jungian shadow in Robinson, Greene not only reveals an acceptance of the reality and presence of the darker aspects of personality (an act that Jung declares essential for any kind of self-knowledge and says requires considerable moral effort) 35 but also appears to challenge the idea of the shadow’s primitive nature. Robinson may exhibit base and primitive instincts, but in his storytelling and in his ideas he displays a greater sophistication than Fotheringay, which we might read as a subversion of the shadow’s traditionally subordinate and compensatory relationship with the ego. Robinson may be an unreliable narrator, but it is Robinson’s story that we hear; it is Robinson whom the reader constantly shadows. Thus, by making Robinson not the unknown, unnamed “Fotheringay,” the real personality of the story, Greene could be said to preempt the ideas of James Hillman, Jung’s most radical interpreter, who suggested that “the shadow world is this world in metaphor, but our shade is not merely our shadow. From the psychic perspective ... only the shadow has substance, only what is in shadow has substance, only what is in shadow matters truly.” 36 From this perspective Robinson is not simply the repository of the darker aspects of the personality that need to be integrated. Instead, it is Fotheringay (the ego/social self) who is merely the reflection of the deeper essence contained in the shadow, just as Fotheringay’s existence in the story is merely the reflection of what Robinson chooses to tell us about him. Greene, it seems, knows that man does not just cast a shadow, that sometimes the shadow can cast the man. At the very least, the process works both ways, as Robinson implies when he describes his shadowing strategy: “In that I was really like a shadow, for sometimes I was before him and sometimes I was behind him.” 37 We cannot know which comes first, the act or the shadow; all we know is that the shadow and the ego are inseparable.

The fact that the shadow is our closest witness, and in some ways our closest collaborator, is also illustrated in the way the story unfolds. Fotheringay’s journey provides the story’s action; without Fotheringay’s decisive movements—taking the plane, saving a day, and safely achieving his journey’s end—there would be no story, just as there might be no short story had “Greene the journalist” not flown to Paris. Equally, “A Day Saved” could not

32 Graham Greene, Collected Short Stories, “A Day Saved,” 143.
33 Ibid.
exist without Robinson, our narrator or, behind him, “Greene, the novelist” with his Jungian knowledge, telling it.

Like fact and fiction, there are times when Fotheringay and Robinson come close to merging with each other. In the middle of the story, Robinson makes himself known to Fotheringay and they get drunk together. Intoxication is a well-known method of dissolving the barriers between the conscious and the unconscious and, as Robinson and Fotheringay enter this state, Robinson has an absolute feeling of kinship for the man he is trailing, saying “We became for the time being friends. I felt more warmly towards him than towards any other man I have ever known.” But the feeling does not last; it cannot last because the two characters cannot understand each other. They may exist within the same person, but they occupy separate realities. When Robinson, for example, tells Fotheringay he is desperate, Fotheringay can only think that his companion is asking for money. And despite the fact that they are together for hours, Robinson can never even manage to learn Fotheringay’s true name. After they travel to Fotheringay’s final destination together and Fotheringay invites Robinson into the house, Robinson point blank refuses: “I said no”; “I stepped back and he went in.” The moment of drunken kinship has passed and with it the possibility of integration.

Standing outside in the cold, watching Fotheringay and his friends make what seems to be “a deliberate display of their unity and companionship,” all Robinson’s hatred for the man he has shadowed for so long returns. He feels his own isolation, feels his own paralyzed “shadow-ness.” Furiously, he turns “the day saved” into a curse, “praying” that Fotheringay “suffers its eighty-six thousand four hundred seconds when he has the most desperate need” (this curse-prayer is yet another indication that he lives in the inverted world of the shadow) and prophesying a day when Fotheringay will be the shadow. With his failure to make good the threat to kill Fotheringay, we may assume that Robinson has at some point realized that such an action would be self-slaughter, but nothing can prevent him from falling into self-hatred as he stands an outsider in the garden and an angry man within.

Greene ends the story leaving the two characters deliberately and dramatically separate. Fotheringay has become slightly conscious of his shadow, but the shadow has refused integration. As we have seen, it is only now, in the last line, that Greene reveals the two characters’ single identity, telling us, “I am Fotheringay, Wales, Canby … I am Robinson.” And, we might suggest, “I am all of you listeners/readers,” for Greene understood that the psyche is made up of a fragmented multiplicity of selves, a multiplicity that will always include a shadow, but a shadow that may perhaps turn out to be Fotheringay, not Robinson.

In depth psychology, all consciousness begins in what we might term “the night,” and only by penetrating the night’s shadows can we gain a true insight into the nature of reality. What is particularly interesting about “A Day Saved” is that Greene does not merely personify the concept of the

39 Ibid., line 6.
40 Ibid., line 10.
41 Ibid., lines 17-18.
42 Ibid., lines 27-28.
43 Ibid, lines 32-33.
shadow, he also embodies the hidden presence of the shadow world in the very structure of his narrative to show that only by penetrating that world will we truly understand what he is doing in the story. Thus, “A Day Saved” operates on several levels. We can, like most of the radio listeners would have done, hear only an uncanny twist at the end; we can add to the story’s depth by recognizing Robinson as a second self, as the shadow part of the psyche; and we can take it even deeper by recognizing the truth of what Greene is telling us: it is in the shadow world that the most important things happen; it is the shadow world that shades in life and gives it meaning.

Greene, we are sure, must have seen the parallels between the shadow and his own creative process. As Robinson remains outside in the garden, observing everything in minute detail, Greene too was capable of regarding life with the precision and detachment required to take the material it gave him and turn it into magnificent fiction. Over the next few years, as his writing evolved, he would continue to explore the breadth of the human psyche, but he would do so within the more accessible paradigms of Christianity, marrying the ancient dilemmas of faith with his understanding of modern psychology to create some of his most successful novels. Yet regardless of whether his writing ranged between the old poles of good and evil or chose to explore the twilight land between the ego and the shadow, Greene, like Robinson, was in constant pursuit of something, a thing hidden and secret but worth pursuing: the mystery of what makes us who we are.

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In this tale Blacker, one of the town’s two bakers and a self-professed “free-thinker,” attempts to persuade the ten-year-old Catholic altar boy David to procure a consecrated Eucharistic Host—one that has, through the celebration of the Mass, been transformed into the body of Christ. Blacker’s interest in the communion wafer, he insists, will provide him with the opportunity to demonstrate his own skill (“I can bake the things you eat just as well as any Catholic can”) and to conduct an empirical enquiry into the doctrine of transubstantiation by which the Eucharist is said to transform: “Do you think if I put the two of them under a microscope, you could tell the difference? ... How I’d like to get one of yours in my mouth—just to see ... want to see what your God tastes like.” David procures the Host but in so doing he desecrates it, depriving it of its sacred purpose and altering its form. In so doing he is converted from spiritless enactment of religious devotion and liturgical rites to a depth of faith that results in him, in later years, taking holy orders.

Greene’s story of the sacrilegious misuse of a sacred object is not wholly original. Host desecration narratives similar to this have abounded since the Middle Ages and were often used in an attempt to justify the persecution, expulsion, and murder of Jews. Folklorist Alan Dundes describes how such accusations may have arisen from “projective inversion”—a psychological process “in which A accuses B of carrying out an action which A really


3 Ibid., 40-41.
wishes to carry out him or herself.”

Dundes explains: “It is the underlying Christian guilt for orally incorporating the blood and flesh of their god, commonly perceived as the Christ child, which makes them project that guilt to the convenient Jewish scapegoat.”

These Host desecration myths depicted Jews as opponents of Christianity, intent on defilement. Blood libel myths proliferated, and Jews were falsely accused of ritually murdering Christian children in order to consume their blood. In fact, stories of the murder of children and of the desecration of the Host were often linked by the trope of ritual consumption of bread; the blood libel myths that proliferated in the Middle Ages generally saw a young boy tortured in ways that echoed Christ’s Passion, killed, exsanguinated, and his blood used to make matzah for Passover.

Given Greene’s interest in medieval drama, he may have taken as his inspiration one particular dramatic retelling of such desecration myths—the only extant English Host Miracle Play, *Pe Conversyon of Ser Jonathas Be Jewe by Myracle of Be Blyssed Sacrament*, also known as the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*. In this late fifteenth-century drama Aristorius, a Christian merchant, procures a consecrated Eucharistic Host for Jonathas, a Jewish man who wants to use the bread to disprove the doctrine of transubstantiation. In order to test and undermine the Christian belief that the Eucharistic bread is the body of Christ, Jonathas and his companions enact a series of grisly tortures upon it, echoing Christ’s Passion: it receives five wounds; it is submerged into hot oil; it is nailed to a post and then plucked down. The Host bleeds throughout this process and, finally, as it is baked in an oven, it transforms into the Christ child who rebukes his assailants. Christ heals Jonathas, who has been wounded during the ordeal, and the play ends with a conversion and a promise of pilgrimage. Although in “The Hint of an Explanation” Blacker never acquires the consecrated host to inflict these ordeals upon it, both stories (and other such analogues) have in common the persuasion of a Christian to procure the communion bread, the desire to test empirically the doctrine of transubstantiation, and a desecration that either converts or deepens faith.

The anti-Semitism of the possible analogues for Greene’s story and the historical context of desecration myths cannot be erased, especially not for the reader who is familiar with medieval drama or with the history of persecution of the Jewish people. Blacker’s threat to bleed David with his cut-throat razor echoes blood libel narratives, and


5 Ibid., 398.


7 See McCormack.

David’s unquestioning devotion calls to mind that of the *litel clergeon* of Chaucer’s *Priess’ Tale* who is persecuted, in a blood ritual, for his piety, despite his lack of understanding of the *Alma Redemptoris* that he sings. David’s faith before the desecration is also merely performative. He tells his interlocutor that “it may seem odd to you, but this was the first time that the idea of transubstantiation really lodged in my mind. I had learnt it all by rote; I had grown up with the idea. The Mass was as lifeless to me as the sentences in *De Bello Gallico*, communion a routine like drill in the schoolyard, but here suddenly I was in the presence of a man who took it seriously, as seriously as the priest whom naturally one didn’t count—it was his job.”

Greene, however, manipulates his analogues in a variety of ways to distance his tale from the anti-Semitic desecration myths. First, Blacker is not Jewish. He is a free-thinker: a sceptic who believes that religious faith should be empirically tested. This designation is ironic, as David insists that Blacker’s obsession constrains, rather than liberates, his thinking: “Can you hate something you don’t believe in? And yet he called himself a free-thinker. What an impossible paradox, to be free and to be so obsessed. Day by day all through those holidays his obsession must have grown, but he kept a grip; he bided his time.”

Second, it is not Blacker himself who desecrates the Host, but David. Unsure of how to procure the Host, and operating without a plan, David seizes the opportunity when the communion wafer is placed in his mouth. Here the desecration is partly accidental, and partly borne out of confusion and desperation—broadly symbolic of how uncomfortably divine mysteries fit into human hands:

> I got up and made for the curtain to get the cruet that I had purposely left in the sacristy. When I was there I looked quickly round for a hiding-place and saw an old copy of the *Universe* lying on a chair. I took the Host from my mouth and inserted it between two sheets—a little damp mess of pulp. ... I tried to remove the Host, but it had stuck clammily between the pages and in desperation I tore out a piece of the newspaper and screwing the whole thing up, stuck it in my trouser pocket.¹¹

Third, unlike in the Host desecration myths from the Middle Ages, the Host of “The Hint of an Explanation” does not physically transform by, for example, bleeding. Nor is the Host here equated with Christ’s body, but it is more broadly representative of a mystery of faith that David does not fully comprehend until he attempts to defile it. In this text, the focus of the story is not on proving the doctrine of transubstantiation, or even on thinking of the Eucharist in terms of Christ’s body. Rather, it is on David’s changing attitude towards the sacrament and on demonstrating how that faith itself is transubstantiated, with its substance of devotion coming to match its accidents of the celebration of the liturgy.

In the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*, the torture of the Host paves the way for the conversion that results from its miracles—through which Aristorius repents his sins and becomes an exemplar for the audience as well as a sign of God’s mercy made manifest. In

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⁹ Greene, 41.
¹⁰ Ibid., 39.
¹¹ Ibid., 43.
“The Hint of an Explanation,” it is David who is converted, as he comes to meditate upon and understand the significance of the Eucharistic sacrament. When, undressing for bed, he finds the crumpled piece of newspaper that enfolds the sticky Host, he is “haunted by the presence of God there on the chair. ... I knew that this which I had beside my bed was something of infinite value—something a man would pay for with his whole peace of mind.”12 The act of conversion is, paradoxically, through one final desecration as David swallows the wafer—newspaper and all—with the help of water from the ewer. The worldliness of this act—the paradoxically cleansing waters of the ewer and the consumption of a spiritual mystery wrapped inside the materiality of the universe—intensify the paradox of faith at the heart of the text as the reader becomes implicated into the binary encoding of good and evil, light and darkness, on which such moral fables rely and that Greene constantly seeks to deconstruct in this text.

The story is one of tensions, dualities, and contradictions, just like this conversion through desecration in which David’s recognition of the earthly value of the consecrated Host brings an awareness of its spiritual worth. Similar tensions exist, for instance, in David’s insistence that Blacker is defined by his hatred, despite the fact that he sees in him a “certain furtive love.”13 Blacker, too, is depicted as torn—hopeful at David’s procurement of the Eucharist, but also disappointed by it: “When I came back through the curtain carrying the cruet my eyes met Blacker’s. He gave me a grin of encouragement and unhappiness—yes, I am sure, unhappiness. Was it perhaps that the poor man was all the time seeking something incorruptible?”14 These tensions are, in fact, essential to illustrating the mysteries of faith at which David attempts to hint throughout the text—mysteries that cannot be decoded by human knowledge and experience, especially when the parameters of both are so volatile and mutable, filtered through narration, memory, and time.

Greene’s own characters are not exempt from the interpretative riddles at the heart of the story. For instance, David speculates on what Blacker would have done with the Host after obtaining it from David (“‘I really believe,’ my companion said, ‘that he would first of all have put it under his microscope before he did all the other things I expect he had planned’”),15 and he interprets Blacker’s tears as disappointment in his failure to acquire the host. Yet David acknowledges the role that his own tender age played in his interpretations by claiming that his realizations are made despite his age—“even as a child”—and the reader is haunted by the unreliability of the version of the story that is told. Here, David’s speculation is filtered not only through youthful inexperience but also through the capriciousness of memory and through layers of narration in which a travel companion recounts a conversation with a priest that draws on memories of his younger self and that self’s interpretation of events. As Coulthard notes:

The priest is as subjective as the narrator is objective, and herein lies

12 Ibid., 44.
13 Ibid., 38.
14 Ibid., 43.
15 Ibid., 45.
16 Ibid.
the problem of a one-level interpretation. The cleric not only tells the story, but explains its meaning to his fellow traveler. If the reader accepts the priest's interpretation of his childhood experience, the story is elementary. Its theme is that God sends saving signs, or hints, to his chosen. These hints of God’s power often come in the form of evil which, with God’s help, the tempted resists and eventually thwarts. ... However, if the reader chooses to interpret for himself the meaning of the priest’s story (as the traveling companion, an agnostic, seems tacitly to do), he might arrive at an explication quite different from that of the priest (and Greene himself?).

In Greene’s retelling of the Host desecration myth, the author takes a tale that originates in a child’s morality fable and rearranges it so that the lines between good and evil become less clearly drawn. As “The Hint of an Explanation” develops, the chiaroscuro fades into shades of grey, where Blacker is not wholly evil and where David’s interpretation of events is unreliable at best. “Our view is so limited,” the adult David notes to his travel companion, as though to warn readers of the unreliability of his narration before contradicting himself by authoritatively presenting an interpretation of Blacker’s actions (as an attempt to “revenge himself on everything he hated”). As David’s story concludes with a description of Blacker’s hopeless tears, the narrator writes that “the points switched and we were tossed from one set of rails to another.”

Brother Joseph, writing for *The Explicator*, reads these lines as describing the narrator’s development in understanding the problem of evil:

> The train on which the Agnostic and the priest are riding is not like the train in Blacker’s store, riding on its track in circles and never reaching a destination. The real train, passing through tunnels and towns, admitting and obscuring light, absorbing flashes and flickers, is a symbol of the journey of the mind of the Agnostic as it gradually admits the flashes of truth and becomes sufficiently educated to be switched to a new track of thought about God by the hint of an explanation. Yet given the many hints Greene makes toward the unreliability of David’s narration and of the limits of human understanding of divine mysteries—and given that Blacker doesn’t appear to be the wholly evil and irredeemable creature that David claims—this switch of tracks should, perhaps, be read not as a validation of David’s version of events but rather a shift in perspective that challenges that version. This seems to be confirmed by the narrator’s trite statement that “it’s an interesting story” and that he would have given to Blacker what he wanted. “I suppose you think you owe a lot to Blacker,” concludes the narrator,

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18 Greene, 36.
19 Ibid., 38.
20 Ibid., 45.
22 For more on the interpretative problems of the text, see Coulthard, who notes that the text is not the simple moral fable that most readers have taken “hint” to be.
23 Greene, 46.
reminding us of David’s subjectivity and casting doubt on his version of events. This is a text that draws on the typology of medieval moral didacticism to force the reader to question the parameters of their interpretative framework. Greene seems to offer a clear-cut moral fable through the typological naming of his antagonist, by emphasising the protagonist’s youth and innocence, and in the framing of the reminiscence that promises to present us with a hint of the explanation of the problem of evil. Yet he denies the same in the moral ambiguity of his characterization by attributing sacrilege to innocence and through intricate narration. While Coulthard reads the story’s shades of grey as evidence that it is “an understated satire on a proud, complacent priest who deigns to believe that God, for all his infinite mercy, would lead him into the priesthood by having him trod down a helpless, pitiable creature such as Blacker,” it seems, however, that it is not the priest who is held up to scrutiny but the nature of evil itself. In creating a tale that is rooted in medieval moral discourse but refuses the reader the binarism that such texts provide, Greene problematizes the tropes associated with such stories and the lessons that they have traditionally purported to teach. Here the author doesn’t provide a hint of an explanation, but rather complicates the problem of evil, leaving it as nameless and faceless as “the thing” that David refuses to anthropomorphise. In doing so, he reminds us that both redemption and faith can be found as readily in the shadows on the wall as they can elsewhere.

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24 Coulthard, 60.
25 Greene, 36.
26 Ibid., 44.

Michael Meeuwis

I dedicate this study to the memory of Lucy Hill (14 December 1976 – 27 July 2019), dearest friend in so much more than literature.

1. Introduction and statement of purpose

Graham Greene’s A Burnt-Out Case, first published with The Bodley Head in January 1961, is set in the Congo, which was a colony of Belgium until 30 June 1960. As usual, Greene went on location in advance to find inspiration for a dramatic plot and characters for his new novel and to collect contextual and technical information to compose its background. He spent about five weeks in the Belgian Congo between 31 January and 7 March 1959. During these weeks Greene also kept a diary, which was published eleven months after the novel. It appeared as “Congo Journal” together with a reprint of “Convoy to West Africa,” the diary Greene had kept during his voyage in a cargo boat from Liverpool to Freetown, Sierra Leone, between December 1941 and January 1942. The entire volume was given the title In Search of a Character: Two African Journals.

This widely available published version of “Congo Journal” however, differs strongly from the original manuscript of Greene’s diary. In fact, Greene subjected the manuscript not to one, but to at least five revisions before allowing it to go to print. The revisions involved, among other things: the addition of a whole set of footnotes providing explanations and knowledge Greene gathered after returning from the Congo; deletion of passages of an erotic nature; omission of references to his extramarital affairs in Europe; modification of originally depreciative portrayals of persons he had met in the Congo (some of these portrayals he turned into squarely opposite, positive ones); putting his host Dr. Lechat less in the foreground; and other types of significant alterations.

My aim in this study is threefold. First of all, in light of this large discrepancy between the original manuscript and the eventual publication, it is, plainly, to offer a readable presentation of the original text (first column in section 4), as I deem it in itself of particular interest for scholars interested in Greene’s truest experiences while in the Congo and his general state of mind, heart, and soul at this particular point in his life—the first half of 1959.

Secondly, it is to identify the manifold, successive changes to which Greene submitted the text in the process toward publication. I will describe them in two columns to the right of the manuscript. For the sake of readability, I have chosen not to focus on the purely orthographic and illegible phrase and paragraph in Greene’s handwriting. My gratitude also goes to Richard Greene of the University of Toronto, Honoré Vinck of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (the congregation of missionaries with whom Greene spent time in the Congo), Edith Dasnoy, and Felix Deckx of KU Leuven, for having helped me find invaluable biographical information on persons mentioned in Greene’s diary.

1 A first version of this paper was presented as “The Five Lives of the Congo Journal” at the 19th International Graham Greene Festival, Berkhamsted, UK, 20-24 September 2017. I wish to thank the participants at this Festival for their useful feedback. I am also particularly indebted to Mike Hill, Jonathan Wise, Chris Hull, Richard Greene, and Elizabeth Garner (Harry Ransom Center, Texas, USA) who helped me enormously in deciphering many an
grammatical corrections Greene made, nor on changes of a minor, sentence-level stylistic nature, but rather on the modifications (and all of those) that are somehow pertinent to the content of Greene’s perceptions and experiences with persons, places, events, and himself.

In section 3 I provide general descriptions of each of the successive versions of the text in detail. This, in brief, is an overview. First (section 3.1 below), there is, evidently, the original manuscript, which in fact already displays some changes Greene applied in ink at a later stage than the original moment of writing. Second, the manuscript was typed out by his secretary Josephine Reid, a process during which quite a number of passages were already omitted or changed (see 3.2). Third, Greene then thoroughly corrected Reid’s typescript in longhand (3.3), adding the battery of new footnotes mentioned above but also altering many parts in the text itself. The fourth version are the galley proofs (3.4); these are not an exact reproduction of Reid’s typescript-cum-Greene’s-revision, but in fact also contain (a minor number of) new elements. The fifth “life” of the diary consists of a much longer list of corrections Greene made on the galley proofs (3.5), again in longhand. Many of these, as I will explain, were demanded from him by Dr. Michel Lechat, the leprologist who was Greene’s main medical informant in the Congo. Greene had sent the galley proofs to him for additional comments and feedback. Finally (3.6), there is the eventual printed version as “Congo Journal” in In Search of a Character.

My third but not less important aim is to clarify and contextualize a whole variety of persons, locales, events, etc. that Greene mentions in the journal. By means of an apparatus of footnotes of my own, added to the manuscript itself, I provide historical-contextual information on (Belgian, Congolese, or European) persons Greene met and mentions throughout this text, some of which served as models for characters in A Burnt-Out Case; clarify the French terms he uses; geographically situate the places he is visiting; identify the books he says he is reading; etc.

2. Chronological overview of Greene’s trip to and travels in the Congo

The general idea for A Burnt-Out Case came to Greene during and after finalizing Our Man in Havana (1958). At that point he only envisaged to set his new novel in a leprosy hospital somewhere in the tropics: “a new novel [was] already beginning to form in my head by way of a situation—a stranger who turns up in a remote leper settlement for no apparent reason.”

In September 1958 he contacts his Belgian friend Baroness Johanna “Hansi” von Reininghaus-Lambert (1899-1960), asking whether she would know of such a leprosy settlement in the Belgian Congo. Hansi Lambert immediately forwards Greene’s letter to her friend the Belgian doctor Michel Lechat in the Congo, adding a note requesting him to write to Greene directly. A correspondence between Greene and Lechat quickly ensues.

Michel Lechat (1927-2014) was the only qualified physician working in the Congo,” Graham Greene Studies, Vol. 1, ed. Joyce Stavic and Jon Wise (Dahlonega: University of North Georgia Press, 2017), 56-81.

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3 See Michael Meeuws, “The Furthest Escape of All: Darkness and Refuge in the Belgian
Iyonda’s leprosery—composed of a hospital, technical buildings, houses for the missionary Fathers and Sisters, and a secluded settlement for leprosy patients—was founded in 1945; Lechat had been working there since 1953, living in a house on the compound together with his wife Edith Dasnoy (born 1932) and their two small children Marie (born 1954) and Laurent (born 1956).

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Lechat, at first reluctant, in early January finally agrees on Greene’s visit. He starts making arrangements with the missionaries of Iyonda and in particular with their Bishop in Coquilhatville, Hilaire Vermeiren, whose congregation also runs other mission stations with leproseries in the region. It is decided that Greene will occupy a room in the house of the missionary Fathers in Iyonda and will also have most of his meals with them, that Greene will be free to observe Lechat’s and the Fathers’ daily routines without them having to adjust course of work too much, and that the Bishop will also help Greene visit the MSC’s other mission stations with leproseries.

Greene leaves London on Monday 26 January 1959 for Brussels. He travels together with a young woman whom in his diary he nicknames “Tony” and with whom he is having a brief affair (see 3.1 below). Greene and “Tony” spend five days together in the Palace hotel in Brussels, making excursions to Belgian sites of interest such as the city of Bruges. On Friday 30 January he boards, from Brussels international airport, an airplane to the Congo, arriving in its capital Leopoldville in the morning of Saturday 31 January, the date of his first diary entry.

Greene stays three days in Leopoldville. He unenthusiastically does press interviews with journalists, has dinner with businessmen and officials, and is taken around the city.

On Monday 2 February, Greene leaves Leopoldville on a domestic flight to Coquilhatville, in those days abbreviated to “Coq” in Belgian colonial parlance (which would become “Luc” in *A Burnt-Out Case*). Greene is collected at Coquilhatville’s little airstrip by Dr. Lechat, who immediately drives him to Iyonda and introduces him to the Fathers, who show him to his room in their house. Greene’s daily routine until 12 February is to do his reading of the novels he has brought with him in the morning on the bank of the Congo River. The rest of the day Greene spends walking around the mission and the leprosery, conversing with the Fathers, very occasionally with a leprosy patient, and observing Dr. Lechat’s medical activities and asking him technical questions. He is often taken to Coquilhatville for protocol meetings with officials and dignitaries such as the Province Governor, the Bishop, the Burgomaster, and others.

Between 12 and 26 February, Greene travels the Ruki-Momboyo, a tributary of the Congo River (see Map 2), as a passenger on board the “Theresita,” the Bishop’s steamer frequently used by him and his missionaries to travel between their network of mission posts. Greene’s only fellow passengers are three MSC-missionaries: captain Father Georges Léonet, Father Henri Vanderslaghmolen, whom he had already met at Iyonda and who was the only one with some knowledge of English, and Father Pierre Van den Cruyce. The steamer calls, among others, at the MSC mission stations of Bokuma (where they stay two days, 12-13 February), Ingende and Flandria (14 February), Imbonga (15-17 February), Lusako and Waka (17 February), and reaches its final destination of Wafanya on 19 February. Imbonga and Wafanya each house a leprosery—the one at Wafanya is called “Lombolombo” (see Map 2). Greene visits both, bringing, together with Iyonda, the total of leprosies he will have visited in the Congo to three.

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5 Detailed biographical information on each is provided in my footnotes to the manuscript.
On Saturday 21 February, the Theresita turns around, leaving Wafanya to head back to Coquilhatville. The voyage this time being downstream, they travel much faster. On 22 February they moor at Besow, and the next day they are able to stop and go on land at Waka, Lusako, and Imbonga in the span of one day. On 24 February the passengers spend the entire day at Flandria, Greene being hosted by the English palm oil plant manager Chris Lipscomb and his wife, whom he had already met on his way upstream (14 February). Obliged to speak French all the time in the Congo, i.e., in his conversations with Dr. Lechat, colonials, and all the missionaries (except Henri Vanderslaghmolen), and never understanding a word of the Flemish the missionaries used among themselves, Greene particularly enjoys “the sheer pleasure of talking English” with the Lipscombs. On 26 February, the steamer is back in Coquilhatville, from where Greene is immediately driven to Iyonda.

Back in Iyonda, Greene picks up his former routine of reading novels in the morning, except that he no longer goes to the riverbank and instead chooses the loggia of the Fathers’ house where he has his room. The rest of the day he spends with the Fathers and especially with the Lechat couple, for whom his appreciation continues to grow, resulting in a deep and lasting friendship with Michel Lechat in particular. Greene especially esteems Lechat’s professional wisdom, humaneness with leprosy patients, perspicacity, judgment of character, cultivation and taste, and intelligent discretion. Indicative of this friendship is the fact that Greene dedicated A
**Burnt-Out Case** to him, in a long preface. A correspondence between the two would continue after Greene’s return to Europe and until at least 1988. Michel Lechat also more than once visited Greene in Antibes. He strongly supported Greene in the context of the negative review of **A Burnt-Out Case** by the leprologist Dr. Robert Cochrane. In a personal letter to Cochrane, Lechat took up Greene’s defense, arguing that a novelist has the right to choose any subject he likes, including leprosy, which is no one’s prerogative territory, for “leprosy is part of human life in the same way as war, corruption, scandals, lost hopes, hate and love.”

During his second “term” at Iyonda, between 26 February and 5 March, Greene is again several times invited for duty drinks in Coquilhatville and is once more bothered by amateur writers. In the morning of Greene’s last day in Iyonda, Thursday 5 March, Father Paul Van Molle, an amateur cameraman, realizes that neither the Lechats nor the priests have taken any photos or other kind of visual record of Greene. With Greene’s departure imminent later that day, Father Paul hastens to make a recording of Greene on his 8mm camera.

Greene leaves Iyonda after lunch of this day, 5 March. He is driven to the Coquilhatville airstrip by the Lechat couple, accompanied by their two small children and Father Henri Vanderslaghmolen. Four other colonials meet them at the airstrip to see him off.

He arrives back in Leopoldville in the afternoon, where he spends two days. In the morning of 7 March, he traverses the Congo River by boat, leaving Leopoldville and the Belgian Congo behind and entering the directly opposite city of Brazzaville, situated in French Equatorial Africa. He stays there only one day, boarding a plane to Libreville (now the capital of Gabon) on 8 March, the evening of the same day traveling on to Douala, Cameroon. He spends his days in Douala with Paul Boucarut, an old acquaintance from Indochina, and his Vietnamese wife Hô. As Richard Greene explains, it is here that Paul and Hô introduce Greene to Yvonne Cloetta. Greene visits Dibamba, a leprosery situated near Douala, which brings the total number of leproseries he visits in Africa to four. Greene will later discuss the differences between this leprosery and the ones in the Congo in an exchange of letters with Lechat. He leaves Douala traveling back to England on 13 March 1959.

### 3. The Journal’s successive versions

#### 3.1 The manuscript

The original manuscript, which I have typed out literatim in the first column in section 4 below, is in possession of the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas. Figure 1 shows the first page of Greene’s manuscript. The original manuscript, which I have typed out literatim in the first column in section 4 below, is in possession of the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas. Figure 1 shows the first page of Greene’s manuscript.
journal, giving an impression of the physical characteristics of the text.

Figure 1: Page 1 of the manuscript

[Image of a page from a handwritten manuscript]
These are some general observations of importance to be made about this original text. First of all, the Harry Ransom Center has confirmed to me that the pages containing the 9 February entry are missing from the holograph. They must still have formed part of the diary when Greene handed it over to his secretary Josephine Reid for typing out, as her typescript contains a full entry for this date.

Secondly, Greene already made some changes to the text in longhand. We can detect that from the different ink type he used or from a different freshness of the ink type. In the January 31 entry (Figure 1), for instance, we can see how he added “is that a practical possibility.”

Third, there is the date and title on top of the first page. Greene wrote “JOURNAL Feb – March 1959” in the right top corner, and the title “In Pursuit of a Novel” in the center. Telling from the positioning (and the ink) of both, they are clearly later additions. As these two lines do not appear in Josephine Reid’s typescript of the manuscript, Greene probably added them much later, for instance when at an advanced moment in his life he was sorting out his archives. Either way, as I will explain in 3.3, when correcting Reid’s typescript in longhand, Greene would come up with yet a different title, the definitive one, namely In Search of a Character: Two African Journals.

Fourth, the most intriguing changes Greene made in ink in the original diary have to do with a young English lady whose real name he already at this stage decides to blot out and replace with the nickname “Tony” (Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Examples of original name blotted out, and replaced with “Tony”](image)

In the diary manuscript, Greene describes “Tony” as “a girl of 29, married two years to a man of 28 whom she loves, the first affair since marriage. [...] The mystery that surrounds her motives and character—the mixture of juvenility and the sophisticated, even corrupt surroundings attract one like fire. Whatever her motive how ready and how sweet she was” (15 February entry). Greene had an affair with this “Tony” when his affair with Catherine Walston was coming to a close. Tony’s
one-year younger husband apparently served in Cyprus: “One letter from C. and one from Tony. The good news from Cyprus may have put an end to that relationship—I’m sorry even though I know it’s for the best. For once there will be only pleasant memories. Not even one quarrel in that week [i.e., the week in Brussels, prior to Greene’s departure for the Congo, MM]” (26 February entry). As I explained elsewhere, letters from Greene to his friend and confidant John Sutro make it clear that the affair had already started in England before Greene and left for Brussels and then the Congo. In a letter to Sutro of 13 January 1959 Greene writes: “My own appointments are getting congested owing to the extreme developments due to a certain reckless move.” This “reckless move” probably refers to the beginning of the affair with Tony. It is from a letter of Friday 30 January that we know, as mentioned above, that Greene and Tony traveled together from London to Belgium (Monday 26 January 1959), spent the week together in the Palace Hotel in Brussels, made excursions to Bruges, and that on the night of Friday 30 January Greene boarded a plane in Brussels for the Congo after having “seen my companion off by train.”

Who may this Tony have been? The blotted-out characters suggest the name “Antonia,” but then this, too, may have been a pseudonym, one that Greene chose to use when first writing his lines. In her notebook Gillian Sutro, wife of Greene’s friend John Sutro, copied down guesses that Yvonne Cloetta, who apparently also was in the know, had suggested as to the real identity of Tony. These are:

~ Leslie Caron, French-American actress who played Gigi in the 1958 eponymous movie;
~ Heather Sears, award-winning British actress;
~ Samantha Eggar, British-American actress who began her career after 1960;

The following facts corroborate or contradict these different hypotheses. Leslie Caron was indeed 28 or 29 years old in January 1959. In favor of the Heather Sears hypothesis speaks the fact that in 1959 she was two years married to the production designer named Anthony “Tony” Masters, which could have been the reason for Greene’s use of the nickname Tony. Yet in January 1959 she was only 23, not 29 as Greene writes, and her husband was 39, not 28. An argument against the Samantha Eggar hypothesis is that in January 1959 she was only 20 years old, and she did not marry until 1964. Allegra Sander, finally, was 30 in January 1959, which is close to the age Greene mentions for his Tony. The order in which I have reviewed these possible candidates is not meant to imply a preference for one or the other hypothesis. More research is needed to establish with certainty the true identity of Tony. At this point I would like only to suggest that there is some likeness between

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15 See R. Greene, 252.
Greene’s description of Tony in his diary and the character of Marie Rycker in *A Burnt-Out Case*, Rycker’s wife. She too, is juvenile, lowly educated, and invents an affair with Querry.

These are the editorial principles I will apply in presenting the manuscript. In my presentation of the manuscript (first column), normal parentheses are Greene’s, while square brackets (at times including a question mark) are my own and indicate words or phrases difficult to decipher in Greene’s handwriting. In his manuscript, Greene often used the symbol “Δ” for “and.” For ease of reading, I have changed these instances to “and” (as they also appear in the final publication). Also, as mentioned above (the example of “is that a practical possibility”), in some places Greene crossed out a word or phrase inserting a replacement, of which in fact there are only few cases. I will not copy the original, crossed out text, but only retain the replacement. Apart from these minor interventions I make for the sake of readability, I will maintain as many typographical characteristics of the manuscript as possible. Greene’s own organization of the text in paragraphs, his (inconsistent) use of underlining, his abbreviations (e.g., “The P. and G.” for “The Power and the Glory,” “Feb.” for “February”), capital letters, spelling mistakes (rare, but particularly present in the spelling of African names) will all be respected and are explained in footnotes of my own.

### 3.2 Josephine Reid’s typescript

(JR)

The second column in section 4 below contains and identifies, by means of the code JR, the changes that Greene’s secretary Josephine Reid made when typing out the author’s handwritten diary.

Reid’s typescript is not a verbatim transcription of the diary. It contains important shortenings and omissions, most probably requested by Greene when he handed her over his manuscript. The shortenings mostly apply to the many reflections Greene made on the extramarital affairs he had had, or was still having, in Europe; the omissions are mostly passages of an erotic nature, as well as the references to his affair with Tony. It is indeed in this process of Reid’s typing out Greene’s original diary that Tony disappears from the text.

Another significant difference is that there is now a two-page introduction, which, with some modifications, would become the Introduction of the published version *In Search of Character*. Again, Greene must have given it to Reid in long hand together with his diary manuscript. I copy this introduction below (to the right, the codes GGJR, GGgp, and fp signify, respectively, Greene’s correction on Reid’s typescript, Greene’s revision of the galley proofs, and the final publication).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JR. Adds:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have set two of my novels in Africa, <em>A Burnt-Out Case</em> in the Belgian Congo and <em>The Heart of the Matter</em> in Sierra Leone. The circumstances were rather different: I went to the Belgian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congo in January 1959 with a novel already beginning to form in my head by way of a situation - a stranger who turns up in a remote leper colony. I am not as a rule a note-taker, but on this occasion I was bound to take notes so as to establish an authentic medical background. Even making notes day by day in the form of a journal I made mistakes which had to be corrected at a later stage by my friend Dr. Lechat. As a journal was forced on me I took advantage of the opportunity to talk aloud to myself, to record scraps of imaginary dialogue and incidents, some of which found their way into my novel, some of which were discarded. Anyway for better or worse this was how a novel started, though it was four months after my return from the Congo before I set to work. Never had a novel proved more recalcitrant or more depressing. The reader had only to endure the company of the character called here X and in the novel Querry for a few days, but the author had to live with him and in him for eighteen months. As one grows older the writing of a novel does not become more easy, and it seemed to me when I wrote the last words that I had reached an age when another full-length novel was probably beyond my powers.

The second journal was written for my own amusement at that period of the war when life and a future seemed uncertain for all of us. I had no book in mind, although during the voyage to West Africa so recorded I remember reading a detective story of a fantastic kind by Michael Innes which set my mind moving in the direction of The Ministry of Fear, which I wrote in what spare time from work I could allow myself in Freetown16. It was my second visit to West Africa - the first had been in 1934 when I went up through Sierra Leone to the Liberian border and then walked

16 Capital of the British colony of Sierra Leone in West Africa.
across that strange country to the sea at Grand Bassa. My purpose now was work - government work of rather an ill-defined nature. During two months in Lagos and a year in Freetown I kept no journal for security reasons, and so I have no record of this bizarre period of my life, which included such episodes as a Police Commissioner driven out of his reason by well-meaning spy-hunters and my own quarrel with my superior officer, two thousand miles away who ceased to send me any money to continue my work. God rest his soul: He is dead now and I was a sore trial to him.

I did not realize at the time that a novel would emerge from those years, and when five years later I began to write The Heart of the Matter I regretted my lack of notes. So many small details of life in Freetown had sunk for ever into the unconscious.

Neither of these journals was kept for publication, but they may have some interest as an indication of the kind of raw material a novelist accumulates. He goes through life discarding more than he retains, but the points he notes are what he considers of creative interest at the moment of occurrence.

There is a small number of purely technical changes made by Reid that I will not draw attention to. For one, Reid took the initiative to write certain abbreviations in full, such as replacing “Mme” by “Madame,” “Mlle” by “Mademoiselle,” and others. There are a very low number of words or phrases Reid was not able to read and for which she left a long blank, which Greene filled in later by hand to help her, namely in his corrections on Reid’s typescript. Finally, Reid also took the initiative to correct or change a (very low) number of spelling choices Greene made (“dreamt” instead of “dreamed,” and other examples).

3.3 Greene’s revision of Reid’s typescript (GGJR)

In section 4, second column, Greene’s revisions of Reid’s typescript, which he did in longhand, are indicated by means of the code GGJR. Greene carefully reread Reid’s typescript, in the process correcting typing mistakes she had made, filling out the blanks she had left, etc. But he also applied a large number of new additions and modifications. In fact, he left not one page, and hardly a paragraph, untouched. This can be appreciated from the example reproduced in Figure 3.
On any great occasion he was made to parade wearing his father's medal, and he hated this and at last refused and was punished.

"That is why now I try to be hard and rough."

Names of Africans: Heni with a y, Aungola, Doc Orrum, Alex. Visit with L. to dispensary for an inspection of hands. He made her move the fingers in certain exercises. Treatment: paraffin wax, massage, splints. The typical monkey hand due to a damaged median nerve. Surgical treatment when the nerve is being strangled by a thickening of the sheath and cut through the sheath and let the nerves free.

Maurice from Father Paul.

Men playing mysterious game altering the number of beans that lie in rough troughs on a home-made board.

A smell of caterpillars brought home by a leper to soil or eat.

Dinner at the governor's. Madame de V, who has published two books at her own expense talked interminably of a writer's method and vision.

Falsy and mutilation alternatives. A man goes on working with dead nerves and injures his fingers because they feel nothing; sensy where the nerves rest if some sort of protection.

February 13th Yunda

Everyone quiet and depressed after last night's dinner.

The leper tribunal outside a house - three men, representatives of their tribes, listening to the witnesses. They can hear small cases of theft, abuse, stealing a man's wife, and they can samo sentence for short term in the prison near Yunda. But the prisoners are allowed out for work and treatment: they only spend the nights in the prison.

Shopping for the boat. JET bomb, sam-de-cologne, soap flakes, ten whiskies, thirty-six soaps. Gave the L's dinner in the hotel. The
Some general observations about this stage in Greene’s reworking of his diary are these. First of all, it is at this stage that he adds, on a separate sheet, what would become the eventual title for the entire volume, *In Search of a Character: Two African Journals*.

*Figure 4. Sheet added by Greene when revising Reid’s typescript. First appearance of the final title In Search of a Character: Two African Journals.*

It is evident that Greene had his original diary at hand when revising Reid’s typescript and carefully compared each phrase, sentence, and paragraph in the typescript with his originals. We can deduce this from the fact that some of his corrections are corrections of parts that Reid copied wrongly, thus re-establishing the journal. For instance, in the 5 February entry, Reid misread “the warning sun” for “the warming sun,” which Greene at this stage corrects back to the original. Or, in the 7 February entry, Reid had written “for a” instead of...
“but with” in the sentence: “It seems to me impregnated with nothing so strong as spiritual pride but with spiritual vanity,” a mistake Greene changes back to “for a.”

In 3.2 above I mentioned how when Reid was typing out the manuscript, and probably on Greene’s instructions, she removed or shortened many references to his affairs with women in Europe as well as passages of erotic thoughts. When revising Reid’s typescript, Greene’s takes this intervention one step further. For instance, he now crosses out “that relation in which both of [us] hoped so much and which failed us both” (6 February), which is about his relationship with Anita Björk. Another example is that he now deletes the two very last sentences of the diary: “One girl of great beauty with sad and humane eyes. I would have liked to have gone with her but for the fear of infection” (6 March).

Incidentally, Greene at this stage also adds one passage with erotica overtones. In the 1 February entry, to the passage “I was woken by somebody knocking on the door. I put on a mackintosh and opened it on a young woman with so bad a stammer that for long I couldn’t understand what she wanted,” he now adds: “She was a complete stranger, I wore nothing but a towel, and it was several minutes before she could complete a sentence inviting me to dinner at her home.” This passage will not survive in the published version (see 3.4 below for an explanation of its removal).

The final published version contains no less than fifty-eight such footnotes, a considerable number given the relatively short length of the journal. Almost all of them were added precisely at this stage of Greene rereading and amending Reid’s typescript (a small number of others he added later, when correcting the galley proofs and revising as suggested to him by Dr. Lechat; see 3.5 below). Greene clearly flags his new footnotes as “new” insights he gained after returning from the Congo. He does so by using the past tense when referring to his stay in the Congo as well as to the publication of A Burnt-Out Case, or by using clauses such as “I later learned that” and the like. An example is the footnote “Not grass as I learned later, but water-jacinth” (3 February) that he adds to a passage in the diary in which he believes to see “grass” floating on the Congo River. Another example is the footnote: “Inaccurate. Corrected later” that he adds to the sentence “Cortisone for reaction cases, Sulfane daily through the mouth ordinary treatment” (4 February).

Of particular interest are the numerous footnotes that pertain to the gestation process of A Burnt-Out Case. When rereading some of the thoughts he was developing for the novel while in the Congo, including plot lines, characters, but even a few draft try-outs of sentences, he realizes that some of them did not survive. He now uses footnotes to occasionally inform the readers of In Search of a Character about this, offering us a window into the process of thinking out and rethinking a novel. He adds a footnote, for instance, admitting that “The economy of a novelist is a little like that of a careful housewife, who is unwilling to throw away anything that might perhaps serve its turn. Or perhaps the comparison is closer to the Chinese cook who leaves hardly any part of a duck unserved. This story—placed in Dr Colin’s mouth—helped me to bridge a gap in A Burnt-Out Case” (2 February) or tells us that “I don’t know why X, who later became Querry, lost half his English nationality” (4 February) or that
“these ideas were abandoned or completely transformed” (12 February). In the same vein, on February 13 we learn in a footnote that “the book was coming nearer. Indeed the second sentence was very like to this: ‘The captain in a white soutane stood by the open window of the saloon reading his breviary,’” and on 21 February that “the dreaded essential opening sentences have almost arrived. The actual one: ‘The cabin-passenger wrote in his diary a parody of Descartes: “I feel discomfort, therefore I am alive,” then sat pen in hand with no more to record.’”

In this respect, I wish to draw attention to one fascinating development, namely the changes in how Greene conceived his main character, whom he first simply called X, then C, and finally Dr. Colin. In the novel, Dr. Colin is portrayed as a sympathetic, wise, and composed man, relaxed in his convictions. But from the diary and the footnotes Greene adds at this stage we learn that this was not his conception of the character from the start. Initially, he planned on characterizing the doctor as a bitter, discontented man, a married and jealous husband. In the novel, Dr. Colin is a widower, and is far from a bitter or discontented character. Greene tells us, for instance in the footnote added to the 14 February entry, that this conceptual evolution was due to the fact that as the story developed in his mind, the initial negative characterization did not fit in with the drama and psychological layers of the plot. Greene’s growing strong appreciation in real life of Dr. Lechat, the model for Dr. Colin, may have influenced this adjustment.

A final important revision, in fact an addition, that Greene carried through at this stage is related to the following event. Not later than the day after Greene’s arrival at the leprosy hospital of Iyonda on 3 February, a Belgian schoolteacher by the name of R. Van den Brandt, who taught English at a school in a nearby American Protestant mission and had written a novel of his own, disturbed Greene at the end of his siesta, seeking advice on literary agents. Greene gave him a few names, hoping to have brushed him off for good. But the next day Greene received a note from him, begging for another meeting in order, this time, to discuss spiritual matters. In the original diary text Greene reports on this, only writing: “Pursued by the schoolmaster who now tries to exercise a spiritual blackmail. I am replying that I am not competent in matters of faith: he should apply to a priest” (see 4 February). But while revising Reid’s typescript, he now decides to quote the schoolteacher’s note in full (see 4 February entry, second column) in view of sharing it without reserve with the readership of In Search of a Character. Maybe Greene did so because Van den Brandt served as one of the models to compose the character Rycker in A Burnt-Out Case. In the novel, Rycker is a former seminarian and devoted Catholic, who refuses Querry’s silence about his loss of belief and insists on forging a meaningful spiritual bond with him. As I explain in 3.5, while correcting the galley proofs Greene will again remove Van den Brandt’s note.

As for the other revision stages, as for this one too, I will only indicate Greene’s changes if they have implications for a proper understanding of the content and Greene’s perception of persons and events. For the sake of readability, I will not identify minor typographical mistakes which Reid had made and Greene now corrects. Nor will I draw attention to purely formal
linguistic corrections or minor stylistic changes he makes.

3.4 The galley proofs (gp)

The few differences between the galley proofs and Greene’s revision of Reid’s typescript are indicated with the abbreviation gp in the third column.

The galley proofs reflect all the corrections (modifications, removals, added footnotes) Greene made in the previous stage in longhand on Reid’s typescript; all were respected when the galley proofs were set. Yet the proofs also contain three new footnotes that Greene had not written down in the GGJR stage but do appear in printed form on gp. I have, as yet, found no evidence as to when and how he slipped these into the process. Also, there is one footnote he had added in longhand when revising Reid’s typescript, but which is no longer in the galley proofs, namely the footnote in the 1 February entry: “She was a complete stranger. I wore nothing but a towel, and it was several minutes before she could complete a sentence inviting me to dinner at her home.”

3.5 Greene’s revision of the galley proofs (GGgp, GGgp (ML))

In June 1961 Greene receives, from The Bodley Head, the galley proofs of In Search of a Character. In the third column of my edition, these corrections will be identified by means of the code GGgp. (Again, my edition only indicates corrections that have an impact on substance and on Greene’s experiences, not banal editorial changes such as comma’s, typos, and the like).

Immediately upon receiving the proofs, Greene sends a letter to Dr. Lechat asking him whether he would be willing “to look through the typescript of the Congo Journal which is not very long and tell me anything that you would like me to leave out or anything which I have got wrong. I am leaving room for footnotes to correct any errors so as to leave the journal intact.” On 19 July, he sends another letter saying: “There’s a great rush over the printing of this Journal. I have asked the printers to airmail you a copy of the Congo Journal as soon as it is ready and would you be kind enough to airmail me any comments or changes you want made or omissions you want made to the Villa Rosaiio, Anacapri, Capri, Italy so that I can incorporate them in my proofs. I’ve promised to try to get the proofs back to the printers by August 18th. On errors I’d be inclined to put [them, MM] in footnotes so as to leave the original mistakes intact.” Thus, Greene and Lechat corrected the proofs independently of one another, at roughly the same time. We learn from the correspondence between the two that Greene apparently mainly wanted Lechat to spot technical-medical errors and was planning on adding those in new footnotes. In my edition, I will identify the changes that Greene applied upon explicit or general request by Michel Lechat with the code GGgp (ML) to distinguish them from the change he made on his own initiative (simply identified by GGgp).

In reality, Dr. Lechat corrected much more than simply technical-medical issues to go in footnotes. In his

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17 Letter of 21 June 1961 from Greene to Lechat, Michel Lechat archives; author’s possession.
18 Letter of 19 July 1961 from Greene to Lechat, Michel Lechat archives; author’s possession.
unpublished memoirs he wrote:“the Congo Journal is in fact a text carefully expurgated by me” (my translation from the French). What Lechat means is that when he sent his corrections of the proofs back to Greene in the first days of August, he attached two separate lists: one was indeed a list of medical issues to correct, with references to page numbers, but the other was a four-page long plea and admonition urging Greene to delete certain passages in which persons were described in unfavourable terms, persons who were still living and working in the Congo. Lechat writes that these descriptions are unnecessarily offensive and that they would also embarrass him, as he was the one who had introduced Greene to them. Lechat’s verdict was far-reaching and merciless, saying that the Congo Journal was utterly unpublishable as it was. He went as far as to put their friendship at stake: “Since you have been confident enough to send me the proofs, I should tell you that I make of that a real question of friendship between us.”

Greene was very impressed by Lechat’s severe admonition. On 13 August 1961, in a handwritten letter from Tunis, Greene apologizes to Lechat for all the trouble caused. He emphasizes that everything Lechat has suggested has been changed. Nine days later he again sends a telegram to Lechat, repeating “all changes made and more besides.”

The “more besides” is of interest: Greene indeed made more changes, eliminating embarrassing or hurtful comments, than Lechat requested. One can indeed say that, in order to make absolutely sure their friendship was safe, Greene hypercorrected the proofs. I have found not one correction, omission, or change suggested by Michel Lechat that was not heeded by Greene. Also important to note is that the changes Greene made did not just consist in omitting passages Lechat had disapproved of, but that in quite some cases he completely turned a negative depiction of a person into a fully positive one.

The changes demanded by Lechat are of different types. First of all, some show how Lechat wanted to protect himself and his own reputation. In his accompanying letter, Lechat wrote “Also, I should prefer to be less in the spotlight as giving you so many references. It seems a little repetitive. It would be nothing for the printer if you replace from to time ‘L’ or ‘Lechat’ by ‘Has been told’ or ‘One told me ... .’” Greene in effect anonymized Lechat in many (not all) places. For instance, in the 7 February entry, he changes “L. tells me that at any gathering …” into “I have been told that at any gathering … .”

Secondly, and more frequently, Lechat’s admonitions were meant to protect others in the Congo. He wrote “some of the people you are talking about are still in the Congo, living under the same routine. For others, some sentences in the Journal will deeply grieve them, unnecessarily so I think. One may not jeopardize the work of an individual, his hopes, or his loves, even early August. Michel Lechat archives; author’s possession.

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19 In possession of Lechat’s widow Edith Dasnoy; copies in author’s possession.
20 Cover letter from Lechat to Greene accompanying his corrections of the proofs. Undated but judging from a letter from Reid to Lechat of 8 August 1961, acknowledging receipt of Lechat’s proof corrections, it must have been
21 Telegram from Greene to Lechat, 22 August 1961. Michel Lechat archives; author’s possession.
22 See note 20.
if it is stimulating to the minds of millions of readers."\textsuperscript{23}

When seeing, in Greene's 4 February entry, his disparaging depiction and citation of the Belgian schoolmaster R. Van den Brandt, who was pursuing him for spiritual advice, Lechat reacted: "he bothered you much at Yonda, spoilt part of your stay there, and the letter of him that you are publishing is not in his favour. But is it really necessary to make the man recognizable, for anyone [sic, means everyone] knows him. The only Belgian and the only Catholic teaching in the only American Protestant School in a city of less than one thousand. He should be still more recognizable, since he became bankrupt and the Bishop is godfather of his elder son. He has a charming wife and nice children. What will they think of the [illegible] confession and the black-mail of their father. I feel strongly about the contents of this letter, and I do not feel it should be published. Furthermore, it is dangerous because this man may become seriously affected by your writing and nobody knows what could happen."\textsuperscript{24} Lechat fears no less than a possible suicide of the mentally unstable schoolmaster. Greene fully takes Lechat's reprimand to heart. Not only does he omit the schoolmaster's letter from the galley proofs, he also makes a new footnote in which the irritation is rather caused by himself, or by the heat, than by the schoolmaster.

Greene's account of the chief Medical Officer (see 10 February entry) is another example. Lechat warned Greene that "when, coming back from Coq, I told you this story, I thought it was between us. This man would be humiliated and embarrassed." Greene is impressed and crosses this out completely.

Lechat is also annoyed by Greene's unfavorable, even belittling, depictions of the Province Governor Alphonse De Valkeneer and his wife Suzanne De Valkeneer-Briard, herself an amateur novelist as seen, for instance, in the 2, 5, 10 February and 4 and 5 March entries. Lechat sermons Greene, giving him lessons in compassion, empathy, and respect for people not as intelligent or intellectual as himself:

You seem to be very sensitive to the fact that authors publish at their own expense. I understand she irritated you giving lessons on how to write! But it is another aspect of the human problem. This simple and kindly couple spent some twenty-five years in the Congo, almost always in the bush. But years ago, without boat, without mail, and more, without children. They were walking in the forest twenty days a month (that was the duty), resting the ten other days in small stations like the missions you visited. Going to teach the Congolese how to cultivate manioc or rice, or to supervise the building of dispensaries, or to inspect the native tribunals. Frustrated by European life, perhaps doubtful about the value of their work, the wife was taking notes in order to relate her "experience" and thus to give some importance to her routine. [...] No matter if the book is good or bad, it belongs to another sphere of writing. What she gave to you, through the book, was not literature, even if she thought it was. It was a kind of tribute of her own past. You cannot belittle or banalize the past of such people and make them lose

\textsuperscript{23} See note 20.

\textsuperscript{24} See note 20.
Greene decides not to simply to remove all mentions of this couple from the galley proofs, but instead turns his evaluation of them around from a belittling to an appreciative one. He drops the “not very intelligent,” the “awful,” and the “she gave me lessons on how to write a book,” and adds a laudatory footnote (see 5 February entry) in which he literally copies words and sentences from Lechat’s letter.

Greene applies the same strategy to his original negative portrayal of the Bishop of the MSC-missionaries, Mgr Hilaire Vermeiren (see for instance the 11 February entry). Lechat’s retort was:

The Bishop: he has recovered from his broken hip and this man who liked to play cards during the smooth colonial days proved himself in the present difficulties. He is doing very good work, has the confidence of the Congolese, is helping the white people there and stands firm through all the troubles. The “curé” is still there, standing with him, and also his “second in command.” You can easily imagine how life must be uneasy for them and the consequences of your two sentences of page 47. I think you should drop 6 lines as indicated in the text, or at least change them. Furthermore, I think I told you the story of the second in command but I would prefer that to be kept between us.

On the galley proofs, Greene rephrases the passage, adding a footnote very similar to Lechat’s words in his letter to him.

3.6 Final publication (fp)

By means of the code fp in the third column, I will signal differences between what is in the final publication but not part of Greene’s revision of the galley proofs.

“Final publication” refers not only to the 1961 edition with The Bodley Head, but includes later ones. The United States edition with New York Viking Press of the same year is identical to the one by The Bodley Head. In 1968 Penguin published a re-edition of In Search of a Character (with a number of reprints until into the 1990s). This Penguin edition shows only minor, typographical changes as compared to the one by The Bodley Head; French words that were first set in normal font are now italicized, a few words are now written with a hyphen, the footnotes receive other leading symbols, and the like. I will not make particular mention of these. In 2000 Vintage Classic of London published a new edition (with at least one reprint, in 2011), which also shows no characteristics relevant to the purposes of my study.

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25 See note 20.

26 See note 20.
4. The Text and its Revisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The manuscript</th>
<th>~ Josephine Reid’s typescript (JR)</th>
<th>~ Greene’s revision of Reid’s typescript (GGJR)</th>
<th>~ The galley proofs (gp)</th>
<th>~ Greene’s revision of the galley proofs (GGgp)</th>
<th>~ The final publication as Congo Journal in In Search of a Character (fp)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JOURNAL Feb - March 1959.</td>
<td>JR. this line omitted</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>In Pursuit of a Novel.</td>
<td>JR. this line omitted</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31st.</td>
<td>All I know about the story is a man “who turns up,” and for that reason I find myself on a plane between Brussels and Leopoldville. The search for my character cannot end there – X must have known Leopoldville, come that way, but the place where he emerges into my semi-consciousness is a leper station, many hundred miles up the Congo. Perhaps Yonda, perhaps one of the smaller stations four days away. I know no more about him yet, than do his involuntary hosts. I cannot even picture the scene – or why should I be here? He is a man of means – perhaps he turns up by car, perhaps by a paddle steamer, even perhaps by canoe. He flings himself with abandonment into the life of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 The Congo River.
29 As mentioned in my introductory sections, “Yonda” and “Ionda” were common spelling habits during Greene’s days. Today its official orthography is “Iyonda.”
the leper colony, – is that a practical possibility? but what his motives are I know no more than the priests and the doctors at the station. The novel is an unknown man and I have to find him: a situation that I cannot yet even vaguely imagine: a background as strange to me as it was to him at his first entrance.

Feb. 1. Sunday. Leopoldville. I am taken in charge at once by many strangers but not the ones I had been warned to expect. A brand new city with miniature skyscrapers – I lunched fourteen floors up. Only outside the airport was there the smell of Africa – I smelled it first at Dakar and found it again, not only in the West but on the airfield at Casablanca and the road beyond Nairobi. Heat? Soil? Vegetation? The smell of the African skin?

Lay down after lunch naked in the Sabena resthouse, but almost immediately I was woken by somebody knocking on the door. I put on a mackintosh and opened it on a young woman with so bad a stammer that for long I couldn’t understand what she wanted. When she had gone the press arrived in relays.

GGJR. to what she wanted adds footnote She was a complete stranger. I wore nothing but a towel, and it was several minutes before she

gp. footnote She was a complete... removed again.

30 Greene is referring to journalists and other political observers with sensationalist objectives considering Greene to be a secret agent sent out to cover the tense atmosphere in Leopoldville. These had resulted from violent pro-independence demonstrations that had taken place early January in the Belgian Congo’s capital Leopoldville, leaving fifty Congolese casualties and more than two-hundred injured. Greene may have drawn inspiration from this type of journalists for his character of the sensation-seeking journalist Parkinson in A Burnt-Out Case, for which otherwise no individual model in real history has been found so far (see Norman Sherry, The Life of Graham Greene, Vol. 3: 1955-1991 (New york: Viking, 2004).

could complete a sentence inviting me to dinner at her home. GGJR. to press arrived in relays adds footnote There had been bad riots\textsuperscript{32} in Leopoldville two weeks before and nothing could persuade the journalists that my journey planned months ago was not occasioned by them.

The streets of Leo\textsuperscript{33} outside the central area patrolled by tanks and lorries and black troops in single file reminiscent of the Indo-China war.

Dinner with a business man. Inevitably he spoke of women and inevitably I encouraged him. The “method” here seems to be to drive around the native town until a likely girl is seen and then to send the chauffeur with an offer of money. If she is married she will never consent without her husband’s consent. For birds in passage like myself a taxi driver will always fetch a succession of girls, but it is necessary to be particular in description. There are a few “free” women who receive men at home. Very low statistics of venereal disease. A black woman takes more care about the cleaness of her parts than a European. She is far more “pudique,”\textsuperscript{34} but on the other hand she is uncomplicated and in a relationship will never deny her man.

\textsuperscript{32} See note 30.
\textsuperscript{33} Short for “Leopoldville.” Belgians in the Congo commonly used the abbreviation “Leo” (in French spelled Léo) to refer to the city in their everyday speech.
\textsuperscript{34} French for “discreet.”
The man who gave me dinner drove me around in the morning. In the native city – but one should talk here of cities, Leo 1 and Leo 2, the old, the new – he told his chauffeur to take off his cap to be less conspicuous. Up to the new University – Lovanium – a sense of great emptiness: will it ever be finished? Then round to the Stanley Memorial – a thick hideous huge statue where Stanley made his camp with a view of the Congo and the Pool. In the distance the skyscrapers and the new apartment houses.

“And this also,’ said Marlow suddenly, ‘has been one of the dark places of the earth.’”

Lunch with the Information Officer on his fourteenth floor apartment. Talk of the Kimbangoists who believe in the divinity of Kibongo who died in prison in the forties in Elizabethville. Some attribute the troubles to them. A B.B.C. type whose wife and child are in Brussels, fanatically keen, neurotically keen.

After the intrusion of the Press [Mannagen?], one of the rich young aristocrats of Leo - gentle and simple compared with [Brihis?]. The beautiful young wife – the long crossed thighs in her tight blue jeans – the wife of a middle-aged man in riding things, very rich.

| GGJR. to take off his cap to be less conspicuous adds footnote This sounds a little sensitive to African feelings – it was not that. He was afraid that stones might be thrown. |
| JR. After the intrusion of the press to the house of one of the rich young aristocrats of Leo. The beautiful riding things becomes riding clothes |

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35 Quote from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899).
36 Correct spelling “Kimbanguists,” followers of Kimbanguism, a Congolese religious and anti-colonial movement with ethnic roots in the southwestern Congo and drawing on the teachings of their prophet Simon Kimbangu (1887-1951). The Belgian colonial authorities considered the movement subversive, outlawing it (until December 1959, when it was reluctantly recognized) and prosecuting its followers.
37 Simon Kimbangu (1887-1951), preacher and founder of Kimbanguism (see note 36). Imprisoned in September 1921 and sentenced to death (commuted to life imprisonment). Died in a prison in the eastern Congolese city of Elizabethville in October 1951.
38 Square brackets indicate insertions by me. Words or phrases followed by a question mark: my best guesses of cases where Greene's handwriting is difficult to decipher.
and self-made who makes crushers for the road, but with an intelligent eccentric face: [M. and Mme Binod?].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>and self-made who makes crushers for the road, but with an intelligent eccentric face: [M. and Mme Binod?].</th>
<th>JR. but with an intelligent eccentric face. rest omitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Feb. 2. **Coquilhatville.** Met by Lechat and brought to Yonda. A garden city of 800 lepers. At night the little groups round fires outside the houses. The doctor examining the dossiers, touching the skin, washing his hands in spirit as these are contagious cases. If once the nerve ends are affected, the fingers or toes are lost, though the disease can be checked there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feb. 2. Coquilhatville. Met by Lechat and brought to Yonda. A garden city of 800 lepers. At night the little groups round fires outside the houses. The doctor examining the dossiers, touching the skin, washing his hands in spirit as these are contagious cases. If once the nerve ends are affected, the fingers or toes are lost, though the disease can be checked there.</th>
<th>changes lepers to patients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Tired with the heat and too many strangers – the Bishop was at Yonda to celebrate the jubilee of a nun – I felt depressed. My room seemed too bare with nowhere to hang clothes, and five large cockroaches in the communal shower. Why was I here? The

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tired with the heat and too many strangers – the Bishop was at Yonda to celebrate the jubilee of a nun – I felt depressed. My room seemed too bare with nowhere to hang clothes, and five large cockroaches in the communal shower. Why was I here? The</th>
<th>felt depressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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39 The capital of the Equateur province and seat of the Bishop of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC, see section 2 above). The mission and leprosery of Iyonda was only 15 kms to the south of Coquilhatville. See also my introductory sections.

40 Dr. Michel Lechat, see my introductory sections.

41 As there was only one doctor in Iyonda, “the doctor” as well as “L.” always refer to Dr. Michel Lechat.

42 Hilaire Vermeiren (1889-1967), Vicar Apostolic (titular bishop) of the local diocese of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart with its seat in Coquilhatville. In that capacity formal host of Greene during his stay in the mission stations of Iyonda and others he visited. The Bishop in *A Burnt-Out Case*, he too vainglorious, unspiritual, fond of Bridge, and “an old-fashioned cavalier of the boulevards” (*A Burnt-Out Case*, Part III, Chapter 1), is very closely modelled on Vermeiren.
Governor and wife\textsuperscript{43} came for a drink – a motherly women who wanted to translate her books. She had written one and published it at her own expense. After dark the mosquitoes bad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The story of the old Greek shopkeeper who saw his clerk in bed with his Congolese wife. He said nothing but went and spent his savings on an old car – so old that it would only start when pushed. Nobody could understand why he wanted it, and he said he wanted to drive a car once before he died, so they pushed him until the engine started and he went down to his square in Coq\textsuperscript{44} and hooted his horn to summon his clerks. He couldn’t stop his car because then it would never have started again. He called to his clerk to wait for him, made the circuit of the square, twisted the wheel and drove over the clerk into his doorway. The clerk survived, but with the legs crushed and the pelvis broken. The old man left the car where it was and waited for the police. It was the first case of the new young commissioner. “What have you done?” he said. “It is not a case of what I have done, but of what I am going to do.” the old man said and shot himself through the head.\textsuperscript{45}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\textsuperscript{43} Province Governor Alphonse De Valkeneer (1898–1973) and his wife Suzanne De Valkeneer-Briard (1903–1964). The latter had published a collection of colonial short stories in 1950: \textit{Au Bout du Sentier: Nouvelles Congolaises} (Editions Héraly, Charleroi, Belgium). The character of “the Governor” in \textit{A Burnt-Out Case} is based on Alphonse De Valkeneer, who was also of short posture and wore thick glasses: “The Governor was a very small man with a short-sight which gave him an appearance of moral intensity” (\textit{A Burnt-Out Case}, Part III, Chapter 1).

\textsuperscript{44} Short for Coquilhatville, see note 39. “Coq” was the habitual abbreviation colonials and missionaries used in informal speech. The city returns as “Luc” in \textit{A Burnt-Out Case}.

\textsuperscript{45} This scene, recounted to Greene by Lechat, is recycled in \textit{A Burnt-Out Case}, Part IV, Chapter III.
Feb. 3. Yonda. Everything suddenly changes. Woken in the dark to the sound of prayer and responses in the little chapel next door, then slept again till 7. Bright sunlight and the air still fresh. No cockroaches in the shower. The terribly tired priest\(^{46}\) – tall and washed out with long elegant hands: teaches in a black seminary – only one other white man, apart from the teachers, in the whole region: the red bearded priest,\(^{47}\) the stump of a cigar always in his mouth: the tough reserved lay brother\(^{48}\) who was in a Japanese prison camp. He gives the appearance of enmity, but in my story he begins to come alive as the one who speaks surprisingly 

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\(^{46}\) Henri Vanderslaghmolen (1921-2014), is the MSC-missionary whom Greene mentions most in the journal. He was one of the only missionaries with some knowledge of English, which is why Greene and he spent quite some time together. At the time of Greene’s visit, Father Henri was on leave in Iyonda from his main mission station Bokuma (upstream on the Ruki-Momboyo, see map in introductory sections), to recover from illness. He also accompanied Greene on the steamer to visit other mission stations and leproseries in the region between 12 and 26 February 1959. When Greene leaves Iyonda and Coquihatville on Thursday 5 March 1959, he is driven to the Coquihatville airstrip by the Lechat couple accompanied by their two small children and Father Henri as the only missionary. In the five-minute home video footage showing Greene in Iyonda (Meeuwis 2013), we see Greene and Father Henri doing a mock waltz and larking about in many other ways; Father Henri for instance blocking the door of the house to prevent Greene, clutching his whisky flask, from coming in. In *A Burnt-Out Case*, Father Jean is tall, pale, a jester, a self-declared fan of movies, and has a “cadaverous appearance [yet] a Flemish appetite” (Part IV, Chapter I) all strongly reminiscent of Henri Vanderslaghmolen. Also, in Part IV, Chapter I, Father Jean makes a joke referencing the actress Brigitte Bardot, in the same way as Greene hears Father Henri Vanderslaghmolen do on 14 February (see that entry).

\(^{47}\) Petrus “Pierre” Wijnants (1914-1978), MSC-missionary and Superior of the mission station of Iyonda. The important “Father Superior” character in *A Burnt-Out Case* is strongly inspired by Wijnants. The Father Superior in *A Burnt-Out Case* is never seen without his cheroot hindering others with its ashes, mixes languages during mass, mistakes bidets for footbaths (Part III, Chapter II, and Part IV, Chapter I), is a silently responsible man with an “old-fashioned politeness” (Part III, Chapter II), and the discreet confidant of Dr. Colin. All these characterizations exactly match Wijnants.

\(^{48}\) Sigesbrand Werkhoven (1905-1975), MSC-missionary-brother (not ordained as priest). In a publication of 1994, Father Gustaaf Hulstaert of the MSC (see also note 112), identified a number of missionaries mentioned by Greene in *In Search of a Character*. About Werkhoven he mentions: “he had been a missionary in Java, Indonesia. During World War II he had been prisoner in a Japanese camp there. In the harshness of the camp he had been able to obtain a mitigated regime for his fellow missionaries and himself thanks to his inventiveness” (Gustaaf Hulstaert, "Graham Greene et les missionnaires catholiques au Congo Belge," *Annales Äquatoria* 15 (1994), 499; my translation from French).
at the very end in defence of X. As for the exhausted priest, what a life to take one's rest in a leper colony.

Arranged my room better with a coat-stand to serve as wardrobe. It begins to look like home. Walked down to the Congo. The great cotton (?) trees with their roots like the ribs of ships. From the plane they had stood out from the green jungle carpet browning at the top like cauliflowers. Their trunk curves a little this way and that giving the appearance of reptilian life. Egrets like patches of arctic snow stand among the small coffee coloured cattle. The huge Congo flowing with the massive speed of a rush hour out over the great New York bridges. This has not changed since Conrad's day. "An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest." From as far as one could see the little islands of grass – no water jacinth – flowed down towards the sea they would never reach – some as small as a bucket top, some as large as a dining table. In the distance coming out of Africa they looked like families of ducks. Two rusting metal boats. Blue water lilies. A family sitting in a pirogue: the mother's bright yellow dress, a girl with a baby on her lap smiling like an open piano.

The Danish doctor who excavated in an

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49 As mentioned in section 2 above, when in Iyonda, Greene’s daily morning routine was to do his reading of novels on the bank of the Congo River.

50 Another quote from Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*.

51 French for “dugout canoe.”

52 This is indeed (Greene's later footnote, see gp in right column) the Danish medical historian and paleopathologist Dr. Vilhem Møller-Christensen (1903-1988), known for his major contributions to the understanding of bone deformity in leprosy. Began excavations of the site of the St. George's Hospital, near Naestved, Denmark, in 1948, finding a medieval cemetery including the remains of 750 people, many of whom showed...
clear signs of leprosy. Lechat told Greene about this in Iyonda, but the book Greene refers to in the footnote added afterwards (see gp in right column) appeared later, in 1961, while Greene was revising his journal for publication. (The correct title, incidentally, is not Some Changes in Leprosy, but Bone Changes in Leprosy, published with Munksgaard in Copenhagen in 1961.)

53 French for “customs officer.”

54 R. Van den Brandt (full first name and dates unknown), not a missionary but a layman working at the school of the Protestant mission of the Disciples of Christ Congo Mission (DCCM) in Bolenge, situated between Iyonda and Coquilhatville. See also notes 75 and 14 February entry (GGJR), as well as my section 3.3 above.

55 Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.
and the ex-prisoner\textsuperscript{56} who has relaxed a little. Water: soup: scrambled eggs: pine-apple.  

A motto of the local tribe: “The mosquito has no pity for the thin man.”

| Feb. 4. Yonda. A bad night. I could find no comfortable position on the hard mattress: a touch of rheumatism from the sweat: mosquitoes droning outside my meat cover. Woke at 6.40 to an overcast morning. Wrote to my mother and then took Julian Green’s journal\textsuperscript{57} down to the Congo and found a place to read free from ants on board the rusty metal boat. Always astonished at the procession of grassy islands — no, water jacinth — endlessly in progress at four miles an hour out of the heart of Africa, none, however small, overtaking another. GGJR. crosses out — no water jacinth — again |
| One priest in charge of constructions, one of education (the universal problem of what to do with the boy who has passed out of primary), the ex-prisoner I think of electricity. Is it possible that X (who is certainly no Olga Deterding\textsuperscript{58} as one imagines her to be) might be an architect?\textsuperscript{59} The drawings of the past he keeps concealed. Perhaps when he came he had illusions that he could work in the hospital. Go back to Europe, he is told, and have a six months |

\textsuperscript{56} Werkhoven, see note 48.  
\textsuperscript{57} Julien Green (1900-1998). Correct French spelling of his first name is “Julien”—Graham Greene’s error of writing “Julian” remains uncorrected in the final publication of In Search of a Character. Greene is referring to Julien Green’s journal Le Bel Aujourd’hui, spanning the years 1955-1958 and published with Plon in Paris in 1958.  
\textsuperscript{58} Olga M. Deterding (1926-1978), wealthy celebrity of London, worked as an unpaid volunteer in Albert Schweitzer’s leprosy hospital in West Africa out of selfless philanthropy.  
\textsuperscript{59} First occurrence of Greene’s intention to choose architecture as Querry’s profession in A Burnt-Out Case.
Among the missionaries with whom Greene spent time in the Congo, Henri Vanderslaghmolen was the only one who knew English.⁶⁰

> Reading Julian Green, one wonders whether it is easier for a homosexual to lead a chaste life if he so wishes because of the unfair stigma attached to his desires. Is it easier for Green than for someone like myself to refuse – from a religious motive – an affair which offers itself?

A Japanese Atlas of leprosy: some of the plates resemble the warm thick landscapes of Van Gogh.⁶³

Through whose eyes shall I tell my story? It cannot be through X’s, though I can imagine certain letters from women – condemnatory letters which perhaps in one of his rages he shows the priest. I don’t think it can be through the priest’s eyes – I wouldn’t know this father and his daily routine well enough; I am suspicious of several points of view except in so far as like the letters and the dialogue they are ‘contained’ in the story. There remains the author’s eye, but then he should not penetrate

| GGJR. to who speaks English adds footnote | I don’t know why X, who later became Querry, lost half his English nationality. |
| JR. than for someone like X⁶¹ to refuse – from a |

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⁶⁰ Among the missionaries with whom Greene spent time in the Congo, Henri Vanderslaghmolen was the only one who knew English (note 46).

⁶¹ It is Reid who changes “myself” to “X,” probably, but this is not visible, on Greene’s request. In the original text, Greene first applies his thought that it is easier for a homosexual to refuse an affair that offers itself, regardless of religious conviction, to himself. Now, this thought is transposed to the main character of the novel he is thinking up.

⁶² Shown to him by Dr. Lechat.

⁶³ This resemblance with van Gogh paintings returns in A Burnt-Out Case, Part I, Chapter II.
into the thoughts of any character – and must be indicated only in action and dialogue. This makes for the mood of mystery which I wish to catch. Title: possibly “The Uncompleted Dossier.” If the priest keeps a Dossier on X, it will enable me to penetrate a little into his mind. The one who must never put up a case for himself is X.

Red-beard\textsuperscript{64} never ceases to smoke except at meals: he stands around, bicycles around, strolls around, a veritable overseer. For the convalescent priest\textsuperscript{65} his breviary is a little like a cigarette, something to have between the fingers.

Visit to the dispensary of Dr. Lechat.

The circle of leprosy – contagious and non-contagious different diseases, but the non-contagious can develop into the contagious. If caught at the right moment of development the cure of the more serious cases is quicker than that of the non-contagious, but if that point is missed the position is very serious.

Reactions from treatment terribly painful

\textsuperscript{64} Wijnants, see note 47.

\textsuperscript{65} Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.
and can be very serious – blindness, mutilation etc. Comes from the accumulation of the drugs. Nodules a typical sign of contagious leprosy – on the ears, back etc. The man without fingers (cured) who makes pullovers. Cortisone for reaction cases, Sulfane daily through the mouth ordinary treatment at a cost of few shillings a year. The flirtatious girl who had had a surgical operation on her arms to cut the nerves and who now suffers from a “small palsy.” Her made-up finger nails.

Baccili have to be cultivated – you cannot transmit to an animal. The social problem: the husbands are less inclined to follow their wives into a colony than the wives. A husband will set up in his village with another woman, and when his wife finds a lover to look after her in the colony, the husband descends demanding justice and the return of his dot. The Protestant missions allow this to happen, but the Catholic fathers give the husbands short shrift. Short of scandal people here are left alone and there are no moral inquisitions. Two husbands left cured and both wives are now being looked after by one man.

One of the little houses: a bedroom with two beds, very neat and clean under coverlets: the sitting room with radio, bicycle, picture of King Baudouin, both popes, a shop calendar (a girl advertising Singer sewing machines), holy pictures.

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66 French for “dowry.”
67 Baudouin of Belgium (1930-1993), Belgian King from 1951 until his death.
It is strange how even the African is not acclimatized to this humidity and heat. Today is unusually bad and so there is only a sprinkling of inert patients at the dispensary when otherwise there might be hundreds clamouring for attention.

Read a strange terrible pamphlet “The Social Stigma of Leprosy.” By Dr Eugene Kellersbrger68 (The Americans are now trying to call it Hansen’s Disease). Dr L’s story of how a cultivated old gentleman in Paris – a friend of Gide69 – almost turned him out of his apartment when he heard he was working on leprosy. “You should have told me. I feel responsible to all the residents. How long will it be before I know whether I have caught leprosy?” He was 74.70 “Ten years.” “Do you mean that I must live for ten years with this hanging over me.”

? No bacilli have yet been found in non-contagious leprosy.

The case of the leprophils71 – many volunteer workers but also many victims. The case of a European in Coq72 who contracted it

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69 André Gide (1869-1951), French author and winner of the Nobel Prize in literature in 1947.

70 Lechat’s unpublished memoirs, held by his widow Edith Dasnoy, reveal that this incident took place in 1950 in the apartment of the brothers Joseph (1876-1952) and Jean (1881-1953) Baruzi, the former a historian and philosopher, the latter a renowned French professor in history of religion at the Collège de France since 1934. Both brothers were present at the incident; Joseph is the one who was 74 at that time, but Lechat writes that it was mainly Jean who furiously threw him out of the apartment, still vociferating curses at him as he was hurling down the staircase in trepidation.

71 Person inappropriately attracted to leprosy patients and their predicament.

72 Coquilhatville, see note 44.
very mildly, but because he boasted of having it had to be transferred. He was told to keep his mouth shut this time, but again he told everyone and he had to be returned to Europe. The vanity of being something special – even in disease. L. would class Father Damien to among the leprophils. The difficulty of catching leprosy shown by the 114 people whom a German doctor (the forerunner of the doctors of Belsen) tried to infect at their own desire (they were to be expelled from Damien's island) with no success.

| Vagaries of contagion: the two Texan soldiers of the same company who suddenly, after no contact with lepers became infected. They had both been tattooed by the same man on Hawaii (?) and he had last used his needles on a leper. |
| The bacillus probably to be found in small quantities in healthy people who have spent a long period in certain parts of the world. |
| The lady of Coq who developed a mild leprosy. No question of her morality. But perhaps it had been enough in her case to handle a ball or some other object which had been handled by a leper. |
| Memo to ask Doctor L. about the leprous |

who contracted it very mildly, but because he boasted of it had to be transferred. GGjp (ML). changes L. would class Father Damien among the leprophils. to Should one class Father Damien among the leprophils?

| GGgp (ML). changes L. would class Father Damien among the leprophils. |
| Vagaries of contagion: the two Texan soldiers of the same company who suddenly, after no contact with lepers became infected. They had both been tattooed by the same man on Hawaii (?) and he had last used his needles on a leper. |
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| Memo to ask Doctor L. about the leprous |

footnote The fathers had an idea that contagion might be carried by the breath and always in the confessional box held a handkerchief between their mouth and the leper's. GGJR. to which had been handled by a leper.

Throughout his life and career, Greene more than once took a stance against his being identified as a Catholic author. To cite but one example: “Many times since Brighton Rock I have been forced to declare myself not a Catholic writer but a writer who happens to be a Catholic” (G. Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 61).

| prone. | In the evening the air was so humid that every now and then one felt it break on the skin like a single spot of rain. After dark storms broke around and there was rain but not heavy rain. We were missed out. L. said that in six years he had known only about 20 days of such heat and humidity. |
| Pursued by the schoolmaster, who now tries to exercise a spiritual blackmail. I am replying that I am not competent in matters of faith: he should apply to a priest. | JR. When handing the manuscript over to Reid Greene had included the original (typed) letter from this schoolmaster. She types it out as a footnote to the sentence ending in *blackmail*, leaving out the author’s name and address and correcting one minor syntax error. The original letter reads: Dear Mister Greene, I thank you for the addresses of literary agents you have given me. I am sure the Fathers and Sisters and especially your work will take most of your time, but if you have still a few minutes to spare I would like to talk to you once more about religion. I have lost mine after the bankruptcy notwithstanding the fact that Monseigneur is the godfather of my older son – and I don’t see how I will ever be able to come back to it. I cannot understand in your book “The |

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74 Van den Brandt, see note 54 and my section 3.3.
76 Throughout his life and career, Greene more than once took a stance against his being identified as a Catholic author. To cite but one example: “Many times since Brighton Rock I have been forced to declare myself not a Catholic writer but a writer who happens to be a Catholic” (G. Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 61).
| Heart of the Matter” how you let your hero commit suicide...
I wished I could be of any use to you. I am here since 1939. Could I show you around the American mission, where I am teaching at the Preachers School too (although I am an agnostic for the moment...)? Very sincerely yours,
(I am not a reporter !!!)."
[signature
R. Van den Brandt⁷⁵
c/o D.C.C.M. Bolenge] |
| Querry, a man who had turned at bay. |

| The atmosphere more relaxed when I had dinner with the fathers, perhaps because I am less shy and beginning to understand better the Belgian accent.⁷⁷ |
| |

| Feb. 5. Yonda. A very overcast day. The absence of the warning sun makes many people late for work. |
| |

| As I shave a worker goes by in sandals cut to fit feet without toes: already I hardly notice that any more than the singing of the leper who is now painting the exterior of my door. The toeless man puts down his feet as though he were thumping the ground to level it with iron rods. |
| |

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⁷⁵ Van den Brandt, see note 54 and the 14 February entry (GGJR). The character of Rycker in *A Burnt-Out Case* is in part modeled on Van den Brandt, who had also lost his faith as can be appreciated from this note to Greene. In *A Burnt-Out Case*, Rycker, a former seminarian and devoted Catholic, also refuses Querry’s silence about his belief and insists on forging a meaningful spiritual bond with him.

⁷⁷ The missionaries Greene met were all Flemish Belgians. They had a secondary knowledge of French, the language Greene used with them (except with Vanderslaghmolen), but all had a Flemish accent when speaking it.
It is always depressing the first day in a very strange region knowing that weeks are to go by before one returns to the familiar, but after a few days (hold on and wait till they have passed) one has constructed the familiar in the very heart of the strange. One takes to routine as to a pleasure: after breakfast a shave, a letter to be written, perhaps an entry in the journal, then down to the Congo with a book to read on the old tin ship, return, another letter, a book, perhaps as yesterday a visit to the dispensary – it is almost time for lunch at the doctor’s, then the siesta, a walk again to the Congo, the evening glass of whisky, dinner with the fathers, bed, another day rapidly gone. It is almost disturbing that today the routine will be altered, my meals reversed (lunch with the fathers), a visit to Coq for a pique,78 to make plans for my trip into the bush, drinks with the Governor.

The laughter of the African: where in Europe would one hear so much laughter as among these leper workers? But the reverse is true: the deep sense of despair one feels in them when they are sick or in pain. (One remembers that too among the carriers in Liberia, my boys in Sierra Leone). Life is the moment. This is their form of eternity.

Scene in the dispensary yesterday when there was too much noise of children crying and the doctor called to his assistant who commanded “Put the children to the breasts,” a command, he says, you hear frequently at Mass.

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78 French for “injection.” Remember that Greene spoke French with Lechat (and the Fathers), whose English at that time was still imperfect.
Certainly silence suddenly reigns.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certainly silence suddenly reigns. 79</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiently overcast for walking. To the main dispensary and the new laboratory which is in building. L. showed me complicated apparatus for measuring to 1/20,000 of a second the reactions of the nerves. But what pleased him was a relatively cheap apparatus for taking the temperature of the skin simultaneously in 20 spots. A patch seems to have a higher temperature and he hopes that it will prove possible to forestall in a child the formation of a patch and begin treatment before a patch appears. In the same way with the fingers he hopes to be able to foresee mutilation and forestall it. In correspondence with India where the same experiments are being made.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The man at the dispensary with elephantiasis: 81 his feet and lower leg gnarled and nodule like an ancient tree trunk which has been carved at the end in the shape of huge toes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If X has been successful architect, isn’t it possible that he has come to the end of his vocation? The love of his art has gone the way of his love of women: a kind of sensual exhaustion has overtaken that too.</td>
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<tr>
<td>After lunch went into Coq with the L. family 82 and had my second T. and B. 83 rather painfully at the National Health Service. L. tells me of a doctor there,</td>
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79 This scene returns in *A Burnt-Out Case*, Part V, Chapter II.
80 Dr. Lechat was indeed in correspondence with the Indian leprosy specialist R. Ranchandra Vishwanath Wardekar, see note 321.
81 Disease caused by worm infection and characterized by at times very expansive tissue swelling of body parts.
82 The Lechat family are Dr. Michel Lechat, his wife Edith (née Dasnoy, born 1932), and their two small children Marie (born 1954) and Laurent (born 1956).
83 Vaccine against typhoid and paratyphoid fever.
me that the doctor there, who is officially his chief, is a very scared man. He is continually ringing up the Sûreté\textsuperscript{84} at night to say there are Congolese outside his house who have come to murder him and his wife. A lot of people at Coq now are sleeping with guns beside them – the chief danger is an incident provoked from fear.

Went to the Bishop’s.\textsuperscript{85} A wonderfully handsome old man with an 18th century manner – or perhaps the manner of an Edwardian boulevardier. He will try to lend me his boat for my trip into the bush.

Drinks at the Governor’s: a simple kindly not very intelligent couple\textsuperscript{86} but quite free from the vices of a colon.\textsuperscript{87} After dark an engine passes through the streets spraying D.D.T. so thickly that for a little we were lost in our car as completely as in any London smog: visibility down to a few yards. The Governor’s adjoint\textsuperscript{88} with 20 years experience. His admiration for the African woman. He spoke with emotion of the gentleness of life in the villages, but he too feels – as I cannot – that the tribal framework must be broken and material incentives be given for that purpose. Doesn’t this lead straight to the gadget world of the States? He spoke of the

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who is continually ringing up the Sûreté at night to say that there are Congolese outside his house who have come to murder him and his wife. & of ... his wife to Told of a man there who is continually ringing up the Sûreté at night to say that there are Congolese outside his house who have come to murder him and his wife. &
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{84} Correct spelling sûreté, French for “police” or, in other contexts, “secret service.”

\textsuperscript{85} Vermeiren, see note 42.

\textsuperscript{86} A. and S. De Valkeneer, see note 43.

\textsuperscript{87} French for member of the colonial administration or a private colonial entrepreneur, i.e., any European working in the Congo who was not a missionary.

\textsuperscript{88} French for “assistant,” “substitute/deputy,” or “acting.” The official title of a Province Governor’s second-in-command was “Province Commissioner” (French Commissaire Provincial). In this case, Victor Brebant (1911–?).

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\textsuperscript{GGgp (ML). changes Drinks at ... colon to Drinks at the Governor’s: a simple kindly couple quite free from the vices of colons. and adds footnote I learnt later that they had spent some 25 years in the Congo, almost always in the bush, in the early days without boat and without mail. They were on trek in the forest 20 days a month (that was the duty), resting the ten other days in such small missions as I describe here.}
necessity for a mystique, but is there any mystique in America today, even inside the Catholic church? The letter I have included earlier is relevant.

They taught the Congolese how to cultivate manioc and rice, supervising the building of dispensaries, inspecting native tribunals. Out of such experiences came the wife’s book of stories which had to be published at her own expense, for we have seen how little interest there was in Belgium for her colonies. This is only one example of the tragic waste of small heroic lives.

Feb. 6. Yonda. Slept well for two hours, but then lay awake curiously uneasy – perhaps the effect of the piqure, imagining that the distant voices among the leper houses meant danger. Lights flashed: I lost my torch and lay among illusions as thick and disagreeable as the D.D.T. cloud. When at last I slept again I dreamed all the time of Anita.

How strange it is that over more than a hundred years Africa has been recommended as a cure for the sick heart.

JR. I dreamt all the time of one person.

GGJR. to for the sick heart adds footnote Even in the case of strong-minded Mary Kingsley. After the loss

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89 French for “mystic.”
90 See note 43.
91 French for “injection.”
92 Anita Björk (1923–2012), Swedish actress with whom Greene had a relationship between roughly 1954 and 1958.
93 Mary H. Kingsley (1862–1900), one of the very few women among the first European travelers (“explorers”) in Africa at the time. Traveled through West Africa (from present-day Sierra Leone to Angola) and wrote down these experiences in her bestseller *Travels in West Africa* (1897). Died in South Africa, nursing prisoners of war of the Second Anglo-Boer War.
of her father and mother “I went down to West Africa to die,” she wrote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Solphane treatment. DDS</strong>&lt;sup&gt;94&lt;/sup&gt; given orally in tablets – two tablets 3 times a week: an interval of one week at the end of a month.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hydrocarpus oil – of social use only in disguising the patches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The constant conversation, ribaldry and laughter of the workers. If one could understand, how tedious the noise would become, but incomprehensible it makes a kind of cacophonous background music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A man whom L. has cured wrote a letter to his sister still in the leproserie&lt;sup&gt;95&lt;/sup&gt; urging the death of L. and boasting of what he had done in Leopoldville. The sister was frightened and couldn’t understand and took it to a monitor in the school. Now another letter has arrived and L. wonders what is in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another man whom he cured and who therefore had to leave the station threatened to burn down the doctor’s house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wing of melancholia flicks at me today, perhaps because I have learned nothing new here, perhaps because of my bad night, perhaps because of my dreams – that relation in which both of hoped so much and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<sup>94</sup> Diaminodiphenyl sulfone, also known as Dapsone.

<sup>95</sup> Throughout his journal, Greene uses the French spelling *leproserie* for “leprosery.”

<sup>96</sup> See note 30.
Both of us. Björk and himself. Referring to Anita Björk, a Swede (see note 92).

French for “injection.”

Going to the bank of the Congo River to read; see note 49.

Julien Green, see note 57.

François Villon (1431 – died after 1463), French poet of the Middle Ages. Known for his criminal and anticlerical behavior and writings.

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>which both of\textsuperscript{97} \textit{sic} hoped so much and which failed us both.</th>
<th>which failed us both.</th>
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</table>

| Feb. 7. Yonda. A good night with the help of a pill and only one Swedish\textsuperscript{98} dream. My piqure\textsuperscript{99} nearly better and the wing of melancholy removed. | JR. omits Swedish |

| A pamphlet speaks of how Europe eradicated leprosy, but was it leprosy and was it eradicated? |

| Because of a delay in the cleaning of my shoes, I nearly missed the morning half hour\textsuperscript{100} by the Congo. How easily a habit in strange surroundings takes on the character of a magic charm. Against what? Melancholy perhaps, or ennui. |

| Reading the last volume of Julian Green’s journal – Le Bel Aujourd’hui\textsuperscript{101} with growing irritation. It seems to me impregnated with nothing so strong as spiritual pride but with spiritual vanity. He talks too much of God and the saints. In one passage he talks of the need to eliminate everything which is not pleasing to God. But is God pleased with a succession of pious platitudes on his nature? Wouldn’t he give them all for one blasphemous line of Villon\textsuperscript{102}? I cannot help picturing the good God glancing at |

\textsuperscript{97} Both of us. Björk and himself.

\textsuperscript{98} Referring to Anita Björk, a Swede (see note 92).

\textsuperscript{99} French for “injection.”

\textsuperscript{100} Going to the bank of the Congo River to read; see note 49.

\textsuperscript{101} Julien Green, see note 57.

\textsuperscript{102} François Villon (1431 – died after 1463), French poet of the Middle Ages. Known for his criminal and anticlerical behavior and writings.
this book and throwing it aside as an author throws aside one more worthy and how boring thesis on his work by a student for a baccalauriat.\textsuperscript{103}

Perhaps the first argument concerning X will be whether he should be classed as a leprophil. At the moment X stands still in my mind: he has hardly progressed at all. I only know a little bit more about his surroundings. Perhaps it will be necessary to name him – and yet I am unwilling to give him a definite nationality. Perhaps – for ostensible reasons of discretion – he should remain a letter. Unfortunately as I have learned before if one uses an initial for one’s principal character, people begin to talk about Kafka.\textsuperscript{104}

Leprosy bacillus very similar to that of tuberculosis. Hansen’s bacillus however cannot be transferred to an animal. Appearance: (a) patches with loss of sensation (b) loss of sensation in the limbs without patches (c) thickening of the skin of the face and ears and the appearance of nodules. The last is the contagious.

Cleanliness is important to the non-patient: hardly at all to the patient.

When one travels far one travels also in time. A week ago at this hour I was still in

\textsuperscript{103}French name of an exam taken by students who have completed their final year in secondary education. Successful passing of the exam permitted one to proceed to higher education.

\textsuperscript{104}Reference is to “Josef K.,” protagonist of Franz Kafka’s \textit{The Trial} (1925).
Brussels\textsuperscript{105}, but I feel separated from that time by weeks not days. In 1957 I travelled more than 44,000 miles. Is it for that reason – I began my long journeys in the 30’s – that life seems to have been quite interminably long?

Is there a way in which I can use the dreams of X? As I knew to my cost yesterday dreams can dictate the mood of a whole day and bring a dying emotion back to full life.

The Abokos.\textsuperscript{106} The Bishop\textsuperscript{107} told us two days ago that many were persuaded that with a certain powder they could destroy walls. They pushed the powder under their nails and then they had only to beat on a wall and it would fall. In primitive people as in children there is sometimes a failure to distinguish between dream and reality. This confusion is well illustrated in a huge novel La Gana,\textsuperscript{108} which I am reading now.

The new drug 1906.\textsuperscript{109} Too expensive to be practical when dealing with millions. DDs\textsuperscript{110} cost is only 3f a year. The cure with 1906 takes much the same time.

\textsuperscript{105} Refers to the week from 25 to 31 January, which he spent in Brussels with the woman “Tony,” just before leaving for the Congo (see my introductory sections).

\textsuperscript{106} Correct spelling “Abakos,” i.e., members of the \textit{Association des Bakongo} (“Association of Bakongo”), a political group strongly anchored in the ethnic group of the Bakongo hailing from the Lower-Congo area. The fiercest anticolonialist voice in the late 1950s, Abako pleaded for immediate decolonization and the establishment of a new state based on ethnic federalism. It had a major hand in the anticolonial uprising which took place in Leopoldville in early January 1959 (see also note 30).

\textsuperscript{107} Vermeiren, see note 42.


\textsuperscript{109} Full name of the drug CIBA-1906, based on the chemical compound thiambutosine.

\textsuperscript{110} See note 94.
Colonial protocol. L. tells me that at any gathering – however casual and spontaneous say in a restaurant – one cannot leave until one’s seniors in rank have left. As was the case to my knowledge in Sierra Leone furniture is according to rank. He will soon be in position to have six instead of four armchairs or let his wife have a full-length mirror. The sad story of the man who couldn’t have a second “cabinet” passionately wanted by his wife without passing certain exams and entering another grade. He failed and so out of his own money he built a second ‘cabinet’ in the garden. But the garden belonged to the State and the governor of the time told him to destroy it. L. ignores these rules for leaving a party and it has sometimes happened that the wife of his superior rank has risen quickly and got to the door first to prevent him making a gaffe.

| 111 See note 16. Setting of The Heart of the Matter. | be practical and crosses out The cure with 1906 takes much the same time. | GGgp (ML). changes L. tells me that at any gathering to I have been told that at any gathering |

| GGgp. to destroy it adds footnote In 1942 outside Freetown I lived in a house in a swamp used by the natives as a lavatory, a great encouragement to flies. (Once I closed my office window and killed 150 in two minutes.) I sent a demand for a native lavatory to the Colonial Secretary who replied that such a demand must come through the proper channels, but as in my case there were no proper channels I had to remind him of Mr. Churchill’s minute on the subject. I got |
Father Gustaaf Hulstaert (1900-1990), MSC—missionary and prolific researcher of the indigenous languages and cultures of the region, and whose name Greene leaves blank a few sentences later. Hulstaert recounts this particular event of 7 February as follows:

“Graham Greene had been taken by Dr. Lechat to see me in my mission station in Bamanya. During our conversations, Greene explained to me that he had come to the Congo to find the subject for a new novel: theme, characters, and an authentic African background. In order to give him a taste of indigenous culture, I invited him to join me the next day to the last performance of a local funeral ceremony, very rare and by that time almost extinct, namely the solemn revealing of a coffin carved in the form of a human, whose sculptor categorically refused to produce more copies. It is this scene which Greene recounts in his diary. He was sat next to me, and clearly gave the impression to be less interested by the ceremony than by the members of the audience. It also seemed he was annoyed by the Belgian photographer, a civil servant of the province administration, whom I had invited to film this historical event. We had fetched an old priest, Father [blank], from his mission. The priest with the greatest knowledge of the

my lavatory and was able to record on the Government files that like Keats my name was writ in water.

Greene left this blank as he had probably not properly understood the name. The person in question is Father Gustaaf Hulstaert (1900-1990), see note 112.

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112 Father Gustaaf Hulstaert (1900-1990), MSC—missionary and prolific researcher of the indigenous languages and cultures of the region, and whose name Greene leaves blank a few sentences later. Hulstaert recounts this particular event of 7 February as follows: “Graham Greene had been taken by Dr. Lechat to see me in my mission station in Bamanya. During our conversations, Greene explained to me that he had come to the Congo to find the subject for a new novel: theme, characters, and an authentic African background. In order to give him a taste of indigenous culture, I invited him to join me the next day to the last performance of a local funeral ceremony, very rare and by that time almost extinct, namely the solemn revealing of a coffin carved in the form of a human, whose sculptor categorically refused to produce more copies. It is this scene which Greene recounts in his diary. He was sat next to me, and clearly gave the impression to be less interested by the ceremony than by the members of the audience. It also seemed he was annoyed by the Belgian photographer, a civil servant of the province administration, whom I had invited to film this historical event. I don’t know what the photographer did with the film afterwards. At any rate, this very special indigenous rite has never been performed since, and no new copy of this type of sarcophagus has ever been sculpted—the last sculptor, by the way, died shortly after this ceremony” (Hulstaert 495-96; my translation from French).

113 Either Pierre Ahrens (1902-unknown), District Commissioner and First Burgomaster of the city of Coquilhatville, or, less probable, Henri Lermusiaux (dates unknown), mayor of only the white city quarters of the city at that time.

114 Greene left this blank as he had probably not properly understood the name. The person in question is Father Gustaaf Hulstaert (1900-1990), see note 112.
indigènes. He made a small speech before this artificial ceremony which had for its purpose only the acquisition of one of these coffins for the museum in Leo. Drums beat, old women danced with leaves, but one couldn’t help comparing this scene with the tubular chairs and the whirr of an amateur cine-camera with the real ceremonies and drums of Nicoboozu and Zigita in the untouched Liberian hinterland. There was only one genuine moment when the organizer and purchaser (for 2000 francs) of the coffin wished to leave it in the village overnight and the people refused – it would bring bad luck. The notable of the district – the heir of the chief – a good-looking young Congolais in a smart European suit arrived hand in hand with his daughter, a beautiful girl in a yellow head-scarf shaped round her head like a crown. She wore ear-rings, a European frock and a necklace, and she sat in her chair with the poise of a young Queen while the wives of the colons chattered and moved restlessly here and there and fussed with their cameras.

The old priest stayed to dinner. A cheerful amusing old man, but as he was driven home afterwards in the dark he spoke of his fear for Coq, of what the unemployed and the...

JR. of the district – with the air of a chief – a good-looking The manuscript clearly says the heir of the chief. On GGJR, GG did not correct it back to heir, probably an oversight. Indeed remains with the air of a chief until fp.

115 Two towns Greene had visited in West Africa in 1935, mentioned in his Journey Without Maps.
117 Hulstaert, see note 114.
jeunesse\textsuperscript{118} might start. We had a drink in the smaller of the two hotels after dropping him (the larger repelled by its yellow lights painted like the moon of a child’s book with human features). Very discreet 1920ish pin-ups, the tiny dart’s board. A man at the bar was impertinent to L. because he preferred to wait and signal the waiter rather than call ‘Boy.’ “Êtes-vous muet?”\textsuperscript{119} Returning the lit windows of the fonctionaire\textsuperscript{120} who can’t sleep at night for fear.

| L. remarkable young man at 32. When he came out six years ago there was no doctor: only a formidable pair of nuns\textsuperscript{121} living in a kind of native hut with a great reputation for sanctity. It was impossible with them to make any progress so he wrote back a letter of 32 pages demanding their removal within 48 hours and promising to say nothing of his reasons – a promise he still keeps. The mother-superior in Belgium got in a car and drove all through the night to the south of France to catch the General of the Order: a sister was despatched from Louvain at 24 hours notice, and the sisters removed into the bush. There one of them has developed, realized her mistakes and is going to be put in charge of an important station. But they left hating him, and in Coq where they were regarded as saints his promise sealed his lips: a remarkable action at |
| GGJR. Returning saw the lit windows |
| GGJR. crosses out L. remarkable young man at 32. |
| GGJR changes When he came out six years ago there to When L. came out six years ago at the age of 26 there |
| GGgp(ML). crosses out entire passage When L. came out ... remarkable action at 26. |

\textsuperscript{118} French for “youth.”
\textsuperscript{119} French for “are you deaf?”
\textsuperscript{120} French for “civil servant.”
\textsuperscript{121} The leprosery of Iyonda had been founded in 1945 by missionary sisters of the congregation \textit{Sœurs de la Congrégation des Filles de Notre-Dame du Sacré-Cœur} (“Sisters of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart”).
Yonda. Feb. 8. Sunday. Mass at 6.30 in the leproserie church: the Africans at the back. Segregation for health reasons? Taken in a bus driven by the beautiful nun whom I had seen in the Foyer Social. Anita very much in mind, and melancholy on the horizon. How everything seems to be dying all the time in the tropics if only a butterfly on the altar steps. What a mountain of debris there must be every day of mosquitoes, cockroaches, cockchafers, moufes, moths.

At breakfast spoke to the convalescent Fr Henri. He would like to come with me on the boat and get off at his seminary on the return voyage. Spoke of the Protestant and Catholic missions. The native was Protestant or Catholic according to the school in the neighbourhood, but he felt certain that they had a stronger credence in the Catholic, partly because of the cult of Our Lady, as the love of the mother is the

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JR. A. very much in mind</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GGJR. crosses out A. very much in mind.</strong> Clearly Greene wants no reference to Anita Björk to remain.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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122 Sister Germaine Matthys (1903-1996).  
123 A *Foyer Social* was a sort of community house where Congolese women were given training in housekeeping, cooking, needlework and sewing, etc. Some *Foyers Sociaux* were run by the colonial state administration, others by missionary nuns. In the former, the training sessions were given by female lay social workers from Belgium (called *assistantes sociales*, “social assistants,” or, commonly, *demoiselles*), occasionally assisted by a nun; in the latter, the nuns themselves gave the sessions. There was a *Foyer Social* in Iyonda, run by the nuns, and another one in Coquilhatville, run by the administration. The leprosery of Lombolombo at the mission of Wafanya, which Greene visited on 19-21 February, also had a *Foyer Social*.  
124 Björk, see note 92.  
125 Word not known either in standard or colloquial French, not even in Belgian colonial jargon. My best guess is that Greene was aiming for *mouches*, the French word for “flies.” It remains *moufes* in the final publication.  
126 Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.  
127 Vanderslaghmolen, temporarily in Iyonda to recover from an illness (see note 46), regularly worked at a seminary in the mission post of Bokuma, on the Ruki-Momboyo, the river Greene (and Vanderslaghmolen) would travel between 12 and 26 February.
The variety of Dutch spoken in Flanders, the northern half of Belgium. The missionaries with whom Greene spent time in the Congo were all native speakers of Flemish and used this dialect among themselves (see note 77).

The “businessman” with whom Greene had dinner in Leopoldville on 1 February (see that entry).

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**French for “the Congolese.”**

**The variety of Dutch spoken in Flanders, the northern half of Belgium.** The missionaries with whom Greene spent time in the Congo were all native speakers of Flemish and used this dialect among themselves (see note 77).

**The “businessman” with whom Greene had dinner in Leopoldville on 1 February (see that entry).**
is leaving for Leo. Male dances called athletic, but these athletes would have been put to shame by any second-class musicall troupe in Europe. Nonetheless they were watched by B. the district officer\(^{31}\), with smiling proprietorial pride. How often have I seen that smile – like that of a proud schoolmaster watching a school performance of *The Merchant of Venice*, or the faces of British district officers or administrators, in West Africa, in Malaya... at least it is not the stupidity of the colon.

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<th>Returning I found my floor covered with big flying ants. A sign of rain? I remember them falling in showers over my food in Freetown just before the rains.</th>
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[9 February entry completely missing from manuscript. This missing was confirmed to me by Harry Ransom Center: page(s) are not in the original. Reid’s typescript of these pages, reads: ]

<table>
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<tr>
<th>February 9th Yonda. The rain came in the night. I’m worried about my book. It’s possible that for the mis-en-scène I should go back to my memories of Mosambolphun and Ganta in Liberia and my arrival at these places. The arrival of X has to set the tone, and perhaps what L. would call a more ‘sentimental’ setting is required in this highly organized</th>
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\(^{31}\) Maybe the Congolese Joseph Bofonge, see note 116. In 1957-1959 Bofonge was member of the Commission of Education of the Province Council and in that capacity very active in the rethinking of school education for the Congolese (see Lufungula Lewono & Vinck). Greene’s comparison to schoolmasters elsewhere may have been inspired by this.
garden city. I am worried too by the members of my priestly chorus: they are right for Europe but not for the missions. I have never yet found in a missionary priest either the naivety which I want for certain of them, nor the harshness towards human failing, nor the inquisitiveness. These men are too busy to worry about motives – they are concerned of cement, education, electrical plant – not motives. How can I get rid of this falsity?

A morning with the doctor at the dispensary and hospital. The leaf-like tattoos on the faces of old women: the withered breasts like a pair of small empty gloves: the man without fingers or toes nursing a small child; the man with elephantiasis, testicles the size of a football: the tubercular women (it seems unfair that if one is a leper one should suffer from other diseases as well): the old man with the sweet face and a gentle courtesy who has retired into the mud hut behind his hut to die (high blood pressure) – legs like a child and the face of a saint: the woman without legs who bore a child: the man who retired to die and was not discovered at the back of his house for days.

The bacillus in the tubercular variety almost indistinguishable from other diseases such as syphilis, but the bacillus of the lepromateuse a thing of its own. Leprosy drugs can be used in the tuberculosis of the skin, the tuberculosis drugs not valuable for leprosy. Many lepers die

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132 See note 81. Used in *A Burnt-Out Case* Part II, Chapter III, and Part IV, Chapter I.
of tuberculosis.

Into Coq with L. to try to arrange about the boat. A terribly hot afternoon and a sense of despair. A funny little high-built boat\textsuperscript{133} badly needing paint like a miniature Mississippi paddle-steamer. Received by the retiring captain\textsuperscript{134} a tall priest with gold-stopped teeth and a long straggling beard who gave us beer in the saloon with big windows above, I suppose, the bridge. The cupboard with a panel with the nativity. There was a difficulty, it was explained; the boat had for long been in bad condition and now it was dangerous: a hole or a rotten plank (I'm not sure which) in the bottom. (Outside the cabin a life-belt looking like a dried eel all twisted out of shape). Long discussion. A visit to Otraco\textsuperscript{135} – all berths to Wafania\textsuperscript{136} full as far as Ibongo.\textsuperscript{137} Possibility of car to Flandria\textsuperscript{138} and canoe to Ibongo\textsuperscript{139} and waiting there for the passenger boat's return, or a plane somewhere else and a car to Wafania and return by passenger boat, leaving out Ibongo.\textsuperscript{140} All tiring restless incomplete trips. Return to the cathedral. Only Monseigneur could give word for the boat to go, and the day before he had fallen

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{133} The “Theresita” steamer of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. See also my section 2 above.
\item \textsuperscript{134} Petrus “Pierre” Van den Cruyce (1908-1994), MSC-missionary. In \textit{A Burnt-Out Case}, too, there is a change of captain of the steamer on which Querry travels.
\item \textsuperscript{135} Acronym of \textit{Office des Transports Coloniaux} (“Office of Colonial Transport”), the public transportation office of the Belgian Congo.
\item \textsuperscript{136} Correct spelling “Wafanya”; see map in introductory sections.
\item \textsuperscript{137} Correct spelling “Imbonga”; see map in introductory sections.
\item \textsuperscript{138} Flandria, mission post of the same missionaries; see map in introductory sections.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Correct spelling “Imbonga”; see map.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Correct spelling “Imbonga”; see map.
\end{itemize}
Andreas (André) Beke (1912–1970), MSC-missionary in charge of the logistics of the congregation. Tells Greene that due to technical problems the steamer cannot sail for the next weeks or month, but Greene senses that Father André is only trying to thwart his plans.

In his own handwritten memoirs, Father André noted Greene’s not-so-positive depiction of him in *In Search of a Character* and defends himself:

“this was about whether our boat, which was out of order, would sail or not. Because it was out of order, I didn’t give him [Greene] a straight answer, I still had to wait and see” (André Beke’s personal notes; archives of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Borgerhout, Belgium, my translation from the Flemish). Yet Dr. Lechat’s widow Edith Dasnoy showed me a letter she wrote from Iyonda to her father in Belgium on 11 February 1959, only two days after Greene’s unsuccessful attempt with Father André. It appears that the latter was very skeptical of Greene’s presence among the priests in general, suspecting that he would write scornful things about them in his novel. Father André pretended the boat to be inoperative; distrustful, he wanted to protect his fellow missionaries in the other MSC mission stations from Greene’s observations.

Van den Cruyce, see note 134.

Not Pierre Van den Cruyce, the captain mentioned a few sentences earlier (and see note 134), but Pierre Wijnants, MSC-missionary and Superior of the mission in Iyonda (see note 47).

11 February 1959.
or toes are known as burnt-out cases.\footnote{This is the parallel I have been seeking between my character X and the lepers. Psychologically and morally he has been burnt-out. Is it at that point that the cure is affected? Perhaps the novel should begin not at the leproserie but on the mission boat.} This is the parallel I have been seeking between my character X and the lepers. Psychologically and morally he has been burnt-out. Is it at that point that the cure is affected? Perhaps the novel should begin not at the leproserie but on the mission boat.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>footnote</th>
<th>The English phrase is used by the Belgian doctors – there is no French equivalent, and for that reason I had to find quite a different title for my novel in French.\footnote{The English phrase is used by the Belgian doctors – there is no French equivalent, and for that reason I had to find quite a different title for my novel in French.}</th>
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How often people speak of the absurdity of believing that life should exist by God’s will on one minute part of the immense universe. There is a parallel absurdity which we are asked to believe that God chose a tiny colony of a Roman empire in which to be born. Strangely enough two absurdities seem easier to believe than one.

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The cows with the elegant snow-white birds – piqueboeufs\footnote{French for “oxpecker.”} – which attend them like guardian angels. They are so sleek and smooth that their feathers seem of porcelain. Innumerable butterflies.

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The old woman with the palsied eyelids who could not blink. The doctor had bought her dark glasses, but she would not wear them because they were not a medicine – she had trust only in drugs. The problem of shoes. Special shoes were bought for the mutilated but many people would not wear them. They wanted ordinary shoes. Even if they consented to wear shoes it was only on a Sunday, and usually they would accept them only to sell them.

\footnote{As Greene writes in a footnote he added in GGJR (see next column), “burnt-out case” was the English phrase the Belgian doctors, as well as the missionaries and colonials, used as a loanword in their otherwise French or Flemish speech.}

\footnote{The title of the French translation of the novel is \textit{La Saison des Pluies}; literally “The Rainy Season.”}

\footnote{French for “oxpecker.”}
I have not been able to establish with absolute certainty the identity of the medical officer Lechat’s anecdote is about. The colonial state had “medical officers” at different levels of its administration, and the doctors occupying that post changed quite frequently. The two most important ones in Coquilhatville at the time of Greene’s visit were Dr. J. Van Droogenbroeck (birth and death unknown) and Dr. G. Gerkens (1910-unknown). But Lechat is probably relating an incident that happened in the past, well before Greene’s arrival (maybe years), involving a previous chief medical officer rather than the one in charge at that time.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>The problem of charity. A special leper’s day in Coq produced enough clothes for 400 patients, but there are 800, so 400 more had to be bought – a great expense. Then the 400 given were all different, and this caused infinite jealousy.</th>
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<tr>
<td>The doctor is having six invalid chairs made for those who have lost their feet and can only crawl. But there are ten of these. How about jealousy, I asked him? ‘For something important I will defy jealousy’, he said, ‘but not for a tin of sardines.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of his work is paper work and how much consists of manoeuvres – the refusal even of gifts at certain moments if as a result he can obtain more later on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chief Medical Officer, a hard man, who began to weep when L. told him that he would not hold a lepers’ day in Yonda because he did not want his people to be regarded as inmates of a zoo. The medical officer, who had always been his enemy, agreed with him. He explained his tears. His father had been killed in the first war, his mother had died, and from the age of eight he had been brought up in an orphanage. On any great occasion he was made to parade wearing his father’s medals, and he hated this and at last refused and was punished.</td>
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148 I have not been able to establish with absolute certainty the identity of the medical officer Lechat’s anecdote is about. The colonial state had “medical officers” at different levels of its administration, and the doctors occupying that post changed quite frequently. The two most important ones in Coquilhatville at the time of Greene’s visit were Dr. J. Van Droogenbroeck (birth and death unknown) and Dr. G. Gerkens (1910-unknown). But Lechat is probably relating an incident that happened in the past, well before Greene’s arrival (maybe years), involving a previous chief medical officer rather than the one in charge at that time.
“That is why now I try to be hard and rough.”

Names of Africans. Henry with a y.
Attention. Deo gratias.149

Visit with L. to dispensary for an inspection of hands. He makes them move the fingers in certain exercises. Treatment: paraffin wax, massage, splints. The typical monkey hand due to damaged medial nerve. Surgical treatment when the nerve is being strangled by a thickening of the sheath, to cut through the sheath and let the nerves free.

Haircut from Fr. Paul.150

Two letters from Tony. Long badly written, badly spelt, childlike and sophisticated.

Men playing mysterious game altering the number of beans that lie in rough troughs on a home-made board.

A coil of caterpillars brought home by a leper to sell or eat.

Dinner at the Governor’s. Mme de Valkeneer151 who has published two books at her

—————

149 Deo Gratias, a Congolese leprosy patient in Iyonda (birth and death unknown). Model for the character by the same name in A Burnt-Out Case, the only character for which Greene did not choose to find a pseudonym.

150 Paul Van Molle (1911-1969), MSC-missionary. Father Paul held the 8mm camera with which he shot the film showing Greene in Iyonda on 5 March 1959, to be viewed on http://rozenbergquarterly.com/?p=6141 (Meeuwis 2013).

151 See note 43.
own expense talked interminably of a writer’s method and vision.

Palsy and mutilation alternatives. A man goes on working with dead nerves and injures his fingers because they feel nothing: palsy where the nerves react in some sort of protection.

Feb. 11. Yonda. Everyone quiet and depressed after last night’s dinner.

The leper tribunal outside a house – three men, representatives of their tribes, listening to the witnesses. They can hear small cases – of theft, of abuse, of stealing a man’s wife, and they can sentence to short terms in prison near Yonda. But the prisoners are allowed out for work and treatment: they only spend the nights in the prison.

Shopping for the boat – D.D.T. bombs, eau de cologne\footnote{French for “cologne.”}, soap flakes, ten whiskies, 36 soda. Gave the L’s dinner in the hotel. The terrible bar with steal chairs and man in the moon lampshades. The dinner not so bad. Then whisky on the boat. The Bishop’s cabin very pleasant. The altar in the deckhouse.

 GGJR. to dinner not so bad. adds footnote One of the saving graces of

GGJR. to ten whiskies, 36 soda. adds footnote It had always been my experience in Europe to find whisky the favourite drink of the clergy, but on board the captain only drank beer, Father Henri\footnote{Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.} would not take more than one glass before dinner, and the rest was left to me. The soda water was at any rate useful for cleaning teeth, for the Congo water was the colour of clay.

\footnote{French for “cologne.”}
\footnote{Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the Congo was the excellent cheap wine obtainable, even in Coq. I remember in particular an excellent Portuguese rosé. Whisky only cost the equivalent of about 22 shillings. Camemberts flown from Europe were creamy and mature.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

154 Vermeiren, see note 42.

155 French for “parish priest.” Josef Calsius Sr. (1915-1920), MSC-missionary and at that time parish priest of the cathedral in Coquilhatville, seat of Bishop Vermeiren (note 42).

156 Louis Van Der Beken (1905-1969), MSC-missionary and Vicarius Delegatus (substitute/deputy bishop) of Vicar Apostolic Vermeiren.

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The bishop’s accident. In all the years he had never before known illness, and the boredom rather than the pain is killing him. He had been a man who could not stand being alone, who read little and liked cards: as a bishop dignified and immaculate with the big cross round his neck. A kind and courteous man who had never really done anything at all. Now he lies in his pyjamas alone with his intolerable ennui, unable to understand how to be alone. In all the fifty years since his ordination solitude has never caught up with him before. He is even unable to move his head without pain. There is no sympathy for him amongst his priests. The curé is well content that his bishop should at last know what sickness is like. His second-in-command is tired out with him. “I wish I could mail him to Europe,” he says. He is aware of how much he could do if he were left alone to do it.

GGJR, who had never really done anything at all. becomes who had done very little in his diocese.

GGgp(ML). crosses out who read little and liked cards

GGgp(ML). to without pain adds footnote I am glad to say that the Bishop recovered from his broken hip. The apparent boulevardier of smooth colonial days came into his own in troubled times. He has stayed at his post, has the confidence of the Congolais and has remained firm through all the troubles, helping the white
people who have remained in Equatoria. How often the lives of individual priests reproduce in this way the history of the Church.

GGgp(ML). crosses out the part There is no sympathy ... alone to do it.

| At the last moment a local mail brings a letter from another local writer and a copy of his book – like Mme V’s shown published at his own expense. Why should this dream of writing haunt so many? The desire for money – I doubt it. The desire for a vocation in a life they haven’t really chosen? The same instinct that drives some people to desire rather than to feel a religious faith? |
|---|---|---|
| GGJR. The desire for a vocation .... a religious faith? becomes The desire for a vocation when they find themselves in a life they haven’t really chosen? The same despairing instinct that drives some people to desire rather than to experience a religious faith? |
| GGgp(ML). crosses out – like Mme V’s |


Reading a book which moves me: La Fête Espagnole by Rey. \(^{158}\)

GGJR. corrects Espagnol to Espagnole and adds footnote The author is said to have been clearly depicted as the principal character in the French best-selling novel, Le Répos d’un

\(^{157}\) S. De Valkeneer, see note 43.

\(^{158}\) *La Fête Espagnole* (1959), novel by Henry-François Rey (1919-1987).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Guerrier⁵⁹.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Woken at 5 by the boat leaving and opened my window to see the lights of Coq.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot of vibration from the paddles. The river about 1½ kilometres wide. We keep near one bank.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The control to see that the ship is clear of flowers and plants which will seed and help to close the channels.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pontoon on either side loaded with logs. The former captain¹⁶⁰ reads his breviary after breakfast. X’s account with his deliberate affair with a young married woman in order to ease his own pain. At the end he tries to go back to sexual love, but rejects it from sheer lack of desire. One leaves him waiting for what may come.</td>
<td><strong>GGJR. to what may come adds</strong> footnote These ideas were abandoned or completely transformed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are three priests on board – and the African hands which seem to include at least one woman. There is Père Henri,¹⁶¹ the convalescent and a former captain who has come for the trip but is longing to reach by daylight his seminary at Bakuma:¹⁶² the former captain, Père Pierre¹⁶³, with his long ragged beard and glasses, who is joining the seminary as a professor, and</td>
<td><strong>GGJR.</strong> the new captain – a man obsessed with shooting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹⁵⁹ *Le Repos du Guerrier* (translated in English as *Warrior’s Rest*, 1960), 1958 prize-winning novel by female author Christiane Rochefort (1917-1998). Rochefort had a relationship with Henri-François Rey, a relationship which is said to have inspired the one between the protagonist couple Geneviève and Jean-Renaud in the novel.

¹⁶⁰ Van den Cruyce, see note 134.

¹⁶¹ Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46 and, for the seminary at which he worked, note 127.

¹⁶² Bokuma, see note 127.

¹⁶³ Van Den Cruyce, see note 134.
Père Georges, the new captain – a man who loves shooting. There is a kind of monkey near here which lives on the ground and he boasted of how many he had shot on one round-up – apparently they are very good to eat. Just now we passed a cormorant – long neck and tiny head – sitting on a log and he took a shot at it, but the vibration of the boat made him miss and it flew off the way we had come, keeping always the same distance above the water. Apparently the crocodiles here are long nosed and not man-eating. Bathing is safe. This according to the Fathers: the doctor doubted their dependability.

The first day one watches to see whether a routine will emerge: it is a routine that makes home. You can have moments of excitement, ecstasy, happiness, but you can’t have the sense of peace.

At 11 we had beer and then I taught the fathers 421. After lunch siesta.

Reading Conrad – the volume called *Youth* for the sake of *The Heart of Darkness* – for the first time since I abandoned him about 1932 because his influence on me was too great and too disastrous. The heavy hypnotic style falls around me again, and I am aware of the poverty of my own. Perhaps now I have lived long enough with my poverty to be safe from

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164 Georges Léonet (1922-1974), MSC-missionary. Model for “the captain” in *A Burnt-Out Case*, equally trigger-happy, cruel with animals, spending his spare time making rosaries (see 18 February entry in diary, and Part I, Chapter I in *A Burnt-Out Case*), and fond of simple card games (21 February entry).

165 Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (see also note 35) first appeared in 1899 but later, in 1902, also as one of three short stories in the collection *Youth*, together with the other short stories *Youth* and *The End of the Tether*. 
corruption.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One day I will read Victory again. And The Nigger.¹⁶⁶</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The colour of the water a polished pewter: the clouds seem to shine upwards from below the pewter surface. Even the green of the woods lies under the pewter. Some fisherman’s houses on stilts remind one of the east. Men standing in pirogues have their legs extended by their shadows into the water, so that they have the appearance of wading. Has some rationalist suggested this as an explanation of Christ walking upon the water?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGJR. to remind one of the east adds footnote I was thinking, I think, of a particular village on the Mekong river in Laos, not far from Luang Prabang, where the motor of my canoe broke down. It was during the Indo-China war and we were trying to reach a particularly holy Buddhist shrine, there to offer our prayers against the advancing Viet Minh army. I remember with vivid pleasure the meal on the floor of one house on stilts, and how the walls were covered with Paris Match photographs of Queen Elizabeth’s coronation, though our peasant host could not speak a word of French. I do not apologize for such digressions. Memories are a form of simile: when we say something is ‘like’ we are remembering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More and more worried the last few days whether anything will come of this book. Perhaps I am not accepting the reality but struggling against it, and at the same time frightened of what the doctor calls “sentimental” which is his word for picturesque or dramatic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perhaps X helps with hand exercises and is caught forgetting the obvious precautions of washing with spirit. The priests are more concerned with engineering, electricity, navigation and the like, than with the life of man or God – but that is X's wrong impression. He has come seeking another form of love and is faced with electric turbines and problems of building, and he fails to understand the priests as much as they fail to understand him.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The water at the bow of the pontoons the colour of burnt sugar.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A first sentence perhaps: “Each day after breakfast the captain read his breviary in the deckhouse.”</td>
<td>GGJR. to the deckhouse adds footnote The book was coming nearer. Indeed the second sentence was very like to this: ‘The captain in a white soutane stood by the open window of the saloon reading his breviary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The continuous shovelling of wood from the pontoon to engine reminds one of the Atlantic crossing by Phineas Fogg. 167</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The approach to Bakomo and the excitement of Père Henry: “My home.” “Not your prison?” “No. Yonda is my prison.”</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrival. Dinner in the mission and afterwards the fathers played a card game, with three packs which they called Matches. You could deal 5-11-15-20 cards, and the stakes were</td>
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167 Not Phineas but Phileas Fogg, one of the protagonists in Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1872).
168 Correct spelling "Bokuma"; see note 127.
169 Henri Vanderslaghmolen; see notes 46 and 127.
made with matches. The total stakes must not equal the number of cards in the hand, and one must make exactly the number of tricks staked neither more nor less. As there are three aces in each suit etc., they have orders of value according to the colours of the pack, red white and blue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A disturbed hot night in spite of the pill. Dreamed angrily of Anita and yet I have never thought of her angrily.</th>
<th>JR. Dreamed angrily of someone of whom I have never thought angrily.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Conrad’s Heart of Darkness still a fine story, but its faults show now. The language too inflated for the situation. Kurtz never comes really alive. It is as if Conrad had taken an episode in his own life and tried to lend it, for the sake of “literature”, a greater significance than it will hold. And how often he compares something concrete to something abstract or vague. Is this a trick that I have caught? | |

| It was curious tonight to think what professions one would have attributed to these fathers if one had not known – only one man in a soutane. Fr Georges, the captain, resembles very closely many young officers of the Legion one has known in Indo-China; Fr Pierre rather resembles W.G. Grace or perhaps Huxley; the |

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170 Björk; see note 92.
171 Main character in Heart of Darkness. Interestingly, Greene’s appreciation is remarkably similar to a confession Conrad himself had made about Kurtz fifty-eight years earlier in a letter to Ford Madox Ford’s wife Elsie Hueffer of 3 December 1902: “What I distinctly admit is the fault of having made Kurtz too symbolic or rather symbolic at all” (Conrad cited in Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies, eds. The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Vol.2: 1898-1902 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 460.
172 Léonet; see note 164.
173 Wijnants; see note 47.
Ludwig Vogel (1914-1991), MSC-missionary. Not an Austrian but a German from Bavaria. One of the very few non-Belgian priests of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart working in the region. Incidentally Martin Bormann’s son is somewhere here in the bush. A kind of euphoria among the fathers. Continual jokes and laughter. Only one young man (one of the few beardless) a little quiet and self-contained. Does this continual badinage and college humour go on through all the years?

A mission is a little like a consulate. There is always a portrait of the new Pope and a portrait of the bishop.

Can I make a value out of this euphoria, the continual jests and laughter around the enigmatic and unresponsive figure of X?

Feb.13. Bokuma

Woken by the sanctus bell from the deckhouse. Breakfast at the mission and then a walk with Fr

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174 Ludwig Vogel (1914-1991), MSC-missionary. Not an Austrian but a German from Bavaria. One of the very few non-Belgian priests of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart working in the region.

175 Martin Bormann (1900-1945), Adolf Hitler’s private secretary. Greene here refers to Bormann’s son, Martin Adolf Bormann Jr. (1930-2013), godson of Hitler. Converted to Catholicism at the age of seventeen, Bormann Jr. studied theology and was ordained a priest in 1958 in the Austrian-German branch of the congregation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Strangely, Bormann went to the Congo for the first time only in May 1961 (see Martin Bormann, Zwischen Kreuz und Fetisch: Die Geschichte einer Kongomission (Bayreuth: Hestia, 1965), which means that he could not have been in the region during Greene’s 1959 visit. An explanation for this anachronism in Greene’s diary is found in the fact that Bormann’s entrance in the congregation in Europe and his being prepared for work in the missions of the Congo had already raised some dust among missionaries and colonials in and around Coquilhatville. Either the priests or Greene himself picked up the news and misinterpreted it, believing Bormann had already arrived.

176 Edouard Vanderpooten (1921-1999), MSC-missionary.

177 Greene will indeed make value out of this in A Burnt-Out Case.

178 See note 127 and map in introductory sections.
Van den Cruyce (see note 47), one of Greene’s fellow passengers on the steamer.

Lomongo was the local language of the Congolese. The MSC-Fathers had (varying degrees of) knowledge of it.

Referring to the week spent with “Tony” in Brussels before leaving for the Congo; see my introductory sections.

In order to avoid reference to his affair with Tony; see my introductory sections.

179 Van den Cruyce (see note 47), one of Greene’s fellow passengers on the steamer.
180 Lomongo was the local language of the Congolese. The MSC-Fathers had (varying degrees of) knowledge of it.
181 Referring to the week spent with “Tony” in Brussels before leaving for the Congo; see my introductory sections.
182 In order to avoid reference to his affair with Tony; see my introductory sections.
As mentioned in note 77, all the missionaries Greene met in the Congo were from Flanders, the Flemish-speaking northern half of Belgium. Their native language was Flemish, knowing and using French as a second language only, and speaking it with a (sometimes strong) Flemish accent. That is why Greene calls their French “hardly more comprehensible.” In *A Burnt-Out Case*, this observation and irritation returns more than once: “This was the moment for talk in garbled French or garbled Flemish if they were going to talk, but they never talked much” (Part I, Chapter I); see also Part II, Chapter I, Part IV, Chapter I.

Björk, see note 92.


Ancient Roman novel (2nd century), also known as *Metamorphoses* by Apuleius. Photis is one of the characters.

Correct spelling “Ikenge”; see map in introductory sections.
Gathering storm. Fr. Henri\textsuperscript{188} bathes. Thunder and lightning and heavy rain and the steam blew a joint as we prepared to leave. Held up for the night. The captain\textsuperscript{189} stretched in a deck chair and read his breviary. Fr Henry walked up into the village to tell the people there would be Mass in the morning. The captain went fishing. A lovely fresh evening.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When the lamps were lit some old woman came creeping into confession.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The accident to the pipes has happened on Friday Feb. 13\textsuperscript{th}. Has there been a Friday Feb. 13 since 1942 when I fell down an open drain in Lagos?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feb. 14. On the River Ruki. In the early morning (6.10), as we start after two Masses the river smokes with mist near the bank. Up before light when the siren blew at 5 to signal mass. A lamp lit procession came down from the village. The captain said the first Mass. Men working in the engine room came in for the elevation and went back to work again. Eggs and bacon for breakfast and the captain skinned one of the rabbits Fr Henri brought on board yesterday in a hutch.

| The seminary had quite a rabbit farm. Father Henri, who had a touch of cruelty, had named one rabbit Brigitte Bardot.\textsuperscript{191} |

\textsuperscript{188} Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.
\textsuperscript{189} Léonet, see note 164.
\textsuperscript{190} See note 164.
\textsuperscript{191} See note 46.
The book moves a little. Opening: the doctor and the burnt-out cases:192 a bitter discontented man, tired of the raillery of the priests, unable to do what he wants to do: a hard smoker of cheap cheroots. This the opening. Query to turn to the boat and X in passage down the river or to carry straight on to his arrival? I incline to the first.

Is the doctor perhaps married? To a foreigner – the same nation as X? As X’s past comes out the doctor becomes obsessed by jealousy. It is he, and not one of the priests who worms the past out of X and misunderstands. If it is to be a choice between X and the doctor, of course the mission have to choose the doctor. Who is, au fond,193 a good man. Spoiled by frustration, that’s all. So the man who is seeking a new form of love finds a new form of hate.

The African hair which looks as though it will never grow enough to demand any effort in fact needs constant attention. A barber is always at work on the pontoon with comb and safety razor blade, scraping, while his client holds a mirror constantly before him to see the work as it is done.

The boat all the way escorted by butterflies.

192 See note 145.
193 French for “in essence.”
Reading *The Roots of Heaven*, an admirable book if only it were not quite so obviously modelled on the language and method of Conrad. A French Marlow.

One searches the forest for a sign of life, other than butterflies, rather as one searched when a child those puzzle drawings in which a human face was concealed.

Ingende at lunch time. Walked up with Fr Henri and posted letters. By the beach a notice in French, Flemish and Indigène: “Zone of Sleeping Sickness. Be careful of the tsetse fly.”

The photograph above the bishop’s bed—that I now sleep in—of a church or cathedral covered in snow.

At the end of ‘The Burnt-out’ we have a jealous husband (without reason for jealousy) who drives X away from his attempt at rehabilitation. But the doctor’s wife pursues him to Coquilhatville; she offers herself and of course he doesn’t want what she offers—which to the husband is the worst insult of all. He kills him and she becomes the heroine of a crime of passion in a classic African scene. What cannot be read at the trail for it would destroy the picture is X’s last letter—to one of

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195 Charles Marlow, the fictitious frame narrator in *Heart of Darkness* (as well as in some other stories by Conrad).
196 See map in introductory sections.
197 French for “indigenous (language).” In this case, Lomongo; see note 180.
198 Coquilhatville; see note 44.
199 Leopoldville; see note 33.
the priests at the leproserie, or perhaps to his mother who had never burnt out, or to both. Am I going too far from the original vague idea: am I beginning to plot, to succumb to that abiding temptation to tell a good story? Yet I feel that X must die because an element of insoluble mystery in his character has to remain. Of course he could simply walk off like an early Chaplin.

### Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>R. Van den Brandt; see notes 54 and 75 above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>See map in my introductory sections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>Chris Lipscomb (?-2003), English plant manager working in the Congo for Unilever.</td>
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<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>Coquilhatville; see note 44.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
up unexpectedly. We made a rendezvous with the boat and then drove round the estate. The mill – nothing wasted: all that is not crushed into oil is fuel for the furnaces: no other fuel required. A smell of stale margarine. Huge areas of forest clearance like a scene on the Western Front. Platforms have to be built some eight feet up the great trees to cut them off above the big ribs. The cook who had leprosy in the feet and had to be dismissed because of the children and who wept.

The boat punctual at the rendezvous looked very beautiful coming round the bend of the river into the sunset-stained reach.

A very hot night in the deckhouse because we had to have the verandah doors closed for steering in the dark, so I went to bed early and had bad jealous dreams of C.\footnote{Catherine Walston; see note 185.} mixed with a sapphorous threesome scene in a bed involving Tony but quite unlike Tony.

A lot of singing in the dark: they sing the events and characters of the journey. It is possible opening to begin with a native song: “Here is a man who is not a father nor a doctor. He comes from a long way away and he goes to [blank]. He drinks much and he smokes and he gives no man a cigarette.”

\begin{tabular}{|p{5in}|p{5in}|}
\hline
adds footnote There is nothing in common between my intelligent and charming host and the unspeakable Rycker, but at Rycker’s factory too “through the net of the window there blew in the smell of stale margarine”. & \\
\hline
JR. omits of C. mixed with a sapphorous threesome scene in a bed involving Tony but quite unlike Tony. & GGgp. crosses out jealous \\
\hline
GGJR. to no man a cigarette adds footnote Another abandoned beginning. The beginning of a book holds more apprehensions for the novelist than the ending. After living with a book for a year or two, he has come to terms with his
\end{tabular}
unconsciousness – the end will be imposed. But if a book is started in the wrong way, it may never be finished. I can remember at least three novels I have abandoned, and one abandonment at least was caused by a wrong opening. So one hesitates a long time before taking the plunge – whether one is to sink or swim depends on that moment.

**Feb. 15. Sunday. On the Mombovo River.**

We travelled all night and I only woke at 6 to find the first Mass nearing an end.

I can never get used to the beautiful even colour of the young African women – the most beautiful backs of any race. Here are elaborate crossroads of partings on the scalp, the hair is twisted in thin cords to form a kind of bird cage. The big toe is often made up.

What Lechat told me our last evening about suicide among leprologists – a common phenomenon. The doctor who soaked his house and himself in petrol and then set himself on fire. The doctor who injected himself with an enormous dose of serpent serum.

The bitter doctor of my story – Dr Colin – breaks out on this subject – “and perhaps you are waiting for me to kill myself.”

GGJR. to kill myself adds footnote
No such bitterness was ever shown in the book by Dr Colin – the case of a character who would not conform to
The sisters who sometimes resent leprosy being cured. “It’s a terrible thing – there are no lepers left here.”

Stopped for a quarter of an hour at a village. The maison de passage\textsuperscript{205} with its strange medley of objects: a crucifix, a Catholic prayer book and magazine, a Protestant mission paper, a coloured pin up of Jane Russell\textsuperscript{206} which turned out to be the backing of a looking glass made in Hong Kong.

The healthy-mindedness of the young have now robbed men of their periodic rest: where we used to have four or five days, we cannot now expect more than two.

What a mysterious week that last week in England and Brussels was.\textsuperscript{207} A girl of 29, married two years to a man of 28 whom she loves, the first affair since marriage. (There are technical reasons to believe that). Then why and so easily? The mystery that surrounds her motives and character – the mixture of juvenility and the sophisticated, even corrupt surroundings attract one like fire. Whatever her motive how ready and how sweet she was, and how she lifted me out of the hopeless broken-backed state I was in after leaving Anita.

I missed this morning’s crocodile – of course the first instinct of Fr. Georges\textsuperscript{208} was to

\textsuperscript{205} French for “guest house for transit passengers.”
\textsuperscript{206} Jane Russell (1921-2011), American actress and singer.
\textsuperscript{207} This entire paragraph refers to his affair with “Tony”; see my introductory sections.
\textsuperscript{208} Léonet, the captain of the steamer, see note 164.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shoot at it as he shot at the cormorant, and I couldn’t detect the fishing eagle he pointed out on a tree stump.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now it’s a heron and this time the captain’s aim alas is true. It flaps and tries to rise and sinks into the water. The boat is put about. I can’t help remembering Cardinal Griffin at a dinner at Dick Stokes’s opposing a Blood Sport’s bill because the animals were created for man’s pleasure and use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And if this is a correct view in moral theology, to Hell I would say to moral theology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remember</strong>: the dog at Mass. The captain sitting in the verandah doorway, the dog behind him, chatting to the black crew below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>With the dark we came to Imbonga and another Fr. Henri</strong>, with untidy red hair and bloodshot eyes and little red beard. I liked him. Sitting drinking in the deck house by lamplight one touched the right mood. Went on shore to eat and sleep, but slept very badly. Also visited the sisters and the priests insisted on arranging a car to take me to the leproserie 7 kms. away, but I had my own intentions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ate Fr Georges’s heron for dinner, but I mistook it for rabbit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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210 See map in introductory sections.
After breakfast walked to the leproserie, with a guide to help me to a fork after 2 kms. of forest. After he left a big monkey, red with a long tail, leapt across the path ahead. The leproserie is 1 hr. 5 minutes which was brisk walking. Three villages saw round them all with the black infirmier\(^{212}\) and his two assistants. The main village very well laid out with room for three lines of traffic if there had been any traffic with a wide alley of palm trees down the middle. The lepers brushing the dust. There remain even today nightmare cases. Went into one hut divided into two rooms: the inner room completely dark – one could just distinguish a pot and hear the sounds of human movement. Then there emerged an old woman on hands and knees (if you could call them hands), like a dog, unable to raise her head, just crawl towards the sound of human voices. The only word I knew was Ouané\(^{213}\) – bon jour\(^{214}\) – a stupid phrase in that context. A cheerful old man at the beginning of the village waves his stumps and lifted mutilated feet. I was dashed eggs for which I paid and had a cheerful leper to carry them and walk back with me – bad lesions on the forehead and one eye nearly closed. Unmarried. He had been six years in the leproserie.

Siesta interrupted by arrival of car and so unwillingly because it was siesta time and I had seen all I wished, back to leproserie (my camera

\(^{212}\) French for “male nurse.”

\(^{213}\) In Lomongo, the local language, wâné literally meaning “day.”

\(^{214}\) French for “good morning.”
stuck and I had to leave it behind). It was amazing that a car could get there along the last part of the route – the narrow paths and the narrow bridges, but it did.

Later after seeing round the mission a storm broke and out of the rain emerged a regional officer and a young doctor (with a copy of The Third Man), who had arrived by what they call here a cannot as distinct from pirogue – we would call it a motor boat. So people seem to emerge in Africa – out of the vastness for a night, whisky and 421. The captain, Fr. George, became a great bore and suddenly one sees the secret of his gun and his continual hunting: a homosexual disguising himself as a tough, and now (quite innocently naturally) out to impress the young doctor. Back to the boat to sleep, but slept badly. A belief that I had mice in my mattress. And Anita back in my thoughts. I suppose she represented a whole way of family life that I was trying to recapture and so she remains the unattained dream of peace.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GGJR. to but it did adds footnote</th>
<th>I had the forest outside Imbonga in mind when I described Querry's search for Deo Gratias, mingled perhaps with memories of the deeper forsts of Liberia.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GGJR. The captain ... doctor becomes</td>
<td>The captain, Father George, became a great bore with his exaggerated attentions and suddenly I thought I saw the secret of his gun and his continual hunting: a homosexual disguising himself as a tough, and now (quite innocently naturally) out to impress the young doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGgp(ML). crosses out</td>
<td>The captain, Father George, became a great bore ... young doctor (which he had added in GGJR).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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215 Unidentified.
216 Unidentified. Must be a doctor from another locale than the leprosery at Imbonga, as the latter had no permanent qualified doctor at that time (see also GGJR in 16 February entry).
217 Correct spelling canot, French for “small boat.”
218 Björk, see note 92.
whole way of family life that I was trying to recapture and so she remains the unattained dream of peace.

Fr. Henry\textsuperscript{219} talking of African materialism had a good school story. The master was showing his class a globe and telling them about the earth and the countries on it. Then he asked for intelligent questions. A boy at once put up his hand. “How much did the globe cost?” “I want intelligent questions.” Another boy puts up his hand. “What’s inside it?”

Fr. Henry’s whimsical passion to torment the cat of the mission and the dog in small ways.

Feb. 17. On the River

Off again and glad to be back on the boat. The whole river, much narrower now, steams a foot from the surface. Along one edge the white nenuphars stand like birds. A few small crocodiles lying along the fallen branches and diving as the boat passes.

The Lipscombs lent me The Tiger in the Smoke\textsuperscript{220} – a most absurd unreal story by Margery Allingham. It didn’t even pass the time: it was an irritation.

An ibis to add to my natural history list.

Lusako.\textsuperscript{221} We take on wood. The madman in the red fez and the yellow green robe wearing a crucifix, a dagger and a big plaque and carrying papers with a great air of importance.

\textsuperscript{219} Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.
\textsuperscript{220} *The Tiger in the Smoke*, crime novel by Margery Allingham (1904-1966), first published in 1952 with Chatto and Windus.
\textsuperscript{221} See map in introductory sections.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obviously nothing can go on without his presence. Like ourselves he believes himself to be in control. Once he knelt and crossed himself. Like ourselves too he is in control under God. The pretty young girl who goes ashore and stands alone rubbing her back and buttocks against the tree stump.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The madman gets cross with the labourers and comes on to the pontoon: he hands his papers to the captain – a guide for the use of infirmières, plans of the blood stream and the digestive system. When I try to photograph him he poses at the tiller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember: the innumerable questions on the road Africans exchange and then go opposite ways asking and replying without even turning round, their voices carry so clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The madman gives his last instructions as we prepare to put off, then retires to the hut on the bank, and someone obediently surrenders the one deck chair. He seats himself, crosses himself; thanks to him everything is in order. There is something Parliamentary about him. Then he stands on the point of the shore waving us on. He wears smoked glasses, but there is only one lens left, and as well as his medical handbook and an official envelope, he has a tin box – holding what?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading <em>The Cruise of the Nona</em>. I cannot like Belloc. He exaggerates everything.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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222 *Infirmières*, French for “female nurses.”

223 This “African habit of speaking” and the way it is copied by the Belgian Fathers sets a scene in Part I, Chapter II of *A Burnt-Out Case*.

224 *The Cruise of the Nona* by Hilaire Belloc, 1925.
He talks a lot about Truth, but there is no truth in his feelings. When he exaggerates his hatred he may achieve a rather crude comic effect, but when he exaggerates his feeling for what he loves, we are aware of his fundamental falsity. Certain he wants to believe, but does he?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After close on three weeks my mind runs too much on sex: of the fifteen “honest”225 women I have been to bed with: of the fifty odd [tarts?] perhaps half a dozen had some importance. But over the years only two people stay in my blood, though most of the fifteen in my affection: Catherine and Anita,226 I [fear?] to add Tony227 to those two.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JR. reduces After close ... Tony to those two to After close on three weeks my mind runs too much on sex. Over the years only two people stay in my blood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGgp. crosses out After close on three weeks my mind runs too much on sex.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the evening heard over the radio news of disturbances in Brazzaville: one feels that European Africa is rapidly disintegrating. To hear it 300 miles within the bush is a little like one of the stories by Ray Bradbury.228

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Went to bed early. We pulled up about 10 for the night at Wako.229</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fp. Wako becomes Wakao230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feb. 18. On the river.

A good night thanks to the supponeryl which I had left in the fridge. Stopped at breakfast time and a colon came on board – a little man in glasses who is married (really married) to an

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225 That is, other than prostitutes.
226 Catherine Walston and Anita Björk, see notes 185 and 92.
227 The woman Greene had an affair with before leaving for the Congo; see introductory sections.
228 Ray D. Bradbury (1920-2012), American screenwriter and author of science fiction and fantasy stories.
229 Correct spelling “Waka”; see map in my introductory sections.
230 Correct spelling “Waka”; see note 229.
indigène<sup>231</sup> who only speaks her own tongue. Four children and of course all the relatives, but it matters little – he has made his choice of living his whole life in Africa.

At 9.15 we stop again by a beach and the captain rides off into the bush on a bicycle to find if possible a cargo from a colon, for the boat is empty.

Belloc’s attack on Parliament<sup>232</sup>: if one were a man of Belloc’s temperament one would suspect him of having been bribed to attack Parliament for the wrong reasons so that people might forget the real issue – which is not the corruption of individual ministers or members.

Now started rereading David Copperfield.<sup>233</sup> Surely the first two chapters are supreme in the novel: untouched even by Proust or Tolstoy. One dreads the moment when Dickens will fail as he always fails – with exaggeration, whimsicality or sentimentality. How perfectly the idyll of Yarmouth is put in, with the menace of Mr. Murdstone in the background.

This afternoon has been too hot, with the river narrowing to fifty yards or less. Now at 5 Fr George,<sup>234</sup> the captain, sits stringing a rosary,<sup>235</sup> and Fr Henri plays patience. The book stays

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<sup>231</sup> French for “indigenous person.”

<sup>232</sup> See notes 224 and 339.

<sup>233</sup> Novel (1850) by Charles Dickens (1812-1870). The West-English town of Yarmouth appears in the novel; Murdstone is David Copperfield’s stepfather.

<sup>234</sup> Léonet; see note 164.

<sup>235</sup> The captain in A Burnt-Out Case (Part I, Chapter I) “sometimes, sitting down at the dining-table with a box of beads, [...] would set himself the task of manufacturing cheap rosaries.”
A colon couple with their child came on board after dinner.

Feb. 19. On the river

A lot of tsetse flies with their nasty little jet-styled wings.

Sad dreams last night of Anita. In two and a half years I have not dreamed so frequently of her, but perhaps this indicates the beginning of a cure – because I think of her less with my conscious mind. In my dream I had to visit her on some point of business: she was back in a flat and a man was there whom I was uncertain about: my successor or a brother? We were ill at ease together, and I no longer found her beautiful. I was reminded a little in her eyes of Vivien. Perhaps the association here was in my attempt for the only time since my marriage to settle in a family life. She seemed like Vivien over concerned with the objects in her life – the decoration of the home, and perhaps indeed Anita might have developed that quality if she had not been saved by her vocation as an actress.

Père Georges has just shot – it took two balls – a beautiful fishing eagle. He always shoots a sitting target, never one on the wing. The bird was only wounded. The boats stop. An African swims ashore and finishes the bird off –

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Björk; see note 92.

Vivien Greene (née Dayrell-Browning, 1904-2003), Greene’s spouse (married 1927).
from a very discreet distance – with a log of wood. Then he swims back with it and immediately they begin to pluck it. Too tough for our eating.

Reading a difficult (for me) odd book *La Forêt Veuve* by Silvagni about Brazil. Fine description of a kind of country brothel – two women and musicians to each house and an elaborate ceremonial.

“Il faudrait être le dernier des cons et des salauds pour les appeler putains, les Dames Amies. Ou alors, putain, c’est le plus beau compliment qui peut être fait à une femme, à une vraie femme, par un vrai mâle.”

Catherine and Tony, bed, putains, Anita not — perhaps that what was wrong.

Little birds blue black in colour like swallows.

Into the 8th day and I really feel I’ve had enough. I’d like to be transported into a bathroom in the Ritz in Paris and then to a dry Martini in the bar.

Arrived about four at Wafanya. One priest, the superior there, the others away. A

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238 *La Forêt Veuve* (1958) by Giulio Cesare Silvagni (1900-1984), Italian author who wrote in French. The title would translate literally as “The Widow Forest.” In French the title is a pun that does not work in English, *veuve* meaning “widow,” which Silvagni implicitly contrasts with the French phrase *la forêt vierge*, which literally means “the virgin forest” and which is the standard French term for “rainforest.”

239 French for “One should have to be the ultimate jerk and bastard to call them ‘whores,’ the Lady Friends. Or else, ‘whore’ is the nicest compliment a real man could give to a woman, a real woman.” Probably a quote from Silvagni’s *La Forêt Veuve*.

240 French for “whores.”

241 Greene is recounting a dream he has had.

242 See map in introductory sections.

big untidy mission and a big untidy man with a cigar. Very very hot. 30° even at sunset. Decided to sleep on boat.

The three Assistance Social women\textsuperscript{244}, and Fr Octave\textsuperscript{245}, from the leproserie came for drinks in a Volks Wagen and I said I would spend the weekend with him. A far more sympathetic man of peasant-farmer stock.

Feb. 20. Lombolumba\textsuperscript{246}

Lombolumba\textsuperscript{247} means a clearing in the forest and a leproserie is that, picturesquely studded with rounded hills covered with foliage which are the work of the termites. Drove out early with the fathers of the boat and walked all round till well after ten. Terribly hot. Great sense of width and airiness in spite of the heat. A childrens' home where the children are segregated from birth – the mothers come twice a day to feed them and have little desks with cleaning material so that they can clean them. Neither the women nor the small children in this region attractive. The poor little wasting creature, four years old, without speech, crouched in a womb position on a bed in an empty dormitory, as small or smaller than a year old child, and a permanent unresponding misery on his face. Fathers allowed to visit on Sundays.

The fathers from the boat departed.

\textsuperscript{244} Belgian lay social workers in \textit{a Foyer Social} (see note 123).

\textsuperscript{245} Octaaf Everaert (1914-1998), MSC-missionary.

\textsuperscript{246} Correct spelling Lombombo, the name of the leprosery near Wafanya; see map in introductory sections.

\textsuperscript{247} Lombolombo.
obvious loneliness of Fr. Octave\textsuperscript{248} made him very sympathetic. Reads cheap romans policiers.\textsuperscript{249} Caffard\textsuperscript{250} particularly in the evenings. After my siesta we walked again, but it was almost unbearably hot, into the forest, to his favourite pond. He had built a small bench there to sit on. Then the boat fathers turned up again (Fr. Henri\textsuperscript{251} ill from the sun) and there was 421. At 7.15 rosary in a little out of door chapel by the light of candles. Memo: in the church the lepers benches are made of cement to make them easier to wash down.

Supper with the “demoiselles”;\textsuperscript{252} then for my benefit the school band came with torches and the boys put on a kind of show. So much more psychological help given here than at Yonda. Flower gardens planted too. Everything to raise the spirits. All day as we walked around questions shouted as to who I was. The father replied a big fetishist. Played 421 with the father and the demoiselles till after 10. A huge spider in my room and woken by a real tropical storm which did not stop till 6.

To my delight, for I am tired of all this, it was agreed that the boat should start back after lunch at Wafanya.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabularx}{\textwidth}{|p{0.7\textwidth}|p{0.3\textwidth}|}
\hline
obvious loneliness of Fr. Octave\textsuperscript{248} made him very sympathetic. Reads cheap romans policiers.\textsuperscript{249} Caffard\textsuperscript{250} particularly in the evenings. After my siesta we walked again, but it was almost unbearably hot, into the forest, to his favourite pond. He had built a small bench there to sit on. Then the boat fathers turned up again (Fr. Henri\textsuperscript{251} ill from the sun) and there was 421. At 7.15 rosary in a little out of door chapel by the light of candles. Memo: in the church the lepers benches are made of cement to make them easier to wash down. & GGJR. to the “demoiselles” adds as the women of the Assistance Social are called. Then adds footnote This as far as I could make out is a kind of lay order, with vows of chastity, but no permanent vows. GGJR. to planted too adds footnote The voice of my sceptical doctor might add, ‘If Africans’ spirits can be raised by flowers.’ At any rate any psychological aid given to the white man or woman in these dismal circumstances is of value. \\
\hline
\end{tabularx}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{248} Everaert, see note 245.

\textsuperscript{249} romans policiers is French for “detective stories” or “whoddunnts.”

\textsuperscript{250} Correct spelling cafard, French word denoting the depressed state of mind. Here it in particular refers to such state of mind occurring among whites chronically stressed by the humidity and heat in the tropics.

\textsuperscript{251} Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.

\textsuperscript{252} Referring to the Belgian lay social assistants working in a Foyer Social at a leprosery (see note 123).
Feb. 21. Lombolomba Encouraged by the thought of going. Walked around, taking photographs for the sake of appearances, drinking beer, talking with increasing difficulty (how it adds to the fatigue of a tropical journey to struggle with a foreign tongue), played 421 and lost every game. (It almost makes one superstitious to watch how the priests always win). At last it was 11.30, time to go to Wafanya, the whole company – demoiselles and all. One of the other priests arrived, a fat doctor and his fat wife who have adopted a black child as unattractive as themselves. At last – 12.45 – off with a lot of deck passengers, goats etc. Half an hour later stupidly struck a snag in mid-steam and bent the rudder. Now we are tied up to the bank in the forest, the rudder must be unshipped, a fire lit, and perhaps it will be possible to straighten it. Frustration and heat! The long fingers of the palm leaves quite still which in the smallest suspicion of a breeze begin to play like fingers on a piano.

For Book.
“The passenger wrote in his diary: ‘I am alive because I feel discomfort;’ He was uncertain why he kept the diary. Perhaps – ‘I feel fear, but it is of small things: the cockroach in my cabin....’”

Greene spoke French with the missionaries and colonials all the time during his stay (except occasionally with Father Henri Vanderslaghmolen, who knew some English, see note 46).

French for “secret service.”

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253 Correct spelling “Lombolombo.”
254 Greene spoke French with the missionaries and colonials all the time during his stay (except occasionally with Father Henri Vanderslaghmolen, who knew some English, see note 46).
255 French for “secret service.”
GGJR. to in my cabin...” adds

footnote The dreaded essential opening sentences have almost arrived. The actual one: “The cabin-passenger wrote in his diary a parody of Descartes: ‘I feel discomfort, therefore I am alive’, then sat pen in hand with no more to record.

Sat for relief from the heat on the pontoon in the dark while the captain fished. The stars became visible one by one and the large vampire bats went creaking over the forest. Difficult to sleep at first because of all the livestock.

Feb. 22. Sunday. On the River

Got off at last about 6.15. Woke with a very sore throat. Mass. A tall rather insolent looking African had a prayer book with small holy pictures, including a film star dressed as a cowboy.

Today at 9 it is dark and cool and stormy, but to make up there are quantities of tsetse flies. Almost too dark to write.

The storm broke heavily and has been going on for an hour and a half. Somewhere behind is the Otraco\textsuperscript{256} boat slowly overtaking us.

11. Still raining. Besow\textsuperscript{257} for cargo. Three old boats, two upturned, on a tiny beach and two women sheltering under one from the rain. The

\textsuperscript{256} The Belgian Congo’s public transportation company, see note 135.

\textsuperscript{257} A place on the Momboyo river, between Wafanya and Waka; see map in introductory section.
passengers come down from the bush. The Otraco boat overtakes us – thank goodness, I’m not on it. The only place for the first class passenger is to sit apart from their small cabins a tiny open portion of deck above the engines and very hot. One Congolais huddles there now. The waiting passengers shelter themselves under the big leaves of plantains. We have to retire and make room for Otraco. The cargo here being a very small one and uncertain we go on to Bokoko for fear the cargo there might be taken by Otraco.

The three goats in the bow: the little one who is butted backwards and forwards between the others.

Mr. Gourmont, the young planter at Bokabu, who had his first holiday in Europe after twelve years. Two daughters in Belgium, two small sons with him and a baby in his home. He brought a copy of The P. and G. for me to sign.

I only mentioned those books of mine because to an author there is a certain romance when stray copies of his work turn up in far, poor or abandoned places of the world. The European or American bookshelf gives no such gratification.

258 Unclear; maybe Makoko, at the juncture of the Loile and the Momboyo; see map.
259 Probably René Gourmet (not “Gourmont”; years of birth and death unknown). A Belgian private planter who had his plantation on the Loile (see map in introductory sections) and who fits Greene’s description. May have been en route to Coquilhatville, from where he would board a plane to Leopoldville and from there to Belgium for his holidays.
260 Unclear.
261 The Power and the Glory (1940).
“The doctor said, “He was what I would call a burnt-out case. There was no contagion left. If we had tests for minds as we have for leprosy the results would have been negative. He was mutilated of course and we don't spend time and money in arranging for these people occupational therapy. (we know how the sisters have taught Gratias Dei to knit sweaters even though he has no fingers.) All the same I think this man had almost found his own, until these fools – these interfering fools....”

“Aren’t you a little hard on the woman,” the youngest priest asked.

“Am I? She’s the proudest woman in town. And the happiest. I feel tempted to tell her about the letters, they would be a disappointment to her, but then after all my business is only with the lepers.”

Wrote the above final sentences in the middle of the night. I wonder whether I shall ever reach them. The book is changing out of all knowledge. The doctor now is not directly concerned: a bitter commentator. It is a plantation manager, a colon, jealous and stupid, and his wife, pretty and stupid, who bring on the disaster to C.

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262 Greene is trying out sentences for his novel. Part I, Chapter II and Part V, Chapter II of A Burnt-Out Case indeed contain some reprocessed versions.
263 See note 145.
264 Deo Gratias; see note 149.
265 A Burnt-Out Case, Part VI, Chapter III: Dr. Colin to the Superior: “The fools, the interfering fools, they exist everywhere, don’t they? He had been cured of all but his success; but you can’t cure success, any more than I can give my mutilés back their fingers and toes.”
with surnames, C was the only initial that struck me as possible, since I had already used D in *The Confidential Agent*. Why none of the other twenty-two letters were possible, I don’t know: C somehow had the only quality possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How few letters there are one can use in place of a name. K. belongs to Kafka, D. I have used, X is self-conscious. There remains C. Can I avoid names altogether for the principals as I did in the P. and G.?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| “The doctor looked at C. with astonishment: the man had actually perpetrated a joke.” |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feb. 23. On the River</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| A cool day so far. Still a bad throat and some rhumatism. Somebody last night left on board a copy of *Orient Express* for me to sign. We lay at Waka. The colon we were expecting on board was ill with fever. Woken in the night by the noisy arrival of the Otraco boat, and then kept awake by animal noises from the hens, |

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266 See note 104.
267 *The Power and the Glory* (1940).
268 Becomes the final sentence of Part II in *A Burnt-Out Case*.
270 See map in introductory sections.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cocks, goats.</th>
<th><strong>Dreamed that I was concerned in some kind of Red Indian war. We were supposed to leave the Indians in peace for the night, but the men on guard shot and killed one, so an attack was expected. I loaded two revolvers of an old fashioned kind and felt an odd confidence and peace.</strong></th>
<th><strong>G.G.J.R. to confidence and peace adds footnotes: The interest I always feel in dreams, not only my own dreams but the dreams of anyone I love and the dreams of my characters, is probably the result of my having been psycho-analysed at the age of sixteen. Querry’s dream on page 59-60 of A Burnt-Out Case, dealing with a lost priesthood and the search for sacramental wine, is an exact reproduction of one of my own dreams which occurred while I was writing the novel at the precise moment when I needed it. I wrote it in the next morning. My novel, It’s a Battlefield, had its origin in a dream.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Back to Lusaka</strong> and the madman waving the ship on with the help of a looking glass. Then after lunch Ingomba and the same mission. Oh, how quickly tired one gets with the company of acquaintances. I long to be with friends again. But nearly three weeks</td>
<td><strong>G.G.J.R. corrects Ingomba to Imbonga</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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271 Correct spelling “Lusako”; see map.
272 Correct spelling “Imbonga”; see map.
273 “the same mission”: Greene and his fellow passengers had stopped at Imbonga on the outbound trip, on 15-16 February (see that entry).
274 “acquaintances”: his fellow passengers on the steamer, Fathers Henri Vanderslaghmolen, Pierre Van den Cruyce, and captain Georges Léonet (see notes 46, 134, and 164).
275 Referring to Dr Lechat and his family back in Iyonda.
must still pass. JR. entirely omits paragraph Worried about Tony ... becomes a shadow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worried about Tony. It would be better if she turned wise. I have an awful inability to refuse, and tenderness has crept already into what began as a game I never expected would turn serious before I left England. To risk her marriage and mine (for I feel married to Catherine)\textsuperscript{276} is absurd, for neither of us are deeply engaged. And after terrible years – and an attempted break with Anita,\textsuperscript{277} I know just how deeply I am engaged to Catherine. The only person in my life who has given me everything to its height – even unhappiness. Every other relation becomes a shadow.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Otraco boat catches us up before bed at Imbonga. It had ran on the same snag and injured two propellers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Just another day of 421 and “jollity” and killing flies. Arrived at Flandria\textsuperscript{278} around 9 and Lipscomb\textsuperscript{279} met the boat. After beer on board sat up till nearly midnight drinking whisky and the sheer pleasure of talking English\textsuperscript{280} to two intelligent people again.\textsuperscript{281}

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\textsuperscript{276} Walston; see note 185.
\textsuperscript{277} Björk; see note 92.
\textsuperscript{278} See map in introductory sections.
\textsuperscript{279} Chris Lipscomb, the English palm oil and margarine plant manager in Flandria; see note 202.
\textsuperscript{280} As mentioned (see notes 77, 129, and 183), Greene was obliged to talk French all the time in the Congo, with Dr. Lechat, the colonials, the missionaries (except Henri Vanderslaghmolen), which put him under strain after a while.
\textsuperscript{281} Lipscomb and his wife. Throughout the diary (and the novel) Greene’s disillusionment with what he felt to be the missionaries’ low level of sophistication is a constant.
Feb. 25. Flandria
A wet day and read and talked and drank till after midnight: an orgy of pleasant social life.

Off by car with Fr. Jules.\(^{282}\) Stopped on the way – against my will – to see a young administrator who paints pictures\(^{283}\) – not very well and has published a volume of verse. Arrived at Yonda at mid-day and it was nice to run at once into Lechat and have lunch with them. He had obtained his new mattresses for the hospital, but the next day he found the patients lying on the floor. They told him that the Sister had told them that they couldn’t lie all day on the mattresses or they would wear them out!

An enormous mail and piles of newspapers. One letter from C.\(^{285}\) and one from Tony. The good news from Cyprus may have put an end to that relationship – I’m sorry even though I know it’s for the best. For once there will be only pleasant memories. Not even one quarrel in that week. In my absence I was invited to lunch at Buckingham Palace, but thank God, I was away. The trouble is it may occur again.\(^{286}\)

Fr. Henri\(^{287}\) turned up in the evening.

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\(^{282}\) Jules De Knop (1906-1985), MSC-missionary.
\(^{283}\) Edward Lernout (1931-2019), colonial officer at sub-district (“territorial”) level; painter and poet in his free time.
\(^{284}\) See my note 275. While traveling on the river, Greene had been annoyed by his fellow passengers and had strongly missed the Lechat couple.
\(^{285}\) Catherine Walston; see note 185.
\(^{286}\) It would, namely on 11 March 1966 (see R. Greene, 368).
\(^{287}\) Vanderslaghmolen, see note 46.
Dinner in the old routine with the fathers and Fr. H. and I introduced the Superior²⁸⁸ and Brother Joseph²⁸⁹ to the delights of 421.

A commission on leprosy to meet in Coq²⁹⁰ under the hon. Presidency of the Governor²⁹¹ which consists of the local Chief,²⁹² a nurse who has had no experience of leprosy and a local doctor ditto. No invitation to Lechat.

JR. omits and a local doctor ditto as well as No invitation to Lechat.

GGJR. adds No one invited from Yonda.

Feb. 27, Yonda.
The old routine except that I no longer bother to go to the Congo to read.²⁹³

Shopped in Coq and bought some native cottons, and a bottle of champagne for Mme Lechat.²⁹⁴

Lechat spoke to me about the beautiful nun.²⁹⁵ As I would have expected she is a young woman of good birth, family of means, with a university education. He said, “I prefer a sister with some failings. She has none;” I asked

JR. Lechat spoke to me about the beautiful nun. becomes Lechat spoke to me about one of the nuns remarkable for her beauty.

JR. she is a young woman of good birth becomes she is of good birth

²⁸⁸ Pierre Wijnants; see note 47.
²⁸⁹ As Hulstaert noted, the only Brother present in Iyonda at that time was Brother Sigesbrand Werkhoven (see note 48). Greene most probably refers to Father Joseph Jacobs; see note 313.
²⁹⁰ Coquilhatville; see note 44.
²⁹¹ A. De Valkeneer, see note 43.
²⁹² Probably J. Bofonge; see note 116.
²⁹³ During his first stay in Iyonda (i.e., before making his trip on the Ruki-Momboyo), Greene went out every day to the bank of the Congo River to read; see note 49.
²⁹⁴ Edith Lechat’s birthday is 1 March. She turned 27 that day.
²⁹⁵ G. Matthys; see note 122.
whether she was a leprophil.\footnote{See note 71.} No, he said, she would be equally content to go anywhere and do anything under obedience. Completely efficient too. You can almost tell that from her hands on the steering wheel of the bus. Absolutely free from sentimentality.

He spoke of a leproserie\footnote{The leprosery of Acanouany in northwest French Guiana.} in French Guiana where the lepers are nearly all old convicts, and of the strange man who helps there who is a burnt-out case psychologically – my X in fact. It is in the wilds and one has to hire a plane and a jeep to reach it. Founded by Mère Javoskey whose life by Georges Goyau\footnote{Georges Goyau (1869-1939), historian of religion. Wrote a biography of Anne-Marie Javouhey (1779-1851), a French Catholic nun known for her efforts in liberating and emancipating African slaves in French Guiana in the 1830s, and for having founded the leprosery of Acanouany. Beatified by the Roman-Catholic Church in 1950 and venerated as liberator of the slaves. G. Goyau, \textit{Un Grand "homme": Mère Javouhey, Apôtre des Noirs} (“A Great ‘Man’: Mother Javouhey, Apostle of the Blacks” 1929, Editions Plon). Greene’s misspelling “Javoskey” remains uncorrected in the final publication of \textit{In Search of a Character}.} I have begun to read.

| Reading of a leproserie in French Guiana where the lepers are nearly all old convicts and of a strange man who helps in another leproserie not far away who is a burnt-out case psychologically – my C in fact. | GGgp (ML). changes He spoke of... in fact to Reading of a leproserie in French Guiana where the lepers are nearly all old convicts and of a strange man who helps in another leproserie not far away who is a burnt-out case psychologically – my C in fact. |
| I was tempted to delay my book and to visit French Guiana in case it offered a better mise-en-scène, but I realized I would have to stay far longer in an unfamiliar region. Indo-China had cost me four visits which I could only afford by acting as a war correspondent, and I had chosen Africa for the reason that I was already fairly familiar with the West, after three months in Liberia before the war, and fifteen months in Nigeria and Sierra Leone during the war – negro |
| GGgp (ML). changes He spoke of... in fact to Reading of a leproserie in French Guiana where the lepers are nearly all old convicts and of a strange man who helps in another leproserie not far away who is a burnt-out case psychologically – my C in fact. |

\footnote{Graham Greene Studies, Vol. 2 [2021], Art. 1}
Africa whether west or central has much in common.

Purchases of equipment for the leproserie. In the catalogue Fr. Pierre\(^{299}\) sees the picture of a bidet unknown to him previously. He sees it as the ideal footbath for ulcers and wants to order twelve, telephoning to Coq on the matter. Others had to explain to him that a bidet has other uses.

Feb. 28. Yonda.

Visited the leprosy dispensary and (completely empty) hospital in Coq.\(^{300}\) A contrast to Yonda, for here there is everything and not a single in-patient. But my main purpose was to meet the “dispensaire,\(^{301}\)” Ml. Andrée de Jongh, G.M., a war heroine who is said to have smuggled nearly a thousand allied airmen out of Belgium before she was traced by the Germans and sent to a concentration camp.\(^{302}\) She still looks young, though over 40, with humorous pretty eyes. She said she had picked up her accent from having had as English teachers all the British Commonwealth – Canadian, Australian, GGJR. to not a single in-patient adds footnote This was because the hospital at Coq dealt only with the non-contagious tuberculoid cases. All contagious cases were sent to Yonda. The fine laboratory and the clean empty wards could not but be an object of envy to the doctor struggling to serve his 800 contagious cases with inadequate resources.

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\(^{299}\) Superior of the mission Wijnants, see note 47. Greene uses this scene of Wijnants mistaking bidets, of which he sees pictures in a magazine, for footbaths, twice in *A Burnt-Out Case* (Part III, Chapter II, and Part IV, Chapter I).  
\(^{300}\) Coquilhatville, see note 44.  
\(^{301}\) French for “helper at a health center.”  
\(^{302}\) Correct spelling “Andrée De Jongh” (1916-2007), legendary member of the Belgian resistance during World War II. Received the George Medal (Greene’s “G.M.”) from the United Kingdom for having led “the comet line,” a resistance network assisting British and other airmen and prisoners of war to escape from occupied Belgium and return to the UK. In total the network helped about 600 soldiers and officers to return to England, 118 of which De Jongh personally accompanied on the trail through France and Spain. She was conferred the title of Countess by Belgian King Baudouin in 1985.
English. I couldn’t help feeling a pride when she said that The Power and the Glory had had a great influence in converting her to Catholicism after the war. (She had put up a crucifix in the dispensary). A mysterious woman – one longs to know the background to her celibacy. There can be no such thing as a secret life in Congo. She is said to have a wild but quickly burnt out temper and a book has been written about her by an Englishman, Airey Neave, called Petit Cyclone.303

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English. I couldn’t help feeling a pride when she said that The Power and the Glory had had a great influence in converting her to Catholicism after the war. (She had put up a crucifix in the dispensary). A mysterious woman – one longs to know the background to her celibacy. There can be no such thing as a secret life in Congo. She is said to have a wild but quickly burnt out temper and a book has been written about her by an Englishman, Airey Neave, called Petit Cyclone.303</th>
<th>JR. omits A mysterious woman – one longs to know the background to her celibacy. There can be no such thing as a secret life in Congo. GGr. to called Petit Cyclone adds footnote The doctor of the hospital who imagined that I was interested in his empty wards treated her like any subordinate: sending her to fetch cups of tea for us and allowing her no opportunity to join in the conversation. I asked L. when we got home to invite her to Yonda.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White birds are called Piques–Boeufs.304</td>
<td>GGJR. crosses out White birds are called Piques–Boeufs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vegetation floating down the Congo is water jacinth. A serious threat to navigation. The army engaged in destroying it by poison, and the poison used is said after a time sometimes to send a man mad.</td>
<td>GGrp. crosses out is water jacinth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening drive with the doctor round a plantation and afterwards to a village, Ikengo305 to watch the sun set spectacularly across the Congo. Single pirogues pass across its path returning from fishing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The deep blue green of the plantation: ferns growing out of the pineapple bark.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

303 *Little Cyclone* by Airey Neave (1916-1979), published in 1954 with Hodder & Stoughton. As MI9 officer Neave had been actively involved in liaising with the comet line in occupied Europe.

304 French for “oxpecker.”

305 Some 15 kms south of Iyonda.
After dinner went out with Raymond Wery, a police officer, round the African bars till 2 in the morning. Polar advertisements. White jockey caps with Polar. The public women – lipsticks that take a mauve tint, and skin under make-up that greys like mourning. The old madman with his torn shirt and woman’s handbag. The intellectual questioning the good faith of Belgium but confused when I introduced Ghana. No real news of the world for the African. The huge dispute outside the last bar because a woman had drunk the beer in a man’s glass. The two women who solicited: “There is lots of gonorrhoea and syphilis. We are safe.”

Back with Wery for a whisky [and ice?]. He praised the character of Scobie as really representing a colonial police officer. Home at 2.45 and tomorrow’s expedition to a lake cancelled. The young debater in the bar – the thin fine hands of the African. One felt in him an element of trust in the sincerity of the white man’s argument, and a fear and confusion because he did not wish to disbelieve his own theories. Another man might not have listened.

JR. After dinner went out with Roland Wery, a police officer round the African bars till 2 in the morning. This was regarded by some of the timid white inhabitants of Coquilhatville as a wild folly.

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306 Raymond Wery (1923–?), deputy police superintendent (sous-commissaire de police) in Coquilhatville since 1956. Unclear why JR (see middle column) changes his first name to “Roland,” as Raymond is correct. Reid’s error remains uncorrected in fp.

307 Henry Scobie, protagonist of *The Heart of the Matter*.

308 Referring to George Orwell’s rather negative review of *The Heart of the Matter* in *The New Yorker* of 17 July 1948 (see also R. Greene, 176).
The mission station with leprosery Greene visited on 15-16 February and 23 February.

Ikenge on the Ruki-Momboyo; see map in introductory sections.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>took one bizarre form – after a hanging at which he had to be present he could not eat meat for a fortnight (this spoilt for him the Christmas of 1942).</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Remember: Injections are the same medicine as D.D.S.\(^{309}\) conveyed in oil to slow the effect. They are an alternative to the tablets, more expensive and taken less frequently. Once a month. The doctor now gives two tablets two or three times a week, not daily, and there is no need for a monthly intermission. He intermits only at such times as are convenient. The sister’s annual retreat etc. Vitamin tablets (B.12?) were given as at Imbonga\(^{310}\) because it was believed that D.D.S. caused anaemia, but the doctor now believes the cause to be such complaints as hookworms. “It is cheaper to give them lavatories.”

The town councillor at Ikenge\(^{311}\) who seeks work but can’t get any because of his illiteracy. The other councillors say he is a bad man because he can only have been elected because he is a witch doctor and made a medicine (from the bark of trees etc.). The witch with the red bark make-up carrying a bell outside the market.

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\(^{309}\) See note 94.

\(^{310}\) The mission station with leprosery Greene visited on 15-16 February and 23 February.

\(^{311}\) Ikenge on the Ruki-Momboyo; see map in introductory sections.
**The caffard**\(^{312}\) of Fr. Joseph\(^ {313}\) he doesn’t work with the others: a discontent. He has been told that he can choose his own work and that he can even return to Belgium, but what priest wants liberty of choice? A failed vocation?

| JR. The caffard of Fr. J. | GGp(ML). crosses out The caffard of ... liberty of choice? Given what he crossed out on GGJR this leaves nothing of the paragraph. |

Lechat compares with Père Joseph,\(^ {314}\) the Père George who was found drowned recently.\(^ {315}\) He says that George did nothing at all at the mission but say Mass. The rest of the time he spent hunting and collecting specimens of the wild birds for the museum\(^ {316}\) (he had his own pirogue). But at the same time he had a relation with the Africans, talking to them as he went here and there, and when his body was brought back to the mission, the Africans lined the road and knelt as his body passed.

| JR. Lechat compares with Père J. the Père Georges GGJR. to the Père Georges adds footnote Not the captain of the boat. | GGp(ML). changes Lechat compares with the Père J. the Père Georges to Stories of a Père Georges who was found drowned recently. retaining the footnote added in GGJR |

March 1\(^{st}\) Yonda, Sunday.

The doctor in the novel: “Occasionally he became conscious of the smell of the Africans around his table, and his heart moved quickly as it had done on his first day in Africa.”

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\(^{312}\) Cafard, French for depression; see note 250.

\(^{313}\) Joseph “Jef” Jacobs (1924-2003). Model for the anxious, doubting, egocentric Father Thomas in *A Burnt-Out Case*, the only priest who annoys Querry with higher spiritual questions and doubts of faith, and “the only priest in the leprosery with whom the Superior felt ill at ease” (Part IV, Chapter 1), and of whom Greene himself later wrote that he symbolized “an unsettled form of belief” (G. Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 195). Greene’s description, here in the journal, of Father Joseph Jacobs has been confirmed to me by other members of the congregation, knowing him generally as prone to complaining and as someone suffering from character instability and from doubts about the meaningfulness of his vocation.

\(^{314}\) Jacobs; see note 313.

\(^{315}\) Georges Michielsen (1911-1958), MSC-missionary. Hulstaert adds this information on him: “In actual fact, [he drowned] on 30 July 1958 while bathing in the Congo river at Iyonda, a daily routine. [...] He sent many items to the Africamuseum in Tervuren. To say that he did nothing at the mission is a great exaggeration” (496–97).

\(^{316}\) See note 315: Greene refers to what at that time was called the Royal Museum for the Belgian Congo, located in Tervuren near Brussels. After independence it was renamed “Royal Museum for Central Africa,” and since 2018 “AfricaMuseum.”
Hangover: stayed in bed till nearly 8: cup of coffee: lunch with the fathers: a long siesta: reading The Wilder Shores of Love — a terribly overwritten book: down into Coq with L. and a beer at the smaller restaurant. The man married to a mulattress who had lost his little girl in an air crash because she hadn’t got the necessary stamp of the health service in her passport and had to follow on a later plane. Mass (of a most unreligious kind): everybody turning their chairs and themselves as in a dance, so that one felt a partner of the woman in front. Most unattractive colonial types, I should add. The usual low benches a few inches high, for the Africans.

Discrimination has taken a turn the other way. The white man pays more than the black for his radio licence: in the courts unless there are witnesses the word of the black – that a white man has struck him say – is always taken against the white, which leads to a kind of blackmail. L. speaks of the masochism of Europe – the letters many nuns received even from fellow religious in Europe on learning the events in Leopoldville – “we have brought it on ourselves.” No realisation of the work selflessly done for the

footnote A sentence which does not seem to have been used in the book.317

317 Yet a resembling sentence in A Burnt-Out Case is “in all the years he [Doctor Colin] had never become quite accustomed to the sweet gangrenous smell of certain leprous skins, and it had become to him the smell of Africa” (Part I, Chapter II).
319 Coquilhatville; see note 44.
320 *mulâtresse*, French for “woman of a black and a white parent.”
The bustles of the black women: these are partly caused by a sort of necklace of plastic rings they wear round their hips next to the skin. The richer they are, the more their necklaces. A sexual significance. Do they wear them during intercourse?

Birth control here not the problem. The African a dying race owing to the sterility of the women due to gonorrhoea. The doctor recently had a girl of 8 with gonorrhoea.

March 2. Yonda.

“Within limits of normality, every individual loves himself. In the cases where he has a deformity or abnormality or develops it later, his own aesthetic sense revolts and he develops a sort of disgust towards himself. Though with time, he becomes reconciled to his deformities, it is only of the conscious level. His subconscious mind, which continues to bear the mark of the injury, brings about certain changes in his whole personality, making him suspicious of society. Even if we strip leprosy of all its stigma, a leprosy patient will develop all these complexes arising out of the disfigurement.”

R.V. Wardekar

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321 R. Ranchandra Vishwanath Wardekar (1913-1996). Indian doctor and leprosy specialist, founder of the Gandhi Memorial Leprosy Foundation. Wardekar and Lechat would later become close colleagues, and in 1990 they jointly received from the same Foundation the International Gandhi Price for their groundbreaking research on leprosy and leprosy treatment (see Meeuwis, “Lechat”). This quote is from a pamphlet on leprosy by Wardekar that, as Greene adds in a later footnote (see GGJR in the next column) he found in Lechat’s library in Iyonda, and which he used as an epigraph to A Burnt-Out Case. Neil Sinyard wrote about Greene’s choice of this epigraph: “This seems to be more than a comment on the leper or
I read at Yonda in the doctor’s library provided met with an epigraph for A Burnt-Out Case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Père Joseph(^{322}) speaks of the row which started between one of the infirmiers(^{323}) and his wife at 5:30 this morning. These rows can often be heard all round at any hour of the night. They are partly the results of a virtual enslavement of women. As secondary education has only been started for girls in the last few years an educated African can find no woman of equal education to marry. But the resentment to the slave imposes also a kind of slavery on the man. As the woman does the heavy work she can make life very unsupportable for her master.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JR. Père J. speaks</td>
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<tr>
<th>The dispensary: the burnt out case: no toes on one foot, two on the other: both thumbs gone. Treatment for psychological reasons only.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Paraffin wax baths for palsy: temperatures must be just right – patient cannot feel the heat. Danger of fire. Wax used over again because of expense.</th>
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<tr>
<td>GGJ. cannot feel the heat owing to the atrophied nerves.</td>
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<tr>
<th>The child brought in with fever. The doctor exposes on the breast the mark of where a knife has been used to cut the skin and insert native medicine. He is angry with the woman and she puts the blame on the grandmother.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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even on the central character, Querry; it is nothing short of an expression of the tormented state of mind of the author as he embarked on that novel, alluding to his self-disgust, his social alienation and a perceived psychological, rather than physical, deformity in his own personality.” See Neil Sinyard. *Graham Greene: A Literary Life* (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2003), 81.

\(^{322}\) Jacobs; see note 313.

\(^{323}\) French for “male nurses.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Palsy of the eyes: can be treated by having the eyelids stitched up, but the patients often refuse.</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Back to dispensary after short siesta: the man who had had leprosy in the testicles and one breast dangled like a woman’s. He was being treated very satisfactorily with 1906, but the sweet baked smell of sloughed leprous skin filled the dispensary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the evening Mlle de Jongh and a friend in for drinks. The Little Cyclone was quite ready to talk about her war experiences and much came out that was not in the book. She and her organisation were betrayed by two American pilots who were told by the Germans that they would be shot as spies if they did not prove they were officers by reconstructing every stage of their journey from the plane. Americans in general she found very lack luster in escaping: they all thought that there must be some easier way of getting to Spain, and none of them knew how to walk. She said the Americans would say that it was impossible to go further: the British that they were very tired but would go on until they could go no further – which never happened. The same applied to Canadians. She obviously preferred the British. Her two worst escapees however were Belgians who had to be carried two hours at a time by her contrebandier.</td>
<td>GGJR. crosses out The Little Cyclone was, leaving Quite ready to talk GGJR. their journey from the plane becomes their journey from Belgium to the Pyrenees. Then adds footnote Miss de Jongh, then in her early twenties, turned up in San Sebastian after the fall of France with two allied civilians whom she had escorted from Brussels to the British Consulate and asked the consul for money to establish an escape route. He suspected a German plant and told her that he was only interested in allied airmen. After a few months she returned with two pilots who had been shot down over Belgium. She had enlisted the aid of a Contrebandier in the Pyrenees, but before the last journey he went down with flu and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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324 See note 109.
325 Andrée De Jongh; see note 302.
326 French for “smuggler.”
while she and three airmen (two American and one British) were holed up in a farmhouse waiting for his recovery they were spotted by Vichy police. She owed her life to the fact that she was handed over under an assumed name to the German Air Force police who did not realize that she was the notorious de Jongh for whom the Gestapo were searching. As a result of the American betrayal the whole escape route was destroyed, several people were executed including her own father, and more than a hundred went to concentration camp.

The characters Geoff (Australian) and Jim (British) who had a friendly bickering rivalry. Jim was wounded and G. insisted that he jump first. He hadn’t fastened his parachute properly and it was whirling away from him when he caught it with one hand. Jim was baby-faced and Geoff tough. Geoff carried Jim and said that never again would he carry an Englishman. Jim said that he would never allow himself again to be carried by an Australian. A doctor gave Jim an injection which he said would enable him to walk the two miles to Waterloo. But at Waterloo they were given bicycles and told to straight on to Brussels. At Brussels two railway tickets intended for two men who had been captured were ready for that

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327 Town near Brussels, Belgium.
night, so poor Jim had to be off again. The guide was told to take a camp stool and to see that the wounded man sat on it if the train was crowded, but as Geoff had got a burn on his face the guide thought that he was the wounded man and made him take the seat. Neither Geoff nor Jim could speak French so that they couldn’t put the mistake right, and every time Geoff tried to give up his seat he was ordered down onto it again. Only in Paris outside the station when Jim fainted did the guide understand his mistake. Within a week of being shot down they were back in England and Geoff was killed on his next sortie.

She spoke always as though all had been a joke and these happy years – only once did she refer to nervous strain. She was funny even about the concentration camp where five people were allotted 80 centimetres of space for sleeping, so that they had to fit themselves together sideways and when one turned all turned. One night she heard a very bourgeois Brussels voice saying indignantly, “Look at her. Sleeping on her back like a queen.”

The noise of the insects outside: “There is never any silence in the Congo, except for an hour in the afternoon when it is too hot to enjoy it.” Then she spoke of the wonderful silence of the Pyrenees at night.

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328 In A Burnt-Out Case, Greene will draw twice on this observation made by De Jongh: “As usual there was no silence. Silence belonged to cities” (Part II, Chapter I) and “there was no silence [...] Only for an hour or so, in the midday heat, silence fell, the siesta of the insect” (Part II, Chapter IV).
I asked her why she had come to the Congo. “Because from the age of 15 I wanted to cure the lepers. If I delayed any longer it would be too late.”

She became a Catholic in 1947.

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March 3, Yonda.

D.D.S. sometimes has the effect of making a patient temporarily mad. The patient who asked to have his hands bound because of his desire to attack people “I told him that at eight o’clock you will feel worse. At eleven o’clock worse, but a few more hours and you will feel as you do now, and after that less....” The patient was able to hold on.

The new ointment which has a very quick effect: there have been cures in a few months: but so abominable a smell that it makes people sick. The cures have to be reinforced of course with D.D.S.

The man without toes and with one testicle the size of a large ball who cohabits with an ex-polio patient who has only tiny paralysed legs and can only crawl. They have a healthy child. He is a Catholic catechist.

The man with no nose, a terrible claw hand and mutilated feet.

The child from the bush who had lost a toe from jiggers.
Lepromime\textsuperscript{329} used to determine the resistance of an undetermined patient to see which course the disease will take.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March 4. Yonda.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tomorrow start for home. A little disappointed by the silence of T.</strong>\textsuperscript{330} The doctor after reading La Gama\textsuperscript{331} has a bad night and dreams we all have an accident in the car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drive to Lake Bukaru.</strong>\textsuperscript{332} Drinks with the second man at the botanic station and then on and had lunch with a huge fat old colon\textsuperscript{333} with a beautiful child, a retired veterinary officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Felt a bit tired with sun and atmosphere very heavy. Awful duty drinks with the Governor and his wife.</strong>\textsuperscript{334}, Mme V.\textsuperscript{335} gave me lessons in how one should write a novel, showing her method of taking notes for her next work. Then with them to the burgomaster\textsuperscript{336} and his wife to sign their “Golden Book”, bought a bottle of champagne and relaxed with the L’s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{329} Correct French spelling *lepromine* (see also GGgp in right column), in English “lepromin.” It is the name of a skin test, performed by injecting an inactive leprosy bacillus under the skin, to determine the patient’s type of leprosy.

\textsuperscript{330} Tony; see my introductory sections.

\textsuperscript{331} *La Gana*, 1958 novel by Douassot; see note 108.

\textsuperscript{332} Lake Bikoro, also known as Lake Bikoro-Tumba or Lake Tumba. About 110 kms south of Coquilhatville. See map in section 2 above.

\textsuperscript{333} Albert Jussiant (1898-1971), a retired veterinarian who published some articles on tropical veterinary medicine. As Lechat wrote much later in what he called his “tardy exegesis” of *A Burnt-Out Case*—an unpublished but noteworthy new analysis he made of the novel in 1996—it is during this visit to Jussiant and his much younger wife on 4 March 1959 that the latter recognized Greene from his picture on the cover of an issue of *Time Magazine* (issue of 29 October 1951) the Jussiants had in their home library. This scene is revived elaborately in Part II, Chapter II of *A Burnt-Out Case*, where Querry is recognized exactly by Rycker’s equally younger wife Marie from a photo on the cover of *Time*.

\textsuperscript{334} See note 43.

\textsuperscript{335} S. De Valkeneer, the Province Governor’s wife; see note 43.

\textsuperscript{336} See note 113.
A terrible thing about these officials if one is tired is that the drinks are never ready. There is always a pretence that one has come for sheer sociability. After five minutes the hostess gets round to suggesting a drink, but it is a quarter of an hour before glasses and bottles are found.

March 5. Léo.337

A quiet morning, spinning out The Road to Rome which I don’t dislike as much as when I was a boy (it is more forgivable than The Voyage of the Nona,340 for he was a young man who may be allowed to cut a dash): I have to be careful, since I am running short of books.

The number of bicycles possessed by the young Africans. They are stacked outside the dispensary as they are stacked outside a Cambridge college.

Seen off by Lechat family,341 an awful woman from the Service Social whom I had been avoiding, the Governor’s wife whom I had hoped I would never see again, Père Henri344 and the charming Andrée de Jongh.345

337 Short of “Léopoldville,” the Congo’s capital; see note 33.
338 In the morning of 5 March, Greene was still in Iyonda and Coquilhatville, from where he took a plane to Leopoldville in the afternoon.
339 The Path to Rome, by Hilaire Belloc, first published 1902.
340 The Cruise of the Nona, by Belloc; see note 224.
341 See note 82.
342 Service Sociale, French for “social service,” the public office which organized, among others, the Foyer Social; see note 123.
343 S. De Valkeneer; see note 43.
344 Vanderslaghmolen; see note 46.
345 Resistance member Andrée De Jongh; see note 302.
and her girl assistant. Very hot.

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<tr>
<th>and her girl assistant. Very hot.</th>
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<td><strong>Arrived Leo.</strong> Met at terminus by [Mannagen?] who took me to hotel. The longed-for bath, disturbed only by two telephone calls and a written message. Driven out by a friend of M’s to dinner there and found him heavily engaged in killing two puppies out of a litter of nine. The usual interminable Belgian delays before a drink and they never seem to have ice laid in, even in the best and most friendly households. A young professor of economics with his 22 year old Irak wife whom he treated relentlessly (she looks about 35) and the lovely Mme [Binod?] and her husband. Home after reckless driving at midnight.</td>
<td><strong>JR.</strong> Arrived Leopoldville. Met at terminus by M who took me to hotel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JR.</strong> Arrived Leopoldville. Met at terminus by M who took me to hotel.</td>
<td><strong>JR.</strong> Arrived Leopoldville. Met at terminus by M who took me to hotel.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>March 6. Léo.</strong></th>
<th><strong>March 6. Léo.</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lunch with [Barons?] Griendl.</strong> Danish consul and his wife. A local pederast. My hostess a bien pensant who likes Charles Morgan. I did my best to shock her a little. Usual trouble with a journalist. Made an appointment for tomorrow evening when I shall</td>
<td><strong>JR.</strong> entirely omits Lunch with ... her a little.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JR.</strong> entirely omits Lunch with ... her a little.</td>
<td><strong>JR.</strong> entirely omits Lunch with ... her a little.</td>
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346 Leopoldville; see note 27.
347 Same person (“one of the rich young aristocrats of Leo”) Greene had met in Leopoldville on 1 February; see that entry.
348 The “beautiful young wife—the long crossed thighs in her tight blue jeans” whom he had also met on 1 February; see that entry.
349 Probably Baron Albert Greindl (1914-1991), Director of l’Office Belge du Commerce Extérieur pour le Congo Belge et le Ruanda-Urundi (“Belgian Office of Exterior Trade for the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi”). Greindl had written a letter to Dr. Lechat on 19 February 1959 while while Greene was travelling on the Ruki-Momboyo, asking him to request Greene to have lunch with him and maybe other guests on his way back through Leopoldville (Letter in archives Michel Lechat, folder 6).
350 Greindl is not the Danish consul. This Danish consul and his wife (names unknown) must have been present at the lunch, too, in addition to Greindl.
351 **bien pensant**, French for “right-thinking person.”
be gone.

| O the would-be writers. Out to drinks with a pathetic tired man, the head of the Govt. library called Dr [Deude?]. He had once written me a fan letter about his son and The Little Train. Married strangely enough to the third most attractive woman I’ve seen in the Congo. I invented a date at the hotel for 9.30 and driving me back he opened as they say his heart. It was his ambition to write – something creative if only a page or two, but now he was tired, sick and middle-aged. | JR. pathetic tired man, the head of the Govt. library called Dr [Deude?]. He had once written me a fan letter becomes pathetic tired man who had once written me a fan letter | GGgp. crosses out pathetic

| GGgp. crosses out strangely enough |

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**March 7. Brazzaville**\(^{353}\)

Forced to give the interview I thought I was going to dodge, and caught a boat at 9.30. The tiny little port of Leo with the ticket kiosque, a douane\(^{354}\) who only looked at Africans, and a white immigration officer for whites. On the opposite side all black and no examination [either? even?] for whites. What opportunities even today for the white smuggler between African territories.

Brazzaville a far prettier and more sympathetic place than Leo – Europe weighs down in Léo on the African soil in the form of skyscrapers: here Europe sinks into the greenery and trees of Africa. Even the shops have more chic than Léo. The inhabitants of Léo call this a village, but at least it is a charming provincial

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\(^{353}\) Capital city of French Equatorial Africa, on the opposite bank of the Congo River, just across Leopoldville (Belgian Congo). Today the capital of the Republic of Congo.

\(^{354}\) French for “customs officer.”
village and not a dull city.

Possible epigraph: “There are doorways and dust-heaps for such deaths, and such despair.” Dickens.

A quiet day. Took a taxi in the evening to a bookshop and bought the first vol. of the complete Goncourt Journals. Whisky by myself in my room. It's nice, for a while, being alone.

Hinduism is a tropical religion: a reaction from indiscriminate slaughter, which only happens in the tropics. For every insect one kills in Europe, one must kill a hundred at least in tropical countries. One kills without thinking – a smear on one's napkin or on the pages of one's book.

Gave myself a good dinner and perhaps that caused the bad night which followed.

March 8. Brazzaville

Finishing David Copperfield. Is a picture missing or is my memory wrong? Surely there was once a picture of Steerforth on the wreck, or was the picture in my mind only?

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355 Diaries kept by the brothers Jules (1830-1870) and Edmond (1822-1896) de Goncourt, totaling 22 volumes and relating literary and artistic life in Paris in the 19th Century. The de Goncourt brothers were writers and literature and art critics. The Prix Goncourt, a prestigious annual prize awarded in French literature, still bears their name.

356 By Charles Dickens; see note 233.

357 James Steerforth, character in David Copperfield. Handsome and disdainful young man.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Steerforth always attracted me, and just as when a child I was stirred by Mr. Murdstone(^{358}) and his cane, perhaps the death of Steerforth helped to fix in me my fear of death by drowning.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The court of the hotel is haunted by poor young Africans whom some wretched European has taught to turn out “decorative” pictures of dancers on black paper – all the same designs. I suppose they sell some to tourists. This man was admired by the librarian in Leo who proudly showed me one of his pictures – no better, no worse, in fact indistinguishable except in size, from these pictures by the students. I suppose of his atelier. When one compares what he has done with the genuine art movement started by an American in Haiti, one is appalled at the waste and corruption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wonder who it was reading David Ogg’s England in the Seventeenth Century(^{359}) in Brazzaville airport?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English papers of March 7 on the plane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libreville(^{360}) pretty little airport all trees and water like a country railway station. Back in the West in sight of the Atlantic. A big party going on to see an African going off to Paris. Complete mixing, not only of black and white, but men and woman. Contrast here to Belgian Congo where women are still uneducated. A black priest. Black girls – very pretty ones – in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{358}\) See note 233.

\(^{359}\) David Ogg (1887–1965), Scottish historian. Greene must be referring to his *Europe in the Seventeenth Century* (first published 1923), or else to his *England in the Reign of Charles II* (1934) or his *England in the Reigns of James II and William III* (1955).

\(^{360}\) City in French Equatorial Africa, now the capital of Gabon.
European clothes and short balloon skirts. Too great a cordiality and shaking of hands and noisy affability. Colonialism in hurried and undignified retreat. Cf. the official retreat in B.C. and the orders not to “tutoyer”.

One had the feeling though of the worst whites mixing probably with the worst blacks. Great number of half castes. A Swiss sharing my table pointed out one called Mackenzie. His father had made his money in timber, but his son had dissipated it. Wearing a white sporting cap. Nearly everybody drinking whisky at 4:30 in the afternoon. The stringy wet sweaty hair of white women. Inter-tribal trouble here too.

At Douala met by Boucarut. Drinks with him and an American in the bar, and then with B. to my hotel. A nice genuinely air conditioned room with a lovely view of palms, forest and water. B. spoke of the Communist organisation which is fighting in the maquis – the leader was killed recently and B. has his lighter. The U.P.C. – Union Peuple Cameroun (?) Representatives in Moscow, Warsaw, Prague etc.

Dinner (picnic kind) at the Beach Club.

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361 Belgian Congo.
362 French verb, meaning to address someone using the informal tu and toi pronouns rather than the formal, polite-deferential pronoun vous.
363 City in French Equatorial Africa, now the largest city of Cameroon.
364 Paul Boucarut (1928–2013), French veteran of war and secret service officer. Greene had met him as a police officer in Indochina in the early 1950s. Boucarut was now a secret service agent in Cameroon, where he had moved with his Vietnamese wife Hô (see section 2 above).
365 The question mark is Greene’s. Correct name: Union des Populations du Cameroun (“Union of the Populations of Cameroon”), Marxist pro-independence organization in Cameroon.
Mme Boucarut, a beautiful sight in her Indo-Chinese dress. Very pretty wife of a surgeon who spoke English well. Then on to a boat for more drinks, seeing off a couple leaving for France. A sense of pretty woman, dancing, gaiety, unknown in an English colony. Sensible clothes, good make-up. Then with Boucarut and another man to the Fregate – black prostitutes and a tiny dance floor. Young sailors standing drinks and dancing. One girl of great beauty with sad and humane eyes. I would have liked to have gone with her but for the fear of infection.

| JR. Then with B. and another man to GGJR. Young sailors standing drinks and dancing. becomes Young French sailors standing drinks and dancing with the prostitutes cheek by cheek. GGJR. crosses out I would have liked ... infection. |
| JR. omits the 9 March entry entirely |

| gp and fp end with the 8 March entry. |

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366 Hô Boucarut, Paul Boucarut’s Vietnamese wife.
367 Frégate, French for “frigate.” Name of a bar-discoteque in Douala.
Rose and the Modern “Religious Sense” in Graham Greene’s Brighton Rock

Katherine Walton

Graham Greene opens his novel The Heart of the Matter with a quote from the French Catholic poet Charles Péguy: “The sinner is at the very heart of Christianity. ... No one is as competent as he is in the matter of Christianity. No one, if it is not the saint.”1 If this seems a strange place to begin a study on the earlier Brighton Rock, the first of Greene’s four “Catholic novels,” then we might consider Mark Bosco’s recent comment that “it could be the epigraph and the theological lens for all of [Greene’s] novels from this period: the spiritual life of the sinner has the privileged status of experiencing ‘the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God.’”2 Greene’s young sinner Pinkie appears time and again in scholarly attention to Brighton Rock, so much so that he has been framed as the novel’s “only character who has the power to awaken people to the spiritual.”3 In our preoccupation with the Luciferian youth however, we seem to have forgotten about Pinkie’s other half: Rose, through whom Greene develops an apparatus for understanding both of these characters’ Catholicisms as well as the novel’s conflicted preoccupations with a love for God.4 As Gerald H. Cox observed, “nearly all criticism of Graham Greene’s Brighton Rock has focused on the characters of Ida and Pinkie,” yet “the context of Brighton Rock clearly points to Rose as the sole exemplar.”5

Since Cox’s generous appraisal, Rose’s character has remained on the margins of scholarship on Greene’s novels. She has been frequently sidelined as, at best, a figure for “fundamental decency” who remains “naïve” due to her innocence; as a symbol of “blind faith” who fails to provide “a determinate moral center to the novel”; or worse yet, dismissed as a “limited and disingenuous ... immature sixteen-year-old girl” whose love finds its way into the narrative as mere

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1 I extend sincere thanks to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Ares and Science Top Doctoral Fellowship program for their funding of my research.


“infatuation.” While Roksana Zgierska’s analysis of Rose as a saint-type offers a welcome counterbalance for more cynical views of her character, this reading also becomes problematic when it claims that she “rejects her religion” through her “love for other people.”

To draw on Péguy’s words, Rose’s character cannot be easily categorized as either a sinner or a saint, nor is her love for others so callow, her faith so untried, as to warrant anything less than serious consideration.

It is the purpose of this paper then, to provide a fuller account of that character. The nuanced treatment that Greene affords Rose supplies Brighton Rock with a particular metaphysical ground, one which neither Pinkie, in his inability to feel contrition, nor Ida, in her esoteric humanism, is able to access. Indeed, against the wider contexts of Greene’s literary Catholicism, Rose’s innocence and subsequent fall into mortal sin bear a grim resemblance to a Christ-like self-sacrifice where, in the state of sin, God’s presence is revealed through individual and freely chosen human acts of love and faith. Rose’s love functions as the narrative’s central redemptive force, her charitable feeling the novel’s example of a spiritual ideal amidst humanity’s moral failings. This is not to say however, that Rose is a Christ-type. Rather, Rose occupies a medial position between the novel’s moral and spiritual extremes: the ideal that she represents is profoundly human and thereby profoundly flawed.

Nevertheless, her sustained faith as she willingly commits herself to sin for Pinkie’s sake not only captures the complexity of human experience in an elegantly Greenean fashion, but suggests that her practice of love—one that finds connection with the specific practice of Christian love—best constitutes a positive affirmation of the immanence of a divine force. By the novel’s conclusion it falls to Rose alone to explore the role of the self-aware individual against a fallen modern world at once governed by and broken from its faith-based principles through which, I argue, she comes to represent one of Greene’s earliest candid attempts to view that world through a female perspective.

Graham Greene’s Female Characters

Greene’s female characters have more recently come under scrutiny. Rose’s treatment in the scholarship is perhaps one symptom of a larger issue concerning Greene’s fictional women who frequently present as docile, emptied of the troubled interiorities that we find in their male counterparts, or alternately as threatening to a governing male perspective. Greene’s women have been polarized as “either virgins or whores,” that former type more

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commonly framed as “the plucky waif” or the passive victim. Helen in The Heart of the Matter seems at once to occupy the positions of victim and threat, where Scobie’s trouble with women—his tendency to infantilize and assume paternalistic guardianship over them—leads him into an extramarital relationship with her that serves in part to catalyze the fuller breakdown of both his marital and spiritual lives. Helen’s perspective however, is lost in the narrative’s intense focus on Scobie’s internal plight, his labor with his faith, and his suffering when religious doctrine fails to contain his lived experience. Contrastingly, The End of the Affair provides insight into Sarah’s conflicted interiority in her letter to Bendrix—into her struggle between her felt need to accommodate male desire against her own spiritual compulsion—but it takes the sacrifice of her happiness, health, and finally her life to complete her conversion to Catholicism and to escape from her estranged marriage to Henry as well as from Bendrix’s ultimately unwanted attention. Brighton Rock’s depiction of Ida simplifies such conflict in favor of action: by removing the moral ambiguities bound up in Catholicism through Ida’s active form of heroism, Rose’s yielding, self-sacrificial obedience and acquiescence to Pinkie’s inimical spiritual pathologies seem to place her in deference to both Ida’s and Pinkie’s dominant personalities, particularly when her perspective is filtered through and diminished by Pinkie’s twisted vision of the world.

Work has been done to rehabilitate our view of Greene’s women; the power of a whole personality, Judith Adamson argues, emerges in Greene’s later female characters, while Michael G. Brennan suggests that Greene’s fascination with female religious figures affords his religiously charged women with singular

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10 Brennan, Graham Greene: Fictions, Faith and Authorship, 3.

In his narratives, positions in his narratives. In *Brighton Rock*, and like so many of Greene’s early women, Rose does not enter into the diegesis fully formed, but she nonetheless resists the bounds of caricature. Her part in the narrative triad establishes for her, by the novel’s concluding paragraphs, a fraught perspective like those of her male counterparts, who are far from one-dimensional portraits. Scobie’s tortured self-reflection, the priest’s spiritual torment in *The Power and the Glory*, and the juvenile Pinkie’s own turbulent internal monologues showcase a maturity in Greene’s approach toward his male cast that recognizes the multitudes of human emotion. Indeed, as much as we might wish to condemn Pinkie for his villainy, he experiences shades of an impoverished form of love in his occasional sensations of “tenderness” in that “something else” that he feels with Rose, which threatens like “the pressure of gigantic wings against the glass. Dona nobis pacem” in moments where he might not be “all bad.” In a Catholic paradigm, if Pinkie finds himself as a part of the *mali non valde*, then Rose occupies the position of the *non valde boni*, and Greene’s novel positions itself to explore how, like evil, goodness operates by degree. The complexity of Rose’s character is unwound in just such a conversation between good and evil as extremes and in the impossibility of a Greenean world to contain absolutes.

The bedrock of Rose’s character is her innocence. Rose becomes “mixed up” with Pinkie and his racetrack mob following their murder of Fred Hale, a reporter for a popular newspaper who betrayed Pinkie’s mentor and former gang boss Kite to their rival Colleoni, resulting in Kite’s assassination by Raven, Greene’s protagonist in the earlier *A Gun for Sale*. In *Brighton Rock*’s diegesis, Pinkie fixates on Rose, rightly suspicious that she knows of his attempt to cover up Hale’s murder. In order to prevent Rose from testifying against him should the murder be uncovered, by the novel’s half-way point Pinkie reluctantly arranges an illegal state marriage. The subsequent consummation of the secular ceremony in all of its “cold poverty” results in the violation of their shared Roman Catholic beliefs, as the marriage itself is unsanctioned by the Church and performed without their having been shriven. Pinkie’s desperation to avoid the legal consequences of his actions heightens as the narrative moves toward its conclusion; as Ida’s investigation closes in on him, and having already carved a path through his gang, Pinkie plans to remove Rose as a final measure to secure the silence of his witnesses. Against the backdrop of Pinkie’s panic, Greene locates the additional tension of his two young protagonists’ concerns over their souls, the dark irony in Pinkie’s attempted escape from Rose found in what Rose represents—his last

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14 Ibid., 261.

15 For a sensitive treatment of Pinkie’s desire for peace, see Leah, “Between the Stirrup,” 800.


17 Ibid., 125-26.

18 Ibid., 184.

19 Ibid., 183.
chance for salvation. While Ida’s narrative arc might best be categorized as a modern detective fiction, the intensely anxious drama surrounding both Pinkie’s and Rose’s fuller engagements with a criminal world traces theological questions onto their actions. In the novel’s competing moral perspectives—Ida’s life of “right and wrong”\(^{20}\) and the “stronger foods” that Rose and Pinkie understand as “Good and Evil”\(^{21}\)—Rose’s location on these axes is defined by her innocence. For Ida, Rose is an unchanging figure for the “Innocent,”\(^{22}\) a victim who requires saving from the suffering that Pinkie will inevitably cause her. However, Pinkie on the other hand, views Rose’s innocence with animosity; he rails at the thought of her “greenness and innocence”\(^{24}\) and loathes that her purity—both in terms of sex and sin—threatens the illusory power that he has gained by avoiding the consequences of his crimes. He detests her “stupid innocent face,”\(^{25}\) which reminds him of his own childhood in the Brighton slums,\(^{26}\) a face which reveals to him the “danger” of his precarious position in this life and the next,\(^{27}\) and which repels him for its being at once everything that he is and is not.

Rose sees herself however, in terms more fraught than those afforded to her by either Ida or Pinkie. For both of these latter characters, Rose’s innocence is akin to goodness; Ida’s notion of “Right and Wrong” leads her to implore Rose to act rightly and to leave Pinkie upon the basis of being “a Good girl,” while Pinkie realizes that Rose, against his sense of his own damned soul, “was good.”\(^{28}\) But when Pinkie equates Rose’s innocence with ignorance—“You don’t know anything”—Rose objects: “I know a lot.”\(^{29}\) For Rose, knowledge complicates innocence. Her self-positioning on the novel’s moral axis of “Good and Evil” and its alignment with a Roman Catholic system of values implicates her in the moral failings of a fallen world; as writes C. Kenneth Pellow, “one cannot glibly separate ‘good’ and ‘evil’ in Greene’s work, as his best characters are a mélange of both.”\(^{30}\) As if to prove herself to Pinkie, Rose admits that she “did something once too. A mortal sin.”\(^{31}\) This Rose uses to distinguish herself from Ida: “‘Right and wrong. That’s what she talks about. I’ve heard her at the table. Right and wrong. As if she knew.’ She whispered with contempt. ‘Oh, she won’t burn. She couldn’t burn if she tried.’”\(^{32}\)

Rose’s knowledge of sin, however innocent she may be when set into relation with Pinkie, leads her to love him regardless of his evil acts and to participate with him in those acts. We might read Pinkie’s brief moment of insight about Rose in a similar context: “He was speechless; and some knowledge of the astuteness of her simplicity, the long experience of her sixteen years, the possible depths of her fidelity touched him like cheap music, as the light shifted from cheek-bone to

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 43.
\(^{21}\) Ibid., 217.
\(^{22}\) Ibid., 130, 217.
\(^{23}\) Ibid., 243.
\(^{24}\) Ibid., 145.
\(^{25}\) Ibid., 94.
\(^{26}\) Ibid., 95.
\(^{27}\) Ibid., 192.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 135. See Leah, “Between the Stirrup,” who positions both Rose and Ida as forces of “Good” against Pinkie’s “total Evil” 798.
\(^{29}\) Ibid., 53.
\(^{31}\) Greene, Brighton Rock, 121.
\(^{32}\) Ibid.
cheek-bone and across the wall, as the gears ground outside.”

Rose occupies a middle ground in the novel’s conceptual tensions and makes available a more nuanced perspective than either Ida or Pinkie. The sin to which she refers may very well be posturing on her part in order to impress her lover—we never do learn what sin she previously committed—but behind her words, and behind Pinkie’s observation, is the suggestion that like Pinkie, and like all fellow “Romans,” she is sinful because she is human; she suffers from original sin, from a fall from Eden into a realm of knowledge and experience. As much as Rose may initially be innocent of the kinds of actions that may be properly thought to damn the soul, she is still human, and the incremental development of that “dark theology between them,” in Rose’s view, affords her and Pinkie with a privileged understanding of the world. Their shared perspective—one from which Ida exempts herself—allows the youths to distinguish themselves with pride at being a part of a community of the elect—even if those elect are damned:

It seemed to her that everyone was very kind: there seemed to be a companionship in mortal sin.

Pride swelled in her breast as she came up from the basement. She was accepted. She had experienced as much as any woman.

Nevertheless, the inborn goodness that Rose’s counterparts detect in her leads her to love Pinkie. In Pinkie’s words, “they were made for each other,” and that duality of “Good and Evil,” of salvation and damnation, appears decidedly more one-sided without Rose’s narrative part.

The Female Religious in *Brighton Rock*

Rose may be too human to be a saint, and she does fall into mortal sin so as to be with Pinkie, but she nevertheless embodies a promise: her presence in the narrative is salvific in nature. We read of it in her second scene with Pinkie as his “one hand caressed the vitriol bottle in his pocket” while “the other touched Rose’s wrist.” Rose provides a sense of balance, in this scene and in the larger narrative, between the concepts of damnation and salvation. Pinkie holds fast to Rose, to her goodness and its promise of salvation, just as he does to the bottle of vitriol, itself a compound symbol of his sins and his related confidence in the reality of “Hell. Flames and damnation.” In the end, the vitriol seems to claim him. Gerald Cox describes the shattering of the glass against Pinkie’s face as “a parody of Extreme Unction” where, from Rose’s vantage in the passenger’s seat of Pinkie’s old 1925 Morris, “it was as if the flames had literally got him.” Even as the acid melts Pinkie’s flesh, through Rose’s eyes the danger that he faces is spiritual in nature. It is Pinkie’s irony that his actions ultimately call the flames of hell into the immediacy of his lived word. In her continued survival


Ibid., 122.

Ibid., 54.

Ibid., 211. For “the exclusiveness of English Catholicism,” see Bergonzi, 96; on Rose’s sense of kinship with Pinkie, see Gerald H. Cox III,

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid., 54.

35 Ibid., 122.

36 Ibid., 211. For “the exclusiveness of English Catholicism,” see Bergonzi, 96; on Rose’s sense of kinship with Pinkie, see Gerald H. Cox III,

37 Ibid., 135.

38 Ibid., 52-53.

39 Ibid., 55. See also Leah, “Between the Stirrup,” 798.

40 Ibid., 264. Cox, 27.
however, Greene reorients the novel’s narrative perspective toward the anxious hope that Rose’s character embodies, that a spiritual life might see not only the prospects of Hell, but of “Heaven too.”

Despite overt parallels formed in *Brighton Rock* between the literal and the spiritual, as Peter M. Sinclair maintains, “theological inflections can become problematic in Greene’s novels if we do not make a crucial distinction between fiction and doctrine in his works.” Greene himself was opposed to the epithet of “Catholic novelist,” with which he became associated during and after his oeuvre’s “Catholic cycle.” For Greene, while these novels explored questions of a religious nature, “he did not want readers to be seeking catechetical exactitude in his stories.”

We might take Mark Bosco’s words as our guide when he writes that it was the “religious sense” that was important for Greene. In this way we must read Greene’s Catholic novels with an approach that is sensitive to how Greene’s religious and literary impulses interact. More specifically, the Catholicism that we read as it is expressed in Greene’s works “gave him a specific point of view throughout his literary career. ... From the beginning, Catholicism for Greene was never a system of laws and dogmas or a body of belief demanding assent or dissent but rather a system of concepts, a reservoir of attitudes and values, and a source of situations with which he could order and dramatize his intuitions about human experience.” Catholicism thus transposed into Greene’s literary worlds functions as a model, as a frame through which his fictional characters’ struggles can be understood. While these characters and their situations are steeped with religious significance, they do not model a strict adherence to religious orthodoxy. Instead, that “religious sense” opens up religious signification and spiritual feeling to the vicissitudes of human experience.

When we read Rose’s fall into sin, we ought to attune ourselves to the “religious sense” that imbues her character with spiritual meaning, the language and imagery which interfuses Ida’s world, free of religious dogma, with the sacrality of a Catholic paradigm, twisted as it is by the self-conscious sensibilities of two “Romans” whose understanding of a lived world under Catholicism is informed by their acute awareness of their own fallenness, whose understanding is that that very world is flawed and painfully separate from that vague, now shapeless and indistinct world of spiritual perfection. What Pinkie and Rose share in their understanding of their world is sin; though Rose suffers already from original sin—that state of being which fundamentally and forever divides both she and Pinkie from Ida—her marriage to Pinkie precipitates a freely chosen fall into a state of sin liable to damn her soul. Indeed, the state ceremony closes with Pinkie’s thought that “you signed covenants like this in your blood.” Neither he nor Rose have, up to this point, believed that such proceedings could constitute “a real marriage.”

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41 Ibid., 55.
42 Sinclair, 131.
43 Ralph McInerny, *Some Catholic Writers* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2007), 66. See also Brennan, *Graham Greene: Fictions, Faith and Authorship*, x.
47 Ibid., 125, 126, 150.
though its consequences here are felt as real: “He stood back and watched Rose awkwardly sign—his temporal safety in return for two immortalties of pain.”

Convinced of their souls’ mutual damnation and feeling “as if they were shut out of an Eden of ignorance,” sin succeeds sin as Rose’s fuller participation reads as a process of embodiment, a kind of incarnation through which the loss of her innocence is traced onto her body; after leaving the courthouse, Rose’s face is marked by the “enormous weight of responsibility.” Pinkie notes that “she was good, but he’d got her like you got God in the Eucharist—in the guts. God couldn’t escape the evil mouth which chose to eat its own damnation,” and this same language of perverse ritual reappears shortly in the description of their marriage consummation: “It’s mortal sin,’ he said, getting what savour there was out of innocence, trying to taste God in the mouth.”

Rose’s body, thus far bound up with innocence and goodness, here assumes Christ-like significance; the consumption of Christ’s body through the Eucharist re-enacts his sacrifice, his gift of redemption to the human soul through his bodily suffering and death. The ritual itself establishes individual connection with God through the symbolic communion of bodies and bodily participation in the process of salvation. The distortion of that communion in Pinkie and Rose’s “painful ritual upon the bed,” however, marks Rose with a morbid incarnational substance that resonates as at once a force for salvation and damnation.

Should we return briefly to Greene’s epigraph in The Heart of the Matter, Gordon Leah suggests that “a second look at Péguy’s words shows that a great sinner may be able to understand and feel God’s mercy more than a so-called righteous person.” Péguy’s words not only touch on the notion that those who have sinned are in the most need of God’s mercy, but that “a believer who knows no sin or is so bound by conformity to ecclesiastical doctrine that (s)he has lost all awareness of personal failure or need of grace, is far from the Kingdom of God.” In Brighton Rock, Rose’s incarnation as a sinner paradoxically leads her to God—toward the need to better understand her faith in a world that asks the greatest sinners to equip themselves with a profound trust in the mercy of the divine.

At the end of the novel, and following Pinkie’s gruesome death, Rose visits a confessor at a local church. There she expresses her desire to repent not for her sins, but that she did not die with Pinkie, that she did not commit suicide as Pinkie had wanted her to do. The one doubt keeping her from carrying out this final act is her fear that “in that obscure country of death they might miss each other—mercy operating somehow for one and not for the other.”

priest cannot absolve Rose, as her confession fails to demonstrate the proper form of contrition, he responds with an unorthodox musing:

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

The priest’s description here puts into words Rose’s own rebellion against the strictures of Catholic doctrine. Her love for Pinkie, misguided and self-destructive as it is, is so great that a part of her would allow herself to lose her soul so that he might be saved from the desolation of damnation, if only by her company. Some scholars go so far as to suggest that the man about whom the priest speaks is Charles Péguy himself, which throws Greene’s epigraph into further relief; the sinner herself—when committing sins on behalf of others for the perceived spiritual good of others—reproduces a kind of saintly self-sacrifice. Through the priest’s words, Greene provides an image of one who perjures his soul and who rejects the possibility of its reunion with God for those who are in the most need of love and mercy, for those who are damned and thus in the most need of salvation. Péguy’s is a gambit for a universal code of salvation, and like Rose, his resistance is as much a protest against the cold authority of an institutionalized bureaucracy of religion as it is against the conception of a God who could turn away from those most in need. What separates Rose from Pinkie is not God or death, salvation or damnation, but rather her capacity for love, that same faculty of feeling that transforms one complicit in sin through a love for others into a type of saint. Whereas Pinkie consistently fails to love and instead chooses to deny responsibility for the suffering that he causes both to himself and to others, Rose accepts the burden of sin in the hope of saving another, even if her imagined form of salvation is not of a doctrinal kind. To recall a more generous approximation of her character, this imagination is naïve, but it is also deeply felt, and it asks profound theological questions. Moreover, this drive for salvation for all—even if it is imperfect—keeps Rose from committing an act of despair and instead leads her to seek the guidance of both priest and Church.

If there is a narrative space where Brighton Rock does some extended theological work, then it is through Rose and Rose’s perspective, where that engagement finds fuller expression. Rose’s character operates under the

58 Greene, Brighton Rock, 268.
59 See Bergonzì, 101. Greene’s version of Péguy—or Péguy’s signification in the frame of the fictional narrative at hand—is of focus here rather than how accurately Greene represents the historical man. See Grahame C. Jones, “Graham Greene and the Legend of Péguy,” Comparative Literature 21, no.2 (1969): 139, 144-45. Péguy however, was eventually reconciled with his Catholic faith if not with the Catholic Church; see Roger Kimball, “Charles Péguy,” The New Criterion (2001): 19; McInerny, 119-20.
60 Brennan, Graham Greene: Fictions, Faith and Authorship, 50.
logic of Christian love, the same love that could qualify a sinner like Péguy, at least within the narrative’s “religious sense,” for a kind of sainthood. Two simultaneous forms of love operate at the heart of Christian love: a love for God and a love for others. We might consider these, respectively, in terms provided by J. C. Whitehouse, as elements of “vertical” and “horizontal” relationships which define Catholic experience, where together, in mutual co-existence, they form the body of the cross and bring a symbol of faith into a lived praxis. Informed by the Pauline virtue of charity, Christian love is caritas, “an outpouring of love for God” and a wellspring of selfless love for others, modeled after Christ’s love for humankind in accordance with the love that led to the Incarnation and Christ’s redemption of the human soul through self-sacrifice. Though Greene frames neither Rose nor Péguy as martyrs for God, their sacrificial impetus is bound up in a Christian love for others. In Whitehouse’s terms, their love can be understood as a “horizontal” relationship defined by a shared humanity—and in Brighton Rock, a shared damnation—a process which, for Greene, leads to “a growth towards God.”

Rose consistently asserts herself in the terms of just such a love. Against Ida’s warnings that Pinkie “doesn’t love you,” Rose actively chooses to love; she responds, “I don’t care ... I love him.” Ida later insists that Rose’s “life’s in danger” and that she has “got to be saved”—an ironic statement from Ida, whose concern is with Rose’s immediate bodily life, but whose words reflect the increasing precarity of Rose’s soul—yet over and again Rose maintains that she has bound herself to Pinkie:

The woman could tell her nothing she didn’t know about [Good and Evil]—she knew by tests as clear as mathematics that Pinkie was evil—what did it matter in that case whether he was right or wrong?

“You’re crazy,’ the woman said. ‘I don’t believe you’d lift a finger if he was killing you.’

Rose slowly came back to the outer world. She said, ‘Maybe I wouldn’t.’

Rose here chooses to “suffer” out of love: at her own peril, “she had chosen her side: if they damned him they’d got to damn her, too.” Though Ida is unable to register its tenor, Rose models a charitable form of love. Pinkie embodies Péguy’s idea of the needful sinner, the soul that needs saving. Pinkie himself increasingly recognizes that “What was most evil in him needed her,” a need that becomes more immediate in his narration as he slides further toward that state of irredeemable sin with which he is preoccupied. In loving Pinkie, Rose desires to act charitably with her life and

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63 Whitehouse, 87.
64 Greene, Brighton Rock, 131; original emphasis.
65 Ibid., 215.
66 Greene, Brighton Rock, 217.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., 207.
69 Ibid., 135.
her soul. She is prepared to sacrifice both for the sake of Pinkie’s soul which, if she cannot save, she can at least continue to love in damnation. Rose understands this as an “eternal act” which, through solidarity with Pinkie, may somehow provide him with a form of mercy even in damnation. In a “religious sense,” Rose’s love begins to look like a form of *imitatio Christi*. It is surely imperfect, but once again, Greene here treads a line between a clear, religious model and the murky complexity of a world where humans resist containment by absolutes. As much as Rose’s love emerges from an impetus like *caritas* and a desire to guide the soul toward consolation, her willingness to serve both Pinkie and the novel in a sacrificial capacity equally serves her as the means by which she distinguishes herself from within just such a world. Through Rose, the novel explores the meaning and consequences of faith, and through faith, Rose finds the agency to affect a wider range of experience than is initially available to the self-destructive role given to her by her love for Pinkie. Rather, her love leads her toward faith, and in nurturing that faith Rose becomes better able to determine the quality of her participation in the world, which asks her to embrace the imperfection of her humanity. Her project is, in its ultimate expression, one of self-determination enacted through the models made available to her by her faith.

Nowhere are such tensions at their most potent than during the novel’s climax, where Greene informs the redemptive power of Rose’s love with an epiphanic moment of faith. Rose has by this point agreed to a “suicide pact” with Pinkie. Unbeknownst to Rose, Pinkie has no intention of dying; rather, he has planned her suicide as a means of escaping both hers and Ida’s influences. As they drive away from Brighton in Pinkie’s Morris, Rose becomes conscious of the eternal implications tied to the anticipated act: “She felt as if she were signing away more than her life—heaven, whatever that was.” With the point of a gun in her ear and Pinkie outside of the car, aware that each of her proceeding actions could lead to a double form of death, Rose senses a presence other than her own: “If it was a guardian angel speaking to her now, he spoke like a devil—he tempted her to virtue like a sin. To throw away the gun was a betrayal; it would be an act of cowardice: it would mean that she chose never to see him again for ever. …The evil act was the honest act, the bold and the faithful—it was only lack of courage, it seemed to her, that spoke so virtuously.” “The evil act,” for Rose, is not so evil. Just as Pinkie is unable to imagine heaven—“A brain was only capable of what it could conceive”—Rose cannot conceive of “eternal punishment” or commit an “act of despair” since what she feels is not despair at all. Rather, she acts through a love that “wouldn’t let him go into that darkness alone,” imperfect because Rose is human; it “was a poor love that was afraid to die”; she has within her “all the hideous forces of self-preservation.”

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70 Ibid., 218.
71 Ibid., 235.
72 Ibid., 232-33, 235.
73 Ibid., 247.
74 Ibid., 263.
75 Ibid., 248.
76 Ibid., 249.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., 263.
79 Ibid., 264.
is balanced by her love for life, even though she rails against that life, against what is “meek, good, repentant,” much like those dissatisfactory “moral maxims dressed in pedantic priestly tones remembered from old sermons, instructions, confessions.” The tempting voice of grace arrests the forward momentum driving Rose toward death. And although she is struck by an inability to act which, in her narrative voice, tastes of humiliation, of powerlessness, whether by divine intervention or the primacy of her own instincts, the epiphanic moment positions Rose at the crux that informs all of Greene’s “Catholic novels”: that the complex nature of faith resists the boundaries imposed not only by an orthodox religious model incapable of fully representing the lived realities of modern life, but by the individual herself. The receipt of grace reveals to Rose the contradictions bound up in her humanness and asks her to break from the sacrificial models which thus far have governed her activity, whether drawn from Ida, Pinkie, or her own understanding of Catholic doctrine. In a pattern that holds across Greene’s literary explorations of faith, the epiphany offers not peace, but an intense emotional turbulence which, for Rose, provides her with the perspective of a whole personality, one not bound by the pre-determined roles of saint or sinner, but released into the interstices of a human life that asks her to choose not for others, but for herself.

Epiphany, here, demarcates the boundaries of the self-sacrificial impetus and forces radical internal change, ultimately resulting in Rose’s survival and in a concomitant return to the Church—more than is provided to many of Greene’s doomed protagonists.

**Brighton Rock’s Fallen Modern World**

Greene’s fictional worlds are frequently defined by critics using the term “Greeneland.” Andrea Loewenstein describes this landscape as one that is pervaded by a “sense of falseness and of alienation from a world which is morally as well as physically shabby and corrupt.” In *Brighton Rock*, this world is inhabited by “hatred, disgust, loneliness.” In this vision, humankind’s options are limited and an animal existence, fuelled by “murder, copulation, extreme poverty, fidelity and the love and fear of God” is counterposed only by the “experience” found in “the glare and open world outside.” Neither offers much in the way of hope; both are marked by a loss of innocence where humans become sensate of their isolation—from others and from God—or, like Pinkie, recoil in horror from the prospect of a connection which might break them from their “habit of hate.” Mark Bosco explains that Greene’s modernism picks up on a realist aesthetic which sought “to expose both human nature and society as they really were ... forcing readers to understand the brutal reality behind the

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80 Ibid., 262.
81 Ibid., 263.
83 Loewenstein, 242, see also 308.
85 Ibid., 131; see also Peter Liebregts, “‘The World is a Fine Adventurous Place’: Graham Greene in the 1930s,” *Modernism Today*, ed. Sjef Houppermans, Peter Liebregts, Jan Baetens, and Otto Boele (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013), 37-38.
comforting facades of modern life.”

God is far-removed from the world in this conception, a Deus absconditus whose presence is hidden from a fallen humanity. The ethos of a character like Ida, whose concerns are emphatically of a world outside of the religious, functions much like a panacea for the novel’s troubles with God. Exempt from the strictures of the Catholic faith, Ida navigates the world “like the chariot in a triumph,” where she champions “right’s right, an eye for an eye, when you want to do a thing well, do it yourself,” and above all, “justice.” Of all of the novel’s competing paradigms, Ida’s perspective may very well be the best suited to the Greenean world since in her essentially phenomenological approach to life, she is most equipped to interact with those who populate it. That is, Ida understands immediacy in the nature of human experience, and without hesitation is able to determine a course of action with clearly foreseen results. Hence her reflection on “the people she had saved: a man she had once pulled out of the sea when she was a young woman, the money to a blind beggar, and the kind word in season to the despairing schoolgirl in the Strand.” Salvation, for Ida, is a granular, quotidian concept with instantaneous and repeatable effects. From one situation into the next, the “right” action—indeed, the “just” action—is a life-sustaining exercise that functions to balance the sense of isolation in an existence that recognizes its own individuality. A faith like Ida’s is a faith in the capacity of the human to survive as the greatest good of all.

As this paper has sought to argue however, Greene’s investigation into matters of faith is not so cleanly cut as any boundaries might at first suggest. In the “religious sense” of Brighton Rock’s diegesis, the secular cannot be cleanly divided from the spiritual and instead throws the novel’s theological questions into relief. Hence, while Greene’s characters seem to themselves typify different worlds and different sensibilities, the whole of the novel’s take is as murky as a world without “catechetical exactitude.” Ida’s separate worldview, when understood in the whole of Brighton Rock as a complete work of fiction, cannot be and ought not to be separated from Pinkie’s exploration of the realities of hell, or Rose’s form of imitatio Christi, of that spiritual paradox where salvation is made real through a fall. Indeed, without the remove from a created world that Ida’s perspective provides, we would not become party to the dramatic irony that hell is brought to life by Pinkie’s own actions, counter to his belief in hell’s a priori existence, nor would we recognize that the hope for spiritual salvation which Rose carries with her depends upon human action in a painfully human world which itself manifests the divine, and which seeks out connection with the divine through a desire for unity with those who are most fallen, with the sinners who stand at the heart of Greene’s depictions of Catholicism. It is in just this way that

87 Bosco, “Shades of Greene,” 11. See Pellow, 72, who refers to Greene as “a tough-minded realist.”
90 Ibid., 243.
91 McInerny, 66.
Greene’s modernism deliberately resists the notion of a world not created by God. Rather, as argues Anne Loddegaard, “God’s existence becomes a matter of individual faith” whereby “virtue and sin are not experienced as easily definable, distinct entities in concrete situations, but are struck by complexity, opacity and ambiguity.”

Though God’s presence is fraught with human nature’s inherent tensions and its inability to understand the divine—in Pinkie’s silent recitation of the Mass, “He was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not”—by placing a fallible, unstable humanity at the heart of the world, Greene’s “religious sense” works from the ground-up, filling his religious landscape with meaning found in that same human nature.

And what we do see of salvation in *Brighton Rock* is human. In the world depicted by the modern Catholic novel, Bosco observes, “Catholicism was inscribed in the midst of fallen, poor humanity, a place of constant struggle where the mysterious irruptions of grace might shine forth or manifest in profound ways.” Catholicism thus “became a cultural container and conceptual signifier for the paradoxes within the ‘modern’ individual.” As with Rose’s dissatisfaction with doctrinal “moral maxims,” evidence of salvation cannot be found in a world received through simplified forms of religious orthodoxy. Rather, it figures forth in the instability and confusion of human experience, in Rose’s very face:

“They said that saints had got—what was the phrase?—‘heroic virtues,’ heroic patience, heroic endurance, but there was nothing he could see that was heroic in the bony face, protuberant eyes, pallid anxiety.” Shown on Rose’s face is “the ravaged and disputed territory between the two eternities,” a world that vacillates between Good and Evil—or between Right and Wrong where, in Ida’s view, “all the fight there was in the world lay there—warships cleared for action and bombing fleets took flight between the set eyes and the stubborn mouth.” In Rose’s face, the novel’s two overarching paradigms of human existence meet; her face, and faces like it—faces twisted with suffering and experience—attune the divine to the very grit of modern life: “In an alley between two shops, an old woman sat upon the ground; he could just see the rotting and discoloured face: it was like the sight of damnation. Then he heard the whisper, ‘Blessed art thou among women,’ saw the grey fingers fumbling at the beads. This was not one of the damned: he watched with horrified fascination: this was one of the saved.”

A constant across depictions of God’s manifest presence, the divine here appears to Pinkie amidst poverty and disease, eternity writ onto Ida’s vision of war. The connection between Rose and the old woman is plain: Pinkie responds to the woman in the same manner as with Rose time and again, “with distaste,” with the urge to dismiss all that is immanent and imperfect as instead a sign of the impossibility of divine

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92 Liebregts, 38.
93 Loddegaard, 4.
95 See also McCormack, 266; Sinclair, 131.
96 Bosco, “Shades of Greene, 12.
97 Ibid.
99 Ibid., 156.
100 Ibid., 151.
101 Ibid., 217. For a discussion on Rose’s statuesque resemblance to the Virgin Mary, see Cox, 28-29.
102 Ibid., 204.
103 Ibid., 93.
presence. In this case, Pinkie’s (mis)understanding of orthodox knowledge fails him; Pinkie thinks only in the terms of a binary ontology—that Good and Evil—which opposes saintly perfection with sin and damnation. When he looks toward just such a perfection for proof of God’s presence, its absence ratifies his belief that already this world is a form of hell, that already humankind suffers the pains of damnation in a total separation from the divine, that hell “wasn’t anything to worry about: it was just his own familiar room.” The revelation that salvation exists with those who are most fallen, and that those who are fallen bear salvation into the world, threatens to shatter Pinkie’s worldview in the correlative demand that he accept culpability in the tarnishing of his spiritual life—that all along it has been his prerogative to damn his soul and, worse yet, that he might still choose to save it. In opposition to Rose’s encounter with the priest, Pinkie’s fiery end results in his continued flight from the mercy of a God with whom he refuses to feel a connection. Nevertheless, in Rose’s face, a face that reflects the face of the old woman in the alley, that reflects Pinkie back to himself, the novel offers an image of salvation, a human manifestation of what the priest at the end of the novel can only name as the “appalling strangeness of the mercy of God” which may yet touch Pinkie as it already has Rose in the “honest act.”

Rose’s character then, is very much the metaphysical lynchpin in \textit{Brighton Rock}: without Rose, and without the faith-based perspective that she provides, there would be no central presence of God in the narrative’s reality. Rose’s faith makes her the novel’s only character to provide an apparatus by which to understand a divine force as it is experienced by humans within the world. Unlike Ida, both Pinkie and Rose believe in Good and Evil and their respective “two eternities,” but only Rose exhibits faith in the redemptive power of God. Despite her belief that orthodox religious practices such as prayer and confession cannot help her, Rose instinctively reaches out toward a God who may be distant but not inaccessible; though she refuses to repent for her sins, her faith moves her toward contrition, toward her time with the priest in the confessional at the end of the novel and, perhaps most importantly, toward the power of spiritual self-determination, that will to decide for herself what meaning she might derive from her “Roman” life. J. C. Whitehouse suggests that “belief and uncertainty are shown as bringing blessings,” what Bosco terms as “the virtue of doubt,” without which, for Whitehouse, “there would be no need for faith.” At the novel’s end, just as she accepts the priest’s words in what Gerald H. Cox considers as “clearly an act of faith” in a similar act of community, so too does Rose agree to pray not merely for Pinkie’s soul, but for the priest, as well. In this moment, it is as if Rose suddenly becomes aware that her sin does not sever her from, but rather binds her ever more tightly to her God, and that through this connection,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 198.
  \item \textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 268, 263.
  \item \textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 151.
  \item \textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 267.
  \item \textsuperscript{108} See also Loddegaard, (2008), 9.
  \item \textsuperscript{109} Bosco, \textit{Graham Greene’s Catholic Imagination}.
  \item \textsuperscript{110} Whitehouse, (1990), 85; Bosco, (2005), 26, see also 27.
  \item \textsuperscript{111} Greene, \textit{Brighton Rock}, 267; Cox, 27.
\end{itemize}
she is most in unity with those like her. When previously she believed that “her prayers stayed here below with the siphons and statuettes: they had no wings,”\textsuperscript{112} following her conversation with the priest, she begins to understand that the divine can be made present through human action. She cannot bestow salvation, but she can seek community with God through the action of love. In this way, Rose never “rejects her religion.”\textsuperscript{113} Rather, she enacts a process of coming to terms with the imperfections found in both herself and in the faith-based system that organizes her experience.

For her part in disentangling Greene’s “religious sense,” Rose ought not to be overlooked, particularly in the context of Greene’s “Catholic novels” where his fictional women all too frequently find their agency stripped or suffer death in order to reclaim their power. In the “dark theology” of Greene’s fallen worlds,\textsuperscript{114} Rose supplies \textit{Brighton Rock} with a promise of redemption, one that extends beyond the novel’s engagement with the theological and positions her in Greene’s oeuvre as one of his earliest attempts to see his worlds through an unironic female gaze, one which, here, is best able to recognize the many and conflicting valences that give shape to that reality. In the novel’s final words, Rose walks “towards the worst horror of all,”\textsuperscript{115} the gramophone recording which will reveal to her Pinkie’s spiteful message, whose bitter words reflect his resentment of a life misshapen by the Brighton slums, a life he sees embodied by Rose. In confronting Pinkie’s reality, the recording will ask Rose to escape the one-dimensionality of her relationship with him and to inhabit a fuller being without the existential safety of her opposite in that “open world outside.”\textsuperscript{116} Unlike her narrative counterparts, Rose is equipped with a faith that has led her back to the Church, to the confessional, to community, and has led the novel to a ground of hope, which, despite Greene’s characteristically grim denouement, suggests that Rose, and the reality that Greene explores through her perspective, may yet survive Pinkie’s vitriol.

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\textsuperscript{112} Greene, \textit{Brighton Rock}, 250.
\textsuperscript{114} Greene, \textit{Brighton Rock}, 122.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., 269.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 131.
Chapter 8: The Comedians from Seeds of Fiction: Graham Greene’s Adventures in Haiti and Central America 1954-1983

Bernard Diederich

The Comedians

In a letter dated 20 December 1965 Graham finally broke the news. He preceded it by alluding to the Dominican upheaval. “I was afraid that something might have happened to one of you during the revolution—a revolution which alas I could not attend!” Then, sounding slightly sheepish, at the end of the letter he announced: “I’ve got a novel about Haiti coming out at the end of January, of which I am sending you a copy in the hope that it may arrive. I’m sure you will find a great many errors there, but perhaps you will be amused by the last chapter, which reflects our visit to the bauxite works. Forgive the errors for the sake of the intention.”

In the midst of the Dominican civil war, in spite of the erratic postal service, The Comedians arrived at our home. It was a thrilling moment, mixed with apprehension. This book, I hoped, would affect Haiti’s future or at least Papa Doc’s tyranny. The pen could indeed be mightier than the sword. I felt that much depended on the little parcel I held in my hand that afternoon. I examined its careful wrapping and waited a moment before tearing open the package and showing it to my wife. The book’s cover was several shades of green. The brief blurb on the inside jacket flap said it was Greene’s first novel in five years and noted that “Like one of its predecessors, The Quiet American, it is a story about the committed and uncommitted.” Graham opened the book in the form of a letter, both as a salute to his old publisher A. S. Frere and as a way of establishing its geographical location. “Poor Haiti itself and the character of Doctor Duvalier’s rule are not invented,” he wrote, “the latter not even blackened for dramatic effect. Impossible to deepen that night.”

The UK edition had been published by The Bodley Head of London. In his tiny script Graham had written: “For Bernard—hoping you will not find this too much of a travesty—with love, from Graham. Christmas 1965.”

Unconsciously I lifted the book to feel its weight, as if it were a precious metal. Then I sat down, forgot about deadlines and news reports, and devoured The Comedians. I didn’t sleep that night. Graham had given us a novel in which fiction was reality. There had been no need to worry. He had protected everyone concerned. There was not one breach of confidence. I was reassured he was honorable and compassionate. He had given the poor people of Haiti something that Papa Doc had deprived them: a voice. The horrors of the Papa Doc dictatorship and its gratuitous brutality were there. Graham had managed to capture, in this imaginary love story, the 1963—1964 climate of Duvalier’s terror and its surrealism. Only those who had lived through that terror could appreciate the accuracy with which he painted it. The dark comedy left me depressed, and for several nights after rereading the book I suffered painful flashbacks of my last years in Haiti.

The comedians of the book’s title are not the Haitians but the blans (whites), a term synonymous in Haiti with
foreigners—whom Graham introduces sailing to Haiti aboard the Medea, a Dutch ship named after the jealous sorceress of legend. Their names are as vacuous as their moral philosophies—Brown, Jones, and Smith. However, Jesuit-educated Brown is well read, citing Wordsworth and Baudelaire, and he reads Henry James’s “The Great Good Place” at the Trianon—Port-au-Prince’s gingerbread landmark clearly patterned after the venerable Grand Hotel Oloffson—during a long Sunday afternoon.

But comedy in The Comedians is of the bitter kind, about dark human emotions. There are no belly laughs, just a deep sadness at watching a country sink into a living hell because of the cruel and capricious contempt for human life of its despotic leader and his sadistic Tontons Macoutes. Papa Doc does not make a personal appearance in the book, but his presence permeates the air like some awesome, terrifying vulture. Graham achieves this by portraying Duvalier as the Voodoo god Baron Samedi, guardian of the dead. As such, he casts a demonic shadow that darkens all.

Graham uses a first-person narrative. Brown, the book’s anti-hero and main protagonist, was left by his worldly mother to be raised by Jesuits. He even contemplated becoming a priest at one stage but lost his faith and became a cynical, jaded, middle-aged beachcomber-type. He refers to God “as an authoritative practical joker.” Determinedly uncommitted, Brown wants to remain uninvolved in any social or political cause (which was so true of many foreigners and effete Haitians living under the dictatorship). But Brown’s cynicism does not prevent him from knowing what is going on around him. He returns to Haiti unable to sell his hotel, which his well-traveled mother has ended up with in Port-au-Prince.

Aboard the Medea there is also “Major” Jones, who is sailing under false pretenses. He is a con man in the British genre, at times a charming cad but a pathetic figure nonetheless. He boasts of having battled the Japanese in Burma during the Second World War when in fact—as he confesses to Brown in a Haitian cemetery toward the end of the book—he was an actor performing far behind the front lines (which reminds me of Noël Coward). In Haiti Jones has high hopes of striking it rich by making a lucrative arms deal with corrupt government bureaucrats. Unfortunately, as the winds blow, so do the officials: Jones’s letter of introduction is to an official whose current address is the national prison.

The only committed members of the group of seafarers traveling to Port-au-Prince are Mr. and Mrs. Smith—a noble-minded but naïve and elderly American couple who have not the slightest idea what Haiti is like under Papa Doc’s dictatorship. As evangelical vegetarians (he was the presidential candidate on the US Vegetarian Party ticket) the Smiths absurdly seek to set up a vegetarian center in Haiti that they hope will “one day remove acidity and passion from the Haitian character.” Still, they are likeable, and Graham shows that there are good Americans as well as quiet ones.

From the moment the blans descend the gangplank in Port-au-Prince, they move deep into the terrifying darkness of Papa Doc’s regime and his eerie hell on earth. (Graham told me more than once after his 1963 visit that he had never elsewhere confronted the type and extent of evil that pervaded Papa Doc’s Haiti. The place, Graham said, reeked of
malevolence—a malevolent dictator, a malevolent secret police, and a malevolent system.) Upon disembarking Brown is given an effusive greeting by the ubiquitous Petit Pierre, the most recognizable character in the book after the all-pervasive Papa Doc. Because Petit Pierre seems to have escaped being beaten up or worse, he is suspected of having connections with the Tontons Macoutes. But Brown questions whether it is true because “there were occasionally passages in his gossip-column that showed an odd satirical courage—perhaps he depended on the police not to read between the lines.” It is also true that in a dictatorship any survivors are suspect. In his portrait of Petit Pierre, Graham adds that he was “always gay. It was as though he had tossed a coin to decide between the only two possible attitudes in Port-au-Prince, the rational and the irrational, misery or gaiety; Papa Doc’s head had fallen earthwards and he had plumped for the gaiety of despair.”

Brown heads off in the country’s customary nightly black-out to the eerily majestic Hotel Trianon only to find a corpse in the hotel’s pool, which has no water. The body is that of Dr. Philipot, Papa Doc’s Secretary of State for Social Welfare, who has chosen suicide at Brown’s mother’s hotel, slashing both his wrists and his throat rather than face death at the hands of the regime’s terror specialists, the Tontons Macoutes. Although Brown is unmoved by this distasteful discovery, the incident eventually draws him into Haiti’s drama and even affects his sex life. While making love to Martha, the wife of a South American ambassador, Brown sees in his mind’s eye Dr. Philipot’s corpse again and is rendered impotent. On a visit with the Smiths to see the cabinet minister who has replaced the unfortunate Dr. Philipot, Brown observes: “Above his head hung the portrait of Papa Doc—the portrait of Baron Samedi. Clothed in the heavy black tail-suit of graveyards, he peered out at us through the thick lenses of his spectacles with myopic and expressionless eyes. He was rumoured sometimes to watch personally the slow death of a Tonton victim. The eyes would not change. Presumably his interest in the death was medical.”

The dictatorship is exemplified by Captain Concasseur, who took pleasure “in breaking limbs” and “missed nothing through those dark glasses.” It was he who mutilated and emasculated Joseph, Brown’s servant at the hotel. Typical of the regime’s entrepreneurial insanity is the construction of an ice-skating rink in the mountains at Kenscoff, overlooking Port-au-Prince. (This was actually a short-lived project undertaken by a businessman connected to the Duvalier regime during that time.)

Except for the unworldly Smiths, who are oblivious to their murderous surroundings, the cynical, uncommitted foreigners see themselves only as players in a cosmic bad joke. Life to Brown is a form of dark comedy with the actors and actresses—comedians all—directed by the Almighty. Brown’s world therefore lacks any profound purpose. Even so, the comedians’ superficial environment is so totally dwarfed by the frightening enormity of Papa Doc’s Kafkaesque darkness enveloping them that they appear laughably trivial and insignificant. “We are only the sub-plot affording a little light relief,” Brown tells Martha, commenting on Dr. Philipot’s suicide. “We belong to the world of comedy and not to tragedy,” he tells her on another occasion. He has no moral moorings and is not even able to sustain his romance with Martha. Their affair is
growing cold, and besides being married
she is the daughter of an executed Nazi
war criminal. She mentions her harsh
father, the German, to Brown who says,
“Cruelty’s like a searchlight. It sweeps
from one spot to another. We only
escape it for a time.” And elsewhere he
observes, “Haiti was not an exception in
a sane world: it was a small slice of
everyday taken at random. Baron
Samedi walked in all our graveyards.”
Later when he calls on the British
chargé d’affaires to help the imprisoned
“Major” Jones whose deal is dead,
Brown says he “felt a little like the player
king rebuked by Hamlet for
exaggerating his part.” He is unaffected
even by the death of his mother Maggie
Brown, a brave, worldly woman—
Madame la Comtesse de Lascaut-Villiers.
She leaves him the hotel, and he treats
Marcel, her Haitian lover, as just
another member of the cast of the
theatre of farce. Before she dies the
Comtesse says to Marcel: “I know I’m an
old woman and as you say a bit of an
actress. But please go on pretending. As
long as we pretend we escape.” But
Marcel cannot escape. He is no
comedian; he cares. Filled with grief, he
too commits suicide in the hotel.
Suicide, Brown worries, is bad for
business. On the other hand, there is no
business.

It is the book’s Haitian characters
who try to inject some transcendental
life into the comedians like Brown, who
is the equivalent of a Haitian zombie in
that his moral and spiritual decay has
been caused by a loss of faith—in God—
that makes him resemble the walking
dead.

The towering figure of commitment
is the Haitian physician Dr. Magiot. The
antithesis of Papa Doc, Magiot is a
Marxist but one attuned to the gentler
bourgeois Victorian age in which Marx
himself lived—a time when Marxism had
a human face. Like the Hotel Trianon,
Magiot is almost a relic from a bygone
era. He helps bring about Brown’s slow
regeneration. Brown first encounters
Magiot crouched over the body of the
ex-social welfare minister “in the
shadow cast by my torch like a sorcerer
exorcising death” and gradually
succumbs to his influence as a sort of
father confessor.

Graham, through a letter of
introduction from the French Roman
Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain,
met the Haitian physician Dr. Camille
Lherisson, a big man with an even
bigger ego who had been Minister of
Health in the Magloire government for a
brief time. He was Graham’s opposite.
Graham shunned the public spotlight,
while Lherisson bathed in it. The high-
profile physician had been one of the
first Haitian doctors to be sent abroad
by the Rockefeller Foundation. Under
Rockefeller auspices he received a
scholarship and undertook his
postgraduate work in biology at McGill
University, Montreal. (The Rockefeller
Foundation had granted scholarships to
a number of Haitian doctors to
specialize in various medical fields
abroad. Dr. François “Papa Doc”
Duvalier studied public health at the
University of Michigan for a semester on
a Rockefeller scholarship. There he
learned a great deal about racial
discrimination in the United States, if
not about democratic values. Indeed,
because of color prejudice in the United
States, most Haitians granted foreign
scholarships had earlier been sent to
Canada.)

Engaging and physically impressive,
“Bibi,” as Lherisson was known to his
friends, was attending physician to some
of Haiti’s oldest families. He was a
dedicated and highly skilled in his
practices in his community.
who had become increasingly egocentric with age. He had finely chiseled features and could be described either as a dark mulatto or a light-colored griffe (one of the many shades of color between mulatto and black). Apart from a wandering eye, philosophy was another of his passions. He spoke English well and made a deep impression on Graham, who had difficulties with any language but his own. Lherisson’s moment of fame, at least locally, had come during the last six days of September 1944 when, as president of La Société Haïtienne d’Études Scientifiques (the Haitian Society of Scientific Studies) he organized an international conference on philosophy. It was an extraordinary event for Haiti, made more so by the fact that it was held while the Second World War still raged. In retrospect it might appear that Haiti had priorities other than a five-day discussion on Kant and the anti-intellectual mysticism of Luther, “Object of Sensible Intuition According to Kant” and “Object of Physics-Mathematics” by Eugene Babin. Lherisson himself spoke on the philosophy of mathematics. The star of the event was the Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain, whom Lherisson introduced as “notre cher et grand ami” (our beloved good friend). It was Jacques Maritain who Graham said had helped him publish his first book in France, The Man Within, and who had suggested he meet Dr. Lherisson.

As things turned out, Lherisson became the model for Dr. Magiot in The Comedians. This choice of a model was a shock to me. There were numerous Haitians who could have been the model for Dr. Magiot. It was not until August 1980 that Graham told me who the inspiration was. He told me this as he and I waited for Panamanian strongman General Omar Torrijos’s personal jet to take us to Managua, Nicaragua. Graham lamented the demise of the late Hotel Oloffson bartender Caesar and his famous rum punches. His musing took him back many years. “Did you know Dr Camille Lherrison?” he asked. “I had him in mind when I created the character of Dr Magiot in The Comedians.” Of all the heroic figures I believed were possible models for Dr. Magiot, Lherrison had never crossed my mind. Up to that moment Graham’s powers of observation and judgement had seemed extraordinary to me; now I was not so sure. I was shattered. All I could say in getting over my astonishment was that Graham had got Dr. Lherrison’s color wrong.

“He was black,” Graham said, his lips puckered up, seeming to hold back his words as he usually did whenever he spoke with force and conviction.

Lherrison was a right-wing mulatto. He was an elitist doctor. He couldn’t be the black Marxist Magiot. “It is a good thing Lherrison’s dead,” I said. “This conversion of color and ideology would have killed him.”

“But he was black,” Graham insisted, looking at me as if I was the one who was colorblind. When I didn’t say anything more, he insisted: “He was very dark, black!”

Unknown to even his mulatto friends, Lherisson had entered Graham’s narrative as a noir. They would consider it the ultimate irony, given the color caste system in Haiti, for a man as pompous as Lherisson to be turned by an author who despised pomposity into a “tall elderly negro with a Roman face blackened by the soot of cities and with hair dusted by stone.”

Graham could see that I was upset about his choice of a model for Dr. Magiot, so later he sent me a copy of an article he had written four years earlier
for the *Sunday Telegraph* magazine in which he had identified Lherrison not by name but by color in the following effusive terms:

A man I liked above all who was the model for Doctor Magiot in *The Comedians*, a novel I never dreamed then that I would come to write. He was a doctor and a philosopher—but not a Communist. For a time he had been Minister of Health, but found his hands too tied, so he resigned (something which would have been very dangerous to do under Duvalier). Every other year he visited Europe to attend philosophical congresses. He was a very big man and very black, of great dignity and with old-world courtesy. He was to die in exile, more fortunately than Doctor Magiot. Who can tell?

The *Comedians* leaves no doubt that Graham is firmly on the side of the oppressed. US foreign policy is astutely criticized by Dr. Magiot, who predicts that Papa Doc will keep his “window open towards the east until the Americans give arms to him again.” Magiot notes that the fear of another Cuba, a second communist state at its back door, is reason enough for the United States to forgive Papa Doc his sins. “There will be no Cuba and no Bay of Pigs here,” says Dr. Magiot.

Police Captain Concasseur says: “We are the true bastion against Communists. No Castro can succeed here. We have a loyal peasantry.”

While the *blan* comedians are self-centered and only half-alive, the Haitians they meet at least exhibit purpose. A young poet, Henri Philipot, nephew of the dead minister, decides along with Dr. Magiot to take up arms against Papa Doc. Together they have commitment enough to spare, and they try to breathe some spiritual life into the comedians. But overcoming Brown’s cynicism about life is not easy. The Smiths’ vegetarian scheme also withers. They too get caught up in the violence and corruption of Papa Doc’s Haiti, but at least they care about something. As they sail off to neighboring Santo Domingo, Brown concludes that they are not comedians after all.

Pineda, the cuckolded Latin American ambassador, likewise mirrors the book’s title: “Come on, cheer up, let us all be comedians together. Take one of my cigars. Help yourself at the bar. My scotch is good. Perhaps even Papa Doc is a comedian.”

Henri Philipot, the would-be guerrilla, replies to the Ambassador: “He [Papa Doc] is real. Horror is always real.”

The Ambassador rejoins: “We mustn’t complain too much of being comedians—it’s an honourable profession. If only we could be good ones the world might gain at least a sense of style. We have failed—that’s all. We are bad comedians, we aren’t bad men.”

In his way Graham pays just tribute to the role of Haiti’s folk religion, Voodoo. “Certainly I am not against Voodoo,” Dr. Magiot tells Mrs. Smith; “How lonely my people would be with Papa Doc as the only power in the land.” Voodoo, Magiot says, “is the right therapy for Haitians.”

And it is Voodoo (Graham, who attended a Voodoo ceremony in 1954 gets it right) that the young poet Philipot turns for help when all else fails him. “The gods of Dahomey may be what we need,” he concludes.

Of Philipot, Brown notes: “Governments had failed him, I had failed him, Jones had failed him—he had no Bren gun; he was here, listening to the drums, waiting, for strength, for
courage, for a decision.” Voodoo did not fail him. Brown attends the Voodoo ceremony above Kenscoff, high in the mountains, and the description of the service is remarkably well done for an author who had attended only one Voodoo ceremony in his life—and that more than seven years earlier.

In a letter to Catherine dated 30 August 1954 from the El Rancho Hotel, Graham scribbled down his impressions of the Voodoo ceremony he had attended the night before, which had “lasted until 3 in the morning.” The letter, reproduced in Graham Greene: A Life in Letters edited by Richard Greene, is headed with a request to Catherine: “Will you keep this letter in case I need it to refresh my mind?” In fact, the rite Graham described in his letter was typical of the ceremonies that catered to the tourist trade.

The importance that Haitians attach to sanctifying the dead came through in The Comedians. Haitians worship their ancestors. (A body-snatching by Duvalier’s police recounted in The Comedians is based on an event following Duvalier’s 1957 election when a kidnapping took place during the funeral procession of ex-candidate Clément Jumelle.)

“Major” Jones, the charming cheat and boastful liar who is pursued by Captain Concasseur, tries to escape dressed as a Haitian woman and takes asylum with Ambassador Pineda. Jones is finally conned by a jealous Brown who believes he is having an affair with Martha. This is a chance to put his phony wartime experiences to use. Undergoing a spiritual transformation and shedding his comedian’s mantle, Jones dies a hero’s death with poet Philipot’s guerrilla band. As the guerrillas withdraw from Haiti across the border into the Dominican Republic—our 1965 trip along the Dominican-Haitian border served Graham well in this last chapter of the book—Philipot, carrying the corpse of the torture-victim Joseph, reports that Jones has vowed to keep Papa Doc’s pursuing soldiers at bay until the others have had time to reach the border road. Philipot and his guerrillas are interned in an abandoned lunatic asylum near Santo Domingo, not unlike the Haitian guerrilla camp that Graham and I visited in 1965. Brown, now not so remote, concedes that he would like to erect a stone where Jones died: “I shall get the British Ambassador, perhaps a member of the Royal Family.”

Father Bajeux, our melancholy traveling companion during the three-day border trip, enters Graham’s novel as the Haitian refugee-priest who says Mass at the Franciscan church in Santo Domingo. Father Bajeux and I had told Graham about the Mass said by Bajeux on 27 April 1964 in memory of those killed during the bloody repression in Haiti the year before. After Mass the Kamoken posed for their photograph together outside the church. Toward the end of The Comedians Philipot leads his disheveled troops from the lunatic asylum to attend another Mass, this one for Joseph, limping no more from Concasseur’s blows, and for Jones “whose beliefs were not known” but who “was included out of courtesy.” Besides the guerrilla survivors there are Brown, Martha, and her family. In the sermon the priest, a liberationist, condemns the indifference of the Browns of the world as evil. Graham’s description fits Bajeux as “a young man of Philipot’s age with the light skin of a métis.”

Thus Graham was continually questioning faith, ideology, and human behavior. Shortly after The Comedians was published the Roman Catholic
Church fell into a state of ferment, especially in Latin America, and 1968 was the year of the Second Vatican Council. The age-old image of the implacable, intolerant, and inflexible Catholic Church was being buffeted by the winds of social change. The bishops of Latin America had met in Medellín, Colombia and promised to sever the Church’s centuries-long alliance with the region’s military and entrenched élites. Graham was well aware of these events and was devoted to Pope John XXIII, the most popular pontiff in the century.

Graham had written in his foreword:

A word about the characters of The Comedians. I am unlikely to bring an action for libel against myself with any success, yet I want to make it clear that the narrator of this tale, though his name is Brown, is not Greene. Many readers assume—I know it from experience—that an ‘I’ is always the author. So in my time I have been considered the murderer of a friend, the jealous lover of a civil servant’s wife, and an obsessive player at roulette. I don’t wish to add to my chameleon-nature characteristics belonging to the cuckold of a South American diplomat, a possibly illegitimate birth, and an education by the Jesuits. Ah, it may be said, Brown is a Catholic and so, we know, is Greene ... It is often forgotten that, even in the case of a novel laid in England, the story, when it contains more than ten characters, would lack verisimilitude if at least one of them were not a Catholic. Ignorance of this fact of social statistics sometimes gives the English novel a provincial air.

“I” is not the only imaginary character: none of the others, from such minor players as the British chargé to the principals, has ever existed. A physical trait taken here, a habit of speech, an anecdote—they are boiled up in the kitchen of the unconscious and emerge unrecognizable even to the cook in most cases.

Poor Haiti itself and the character of Doctor Duvalier’s rule are not invented ... The Tontons Macoute are full of men more evil than Concassee; the interrupted funeral is drawn from fact; many a Joseph limps the streets of Port-au-Prince after his spell of torture, and, though I have never met the young Philipot, I have met guerrillas as courageous and as ill-trained in that former lunatic asylum near Santo Domingo. Only in Santo Domingo have things changed since I began this book—for the worse.

The few Haitians privileged to read the book were eager to identify the players. I myself was increasingly persuaded that Brown, the principal character and narrator, was a composite, blending together slight resemblances to several real-life individuals, including the Hotel Oloffson’s American operator at the time of Graham’s 1963 visit. This Caribbean entrepreneur appeared blithely uncommitted as far as Papa Doc’s dictatorship was concerned and seemed to care only about the effects of media reports on the country’s tourism and specifically his clientele. And in spite of Graham’s sweeping disclaimer, other characters in the book brought to mind certain actual people and settings.

“Major” Jones is reminiscent of many wheeler-dealers who were attracted to Haiti by the dictatorship’s need for guns. Mr. and Mrs. Smith, the elderly
vegetarians, evoked a similarly idealistic but naïve American couple who were the only other guests besides Graham and the Italian casino operator at the Hotel Oloffson in August 1963.

Henri Philipot closely resembled Fred Baptiste, the commander of the little guerrilla band that invaded Haiti from the Dominican Republic as poorly armed as any guerrilla group ever was. Years later Graham confirmed to me that Fred Baptiste and Hector Riobe, another young Haitian who fought the regime, had inspired the young idealist Philipot. Graham also revealed that the individual he had in mind when he created Captain Concasseur was the intimidating officer who stared at Graham during his long hours in 1963 waiting in the Caserne François Duvalier, the Port-au-Prince police headquarters, for a permit to travel to the south of Haiti.

Graham used the graveyard he found on his 1963 trip to south Haiti as the stage for the dramatic scene in _The Comedians_ when the two main characters, Jones and Brown, “come alive.”

“You expected a witch to open the door to you or a maniacal butler, with a bat dangling from the chandelier,” Graham wrote, describing the Grand Hotel Oloffson as the Trianon.

Our border trip along the Dominican-Haitian frontier was not wasted as source material. The last chapter of _The Comedians_ draws heavily upon it. Graham’s description of the border was remarkably accurate: “I was glad enough when we came in sight at dusk, from our grey eroded mountain range where nothing grew, of the deep Dominican forest. You could see all the twists of the frontier by the contrast between our bare rocks and their vegetation. It was the same mountain range, but the trees never crossed into the poor dry land of Haiti.” The vaunted international border road he described as “a grand name for a track little better than the Great Southern Highway to Aux Cayes.” And he later observes, the road “was more suitable for mules and cows.”

The mean manager of the Alcoa bauxite operation at Cabo Rojo, Pat Hughson, bore more than a slight resemblance to the book’s Mr. Schuyler Wilson, “a large fat man with an anonymous face shaved as smooth as marble.” Brown’s arrival at a mining site in the Dominican Republic after having fled Haiti recalls our arrival seeking a drink and a bed; he describes the scene faithfully if not a little colorfully.

In his introduction to the US edition of _The Comedians_, published in 1966, Graham also noted: “The best I could do in January 1965 was to make a trip down the Dominican and Haitian border—the scene of my last chapter—in the company of two exiles from Haiti. At least, without Doctor Duvalier’s leave, we were able to pass along the edge of the country we loved and to exchange hopes of a happier future.”

Few Haitians living abroad read _The Comedians_ for its literary value; they were interested in its political content. It was the opposite for the reviewers. Literary critics and pundits were more interested in _The Comedians_ in terms of its literary merit. Much to his mirth, they forever dissected his books in microscopic detail—perhaps because of Graham’s eclectic intellectualism—and because this was his first book in five years, it received even closer scrutiny. _“The Comedians,”_ Graham himself later wrote, “is the only one of my books which I began with the intention of expressing a point of view and in order to fight—to fight the horror of Papa.
Doc’s dictatorship.” He dragged the enigmatic Dr. François Duvalier from the shadows into the floodlights of the world stage.

There were few Haitian exiles around to share my copy of The Comedians since, by the time it appeared, most had been forced to flee Santo Domingo because right-wing death squads had them in their gun sights. It was not until the following year that I caught up with Father Bajeux and was able to discuss the book with him. Bajeux was by then working with the Rev. Ivan Illich, who headed a liberal think tank called CIDOC (the Centro Intercultural de Documentation) in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Father Bajeux had just published an all-encompassing document entitled Un Cri pour Haïti (A Cry for Haiti) in which he analyzed the political and economic situation under Duvalierism and called for drastic change. He was still struggling with his personal God.

The Comedians enjoyed wide press coverage. Photographs I had taken of Graham on the bridge over the Massacre River at Dajabón using his little Minox camera were published in both Time and Life magazines. (By then I was a full-time correspondent for both sister publications.)

When I finally closed my copy of the book and handed it to my wife, I thought this would be the end of our story and the end of Graham’s Haiti period. As he did following his Indochina, South America, and Mexico periods, he would now move on to another place and another book. It was a little sad. Graham’s aim in Haiti was nearly perfect. His pen had proved to be a powerful sword against Duvalier. Although it did not decapitate Papa Doc—who managed to retain power for the rest of his life—the book was equivalent to winning a major battle against his evil tyranny.

While Graham and I were later rarely at odds on any topic, we always disagreed about Jolicoeur. He was convinced that Jolicoeur was a government informer, a spy. To me, Aubelin, like so many Haitians, was simply a brash survivor. I had known him since the early days following his arrival from Jacmel and in 1952 had made him “Personality of the Week” in my newspaper. As a social columnist, one of the first of that journalistic genre in Haiti, he wrote a column for my newspaper. If anything, he was simply over-zealous and adjective-driven.

Graham, I learned later and unbeknownst to him, was under tight Tonton Macoute and police surveillance night and day throughout his 1963 stay. He was not aware that the street people, hangers-on, and drivers around him were either Macoutes or police agents with orders to monitor his every move.

Back in Haiti, iron censorship enforced by harsh penalties, possible imprisonment, or even death kept The Comedians from entering the country. Haitians knew only too well that to be caught with any document or book that was unfavorable to Duvalier was suicidal. Customs inspectors were trained to weed out any literature that could be deemed to impugn Papa Doc. They examined books and even private papers carried by passengers arriving in Haiti. One man was specially assigned at the Port-au-Prince airport to censor foreign newspapers and magazines; scissors unabashedly in hand, he would clip out on the spot any mention of Haiti. Years later, after the Duvalier dynasty collapsed, the censor identified himself to me upon my return via the Port-au-Prince airport, declaring with shameless guile: “I used to enjoy your...
stories" (referring to those bylined from elsewhere). It was one of the more bizarre compliments of my journalistic career.

Gradually however, Haitians learned through their telejol (grapevine) and from other sources about a book called The Comedians written by a famous English writer. They immediately presumed that they were the comedians, and it is not unusual to hear a Haitian say, even today, “Graham Greene was right. We are comediens—actors!” This point of view was not without some logic. For all their earthiness, they exhibited many of the shoulder-shrugging characteristics of the uncommitted, but their masks were often more in keeping with the escapism of carnival as they endeavored to shut out reality and survive. Petit Pierre was not alone in his desire simply to stay alive.

The survivors of Papa Doc’s death chamber reasoned that they might be safe so long as they did not provoke the beast. As an old Creole saying goes, Tout bête genin mode (All cornered beasts bite). Graham had provoked the beast; now we waited for Papa Doc to bite.

Bernard Diederich (1926-2020) was an author, journalist, and historian. Born in New Zealand, he lived most of his life in the Caribbean, including Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Mexico. He was a correspondent for the British and North American press, including the Haiti Sun, the Associated Press, the New York Times, and Time-Life News. He met Graham Greene in 1954.
Greene & Hitchcock: A Marriage Made in Hell? Or, the What-ifs & the Why-nots

Quentin Falk

In a letter to his youngest brother Hugh, dated 31 October 1936, Graham Greene wrote: “I had to see Hitchcock the other day about possible work for G.B. [Gaumont-British Picture Corporation]. A silly harmless clown. I shuddered at the things he told me he was doing to Conrad’s The Secret Agent.”

This is possibly the only-ever recorded actual encounter between two remarkable artists, “poets of English criminality and bad conscience,” as Neil Jordan, the Oscar-winning Irish filmmaker of Mona Lisa and The Crying Game, would memorably bracket them in his Foreword to the third (and later, fourth) edition of my book, Travels in Greeneland: The Cinema of Graham Greene.

Despite the piquant prospect in later years of occasional collaborations (of which more later), these would remain entirely unfulfilled, leading Jordan to muse, somewhat mournfully one senses, about that palpable lack of contact between Greene and Hitchcock, whose mutual preoccupations with sex, murder, guilt, and jealousy, as well as their shared Catholicism—one born with, the other acquired—suggests they might have made ideal creative bedfellows.

What was the nature of Greene’s strange miasma about Hitchcock and his work—Jordan again—which seemed so to affect the great author in the majority of his often perceptive, frequently witty, and regularly acerbic film writings across nearly half a century?

The first sustained assault on Hitchcock arrived in Greene’s The Spectator review of 15 May 1936 of The Secret Agent, not to be confused with Conrad but based instead, if confusingly, on Somerset Maugham’s Ashenden: Or, The British Agent, a collection of loosely linked spy stories first published almost a decade earlier: “How unfortunate it is that Hitchcock, a clever director, is allowed to produce and even write his own films, though as a producer he has no sense of continuity and as a writer he has no sense of life. ... His films consist of a series of small ‘amusing’ melodramatic situations. ... Very perfunctorily he builds up to these tricky situations (paying no attention on the way to inconsistencies, loose ends, psychological absurdities) and then drops them; they mean nothing; they lead to nothing.”

His concessionary “clever director” now begins to ring not just ironic but positively hollow. Finally, the critic rails, “nothing is left of [Maugham’s] witty and realistic fiction.”

Avid followers at the time of Greene’s Spectator reviews might have suspected that such a diatribe was always pending about Hitchcock who, at thirty-six, had already forged a formidable reputation with films like The Lodger, Blackmail, The Man Who Knew Too Much, and The 39 Steps. For even in some earlier reviews of other films and their

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3 Ibid., 162.
filmmakers, Greene couldn’t resist sideswipes at Hitchcock. In his mostly damning critique of Jack Raymond’s *Come Out of the Pantry*, a New York-set musical comedy about class, we suddenly also learn that “Mr. Hitchcock sometimes indulges in crime or ‘low life,’ but it is with the ‘amused’ collector’s air of a specialist in sensation.”

Just three months later Greene reviewed Pierre Chenal’s *Crime et Chatiment*, a Gallic adaptation of Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*: “The cinema has always been successful at conveying violence, and what a remarkable film will result when our murderer is a really classic one. I have long suspected that a high-class murder is the simple artistic ideal of most film directors, from Mr. Hitchcock upwards.” How that “upwards” wounds. And again, apropos Fritz Lang’s *Fury*, here was a film he finally adjudged “great,” albeit one he admits he approached initially with trepidation because of the director’s propensity for melodrama, though “infinitely more expert than, say, Mr. Hitchcock’s.”

He was no less sparing three years later when confronted with *Jamaica Inn*, Hitchcock’s follow-up to the widely praised *The Lady Vanishes*—which escaped Greene’s official gaze—and shortly before the director would decamp to Hollywood and the future triumphs of *Rebecca* onwards and, yes, upwards as the much-trumpeted Master of Suspense. Greene decried this screen version of Daphne du Maurier’s colorfully bucolic tale of Cornish wreckers as a “bogus costume piece” in which “there are no surprises—and no suspense: we can see everything that will happen half an hour away.”

Now, it would be remiss not to step back for just a second and return to the subject of Conrad’s *The Secret Agent*. Just what Hitchcock and his screenwriters, no fewer than four of them, had actually done to Conrad’s novel was spelled out two months later in Greene’s review of the film. However instead—as one might have expected, recalling in particular that letter to his sibling—Greene suddenly and quite dramatically changed tack conceding that, with *Sabotage*, retitled not to confuse it with his previous film, “for the first time he [Hitchcock] has really ‘come off.’”

Greene’s apparently sudden volte face, especially in connection with an adaptation of the author who was an acknowledged influence on Greene’s own writing, is all the more surprising given the reviewer’s seemingly endless antipathy—before and after *Sabotage*—which might also have been interpreted as some kind of odd, inexplicable, and seemingly one-sided personal vendetta. Yet like much of Greene’s recall, especially in retrospect, there is often a healthy—or should that be, unhealthy—element of unreliability. So when we read, toward the foot of a *Spectator* review in November 1935 for the American news series *The March of Time*, mention of “Mr. Hitchcock’s blameless film of Lord Tweedsmuir’s patriotic thriller” *The Thirty-Nine Steps*—Greene was principally comparing contemporary censorship demands—that conclusion contrasted starkly, almost bizarrely, with an altogether different verdict more than thirty-five years on, about the same film:

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4 Ibid., 53.
5 Ibid., 82.
6 Ibid., 116.
7 Ibid., 292.
8 Ibid., 163.
“How inexcusably he spoilt The Thirty-Nine Steps,” wrote Greene in his Introduction to The Pleasure Dome, a 1972 collection of his film criticism of some 600 films between 1935 and 1940 for both The Spectator and the short-lived arts magazine Night and Day.

Of course, Hitchcock wasn’t alone as a focus for Greene’s persistent critical disdain. Another was Alexander Korda, the ex-patriate Hungarian, Britain’s emerging movie mogul and czar at Denham, the country’s largest studio, which opened for business in May 1936 a little under a year after starting construction. Throughout that same year Greene poured scorn on Korda’s productions. “The usual Denham mouse” was a regular epithet. Then, just three months after lambasting Korda’s Rembrandt in November 1936: “The film is ruined by lack of story and continuity; it has no drive,” Greene changed tack exhorting of Fire over England, a “well-directed and lavish picture … the best production to come from Denham yet.” The “mouse” has roared at last!

Had something significantly changed for Greene in those intervening months? On the principle he would rather be joined by the writer than be constantly attacked by him, Korda invited Greene to meet him at Denham and suggest some possible scenarios. The same year, Greene’s idea of a thriller set between one and five in the morning had been written (by others), produced and exhibited as a sixty-five-minute Quota Quickie called The Green Cockatoo. Greene and Korda would soon become lifelong friends.

While Greene’s past biographers such as Norman Sherry (certainly in his first volume up to 1939) and Michael Shelden noted Greene’s early antipathy to the work of Hitchcock, they never really posited any possible ulterior motive. However, Professor Richard Greene, author of Russian Roulette, the newest account of Greene’s life and times published in Autumn 2020, offered me this intriguing twist on the tandem tale: “I think that both Hitchcock and Korda began in the same low place in Greene’s estimation. He looked to both for scriptwriting work in late 1936, and found it with Korda, so that relationship evolved. He did not come to an agreement with Hitchcock, so continued to regard him as a ‘silly harmless clown.’”

Was Greene’s continuing hostility to Hitch—one-sided it must be always reiterated—and emerging partnership with Korda somehow fueled simply by commercial considerations? That it was Korda and not Hitchcock who, in the mid-1930s, had offered the thirty-two-year-old coming novelist (then also father of two young children) access to some crucial supplementary income in addition to freelance film reviewing and journalism. But is that too simplistic and, arguably, overly cynical?

There would be, much later, two further snubs for Hitchcock by Greene when both artists were at the height of their powers. In 1952, not that long after Graham’s (probably) finest screenwriting hours on, first, The Fallen Idol and then The Third Man in the late-1940s, Hitchcock apparently sought help from Greene to crack his latest Hollywood movie, I Confess, a killer thriller based on a chilling true story about the sanctity of the confessional.

According to Mike Hill, who lectured

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9 Ibid., 157.
10 Ibid., 181.

11 Email to QF, 2 October 2019.
about Greene and Hitchcock at the 2010 Berkhamsted Festival and again, five years later, at the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, this would have seemed natural Greene territory; but he “turned Hitchcock down, this time on the grounds that he was interested in adapting for the screen only his own stories. But this reason wore a little thin when a few years later Greene adapted Shaw’s *Saint Joan* for film director Otto Preminger.”

Toward the end of that decade, another “what if?” beckoned when it was reported that Hitchcock had submitted a pre-publication bid of £50,000 for *Our Man in Havana*. Money considerations were clearly not the sole issue this time around when Greene refused Hitch the rights, later telling me, “I felt the book just wouldn’t survive his touch.” As we chatted in his Antibes apartment in 1983, it was clear that for Greene, old habits died hard as far as Hitchcock was concerned, while also conceding he actually did like some of the director’s work, such as *Notorious* (1946), after Hitch went to Hollywood.

Money and, possibly, hubris aside, Mike Hill also offered a rather different and fascinating slant on Greene’s critical hostility toward Hitchcock: “It is that Greene saw (and criticized) in Hitchcock’s films some of the characteristics of his own fiction. This criticism reflects the distinction, adopted by Greene in the 1930s but dropped later, between the novelist’s ‘entertainments’ and his more serious work, his ‘novels.’ ‘Entertainments’ were popular, more commercial, written to make money, not the stuff on which serious literary reputations were founded. ‘Entertainments’ were thrillers, melodramas, carrying no ‘message,’ stories which would make popular films.” Hill then quotes Greene’s rather tasty two-sentence pitch to Korda for the film that would become *The Green Cockatoo*: “This may not have been Greene’s customary way of developing a story, but it is a striking potential opening to a film, and rather a good example of the kind of ‘ingenious melodramatic situation’ Greene so criticized in Hitchcock. The fact is that Greene’s ‘entertainments’ of the 1930s and 1940s very often demonstrate the very characteristics Greene was critical of in Hitchcock’s films.” Hill firmly believes, and it is a stance difficult to dispute, that Greene’s refusal to work with Hitchcock in the 1950s was predicated by his jaundiced views of the filmmaker in the 1930s, ones he stubbornly refused to abandon thereafter.

But what collaborators they might have made—Greene, a “child of the film age” (Basil Wright), a writer with “a camera eye” (Evelyn Waugh), and Hitchcock, the “Master of Suspense,” the “most complete filmmaker of all” (Francois Truffaut)—two men, just five years apart in age, who not only both endured, separately, legendary memos from producer David O. Selznick, but also each merited, much more significantly, enduring adjectives to describe aspects of their respective creative worlds: “Greeneland” and “Hitchcockian.” In fact, it is difficult now not to think of almost any Greene novels (well, perhaps saving just a handful) let

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12 Mike Hill, lecture on Greene and Hitchcock, 2015.
14 Mike Hill, lecture on Greene and Hitchcock, 2015.
15 Ibid.
alone his entertainments that would not have enjoyed elements of the so-called Hitchcock touch. Mike Hill cites in particular *Stamboul Train*, *A Gun for Sale*, *The Ministry of Fear*, and *Our Man in Havana*, opining of the last, a little mischievously one suspects, “Greene’s refusal may have cost us all dear.”¹⁶

What Greene would probably have regarded as a marriage made in hell might just have turned out to be heaven-sent.

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¹⁶ Ibid.
Making Sense of Greene’s Panama: A Fuliginous Process

Creina Mansfield
Donna A. Gessell

“Whom the gods wish to destroy,” wrote Cyril Connolly, “they first call promising.”¹ A promising idea is in similar peril, as evident in Graham Greene’s writing about his various trips to Panama from 1976 to 1983. His “promising idea” started out as a diary, which among its copious details includes plans for a novel to be entitled On the Way Back. However, despite his numerous plans, the novel proved so imperiled that it was never written. Instead, Greene eventually published two books based on his experiences in Panama, both of which defy generic expectations: a memoir, Getting to Know the General, and his final novel, The Captain and the Enemy, a work that Michael Shelden described as “a confused story that tries to combine the world of Berkhamsted with that of violent Panama.”²

The reasons for his failure to complete On the Way Back are complex and opaque—“fuliginous” one might say, to use the word that “The Captain,” the hero of Greene’s final novel, would have used. Incarcerated with only the first half of a dictionary to read, the Captain acquired a wide vocabulary of words beginning from A to G. Known by a series of aliases and a master of disguise, the ethically challenged Captain is somewhat fuliginous himself, a typical inhabitant of Greeneland. “Fuliginous” can also be applied to the works that eventually took shape: Greene’s memoir and final novel. Not only does neither fulfil the expectations of its genre, they also suffer from the complex and opaque issues that Greene faced transforming his experiences in Panama into fact and fiction. The difficulties occurred despite the promise to tell the story as recorded faithfully in the diary, rendered from experiences made possible by his privileged position, having been invited to the country by its ruler and provided with a driver and guide, flown when necessary across the difficult terrain, and able to speak to anyone he chose, from those in the administration to the inhabitants of remote villages.

So what went wrong with the aborted novel, On the Way Back? What prevented the completion of the novel that he announced would be set in Panama, when he already had the skeleton plot and the title in mind? The title came early, as he was taken on a journey through Panama; when a famous haunted house was closed, he and his guide resolved to see it on the way back. There was title and theme—a return that would be a discovery, a re-examination—a triumphal return or a regretful one. Words and phrases, whole snatches of conversation, even an appropriate epigraph, were coming to him readily—and recorded in his usual fashion, in note form to be written up later. Even the tone of the novel seemed to be established when Greene, having finally allowed himself to read Conrad again, found an epigraph in Heart of Darkness: “It seems I am trying to tell you a dream—making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can

convey the dream’s sensation, that commingling of absurdity, surprise, and bewilderment and a tremor of struggling revolt, that notion of being captured by the incredible.” With this comparison Greene indicates his awareness of the perils he faced in creating his ideas, even though when he began visiting Panama in 1976, he had already successfully completed twenty-three novels.

Indeed, the perils to promising ideas abound. *Enemies of Promise*, Connolly’s masterly examination of the writing process first published in 1938, catalogs the various preoccupations, distractions, experiences, and dilemmas that endanger creativity: politics, “day dreams, conversations, drink and other narcotics, ... the clarion call of journalism, worldly success, escapism, ... sex with its obsessions, ... the ties of duty and domesticity.” Yet this list sounds like a synopsis of Graham Greene’s existence. After all, his second autobiographical work was called *Ways of Escape*. Domesticity he had abandoned thirty years before. Describing himself to his wife as having “a character profoundly antagonistic to ordinary domestic life,” he left her and their two children, but the other “enemies” persisted: journalism, success, drinks, and another—politics—became a growing preoccupation.

In fact, Greene had long established a pattern of visiting far-flung places and finding literary inspiration there. Though he described Panama as “this bizarre and beautiful little country,” it was the danger that enticed him. Earlier in 1976 he had “skipped off to Belfast for a cold whiff of fear.” Greene’s friend, *Life* magazine journalist Bernard Diederich, knew that Panama’s volatile political situation would appeal and had spent some time acquainting its head of state with the English writer’s literary reputation and political sympathies. He had also kept Greene informed of events in Panama. It was Diederich who led Greene to write his novel *The Comedians*, set in Haiti; and ultimately it was Diederich who introduced General Torrijos and Greene. Quickly assessing the Panamanian leader as complex—a benign dictator intent on a form of direct democracy, an autocrat who dreamed of relinquishing power—Greene found a paradoxical character ideal for his fiction. After all, the epigraph he chose for all of his writing was a quotation from Robert Browning: “our interest’s on the dangerous edge of things. The honest thief, the tender murderer, the superstitious atheist.” He had found just such a man. No wonder he liked him.

Politics was central to Greene’s interest in Panama and the notes reveal the extension of his concerns for Nicaragua. The reference to the torture of a Sandinista female points to his wish to include the conflict there in his writing. Like Fowler in *The Quiet American*, Greene became involved both in Panama and back in Antibes. There

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4 Connolly, 85-86.
7 However, Greene did not acknowledge this in *Getting to Know the General* to protect Diederich’s role as a journalist.
was no safe way of doing this that could have protected his creative process. As Connolly argues in *Enemies of Promise*, the wrong turns and bitter traps that seem to endanger the literary are also—simultaneously—the very conditions through which art thrives. Writing will never fully outstrip or elude its enemies; it doesn’t succeed by transporting itself into the realm in which difficulties and dilemmas have disappeared. The writing process exists “on the dangerous edge of things.”

The Panama diaries enjoy a richness of details of the political, yet they have issues in their recording of Greene’s “day dreams, conversations, drink and other narcotics.” He relates how the diaries began early on during his first trip: “I felt again a certain sense of adventure. Why otherwise would I have made trivial notes in a diary from the moment I arrived in Amsterdam?” As “the sense of excitement grew,” he compares “a sense of fun” to the emotions he experienced leaving Vietnam, Malaya, Kenya, and the Congo: “These had been serious journeys—this one was not. I thought of it as only a rather comic adventure, inspired by an invitation from a complete stranger which had come to me out of the blue.”

Greene then admits that “the sense of fun, however, faded on arrival” before he meets with others.

That all changes as new feelings set in upon meeting others. After several rum punches with his friend Diederich, in rapid succession Greene meets both Chuchu and General Torrijos. Both prove to be walking contradictions. The General immediately defies the stereotypical as Greene describes being captured by his fixed look and then admitting that “through the next four years I got to know those eyes well; they came to express sometimes an almost manic humour, an affection, an inscrutable inward thought and more than all other moods.”

It is in the early moments of their meeting that Greene becomes aware of his own vulnerability as stereotype in the nascent friendship as he recounts their first conversation: “Perhaps he was painting a self-portrait to the stranger whom he had been rash enough to invite to his country—for what reason he may well have been wondering now himself—as a plain simple man of action, which was very far from the truth. With a sidelong look at me he attacked intellectuals.

“Intellectuals,’’ he remarked ‘are like fine glass, crystal glass, which can be cracked by a sound. Panama is made of rock and earth.’” I won the first smile out of him when I said that he had probably saved himself from being an intellectual only by running away from school in time.

Likewise, he records the contradictions of the driver and guide supplied to him; with the innocent-sounding nickname of Chuchu, Professor Jose de Jesus Martinez is no normal soldier. “A poet and a linguist who spoke English, French, Italian and German as well as Spanish,” Chuchu is a former professor of philosophy who had returned to Panama as a professor of mathematics and army sergeant, a Marxist devotedly loyal to the social democrat General.

Chuchu, Greene explains, “became my guide, philosopher and friend and remains so to this hour.” Their friendship becomes the key to understanding not only

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10 Ibid., 24.
11 Ibid., 25.
12 Ibid., 28.
13 Ibid., 29.
14 Ibid., 27-28.
15 Ibid., 27.
Greene’s experiences in Panama but also his writing process for the novel.

It is Chuchu who suggests the theme for Greene’s writing about Panama. During their travels, they continually miss opportunities to visit places they pass through. For instance, when Greene wants to visit the Haunted House, he is stymied. Chuchu promises that they will see it “On the way back,’ ... but,” as Greene explains, “a year was to pass before I had my way. It proved easier getting to know the General than the interior of the Haunted House.”

Because so much is promised “on the way back,” Greene makes plans to write a novel with that name, explaining: “In my book the promised return would never be fulfilled—there would be no going back for my chief character.”

So the creative process began. The diaries that Greene kept throughout his trips to Panama show that he had been there only a week when he began working on the idea. By 21 December he was writing notes marked On the Way Back. Here are those from a page marked “O.T.W.B.”:

No - the story begins through the Sergeant’s eyes. “He was using one of the General’s cars because his own had been blown up by an insignificant bomb which had only shocked the thief who had tried to steal it”

Try and write the whole book on the surface: dialogue and acts and environment—no thoughts revisited. Or beginning through woman’s eyes. “She felt the uneasiness she always felt before an interview—she lacked the brazenness of the male

reporter, but not, so she believed, his cynicism.”

Chuchu contributed to the novel in other ways. He proved to be a womanizer with a love life that put even Greene’s in the shade. He was flamboyant, dramatic, comical, pleasure-loving, and sincerely committed to the Panamanian cause. He was such a gift for a writer like Greene that he was soon taking a role in On the Way Back. This turned out to be the mistake, as Greene later recognized: “For the first time as a novelist, I was trying mistakenly to use real characters—the general, Chuchu—in my fiction. They had emerged from life and not from the unconscious and for that reason they had stood motionless like statues in my mind—they couldn’t develop, they were incapable of the unexpected word or action—they were real people, and they could have no life independent of me in the imagination.”

Greene had used real-life individuals before, but crucially had allowed himself to change, omit, and modify their characteristics. Even more importantly, he had not used his friends and told them of his intention beforehand. Chuchu, in Diederich’s judgement, had tried to micro-manage the novel.

It is this sharing of the creative process that was damaging. In another sort of notebook, Greene made an intriguing entry which seems to confirm this. During the time he was making occasional trips to Panama, he was also making annual journeys across Spain with his friend Father Leopoldo Durán. The priest had purchased a fine quality exercise book and given it to Greene

16 Ibid., 49.
17 Ibid., 54.
18 Greene’s Panamanian diaries, at Georgetown University. From notes taken by his bibliographer, Dr. Jon Wise.
19 “and” is an abbreviated squiggle; “the” as he writes it, is almost totally illegible, but it is exactly the same illegible structure elsewhere where “the” can be deduced from the context.
20 Ibid., 72.
with the request that he write a sentence or phrase on every page. Greene took seven years to complete the labor of love for his friend. One page has a quotation from Miguel de Unamuno: “If you write, let no-one know how you write, nor at what hours, nor your way of doing it.”

By announcing his intention to write *On the Way Back* to Chuchu, the General, and others, he shared his idea too soon. Conversations had been the enemy of promise. But the ties of duty and domesticity were also returning with force. Panama diaries one and two, written in 1976 and 1977, are labeled “with my love to Yvonne to show what I was up to in those periods of separation.” Yvonne Cloetta was his mistress from 1959 until his death in 1991, and as he aged Greene rediscovered some of the appeal of having a home—his was near Yvonne’s, not with her. Duty too was calling him from Panama, albeit in a particularly dangerous form as he sought to protect Yvonne’s daughter during a bitter divorce from a man who had connections with organized crime. This would lead to a battle with the French mafia and the publication of *J’Accuse* in 1982.

Because of all the perils, Greene ultimately resisted the impulse to turn experiences recorded in his Panama diaries into *On the Way Back*. However, the recursive “on the way back” had become a theme for his travels informing both his memories and his writing. Rather than writing the novel he was planning, Greene turned the tricks of memory into the memoir and his final novel, which become a study of how memory works, particularly Greene’s.

Memory is extremely important to Greene, especially in regard to Panama and his friendship with Torrijos. He remarks about the dangers of memory: “When I had heard of Omar’s death in August 1981, it was as though a whole section of my life had been cut out. It was better, I thought, not to revive memories.”

Memory works differently in each of the two genres. Fiction demands that the process of remembering transforms memories: details become mutated to flesh out characters, enhance theme, and advance plot. Even though this possibility of making fiction of the experience brings the immediacy of the experience into an even sharper focus in the memoir, readers realize that the problem with creating fiction is that it has the opposite effect from how memoirs work. In a memoir reality is recreated by reading diaries and the memories that made the events are re-remembered, all the while supplying the details, which had not been previously recorded, from the vividness of the recall. It is as if this very act of leaving open the opportunity to visit a place “on the way back” keeps the immediacy of the memory alive, even if revisiting never happens. The remark calls into question how memory works, particularly with the immediacy of revisiting familiar places.

In its recursiveness, Greene’s memoir about Panama, *Getting to Know the General*, defies its genre, which is usually more journalistic. Instead it is more oriented toward conveying the worldly success of Torrijos as well as Greene’s escapism. The memoir’s opening itself is recursive, with its news

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21 “Known and Not So Known Literary Outcomes of Graham Greene’s Travels with Father Leopoldo Durán”—a paper given at the Graham Greene Festival by Dr. Beatriz Valverde Jiménez, 23 September 2018.

22 Notes taken by Dr. Jon Wise.

23 Greene, *Getting to Know the General*, 185.
that his fifth transatlantic visit to Panama will not occur as planned: “In August 1981 my bag was packed for my fifth visit to Panama when the news came to me over the telephone of the death of General Omar Torrijos Herrera, my friend and host. The small plane in which he was flying to a house he owned at Coclesito in the mountains of Panama had crashed, and there were no survivors.” He follows with his plan to publicize Herrera’s worldly success in response to sharing his loss with Chuchu: “At that moment the idea came to me to write a short personal memoir ... as a tribute to a man whom during that time I had grown to love.”

However, even that idea is interrupted by his memories and a larger realization of the politics involved:

But as soon as I had written the first sentences after the title, ‘Getting to Know the General’, I realized that it was not only the General whom I had got to know over those five years—it was also Chuchu, one of the few men in the National Guard whom the General trusted completely, and it was this bizarre and beautiful little country, split in two by the Canal and the American Zone, a country which had become, thanks to the General, of great practical importance in the struggle for liberation taking place in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

As Greene slowly realizes why he is in Panama and agrees to continue his annual visits because of the General and Chuchu, he also realizes the commitment to recording their struggles with the injustices of American imperialism. The process of his growing awareness of the extent of the political issues, however, is related in a jumbled manner in the memoir. Early on Greene writes: “A friend asked me, as I was writing the closing passages of this book, ‘But why this interest which you seem always to have shown in Spain and Spanish America?’” Rereading his notes and remembering his experiences, he crafts an answer:

Of those poor Spanish exiles the acknowledged chief was General Torrijos, a man of high qualities and fortune, still in the vigour of his years, and in these desperate circumstances refusing to despair.

The General Torrijos whom I had grown to love had been killed in the vigour of his years and I had been close to him in the desperate circumstances from which he suffered, the closing stages of the long-drawn-out negotiations with the United States over the Panama Canal Treaty, and the disappointing aftermath. He too refused to despair and he even seriously contemplated a possible armed struggle between his tiny country and the great power which occupied the Zone.

When pressed further, he adds: “Perhaps the answer lies in this: in those countries politics have seldom meant a mere alternation between rival electoral parties but have been a matter of life and death.”

He remembers just how Torrijos, whom he calls “a lone wolf,” works:

In his diplomatic struggle with the USA he had no support from ... the authoritarian generals who held their power with the aid of the United States, and who only existed

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24 Ibid., 11.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid., 11-12.
27 Ibid., 12.
28 Ibid., 13-14.
29 Ibid., 14.
at all because in the eyes of the Americans they represented anti-Communism. Torrijos was not Communist, but he was a friend and admirer of Tito and he was on good personal terms with Fidel Castro. His country had become a haven of safety for refugees from Argentina, Nicaragua and El Salvador, and his dream, as I was to learn in the years that followed, was of a social democratic Central America which would be no menace to the United States, but completely independent. However, the nearer he came to success, the nearer he came to death.30

It is only when Greene is halfway through the memoir that he admits: “I was beginning to appreciate what he had done and what he had risked in trying to achieve his dream for a Central America which would be Socialist and not Marxist, independent of the United States and yet not a menace to her. I felt for him as for a teacher as well as a friend.”31

In general, the associated “clarion call of journalism, worldly success, escapism,” enlarged the problems involved in rendering reality into specific genres, particularly vis-à-vis the problems with memory. Greene often commented on the chicanery of memory in his works. For instance, in A Sort of Life, he again uses the image of trying to relate a dream: “Memory is like a long broken night. As I write, it is as though I am waking from sleep continually to grasp at an image which I hope may drag in its wake a whole intact dream, but the fragments remain fragments, the complete story always escapes.”32 In The Heart of the Matter his narrator muses how “he couldn’t tell that this was one of those occasions a man never forgets: a small cicatric had been made on the memory, a wound that would ache when certain things combine—the taste of gin at mid-day, the smell of flowers under a balcony, the clang of corrugated iron, an ugly bird flopping from perch to perch.”33 And in The Captain and the Enemy, his narrator succinctly sums up the issue: “Memory cheats.”34

The memoir twists and turns as it moves forward through each yearly visit, also moving back and forth through time to add context from the past and to explain the significance of events within the context of future events. Despite its obvious memoir form, the book leans toward the novel as time blends to add coherence to the events, to make them story. Even though the memoir is based on notes that were mostly chronologically recorded, it doesn’t follow typical generic conventions; his recollections are neither straightforward nor presented in chronological order, as most memoirs are structured. The memoir is as much about his various attempts to stay linear, but the nature of his Panamanian trips is recursive, so much so that the last time he leaves Panama while the General is alive, he is comforted by the thought that he will return in a year. After the General dies, he does not return the next year; however, he does return two years later, using the unused ticket that the General had purchased for him.

In writing the memoir, Greene admits that “so much that happened in

30 Ibid., 32-33.
31 Ibid., 112-13.
32 Greene, A Sort of Life, 33.
Panama during the next four years proved as unexpected as the events in a dream.”\(^3\) In addition to the dreamlike quality of the visits, part of what makes the memoir so non-linear is the culture of Panama, where even the best-laid plans suffer from miscommunication or are made impossible because of the acts of others. At times readers are left wondering if the sole purpose of the visits is to find places serving an acceptable planters punch fortified with the proper amount of rum, or to frequent restaurants serving passable food. Yet another part of the difficulty of making sense of events is the smallness of the country, causing people to reappear unexpectedly, as Greene explains: “nobody in Panama City only turns up once. Like a play with a small cast the same actors were always reappearing in different roles.”\(^5\)

Also disorienting is the very nature of travel in Panama, made difficult because of its terrain. Greene comments that often the only way to travel overland is by the same road going and coming, and when traveling by air, the steep terrain is made even more dangerous by the unpredictable weather with heavy fog, strong winds, and torrential downpours. Even the geography of the country defies the linear. Greene writes that “points of the compass in Panama can be confusing even to a geographer. Who for example would guess that the canal runs from the Atlantic to the Pacific more or less west to east?”\(^6\) Another complicating geographical feature is the country’s five borders, the extra created by the Canal Zone bisecting the country, which Greene explicates in his memoir:

“Panama is not the Canal, and the Zone was a whole world away from Panama. You could tell the difference the moment you entered the Zone from the neat well-built unimaginative houses and the trim lawns. There seemed to be innumerable golf courses and you felt the jungle had been thrown back by a battalion of lawn mowers.” He adds an epigraph for the Zone:

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\text{And the wind shall say: here were decent godless people:}
\text{Their only monument the asphalt road}
\text{And a thousand golf Balls.}\]

Perhaps even more revealing are Greene’s own memories of his childhood reading that complicate the memoir. He becomes obsessed with visiting the romantic legendary places that he remembers including Portobello, the historic ending of the gold route from Panama City, Nombre de Dios, “the Harbour of Provisions” for Drake, and Bocas del Toro where Columbus turned around, starting on his way back.

When Greene does fictionalize Panama, it is in the second half of his problematic last novel, *The Captain and the Enemy*. The first half, written as a memoir by an adolescent, is specifically problematic in how it deals with “the ties of duty and domesticity.” After all, the first scene depicts his abduction as a child and yet suggests only the slightest disapproval of it by anyone, including the child, who himself—now adolescent—feels no grievance. Nor is there a grievance when the Captain haphazardly renames him Jim. The world is decidedly one without love. The Captain has taken the child to replace an aborted child, and the “love story”

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36 Ibid., 107.
38 Greene, *Getting to Know the General*, 42-43.
between the Captain and Liza (whom Jim is instructed to call “Mother”) is so problematic that neither involved will call it that, which perplexes the child even in his recollections as the adolescent narrator. Like the memoir published earlier, the eventual novel challenges the boundaries of its genre, transforming the memories detailed in the memoir into caricatures. Greene’s exaggerations create both the grotesque and the comedic.

His use of Panama as the setting for the novel’s second half, narrated by Jim as a young adult, invokes mythical images of wealth and gold, again the romantic images from Greene’s childhood reading, which he claims “had persistently haunted my imagination,” but which are quickly discarded as sham by the narrator. For instance, when Jim narrates his flight to Panama, he claims his motivation is “towards a team of mules laden with gold riding along a rough track from the Pacific.” Nevertheless, as the plane descends for landing, reality intrudes as “the forest yielded to the ruins of that old Panama which the pirate Morgan had destroyed and a few moments later the plane was rolling smoothly along the tarmac towards buildings which resembled any airport anywhere.” Similarly, his description of Panama City invokes the grotesque reality:

It was a city of steep hills and torrential rainstorms which lasted for less than a quarter of an hour and yet made miniature Niagaras down the streets, leaving cars stranded. ... In the quarter which was called ironically Hollywood it was a shocking contrast to see the tumbledown shacks on which the vultures lodged and in which whole families were crowded together in the intimacy of complete poverty only a few hundred yards from the banks, where the high windows glittered in the morning sun, and it was even more of a shock to gaze into the American Zone across the mere width of a street, and see the well-kept lawns and the expensive villas on which no vulture ever cared to settle.”

The comedic is also created from exaggeration as Jim and the Captain drive “into the American Zone, past all the golfers and the barracks and the churches—” and the captain named a few of the churches as we went by them—the Coco Solo Community Church, the Cross Roads Bible Church the Nazarene, the Latter Day Saints, the Four-Square Gospel—“more than sixty of them,” he told me confirming Pablos’s mathematics, though not so many as the banks. “Coco Solo,” I protested, thinking of Coca-Cola, “you must have invented that.”

“Not invented, but perhaps I pointed to the wrong building. It may have been the Jehovah Witnesses or the First Isthian. A very religious people, the Yankees. I forgot to show you the Argosy Book Stall. That is really unique. The only bookshop in the Zone. Of course with so much religion, not to speak of military duties, they have very little time to read.”

Through Greene’s creation of a jaded narrator and a host of stereotyped

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39 Ibid., 21.
40 Greene, The Captain and the Enemy, 88.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., 93.
43 Ibid., 117.
characters, he invokes black humor to comment on American imperialism. Two of the strongest statements to this effect are made by the narrator’s would-be “guides” as they control his movements in the country, restricting what he sees. His “guardian” Pablo remarks, “This is not only Panama. This is Central America. Perhaps one day ... ’ He patted the holster at his side. ‘One needs better weapons than a revolver, you understand, to change things.”

Mr. Quigly, his “guide” clearly explains the imperialism evident in everyday life: “Panama is a curious place. A little capitalist state with a socialist general, split in two by the Americans. You and I as Englishmen can understand the difficulties which might arise here. It’s as though England were split between the north and the south with the Americans in between. Somehow the Americans can’t understand the resentment, because they bring in a lot of money. Panama would be poor without them, they expect to be loved, but they have enemies instead. Money makes enemies as well as friends.”

Although fiction permits Greene a wider variety of characters to voice his concerns with authorial distance, he understands that once he transforms his diaries into fiction, he has lessened the potential to recall the memories and link them to real people. As he says in A Sort of Life, “for in the course of sixty-six years I have spent almost as much time with imaginary characters as with real men and women.” Jim, the narrator of The Captain and the Enemy, articulates the problem, which although he is speaking of the Captain and his woman could be equally true for Greene and the General and Chuchu:

I cannot pretend that all these details which I am trying so hard to reconstruct from my memory are necessarily true, but I feel myself today driven by a compulsive passion now that we are separated to make these two people live before my eyes again, to bring them back out of the shadows and set them to play their sad parts as closely as possible to the truth. I am only too well aware of how I may be weaving fact into fiction but without any intention of betraying the truth. I want above anything else to make the two of them clear to myself so that they will continue to live as visibly as two photographs might seem to do propped up on a shelf beside my bed, but I don’t own a single photograph of either of them. Why am I so possessed by them?

However, his last visit to Panama two years later convinces him otherwise. As an unofficial ambassador of Panama, he visits Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Cuba, reigniting his memories and causing him to “feel a little closer to the country which had produced Omar Torrijos.” It is only at the end of the memoir that Greene suggests why writing the novel could never happen: he is reluctant “to close finally the pages of a book and relegate to a shelf all the memories which it contains of a dead man whom I loved, Omar Torrijos.”

Greene’s final visits to Panama become parts of larger trips with visits to other countries, including Cuba and the United States. He uses the occasions to convey the political situation he

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44 Ibid., 94.
46 Greene, A Sort of Life, 11.
encountered in Panama. By focusing on the politics of his visits in such overt political writing, the rendering of those trips into memoir defies the “norms” of travel writing. In fact, his desire to remember and record the injustices of American imperialism in Panama seems to become his sole motivation for writing these works on Panama. They reflect his larger sense of injustice that informs the concern of his writing and his life choices. The concern was fostered early on by his childhood reading; as he recollects of his childhood memories, “a child learns about injustice early.”

As he relates in Getting to Know the General, when the General was forming the delegation to travel to Washington to sign the new treaty, he suggested to Greene that he disguise himself as a colonel of the Panamanian National Guard and appear before President Carter as a special envoy. Despite a love of practical jokes, the writer declined. But he did agree to go as part of the delegation. And so, traveling on a Panamanian passport, he flew into Andrews Air base with Gabriel García Márquez. Both had previously been refused entry to the United States, “for reasons that even the president had been unable to explain,” said García Márquez.

Greene emerged with a status that transcended even that of a world-renowned writer: he became a symbol for the struggle of the weak with the strong. On the Way Back had not developed as he had planned, but he himself was “on the way back” to a country that had once refused him entry and was now receiving the casually dressed writer with “a 21-gun salute and the martial notes of the US national anthem.” His presence alone could disconcert a tyrant. When Márquez and Greene later mingled at a reception at the Organization of American States attended by dictators such Pinochet of Chile and Stroessner of Paraguay, Greene wrote to his friend Diederich: “A girl introduced me to one of his [Stroesner’s] ministers who directly when he heard my name froze, said ‘You once passed through Paraguay,’ and turned on his heel without a handshake.” Greene commented in a letter written to Diederich, “I was pleased to find I got under Stroessner’s skin as I got under Duvalier’s.”

By being part of the Panamanian delegation Greene showed the world where his sympathies lay. As he said to Castro when they finally met, “I am not the messenger. I am the message.” There was nothing fuliginous about that.

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50 Greene, A Sort of Life, 61.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
REVIEW
“Greene on Greene”

Mike Hill


In 1923 Graham Greene played Russian roulette on six occasions. He loaded a bullet into a revolver, spun the chambers round, put the gun to his ear, and pulled the trigger. He did this not to kill himself, but out of boredom and for the thrill of the experience. Each time the bullet was not fired, and Greene was spared. It is a story told in Greene’s 1971 autobiography *A Sort of Life*, and it may not be entirely true. A new biography of the writer marshals evidence to suggest that Greene may well have done this using blanks (perhaps even using a live bullet but believing it to be blank), or “more likely, empty chambers.” Getting the facts straight is the starting point of any biography.

Writing an account of Graham Greene’s life is no easy task. Purely as a writer, Greene wrote, over seventy years, an astonishing range of material—novels, short stories, plays, book and film reviews, essays, journalism, travel books, autobiography, biography, memoir, diaries, children’s stories, poetry, film screenplays, a dream diary, and a vast output of letters. Greene himself once advised that the best way to understand him as a person was simply to “read my books.” But Greene managed also, among other things, to be a publisher, MI6 agent, Catholic convert, tireless traveler, and espouser of left-wing causes—and that is before one considers his turbulent private life and his bipolar disorder. He crammed a lot into his eighty-six years.

Unfortunately, Greene has not been well served by his biographers. There have been a number of attempts to cover part or all of his life, with varying degrees of success. The two accounts of his whole life have been Norman Sherry’s monumental three-volume biography (1989, 1994, and 2004), and Michael Shelden’s 1994 single volume. Both attempts have serious flaws, and it has been obvious for many years that a balanced, thoroughly researched, well-written, single-volume biography of Graham Greene is needed.

Now we have one. Richard Greene must tire of saying that he is no relation to Graham, but he has a pedigree which promises much in writing about his namesake. He is a Professor of English at the University of Toronto, and he has previously written a well-received biography of Edith Sitwell and edited a wonderful collection of Graham Greene’s letters.

Apart from other failings, previous biographies now suffer from being seriously out of date, and Professor Greene’s new book takes full advantage of new material now available on Graham Greene. He has made use of a mass of newly available letters and papers, interviews with Graham’s daughter Caroline, and an unpublished memoir by Oliver Walston of his mother Catherine. An important book by the late Bernard Diederich has told us much about Greene’s involvement with Haiti and Central America; studies within the last ten years or so have shed important new light on Greene in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Vietnam, Cuba, the Congo,

282
Spain, and on Kim Philby; two volumes of bibliography have also been published. Richard Greene has made full use of this material and his scholarship is impeccable.

There is new information throughout the book. Almost entirely new is the detail here on Greene’s children, Caroline and Francis. Sometimes the new material is a fuller version of what is only touched on in other works: this is true of the account of psychiatrist and therapist Eric Strauss, a man who diagnosed Greene as manic depressive and was probably responsible for keeping him from suicide in the 1950s. Sometimes the detail amounts to a scoop, as when a scriptwriting contract is used to help explain why Greene resigned from MI6 in 1944.

The general tone of the book is not judgmental, but it is not hagiography. It mentions Greene’s many acts of generosity toward family, friends, and fellow writers, but also refers to “those acts of insensitivity of which he would often be guilty.” There are sometimes pointed comments on Greene’s political stances—as with his 1963 Sunday Telegraph article “Return to Cuba,” which “contained no reference to the hundreds of political executions that had taken place there, or to other human rights abuses.” And, as in the case of Russian roulette, the book is willing to challenge Greene’s own later account of things, particularly in A Sort of Life, where a poor memory and/or a degree of mythmaking may be at work. But these are matters of setting the record straight; the book is not prosecutorial, as Shelden’s unfortunately is.

There are interesting insights into Greene’s make-up in the book, as when it advises us not to take the cynicism and world weariness of his later life at face value: “There is a core of nostalgia, even sentimentality in him that he worked to conceal and discipline.” The biography emphasizes how often Greene saw issues in terms of belief—Greene “characteristically” saw even Kim Philby’s career as “a problem of belief.” As one would expect from a Professor of Literature, there are insightful comments on Greene’s writings and on the theology behind some of them. There is interesting discussion throughout on the nature of Greene’s religious beliefs and on the author’s claim that he was “not a Catholic writer but a writer who happens to be a Catholic”; Richard Greene comments that “it is more accurate as a description of the second half of his career than of the first.”

In deciding what to include and what to leave out, the author’s judgment is generally very sound. Where Sherry quotes endlessly and tediously from Greene’s letters to his future wife Vivien, Richard Greene briskly comments that the letters are “now embarrassing to read—as if one were listening in on thousands of hours of adolescent phone calls.” There is a deliberate emphasis on the important middle years of Greene’s life—the 1950s, a tumultuous decade for the writer, takes up around a quarter of the book. There are areas of Greene’s life one would like to know more about, like his relationship with Anita Björk and his continuing shadowy involvement with MI6 beyond his resignation from the service, but this is not a criticism of this book; these are areas where, for now at least, simply too little evidence exists.

Then there is the question of Greene’s restless traveling and political commitments: how much contextual information is it appropriate to include? This is a particularly extreme problem for the biographer of a writer who had
involvements in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mexico, Malaya, Vietnam, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Kenya, Congo, Haiti, Spain, USSR, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Panama, El Salvador, Belize, and Nicaragua, many of which form settings for his fiction. “There is no understanding Graham Greene,” Professor Greene writes, “except in the political and cultural contexts of dozens of countries.” There is, in consequence, a good deal of such contextual information here, and in this respect, it is more successful than previous biographies of Greene. On occasion, some readers may find the context a little overdone.

Exploring Graham Greene's very full life in a little over five hundred pages involves a brisk style and pace, and no fewer than seventy-eight chapters. The very many people who made up Greene's life—family, friends, colleagues, foes—are often captured wonderfully in brief pen portraits. And as befits the biography of a man with a manic side and much given to practical jokes, Richard Greene employs a nice line in wit: there is a morally censorious studio boss “whose own adulteries would have led to remarks in Gomorrah,” and a professor “who liked to explain things and spoke in full paragraphs.”

Richard Greene’s book is clear, well-researched, balanced, sympathetic but not uncritical, and witty. His new biography was well worth the wait; for anyone with an interest in Graham Greene, it is essential reading.

REVIEW
“It’s Like Waiting for a Bus”: Two Books about Our Man in Havana

#1
Creina Mansfield


This is a book that deserves a wide readership. It will be useful both to newcomers to Greene’s work and provides fresh information and insights to those who have long been devotees. Christopher Hull has wisely taken a narrative approach to his material, thereby providing a biography of Greene’s life leading up to his writing of Our Man in Havana and setting it in its political context.

He meticulously identifies the threads that became entwined in the novel. From the early formation of the idea of a reluctant spy fabricating a network of agents to details such as the possible origin of the name Wormold, he leads us toward the day actual writing began. By this method the reader appreciates that the creative process began years before Greene wrote the first words.

Why Our Man Down in Havana? Is it to imply the seediness that became Greene’s trademark, one half, so to speak of Orwell’s down and out? Certainly, Hull’s chapter on “Havana Vice” is fascinating: he recreates the atmosphere of pre-revolutionary Cuba and gives a convincing account of how Greene came to be barred from entering the United States—commentators often seem unsure whether Greene brought this about deliberately or not. The book is helpfully divided into sections, chapters, and sub-sections, so a reader intent on looking up a particular subject or time-period will do so easily.

However, a thorough reading from cover to cover is recommended as there are hidden gems throughout. Who knew, for example, that Greene once shared a hotel room with Truman Capote? His description of him as “an extraordinary little fat babish figure, a fairy to end all fairies, but very endearing and very funny” suggests that he got on better with Capote than with Cuba’s most famous literary resident, Ernest Hemingway who, Hull speculates, resented Greene trespassing on his turf.

Hull gives due weight to Greene’s states of mind and his love affairs without allowing them to become preoccupying. Attention remains on the creative process. By chapter 8 of Our Man Down in Havana, we read a detailed description of the making of the film. Though it followed soon after the novel, Cuba had changed. Castro’s revolution transformed the political atmosphere with the new government wanting to convey that the country was no longer the “whorehouse of the Caribbean”; this perhaps contributed to the “interesting failure” of the completed film.

The extraordinary prescience of Our Man in Havana is fully explored. How remarkable that, as rumors of rocket installations circulated, the head of the Foreign Office’s American department should annotate a report on the subject with, “Mr Greene was prophetic.” The Cuban Missile Crisis followed.

I began by describing this book as useful. I must emphasize that it is also extremely enjoyable. No one will already know everything that this book holds; no
one should fail to be impressed. One would like to congratulate Dr. Hull, but since his biographical details have a Greene-ish reticence—we are told only that “He lives in England”—he will be difficult to find.

**Creina Mansfield** is an English author and independent scholar, concentrating on the life and works of Graham Greene.
REVIEW
“It’s Like Waiting for a Bus”: Two Books about Our Man in Havana

#2
Jon Wise

Sarah Rainsford, Our Woman Down in Havana: Reporting Castro’s Cuba.

The job title “BBC Radio Foreign Correspondent” still evokes for many a romantic yet totally outdated image: a crackling voice intermittently audible over the ether as a world-changing event unfolds in a far-distant corner of the globe. The twenty-first-century reality of instant communication is quite different of course. But the joys and frustrations of distilling both the important and the trivial, to give those at home a flavor of a very different culture in the course of a ten-minute report or an even shorter soundbite, must have remained unaltered.

Sarah Rainsford was about to make her first broadcast from Cuba, as she recounts in her memoir, when her continuity presenter announced: “Now it’s over to Sarah Rainsford, Our Woman in Havana.” And apparently the label stuck. The reference to Greene’s work establishes an integral theme in this account of the correspondent’s four-year tenure on the island between 2011-2014. Rainsford claims that she was guided by Greene’s novel as she sought to discover what had changed in the intervening six decades since Our Man in Havana was first published.

Rainsford covers a host of different aspects of Cuban society in her quest to portray the effects of Fidel Castro’s lengthy socialist experiment in the face of intense economic and political pressure from its giant capitalist neighbor just ninety miles away across the Florida Straits. Her findings, for supporters of the Communist ideal, are often depressingly negative. Rainsford recounts details of the poverty, the decaying infrastructure, the scramble to leave the island, the shortages of essential goods, and the constant fear of speaking your mind. Against that she rightly balances the high standard of education, the free health service, and the underlying equality within Cuban society. Above all, there is the unquenchable joie de vivre of the islanders that has remained uncrushed through the years, typified by a love of music and dance. This spirit shines through, as does the insistence of the older generation who have stayed the course, that life is so much better than under the cruelly repressive dictator Fulgencio Batista, whom the revolutionaries finally ousted in 1959.

Of course, Greene’s portrayal is based on pre-revolutionary Cuba with its principally American holiday clientele drawn by the tropical sun, the daiquiris, and a Havana where every vice was permissible. The writer always claimed that his entertainment was principally written as a sly dig at his old employers, the Special Intelligence Service (later MI6). Nevertheless, his unswerving eye for detail and factual accuracy are still evident as Rainsford traces his footsteps with the aid of the book and an unpublished and incomplete journal Greene kept during his visit. She makes significant discoveries: the site of Wormold’s shop and of Milly’s school (she even finds a nun who was educated...
there), as well as those bars and hotels that featured in both the novel and the film—and still survive.

The film was shot shortly after the successful revolution, and Rainsford recounts that although the presence of heavily armed, bearded revolutionaries added a certain piquancy, the filming was allowed to proceed without interruption in those comparatively liberal, early years of the revolution when Castro sought cooperation rather than confrontation with a suspicious capitalist world.

Rainsford’s narrative, gleaned from her personal notebooks, is delivered in a distinctly succinct journalistic style. Indeed, her economy of language and acute powers of description are mindful of Greene himself. Despite being a thoroughly objective and professional account of a bureaucratic, contradictory, and often secretive society, one detects a deep personal affection for this tragic yet strangely comedic island and its long-suffering and beguiling people. No wonder Graham Greene was drawn to it.

(This review was first published in A Sort of Newsletter, November 2018)

**Jon Wise** taught 11-19 year old students English Language and Literature for over thirty years and later supervised trainee teachers. He holds a PhD from the University of Exeter, UK. He has published books and articles about Graham Greene and also on naval history. He has co-authored two bibliographic guides to the works of Greene, and a third is in preparation. He is website manager of the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust as well as a Trustee. He is married and lives with his wife in Herefordshire on the border of Wales.
REVIEW

Mike Hill


Cedric Watts is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Sussex in the UK, and he has a particular expertise in Graham Greene. His 1994 book *A Preface to Greene* is as good an introduction to Greene as there is in print, while his many talks at the annual Graham Greene International Festival in Berkhamsted have always combined closely argued analysis with a liveliness of presentation. His field is not confined to Greene, however; he has written on Keats and Hardy, and he has a particular interest in Shakespeare and Conrad. His latest volume reflects this breadth of interest.

Covert plots are one of Watts’s ongoing literary interests, and he has written on them before. Every narrative, he explains, has an overt plot—the one immediately obvious to the reader—but many have a concealed plot-sequence that may only become evident on re-reading. In many cases, the covert plot is intentional on the part of the author, but this is not always the case. And in most cases, Watts contends, working out the covert plot will enhance the narrative for the reader. This may sound a little dry, but Cedric Watts’s latest collection of pieces fizzes with interesting ideas, and his astonishing scholarship is worn lightly.

Here are essays on twelve works, from H. G. Wells’s *The Time Machine* to Golding’s *Pincher Martin*, and including some analysis of critical works by Roland Barthes, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Edward Said. Each essay is engaging even when the work in question is new to the reader. His discussion of Joseph Conrad’s *Secret Agent* is particularly good, with its covert plot of a group of—Watts argues—Jewish conspirators threatening the peace and order of London. On *Waiting for Godot*, he comments that it is a play that “ensnares and mocks commentators” before explaining his own understanding of it—that while the overt plot is atheistic, the covert plot is anti-theistic, that is, claiming that God does exist but is malevolent, callous, or indifferent.

For those specifically interested in Greene, there are essays here on two novels. On *Stamboul Train*—Watts calls it “that vivid and intense novel”—the focus is on Jewish characteristics explored in the book and the notion that Dr. Czinner is a man of Jewish heritage. On *The Power and the Glory*, which on re-reading, Watts finds “better than ever,” the covert plot concerns the whisky priest and his saintly effect on others in contrast to his apparent and self-declared failure. There is too, in that essay, a consideration of a briefer covert plot: the question of just how Coral Fellows died.

If you have ever read a novel or short story and been aware of loose ends or elements that do not seem central to the plot, it may be that you have sensed a covert plot. Cedric Watts’s splendid essays may embolden you to explore a bit further.
REVIEW

Jon Wise


For a writer who supposedly avoided the limelight, Graham Greene agreed to be interviewed on more than eighty occasions, not counting the book-length series that comprises The Other Man: Conversations with Graham Greene.

This book, edited by an American journalist, is a compilation of four that took place during the last decade of the author’s life. Three of the interviewers, Anthony Burgess, John Mortimer, and Martin Amis, were or are noted writers. The fourth, conducted by the editor of this book, is of note as it is almost certainly the last interview Greene undertook. It is also the first time it has appeared in print in a totally unabridged form. It occupies 89 of the 129 pages of this slim volume, part of an extensive The Last Interview series that covers a diverse range of famous, but predominantly male, subjects.

In his introduction, MacArthur describes at length his difficulties at gaining access to Greene’s flat in Résidence des Fleurs, Antibes. He finally succeeds in early October 1990. MacArthur is clearly on a mission. The United States had invaded Panama in December 1989, overthrowing the dictator Manuel Noriega and restoring American dominance of the strategically vital Panama Canal. MacArthur wants to gauge Greene’s reaction to this in the light of his close association with President Torrijos of Panama a few years earlier. He pursues this topic relentlessly throughout.

A glance at other interviews in the book will tell you immediately that “The Last Interview” is very different. Elsewhere, Greene appears quick witted, opinionated, and totally lucid. Here he is hesitant, mostly led by the voluble MacArthur, and openly hopeless at remembering names. The conversation quickly becomes confused and random. At one stage it suddenly switches from Panama and Noriega to the writing of The Quiet American. MacArthur wants Greene to describe the type of Americans he had encountered in Vietnam. Instead, after struggling to recall the name of Fowler, Greene remarks that the character was entirely fictional. By the time MacArthur has caught up with the writer’s train of thought, Greene has moved on to his inspiration for the plot, the “third force” and Caodaism. At other times his memory partially clears but one realizes, sadly, that his anecdotes are being lifted, almost verbatim, from passages found in his autobiography Ways of Escape. It comes as a relief, therefore, when he switches yet again to give a perfectly plausible explanation as to why, in the late 1940s, he wrote in support of the colonial planters who were suffering during the Malayan Emergency.

Of course, Greene was a very sick man at the time of the interview. He was enduring regular blood transfusions and vitamin injections to counter leukemia. MacArthur had caught up with him during October 1990 when he was briefly in Antibes before leaving for Switzerland for the last time. It is little wonder, therefore, that deep in the interview, Greene suddenly breaks the flow of his interviewer’s questioning to offer him more Bols gin, asking if they can stop soon as he was getting tired and...
needed to prepare his supper. Seemingly unaware of this obvious signal, MacArthur ploughs on with his next question. A while later, when Greene makes another plea, he is again ignored despite the fact that he is trying to explain that it is his birthday the next day and that he has to travel abroad for his next blood transfusion.

All this appears to fall on deaf ears. It is probably a measure of Greene’s exhaustion that he does not protest, let alone lose his temper, remaining invariably polite throughout. The transcription of the interview peters out with MacArthur still in mid-flow.

Do we gain any fresh insights into Graham Greene as a result of this interview? Not really. Should it have been published in the first place? The completist might argue its relevance; otherwise, one is left with a deep sense of sadness at a once great mind rapidly losing its way and struggling to cope.

(This review appeared in a slightly adapted form in *A Sort of Newsletter*, May 2020.)

**Jon Wise** taught 11–19-year-old students English Language and Literature for over thirty years and later supervised trainee teachers. He holds a PhD from the University of Exeter, UK. He has published books and articles about Graham Greene and also on naval history. He has co-authored two bibliographic guides to the works of Greene and a third is in preparation. He is website manager of the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust as well as a Trustee. He is married and lives with his wife in Herefordshire on the borders of Wales.
Introduction to Lucius

Mike Hill

Graham Greene’s 1971 memoir A Sort of Life begins with a famous sentence: “If I had known it, the whole future must have lain all the time along those Berkhamsted streets.” Greene was born in Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire in 1904, attending the independent boys’ school there. The memoir tells us much about his upbringing in the town, the son of a schoolmaster who became head of the school. Greene had an unhappy adolescence, particularly the eight terms he spent as a boarder in St. John’s House from September 1918 until April 1921, when bullying and lack of privacy drove him to despair.

The influence of Berkhamsted and its school on the future writer can hardly be overstated. The town appears throughout his fiction, in various guises, including the names “Boxstead,” “Denton,” and “Bishop’s Hendron.” The references run from Greene’s first (but unpublished) novel Anthony Sant, written while he was at Oxford University and set in a school that is recognizably Berkhamsted, right through to his last published novel, The Captain and the Enemy (1988), where Berkhamsted is unnamed, but again unmistakable to anyone knowing the place.

Berkhamsted and its school features in another piece of Greene’s fictional writing, unremarked on until very recently. In writing of unfinished and unpublished pieces in A Sort of Life, Greene refers to “a school novel of a timid boy’s blackmail of the housemaster who had protected him.” No further explanation is offered, and the reference remained enigmatic for decades. In researching the second volume of our bibliography, covering the Graham Greene archives, Dr. Jon Wise and I came across a Greene story called Lucius. The archive at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas includes a file containing around fifty foolscap sheets in Greene’s mature handwriting—clearly an unfinished novel of about 23,000 words. The manuscript is undated, but external evidence shows that Greene wrote it in the interval between finishing Our Man in Havana in June 1958 and setting off for the Belgian Congo in January 1959. So this is Lucius, a substantial but unfinished story written in the late 1950s of a schoolmaster blackmailed by a timid schoolboy.

The story covers the first term at Bristow School of a boy called Lucius Darling—a boarder in Collier’s House. He is a shy boy, unhappy at the school with the lack of privacy, the physical conditions of the dormitories, and being bullied by two other boys despite attempts to protect him by the sympathetic assistant housemaster Stonier. We also become aware of a developing secret relationship between Stonier—a married man, we learn—and Miss Wilson, the house matron. And crucially, Lucius himself (like Greene, a sharp observer) sees evidence of this relationship, dimly aware that something furtive is afoot. The story finishes, incomplete, at the end of Lucius’s first, unhappy term at school, with Christmas approaching. The boy’s betrayal and blackmail of Stonier lies in the future, untold by Greene.

The town Bristow in the story is clearly Berkhamsted, as the descriptions of the town and school match perfectly, and the details of bullying and lack of privacy for young Lucius parallel Greene’s own experiences at the school.
This story of Lucius has a prologue that acts as a framing device for the school story. Here, the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Luke Winter, returns to his old school for the first time since leaving there as a boy to give a speech at prize-giving. Sir Luke is Lucius Darling, thirty-six years on, with a changed name. The timid boy has, in the interim, learned to project confidence and authority, but his return to the school reignites memories of his unhappy schooldays.

The extract that follows is that prologue to Lucius. It is significant as a hitherto-unpublished piece of mature writing by Greene, and although it was never polished to his own exacting standards, it is recognizably his style and voice, written in a decade when he was still at the height of his powers. It has interest in dealing with the very Greeneian theme of betrayal. And the extract encourages parallels with Greene’s own life: just as the story Lucius suggests that the bullied, humiliated boy became a famous man to show the world that he could make something of himself, so in A Sort of Life Greene wrote that years of bullying had given him “an excessive desire to prove that I was good at something, however long the effort might prove.” Sir Luke Winter is not Graham Greene, but he has been formed by similar experiences.

Why did Greene not finish the story? A footnote in A Sort of Life reveals all. There, writing in 1970, Greene remembers going back to St. John’s House at Berkhamsted School in 1958: “Memory often exaggerates, but some twelve years ago, because I had started a novel about a school, I revisited the scene and found no change. I abandoned the novel—I couldn’t bear mentally living again for several years in these surroundings. A leper colony in the Congo was preferable so I went to Yonda in search of a burnt-out case.” Lucius was never finished because Greene couldn’t cope with the unhappy memories; writing the story proved not to be therapy, but renewed torture. Revisiting his old school was no easier for Greene than for Sir Luke Winter.

Mike Hill is a retired teacher. He edits A Sort of Newsletter, the quarterly magazine of the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust. He is currently organizing his sixth Graham Greene Festival, to be held in Berkhamsted in September 2021. The 2011 volume Dangerous Edges of Graham Greene included his essay “Greene and Hitchcock.” He has co-authored with Jon Wise two books on Greene: The Works of Graham Greene: A Reader’s Bibliography & Guide (Continuum 2012) and The Works of Graham Greene Volume 2: A Guide to the Graham Greene Archives (Bloomsbury 2015).
Lucius, Prologue  
(Transcribed by Mike Hill)

Graham Greene

Prologue
The little town had grown since Winter’s day, but the smell of coal dust and canal and tired brick were about the same. The memory came in through his nose of something deeply forgotten; he couldn’t have told whether the memory was of happiness or unhappiness, he only knew that here had been his beginning. He put the documents back into the red despatch box and handed the box into the hands of his private secretary; the King’s Arms, the Town Hall, the road that led uphill between the brick villas to …

“We are nearly there,” he said.
“Were you happy here?”
“I suppose so, Bates. Boys are, aren’t they? I can’t remember.”

The streets were full of boys in black suits wearing red roses.

“The headmaster was disappointed that you couldn’t come in time for the religious service.”


“Of course, I told him you were very busy about Colombia.”

“I think Griggs will have to be replaced. He can’t get along with the Americans.”

“It will break his heart, sir, after Teheran.”

“One can’t really take hearts into consideration, can one, Bates? They passed the parish church, massive and flinty. Bates said, “Late perp. They keep a crusader’s helmet in there.”

“How do you know?”

“I’ve been reading up an old guidebook. Pelham’s Guide to Bristow. 1865. Don’t seem to be any modern ones. I thought it would be a good thing if I slipped a few local references into your speech. After all this was your home—in a way—for five years.”

“Hardly a home.”

“I’ve just pencilled in a few touches. If you could find time to look them over. I thought the crusader would come in well when you speak of danger from the east: the need of western unity.”

“The crusader was defeated, Bates, in the long run, and I hardly think they were a favorable example of western unity.”

The car swung down the hill and the red brick buildings stood like beefeaters on either side of the road. Boys clustered under the arch and walked through the quad with women in silk dresses and girls with pony haircuts; they scuffed the gravel with their toes and answered in monosyllables to the brittle female chatter under the bright sun. The headmaster, who must have been watching from his study window, came out to greet them on the terrace. In his long black tail coat his face looked as if it was just being squeezed out of a tube: elongated and white and fresh like toothpaste. It occurred to Winter that headmasters had not been so young in his day, or had he merely outgrown them?

“We were getting anxious, Sir Luke … in case Colombia …”

“My young men can deal with Colombia. This is Mr Bates, headmaster.”

The headmaster led the way into a room full of chintz chairs. “My wife, Lord Potter, the chairman of the Governors—but of course you probably know each other. The Bishop of Crewe.” A waiter handed round sherry which
was not quite dry enough. “It’s a great honour for the school—the first foreign secretary in our history to be an old boy.”

“Who was head in your time?” Lord Potter asked.

“I’m afraid I don’t remember. One’s housemaster was more important.”

“You were at Collin’s, of course?” the headmaster said.

“Yes.”

“And the housemaster in your time would have been ...”

“Wooland. I hardly remember him—and Stonier.”

The headmaster’s wife said, “Stonier: wasn’t he the one who ...”

“Poor Stonier” her husband said quickly, and the bishop cleared his throat and fingered his pectoral cross and turned away towards the tray of sherry. It was like the conclusion of a sermon.


“It was kept from the boys of course,” the headmaster said. “Perhaps, dear, we should go in to lunch?”

From the decisive way in which he unfolded his napkin it might have been thought that Winter was glad to see himself placed on the right of his hostess, the bishop on her left; it was a petty enough detail, but in the long climb from this town and this school perhaps he had needed to pay attention to many details—even to his name, and a bishop after all was a member of the Upper House. Strict etiquette would have demanded ... under the circumstances he could afford to be generous to the bishop. “I was sorry to miss your sermon,” he said. His face exhibited no regret; but then it often exhibited nothing. It was like the early map of an ill explored continent: large and white and indeterminate along the coastline; only the two brown eyes were definitely placed like the sites of known cities.

“I think you would have been interested,” the Bishop of Crewe said with satisfaction. “It was on the text—Render unto Caesar.” He held up his fork streaked with a little cold salmon, like a pennant.

“A rather controversial text.”

“I wouldn’t have thought so ... duty to the State ... patriotism.”

“A Foreign Secretary, you see, deals so much with other countries. Patriotism is all right at home, but we are suffering quite acutely at the moment from patriotism in other places. Colombia for instance. Even Russian patriotism has presented certain difficulties.”

“The Prime Minister spoke very movingly the other day on patriotism ...”

Winter said, “We don’t see eye to eye on everything.” In politics a declaration of war can be dropped anywhere, even at a school lunch; he could see the bishop taking note of it. You could almost calculate the time and route of circulation: via St Albans to Lambeth, and then to Downing Street. The headmaster, who may have felt the tension or who may simply have been bored by the abstract argument which kept his head twisting from guest to guest and his smile meaningless, said, “We had quite a lot of trouble tracing you in the records, Sir Luke.”

“I took my mother’s name after I left school.”

“She was very famous wasn’t she?”

“I remember I could trade her signature at school for sixpence a time.”

He was astonished himself at this flash of memory.

“Private enterprise. You were born to be a Conservative leader, I see,” the
Bishop of Crewe said with conscious malice.

“Perhaps just born to be a leader,” the headmaster’s wife retorted; her malice was quite unintentional, for she admired success.


“The PM is getting on in years,” the bishop said. Preferment had passed him by forever—the only comfort was, now his tongue could wag.

“There is no age limit for prime ministers … or judges … or …”

“Or bishops, you were going to say.”

Sir Luke Winter made a gesture over the cold chicken which had succeeded the cold salmon, as much as to say, “if the cap fits.” At the end of the table the headmaster raised his glass in an informal toast.

“Excellent hock,” the bishop said, but Winter found it a little sweet. It seemed to him like a meal chosen by a woman.

Winter asked, “What happened to—Stonier?” He found he had to make an effort to leave out the Mister from a name he had forgotten for so many years.

“Of course, it was long before our time,” the headmaster’s wife said.

“Yes?”

“I believe nobody ever really knew.”

“Knew what?”

“My husband’s predecessor never liked to talk about it. But we had the impression that he knew more than he cared to say. Of course, Stonier had resigned from the school before it happened. Luckily for everybody. Do you remember him at all, Sir Luke?”

He said reluctantly, “I remember him leaving. Of course, I was very young.” He moved his mouth uncomfortably; his whole face shifted: it was as though the unknown continent were being redrawn by a new cartographer with more up-to-date knowledge.

“Did you like him? He can’t have been very—suitable.”

“I can remember so little. He was kind to me. I never saw him after I left.”

“Well, I think it was only a few weeks later that it happened. They wouldn’t have told you.”

“You have told me very little even now.”

“He killed himself.”

“Oh.”

He looked at the bowl of cold fruit salad which was being held under his nose: the apple like chips of ice. “No. No, thank you.”

“Fresh fruit. From our own garden,” the headmaster’s wife said, ignoring the bananas.

“Thirty-six years ago,” he said. “No. No thank you.” He had never felt so shaken, even after his defeat at Dulwich. He wanted to ask how the act had been done—the sad cure Milton had called it. It was Stonier who had introduced him to books.

He said, “They must have kept the secret very well.”

“So disturbing to boys at that age. When were you last at Bristow, Sir Luke?”

“I’m afraid I haven’t been down since I left.”

“I don’t suppose you’ll notice many changes: a new wing on the library, and as a war memorial we built a new gymnasium and squash courts. My husband would be delighted to show you around after the prize-giving.”

“I’m afraid I have to leave then for London.”

“Oh, I’m so sorry. I would have liked you to meet some of the masters, though I don’t suppose there are any who go back …”

“They hardly could, could they?”
The headmaster’s wife laughed nervously as though she had drawn unwelcome attention to his age. “Anyway, you won’t find the ceremony different. Did you win many prizes, Sir Luke?”

“None at all.”

“An unrecognised genius,” the bishop said.

“Churchill was bad at school too,” the headmaster’s wife added brightly, “But I expect there were those who spotted... that’s the real excitement, isn’t it, of a master’s life. Spotting. A parent should judge more by the reports, my husband says, than by the position in class.”

Suddenly Winter remembered; they must have been the last words Stonier ever spoke to him: “You’ve got it in you all right. You are going to go a long way.” What was “It”? He hadn’t meant his words as praise. As Winter drank his coffee, he thought what a foolish bit of vanity it had been to accept the headmaster’s invitation. He began to remember in this place a great deal of degradation, and one of those successes one has to forget—they belonged, of course, to any great career. But he had not known until now what Stonier had done with himself.

The headmaster said, “We had better be getting to the Hall.”

They walked across the quad—the headmaster wearing his MA gown; masters in black gowns and white ermine hoods converged on them and formed a procession. Their approach must have been signalled ahead so that at the very moment the procession entered the hall the music of the school song broke out from a piano in the gallery, and when they had reached their seats, they all stood at attention while the words were sung. A pedagogue behind Winter had a resonating baritone. Most of them just moved their lips; the burden was carried by the boys.

“When your hat trick is over and the over’s over,
You mustn’t show your success:
When you have to convert and the ball goes under
You mustn’t show your distress.
The game’s a game but the school stands there:
The players pass, but their sons declare
Vivat Bristowa.”

The headmaster paid a tribute to Sir Luke Winter (“Collins has produced some excellent centre forwards, but only one Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs”) and to the Bishop of Crewe (“who gave us the most moving address I have ever heard in the school chapel on the twin merits of patriotism and Christianity”). He then read out the successes of the school year: the victory over Lancing, the excellent results at Bisley, the scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge. His fingers played over the leather backs of the prizes stacked on the table in front of him—The Poems of Matthew Arnold, Kinglake’s Eothon.

Winter looked at one headmaster’s portrait after another; beards gave place to side whiskers, side whiskers to moustaches, the clean shaven came last, but no growth of hair destroyed the common likeness: an air of conscious probity, of stern kindliness. If you sought eccentricity, it could be found only in such details as the artist’s treatment of the MA gown. Winter tried in vain to pick out the ruler of the roost in his day. While the headmaster announced a Domus Exhibition in Modern History at Balliol, a woman’s face came up out of the confusion of faces below him as a pattern emerges among the bits and pieces of a kaleidoscope: an old face with a pointed
mouth and precise earrings. He had the impression it was watching him. He looked away and looked back. Why shouldn’t she be watching him? He was the guest of honour.

“And now I call on our guest of honour, Sir Luke Winter ...”

He had forgotten to look at Bates’s notes, but while the school clapped him, he turned over the leaves rapidly to find them. “Crusader’s helmet in parish church.” “Bristow Castle besieged by foreign enemy—French in time of King John.” “Simon de Montfort, founder of Parliament, passed through on way to London.” How on earth did Bates imagine he could work that in?

He spoke of the necessity of Western unity, a unity supported by a common culture to which schools like Bristow contributed learning, tradition, sportsmanship. He referred to the Crusaders (“a crusader’s helmet hangs in the church here”) when the unity of the West had been broken by internal dissensions. They must learn from these ancient mistakes. They might think he was talking politics, dull politics. Youth craved romance, but didn’t we live in days quite as exciting and romantic as the Crusader? Just as Bristow Castle had in its time to withstand a foreign enemy, so all those who cherished Western traditions of democracy, Parliamentary government in all its variants—he thought he could slip in Simon de Montfort here but failed and shied away—all were under siege today, a long-drawn-out siege from the advocates of absolute power. He reminded them of what Lord Acton had said: power tends to corrupt. The woman went on watching him. He became uneasy; he knew he was not a very good speaker. He skipped a page of lip service to the United Nations and came rather flatly to his conclusion: the debt he owed to Bristow and the masters of Bristow who had helped him shape his thoughts. He quickly tried to remember the name of his headmaster and failed. Stonier came to mind, but he could hardly mention him—“poor Stonier.” He had no greater hope, he said, than that in the future men might be able to trace in the foreign policy he had tried, perhaps unsuccessfully to follow, the mark of a liberal (he was not of course speaking politically) education. The applause was polite. He looked at the woman down below. She sat with her hands in her lap.

The prize winners came up the steps and passed in front of the table. He shook hands with each and presented the prize which the headmaster picked out for him; the prizes hadn’t changed much since his day—Macaulay’s essays, The Will to Believe, bound in full calf with the Bristow arms upon the cover. The name Morley caught his attention: a tall boy with spots. He said “Congratulations,” handing him The Voyage of the Beagle. It was a name which had been important to him once; he remembered plans for revenge.

“Their sons declare Vivat Bristowa.” Could this be Morley’s son—or grandson? But again, he couldn’t recall the face—only a pair of boots with trailing laces.

“Which house are you in?”

“Collin’s, sir.”

He said to the headmaster, holding out his hand for the next prize, “I think perhaps I knew his father.”

“You should really visit Collin’s before you go.”

“I’m afraid there won’t be time.”

But when the prize-giving was over, Bates brought him bad news of the car.

“The garage say it will take another three quarters of an hour.”
“Time for Collin’s,” the headmaster said happily.
“We shall have to hire a car,” Winter said.
“You’ll find it difficult today. They’ve all been swept up by parents. You know by the time you dig one out your own car will be ready.”
He gave way. After all what was there to fear? Nobody survived at Collin’s from his day. Even the house would be changed, perhaps unrecognisable.
“This is Mr Carter. He’s in charge of Collin’s.”
“You were under Mr Wooland, I think, Sir Luke?”
“Yes, I think that was the name.” How carefully they must have looked up the records.
Carter drove him up the hill, past the long black ribbon of returning boys.
“Were you happy here, sir?” But now he replied differently: “I wouldn’t live those days again.”
“Of course, things are very different now.”
But the house was not different; the same steps ran up from the road to the back door where the boys entered, and the house was too massive to change in its yellow and grey bricks. “Shall we go in this way, sir, so that you can see the house before the boys return?” In France, he thought, they lured a criminal back to the scene of his crime.
The passage to the schoolroom was as long and dark as his memory, and the schoolroom itself was unchanged except that where the big cast iron stove had been was an electric radiator. The desks were as old and chipped and ink stained as thirty-five years ago. “We don’t put in new desks,” Carter said. “So many old boys like to search for the initials they cut ... I expect you ...”
“I cut none.”
“You remember the gymnasium?” It was brighter and cleaner than he remembered it; the apparatus, he supposed, was new.
“And the changing room?” It was a misnomer. This never changed; even the smell of steam and sweat and rubber and stale running drawers remained as in his time.
“Still a bit primitive, sir, but we haven’t much money to spend.”
“I remember this,” he said.
“Come upstairs and see the dormitories. We have improved those.” But as it happened, they never reached the dormitories. At the first turn of the stairs was a room he remembered more clearly than any other. “We’ll just look in on matron, if you don’t mind,” Carter said. He looked back over his shoulder. “Wouldn’t you like to, sir?”
“Oh yes, of course. Yes.”
The woman from the audience with the earrings and the tight sour mouth stood by the mantelpiece and watched him over Carter’s shoulder. It could hardly, he reassured himself, be the matron he had known thirty-six years ago—the years which had led him so far could not have left her here serving out cough mixtures and plasters. Besides surely his memory was not at fault that after another term or perhaps two she had left. All the same he was relieved when Carter said, “Oh, I’m sorry. I was looking for the matron.”
“She’ll be back in a few minutes.”
“Come in, Sir Luke. I don’t suppose this room has changed.”
They had painted the medical cupboard primrose; he knew now that in his days it had been of framed oak, but on the shelves there was the same jumble of cartons and bottles and eye droppers. In the glass as he turned, he was aware of the woman watching.
“Not very much. I remember the matron—a very kind woman.”
“There must have been more than one during your time.”
“I suppose so. I only remember one.” He moved back towards the door, then turned as if to say goodbye, and met the woman’s furious stare.
“Well,” he said, “perhaps ... if we’re going to see the dormitories ... my car ...”
She said, “You’ve changed your name, haven’t you?”
“Yes. How ... have we met? I took my mother’s.”
“Mary Winter? I remember her.”
“Really? Do you belong to the theatre, Mrs ...”
“Heath. My name is different too, Sir Luke. You would have known me as Wilson. Stella Wilson. I’m glad you remember me as a kind woman.” She explained to Carter, “I was matron here when Lucius was in the house.”
“Lucius?”
“Sir Luke.”
“Really? How very interesting. I was just going to show Sir Luke the new dormitories, but I expect you two would like to talk over old times.”
“I doubt if they would interest Sir Luke.”
“What about it, sir?”
“Of course. Why not? A few minutes ... my car must be nearly ready ...”
“You’ll find me in my room. You remember where that was?”
“If I don’t, Miss Wilson will show me.”
“Miss Wilson? Oh, I forgot. You’re slipping into old times, sir.”
That wasn’t true. His heels were dug in. Down that cliff of time he was determined not to fall. Carter shut the door and left them alone.

“Won’t you sit down? It seems odd to call you Sir Luke. Darling comes easier or Lucius. You’ve got rid of both names.”
“You’ve married?”
“It was always my real name; don’t you remember?”
“I didn’t know.”
“I thought you did. But of course, I suppose there were things even you didn’t know ... or discover.”
“I didn’t know about—about Mr Stonier’s death until today.”
“They hushed it up from the boys and you were only a small boy, weren’t you? That’s how they classed you anyway. You’re a great man now, Sir Luke. I hadn’t expected to recognise you so easily. You have the same features. Do they give nicknames in your career now?”
“Not that I know of.”
“Do you remember much of that time?”
“What time?”
“When you were here. When we were all here.”
“No.”
“You owed a lot to John.”
“John?”
“One-Eye was the name, I think, they gave him.”
“Oh, Mr Stonier—he taught very well.”

He held his ground; passive, immobile, his fat shapeless face recording nothing. No opponent in the House had ever had the satisfaction of forcing an expression onto those features, either of anger, embarrassment—or even pleasure, for he was a sad winner.
“I suppose you thought we neither of us knew what you did, but we both of us knew.”
“You must be talking about something I don’t remember.”
“I don’t believe you. You couldn’t forget that.”

“It’s a very long time ago, Miss Wilson. I beg your pardon, Mrs Heath.”

“It’s only yesterday— I mean ...” She made a movement with her old hands, and he remembered how it was the only way she expressed impatience; she had seemed to him as a boy until the very end a monument of control. How old her hands had become, knobbly with neuritis. The last time he had ever spoken to her was when he came to this room for plaster and iodine; he had slipped and fallen on the gravel path and scraped his knee. When he pushed the door open, she was standing where she stood now. Her face was convulsed as though someone had struck her and was now raising his fist for a second blow. She said, “Not you. Oh no, not you.” He had hesitated in the doorway but then at the sight of the blood on his knee she had reverted to duty; only her hands as she took the plaster had made that movement of impatience. They were not then cramped with rheumatism, nor did a finger carry a wedding ring any more than it did now.

She said, “I came here specially to see you. But it doesn’t seem much use, does it, now that I’m here.”

He said, “If you would like some seats for the House ...” It was almost as though he was losing his head, as if he had been caught by vertigo from looking down so far into that abyss of time. Bates ought to have been there; he wondered angrily where Bates could be.

“Are you really human? Oh yes, I saw your blood once, didn’t I?” She sat down, groping with an old hand at her nearest supports as though she were struck by the same vertigo, looking down from the same point to the same wrinkle in the earth’s skin.

“If you’ll excuse me,” he said, “... my car’s waiting ... Cabinet meeting tonight. Perhaps some other time.”

She gave the physical impression of shouting, but all that emerged was the drily inadequate voice of age. “He killed himself. Doesn’t that mean anything to you? He killed himself. He didn’t just resign and find another job, and then live happily ever after like you’ve done. He wouldn’t have liked me saying this, but he isn’t here to stop me, is he?” She picked up her bag and he flinched, thinking for a moment that she was going to throw it at him, but she was only searching for something concealed between the compact and the cigarette case. Perhaps to keep him there, until she found what she needed, she kept up her vague and cracked plaint like a woman keening for someone newly dead. “I’ve kept this with one purpose, to show it to you.”

“Why didn’t you send it, Mrs – Mrs Heath?”

“You are guarded by secretaries, aren’t you? He was fond of you even after you did that. Not like me. Oh no, he wasn’t like me at all. Too good to live. Do you still betray your friends?”

He was aware of the indignity of standing there, letting her talk, but at the same time he thought it would be worse to run away. He had always outstayed the longest row in the Commons: even over the South American Debt. He supposed now they would cry out that Griggs was betrayed, thrown to the Americans ... for what? His honorary degree at Harvard and the reception at Washington. She had something in her hand now, a letter. A lipstick came out too and rolled across the floor at him, a little gold object, as though someone was throwing money back at him.
She said, “Here. Read it. He never wrote to me again after that. You need only read the last page. The rest’s only—love. You’ll see he writes about you. He could forgive you, but I can’t. I can’t.”

He read, “As for Lucius, don’t hold it against him. There was a lot of good in him once. It was not really his fault that things went as they did. It was the power you and I gave him. Poor little devil, he’s learned the trick and he’ll go a long way now.”

It was an odd and disagreeable sensation being pitied; not one you associated with a political career, and it was not the less disagreeable when the man who did the pitying did it from the safe and invulnerable distance of death.

Mike Hill is a retired teacher. He edits A Sort of Newsletter, the quarterly magazine of the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust. He is currently organizing his sixth Graham Greene Festival, to be held in Berkhamsted in September 2021. The 2011 volume Dangerous Edges of Graham Greene included his essay “Greene and Hitchcock.” He has co-authored with Jon Wise two books on Greene: The Works of Graham Greene: A Reader’s Bibliography & Guide (Continuum 2012) and The Works of Graham Greene Volume 2: A Guide to the Graham Greene Archives (Bloomsbury 2015).
Call for Papers

The University of North Georgia Press, in conjunction with The Graham Greene Birthplace Trust, is issuing a Call for Papers for a peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the life and work of the English writer Graham Greene (1904–1991). University academics, independent researchers, and doctoral, post-graduate, graduate, and undergraduate students are invited to submit papers. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Greene’s political and theological landscapes
- Greene’s depiction of women
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- The plays
- Greene’s travels on ‘the dangerous edge of things’
- Book and film reviews and other feature articles will also be considered.

Please submit all papers to https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/ggs/

All submissions must be original, unpublished work. Papers should be between 2,500 and 10,000 words. Citations must follow The Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition documentation guidelines. All papers should be submitted double-spaced in Word document format using footnotes rather than endnotes for both notes and citation information; there is no need to include a References list as all citation information should be provided in footnotes. Readers and Graham Greene International Festival goers are encouraged to submit.

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