CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMATION

It is true that in modern times very few English novelists appeal to the reading public and the students of English Literature in Indian academic circles. However there is one very popular novelist, Graham Greene, whose popularity ever endures and many still cling to him drinking deep from his literary works. Greene is very popular not only in Britain and India, but also in several countries including America, France and Russia. Angus Wilson in his “Evil and Novelist Today” says that Greene still remains as “Britain’s main literary Export” (115).

Greene’s novels are “as important to English Literature as those of Hardy and more important than those of Lawrence” (Cutts 73). Greene is usually considered to be a writer of “thrillers” and “entertainments” which are equally enjoyed by the high-brow and low-brow readers. They are not like the ones written by Agatha Christie as they contain additional moral and Christian dimensions. Greene is found to be not just a writer, but a serious writer with a religious and humanist ambience. He does not write simply to “thrill” or “excite” his readers. He is not an artist who writes for art’s sake. Nor does he write for the readers’ edification. His conviction is that art must change one’s life. Many of his characters do that. Greene has not openly expressed this anywhere. But it is exactly what he does in his novels. And this is one of the main reasons for Greene’s reputation and popularity. To understand this, one has to turn the pages of Greene’s novel The Burnt-Out Case. Querry the world renowned architect, in desperation, escapes to a distant leper colony where he comes across a group of Catholic priests who surprisingly enough do not work for the glory of the Lord, but to alleviate the
suffering of the lepers who live in the neighbourhood. When Querry comes in contact with the priest, he sees their sacrifice and hard work, and changes his character, conduct and attitude to life. He gives up his former love for praise, pride, love of women and sex; he becomes very humble and innocent and learns to smile and laugh. He also becomes a humanist par excellence helping the lepers, his own leper-servant. Being a humanist he treats Mrs. Rycker as his own daughter and takes her to the town to consult a doctor regarding her pregnancy. But the girl in her pride and arrogance puts the blame of her pregnancy on Querry and her husband Rycker, an ex-seminarian, in great anger shoots him down dead. While dying Querry says that the world has become an absurd place because of the conduct of civilized people like Rycher and Mrs. Rycker. Greene’s penchant is for the primitive life of the ancients who always lived in peace, smiling and laughing, avoiding lust and hatred. The change that comes upon Querry is amazing and his understanding human life and its problems is worth considering.

After reading Greene’s major novels, it is found that Greene has written his works in a way that the readers feel the need for a change in their outlook and attitude. Greene himself felt the need for change throughout the period when he was writing his novels.

From the existentialist philosophy and his own experiences in war-ravaged places of the world he learnt that people had to find ways and means to free themselves from the besetting problems of poverty, misery, exploitation and all kinds of shabbiness. “Greene’s novels of the thirties have an immediate topical reference; they have a contemporary atmosphere. When we read them we feel that they could not have been written at any other time” (Subramaniam 3).
While reading his novels one encounters terrible accounts of “uprooted man a drift in urban society” (Allen, *Tradition and Dream* 203). Novel after novel Greene speaks about the meaninglessness, the seediness and the vulgarity of the modern people living without any proper relationship with others. It saddens one to note that many of Green’s critics have failed to fix him in the context of the human situations.

Man is at the centre of all the novels of Greene. It is unprofitable if one reads him without realizing the thrust he puts on Man’s “humanness”, his human nature and his humanism. The Soviet critic Voprosy has said, “Man is an eternal never ageing theme, one that is never subject to change in taste and fashion. And this theme we must work on” (qtd. in Overchavenko 35).

In consonance with what many of the writers have said about Man, Greene in his novels proceeds to show the readers how they should cherish the humanness of Man in all its totality.

At the outset, the present research project gives a short but useful biographical sketch of the life of Greene. His adolescent life was full of disappointments. He had several sexual longings, on which he could not find any fulfillment. He was totally desperate and so his father sent him to a psychiatrist. But it did not bring a complete cure for his manic depression. There was no use. Young Greene attained quietude and equanimity only when he went to Liberia. His aberrations decreased and fully calmed down when he married Vivien, a Roman Catholic girl. In his novels Greene has just transferred his early troubles, anguish an agony to the heroes who figure in them. They exhibit Greene’s own spiritual and worldly struggles and end up with asserting their unwavering faith in Man.
To throw more light on the objectives of the thesis, brief summaries of the novels which are selected for detailed study are given. The study points out that even in the so called Catholic novels Greene accords divine sanction to the secular humanist qualities like love, pity and compassion which, alone form man’s saving graces. The thesis presents a panoramic world view of the Nineteen twenties and thirties and shows how the prevailing evils totally uprooted man and deepened his inner gloom and despair. It, then, proceeds to show Greene’s knowledge of psychology. It points out to what extent Greene was influenced by various continental psychological and Existential writers, novelists and philosophers. It shows that the influence of The Bible and the Catholic religion is so profound that many of his critics have been tempted to adore him as one of the best and foremost Catholic novelists. The research affirms that the Catholic Fathers who appear in Greene’s novels are totally ineffectual and inefficient priests and that they never found any conclusive and permanent anchorage in Catholicism. The fact is that Greene’s new religion only aggravated his mental tension and brought to him a new awareness about the appalling condition of the plight of people in the modern world. According to Greene, the Church frames and imposes rules and regulations on the community, but it does not know what goes on in the human mind and heart. No doubt, Greene’s novels abound in a number of Catholic rites, beliefs and rituals like confession, the holy sacrament, sin, suffering, damnation and salvation. These do not confluence to make Greene a Catholic novelist. One has to understand the truth that Greene has only superimposed on spiritualism certain secular values like love, pity, affection, proper human relationship and humanism. The motive force behind his novels is undoubtedly his human love.
The thesis pinpoints the influence of various writers and their works on Greene. These include Marjorie Bowen, Rider Haggard, Pester John, Dickens, Munro, Kipling, Henry James, Dostoevsky and Joseph Conrad. The above mentioned writers have increased Greene’s sense of the prevalence of evil in the world and taught him the need for compassion and pity for those who suffer in the world. The writers influenced Greene so much and made him hold always before his eyes the picture of Man entangled in a graceless chromium world. The researcher ardently believes that Greene is first and foremost a humanist and in his novels he has juxtaposed some of the spiritual values of man with some secular values to show how the latter override the former and finally boil down to what is called humanism.

The present research project studies humanist theory which elevates all that is human, humanness, human love, human relationship and all secular values namely, love, pity, kindness, compassion and empathy. The growth and development of humanism in Greece, Rome and England over the centuries are revealed. The establishment of a number of Humanist Societies and Associations and the development of many Humanist Studies laid stress on various tenets of the humanist philosophy of life. All these and the works of the existentialist philosophers widened the gap between spiritualism and secularism which is only a variant of humanism.

The thesis covers a very important area of study – reviewing the significant opinions of relevant critics who have studied Greene’s works from various angles. The research finds out that the reputed critics have lost sight of a major technique used by Greene to highlight his humanism. The research has, therefore, ventured to explore this much neglected avenue in Greene. It is found that most of the critics direct their critical attention to his Catholic novels and talk about his Catholic
themes. These critics and theological scholars are Walter Allen, Anthony Burgess, Alasair Fowler, Frederick Karl, Harold C. Gardiner, Robert Wichert, A.J.M. Smith, Evelyn Waugh, Charles J. Rolo, Mesnet, Francois Mauriac etc. They deeply probe into Greene’s so called Catholic novels – *Brighton Rock, The Power and the Glory*, the *Heart of the Matter* and *The End of Affair* – and deal with the meaning of sin, suffering, death by suicide, damnation, sacrament, confession and salvation. They are greatly concerned with the interpretation of the conflict between good and evil within the framework of Catholic beliefs. No doubt a number of Catholic characters, Fathers and priests figure in these novels. But Catholicism as a system of many dogmatic and conventional beliefs does not offer any proper solution to the problems the characters face. Greene seems to be critical of Catholic faith and principles. A few critics like Lerner and David Lodge, for instance, have categorically said that Greene’s religious vision has no religious joy and that the novels do not show clearly Jesus and his crucifix. The truth is that Greene himself has said that he was a novelist who only happened to be a Catholic.

On the contrary, a number of critics such as James L. McDonald, V. Ivasheva, David Pryce-Jones, Marie-Francois Alais etc. find Greene a social and political novelist. They consider him as a war novelist and as one who favours Communism. At the same time, they direct their critical attention to the “environment” in which the characters live and affirm that it is the “environment” which spoils them.

Jones, for instance, speaks out Greene’s social sympathy and his inclination towards Communist political ideology. There are also a few critics who treat Greene as a “topical writer” who is interested in painting the contemporary scene in the world. They affirm that the contemporary world has become a dry and
meaningless “Wasteland”. They call it “Greeneland”. They bring out what Greene has really experienced in the troubled parts of Mexico, Saigon, Haiti, Liberia and several other God-forsaken areas ravished and ruined by rebellious forces. These places are there unmistakably in Greene’s novels and the truth is that Greene is not as much interested in them as he is in the people who suffer there because of their sin and deviation from normal life. These places, in fact, serve as a backdrop against which Greene has exposed maximum human suffering, misery and desperation.

Greene is also considered as an Existentialist by critics like Evans, Majid, Jones, DeVitis, V.S. Pritchett, etc. Critics such as Kenneth Allott, Miriam Farris, Sharma etc. treat Greene as a novelist dealing with the “terror of life” by which they mean man’s experience with terror during the times of betrayal, flight, pursuit, loneliness in a sordid and violent world. There are also critics who put stress on the “search pattern” theme which is discernible in Greene’s novels.

The research after analyzing the critical opinions of all the above mentioned critics, comes to the conclusion that they do not tell the whole truth about Greene. They take into account only one or another group of novels such as “Catholic Trilogy”, “political novels” etc. leaving out the other groups. They do not study Greene in his totality. As such they miss the single strain that runs and connects all his novels. The strain is Greene’s humanism which he reveals through his technique of juxtaposing certain spiritual values with certain secular values which ultimately turn into what is called humanism. Very recent critics have turned their focus on this avenue. The present study, therefore, includes not only Greene’s Catholic novels but few social and political novels to bring out the humanist vision of Greene, which runs throughout the entire corpus of his works.
In his novels *The Power and the Glory* and *The Honorary Consul*, Greene juxtaposes Communism and humanism with the spiritual values of Christianity. Even as a young man Greene had come to dislike Communism and its adherents. In his novel *A Battle-Field*, Greene gives a clear and detailed exposition of its hollowness. In the novel Greene presents Mr. Surrogate, a Communist and through him he ridicules all those who use the political ideology to their own advantage.

In his novel *The Quiet American*, Greene points out that people lose faith in religion and all “isms” after witnessing the violence and havoc caused by the Communists. For instance, Fowler gives up his faith in Communism and spiritualism after witnessing the atrocities committed by the Communists. What saves Fowler is his human love, humanism which he shows to all those who suffer and in the hands of the Communists, the terrorists. And, at times, he feels, that it is he who is responsible for the suffering of humanity. After seeing all kinds of violence around him he comes out of his cocooned life. Fowler now lives for a human cause and that makes him really great. Evidently he eschewes both Communism and Christianity in favour of human values.

In his novel *The Comedians*, Greene presents war-torn Haiti where destructive activities go on because of the Communists. In the novel, Dr. Magiot, the black Communist, finally becomes a humanist. In a letter addressed to Brown he reveals him forth his humanism and his hatred of Communism. In the letter he tells Brown that they are humanists.

The juxtaposition of secular values with spiritual values and the final triumph of human values can be very clearly seen in Greene’s novel *The Power and the Glory*. Greene brings into the novel the police Lieutenant as a foil to the
character of a priest and shows that in spite of all his physical weaknesses and moral corruption the priest has an edge over the police officer. The priest and the lieutenant are the human agents of the rival ideologies. The Lieutenant is morally upright Communist and he too works day in and day out for the betterment of the people. He is duty-conscious and his aim in life is to eradicate Christianity from the land and establish a new society which will usher in peace and prosperity to the suffering lot. However, unlike the priest who believes in God and God’s “Glory”, he believes in his authoritarian and totalitarian materialist “power”. But he has no faith in God. He wants to build up the world anew by using his “power” which the Communist government has given him. He uses his power to eradicate Christianity from the state. To him there is neither a heaven nor a hell. He is Eliot’s hollow man having no spiritual values. As such his humanism is anti-humanism and his ultimate success is the execution of the whisky priest. He fulfills his mission, but when he walks towards his house after the extirpation of the priest he feels that he is a total failure in life. Through the portrayal of the Lieutenant, Greene pictures that any kind of humanity or humanism which is devoid of divine sanctity is meaningless.

Greene’s use of juxtaposition as one of the techniques runs through the entire body of his novel The Honorary Consul. In this novel, all the three important characters, namely Leon Rivas, Dr. Eduardo Plarr and Charley Fortnum, uphold human love and humanism far and above all spiritual and secular Communist ideological values.

Leon Rivas was once a Catholic priest, but he came out of the Church when he found that its rules had nothing to do with the poor suffering people. He married outside the Church and joined a Communist revolutionary gang which was trying to
set free a few prisoners from the Paraguayan jail. When he does something evil, he does not experience any soul-searching struggle. Like the whisky priest, he also finds God’s image in man and he says that God too has a dark shade. Though he has come out of the Church, he knows that nobody can take away from him the God-ordained priestly functions assigned to him. At the end, he says the Mass without his usual vestments and any altar. Though a revolutionary, he does not kill Fortnum, but kneels down before him and like a penitent sinner he asks his forgiveness. This indicates the failure of the Communist secular values he has embraced. He urges Fortnum to confess so that he can grant him absolution. What is unique about him is his belief that Dr. Plarr is a priest sent by God to hear his confessions. Before his death, he murmurs out: “I am sorry . . . I beg pardon” (HC 253). One is left to interpret what he says. Is he asking God to forgive him for what he has done or is he asking the rebels to forgive him as he has not shot down both Fortnum and Plarr? Though till the end he clings to his spirituality what marks him great is his human love which surpasses all other considerations.

To Dr. Plarr the word “love” which binds people together has no meaning. To him “love” means only sexual love and he develops it to the maximum in his affair with women who come to him for treatment. His lust for Clara, an ex-whore from Mother Sanchez never gets abated. His liaison with her continues for some time and when she begets a bastard child he feels enormous love for Clara, her child and her husband Charley Fortnum, an old alcoholic and a honorary consul for Great Britain. When Fortnum is mistakenly arrested in the place of the American Ambassador by the rebels under Leon Rivas, he moved by human love and compassion forges forward to set him free. Till then he has been living within the four walls of self-created seclusion shunning all institutions like love, marriage,
Church, *The Bible* and Marxism. He comes out from it and gets himself involved in the on-going political action of the rebels. When he walks out of his hideout and makes an attempt to save Fortnum, he gets himself killed. He does this motivated by the feeling that Fortnum will be a better father to the child than he will be.

In the eyes of the British Government Charley Fortnum, the old drunkard husband of Clara, is a non-entity. But the irony is that he assumes great significance when he functions as a loving and forgiving father and husband. Though he comes to know about Clara’s connections with Plarr, he does not give her up as it will make him drop her happiness. His concern for Plarr, Clara and her illegal child overrides all other considerations. He is neither envious nor jealous of Plarr. When Plarr dies he is overwhelmed by profound sorrow and sadness. He never speaks ill of him and he is even prepared to name the child as Eduardo (Dr. Plarr). When Clara says that she never loves Plarr, her lie means nothing to him. Fortnum’s capacity for love is a part of his humanity which has survived the corruption of his life. In Greene’s novels, characters are often judged in terms of their humanity however depraved they are.

Dr. Plarr and Charley Fortnum are neither spiritualists nor Communists. They are only humanists and by presenting them in his novel Greene puts forward his belief in human values and avers that in this calamitous present world humanism alone is the only panacea for all human ills and adies.

By juxtaposing Catholicism and Communism, in *The Power and the Glory* and *The Honorary Consul*, Greene chooses to bring human depravity in all its verities and show that human love alone can save man and set him free from the shackles of all kinds of evils and wickedness to which he has become a prey. He
rejects both Catholicism and Communism as the key to the world’s problem. The only religion favourably projected in the novels is the religion of man.

In the novels The Heart of the Matter and The End of the Affair, Greene has juxtaposed spiritual love with sexual love which is secular in value and shows at the end how the love for the fellow-human overrides the spiritual and sexual love and gets distilled into humanism and its ultimate triumph. The conflict in the two novels is between the conventional and dogma-oriented Church and the morally and sexually depraved people. The incapacity of men to follow up the will to soar up in spirituality and getting entangled in flesh is the grim phenomena of life that can be seen in both the novels. Greene resolves the conflict through a human frame of reference which is generally called as humanism.

In the first novel Henry Scobie, the protagonist, lives in a most sordid place with his wife Louise. He is a very honest officer who has inordinate love for his wife who is nothing but a bag of bones. It is only out of enormous pity he loves her in spite of all her ugliness and awkwardness. Sex is totally absent in their married life. The death of their only girl-child weighs heavily upon her and he is unable to find a way out to soothe and comfort her. When Scobie fails to get a promotion, she thinks she will be humiliated by her English friends in the Colony. Scobie’s self-disgust, sense of failure, anxiety, feelings of guilt mount up day by day. Scobie’s exhausted domestic dialogues marked by irritable phrases, downright lies and meaningless assertions reveal his longing to have some companionship with her. In the end, to pay for her trip, he unwittingly borrows money from a scrupulous and loathsome Syrian trader who hates him for his remarkable straightforwardness and honesty. Scobie does this without informing his chief. Before leaving him, Louise tells him that he should not give up attending the Mass. She is a spiritualist. Soon,
Scobie becomes a sexualist by sleeping with Helen Rolt, a very young girl rescued
from a torpedoed ship. To him she becomes a very replica of his own daughter.
Out of pity and compassion which are in-born characters, he falls for her and
develops an adulterous relationship with her. He once again becomes a victim of
horrible and horrifying emotion of pity. The novel shows that pity changes itself
into love and to sex, the physical activity. He experiences a moral decline, but does
not bother about it. Being a Catholic, he knows, he cannot get a divorce and marry
Helen. Therefore, a conflict arises in him between his Christian morality and
physical weakness.

Helen taunts and teases Scobie on several counts and to appease her, he
writes to her a love letter which unfortunately falls into the hands of Yusef. Yusef
tries to blackmail Scobie and to quicken him, he allows Yusef to smuggle some
diamonds. Louise now returns and Scobie suffers because of the power exerted on
him by both Louise and Helen. Peace, for which he has been praying so far, eludes
him and he is in a fix.

Scobie’s love for others is his only saving grace and it remains intact till the
end. He understands that Ali, the servant who was killed, has the very image of
God. Louise soon comes to know of his infidelity and compels him to go with her
to the Church, partake the Holy Communion and confess his sins. Under pressure
he goes and sins more grievously by taking the Communion bread and wine.
Though Scobie is not a spiritualist, he believes in God. But he cannot accept a God
who is not human enough to forgive the sins of people. There is a struggle and
conflict in him between his sexual love and God’s divine love and unable to find
any resolution, he takes an overdose of Evipan tablets and dies in a state of mortal
sin. Before dying he cries, “Dear God I love . . .” (HM 249). The prayer is not
complete and the incompletion has paved way for a number of interpretations. Father Rank who comes to Scobie’s house interprets his words and says that Scobie’s utterance indicates that any kind of love can earn for one the needed divine sanction. One can clearly understand what Scobie means. He says he loves human beings and that God has to forgive and accept him. Sunitha Sinha points out “The Heart of the Matter was banned in Ireland and Bishop Brown criticized it for encouraging the view that sexual sins are acceptable” (48). Evidently, in the novel Greene has juxtaposed spiritual love with sexual love which ends up as human love and humanism. Through the story of Scobie, Louise and Helen, Greene reiterates the appalling strangeness of God’s mercy by going beyond all the boundaries of conventional theology. He puts a heavy thrust on the peace and happiness of individuals caught up in the web of immorality.

Here, one must recall what Jesus did to a woman caught red-handed in the act of adultery. People brought her before Jesus for judgement. But he said that anyone who had not committed any sin might throw the first stone on her. Realizing their unworthiness and convicted by their own conscience, they all fled away. Jesus looked up and told her that he was not going to condemn her. He told her: “go and sin no more” (John 8:11).

The juxtaposition of the two values is more explicit in the second novel, The End of the Affair. In the novel one finds that Sarah’s love is transformed from Eros to Agape through strife. The Almighty God, interferes in the life of a woman and brings His divinity and grace in her life when she is wallowing in filth and dirt. The immoral lovers in the novel are Maurice Bendrix, a novelist and Sarah Miles, the wife of Henry Miles, a civil servant. They indulge themselves in the act of sex continuously for five years, for nearly every minute of which Bendrix has been
anxiously jealous. His passion for her leaps out of all bounds, it has no limit and parallel anywhere. It is, in truth a kind of demonic passion and it develops in him the psychological complex of hate and jealousy. When he has no chance of meeting her for nearly eighteen months, he suspects another lover, and he employs Parkis, an inept and slightly grotesque, private detective to follow her movements and find out the truth from the life data of Sarah. The detective purloins Sarah’s diary and Bendrix learnt what had happened. From the entries in the diary, Bendrix discovered why Sarah had renounced her sexual affair with him in a terrifying moment of self-sacrifice. He learns that she surpassing all human love “has caught belief like a disease” (121).

The diary entries show the truth. One day while making love in a room, there was a bomb-blast and Bendrix went out to see what had happened. He was knocked down by a blasted door. Sarah also came out and finding his body on the floor she started praying to God whom she had till then despised. She told God that she would do anything, even give him up, if He would save his life. God answered her prayer and she found him alive. As a result, she turns her back on that state of moral guilt with extraordinary determination and agony of mind.

After reading the diary Bendrix finds God as a rival who has entered their life quite mysteriously. He sees God as the ultimate cad who can do anything to trick his rivals. After the bomb incident and Sarah’s regeneration to spirituality, for some time her mind wavers between her corrupt love of Bendrix and her love of God. Sarah struggles painfully against the consequences of her prayer. She makes repeated attempts to break her vow to God, but fails. And all attempts made by Bendrix to have further sex with her also end in smoke. To avoid him she goes out, drenches herself completely in the rain and develops cold. Once they get a chance
to meet in a church; he tries to hook her with his unprincipled lust, but fails as she faints and falls down. All his further attempts are thwarted by God, the jealous lover and soon she dies of pneumonia before Bendrix can bring her back to sexual love. After her death a number of strange things take place, which sustain the novel always in the theological atmosphere – Parkis’ son gets cured of stomach pain and Symthe is cured of his revolting and repulsive strawberry marks on his face when she kisses him. This she does out of her limitless and boundless love for the suffering humanity. Here, one is reminded of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and the Christian Missionaries kissing the feet of the lepers. She humbles herself and her humility is a sign of both her human love and divinity. In her journal Sarah had written: “You are too good to me, when I ask you for pain, you give me peace. Give it to him too. Give him my peace – he needs it more” (EA 99).

Bendrix represents the sinful humanity and he is what God has made him. He makes the reader believe that Satan is as real as an angel. The movement of Sarah is from adultery to sainthood and this gives way for the much discussed theme in the novel, namely the “sinner – saint paradox” in Greene.

As a humanist Greene pleads and even fights for a greater flexibility within the folds and framework of the Church to give proper accommodation to the sexually fallen humanity. This trial and effort is self-evident in almost all his novels, more particularly in the two novels The Heart of the Matter and The End of the Affair taken up for study.

Greene himself, as an adolescent and as an adult, had his own sexual problems. During his adolescence he was yearning to have liaison with many. After his marriage, he moved from place to place in the company of many men and
women. The appeal and pleading, therefore, has a personal touch. Wilhelm Hortman comments that Greene has inverted the Christian dogma to ease his own spiritual tension. He says that from 1938 when he wrote the *Brighton Rock* to 1948 when he wrote *The Heart of the Matter*, he was trying to humanize one of the central doctrines of the church with his own ideas and aspirations.

The novels of Greene – *The Man Within, Brighton Rock* and *The Power and the Glory* – has juxtaposes hell which is secular in nature and heaven which has a spiritual dimension. Even as a boy, Greene had a vision of the duality of life. In the school where Greene studied, he found a baize door which separated two worlds which existed side by side. They were the world of his family and the world of the school dormitories. On one side, he found a world which cared for him and on the other side he found the indifferent and undisciplined world of the school boys. This extraordinary perception later on moulded all his secular and religious value of life. All his fictional works rest on this counter-pointing ant-ithetical order. While at school Greene had a vision of this duality. He experienced within himself the nearness between heaven and hell, sin and salvation. This experience got itself intensified later when he visited Mexico which in those days was a veritable hell. He found there men and women floundering in filth, poverty and misery. However, they all cherished and upheld their religious faith. It was in Mexico, Greene saw the real whisky priest in whom Greene found the confluence of both sexual dirt and blissful spiritual aspirations.

The novel *Brighton Rock* presents the two sets of animosities. In it the secular values of hell are represented by Pinkie, the protagonist, and the spiritual values of heaven are upheld by his wife, Rose. Greene himself has told an interviewer of Times that Pinkie is one who goes to hell.
Pinkie’s character and attitude to life are determined by his environment and his parentage. He becomes part and parcel of Brighton, a place known for all kinds of evil. It is one of the worst places in England. He was born and brought up there. Greene in the novel says, “. . . hell lay about him in his infancy” (BR 70). He is known for starved intensity, hideous and unnatural pride, bitter virginity and grey inhuman eyes. He is seized by the powers of darkness and he is a link between human and cosmic evil. He believes in hell, its fires and Damnation and hellish powers with an air of self-satisfaction.

As a child Pinkie happened to witness the Saturday night sexual affair of his parents and he was filled with the childish feeling that he was ignored and neglected. This created in him certain psychological complexes and he developed in him a great dislike for all sex-related affairs with women. As a result, he does not want any kind of relationship with any girl or woman. He is against marriage, smoking and drinking. He lives almost like an ascetic. Even with his young wife Rose he does not want to have the normal relationship. He often withdraws himself from her thinking that sexual affair is a shameful act.

Pinkie, the boy murders one Fred Hale and to cover up the crime, he hurriedly marries a slip of a girl called Rose who otherwise will witness against him to the police. As such, he also becomes a hunted person. Pursued by the police and by Ida Arnold he runs away hither and thither. As a Roman Catholic he believes in the existence of God but refuses to have any truck with him. Being a murderer his relationship with God and people is totally closed. Now, in his loneliness and thwarted ambition, he looks up to God for relief and help. Once he was in the Church choir, but now he experiences no peace and happiness. Greene presents Ida Arnold in the novel to point out that unlike spiritual values, her ethical values have
no purpose for people. Greene shows through her caricature that “right” and “wrong” and human justice do not matter anything. To Greene, Pinkie and his partner Rose are better persons than Ida who with all her superficial values is a betrayer. Rose too is a Catholic. Yet, to save Pinkie she gives up all her spiritual values. She knows that Pinkie is damned forever. Anyone who comes in contact with Pinkie finds him to be an embodiment of ruthlessness. But it is only Rose who identifies a human heart in him. She manifests all her love and affection for him and takes away from him his inhuman and hellish attitude to life. It is only out of abundant love for a criminal, she throws into the wind both God and the Church. One day after her marriage with Pinkie, she hears the church bells ringing and she experiences peace and happiness which tranced all human understanding. She does not envy the people going to the Church and exhibit any self-pity. She has an exhilarating experience when she gets pregnant with Pinkie’s child. She totally surrenders herself at Pinkie’s feet. It is nothing short of self-effacing human love. In the novel the bond between evil and good shines forth with all its brilliance and brightness. Just before his death, Pinkie too comes close to God. The Latin words “Dona nobis pacem” come to his mind twice and he thinks about religious rites like confession, penance and the sacrament. Now, he does not hate her and the sexual act (BR 261). He puts out his mouth and kisses her on the cheek. To Rose this is the most honest, best and faithful human act. When he dies, Rose too wants to die, though she knows both will be eternally damned by God.

The superimposition of secular values such as human love and compassion on spiritual values is more discernible in the novel when a priest arrives on the scene. He points out the appalling nature of God’s mercy and forgiveness and says that if Pinkie has truly loved Rose, there is something good. He passes the verdict
that in the sight of God, any love, any human kind of love is enough to evince God’s mercy. To the Priest, Rose’s child signifies the best kind of love which tantamounts to God’s love. The Hell of Pinkie and the Heaven of Rose come together through the sheer act and exercise of human love, humanness or humanism which emphasizes the fact that the basic nature of humans should be accepted at all cost.

By juxtaposing Pinkie and Rose with Ida’s ideas of “right and wrong” as David Lodge writes, Greene achieves “an extraordinary displacement of conventional values and sympathies” (99-100). Hunger, deprivation, poverty, exploitation of man by man, injustice, cruelty, bloodshed and war cause the humanist dream of heaven on earth on the rocks. And it is only through a sustained struggle of human love, pity and compassion one can save the situation.

Greene in his much celebrated novel *The Power and the Glory* presents the juxtaposition of heaven and hell more forcefully and effectively. Paradoxically enough the priest in the novel is a whisky priest. He is nameless and he goes about from place to place doing the work assigned to him by God. He seems to subsist only on whisky and for getting it from people he is willing to stoop to any level. The two words in his name “whisky” and “priest” are antithetical and they point to two different world. The first represents the world of evil, the hell, which he carries with him. The second represents the spiritual world which in common parlance is heaven.

The whisky priest is a real person whom Greene met in Tabasco which was then under the rule of Communists. The Churches in that place were closed; religious services were prohibited. The people in Tabasco were starving and yearning to get a priest who will serve them the holy sacraments and baptize their children. Under threat all the priests had run away to different places or they were
shot down. Some got married and settled down in life. The whisky priest was the only stubborn priest and being a hunted man by the ruling Communists he had to live in hideouts. The whisky priest is a flawed character. He lives against the teachings of *The Bible* and the Church. He is full of carnal cravings. He sleeps with a woman and begets a child. He becomes notorious for his acts of fornication. He was once a very proud and lustful man. He loved his authority too much. But in his stubbornness to do God’s work at all cost, he has become a damned man, a beggar with very hard hands as that of a labourer.

In his utter loneliness, the priest feels that he is abandoned. He thinks that abandonment is the fate of not only people but also the fate of dogs and animals. Greene says in the novel that wherever the priest goes he “carries Hell about with him” (PG 176) and evil runs “like malaria in his veins” (176). It is interesting to note that like Andrew and Pinkie, the priest too is a product of the squalid, seedy and sordid environment. He moves about in a land of terrible heat. It breeds beetles, mosquitoes, snakes and parasites.

It is marked by sin, suffering, poverty, untold misery and violence. As such, the people there are poor and victims of all kinds of evil and wickedness. They suffer from several diseases. Greene portrays the moral corruption of both the priest and the people against the background of such an evil environment. Coral and Brigitta are conditioned by the environment. Evil sets itself in their life even when they are just children.

In this land of evil and moral corruption, the priest is being pursued and haunted by the Police lieutenant and those who want to betray him to the Communists. The priest is possessed by fear but he does not renounce the call given
to him by God. He is even on the run serving the people who yearns for holy sacraments. What marks him great is the inordinate love he develops for the people, the lieutenant, his illegal wife, his child and those who try to betray him to the police. He suffers because of extreme cold, chillness and poverty. He is disposed of all his belongings. He is stripped of all his costume all the insignia of his rank and in his nudity he looks like Christ on the cross and a typical Hindu Sanyasin. Yet, even in such a situation, he is full of remorse and feelings of unworthiness. What is remarkable in him is though he himself is a sinner, he weeps for the sins of people. It shows his love, care and concern for all who suffer. In the midst of all his weakness and weariness, he shows his love for the suffering sinful people. And this elevates him to the status of a saint.

In the case of priest, Greene juxtaposes Evil and Good, Hell and Heaven and shows that the ultimate redemption comes to a morally corrupt person only through his human love, which we call Humanism. What is at the centre of the priest’s life is his immense love for the sinful humanity which expands and makes him see the image of God in man. He says, at the end, that God is like him, divided like him and tempted like him.

By placing Hell and Heaven side by side he argues that the hellish people are not altogether left and discarded by God. The so-called evil people have a strand of humanism in them and are better than fraudulent spiritualist. The priest serves the people and strives to give them new lease of life. His saving grace is his faith in God. He wants to keep intact his vows to God and “glorify” His name till the end. The change discernible with the priest is from faith in God and his works to total involvement in human miseries. Paradoxically enough, through his immersion in
sin and suffering the priest emerges as a humanist – “not the best love, but love alkl the same” (PG 97).

The above discussion makes clear that Greene in his novel *The Power and the Glory* speaks in favour of the whisky priest by bringing him very close to the heels of God. Greene’s belief is that God is very close to the sinner and he is always ready to pull him out of the “hell”, “the mire and clay” into which he has fallen.

Through two of his images – the image of what is called “Greeneland” and the image of “Pendele”, Greene presents that human values are far superior to any other values. In almost all his novels Greene portrays the modern world as a chaotic and rotten place unfit for human inhabitation. He establishes this by bringing in numerous sordid and seedy images which accumulate and show Eliot’s “Wasteland” and Dante’s Hell fit enough to form an environment which ruins the people who live there giving them the feeling of abandonment. At the same time in a few novels Greene laments what humanity has lost – its Edenic primitiveness and innocence. Greene himself understood and realized this loss when he was in Africa which presented to him a world unlike the modern Western World full of hustle and bustle of life. This realization of Greene is found in three of his works, namely *Journey Without Maps*, *The Human Factor* and *A Burnt-Out Case*. In these works, Greene has juxtaposed our bitter world of frustrations with his new experience. The juxtaposition gets more vivid and solidity in *A Burnt-Out Case* in which he expresses his new experience through an image called “Pendele”. In the novel “Pendele” represents an Edenic and angelic world of primitive innocence and a place where there is inexplicable peace and joy. If “Greeneland” stands for spiritual sterility and aridity, “Pendele” in the novel stands for human love and humanism.
The juxtaposition of the two worlds pervades throughout the entire body of the novel.

The setting of the novel, a Congo leper-colony, is a veritable Wasteland known for hot air, teste-flies, mosquitoes, crocodiles, yellow-butterflies, rotting trees, etc. However this Wasteland environment, as pointed in the other novels does not adversely affect the people who live in it. For instance, the Fathers who live in the Seminary do not look like Catholic priests. They do not build Churches and spread Christianity. Nor are they interested in the riots, and changing cabinets. They sacrifice their life and all they have for the sake of the lepers. They sing songs, laugh and pass their time without any tension. In addition, unlike the “Greeneland” the “Pendele” environment thoroughly changes the character and attitude of people who come into its fold. One fair instance of this is, Querry, the new comer. Once he was a very proud architect who built Churches for his own glory. He was carried away by praises and unthinking adulations heaped on him. He had no God and he was very much a lustful and lascivious man. But, now after coming into “Pendele” as a burnt-out case, from the Fathers he learns the necessity of showing humility and helping those in need. Along with them he laughs, smiles and remains happy always. Rycker kills Querry because he is bold enough to laugh at him. He finds God through his selfless-service to the poor and by doing the small work assigned to him in the leproserie.

One night Querry walks into “Pendele” in a village and finds the natives singing, dancing and laughing together in the moonlight. He hears from them ancestral voices and regains the memories of his childhood. He returns to his racial past. He understands that life in “Pendele” is simple and joys and it is totally different from that of our civilized world. Once again he comes to “Pendele” to
rescue Deo Gratias, his leper-servant who has fallen into water. He spends a whole night attending the fingerless and toeless body of the boy. Stratford says, “Query is nailed to Deo Gratias” (215). Query puts his hand on the mutilated body of his leper servant and shares his fate. For a man who once declared “Human beings are not my country”, this act of kindness really betokens a resurgence of human feelings to take interest in those who suffer. He is a man of mere secular mode of mercy and love. There is another instance which also shows Query’s response and readiness to a human being’s call for help. He takes Marie to Luc where she can consult a doctor and confirm her pregnancy. But, ironically enough this act of kindness spells his disaster. Marie’s husband Rycker shoots down Query thinking that he has made his wife pregnant. Sunitha Sinha exaggerates Query’s human love and says that at the end by loving human beings. Query establishes and proves Buber’s “I” and the “Thou” relationship. However, it is true that Query makes a move from “being” to “becoming” and a new world of “Pendele” is created by him for the benefit of the Wastelanders.

The novel is a vitriolic satire on Catholic spiritual values. The utilitarianism of Rycker’s religious faith is juxtaposed with the secular charitable values of Query. The representative of Catholicism in the novel is Rycker, an ex-serviceman. For no good reason or reasons he came out of the Church and married Marie and his only business, Greene says, is to have as much sex with her as possible. All his words like “prayer”, “contrition”, “love of God” are just fodders to excite and entice his wife to gratification of his sex. While having sex, this “pious imbecile” is found to have wearing a holy medal around his neck. He sleeps naked on a bed under the wooden body of Christ on the cross. The unvarnished truth is that Greene seems to ridicule Catholic spiritual values in all the novels which he wrote after the
publication of *A Burnt-Out Case*, where the protagonist dies after casting an absurd laugh on modern life and dies.

These convincing and clinching arguments prove that the basic concern of Greenes is humanism. It is precisely this discovery of Greene’s interest in human condition, namely, his humanism which he reveals through juxtaposition of certain secular and spiritual values that has emboldened the researcher to undertake the present study. For several years Greene has been in search of an order and a value system to be imposed on the chaotic life of the modern Man. He found that humanism alone is the only remedy for all his ills and perils. The research after several keen and careful readings of the novels of Greene finds that Greene has transferred to his novels his humanist’s vision of reality. Humanism is the only strain that unifies and informs all his novels from the earliest to the last. Quite obviously, the researcher wonders how the learned critics lost sight of such a link and harped on certain theological, social and political issues which conspicuously lie only on the periphery of Greene’s vision of life. The novels make visible the private universe of Greene, a complex state of existence where Man finds himself lonely, unrelated, alienated, dispossessed, unfulfilled and desperately seeking the meaning and purpose of life. It is also the universe of pity and compassion, of love and hate, of sin and salvation, of the cult of sinners and saints, and of the agony and sweat of Man who gropes through the cunning passages and contrived corridors of contemporary history for redemption. Even for such a beleaguered modern Man, Greene avers, there is hope for remedy if he comes forward to exercise his inborn human love – humanism. Over and above all the Christocentric and theocentric elements, is his human concern – humanism. This message he patently conveys through the life and struggle of his characters who draw the needed sustenance from
innate human love even as they lie groaning on the debris of the shattered moral, spiritual and ideological values.

With the help of his charismatic genius, Greene has woven this eloquent message for humanity into the texture of his novels. And he does it in fictional terms without losing sight of the human interest with astounding artistic finesse, dexterity, and originality displaying his profound concern for the salvation of oneself and the entire humanity as well. Undoubtedly, his novels will have a universal imperishable importance for their affirmative eloquent message, and therein lies his inimitable talent and astonishing drive and originality.

The progress in the areas of pharmaceuticals, robotics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology should not shackle the humanity and hope borne in the human heart which has hidden treasures. The research explores the different hues of Greene: Greene’s wavering between Catholicism and Communism, sacred and profane love, good and evil, and the less civilized and the commercial civilization and recalls the golden period “when money was not the standard by which values were judged” (“The Last Childhood and Other Essays” 151). Through his novels, Greene communicates a deep and sincere sense of compassion for the sinners that all are in one way or another.

His novels, secular and religious alike, provide a clear view of human nature in all its paradoxes and contradictions. The research firmly establishes Greene’s humanist vision in an inhuman world by juxtaposing Catholicism and Communism, Spirituality and Sexuality, Good and Evil, the Edenic world of childhood called Pendele and the hellish world called Greeneland. It also establishes that Greene finds a cure for the broken world only through human love.
When all is said and done, it is imperative on the part of the researcher to suggest a few areas in Greene which need further study. The scholars who are interested in doing research in Greene may do well by dwelling on themes such as Greene’s existentialism, Greene’s feminism and the conformation of evil and good in Greene.