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The Divided Self Creates
the Possibility of Selfhood:
A Look at Four Graham Greene Novels

Harold Hoefle

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

English

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

December 1995

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ABSTRACT

The Divided Self Creates
the Possibility of Selfhood;
A Look at Four Graham Greene Novels

Harold Hoefle

This study examines the divided self of the protagonist in four Graham Greene novels: *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), *The Quiet American* (1955), *The Honorary Consul* (1973), and *The Human Factor* (1978). I identify the sources of strife in the protagonist's self, and show how these sources produce and maintain the possibility of a movement to selfhood, as defined in Chapter One. In Chapter One I elucidate my method: the application of the Catholic, Kierkegaardian, and Camusian concept of the self to the protagonist's self in Greene's later fiction. This post-war self exists in a state of dynamic tension, which situates it between a religious and absurdist world-view. In Chapter Two, Section One, I elucidate Greene's position of the self, as gleaned from his non-fictional writings. In Chapter Two, Section Two, I outline and contrast the concepts of the self proffered by Catholic apologists, Søren Kierkegaard, and Albert Camus. In Chapter Three, I apply my method to an examination of the four Greene novels, one section per novel. I show how subjectivity, persistent striving, doubt and a recognition of personal failure are necessary to the self's movement to selfhood. Finally, I examine the way in which two of Greene's protagonists attain selfhood while two succumb to despair.

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I dedicate this thesis with all love and constancy to my editor and wife, Amy.

Please note that the following abbreviations will be used:

Nb--*Notebooks, 1942-1951*, Albert Camus

RRD--*Resistance, Rebellion and Death*, Albert Camus

CUP--*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Søren Kierkegaard

JP--*Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, Søren
Kierkegaard

Table of Contents

<u>Chapter One</u>	Introduction	1
<u>Chapter Two</u>	The Nature, Meaning, and Purpose of the Self	
Section 2.1.	Greene's Position	11
Section 2.2.	Catholic, Kierkegaardian, and Camusian Positions	16
<u>Chapter Three</u>	An Analysis of the Divided Self in Four Greene Novels	
Section 3.1.	<i>The Quiet American</i>	24
Section 3.2.	<i>The Honorary Consul</i>	35
Section 3.3.	<i>The Heart of the Matter</i>	49
Section 3.4.	<i>The Human Factor</i>	66
<u>Chapter Four</u>	Conclusion	87
<u>Works Cited</u>		90

Chapter One

Introduction

In most of Graham Greene's twenty-five novels, the protagonist's self is besieged on internal and external fronts. On the external front, the world beyond the self, war appears inescapable: World War Two, the French-Vietminh colonial war, the despotic rule of "Papa Doc" Duvalier in Haiti, revolution in South America, and the Cold War are examples of Greene's settings. In *The Lawless Roads*, a non-fiction work which chronicles the official persecution of Catholics in the Mexico of the 1930s, Greene describes the world as "engaged everywhere in the same subterranean struggle...there is no peace anywhere where there is human life" (31-32). Significantly, in Greene's fiction the battles fought within the self mirror these kinds of external conflict. This internal war is the result of commitments which divide the self and result in conflicting loyalties. Greene's obsession with this theme seems to derive from his childhood. In *A Sort of Life*, his first volume of autobiography, he sums up his existence at the school where his father was headmaster: "I was like the son of a quisling in a country under occupation" (72). Such a division of commitments, and the incumbent strain wrought upon the self, defines the embattled self of the protagonist in Greene's fiction.

My study of Greene's fiction explores the region of the divided self, the region where the struggle to become "more human" (*The Human Factor*, 100) is fought. For the self of Greene's protagonists, "more human" seems to mean "more Christian", despite a paradoxically concurrent belief in the absurdity of existence. In this study, I use the term "self" in the sense defined in

the OED: "a permanent subject of successive and varying states of consciousness". I use this definition in order to emphasize the dynamic state of the self in Greene's fiction, a self animated by division and contradiction.

I make use of three concepts of the self, concepts which nuance the OED definition given above. Albert Camus' concept of the self derives from a philosophy of consciousness. Søren Kierkegaard's concept of the self considers the body and the soul in a dialectical unity, albeit in an irresolvable tension; the self is constantly in "the process of becoming" (*CUP*, 74). The Catholic concept of the self, as defined by C.C. Martindale, S.J., sees the self as "a unity, composed of body and soul, matter and spirit, and the latter is indestructible" (Martindale, 4). I outline and contrast these three concepts of the self in Chapter 2.2.

Religious faith is a central theme in four of Greene's earliest novels, works written in the immediate pre- and post-war period. However, in his later work this kind of faith becomes a pole at one end of the spectrum of human meaning and purpose, the belief in temporal man-made meaning being the opposite pole. Tremulously, the self traverses the axis which lies between the religious and the secular. On this axis lies the region of the divided self. Here, crucial decisions demand attention, loyalty is tested, doubt thrives. Various internal commitments, for example to a loved other or the self's own credo, divide the self. The onslaught of external events tests the self. Its credo, because based on commitment to an other or others--to individuals not "abstract terms"--becomes jeopardized. Still, this region of the human condition known as the divided self becomes, in Greene's fiction, the precondition for the possibility of an increased human-ness. Greene

returns to this ideal throughout his fiction, an ideal inevitably expressed in an understated fashion. Thomas Fowler, the narrator of *The Quiet American*, remarks that all one can do is "try to make the future less hard" (76). In *The Human Factor*, Maurice Castle observes that a South African intelligence officer whom Castle knew years ago now "looked more human--perhaps it was that he had taken on with promotion greater responsibilities and with them uncertainties and unanswered questions" (100). It is the persistent striving to become "more human" that defines Greene's ideal self. The self must constantly strive while admitting failure, doubting results, and suffering the effects of self-dividing commitments. Human-ness is achieved by the self that makes decisions which require a sacrifice for the benefit of an other or others, known or unknown. Thus, the self grows into a greater awareness of love or spirituality through "the divided mind, the uneasy conscience, and the sense of personal failure" ("The Last Pope", 587). Though the protagonist's ongoing attempt to help others invites inescapable failure, that fact is, in Greene's fiction, of great worth. He once told a journalist that "[s]uccess is the point of self-deception. Failure is the point of self-knowledge" (*Yours etc.*, xvi).

My study focuses on four of Greene's post-war novels: *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), *The Quiet American* (1955), *The Honorary Consul* (1973), and *The Human Factor* (1978). In these novels, each protagonist's self begins with a different problem: an indiscriminate sense of pity, a disinterest in an *engagé* involvement in war, a disbelief in the concept of love, an obsessive need to requite benefits received from others. Internal decisions are forced upon the self, decisions driven by the assault of external events; these forces divide the self, yet also impel the self to act. Moreover, as these novels are set

by Greene in the war and post-war period, three of these protagonist selves begin their narratives disillusioned with Christian values, a disillusion inspired by the seeming absence of God amid the human indignity they witness. As Thomas Fowler remarks after watching the triumphal finish of a Hollywood film, "the sight of Oedipus emerging with his bleeding eyeballs from the palace at Thebes would surely give a better training for life today" (*The Quiet American*, 237). In the Greene novels under study, both secular and spiritual values inform the life of the protagonist's self. Two of the four maintain a movement to an increased human-ness--which I term selfhood, after Kierkegaard, and will soon define--throughout the narrative, while two fail to persistently strive towards selfhood.

Selfhood is a Kierkegaardian term which stresses the self's relationship to God. However, for the purpose of this study the term shall be modified from the strict Kierkegaardian definition to mean a human-ness defined in two different ways. Selfhood may be achieved by a recognition of the spiritual component in existence, or by a recognition of love's central importance for the self. Each recognition, implied or spoken, also requires the self's increased understanding of its own subjectivity. In Kierkegaardian terms, this means the self's profoundest realizable truth. These recognitions derive from the divided self which, in Greene's fiction, is the necessary precondition for a movement to selfhood. Thus, my study also examines the self that emerges from this movement: either a self increased in human-ness, or a misshapen self, one unable to face and accept the subjectivity of its own identity.

Critics have not neglected the theme of divided commitment in Greene's fiction, though they rarely approach the theme as the precondition for the

self's potential growth in knowledge and acceptance of itself. In the tradition of Greene scholarship, the first critical sieve has been Catholicism--a legitimate enough undertaking for, as mentioned above, four of his earliest novels (published between 1939 and 1951) deal explicitly with Catholic themes and protagonists. After *The Heart of the Matter*, his second to last avowedly Catholic novel, Catholicism remains in his work, albeit in a muted sense. David Lodge sketches in that Catholicism:

There is a good deal of evidence, internal and external, that in Greene's fiction Catholicism is not a body of belief requiring exposition and demanding categorical assent or dissent, but a system of concepts, a source of situations, and a reservoir of symbols with which he can order and dramatize certain intuitions about the nature of human experience (Lodge, 6).

After Greene's death in April 1991, G.W. Hunt, the editor of the Catholic journal "America", noted how Greene's fiction "reflects well several aspects of the Catholic sensibility prior to Vatican II--that of the 'outsider' and of the guilt-burdened idealist, whose experience of God is profoundly personal and private and rarely communal" (Hunt, 433). Hunt summarizes here the Catholic sensibility which animates Scobie in *The Heart of the Matter*.

All Greene critics do not focus on his Catholicism. In a recent critical biography, Michael Sheldon lists aspects of the essential and inevitable self/other relationship in Greene's fiction: "[danger], an enormous secret, a fear of betrayal, a test of loyalty, a lonely act of defiance" (Sheldon, 323). Each of these themes runs into the larger theme of the divided self, though Sheldon does not examine Greene's protagonists from the perspective of the divided self as the precondition for the growth in humanness of the self; that is, for the movement to selfhood. Philip Stratford moves closer to this critical position when he notes that Greene has "explored

the unmapped region that lies between the risk of betrayal and the risk of love" (Stratford, "Editor's Introduction", xiii). Stratford details Greene's artistic project in ethical terms:

an appeal for freedom for the individual; not the partisan freedom of being free to belong to a certain party, sect, country, class, or race, but the more challenging freedom to prefer the independent, the prodigal, and the onerous duty of free choice; to prefer compassion to commitment, and charity to justice (Stratford, 325).

Judith Adamson, in a study of the relationship of politics and art in Greene's work, seems to echo Stratford's position vis-à-vis the importance of inner division in the protagonist. She stresses the importance of polarities and antagonisms in Greene's work, how they affect the feelings, intellect, and will of the self, and how the self needs this divisiveness:

[The] sense of uncertainty, of indeterminacy, of entities constantly dissolving into their opposites, has been the mainstay of Greene's art. He has cultivated the dangerous edge of things in his books so that faith wavers, love betrays, the uninvolved die for causes...[as] so many of his characters discover, loyalty is the most dangerous thing (Adamson, 187).

The ambivalence and tension that derives from polarities within the self *becomes* the self's source of meaning and purpose. Most Greene critics do not treat the divided self theme in this manner; I attempt to examine the theme from a perspective somewhat different from Adamson's, and thus elaborate on her analysis vis-à-vis the four protagonist selves in this study.

Anne Salvatore argues that Greene and Kierkegaard share a concept of the self. She defines Kierkegaard's concept of the self as "less as an object than as an activity" (Salvatore, 72), for the self is "not a static entity, or even a static entity merged with a mobile one; on the contrary, the self 'every instant it exists, is in process of becoming'" (Salvatore, 74). This signature Kierkegaardian concept points to the goal of selfhood, partially

defined by Salvatore as "an awareness of personal guilt, [which] together with a continual struggle to believe [in God], forms...the basis of a transcendental relationship that [Kierkegaard] views as integral selfhood" (Salvatore, 76). Salvatore argues that Greene's theory of characterization "seems to rest on a similar ideology of essential selfhood" (Salvatore, 76); she sees in the works of both writers a belief in God as a necessary component of selfhood. However, this unifocal Christian take on Greene reductively advocates only a religious model of selfhood. In the Greene works under study, the protagonist's self denies or doubts the existence of God. It is the very tenuousness of the self's relationship to spiritual existence that makes selfhood, as modified from the strict Kierkegaardian usage, a possibility. The protagonist's self-division, his dynamic "process of becoming", becomes the necessary way-station en route to selfhood. The protagonist's self cannot escape the pressurized, yet paradoxically transitory, nature of moment-by-moment existence--partly due to the dramatic nature of fictional narrative. In such narrative forms, Greene notes that even dialogue "should be a form of action, with the quickness of action" (*Ways of Escape*, 10). Thus, for the Greene self a so-called "state of being" is, more accurately, a "moment of being", and one besieged by successive moments. The self learns that regardless of need or desire, action is inescapable under the duress of the moment. Moreover, even the refusal to act is an act, for refusal too has consequences in both the internal and external world of the self. A close study of such textual moments in Greene's fiction reveals the self in almost constant strife, and thus in an "ongoing moment" of potential movement towards selfhood.

This study's method involves an application of three concepts of the

self to four Greene novels. The protagonist's self in Greene's fiction exists in a state of tension, simultaneously accepting and rejecting religious values in favour of human-generated secular values. The self, then, exists on an axis between the poles of a pre-Vatican II Catholic and an agnostic-atheist sensibility. In my analysis of Greene's fiction, I view the self through the dimension of pre-Vatican II Catholic thought, primarily represented by pre-Vatican II British Catholic apologists--apt for the study of an English Catholic convert born in 1904. As well as the Catholic apologist's concept of the self, I consider the positions of two writers whose philosophic concerns--the nature of the self, the ideal self, the difficulties inherent in the human condition and how to overcome them--resonate in a study of the self in Greene's fiction. These two writers are the nineteenth-century Lutheran, Danish writer Søren Kierkegaard, and the twentieth-century atheist, Albert Camus. Their works and Greene's both convey the internal strife which derives from the division of commitments. Also similar to Greene, both Camus and Kierkegaard embody paradox: the Christian Kierkegaard is often awash with the 'unforgivable sin' of despair, whereas the atheist Camus asks with what seems a hint of longing, "Is it possible to become a saint without believing in God?" (Pfaff, 105). (Both Camus and Kierkegaard have been placed by certain critics in the camp of Existentialism, but the nature of that inclusion, and of the variants in that system of philosophic inquiry, do not interest me here, for they do not further the aims of my study.) The Catholic focus will not be as pronounced a dimension of inquiry as the Kierkegaardian or Camusian, partly because Henry Scobie, the protagonist in *The Heart of the Matter*, is the only avowed Catholic protagonist in this study. Moreover, in the other novels under study, Catholicism works mostly in the sense noted by David

Lodge, as the three non-Catholic protagonists invoke, deny, envy and otherwise define themselves in part against the beliefs of Catholicism.

Aside from the relevance of Catholicism to Greene's work, as a symbolic scaffolding and an orthodoxy Greene can manipulate, Kierkegaard seems particularly apt as a critical lens. Though he is in many ways a Christian proselytizer, Kierkegaard's concerns resonate in Greene's work: the importance of attaining subjectivity (an inner truth), of striving and the concomitant inner strife as the source of spiritual growth, of risk-taking and bold passionate endeavour, and of privileging the internal over the external man. Finally, there is the aptness of Camus' perspective: his emphasis on the self's engagement with the moment, on the self's responsibility to create his own meaning, on the importance of moderation versus excess (contrary to Kierkegaard's elevation of risk), and on the importance of solidarity among men.

This critical project is not an influence study; I do not see as productive the pegging of a Greene protagonist's self as a Catholic or Kierkegaardian or Camusian ideal. Still, Catholic apologists, Camus and Kierkegaard all define the self in terms of an ideal it should strive towards (though in different ways), be it belief in God-given meaning and purpose, or in the validity of meaning and purpose generated by the temporal self alone. These three concepts of the self are used as critical points of departure from which, in part, I examine the divided self's potential movement toward selfhood.

The conclusions of this study should fill a gap in the criticism of Greene's fiction. I identify the sources of internal strife that produce a movement to selfhood for certain of Greene's protagonists--though not for

those who, conversely, experience instead a literal or figurative death. I analyze how that movement is produced and maintained. Furthermore, I analyze the manner in which the self remains actively in "the process of becoming"; I show how selfhood (or its absence) becomes defined by the closure of each narrative. For the protagonist's self, the attainment of selfhood is not an assumed achievement.

Chapter Two The Nature, Meaning, and Purpose of the Self

2.1. Greene's Position

In *Ways of Escape*, Greene's second volume of autobiography, he defines the human condition in terms of suffering, which he itemizes as "the madness, the melancholia, the panic fear inherent in the human situation" (237). His concern lies both in what the human situation is, and also in the ideal towards which the individual self should strive. It is in the attributes of the divided self, as defined in this study's introduction, that Greene sees the precondition for the self's movement to selfhood.

Doubt is an essential landmark in the region of the divided self. Doubt becomes a "human factor" that keeps a pitiless logic and intellectualism in abeyance. The self's sense of uneasiness and failure--products of doubt--stave off a recourse to rationality which, Greene seems to feel, leads to the kind of logic responsible for the systematic murder that has typified this century. Furthermore, the ideologue's belief in abstract goals is tantamount to the murder of the individual. In *The Lawless Roads*, Greene writes: "It's typical of Mexico, of the whole human race perhaps--violence in favour of an ideal and then the ideal lost and the violence just going on" (48). Throughout his fiction and non-fiction Greene denounces the elevation of religious and political goals over the life of individuals, goals presented in the flowing robes of an ideal. He cautions against the privileging of mental

concepts such as Democracy and Progress, "great empty conceptions that life denies at every turn" (*The Lawless Roads*, 132). In a travel book entitled *Journey Without Maps*, he describes his reasons for a trek across Liberia: "when one sees to what unhappiness, to what peril of extinction centuries of cerebration have brought us, one sometimes has a curiosity to discover, if one can, from what we have come, to recall at which point we went astray" (21). To salvage the self and assert its primacy, Greene considers passion and risk-taking a safeguard against a fateful indulgence in "cerebration".

The willingness to take a risk, though it may be contrary to self-preservation, is an important aspect of the Greene self. In *Ways of Escape*, Greene salutes Herbert Read, whom he calls "this most Christian of unbelievers" (31). Greene quotes with approval Read's idea of glory and its relation to risk: "[a]t certain moments the individual is carried beyond his rational self, on to another ethical plane, where his actions are judged by new standards. The impulse which moves him to irrational action I have called the sense of glory" (31). In Greene's fiction, a risk indicates the self's movement from reflection to action. This movement may be inspired by the self's recognition of love, or its willing sacrifice of itself (or its credo) for an other or others, known or unknown. The inspiration and the risk differ for each protagonist's self in this study, for each is enmeshed in commitments particular to his own human situation. For example, of all possible risks Maurice Castle privileges love as "the greatest risk of all" (27).

In Greene's fiction, the loved other becomes the source of a commitment that divides the self. The self/loved other relationship functions as a barometer. The loved other measures--for the reader, and sometimes, but not necessarily, for the protagonist's self--the self's ability to recognize the

truth of what the self is, of how the self changes, and of what the self has become. The loved other reflects the protagonist self's potential movement to selfhood, his "process of becoming". Furthermore, the loved other seems to serve as a projection of the self's own attitude to itself. For example, the protagonist's self-loathing sometimes projects onto the loved other a momentary anger, even a feeling of hatred. Greene notes that "[w]e cannot love others, so the theologians teach, unless in some degree we can love ourselves" (*A Sort of Life*, 9).

Love becomes one of the commitments that divide the self, a force often in tandem with its polar opposite. "Love demands the same allegiance as hate" (*The Lawless Roads*, 111). Moreover, for Greene the cousins of love, namely trust and faith, often co-exist with distrust and betrayal. The protagonist's self in Greene's fiction, partly defined by a Sisyphean-absurdist *Weltanschauung*--Castle's sense of being "doomed always to try again" (94)--brings this sensibility to the loved other. Admitting that a human being can never understand an other, the self nevertheless strives to love and understand that other. "If a man loves enough, every act will represent his love" ("The Paradox of a Pope", 296). Still, in Greene's fiction the self is often unable or unwilling to trust the loved other. The self needs a confessor-other.

For Greene, the self needs an other to trust and share thoughts and feelings with, while feeling simultaneously trusted by that other. However, in his fiction the loved other rarely becomes the self's trusted other, partially because the self feels the loved other does not trust or understand it. This perception perhaps occurs because the self is unwilling or unable to let the loved other trust or understand it, a result of the self's insecurity

and unwillingness to face the truth of itself. In Greene's fiction, the role of the trusted other is often filled by a confessor-other, a self always of the same gender (male) as the protagonist's self. The confessor-other is seen as sympathetic (if not empathetic) and, often in contrast to the loved other, is considered by the protagonist's self an intellectual equal. For the protagonist selves in this study who move to selfhood, the confessor-other is trustworthy, a "safe" choice. For the selves that do not move to selfhood, the confessor-other betrays the protagonist with inevitably tragic consequences.

Greene's concept of religious faith requires elucidation. In an essay on François Mauriac, written in 1945 and republished in Greene's *Collected Essays* in 1969--with a preface by the author that declares the absence of anything which, "if I were writing today, I would write in a different sense" (9)--Greene laments the death of Henry James. Greene believes that, with James' death, "the religious sense was lost to the English novel, and with the religious sense went the sense of the importance of the human act...even in Trollope we are aware of another world against which the actions of the characters are thrown into relief" ("*François Mauriac*", 91). Later in the essay, Greene describes Mauriac's characters as possessed with "the solidity and importance of men with souls to save or lose" ("*François Mauriac*", 92). Yet Greene's position on "the religious sense" has seesawed since the 1940s. In a letter written to *The Times* on 11 September 1984, Greene poses the question: "Is anyone completely Marxist any more than any one is completely Christian? Doubt like the conscience is inherent in human nature (perhaps they are the same thing)" (*Yours etc.*, 225). For Greene, the self is best able to approach selfhood from a paradoxical belief in doubt, a doubt which

refuses allegiance to purely religious or secular values. Judith Adamson remarks upon this essential tension in the self. "Greene's characters fend off nothingness with faith, and belief with scepticism. Faith keeps alive the possibility of finding a satisfactory purpose and order for mankind, scepticism keeps away the belief that any solution to the human condition is absolute" (Adamson, 192). It is suffering that cannot be escaped, and that partly defines the divided self which remains, in Greene's work, the precondition for a movement to selfhood.

2.2. Catholic, Kierkegaardian, and Camusian Positions

Roman Catholic apologists, Søren Kierkegaard, and Albert Camus posit different answers to shared concerns: what is the human condition, and what is the ideal towards which a human being must strive? Furthermore, what sort of relationship should exist between the self and an other, especially a loved other? In this section I outline and differentiate between the answers offered by these writers. These three concepts of the self are more closely analyzed in my application of them to the four Greene novels under study.

C.C. Martindale, S.J., notes that "for each soul, God has a purpose" (Martindale, 16). Thus, for Catholics it is only through "a life based on faith [in God] that we work out our salvation" (McBrien, 145). Richard P. McBrien adds that only such faith in God permits the individual's "belief in the worthwhileness, the intelligibility, and the purposefulness of human existence" (McBrien, 198). Catholic faith, according to M.C. D'Arcy, S.J., requires "a laying hold of some truth which [God] has revealed" (D'Arcy, 297). Ronald Knox expands on this concept of a revealed truth. "[L]est the world of sense should triumph too easily over their [Catholic] imaginations, they bend it to their own will, singling out a scene here, an object there, an action there, to wear the colours of the supernatural and remind them of their home" (Knox, 145-146). Thus, the Catholic apologist maintains that existence in the temporal world, once one believes in God, has an ultimate meaning discernable by, and only beneficial to, believers. Only believers perceive the influence

of God in the temporal world.

Inner strife, according to the Catholic apologist, may divide the self. Still, such strife is itself proof of a salvation attainable by the self.

M.C. D'Arcy notes that

amid this ruck and reel [of life] which amazes human sight, there can be discerned the direction and the end. The very failures witness to the capacity of man to learn the truth and abide in complete truth, and the groping is the sign of a far off end which has made its presence felt in the tumult of the heart and the dissatisfaction with the present (D'Arcy, 290).

The failures of the Catholic self create the possibility for the self to recognize the truth of its own failure, a recognition the Catholic apologist deems essential. Also essential to the Catholic concept of the self is love: of God, and of an other.

The Catholic apologist views love as a central need of the self, for the self needs to love in order to develop as a self. This need is addressed in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 13:2, St. Paul writes: "If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all" (The Jerusalem Bible). However, the Catholic self's need for love must be anchored in a relationship to God. Richard P. McBrien elucidates how, for Catholic selves, "the need for a relationship with others is dependent on our relationship with God--only if rightly related to God, can we be to others" (McBrien, 241). Yet the Catholic concept of the self includes the sacrament of marriage for the self who wishes "to complete his life by loving faithful union with one who similarly completes her life by union with his...[far] from scorning that contract between two, God establishes its permanence by making it the vehicle for

grace" (Martindale, 74).

As a Christian, Kierkegaard's concept of the self bears a similarity to the Catholic; however, his emphases differentiate his concept from the Catholic and warrant its inclusion in this study. The Catholic apologist C.C. Martindale maintains that "a man [is] intrinsically altered by his deliberate acts, especially the internal ones. Even sins are more what you make yourself, than what you do" (Martindale, 16-17). For Kierkegaard, the importance of the internal self outweighs the external self. Though the self exists in the external world and, as a Christian, has duties in that world, for Kierkegaard the priority is "strengthening in the inner man" (JP, I, 538). Though he shares Camus' stress on the importance of will (discussed below), Kierkegaard urges the individual to direct the will inward. "The more consciousness, the more self; the more consciousness, the more will; the more will, the more self. A person who has no will at all is not a self; but the more will he has, the more self-consciousness he has also" (*The Sickness Unto Death*, 29). For Kierkegaard, consciousness is the home of the internal decision which, as noted above, commands more importance than the external:

To assume that the external decision is higher [in import] than the internal decision is only an example of the contemptible notions concerning the highest human experience entertained by weak and cowardly and shifty men. To suppose that the external action can decide something forever and make it irrevocable, while the internal decision is not thus decisive, is to entertain a contempt for what is sacred (CUP, 305).

Development of the internal self becomes, for Kierkegaard, the precondition for the attainment of selfhood. This state is reached by the self that increases its subjectivity--its deepest possible self-understanding and self-acceptance.

According to Kierkegaard, "subjectivity is truth" (*CUP*, 33), and "becoming subjective is the task proposed to every human being, and his highest task" (*CUP*, 141). For Kierkegaard, the self must embark on an "awakening and inward deepening" (*JP*, I, 520): the self must acknowledge its profoundest level of truth in order to move to selfhood. This appropriation of truth, this act of "becoming subjective", enables the self to fulfil its duties in the external world by engaging with it in a dynamic state of truth-seeking, a state partially defined by passion.

Similar to Greene, Kierkegaard emphasizes the importance of passion. Kierkegaard stresses the salience of the moment, which he treats in terms of its potential. The moment becomes the locus for the possibility of a one-time feeling or vision of incomparable significance:

What really counts in life is that at some moment one has seen something, felt something which is so great, so matchless, that everything else is nothing in comparison, that even if he forgot everything he would never forget this (*JP*, I, 467).

This emphasis on the self's passionate acquisition of experience relates to Kierkegaard's concept of faith, "the highest passion in the sphere of human subjectivity" (*CUP*, 118). Kierkegaard's belief in God is expressed in terms of fervour, in the commitment of the self to passion. "Faith," he writes in *Fear and Trembling*, "begins precisely where thinking leaves off" (53). Still, and in common with Greene, Kierkegaard defines faith in terms of its relation to doubt, and a distrust of the rational (cerebration-oriented) self: "For if passion is eliminated, faith no longer exists, and certainty and passion do not go together" (*CUP*, 30).

Kierkegaard relates faith to his concept of risk: an act of passion performed in the self's external world for the benefit of the internal. "For

without risk there is no faith, and the greater the risk the greater the faith...the less objective security the more profound the possible inwardness" (CUP, 188). Faith is, of course, faith in the existence of God. However, it is Kierkegaard's emphasis on the need to take a great risk, to embrace one's passions and irrational self, that applies to this study of the divided self. Kierkegaard's clarion call to "venture everything!" to attain "eternal happiness" (CUP, 382), to take "the leap of faith, the qualitative transition from non-belief to belief" (CUP, 15) relates to the troubled moments-of-decision experienced by the self in Greene's fiction.

Contrary to the Catholic and Kierkegaardian concept of the self, in which purpose and meaning are discernible in a world made by--and infused with the will of--God, Albert Camus argues against all transcendent values. Consequently, with "the throne of God [now] overturned," it is the self which must "create the justice, order and unity that he sought in vain within his own condition, and in this way...justify the fall of God" (*The Rebel*, 25). Contrary to the Christian belief in the necessity of God to the self, Camus offers an optimism in the self without God. "Man's greatness...lies in his decision to be stronger than his condition. And if his condition is unjust, he has only one way of overcoming it, and that is to be just himself" (RRD, 39-40). Thus, in the Camusian concept of the self, will and perseverance are integral. In *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death*, Camus clarifies his position:

I continue to believe that this world has no ultimate meaning.
But I know that something in it has a meaning and that is man,
because he is the only creature to insist on having one (RRD, 28).

This concept of the self both liberates the self from a sense of its unjust condition, and saddles the self with responsibility.

With a concept of the self born of World War Two and a fearful existence in German-occupied Paris, Camus confronts the absurdity of existence. To create meaning and purpose for one's self and others, Camus counsels an awareness of the world's absurdity and an embrace of "metaphysical rebellion":

I proclaim that I believe in nothing and that everything is absurd, but I cannot doubt the validity of my proclamation and I must at least believe in my protest. The first and only evidence that is supplied me, within the terms of absurdist experience, is rebellion...[it] is born of the spectacle of irrationality, confronted with an unjust and incomprehensible condition (*The Rebel*, 10).

Moreover, a sense of urgency pervades the Camusian concept of the self. "Do not forget: illness and decrepitude. There's not a minute to be wasted" (*Nb*, 79). Camus' sense of urgency implies an emphasis upon external action, in contrast to the priority Kierkegaard gives to "becoming subjective", to the inner self's deliberations.

Similar to Greene, Camus acknowledges the suffering inherent in the human condition, though he advocates a kind of stoical acceptance of such pain. Camus avoids Greene's exploration of the divided self's condition of suffering, for Camus' primary interest is in action: in the creation of meaning and purpose, and in the reduction of injustice in one's society and the world. He stresses man as a social being with social responsibilities. "Our duty is to do what one knows to be fair and good--preferable. That is easy? No, for even what one knows to be preferable, one does with difficulty" (*Nb*, 83). Camus recognizes the problem of combating injustice with stoical honesty, but that recognition is the extent of his exploration of the self's concomitant difficulty. For Camus, human injustice demands urgency of action, a movement away from deliberation and towards an action aimed at promoting

justice for all living human beings. "Decadence," Camus cautions, "begins the moment one accepts" (*Nb*, 103). The metaphysical rebel, in concert with others, seeks universal justice through collective action. This search is partially based on the rebel's compassion for those who share his absurdist sensibility. This concept of the self/loved other relationship differs from the Christian, with which, and not surprisingly, Camus disagrees.

Similar to Greene, Camus notes the division of the self which inheres in the self/loved other relationship. Yet Camus alters the spiritual cloth with which Kierkegaard dresses the self's relationship to *all* others. Camus writes that "[there] is not a single thing one does (one really does) for a human being that does not negate another human being...loving another human being amounts to killing all others" (*Nb*, 199). Camus' alarmist language, albeit figurative, bespeaks a pessimism about the self's commitment to a loved other. "Peace would consist of loving in silence. But there is conscience, and the person; one must speak out. Loving becomes hell" (*Nb*, 187). Camus stresses here the verbal externalization of the self's subjectivity to the other, perhaps a result of the other's words or actions. The self's subjectivity differs, by definition, from that of the other. In Camus' concept of the self/loved other relationship, his priority seems to be the self's externalization of its subjectivity--"to speak out". In a self/loved other relationship, the other's spoken sentiment can obscure the self's own ongoing effort to create meaning for itself based on its own truth, on the values it must create for itself. "I withdrew from the world not because I had enemies, but because I had friends. Not because they did me an ill turn as is customary, but because they thought me better than I am. It was a lie I could not endure" (*Nb*, 187). Camus' willingness to judge himself unworthy of amity,

and to thus exile his self from others, is his harshest human penalty. For the love Camus advocates for the self is found in the solidarity of human beings, as that love is externalized in collective action.

The primacy which Greene and Christian writers give to the self/loved other relationship is transmuted by Camus into a rebel self/rebel others relationship. "The world I live in is loathsome to me, but I feel one with the men who suffer in it" (*RRD*, 83). Suffering, a marker of the divided self in Greene's fiction, becomes for Camus the self's inspiration to derive meaning from its own self *together* with others:

In absurdist experience, suffering is individual. But from the moment when a movement of rebellion begins, suffering is seen as a collective experience. Therefore the first progressive step for a mind overwhelmed by the strangeness of things is to realize that this feeling is shared with all men and that human reality, in its entirety, suffers from the distance which separates it from the rest of the universe...In our daily trials rebellion plays the same role as does the "cogito" in the realm of thought: it is the first piece of evidence. But this evidence lures the individual from his solitude. It founds its first value on the whole human race. I rebel--therefore we exist (*The Rebel*, 22).

For Camus, such collective action does not detract from the individuality of the self. Collective action becomes that which defines the self, and that from which the self receives an experience akin to love.

Chapter Three An Analysis of the Divided Self
 In Four Graham Greene Novels

3.1. *The Quiet American*

In this section, I examine the self of Thomas Fowler. Provoked by a sense of injustice, Fowler slowly changes his empirical world-view and credo of non-involvement to a passionate commitment to action. Thus, his self moves to selfhood through both internal deliberation and an external decision, and a recognition of the temporal world as infused with emblems of the transcendent. This recognition implies his self's spiritual growth. Furthermore, his self's relationship to a loved other and confessor-other hastens Fowler's confrontation with--and ultimate acceptance of--his self's subjectivity. The presence of a loved other and confessor-other in *The Quiet American* enables the reader to trace movement of Fowler's self to selfhood.

The Quiet American is set in the French Indo-China of the early 1950s, the time of the French colonial war against the Communist Vietminh. Thomas Fowler, a middled-aged British journalist, narrates the story, and often states his belief in the primacy of the individual over "what doesn't exist--mental concepts" (118). Yet Fowler forsakes his credo and abets the Vietminh's murder of Fowler's friend, an American Economic Mission Attaché named Alden Pyle, a man "responsible for at least fifty deaths" (17). The

novel's plot begins just hours after the assassination of Pyle, though the reader eventually learns of Fowler's perspective as some time after "the war years in Indo-China" (177). The time perspective is significant. Though the plot follows flashbacks and flashforwards and ends where it began, there is a change apparent within the self of Fowler. The significance of this change becomes stressed by the order in which he relates the narrative's episodes. The fact that his self's "religious sense" becomes progressively apparent--in a plot premised on Fowler's selective use of hindsight--underlines his desire to portray his self's spiritual growth to the reader. Greene's use of the first-person point-of-view in *The Quiet American* lets the reader remain inside Fowler's self throughout the narrative, and likely indicates Greene's artistic project: to investigate the self's movement to selfhood through the region of the divided self.

Critics neglect the spiritual growth of Fowler's self. Norman Sherry calls Fowler a "tired cynic, [who] commits the greatest sin in Greene's catechism--the fatal betrayal of a friend" (Sherry, 475). David Lodge considers *The Quiet American* typical of Greene's work after his "Catholic period", work "permeat[ed]...with negative and sceptical attitudes, characteristically filtered through the consciousness of a laconic, disillusioned narrator" (Lodge, 45). Fowler often exhibits such traits, but they are offset by complicating factors: his passion, his "stupid conscience" (168), and his movement away from an empirical self.

At the novel's outset Fowler declares his empiricism. He reflects on his girlfriend Phuong's name, which means phoenix, and tells himself that "nothing nowadays is fabulous and nothing rises from its ashes" (3). Early in the novel he visits a cathedral--an act which seems to undercut his

empiricism--and tells himself how "I had never in my career discovered the inexplicable...I had no visions or miracles in my repertoire of memory" (110). Furthermore, Fowler defines himself by his disinterest in the affairs of others:

It had been an article of my creed. The human condition being what it was, let them fight, let them love, let them murder, I would not be involved. My fellow journalists called themselves correspondents; I preferred the title of reporter. I wrote what I saw: I took no action--even an opinion is a kind of action (27).

However, when Fowler repeats his credo--"I'm not involved" (197)--to the French pilot Captain Trouin after Fowler accompanies him on a vertical bombing raid, Trouin replies that "we all get involved in a moment of emotion and then can't get out" (198). Fowler's proclamation of his credo at the novel's outset defines his self. As such, his self is buffeted by events in the text, and thus embarked on "the process of becoming". Each protagonist self in this study proclaims a credo; Greene perhaps places such a credo in his text as a kind of concrete position, in order to stress the commitments which will fissure the credo of his protagonist's self. The potted credo creates a didactic effect, as if Greene needs to ensure that the reader gleans the protagonist self's moral outlook. Fowler's self, then, is divided by its empirical and passionate proclivities.

As the narrative progresses, these contradictory tendencies intensify within Fowler's self. When Phuong forsakes him for Pyle, Fowler goes on a crying jag in the washroom of the American Economic Mission. More significantly, Fowler has a "moment of emotion" in the aftermath of the explosion of General Thé's 11:30 a.m. bomb at Place Garnier, a Saigon square. (Thé is the mercenary Pyle financially aids, in the belief that Thé will bring democracy to Viet Nam.) Fowler's self internalizes the sight of a man's

twitching legless torso and a mother "with what was left of her baby on her lap" (212). When Pyle arrives at the scene he appears unable to admit to Fowler the moral implications of his (Pyle's) complicity in the carnage. Fowler departs for the office of the Communist agent Mr. Heng. A histrionic Fowler asks him, "What can I do? He's got to be stopped" (226). The cliché phrases become a measure of Fowler's hysteria. When Heng asks if Fowler will assist the Vietminh in the assassination of Pyle, the question reminds Fowler of Captain Trouin. Mr. Heng remarks that "Sooner or later...one has to take sides. If one is to remain human" (227). In a similar vein, Vigot--Fowler's friend, and the French Sureté officer who works on Pyle's "case"--quotes Pascal to Fowler. "[Y]ou must wager. It is not optional. You are embarked. You don't follow your own principles, Fowler. You're *engagé*, like the rest of us" (179). After the Place Garnier massacre, an impassioned sense of injustice works on Fowler. Still, he deliberates, as his self dwells in the region he elsewhere calls "those internal courts where our true decisions are made" (205). Fowler does not immediately promise to assist Heng. Only later that day, after conversing with a remorseless Pyle, does Fowler make his internal decision and signal a Communist agent below his apartment window to proceed with the assassination of Pyle.

Fowler's internal decision, made with the intention of saving anonymous Vietnamese lives, becomes the site for the strife within his self. Kierkegaard claims that "every man has in himself the most dangerous traitor of all" (*Works of Love*, 39). Fowler betrays his belief in the primacy of the individual. "Suffering is not increased by numbers: one body can contain all the suffering the world can feel. I had judged like a journalist in terms of quantity and I had betrayed my own principles" (240). Still, like Camus'

rebel, Fowler acts to create "order, justice". His complicity in Pyle's murder recalls Camus' examination of the *realpolitik* of the metaphysical rebel's decisions:

The logic of the rebel is to want to serve justice so as not to add to the injustice of the human condition, to insist on plain language so as not to increase the universal falsehood, and to wager, in spite of human misery, for happiness...if he is not always able not to kill, either directly or indirectly, he can put his conviction and passion to work at diminishing the chances of murder around him (*The Rebel*, 285-6).

Camus addresses the moral quandary of killing one man or men to save the lives of (presumably many) others, as part of the self's responsibility to create justice and protect the weak. Fowler decides to assist in Pyle's murder only after Fowler ascertains the remorselessness of the man partly responsible for the Place Garnier massacre. After the event Pyle tells Fowler that "[t]hey were only war casualties...a pity, but you can't always hit your target. Anyway they died in the right cause" (234). Pyle will likely abet more massacres of Vietnamese civilians in pursuit of his ideal: a "Third Force". This "force" is Pyle's textbook notion of a political force neither Communist nor colonialist, one capable of bringing democracy to Viet Nam. Pyle appears willing, beyond a reasonable doubt, to pursue his ideological goal with a marked lack of remorse.

Such an absence of remorse is elsewhere defined by Fowler as inhuman, and thus the definition hints at Greene's concept of the ideal self as inherently troubled. When, stuck with Pyle in a watch-tower outside of Saigon, Fowler hears "something" climb the ladder, and reflects on how "only a man could climb a ladder, and yet I couldn't think of it as a man like myself--it was as though an animal were moving in to kill, very quietly and certainly with the remorselessness of another kind of creation" (136). Fowler's entire

narrative examines both the cause and effect of the guilt of his own troubled self. It is guilt that Kierkegaard considers intrinsic to the self's existence. He states that "the essential consciousness of guilt is the first plunge into existence" (*CUP*, 47). The guilt inherent in Fowler's self produces its internal strife, and creates the selfscape which permits his self's movement to selfhood.

Early in the novel Fowler states a moral code based on an ethical minimum. "All one could do was try to make the future less hard, to break the future gently when it came" (76). Yet his narrative supports a view of the ethical self closer to Kierkegaard's, who considers the kind of internal strife which Fowler's self experiences as the precondition for spiritual growth. "[For] existing human beings...the ideal of a persistent... the only view of life that does not carry with it an inevitable disillusionment" (*CUP*, 110). *The Quiet American* becomes a detailed trajectory of Fowler's "persistent striving".

Fowler's narrative is a disquisition on "persistent striving" towards the understanding of two kinds of commitment: a personal involvement in war and a love relationship with an other. His narrative represents his movement to, first, an understanding of his self's subjectivity with regard to these commitments, and secondly, an externalization of its subjectivity in action. A minor character in the novel reveals to Fowler an important truth about involvement, Fowler's *idée fixe*. "War and Love--they have always been compared" (198). Captain Trouin's statement implies a truth Fowler moves toward: the similarities between the ways that war and love demand involvement, demands which contradict his self-defining credo. In his decision to assist in Pyle's assassination, an act of commitment to the

Vietnamese endangered by Pyle's support of General Thé, Fowler "identifies himself with other men *and so surpasses himself*, and from this point of view human solidarity is metaphysical" (*The Rebel*, 17, emphasis mine). Camus' concept of the metaphysical rebel's duty to the oppressed partially explains Fowler's movement to selfhood. Still, yet another kind of commitment motivates Fowler, and this is his love for the twenty-year-old Phuong. Thus, the Fowler who introduces himself as a cynical empiricist navigates his way through two conflictive commitments: the war in Vietnam and his relationship to it as reporter, and his love for Phuong, a love jeopardized by the arrival of Pyle in Saigon.

Fowler's commitment to Phuong forces him to face his fear of loneliness. While he watches Pyle dance with Phuong on the day he meets her, Fowler reflects on how, since childhood, he "had never believed in permanence, yet I had longed for it. Always I was afraid of losing happiness" (49-50). Fowler panics when, shortly after this day, Pyle proclaims his desire to marry Phuong after wresting her from Fowler. The middle-aged narrator "felt for the first time the premonitory chill of loneliness" (69). He later tells Pyle that "I've reached the age when sex isn't the problem so much as old age and death...I just don't want to be alone in my last decade, that's all. I wouldn't know what to think about all day long. I'd sooner have a woman in the same room--even one I didn't love. But if Phuong left me, would I have the energy to find another?" (133). Phuong functions as human security for Fowler. She is one of a group of women about whom Fowler feels qualified to generalize. He tells Pyle, "[Vietnamese women] love you in return for kindness, security, the presents you give them" (132). As an individual, Phuong does not count; it is her status as a woman willing to stay with Fowler

till death that matters to him.

Phuong serves as an other upon which the anger and frustration of Fowler's self are projected. His self's frustration grows originally out of a desire to understand her:

[one] never knows another human being...I remembered that first tormenting year when I had tried so passionately to understand her, when I had begged her to tell me what she thought and had scared her with my unreasoning anger at her silences. Even my desire had been a weapon, as though when one plunged one's sword towards the victim's womb, she would lose control and speak (173).

At a time in the novel when Fowler believes Phuong is secretly seeing Pyle, Fowler again projects his frustration onto her: "I made love to her in those days savagely as though I hated her, but what I hated was the future" (181). Fowler likely hates too the truth Phuong's perceived behaviour shows him about his own self: his insecurity and inability to cope with life alone; his need for a loved other in a relationship he could control. Phuong becomes a barometer of Fowler's self: when fear and self-loathing grip him, he makes violent love to her. Significantly, just hours after the time planned for Pyle's murder, as Fowler begins to realize the likelihood of that event, he meets the Phuong who had left him for Pyle and "strange to say, I had no desire to hurt her or even to hurt myself" (4). In the internal courts of Fowler's self, he seems to realize that justice has been served, and there is no need to hate himself and thus project that hatred onto his loved other. For Fowler, the loved other becomes the precondition for his self's movement to a subjective truth: in Kierkegaardian terms, an increased subjectivity. Furthermore, the absence of a projected self-loathing is one proof of the movement of Fowler's self to selfhood, for the absence indicates his self's acceptance of its subjectivity.

Fowler's attainment of selfhood is also defined by an ultimate awareness

of a spiritual dimension in the temporal world. In Greene's concept of the self, Fowler--and each of the protagonists in this study--has a soul. The soul's manifestation in a self is described by Alfred Jones, the narrator of Greene's novel *Doctor Fischer of Geneva or The Bomb Party*. Jones tells his wife that, "[i]f you have a soul you can't be satisfied" (83). Halfway through his narrative, the empiricist Fowler begins a reverie that hints at a nascent awareness of spiritual emblems in the temporal world. He is stranded eighty kilometres from Saigon; while Pyle waits for him in a nearby watchtower, Fowler stares at the stars. He notes that "starlight is alive and never still, it is almost as though someone in those vast spaces is trying to communicate a message of goodwill" (124). Significantly, as Fowler leaves the place of his reverie, he reflects that "I couldn't help walking with my shoulders bent: I felt more unobtrusive that way" (124). Fowler ostensibly walks in this manner because he fears detection by a Vietminh patrol or soldier; however, after his star thoughts, his walk description seems to hint at a recognition of God's presence. This renders his bowed gait ambiguous, and hints at a kind of physical reverence. Fowler's recognition of spiritual emblems occurs once more in his narrative, in a scene where Vigot tries again to uncover Fowler's complicity in Pyle's murder.

Nearly a fortnight after Pyle's death, Vigot visits Fowler. Vigot acts as a confessor-other to Fowler, who tries to underscore his innocence in the death of Pyle. As a confessor-other, Vigot's function is paradoxical: Fowler does not want to confess the truth of his complicity in Pyle's murder, for Vigot could arrest Fowler or have him deported. No, Vigot becomes the confessor-other upon whom Fowler's self projects its new spiritual recognition; in a sense, Fowler "confesses" that recognition to his own self,

and to the reader. First, Fowler "held the whisky out to [Vigot], so that he could see how calm my nerves were" (217). As the conversation continues between the two men, Fowler begins to reflect on how Vigot has become for Fowler "a silence" (222). Fowler experiences "the feeling of some force immobile and profound" (221-222). For the empiricist Fowler, this represents his self's deeper acknowledgement of the "religious sense", of a transcendental dimension in temporal reality. Fowler's self, tense with the fear of Vigot's discovery of his (Fowler's) guilt, denies the truth of his complicity, but in the process recognizes a spiritual aspect of reality which he has previously denied.

Kierkegaard describes how such internal strife preconditions spiritual growth. He defines the self as inherently divided and contradictory, as "a synthesis of two contrasting qualities, [wherein] collisions and contradictions in existence must play an essential role. Only through inward strife and 'adversity' can a man develop spiritually and gain 'one more string' in his lyre" (*JP, I*, 518). For Fowler's self, selfhood is attained in two ways. First, by virtue of a "persistent striving", although ambiguously acknowledged by his self, toward a recognition of the "religious sense" in temporal existence. Secondly, Fowler's self reaches selfhood due to the recognition and acceptance of its subjectivity (as noted above). Significantly, these recognitions follow an *engagé* action which breaks his credo of apathy and commits his self to the saving of individual Vietnamese lives.

Catholic apologists deny moral relativism; every self is sanctified, hence suicide or the murder of an other is a sin. Thus, from the Catholic perspective, the apparent movement of Fowler's self to selfhood becomes

heterodox, if not paradoxical. For his self's movement is defined by a progressive awareness, as a consequence of his decision to abet murder, of a spiritual dimension in existence. Nonetheless, Fowler's decision is the catalyst for a recognition of a spiritual dimension in the temporal world, an awareness linked to his self's troubled conscience after its act. Fowler's final line in his narrative reads: "Everything had gone right with me since he had died, but how I wished there existed someone to whom I could say that I was sorry" (247). As seen above, in Greene's fiction a troubled self possesses a soul: a soul the empiricist Fowler would likely deny, but which he reveals to an ever-present confessor-other throughout his narrative: the reader.

Through the suffering born of a difficult internal decision, Fowler's self moves to selfhood. He becomes "more human" because he sacrifices his long-time credo of non-involvement in favour of an action designed to save lives threatened by Pyle, an unrepentant innocent who privileges a political ideal over the persons who may die in the pursuance of such an ideal. Fowler remains troubled at the novel's end; he has learned, with Camus, that "there is no justice; there are only limits" (*Nb*, 185). The movement of Fowler's self to selfhood is proven by its newfound awareness, at the narrative's end, of a spiritual component in temporal reality. This awareness contrasts with the narrative's early establishment of his self's empirical atheism and concomitant cynicism. Thus, the belatedness of his self's awareness is salient, for it stresses the distance his self has travelled through the region of the divided self.

3.2. *The Honorary Consul*

In this section, I examine Eduardo Plarr's divided self in relation to his credo, one which changes from a firm belief in life as absurd to a desire to understand God's existence. Plarr's internal decisions are analyzed in light of the subjectivity he ultimately achieves for his self. Finally, I examine his self's attainment of selfhood. His self moves to selfhood through the pain of understanding and acting upon two kinds of love: a love for his mistress and a communal love for a group of revolutionaries, two of whom also serve as his confessor-others.

Doctor Eduardo Plarr, a man in his early thirties, has a prosperous practice in a northern Argentinian city, a port on the Paraná River opposite the shores of Paraguay. The plot of *The Honorary Consul* begins on a November night in the early 1970s, in the city of Plarr's "adopted country". Paraguayan revolutionaries have kidnapped an honorary British consul named Charley Fortnum in an operation Plarr assists, for he is a childhood friend of two of the revolutionaries: León Rivas and Aquino Ribera. The sixty-year-old consul is a mistaken choice. The kidnappers sought the American Ambassador to Argentina, in the hope of arranging the release of twenty comrades from the jails and police stations of the Paraguayan dictator, General Alfred Stroessner. The kidnappers hold Fortnum hostage in a *barrio* hut outside of the city, a hut soon surrounded by paratroopers from the Argentinian army's 9th Brigade. Plarr's final three nights and two days are spent in the hut,

which becomes the setting for most of the novel's final hundred pages. The enclosed place occasions arguments and discussions between Plarr and the others. Plarr argues for the value of Fortnum's life, a value apparently counter to that which the revolutionaries give an individual's life, which for them remains subject to their ideological goals. Rivas, a priest turned revolutionary and Plarr's best childhood friend, remarks to Plarr early in the novel that "[t]here are a lot of people who would be discouraged if nothing happened. In our situation something must always happen" (44). Both Rivas and Ribera argue in favour of killing Fortnum. Yet in the hut Fortnum's life is not the only topic of debate. Often at Plarr's instigation, the men constantly discuss love, faith, and the existence of God. Plarr's initiation of these discussions, and his comments on the nature of love and the human condition, partially reflect his self's movement to selfhood.

Early in *The Honorary Consul* Plarr contemplates the literary work of his novelist-friend Doctor Jorge Julio Saavedra, whose novels are marked by a heavy fatalism. Plarr's credo becomes apparent to the reader, as Plarr considers the advice he would give his friend. "Life isn't like that. Life isn't noble or dignified. Even Latin-American life. Nothing is ineluctable. Life has surprises. Life is absurd. Because it's absurd there is always hope" (23). Plarr, though raised a Catholic and taught by Jesuits--priests who perhaps "left one germ of the disease [of belief] in me, but I have...kept it under control" (271)--seems to share Camus' concept of the absurd, of the world as meaningless, and thus of the self's responsibility to create its own values. Plarr's chosen profession proves his interest in the maintenance of values such as justice and hope for the sick: at a regular daily hour he tends without charge the poor of the *barrios popular*, the shanty neighbourhoods

surrounding the port city. When, in the kidnappers' hut, Plarr hears Ribera speak of his torture in a Paraguayan police station, the doctor feels nauseous, and recalls "unpleasant deaths which had affected him less. In those cases there had been something to do, some means of helping in however small a degree" (126). Like Camus' metaphysical rebel, Plarr actively chooses to engage in the world of suffering. Moreover, he considers his own commitment to the sick in terms of God's abnegation of *his* supposed responsibility. "Mine's a busy life, León, trying to cure the sick. I can't leave that to God" (265). The affinities between Plarr's self and the Camusian concept of the rebel are partly upset by two aspects the doctor's self: its sense of guilt (discussed below), and its movement toward a position of scepticism with regard to the godlessness of the temporal world.

As the novel develops, evidence grows of Plarr's dissatisfaction with an atheist concept of existence. In the final hut setting, while Fortnum lies atop a coffin in a back room, Plarr and Rivas dispute the nuances of God's existence. Each of the hut's six inhabitants feels increasingly anxious. Colonel Perez, the city's Chief of Police and Plarr's friend, is in command of the paratroopers who surround the kidnappers' redoubt; Perez uses a loudspeaker to inform the kidnappers of the failure of their plan. They sought the release of ten Paraguayan political prisoners in return for the release of Charlie Fortnum; according to Perez, the U.S. and British governments refuse to bargain with the revolutionaries. Furthermore, the soldiers have already shot an Indian kidnapper, and his corpse lies in the mud beyond the hut. Plarr, exhausted by the ordeal of waiting to hear a radio report regarding the kidnappers' demands, and having repeatedly denied the existence of God after he (paradoxically) raises the question over and over of

God's existence, admits to himself that "I can no longer mock a man for his beliefs, however absurd. I can only envy them" (260). As noted above, Plarr has described his belief in life as absurd, a perception that implies his denial of God's existence. While Plarr feels the pressure of Colonel Perez' threats, considers the willingness of the revolutionaries to kill Fortnum, and considers too the weight of ongoing discussions of love and faith, Plarr answers the consul's question "Do you believe in anything at all?" with a "No". Significantly, Plarr reconsiders his reply. "Now that the personal truth was out between them Doctor Plarr felt a need to speak with complete accuracy. He added, 'I don't think so'" (286).

Plarr now appears to believe in doubt, a paradox consistent with other Greene protagonists, such as Fowler and Castle. Moreover, during the Catholic mass Rivas gives at the request of his wife, Plarr stands among the others in the hut and reflects on how they perhaps thought "he was praying with his eyes lowered and a kind of prayer did enter his mind--at least, heavy with self-distrust, that if the moment came he would have the skill and determination to act quickly" (287). Plarr's self is troubled by doubt, yet it is a doubt that exists now only in relation to a new half-belief in God's ability to influence events in the temporal world. Plarr's doubt situates his self on the border zone between two countries: a Camusian land of absolute belief in the self's ability to create truth and meaning and purpose for itself, and a Catholic land where citizens accept God as the creator of absolute truth. Still, in the passage quoted, Plarr's emphasis on the "moment", on the necessity of acting "quickly", recalls the weight Camus lays on urgency. For Camus, the self that waits becomes an iniquitous self. In the tense hut atmosphere, with Perez' 8 a.m. deadline for surrender a mere hour away, Plarr seems to enact

Camus' exhortation: "[t]he longing for rest and peace must be thrust aside; it coincides with the acceptance of iniquity" (*The Rebel*, 249). Plarr's sense of urgency has built up throughout the narrative, an urgency that becomes the culmination of an emotion absent from the Camusian concept of the self: guilt. This guilt is symptomatic of a troubled conscience, inherent in Greene's concept of the divided self and a necessary prelude to selfhood.

Early in the novel Plarr reflects on his discomfort in the company of the man he cuckolds: "perhaps he was plagued by primitive sensations of guilt" (19). In *The Quiet American*, Fowler also describes the guilt he feels, after writing an unjust letter to Pyle, in terms of its biological-cum-historical origin. "What distant ancestors had given me this stupid conscience? Surely they were free of it when they raped and killed in their palaeolithic world" (168). For the self of Eduardo Plarr, an uneasy conscience--troubled by a sense of guilt--is an ever-present internal force, a force which divides his self and in part impels his externalization of anger. During a visit he makes to a brothel with Saavedra, Plarr remembers "how seldom he had thought of his father, and perhaps it was a sense of guilt because of his own safety and comfort which made him a little angry now" (72). Plarr redirects his anger from his own self to Saavedra. He criticizes the implausibility of the Argentinian's literary creation--"Your fisherman is timeless because he never existed" (72)--but immediately regrets his words and apologizes. It is the guilt Plarr feels with regard to his father that inspires the son's projection of his subjectivity, in the form of a truth he otherwise smothers in the interest of politeness--itself a kind of falsehood. In Kierkegaardian terms, Plarr's first reaction to his guilt, his anger, is the proof of a truth gained through his subjectivity, for he has finally acknowledged this truth. Plarr's

outburst is the external manifestation of his subjective truth; in Kierkegaard's concept of the self, such truth is inspired by internal contradiction--in Plarr's case, his guilt over his father and his anger at Saavedra. Guilt troubles Plarr, and becomes a means of measuring his movement to selfhood.

At the close of the second of two scenes set in Plarr's apartment, scenes that end with his departure for the kidnappers' hut, Plarr's self moves from a mild anxiety (evident in the first scene) to a sense of guilt over the fate of Fortnum. This guilt seems to inspire an act calculated to save the honorary consul's life. Significantly, the close of the second scene features much greater odds against Plarr's life than those present on his first departure from his apartment to the hut. On the Tuesday night which opens the plot, the night of the planned kidnapping, Plarr returns home after midnight from an evening spent with a friend. He is telephoned by the kidnappers he has begrudgingly assisted; their abducted man (which they assume to be the American Ambassador) appears to be dying. Plarr's first thought is self-preservation. "Fear made him furious. His liberty, perhaps his life, seemed to lie in hopelessly incompetent hands" (34). As Plarr prepares to meet the kidnappers in the street, he reflects also on his surprise at the actual manifestation of their plan. "Now, as he stood in the dark hall, watching intently the luminous dial of his watch, he realized he had never for a moment believed they would reach the point of action" (35). This moment in the text highlights Plarr's wonder at the actions taken by others, yet the setting for his wonderment prefigures an identical setting with a vastly different internal decision on Plarr's part.

The next time Plarr stands in his dark night-time hall is forty-eight

hours later, after a day spent in Buenos Aires. His mistress lies in his bed behind a closed door. Plarr feels greatly disturbed. Colonel Perez stands before him, and has just told Plarr that his father was shot a year ago during an escape attempt from a Paraguayan police station. As Plarr ingests these words, the kidnappers again phone Plarr and urge him to join them and attend to their wounded hostage:

The small patch of marble floor on which he stood seemed like the edge of an abyss; he could not move one step in either direction without falling deeper in the darkness of involvement or guilt...[h]e felt giddy on his ledge of marble parquet. He couldn't stand motionless forever (211).

The internal decision Plarr makes is inspired by guilt, a marker of the divided self in Greene's fiction. Here is the site of what Kierkegaard considers "the real action", which "is not the external act, but an internal decision in which the individual puts an end to the once possible and identifies himself with the content of his thought in order to exist in it" (*CUP*, 302). Plarr's inward decision is *being* made: his next action proves that his subjectivity has increased, for he seems to have appropriated his guilt over his father. His following actions seem to grow out of a deeper recognition and acceptance of his feelings of love and guilt and doubt. Thus, Plarr seems to move from a kind of Kierkegaardian inward journey to a recognition of Camusian urgency--the need to act in the present moment.

Still, it is the guilt Plarr experiences in various degrees throughout the novel that now seems to inspire an extraordinary act. This act will eventually involve his risky exit from the hut, itself an act performed with the hope of negotiating the safety of the hut's inhabitants. During the second hallway moment (outlined above), the stakes have been raised with regard to the risk involved in another visit to the hut to save Fortnum's

life, for Perez has told Plarr that he will shoot him if he discovers that Plarr is involved. The second hallway scene appears to emphasize the movement of Plarr's self from an unwilling accomplice in the bungled kidnapping to a man intent on a final act of rescue of all the men in the hut. This intention is, significantly, the product of an internal decision formed over two days and nights, and the product too of the contradictory forces of guilt and self-preservation.

In *The Honorary Consul*, Plarr moves from an unambiguous acceptance of a Camusian concept of the world as absurd to a paradoxical belief in doubt, in the final inability of the self to know whether or not there is anything, as he tells Fortnum just minutes before he (Plarr) dies, to believe in. Plarr's final adherence to doubt is a commitment. It is a final position that appears as a paradoxical non-position, but that in fact works as the catalyst which, for an ongoingly divided self, results in a movement from a begrudging willingness to visit the hut and tend Fortnum, to a final desperate act in which Plarr is killed while trying to save the five individuals in the hut. Plarr's final "belief" in doubt appears as a gloss on his real belief, real by virtue of the motivation behind his final act: the value of the lives of the human beings in the hut. His self remains divided by an intellectual doubt, girded by the self-admitted honesty of his response to Fortnum's question. However, in the realm of external action, his final act supports the collective action incarnated in the hut of kidnappers. The inspiration for his sacrifice derives from a desire to act similar to the desire of Camus' rebel--the rebel who will act, despite desperate circumstances, to save human lives. Yet Plarr's ultimate sacrifice, made in support of what Camus calls "a common dignity that I cannot allow myself or others to debase" (*The Rebel*,

297). is emphasized in the text as a twofold act of commitment. Plarr's final act depicts commitment to a collective of others who have shared the travails of a condition akin to imprisonment, and to an other who loves Plarr: his mistress Clara.

Judith Adamson argues that Clara's love is reciprocated. Adamson notes that among Greene's protagonists, "even Plarr [knows] that love makes a claim. It forms the responsibility at the heart of Greene's humanist politics. To be moral is to think about others as you think about yourself. It is the simple teaching of the Beattitudes" (Adamson, 176). Brian Thomas counters this critical position with an argument premised on Plarr as cuckold and brothel-goer, as the self who admits early in the novel his preference for "clinical" (42) brothel sex over an intimate "sexual love". According to Thomas, Plarr is a spiritually bankrupt philanderer, for whom

love becomes merely lust, in which genuine erotic energy congeals into what might be termed a physical 'humor', a repetitive and essentially mechanical sexual urge...he makes amorous conquests but has no use for his mistresses; and in this respect he is perhaps closer in spirit to the Latin code of machismo, itself a perversion of erotic tenderness, yet another mechanism of repression, than he likes to think...[he] suffers from a...form of spiritual as opposed to physical powerlessness, a petrification of the soul (Thomas, 185-186).

Thomas misses the effect of Clara's question--"Eduardo, will you always be angry if I love you?" (205)--on Plarr, who anxiously attempts five times to recall the question she significantly poses on their last occasion together. Plarr's ongoing doubt as to the question's nature indicates the effect of what Adamson calls "love's claim" on his self. Adamson does not explore the nuances of Plarr's "love", how it reflects his relationship with Fortnum and the kidnappers in the hut, who paradoxically appear as both antagonists and confessor-others necessary to Plarr. Yet it is his self's commitment to them,

along with the commitment to Clara, which divide Plarr's self.

Like Thomas Fowler and Henry Scobie, Plarr considers futile the attempt to understand a loved other. With regard to Clara, he reflects that "[h]e could no more imagine her thoughts than he could imagine the thoughts of a strange animal" (282). Still, Plarr continues after this reflection to be troubled by Clara's question. This continuance is consistent with the Greene protagonist's Sisyphean-absurdist actions: Maurice Castle's "doomed always to try again" sensibility, and Fowler's persistent attempts to understand Phuong. Plarr first tries to recall her question almost immediately after he leaves her, but after his failure to remember he deems it unimportant, for "[t]he only questions of importance were those which a man asked himself" (214). Here Plarr paradoxically acknowledges the question's importance, though at this point he does not know it will trouble his self until its death. The movement of Plarr's self to selfhood needs time to internalize Clara's haunting question until his self understands the subjectivity her question reveals--that his self loves her. For the divided Greene self, it is such "persistent striving" that defines the movement to selfhood: a striving that, in Plarr's case, is partly defined by his ongoing attempt to remember Clara's question.

As the loved other, Clara functions as the barometer by which the movement of Plarr's self to selfhood becomes measurable. This movement is concurrent with his understanding of his self, in the Kierkegaardian sense of an increased subjectivity. Clara becomes the projection of Plarr's recognition of the truth of his own self. When he meets her for the second time after attending her as a patient in her home, he buys her a pair of sunglasses. He then grows angry, for "when he looked at her all he could see

was his own face reflected in the mirror-glass. He said, 'For God's sake take off those spectacles. I don't want to shave...I look at myself like that twice a day--that's quite enough'" (96). The loved other is the site of the self's projected self-loathing: Plarr's anger with his self derives from the recognition of his weakness for Clara, the obsessive hold she has on his self. Shortly after the sunglasses scene he beds her in his apartment and, immediately after the sexual act, he reflects with relief that "I'm a free man again" (98). Plarr assumes that his so-called "obsession" has been quelled. Fitting for the self that prefers a brothel's "clinical" sex, Plarr's first post-coital act is the reading of a British medical journal. This action befits the Plarr who tells his novelist-friend Saavedra, "[I]love, love, I wish I knew what you and all the others meant by the word" (198). Thus love becomes a commitment that divides Plarr's self and consequently sets up the precondition for a movement to selfhood, through a recognition of the self's need to love an other. Plarr suffers the guilt of an unexpressed love for his father; unexpressed, because impossible to return to a man Plarr learns is dead. Therefore Clara and, to a certain extent, the kidnappers become the others to whom Plarr can direct the love he cannot give his idealized father.

The movement of Plarr's self to selfhood requires the presence of confessor-others in a situation reminiscent of the life of Plarr's father, the "old English liberal" (252) and comrade to the opponents of Stroessner's dictatorship. As noted above, Plarr's hut situation recalls the Camusian ideal of the rebel self acting in solidarity with a collective of selves in a shared state of suffering. This Camusian ideal is present in Plarr's nostalgic view of his father. Moreover, his father's kind of love is also the model of a love different from the "love" Eduardo associates with his mother.

Her phoney overuse of the word throughout Eduardo's adolescence turned love into a threat followed always by the demand for "obedience, an apology, a kiss which one had no desire to return" (204). Plarr's mother made the concept of love farcical for her son. Conversely, he

[p]erhaps had loved his father all the more because he had never used the word or asked for anything. [Eduardo] could remember only a single [good-bye] kiss...it claimed nothing...the English phrase 'Old Fellow' was the nearest that [his father] ever came to an endearment...[Eduardo] felt no belief at all in sexual love, yet lying awake in the overcrowded flat in Buenos Aires he had sometimes recalled...the illicit nocturnal sounds which he had heard on the *estancia* in Paraguay...a muffled knock...a gunshot...an urgent warning from across the fields--those had been the signals of a genuine tenderness, a compassion deep enough for his father to be prepared to die for it. Was that love? Did León feel love? Did Aquino? (204-205).

Soon after this moment of idealized reflection and doubt, Plarr finds himself amid revolutionaries under siege. Rivas and Ribera want justice for the oppressed of South America--one country according to Che Guevara, whom Rivas invokes with approval. Plarr, who admits to Fortnum that he is "one of them" (221), becomes in effect part of their revolutionary cell. The parallel with Camus' rebel seems apt, for Camus notes that "[m]an's solidarity [is] founded upon rebellion, and rebellion therefore can only find its justification in this solidarity" (*The Rebel*, 22). Yet Plarr's solidarity with the kidnappers does not have purely Camusian overtones: typical of the protagonist's self in this study, his self exists on the axis *between* a secular and Catholic concept of the self, and does not wholly reflect one particular concept.

Specifically, Plarr's situation in the hut invokes not just Camus' concept of the rebel, but also a Catholic concept: the self's need for a confessor.

Plarr shares the fate of entrapment with the kidnappers. Moreover, in their presence his self feels impelled to voice its newfound subjectivity.

This appears in the form of truths his self confronts under the duress of Perez' threat to besiege the hut, the kidnappers' threats to kill Fortnum, and Clara's question. To Rivas, Plarr observes that, "when a man leaves a woman he begins to hate her. Or is it that he hates his own failure? Perhaps we want to destroy the only witness who knows exactly what we are like when we drop the comedy" (259). With his exit from the hut impending, Plarr elaborates his thoughts on love, this time to Aquino Ribera. Plarr admits his jealousy of those who are able to love, and specifically of the man Plarr has cuckolded. "I'm jealous [of Fortnum] because he loves [Clara]. That stupid banal word love. It's never meant anything to me. Like the word God. I know how to fuck--I don't know how to love. Poor drunken Fortnum wins the game" (295). Ironically, Plarr's final act of sacrifice--for Perez has already warned that, "if you meddle in this affair...I will shoot first, and send a wreath later" (210)--ensures the continuance of that love. Clara's child will be nurtured in part by the man whose life Plarr saves: Fortnum. Thus, Plarr's denial of his understanding of love contradicts his actions: his constant attempts to recall Clara's question, and his attempt to negotiate with Perez. These actions bespeak a love for both Clara and the others. Plarr's two confessor-others, León Rivas and Aquino Ribera, are necessary to his increased subjectivity. For, typical of the Greene self divided by commitment, Plarr's self moves to a selfhood defined partly by a subjective understanding he reaches through his conversations with his confessor-others. In Plarr's case, that subjective understanding is his self-perceived and confessed inability "to love".

In Greene's concept of the self, Plarr has maintained a faith in

something, an imperative expressed throughout Greene's fiction. Rivas, the former Catholic priest, tells Plarr that after he lost his faith he married, for "a man must have something to guard" (125). In Greene's novel *The Comedians*, the Communist Doctor Magiot asks the protagonist Brown in a letter, "There is always an alternative to the faith we lose. Or is it the same faith under another mask?" (308). Pyle in *The Quiet American* badgers Fowler about belief, before the American, who asks Fowler curiously innocent questions about love, can state with confidence, "There's something you must believe in. Nobody can go on living without some belief" (118). For Greene, with his noted prejudice against cerebration, the understated and vague *something* undergirds his concept of the self, a self that needs belief. Kierkegaard's statement that "[t]he believer has the ever infallible antidote for despair--possibility" (*The Sickness Unto Death*, 39), seems applicable to Plarr. His final act of sacrifice is motivated by possibility--the possibility not only of saving lives, but of sharing the suffering Plarr knows his father experienced for fifteen years in a Paraguayan police station. For the persistently striving self of the Greene protagonist en route to selfhood, suffering is ineluctable. Though Plarr dies under the guns of the Argentinian 9th Brigade, his self has attained selfhood. This selfhood is premised on his recognition of love's salience to the self, and an incarnation of that recognition in action taken on behalf of a loved other and rebel others.

3.3. *The Heart of the Matter*

Henry Scobie's self is divided by the problem of subjective truth. In this section, I use Kierkegaard's related concepts of subjectivity and inwardness to investigate Scobie's divided self. I examine also the disjunction between his avowed credo and his actions. His apparently Sisyphean-absurdist philosophy--an awareness of life's pain, joined to efforts to ease that pain for others--gives way to despair. I also explore the nature of this slide.

The year is 1942, and for fifteen years the Catholic convert Henry Scobie has lived in the port of a British West African colony, where he works as the Deputy-Commissioner of Police. The middle-aged Major Scobie has been married to his wife Louise for fourteen years. Louise is miserable in the port for she feels that all the other Europeans hate her, a condition Scobie privately considers the effect of her snobbishness. She wants to leave the colony. Consequently, Scobie compromises his integrity by borrowing money from Yusef--a Syrian trader renowned for his criminality--in order to send Louise to South Africa for a vacation. During her absence, Scobie begins an affair with a nineteen-year-old widow, Mrs. Helen Rolt, a woman who has just survived forty days in an open boat after it has been torpedoed. As Scobie's commitments multiply, he loses "the trick of trust" (234). Specifically, he becomes suspicious of Ali, his loyal native servant of fifteen years. Scobie unintentionally abets Ali's murder, an event that spurs Scobie to his final

commitment: suicide. Thus, *The Heart of the Matter* becomes a kind of suicide's progress, and Scobie becomes a much more ambivalent figure than the critical debate makes him out to be.

In this debate, arguments are polar and thus ironically reflect Scobie's own emotional extremism. For example, Brian Thomas argues that both Scobie and the whisky priest protagonist in Greene's second "Catholic novel", *The Power and the Glory*, are

'Christ figures' precisely because both are tragic victims or scapegoats; each functions as a *pharmakos* whose ultimate fate derives its meaning or intelligibility from the central Christian myth of the Crucifixion. Their respective lives and deaths become "imitations" of another life and death in a larger, implicit, contextual narrative (Thomas, xiii).

Thomas' reading of Scobie in terms of the central Christian myth affirms Scobie's suicide as an act of self-sacrifice for the sake of others, for Scobie believes his death will spare others the pain he inevitably spreads. Anne Salvatore affirms Scobie's self in terms of his "deepening self-knowledge...[born of] the spiritual journey of a weak and good man who is not destroyed by pity but led into selfhood by his humanity" (Salvatore, 78). This shared critical position of Scobie as Christian exemplum--a common position in Greene scholarship--contrasts with the critical views of a virulently "anti-Scobie" camp.

In a review which appeared on the publication of Greene's novel, George Orwell infuses a critique of Scobie with one of Greene himself:

All [Scobie] is interested in is his own progress towards damnation...[the] central idea of the book is that it is better, spiritually higher, to be an erring Catholic than a virtuous pagan...[Greene] appears to share the idea, which has been floating around ever since Baudelaire, that there is something rather *distingué* in being damned...Scobie is incredible because the two halves of him do not fit together. If he were capable of getting into the kind of mess that is described, he would have got

into it years earlier. If he really felt that adultery was mortal sin, he would stop committing it; if he persisted in it, his sense of sin would weaken. If he believed in Hell, he would not risk going there merely to spare the feelings of a couple of neurotic women...if he were the kind of man we are told he is--that is, a man whose chief characteristic is a horror of causing pain--he would not be an officer in a colonial police force (Orwell, 498-500).

Michael Sheldon follows Orwell's critical trail. For Sheldon, Scobie is a masochist. With regard to his mistress Helen Rolt,

[Scobie] seems to want an affair simply to make himself more miserable. There is no question that a love of pain attracts him to Helen Rolt...if he cannot have beauty and love, he will make a pleasure of ugliness and pain...The situation is never as bad as Scobie thinks; we later discover that both women can live without him...[Scobie] tells God that he will be doing Him a favour by taking his own life. But the pleasure is all Scobie's... [h]aving found so much unhappiness in life, he wants to wallow in it, making every good thing bad. It is a path of destruction which must lead to the sin of suicide. It is the only way that he can carry pain to the ultimate extreme (Sheldon, 349-350).

Both critical positions are problematic because, in their approach to Scobie's self from extreme positions, the critics miss the ambivalence that animates his self. When viewed through the lens of Kierkegaard's concept of subjectivity, Scobie's self becomes ambivalent, which renders tenuous his Christ-figure status and achievement of selfhood, and also his psychological improbability and fatalistic damnation-wish.

Scobie's credo is remarkably similar to the credo of Maurice Castle in *The Human Factor*. Scobie, looking at his wife, reflects that "It isn't beauty that we love, he thought, it's failure--the failure to stay young forever, the failure of nerves, the failure of the body. Beauty is like success: we can't love it for long. He felt a terrible desire to protect" (253). Scobie's self defines itself by pride in its ability to protect an other. The source of that pride is a permanent sense of duty coupled with an obsessive need to be

perceived as the flawless performer of one's duty. Even at the start of his service in Africa, "he had begun to desire [the native Africans'] trust and affection" (20). His self believes in its unstinting willingness to assist every perceived suffering other; Scobie "couldn't shut his eyes or his ears to any human need of him" (187). For Scobie, "[it] had always been his responsibility to maintain happiness in those he loved" (25-26); he believes that "[a]ny victim demands allegiance" (206). Scobie's use of *always* and *any* hints at the obsessiveness which partially defines his self. Still, his obsessiveness is born of moral intentions. He cannot deny the succour *he* believes necessary and desired by every individual he considers a victim: significantly, his self takes great pride in both the intention and execution of assistance to each perceived victim-other.

From the perspective of intention, Scobie's decisions appear morally laudatory, for he *does* intend to help every troubled person he knows and meets. However, his sense of responsibility is indiscriminate: he commits his self to every perceived victim. These victims include his colony-hating wife; the Portuguese captain whose illegal private correspondence Scobie finds but does not report; his mistress Helen Rolt; Ali; and Scobie's Catholic God. Scobie's proud perception of himself as the only one willing to act for others--a responsibility he believes he follows more closely than God--slowly destroys his self, for his pride demands that he answer every supposed victim's cry. When at Pende, an area of his jurisdiction across a river from a Vichy French colony, Scobie observes the temporary hospital set up for torpedo victims (including the as-yet unmet Helen Rolt) who have spent the last forty days in an open boat. Louise, one of Scobie's responsibilities, has remained in the port. Scobie considers the dilemma of his commitments:

It was as if he had shed one responsibility only to take on another. This was a responsibility he shared with all human beings, but that was no comfort, for it sometimes seemed to him that he was the only one who recognized his responsibility (122).

Scobie's intentions, however morally laudable, betray a lack of balance, an inability to discriminate between priorities and an unwillingness to accept another person's own volition. After Scobie's first failed effort to get a bank loan for Louise's boat passage, she assures him that she need not go, that she will stop tormenting him. Nonetheless, Scobie promises her the money as if he *needs* to think of her as a victim he is able to assist. Scobie seems to need to create victims in order to assure his insecure self that yes, he is performing the policeman-like duty he prides his self on: the giving of succour to all.

Scobie's self flings wide the net of its perceived responsibilities, and as such his self will eventually hate itself for a failure to maintain a responsibility to every "victim". Camus cautions against the notion of total commitment:

One cannot be capable of commitment on all planes. At least one can choose to live on the plane on which commitment is possible. Live according to what is honorable in oneself and only that. In certain cases this may lead to turning away from human beings even (and above all) when one has a passion for human beings (*Nb*, 95).

Here is Camus' concept of moderation, a concept Scobie seems unable to recognize or appropriate. Scobie's obsessiveness appears to derive from a deep insecurity about his ability to assist all victims, or even to ably assist one. (This insecurity parallels Castle's, examined in section 3.4.) Scobie's self cannot turn away from others.

Significantly, Scobie's vaunted "allegiance to any victim" is undercut by the cruelty which so often informs his initial reaction to a victim other.

Once, when he sees Louise under a mosquito-net, "for a moment he had the impression of a joint under a meat-cover...[b]ut pity trod on the heels of the cruel image and hustled it away" (23). When he first notices Edward Wilson (a recent colony arrival and undercover Field Security Corps member), Scobie likens him to "a dog. Nobody had yet drawn on his face the lines that make a human being" (30). Upon waking up beside Helen Rolt for the first time, Scobie looks at her and "[it] seemed to him for a moment even then, before his tenderness and pleasure awoke, that he was looking at a bundle of cannon fodder" (161). A joint of meat, a dog, a pile of cannon fodder: these are Scobie's initial images of the other, images that strip the other of humanness and project onto the other his own self-loathing. His self submerges his self-loathing beneath the pride he takes in giving succour to every perceived victim. Scobie's perception of--and dedication to--the weak, the ugly, the failed other, seems initially to fulfil the Christian ideal of the imitation of Christ. Scobie's actions seem a response to the Christ of Matthew 25:40: "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me". However, Scobie's cruelty seems to render ambivalent a perception of him as a sainted victim, a *pharmakos* figure who sacrifices his self for others.

The above discussion shows the ambivalence of the relationship of Scobie's self to its subjectivity, its inwardness (in the Kierkegaardian sense), its truth as fashioned by its own self. Kierkegaard defines truth in terms of its source *in the self*: "[in] order to swim one strips oneself naked--in order to aim at the truth one must undress in a much more inward sense, one must take off the inward clothing of thoughts, ideas, selfishness, and the like, before one is naked enough" (*The Last Years*, 296). Scobie's cruel first

reactions imply his subjective truths, yet they are contradicted by his avowed credo. Scobie denies the value of such truth--a denial which masks a fear and loathing of his subjectivity--and relies instead on "the comforting lie" (141). He maintains that such lies spare others the pain he considers inherent in the truth as he perceives it. His lies, recognized as such by his self, fuel his fatalism. Early in the novel, Louise calmly provokes Scobie with the avowal that she has known for years he no longer loves her. Scobie reflects on how the truth "has never been of any real value to any human being--it is a symbol for mathematicians and philosophers to pursue. In human relations kindness and lies are worth a thousand truths. He involved himself in what he always knew was a vain struggle to retain the lies" (58). Scobie's admission of the futile struggle is ambivalent; his avowal admits of a helplessness cloaked in an all-consuming sense of sacrifice and pity, yet he nonetheless does "involve himself" and "always". This kind of Sisyphean-absurdist sensibility, as noted above, defines the protagonist's self in Greene's fiction.

Scobie's efforts seem to exemplify the Greene self's efforts, its *intentions*, to improve the lot of others known and unknown, while admitting the futility of such an effort. From the perspective of intention, Scobie's lies are made for reasons consistent with the Greene self who, in Fowler's words, "tries to make the future a little easier". Intention, from the perspective of Catholic apologist C.C. Martindale, is one way the Church--and, by extension, God--judges the self. "[A] man is intrinsically altered by his deliberate acts, especially the internal ones. Even sins are more what you make yourself, than what you do" (Martindale, 16-17). The Catholic apologist's demarcation of the internal self and its external actions in the

world parallels Kierkegaard's concept of the self. Within Scobie's self there is evidence of an absurd sensibility, one that recalls Camus' use of the myth of Sisyphus as a defining symbol for the sensibility of the metaphysical rebel who, despite his perception of the world's meaninglessness, endeavours to fashion his own meaning without belief in his success. Scobie *appears* as a model Greene self. For Scobie's self is divided by commitments and, though fatalistic about the hope of reconciling its commitments and thus of healing the divisions of the self, his self persistently strives to improve a situation or an other's plight.

Scobie's "vain struggle to retain the lies" typifies the Greene self, which appears to need to make such fatalistic reflections. Scobie's fatalism surfaces early in *The Heart of the Matter*. "He had a dim idea that perhaps if one delayed long enough, things were taken out of one's hands altogether by death" (22). He reiterates such fatalistic prognostications throughout the novel; at a dinner party he reflects that "[l]ife always repeated the same pattern; there was always, sooner or later, bad news that had to be broken, comforting lies to be uttered, pink gins to be consumed to keep misery away" (191). Here is a variation on the signature phrase of Samuel Beckett's novels, the theme of "I can't go on, I must go on". However, for Scobie's self and the Greene self in general, such reflections seem a kind of psychological bloodletting, a way to relieve the pressure built up as a result of commitments which divide the self.

Scobie fears unadulterated truth--both his subjective truth and an other's truth. One evening in Scobie's home, because he assumes that Louise is reading poetry to Edward Wilson, Scobie does not join them. "[H]e just couldn't understand such bare relations of feeling" (41). Here, Scobie seems

to recognize the subjectivity of an other as incarnated in the emotional truth of poetry, and though he recognizes such subjectivity he does not understand nor want to understand it. The public avowal of such emotion goes against his own impulse, which is to deny shows of emotion and maintain a calm exterior. Scobie seems to fear the external avowal of emotions because it hints of the uncontrollable and the unpredictable. As a policeman who prides himself on doing his duty, on controlling situations for the happiness of others and the maintenance of justice, Scobie sees an other's emotion as the source of a behavioural anarchy he cannot quell.

Similarly, in Scobie's diary--a record he has kept for many years but one that differs from the popular conception of the diary as the repository of subjective truth--Scobie keeps "the barest possible record" (114). He does not know why he keeps such a record; in it, he "seldom allows himself an opinion" (190), but "at least he had never lied. At the worst he had omitted" (254). Scobie's diary symbolizes the denial of his self: Scobie, the emotional obsessive, believes that words shorn of opinion can somehow erase the subjectivity which inheres in his self. His self divided, this region does not become in him a precondition for the movement to selfhood, for Scobie denies the identifiable reason for his divided self. That reason is his self's pride, born of a belief that an indiscriminate pity best serves his credo of responsibility for others. The Christian Kierkegaard argues for the self's duty to all others, the non-preferential love of all others. However, this external action must be in conjunction with the self's understanding of its own subjectivity. Scobie's actions and subjectivity, as has been shown, are not in such a conjunction.

Early in the novel, Scobie notes in his diary the loan he has transacted

with Yusef. At first, Scobie appears uninterested in the truth of his diary entry--"Y. called in the evening" (115)--for the loan. "His pen was powerless to convey the importance of any entry: only he himself, *if* he had cared to read back, could have seen in the last phrase but one the enormous breach pity had blasted through his integrity. Y. not Yusef" (115, emphasis mine). The *if* paradoxically defines Scobie's ambiguous relationship to the subjectivity of his own self. It is only at a point near the narrative's end that Scobie seems able to fathom the personal ruination his philosophy of lies has wrought. En route to his mistress Helen, Scobie knows his visit is being observed by another European member of the colony. Scobie "felt his whole personality crumble with the slow disintegration of lies" (209). His self's understanding is based on the subjective *felt* and thus, in the Kierkegaardian sense, approximates the inner truth of the self, the self's subjectivity. However, Scobie's awareness of the consequences of falsehood does not halt his telling of lies. Thus, it fails to prevent his descent into a self-knowledge paradoxically premised on a cognizance of his insubstantiality, of the cessation of his self's existence. Half-aware that Yusef has arranged some violent act for Scobie's servant Ali, Scobie reflects that "[i]t seemed to him that he had no shape left, nothing you could touch and say: this is Scobie" (246). Immediately after this admission, Scobie finds Ali murdered by the young thugs whom Yusef controls, a murder Scobie himself set in motion. Throughout the text, Scobie has slowly built up an understanding of his subjectivity in the same paradoxical way he has built his home: "by a process of reduction" (15). Rather than face the truth of his failures, he prefers to attenuate the truth of his self until there is no self left to face.

Late in the novel, Scobie's fear and loathing of externalized emotion

ironically manifests itself in a series of internal and external shows of emotion. In a scene with Helen Rolt, Scobie "put his hands over his eyes, feeling hysteria beginning to mount again. He said, 'I can't bear to see suffering, and I cause it all the time. I want to get out, get out'" (233). The repetition of his final phrase hints at a submission to emotional excess, a submission that negates his self's former willingness to confront his failures and to keep Helen happy, to rescue her from loneliness and the sexual advances of Flight Lieutenant Freddie Bagster. Scobie's phrase-repetition, manifested in an external burst of emotion, becomes a chant when a similar fit of hysteria seizes Scobie and is internally voiced. In his last scene with Helen Rolt, a scene which solidifies for Scobie's self the decision to commit suicide, he invokes God. "O God, he prayed...kill me now, now. My God, you'll never have more complete contrition. What a mess I am. I carry suffering with me like a body smell. Kill me. Put an end to me. Vermin don't have to exterminate themselves. Kill me. Now. Now. Now" (252). The internalized melodrama continues when Scobie plans his suicide. "In his behaviour there must be not a hint of farewells. This was the perfect crime a Catholic could commit--it must be a perfect one" (257). These moments of hypertrophic emotion point to Scobie's ultimate negation of his own ideal of the self as the stoical acceptor of pain.

Scobie's self is unable to accept a sense of personal failure, a key precondition for the Greene self's movement to selfhood. For example, when Scobie is denied a loan from the bank manager in the port, a loan Scobie intended to use for the purchase of a boat passage to South Africa for Louise, he reflects that Louise had deserved better of him. "It seemed to him that he must have failed in some way in manhood" (46). Scobie perceives failure as a

wounding of one's pride, for it threatens his notion of masculinity. He invokes an ideal concept of manhood which denies failure as an ineluctable--let alone beneficial--aspect of the self. Scobie's concept of manhood extends to his disappointment in the God who "was too accessible...[l]ooking up at the cross he thought, He even suffers in public" (154). Here, to suffer means to publicly admit failure. Scobie perceives God as a failure because he publicly avows failure (the crucifixion). Scobie's attitude to God makes ambivalent the critical position which maintains that Scobie is a *pharmakos* figure, a literary construction defined by Northrop Frye as "the character...who has the role of a scapegoat or arbitrarily chosen victim" (Frye, 367). Furthermore, Scobie's perception of God underlines the ambivalence of his relationship to Catholicism.

Near the novel's end Scobie visits the local church and begins a monologue with God, a monologue that seems to treat seriously his acknowledgement of his damnation. He believes he will be damned for his mortal sins: his unconfessed adultery, and especially for the taking of the host (the symbol of Christ's body) in a state of mortal sin. He has already emphasized to Helen that acceptance of the host, while one is in a state of mortal sin, damns a Catholic for eternity. At the point in the novel of Scobie's church visit, he has already decided to commit suicide, an act he also believes will ensure his damnation. Yet in his monologue with God he appends a proviso. "I'm going to damn myself, *whatever that means*" (258, emphasis mine). From the novel's outset, Scobie's self has partially prided itself on its fidelity to what Roman Catholicism means in terms of the duty it demands and the judgement it makes. Here, however, his flip deflationary tag undercuts the seriousness of his fidelity to the Church's rules, especially as

seen in his conversations with Helen Rolt. His comment reveals a rejection of his own position, and thus destroys the veracity of his fidelity to the Church's laws, fidelity he has thought and voiced throughout the text.

At the moment of his suicide the text seems to invite a sainted image of Scobie: as he falls to the floor of his house after taking an overdose of Evipan, he knocks onto the floor a medal of "the saint whose name nobody could remember" (265). Scobie's suicide, a mortal sin in the Church, for it symbolizes the unforgivable sin of despair, becomes an ambiguous act. It is rendered thus because of its linkage in the text to the fall of a Christian icon. The ambiguity of Scobie's self, supposedly damned in a strict interpretation of Catholic belief, is stressed again at the novel's end when Father Rank distances himself from the Church's dogma with regard to damnation and salvation. He tells a scornful Louise Scobie that "the Church knows all the rules. But it doesn't know what goes on in a single human heart" (272). Thus, a representative of the Church sanctions Scobie's own privileging of the individual over the Church's rules governing "abstract terms". Moreover, at the text's closure Father Rank adds that he thinks Scobie really did love God.

Scobie seems to end the text with a denial of the motivation--a duty to justice--which dictates much of his action, and his self's own interpretation of that action. His final avowed self-knowledge seems to illustrate his departure from the region of the divided self into that of despair. "I've lost my way" (245), he tells Yusef. The Syrian attempts to disabuse Scobie of his pessimism by telling Scobie that he is a just man. Scobie replies that "I never was...I didn't know myself, that's all" (245). The "that's all" appears as an indication of Scobie's final resignation, an avowal of his disinterest in a continual effort to help both others and his own self. His self's final

subjectivity denies the position his self has used to define itself throughout the text. Scobie's self arrests its movement to selfhood with a paradoxical moment of self-knowledge: the avowal that it does not know itself.

The manner in which Scobie's self obscures and denies its subjectivity, its inner truth, has been examined. Scobie's self/loved other relationships become a final barometer of Scobie's denial of his self's subjectivity. Scobie's wife acts, like each of the loved others in this study, as a barometer of the subjectivity which the protagonist's self will not confront. When Louise challenges Scobie to voice his love for her, he does not, for "they had reached the quiet centre of the storm: always in this region at about this time they began to speak the truth at each other...in this cyclonic centre he was powerless to give the comforting lie" (58-59). As a truth-teller, Louise emasculates Scobie's self, a self defined by the ability to comfort, a comfort so often given in the form of a lie. The loved other is closest to the subjectivity of the protagonist's self, and if that self is unable to face its own subjectivity, then the loved other is both loathed and feared.

Similar to all the protagonists in this study, Scobie has a confessor-other to whom he can unburden his subjectivity, his innermost truth. Ironically, the Catholic convert Scobie does not choose Father Rank, but rather Yusef, the Syrian Muslim. Each protagonist self in this study, like the Portuguese captain whose private correspondence Scobie confiscates and later destroys (against regulations), "cannot always wait to speak" (50). Near the novel's end Scobie "felt an odd yearning towards his tormentor" (238). (Yusef has successfully blackmailed Scobie into allowing Yusef's smuggling of industrial diamonds, with the threat of giving his love-letter to

Helen to Louise upon her return from South Africa.) Now, at the novel's end, Scobie visits Yusef with a yearning that recalls the thoughts of Arthur Rowe, the protagonist in an early Greene novel, *The Ministry of Fear*. "It is impossible to go through life without trust; that is to be imprisoned in the worst cell of all, oneself" (31). Scobie admits his fear of Ali's collusion and Yusef sends off his own boy to fetch Ali. Scobie appears half-aware of the danger he has put Ali in, but simultaneously "[h]e had the odd sense of having for the first time in his life shifted a burden elsewhere" (242). Scobie's need to talk blunts his judgement with regard to Yusef's trustworthiness. Fearful for Ali's fate, Scobie tells Yusef he "*must* know" (244) what Yusef has arranged for Ali. Scobie does not persist with his concern; his usual hypersensitive awareness of a victim succumbs at this late stage in the text to his self's own need to disavow responsibility. Scobie feels that, in the room "a kind of nursery peace descended" (242). When a scream shatters Scobie's sense of peace, he leaves Yusef and finds Ali's body on the wharf.

Scobie's suicide is in part the result of his self-perceived responsibility: to shoulder and thus lighten the difficulties of others, notably his wife and mistress. However, his commitment to each of his female loved others remains ambivalent throughout the novel. He once wonders, "why do they need me, a dull middle-aged police officer who has failed for promotion? I've got nothing to give them they can't get elsewhere: why can't they leave me in peace?...[it] sometimes seemed to him that all he could share with them was his despair" (189). Scobie's self is unable to reconcile his choice of women "to love", his proud boast of giving allegiance to "any victim", and his apparently overwhelming desire: to be alone. His credo

bespeaks a desire to give succour to the ugly, yet Helen's "ugliness was like handcuffs on his wrists" (159). When Scobie learns that Louise is en route from South Africa, his thoughts "lit for a moment on the possibility that [the boat] may never arrive. In our hearts there is a ruthless dictator, ready to contemplate the misery of a thousand strangers if it will ensure the happiness of the few we love" (190-191). The narrator seems to speak for Scobie, who sees the death of his wife as a solution to his problem of divided commitments, and to the problem of Helen's jealousy of Louise.

These examples show that Scobie's subjectivity, his region of inner truth, contradicts his verbal espousals of a creed premised on a loyalty to loved others and victim-others. Still, contrary to the critical position shared by Orwell and Sheldon, Scobie's self continues to act in a manner he considers best-suited to the happiness of his loved others. Just before he leaves Helen for the last time, Scobie reflects on "how much easier it would be for her if I were dead" (250). Scobie's subjectivity, his perception of his "slow disintegration" due to his consistent use of "comforting lies", triggers his decision to commit suicide.

Scobie's indirect involvement in Ali's death also motivates his decision to assist all of his "victims" in what he now considers the best way: the erasure of his life from theirs. Thus, the Sisyphean-absurdist sensibility that has characterized Scobie's divided self has been subverted. Scobie's self now feels bound by despair; he considers the latter as ineluctable, and thus his self-destruction as necessary. While the divided self remains in Greene's fiction the necessary precondition for a self's movement to selfhood, the movement of Scobie's self is initially derailed by its inability to

recognize its own subjectivity until the novel's end. Then, upon his self's perception of its "disintegration". Scobie cannot accept such failure. In Greene's fiction, the self's inability to face and accept its subjectivity--the truth of its failure, guilt, contradiction, and doubt--will predicate the demise, literal or figurative, of that self.

3.4.

The Human Factor

In this section I examine the self of Maurice Castle, the protagonist of *The Human Factor*. Castle's self is divided by passion and resignation, aspects of his self which inform his commitment to Sarah MaNkosi (a black woman and Castle's wife), and to the man responsible for saving her life. I also examine Castle's credo, one which warrants a comparison with Scobie's, though Castle's credo is informed by doubt. Though he is a foot soldier in the service of opposing ideologies, Capitalism and Communism, he is able to tell his colleague Arthur Davis that he, Castle, "hasn't the faintest idea what the word 'justice' means" (129). Such "ignorance" of a "mental concept", an ideal promised by creeds and ideologies, becomes in Greene's fiction a necessary and paradoxical viewpoint for the protagonist's self, and a prelude to that self's dispensing of "justice" for others. Finally, I examine Castle's passions and his risk-taking. I also examine Castle's relationship to his loved other and his need, typical of each protagonist in this study, for a confessor-other.

Sixty-two-year-old Maurice Castle has worked for the British secret service for more than thirty years, and for the last seven he has also worked for the Soviet Union. He passes classified information to his Communist control in London as an act of gratitude to Carson, a Communist Castle knew in South Africa. Seven years earlier Castle worked as a diplomat in South Africa, where he fell in love with Sarah. Castle's contact with his agents in

the field. His marriage to Sarah contravened the South African race laws; Castle, protected by diplomatic immunity, was able to leave the country without great difficulty, whereas Sarah had to escape or face incarceration. Carson aided her escape from BOSS, the security forces in her apartheid-ruled country. Now, Castle works in London and lives with Sarah and her son Sam in the nearby village of Berkhamsted.

Critics seem most interested in the external manifestations of Castle's plight as a double agent, rather than the internal divisions of his self. Roger Sharrock maintains that Maurice Castle, especially in the context of his marriage, receives "a certain externality of treatment: it is the divided [in Greene's fiction], those at odds with the man within--Plarr, Brown, Querry, Fowler, Scobie--who enjoy the dubious luxury of a rich inner life" (Sharrock, 250). On the contrary, Castle's self *is* divided by feelings of doubt, failure, and resignation. His self is a storm centre of conflicting needs, wishes, and regrets; a self whose treatment in the narrative is the antithesis of "external". Sharrock's claim for the self/other relationship--along with the claims of other critics, such as Nurul Islam--is addressed below.

The Human Factor follows Greene's formula, noted in Chapter 3.1., of packaging the protagonist's credo: Castle's credo appears in a paragraph midway through the text:

Why are some of us, he wondered, unable to love success or power or great beauty? Because we feel unworthy of them, because we feel more at home with failure? He didn't believe that was the reason. Perhaps one wanted to right the balance, just as Christ had, that legendary figure whom he would have liked to believe in. 'Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden.' Young as the girl was [a girl he loved at age ten]...she was heavily laden with her timidity and shame. Perhaps he had merely wanted her to feel that she was loved by someone and so he began to love her himself. It wasn't pity, any more than it had been pity when he fell in love with Sarah pregnant by another man. He was there to

right the balance. That was all (147).

Castle's credo recalls Scobie's, for Scobie also endeavours to love the ugly, the unwanted, the failed. However, Castle waters down his invocation of Christ with a proviso: the Christ "whom he would have liked to believe in". This proviso fixes doubt as an aspect of Castle's self. "Perhaps," he tells Sarah, "I was born to be a half-believer" (107). He also tells her that in South Africa men of opposing creeds commented on Castle's doubt. Both the Communist Carson and a Catholic priest, a man who worked in Soweto's slums, identified Castle as one who "strained at a gnat" (107); that is, one who is filled with doubt. Castle knew Carson as a lawyer who defended individuals against the South African security forces, whereas the priest was similarly devoted to the oppressed: this aspect of both men legitimizes, in Castle's eyes, their comments on his self. For each of these men is committed to an ideology and they act on their beliefs. Castle lauds the individual believer who *acts* on behalf of the oppressed.

Conversely, Castle denounces the dehumanizing and hypocritical actions of unswerving ideologues and believers. In conversation with his Communist control Boris, Castle notes examples of the Communist Party's hypocritical acts, given its assertion that all human beings are equal: the Soviet army's brutal suppression of popular dissent in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Similarly, Castle recalls the "bourgeois" Catholics of his childhood village and their "weekly moment of belief" (61). He notes too "the gaudy bedizened altar and the sentimental statues" (183) of a Roman Catholic church. A believer's inconsistent act of faith, and the gaudiness and sentimentality of that faith's physical manifestation (the church's fixtures) all indicate hypocrisy. Although each system shares, albeit in a

different sense, the objective of "a just society", the means they adopt to reach this end distance Castle from belief in either system. It is the quality of doubt that he lauds as the means to his own ideal of a more just treatment of individuals, especially the weak: a quality he describes as that of being "more human" (100).

Cornelius Muller, whom Castle meets in England for the first time in seven years, initially seems "more human". Castle's reflection on Muller is significant. Muller, the former BOSS agent (now officer) who in South Africa interrogated Castle with regard to Sarah, comes to England to meet with his counterparts in MI5 to discuss Operation Uncle Remus, a plan Castle first hears about from his own MI5 chief, Sir John Hargreaves, known colloquially as "C". Uncle Remus is a secret White House paper that is, in effect, a plan to wipe out swaths of the South African black population under the aegis of combating black South African guerilla fighters with tactical atomic weapons in the event of a race war over gold and uranium deposits. In this plan, the British, American, and South African intelligence services will work together. Muller, then, visits Castle at his village home, and he notes how Muller appears to have changed. "Since they last met something had happened to him: he looked *more human*--perhaps it was that he had taken on with promotion greater responsibilities and with them uncertainties and unanswered questions" (100, emphasis mine). In his meeting with Castle, Muller soon disabuses Castle of the notion that he, Muller, has changed his racist views. Still, the phrase "more human" signals Greene's concept of the ideal self, an ideal by definition impossible to attain but one that, nonetheless, should be pursued.

The phrase "more human"--colloquial, laconic, understated--indicates again Greene's separation of the ideal self from one achieved through or described in terms of cerebration. This distinction was noted in Chapter 3.1., where Fowler's ideal--"to try to make the future a little easier"--was discussed. The self's use of verbal understatement, in the service of disavowing cerebration, becomes another distinction between the individual's struggle and the grandiloquent and airy claims of a creed--Communism, Capitalism, Christianity--to absolute knowledge of the means necessary to create a just society. Castle's willingness to combat injustice recalls Camus' concept of the rebel, and is discussed below.

Doubt is one internal landmark in the region of the divided self, while another is a sense of personal failure. Castle's feelings of failure surface in guilt. When he reflects on how he spent three years in South Africa protected by diplomatic immunity, Castle's "own relative safety made him feel shame. In a genuine war an officer can always die with his men and so keep his self-respect" (97). The sources of Castle's guilt include the death of his first wife, Mary, who died in the London blitz while he was working in Lisbon. Castle's mother, whom he visits monthly, once asks him why he never mentions Mary. He replies that he tries to forget the dead, before he adds to himself that "that was not true...He had failed to protect [Mary], and he hadn't died with her. That was why he never spoke of her, even to Sarah" (111). Like Scobie, Castle feels he must somehow share all the risks and suffering, past and present, of those he knows and especially of those he loves. If the risks are taken by others who act on their own volition, that is immaterial to Castle. His guilt seems permanent; only the sources change.

This sense of guilt, intrinsic to Greene's concept of the self--and, of course, to the Catholic and Kierkegaardian--is scorned by Camus. For the proponent of the metaphysical rebel, guilt is anathema, for it admits of the unchangeable past, which Camus considers of no consequence in a world where the problems of the present demand immediate action. Camus derides those who accept "this philosophy of the guilty conscience which has merely taught [people] that every slave is enslaved by his own consent, and can be liberated only by an act of protest which coincides with death" (*The Rebel*, 144). Ironically, given Camus' derision of guilt, Castle's self *does* act against a grave injustice--he sends a report to the Communists with regard to Operation Uncle Remus and thus risks exposure as a double agent. One of the catalysts for this action is guilt, specifically the guilt of an unrequited gratitude.

Castle regrets his inability to show his gratitude physically to Carson, to welcome Carson into his home, after the assistance Carson lent Sarah. Carson has died in a South African prison; murdered, Castle assumes, by the South African security forces. Castle, though he has worked for the Communist Party for seven years as an act of gratitude to Carson, still regrets what he considers an inadequate show of gratitude, despite Boris' assurance to the contrary. Castle tells him, "[o]ne can't reason away regret--it's a bit like falling in love, falling in regret" (117). Castle's separation of reason and emotion typifies the divided self in Greene's fiction: emotion battles a complacent acceptance of "reasonableness", of the status quo, of events that seem beyond the self's control. As the example of Castle shows, the position of the Greene self lies between a Camusian emphasis on the self acting-in-the-external-world-now, and a Christian stress on the divided self as *the source* for such an action. Castle angrily tells Boris that "[o]ne has to be

concerned about the present, and the present is Uncle Remus" (119). The present constantly challenges the self to separate "the human" (in this case the emotion of regret) from "the factor" (reason), and privilege the former. The present moment, as noted above, is Camus' chosen moment of action.

Castle's desire to derail Operation Uncle Remus *now* recalls Camus' rebel:

Those who find no rest in God or history are condemned to live for those who, like themselves, cannot live: in fact, for the humiliated...[rebellion's] merit lies in making no calculations, distributing everything it possesses to life and to living men. It is thus that it is prodigal in its gifts to men to come. Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present (*The Rebel*, 304).

Castle does decide to give all to the present in an attempt to thwart Operation Uncle Remus. Thus, a parallel with Camus' concept of the self seems valid, albeit in a limited sense. Camus does not privilege passion--in Castle's self a guilt which derives from an obsessive sense of personal failure--as a potential motivation for the self which recoils at injustice. Though Camus urges the self to "make no calculations" and "be prodigal in its gifts", he also cautions against the kind of non-rational excess which defines Castle's self. Camus describes as "an extreme virtue [that which] consists in killing one's passions. A deeper virtue consists in balancing them" (*Nb*, 185). Conversely, Castle's self is wracked by divisive passions. Greene sees such passion as a safeguard against the consumer-driven material world. "In a commercial world of profit and loss man is hungry often for the irrational" ("Letter to a West German Friend", 600). The passion Greene extols, Camus decries. Moreover, to be human, the Greene self must forswear peace and take a great risk, a risk emboldened by passion and premised on self-sacrifice.

Spurred partly by a sense of unrequited gratitude, Castle takes that

risk. Castle's secret service keepers have detected the security leak in his department and killed Arthur Davis, their prime suspect and Castle's sole departmental colleague. In the evening that follows both a morning meeting with Cornelius Muller and Davis' funeral, Castle goes to Sam's bedroom and talks with him. Sam, Castle reflects, "had never looked more black" (174). A heightened awareness of Sam's colour combines in Castle's mind with his recollection--"the same image recurred like an obsession" (174)--for the third time in the novel, of a famine photograph of a child's corpse "spread-eagled on desert sand, watched by a vulture" (23). A combination of experiences and thoughts presses upon Castle's self: Muller's discussion of Uncle Remus, Davis' funeral, the renewed recognition of Sam's blackness, and the memory of the photograph. After Castle leaves Sam's room, he copies the BOSS officer's notes on Operation Uncle Remus--notes that highlight the points Muller made on a recent visit to his German counterparts, and entitled "The Final Solution". (Greene obviously chose the name to underline the affinities between Uncle Remus and the Nazi plan for mass extinction of a targeted group.) Castle eventually passes the notes on to the Communists:

Now as he wrote 'Final Solution' and copied the words which followed with exactitude he identified himself truly for the first time with Carson. Carson at this point would have taken the ultimate risk. He was, as Sarah had once put it, 'going too far' (174).

Castle's cognizance of the guaranteed risk involved, the inevitable fate of discovery by his bosses and consequent danger to himself and his family, recalls Kierkegaard's exhortation to "venture everything". For Kierkegaard, such risk brings the self closer to God; furthermore, such risk embodies faith in the potential result of the self's risk, however illusory. Such an act of faith is, for Kierkegaard, "the highest subjectivity", and thus the closest

the self can come to a recognition and understanding of itself. Castle's act is a momentous risk, for it jeopardizes both his family relationship and his life. Because Davis is Castle's only colleague in 6A, MI5's African section, the continuance of the security leak after Davis' death can only mean that Castle is the double agent.

Castle's act manifests his sense of unrequited gratitude with regard to Carson's favour, his love for Sam, his heightened awareness of Sam's vulnerability and that of his people in South Africa, and also his loathing for BOSS. In Kierkegaardian terms, Castle's great risk is the external manifestation of his "inwardness" or "subjectivity". Typical of the protagonist selves in this study, Castle's self has been divided by commitments since the narrative's outset. Thus his divided self--the site of his "inwardness"--becomes the necessary catalyst for what Anne Salvatore calls "true social reform". This reform,

[both] Kierkegaard and Greene imply, begins with the individual's externalization of inwardness. Kierkegaard articulates the process more specifically in *Works of Love*: 'This hidden love is knowable by its fruits'...The last phrase may be the most important one in both artists' credo, for it indicates that the inwardness, translated into love, 'is an *act*--not an expression about, not a theoretical conception' (Salvatore, 65).

Castle's act occurs at the conjunction of the external world and the subjectivity of a self: his passions--divisive, troubling--motivate the externalization of his "inwardness" on behalf of the humiliated. The strife that defines the region of the divided self becomes, in Greene's concept of the self, the necessary precondition for an external action that approximates the fulfilment of the self's credo. Therefore, such strife appears to abet the movement to selfhood.

The Human Factor seems to trace the revitalization of Castle's self, the self defined early in the novel as one which "had lost both audacity and innocence for ever in South Africa while waiting for the blow to fall" (20). For Castle's self is initially presented as desirous of conformity, of the negation of his individuality. In his first interview with a new security officer at MI5, Colonel John Daintry, Castle reflects on how "[t]here were times, which grew more frequent with each year, when he daydreamed of complete conformity" (12). This desire to erase his individual self seems to parallel his sense of fatalism. Early in the novel, he reflects on his village, where "[he] had always, since they came [from South Africa], felt certain that one day a doom would catch up with them" (19). Yet Castle's relentless fatalism has an absurd cast that recalls Camus' ideal of the rebellious self: Sisyphus. When Sarah happens upon Castle in the act of writing a report for his Communist keepers, he tells her he is writing an essay, and puts away his work. In response to her pleasure at his return to writing, Castle replies, "Yes. I seem doomed always to try again" (94). Here is the conjunction of fatalism and striving, the dynamic self in a constant "process of becoming", of movement towards the state of being "more human". Camus argues that "[t]he struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart...we must imagine Sisyphus happy" (*The Myth of Sisyphus*, 91). However, Castle's absurd nature, his fatalistic wilfulness, is permeated by an obsessive sense of gratitude that, the narrative seems to assert, foreshadows his final despair.

Early in *The Human Factor* Castle slips into a Berkhamsted church, an act motivated by a characteristic emotion: he has "a sudden desire to give a kind of thanks, if it was only to a myth, that Sam was safe" (57). Castle's fit of spontaneity falls victim to a heavy act of symbolism. "Then a sonic boom

scattered the words of the hymn...[he] went out quickly and bought the Sunday papers. The *Sunday Express* had a headline on the front page--'Child's Body Found in Wood'" (57). Here appears the confluence that defines Castle's embattled self: a need to show gratitude, a spontaneous act born of emotion, and a physical symbol (the church) of a creed unable to give sanctuary from the external world's battering of one's intention, hope, and temporary peace. The narrative carries this confluence, this defining of the parameters of Castle's divided self, to the final setting in Moscow, where Castle will not and cannot "try again" for he has lost the will to try. His despair seems to indicate that his movement to selfhood has been forsaken. Yet throughout the narrative Castle's apparent movement to selfhood has been problematic. His movement has been partially undercut, and thus made measurable by, his relationship to his wife Sarah. She functions as the loved other and, as such, the barometer of Castle's ability to recognize and accept the subjectivity of his self.

Most of the critics who examine the self/loved other relationship in *The Human Factor* present a position similar to Roger Sharrock's:

In the forefront of the book is a happy and equal marriage between a white man and a black woman of comparable intelligence and education with a child to whom they are attached. They are Greene's happiest couple, but their treatment by the plot is of the cruelest, leading to their apparently permanent separation...One is bound to reflect that Greene is more inclined to favour the twisted and the fallen...than the normally happy (Sharrock, 250).

Sharrock simplifies the self/loved other relationship in *The Human Factor*, for he misses the antagonism and projected self-loathing (discussed below) which partially defines the relationship. Nurul Islam moves closer to this position. "For Castle, Sarah is almost a human object--a piece of precious

sculpture, which serves to hold and at the same time dispense what he theoretically stands for in life" (Islam, 227). Sarah, as the barometer of Castle's capacity to face his self's subjectivity, becomes a kind of enemy. Her truth seems to sear Castle, and thus provoke the response of anger and eventual escape.

Castle constantly recalls and voices the strength of his love for Sarah. He considers their love "too established to need assurance" (185), though "[t]he depth of their love was as secret as the quadruple measure of whisky [he nightly drinks]" (20). In his lonely Moscow exile at the novel's end, Castle reflects that "to hear her voice meant everything to him" (247). Still, contrary to his assertions of love, Castle also considers Sarah an enemy. She knows the nature of his work--"[a] department at the Foreign Office...[e]veryone knows what that means" (22)--and sympathizes with his (perceived) need to keep his daily work secret. Yet her sympathy induces Castle to admit aspects of his subjectivity, inner truths he wished to hide. For example, when she tells him that "a child of yours would have been something to live for when you are not there any more. You won't live forever" (113), Castle's reply is immediate. "No, thank God for that" (113). He is dismayed by her ability to wrest a deeply held truth from him--in this case, a desire for his own death. Sarah's sympathy works as a truth-exposing ability, which turns her into Castle's perceived enemy:

It was her sympathy which always made him commit himself too far; however much he tried to harden himself he was tempted to tell her everything. Sometimes he compared her cynically with a clever interrogator who uses sympathy and a timely cigarette (113).

Later in the novel Castle watches Sarah sleep, and feels "the tenderness one can feel even for an enemy who sleeps" (198). Sarah's words and physical self provoke images and thoughts of an enemy, for she becomes the projection of

Castle's permanent enemy: his guilt-stricken self. For Castle's self is debilitated by its perceived inability to adequately requite gratitude or share the risks and suffering of loved others and colleagues. As the loved other, Sarah becomes--like Phuong and Clara--the projection of the protagonist's self-loathing.

Early in the *Honorary Consul*, as discussed above, Clara and her sunglasses function as a reflection of Plarr's self-loathing; in *The Human Factor*, there is a similar use of the loved other, twinned with a mirror-image. Castle's replies become staccato and angry when Sarah admits her ignorance of why Castle does not share her wish that Sam, fathered by another man in South Africa, was really Castle's son. "I don't wish it. You know that" (113); he adds that "I've told you many times. I see enough of myself every day when I shave" (113). He tells Sarah, "I love Sam because he's yours. Because he's not mine. Because I don't have to see anything of myself there when I look at him. I see only something of you. I don't want to go on and on for ever. I want the buck to stop here" (25). Castle's self-loathing thus subverts the supposed subjective truth of his ongoing professions of love.

As the loved other, Sarah serves as the barometer of the self's movement to selfhood, a movement premised on the degree of subjectivity the self is willing to face and accept. Along with his fatalism, Castle's image of Sarah as an enemy and thus a loathed other persists throughout the text. Both his Sarah-image and fatalism are projections of his own self-loathing. Consequently, Castle's momentous act of solidarity with the blacks of South Africa--the risk he knew would result in his need to leave England--appears also as a possible act of escape from the truth-teller whom he avers love for,

yet also fears: the loved other.

Castle eventually tells Sarah of his work as a double agent. Before he does this, on one occasion he admits his strong suspicion that Davis' death was not natural, that he was murdered by a member of the British secret service. Sarah immediately asks Castle numerous questions about Davis' death, and tells him she wishes they (her, Sam, Castle) could leave immediately for France. When Castle weakly replies that "[w]ell, you know a man has to give proper notice" (145), Castle becomes "scared by the quickness of her perception" (145) when she asks if Davis was given "proper notice". Shortly after his panic he abruptly leaves Sarah with the excuse that he needs a walk because "I want a breath of air and so does Buller [the family dog]" (146). It is the truth which stifles Castle, the truth Sarah airs and Castle cannot breathe. Her question raises the possibility of his preference for the dangerous existence of the double agent over a likely calmer, more secure family arrangement in France. His preference seems to conflict with his need, made clear early in the novel: "to reassur[c] himself that what he valued most in life was still safe [because by] the end of the day he always felt as though he had been gone for years leaving her defenceless" (19).

Castle's strongest need seems to be the requiting of gratitude to Carson, for the now-dead Carson is an easier object of Castle's gratitude. Sarah, as his loved other, functions as an unwanted mirror of his own self-loathing and perceived inadequacy, whereas the requiting of gratitude to the dead Carson becomes--despite Castle's need to flee England--a risk Castle finds easier to take. Significantly, as he copies Muller's notes Castle recalls Sarah's phrase, that in the act of requiting gratitude there is the danger of "going too far". His recollection of *her* phrase underlines a

recognition that *she* is the projection of his subjectivity, of an inner truth he constantly fails to perceive in his own self. Only now, as he copies Muller's notes, does he appropriate his subjectivity as *her* truth and not, in an intrinsic sense, as his. Finally, the text seems to imply that the other which Castle needs most is not a loved other, but a confessor-other. This other does not present Castle with aspects of the loved other he is unable to withstand: the sense of duty, the source of fear, the source of an unwanted (because accurate) truth. While Castle waits in his Berkhamsted home for Muller's arrival, he (Castle) reflects on his time in South Africa, where his relationship with Sarah rendered her vulnerable, and thus "he had learned...the age-old lesson that fear and love are indivisible" (95). Castle, of course, means fear *for* his wife; he does not face or accept his fear *of* his wife.

While exiled in Moscow, Castle divides on paper the "comforts and miseries" (249) of his situation into Good and Evil. Significantly, in the Evil column he does not list the first evil as the absence of a loved other, but of a confessor-other: "I have no soul to speak to, or to relieve me" (250). Throughout the novel, it is the confessor-other that gives his self succour and relief. After Castle gives a copy of Muller's notes to Halliday Senior, a London bookseller and the father of Castle's presumed Communist intermediary (Castle later learns that the father is his contact), Castle tries to locate Boris. Castle's need is shared by each of the protagonist selves in this study; he speaks for all when he considers how "a moment arrives when one has to talk" (181). Still, Boris is gone, and Castle feels "[t]here was no one--literally no one--left to whom he could speak...[h]e felt invisible, set down in a strange world where there were no other human beings

to recognize him as one of themselves" (182). Castle appears to need a confessor-other to define himself *as a self*. For the protagonist's self in Greene's fiction, the need to talk often comes unbidden. It is a need the loved other cannot satisfy, a need only a confessor-other can relieve, and the confessor other must be male: a Vigot, a León Rivas, a Yusef. Significantly, it is Sarah, as Castle admits to her, who "lan all the risks" (175) when they worked together in South Africa. Still, though her share of the responsibility and risk-taking has been disproportionate to Castle's, she does not qualify as the other to whom he confesses certain opinions and inner truths. As the female loved other, he projects onto her his subjectivity, specifically his self-loathing. Yet he will not "let down his guard" and show emotion in her presence. That he will only do with Boris, his confessor-other.

With Sarah, as shown above, Castle's anger manifests itself in staccato expressions of understated emotion; with Boris, Castle releases his passions and, significantly, admits to them. Here he expresses his feelings toward Cornelius Muller:

How I dislike that man! And how I hate the whole BOSS outfit. I hate the men who killed Carson and now call it pneumonia. I hate them for trying to shut Sarah up and let Sam be born in prison. You'd do much better to employ a man who doesn't hate, Boris. Hate's liable to make mistakes. It's as dangerous as love. I'm doubly dangerous, Boris, because I love too (119).

Castle's outpouring to his Communist control seems to emphasize the protagonist self's need for a confessor-other, one who Castle believes, as a fellow spy, shares the risks of life in England. However, indicative of the protagonist self whose movement to selfhood is foreshortened, Castle's choice of confessor-other is a mistaken one. Boris and his party betray Castle. He

learns the details in Moscow: the Communists have used his information over the past seven years to aid their operations beyond Africa, the only area where Castle has stated he would help them. For their own propaganda purposes, the Communists pull him out of England before it is necessary. When Boris offers a renewal of his friendship to the lonely Moscow-bound Castle, he considers how "the offer of friendship [now] had the sound of a menace or a warning" (250). For Fowler and Plarr, the protagonist selves who maintain a movement to selfhood throughout their respective narratives, the choice of a confessor-other is not an eventual betrayer. For Castle, as for Scobie, the choice of a confessor-other indicates the desperation with which the protagonist self exists. This desperation seems to derive from insecurity and self-loathing; it weakens the self's ability to choose a confessor-other worthy of its trust, and by whom it can feel trusted.

Castle realizes he is not trusted by the others he believes should trust him. Colonel John Daintry, a new superior officer at MI5, conducts a security check that annoys Castle. He admits to Sarah that "[i]t irritated me--I've been more than thirty years in the firm, and I ought to be trusted by this time" (22). Castle's other secret service employers also show their mistrust of him. As stated above, Castle's assumption, based on information given him by Boris, is that the pornography bookshop owner Halliday Junior is Castle's Communist intermediary. The young man supposedly picks up Castle's "drops" of information. When Castle learns from Halliday Senior that he himself is the intermediary, "[i]t came as a shock to Castle to realize how little he had been trusted even by those who had the most reason to trust" (216). Just prior to his fatal copying of Muller's notes, Sarah asks Castle to swear he will not mention Davis' death to Sam, who liked Davis. Castle asks Sarah if

she does not trust him, and she replies "Of course I trust you, but..." (171).

Sarah's expression of doubt unnerves Castle:

The 'but' pursued him up the stairs. He had lived a long time with 'buts'--we trust you, but...Daintry looking in his briefcase, the stranger at Watford, whose duty it was to make sure he had come alone to the rendezvous with Boris. Even Boris. He thought: is it possible that one day life will be as simple as childhood, that I shall have finished with buts, that I will be trusted naturally by everyone, as Sarah trusts me--and Sam? (171).

Greene's text seems to indicate that, for the protagonist self unable to accept its subjectivity and thus *trust its own self*, the fate of that self is to suffer a lack of trust from both the loved other and the confessor-other. To be trusted, Greene seems to imply, the self must be able to trust its own self, however divided. The suspicion Castle meets from his loved other, confessor-other, and British secret service employers seems to emphasize his sense of insecurity, that which his mother identifies as the source of his obsessive sense of unrequited gratitude. Castle's insecurity, born of mistrust, is one more force which destabilizes and divides his self.

Brian Thomas sees in *The Human Factor* a reversion to the novel structure Greene used in the 1930s: "a story again primarily about descent or fall, it sustains the possibility of the protagonist's deliverance and emergence until the final pages, only to reveal his hopes at that stage as absurdly illusory" (Thomas, xv). More specifically, what lapses finally in the Moscow dénouement is the Sisyphean-absurdist sensibility which vivifies Castle's self. His fatalism seems to derive from the enemy within his self: Castle's "doomed always to try again" attitude dies amid "the snow-drowned streets" (253) of Moscow. His unremitting sense of resignation eventually overcomes his absurdist sensibility.

In the Soviet Union's capital, Castle's self finally realizes its

betrayal by both secret services, and the fact that their similarities outweigh their ideological differences. As systems, they cancel the significance of the individual self. The self becomes a mere factor in the ideology's logical means, whatever they may be, to achieve their objectives. The text of *The Human Factor* symbolically stresses the ideologies' similarities: both the Communist control and British secret service chief have blue eyes. The chief and Halliday Senior, the Communist bookseller, both read Anthony Trollope's novel *The Way We Live Now*. Finally, Halliday Senior makes a gift of the Trollope novel to Castle as he escapes from England. This act symbolizes the closing of the circle, and foreshadows Castle's figurative death in Moscow due to his fatalistic involvement with both sources of betrayal.

From Moscow, Castle speaks once to Sarah, and learns during their phone conversation that she and Sam will not join him. Doctor Emmanuel Percival, the secret service officer who engineered the murder of Davis, tells Sarah his government will delay the issue of Sam's passport. In Moscow, as explained above, Castle learns from Boris of his (Castle's) betrayal at the hands of the Communists. They have taken him out of England so he could give public witness to the world press of the western powers' perfidy--his testament and presumed defection from the British secret service would amount to a moral and publicity coup for the Soviet Union. In a Moscow conversation with Boris, Castle suggests that he will refuse to conduct a press conference unless the Communists bring Sarah and Sam to Moscow. Boris' reply puts an ideologue's spin on Castle's own notion of gratitude. "We'll do without you, but you couldn't expect them [Boris' superiors] to solve the Sarah problem. We are grateful to you, Maurice, but gratitude like love needs to be renewed daily or

it's liable to die away" (260). An ideologue's use of gratitude likens it to a "factor" in an equation: gratitude becomes part of the means to achieve the end--for Boris and the Communist Party he symbolizes, the end is the demise of capitalist systems of government. Thus, Castle belatedly learns the lesson Thomas Fowler fails to teach Alden Pyle, "that there's no such thing as gratitude in politics" (*The Quiet American*, 230). In his phone conversation with Sarah, the conversation that ends the novel, Castle admits that his mother "wasn't far wrong" (265) about his obsessive need to show gratitude.

Still, Castle's belated realization, with regard to the danger of an obsessive sense of unrequited gratitude and a political system's inevitable betrayal of the individual, does not result in his self's attainment of selfhood. In Moscow, Castle ceases the "persistent striving" that preconditions the divided self's achievement of selfhood.

The site of Castle's exile is a city the narrator describes with a cluster of death images. Here, amid "a merciless, interminable, annihilating snow, a snow in which one could expect the world to end" (253), Castle deteriorates. His voice on the phone has become one Sarah "hardly recognized--it was the voice of an old man who couldn't count with certainty on any spring to come" (255). She pleads with Castle to continue to hope for their reunion, but the novel's last line stresses despair, for "in the long unbroken silence which followed she realized that the line to Moscow was dead" (265). The death imagery that defines the city, Castle's old-man voice, and the truncated phone conversation together stress Castle's figurative death in exile. Thus Castle's self, initially divided by resignation and emotional obsession, is ultimately incapable of accepting and utilizing its subjectivity, its belated realizations. Castle's emotional excess,

specifically the guilt of unrequited gratitude, overtakes his self and leads it to a final passive despair.

Camus' advocacy of moderation seems applicable to the Greene self, and specifically Castle's self:

The real madness of excess dies or creates its own moderation... [m]oderation, born of rebellion, can only live by rebellion. It is a perpetual conflict, continually created and mastered by the intelligence. It does not triumph either in the impossible or the abyss. It finds equilibrium through them (*The Rebel*, 301).

For the Greene self, "intelligence" seems to manifest itself in fatalism, in a resigned acceptance of aspects of the external world the self considers immutable: ideologues oppress the weak, "justice" does not exist. The passion which animates the Greene self counteracts its fatalistic proclivities, thus creating the Sisyphean-absurdist self that strives to become "more human" while it simultaneously denies the possibility of such an achievement. Thus, Camus' advocacy of a moderation which depends on "a perpetual conflict" becomes, in the Greene self, a vivifying dynamism: the region of the divided self. Given this fact, the example of Castle seems to indicate that, with Camus, Greene counsels equilibrium. The self should try to maintain a tenuous balance, but a balance nonetheless, between fatalism and the persistent striving born of passion. When the dynamism that defines Castle's self ceases, his self also ceases, as does its movement to selfhood.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

In Greene's fiction, the protagonist's self is trapped in the war-ravaged moments of the twentieth century, a war the self paradoxically abets by its commitments to others. Through its efforts to "try to make the future less hard"--as Fowler suggests--the self is divided by commitments. Moreover, the self must strive to avoid the easy signing of a treaty with the forces of resignation, for this becomes a literal or figurative death. It is the dynamism of the divided self, often manifested by the absurd engagement with existence Castle calls "doomed always to try again", that bolsters the self's refusal to forsake responsibility and accent despair. For despair, like the vultures that rattle the roof of Scobie's home in *The Heart of the Matter*, remains a constant threat in the existence of the divided self.

In Greene's fiction, despair can only be fought on the home front of the divided self, and a necessary weapon is the heightened subjectivity advocated by Kierkegaard. This subjectivity requires the self's willingness to privilege passion over reason; to take risks; to recognize the value of failure, suffering, guilt, doubt; to avoid obsessive emotion. Furthermore, the self must be willing to "give all to the present", as urged by Camus. The self must always act against injustice, despite an awareness of the futility of action in a world ineluctably unjust and miserable.

In this study, I have analyzed the causes and effects of the divided self in Greene's fiction, and the means by which the divided self becomes the precondition for the possible movement to selfhood. Thomas Fowler and Eduardo

Plarr attain selfhood by the closure of their respective narratives. Fowler recognizes the need to forsake a credo of apathy and act against the likely killing of innocents; simultaneously, he recognizes a spiritual aspect in temporal existence. Plarr recognizes his subjectivity, his inability to love, a recognition he makes concurrent with an act designed to save the lives of others. As opposed to Fowler and Plarr, both Henry Scobie and Maurice Castle fail to attain selfhood. Both selves succumb to despair, a static state that precedes their respective literal and figurative deaths. The mutual failure of their selves to recognize their subjectivity derails their movement to selfhood. Scobie's self cannot acknowledge the pride that motivates its indiscriminate pity, nor can it admit the scorn with which it holds the others it supposedly loves and pities. Scobie's self is essentially solipsistic. Castle's self does not fully recognize its subjectivity: the insecurity, the lack of self-acceptance which drives his self to an indiscriminate sense of unrequited gratitude. Both Scobie and Castle's selves incarnate the central Greene ideal of passion. However, as Camus argues, a lack of balance in the self's passions, especially when it involves a desire to commit one's self to all others at all times, will destroy the self.

The attainment of selfhood is, we have seen, premised mainly on the self's persistent striving to become what Castle calls "more human", and also on the self's growing ability to recognize and increase its subjectivity, its truth of what it is, and what it has become. In Greene's fiction, the loved other becomes the site for the protagonist self's projection of his subjectivity. This projection becomes clear to the reader. Often, the loved other becomes feared or loathed by the self; these projections are indicative of "the enemy within" the self, an enemy the self must recognize in order to

attain selfhood.

Finally, my study shows that doubt is a necessary precondition for the movement to selfhood. The protagonist's self accepts neither the verities of a purely atheistic or Christian philosophy of life, just as a purely Capitalist or Communist ideology also alienate the self. Each of these systems of belief lean on abstract terms to dress enticing ideals that, the Greene self realizes or comes to realize, muffle the voice of the individual self's suffering. While those individuals alive in the pre-war world perhaps had a sort of shared belief in Christian values, this is not enough for the post-war Greene self. That self moves to selfhood in a dynamic condition; the self experiences a tension between a recognition of its absurdist position and a belief in the values associated with Christianity. For the divided self, resignation is tempered by a need to go on, to strive to become more subjective, to try to assist the other. This apparent credo in Greene's fiction appears in T.S. Eliot's "East Coker":

There is only the fight to recover what has been lost
And found and lost again and again: and now, under
conditions
That seem unpropitious. But perhaps neither gain nor loss.
For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business
("East Coker", ll.188-192).

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