

# A Study of Graham Greene

## *Monsignor Quixote*

— The Shadow of Disbelief —

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### I

Graham Greene often writes about and describes figures of priests in his essays, novels, and plays. Being on the boundaries between the Church and the secular world, his priest figures provide appropriate and productive themes in which Greene can express interests and doubts he is aware of in the real situations in which human beings are involved. It is the “human factor” that interests him and “not apologetics” (*The Other Man*, p.160).<sup>1)</sup> Thus, priest figures must be advantageous for Greene; through them he can externalize his inwardness, can explore the anger, fear, agony, and doubt he meets in real life. In his novels three priest characters stand out: the whisky priest, the protagonist, in *The Power and the Glory*; Father Rivas, a character who plays an important role in *Honorary Consul*; and Father Quixote in *Monsignor Quixote*. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the figuration of Father Quixote, not only as a priest but also as an ordinary human being who honestly quests for his own intrinsic meaning of life. Through the character of Father Quixote, Greene expresses his own ambivalent feelings or his paradoxical sense about belief in God.

Greene has been called a Catholic writer since the early days of

his career, but he has refused the label repeatedly: "I don't see why people insist on labelling me a Catholic writer. I'm simply a Catholic who happens to write," "... a writer who happens to be a Catholic, and perhaps even a Protestant inside the Church. For I've always considered it better to be a Protestant inside rather than outside" (*The Other Man*, p.159, p.168). His intention is to be a writer who simultaneously is a Catholic searching for the true meanings of life, and his attitude toward the Church is like "grit in the machine." He does not compromise with the existing, self-satisfied Church, but prefers to be a doubter. When he was baptized, Greene chose the name of Thomas to identify himself with St. Thomas Didymus, the doubter. He accepted the existence of God not as an absolute truth but as a provisional one (*The Other Man*, p.154).

In an interesting book by Leopoldo Duran, who made journeys through the countryside in Spain with Greene during his later years, the words of Greene himself are recorded. Imitating Don Quixote and Sancho, Greene said, "I'm Sancho, you're the Monsignor" (*Graham Greene: Friend and Brother*, p.75).<sup>2)</sup> Greene has also commented that "My intention is clear enough from the epigraph at the front of each book" (*Graham Greene: Friend and Brother*, p.184). As the epigraph of *Monsignor Quixote*, Greene chose Hamlet's lines: "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so" from "Why then 'tis none to you, for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison." The phrase Greene chose expresses that there is nothing absolute anywhere and one's mental disposition is not decisive. One of the notes of the phrase explains that "this phrase voices an uncertainty about absolutes which reverberates throughout the play," and what Hamlet means here is "that there are no ethical absolutes" (*Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, II, ii, ll.24).<sup>3)</sup>

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The phrase conveys “an uncertainty about absolutes” and it means lack of assuredness of anything. In other words, it expresses the lack of belief or trust in anything, which is one of the qualities peculiar to a doubter. Father Quixote, who says, “I am riddled by doubts” and “Doubt is human,” (p.179) would be, like Hamlet, a typical character who embodies Greene’s inward uncertainty: his doubt of the existence of God. “Uncertainty” or “doubt,” therefore, would be the main tune sung through out the course of *Monsignor Quixote*. Accordingly, the key words in the novel would be “uncertainty, fiction, fact, doubt, belief, disbelief,” and by interpreting some of the scenes, it becomes clear what Greene has intended in the figuration of Father Quixote. In Part I, the identity of Father Quixote shows both the qualities of a priest and an ordinary human being; and in Part II it becomes clear that an example of wholeness or integrity is demonstrated in the figure of Father Quixote, as well as uncertainty, in other words, the longing for the certainty of God leading throughout the novel.

Critics have found the novel to be profound in its examination of “the human condition” and the metaphysical problems of the reality of human existence and belief in God. Of priest figures, one relevant interpretation is that “the priest-rebel is a persistent reminder of the author’s predilection for the fallen and disobedient as the prism through which can shine the disturbing light of faith” (Michael W. Higgins, “Greene’s Priest,” *Essays in Graham Greene*, vol.III, p.23).<sup>4)</sup>

About the theme of *Monsignor Quixote*, Anne T. Salvatore states that Greene grasps the conflicts between having transcendental belief and living in accordance with it in the world (*Greene and Kierkegaard*, p.98).<sup>5)</sup> Another critic, Maria Couto, interprets the conflicts as an examination of the essentials in human existence and “man’s greatest

metaphysical problem, that of illusion and reality," admiring the novel for "life viewed in its pristine beauty and bounty" (*Graham Greene: On the Frontier*, p.201).<sup>6)</sup> A. A. DeVitis also approves of the novel and mentions that "Never before has there been so cloudless a horizon in Greene's fictional sky. The simple man dies at the novel's end, not so much for love as with love" ("The Later Greene", *Essays in Graham Greene*, vol.I, p.80).<sup>7)</sup>

As Roger Sharrock says, superficially the novel is "one of those imitations of Cervantes" but the main point of it concerns "two differing twentieth-century attitudes to the human condition" (*Saints, Sinners and Comedians*, p.270).<sup>8)</sup> *Monsignor Quixote* (1982)<sup>9)</sup> superficially gives an impression that the subject is about the absurd episodes of Father Quixote, but the metaphysical problems of human existence are revealed in the course of the travel. *Monsignor Quixote* consists of two parts: Part I (composed of 10 chapters) illustrates the innocence and ignorance of Father Quixote through the funny and extravagant episodes of his journey with the ex-Mayor, who was defeated in the last election, during a vacation the priest was forced to take. Part II (composed of 4 chapters) describes his second journey, which ends when Father Quixote dies. Unlike Cervantes' Don Quixote, who dies at home not as Don Quixote de la Mancha but as Alonso Quixano the Good, a sane man,<sup>10)</sup> Father Quixote dies at a monastery, injured as a result of his attack on corrupted priests and believers.

## II

The story of Father Quixote begins with the uncertainty of his identity. The scene of his meeting the Bishop of Motopo introduces the motivation that drives him away from El Toboso, where he has

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been spending his quiet days as a Father. The role of the Bishop of Motopo, unlike the Bishop of El Toboso, is to approve of Father Quixote's identity as a descendant of Don Quixote, and to encourage him to "go forth . . . on the high road of the world" (p.22). Father Quixote's doubts about his ancestor, who "was a madman" and "was a fiction . . . in the mind of a writer" (p.22), are clearly dissolved by the Bishop of Motopo: "Perhaps we are all fictions . . . in the mind of God" (p.22). The Bishop of Motopo also urges Father Quixote to tilt at windmills.

'It was only by tilting at windmills that Don Quixote found the truth on his deathbed', and the bishop . . . intoned in Gregorian accents, "There are no birds this year in last year's nests." (p.22)

The phrase "There are no birds this year in last year's nests" is a Spanish proverb and is also the remark of Don Quixote on his deathbed.

'Let us go gently, gentlemen,' said Don Quixote, 'for there are no birds this year in last year's nests. I was mad, but I am sane now. I was Don Quixote de la Mancha, but to-day, as I have said, I am Alonso Quixano the Good . . . . (*The Adventures of Don Quixote*, p.938)

Father Quixote asks the meaning of the phrase, but the Bishop of Motopo only replies, "I have never quite made it out myself," "but surely the beauty is enough"(p.22). "The beauty" of the phrase is alluded to in *The Life of Don Quixote and Sancho* by Miguel de Unamuno, in which Unamuno quotes the phrase like a refrain to express that life is a dream but that Don Quixote is actually the spiritual ancestor of Sancho.<sup>11)</sup>

Jae-Suck Choi received verification in a personal letter from

Greene that Greene first “read *The Life of Don Quixote and Sancho* some time in the 1930’s and *The Tragic Sense of Life* not before 1962” (*Greene and Unamuno*, p.3).<sup>12)</sup> Leopoldo Duran also mentions that Greene “had just reread Miguel de Unamuno’s *Life of Don Quixote and Sancho*. We discussed Unamuno’s theory that Cervantes derived his inspiration from St Ignatius Loyola when he had created the character of the knight, Quixote himself” (*Graham Greene: Friend and Brother*, p. 47)). Unamuno’s influence on Greene is evident enough to set the scenes where Father Quixote and the ex-Mayor visit the tomb of Unamuno, and in the quotation of a passage from *The Tragic Sense of Life*. This passage is recollected by the ex-Mayor, who as a student listened to Unamuno’s lectures in philosophy at the University of Saramanca, where Unamuno was professor of Greek and later rector.<sup>13)</sup> The passage is as follows:

There is a muffled voice, a voice of uncertainty which whispers in the ears of the believer. Who knows? Without this uncertainty how could we live? (pp.97-98)<sup>14)</sup>

The quotation above also stresses the “uncertainty” always lurking in the mind of the believer, the skepticism persistent in the mind that searches for the intrinsic meaning of life. Besides, just before the quotation above, Unamuno tells about “a shadow of uncertainty”: “In the most secret chamber of the spirit of him . . . there lurks a shadow, a vague shadow, a shadow of shadow, of uncertainty . . . .”<sup>15)</sup> The wording of “shadow” also suggests the influence on Greene’s wording, “the shadow of disbelief” (p.172).

Another supposed influence on Greene by Unamuno concerns the Spanish proverb previously mentioned, especially in its image of bird

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nesses, which seem to be incorporated into the following dream of Father Quixote, who, because of his promotion to monsignor, has to go out of El Toboso, leaving his days of “the comforting unbroken rhythms” (p. 23).

... but before reading more than a few sentences he fell asleep, and all that he could remember after he had woken was that he had been climbing a high tree and he had dislodged a nest, empty and dry and brittle, the relic of a year gone by. (p.33)

One of the possible interpretations of the dream is the literal meaning of the proverb that the past is the past and specifically, his past years in El Toboso have been cast aside and he has to begin his new life outside of El Toboso. In another interpretation, “the relic of a year gone by” suggests the idea that the Church is only a surviving form, and the dream implies the underplot: the quest of Father Quixote for the certain basis of his life as “a fiction in the mind of God,”: his identity based on the certainty of God. Significant is the following dialogue between Father Quixote and the ex-Mayor.

‘All the same you do believe all that nonsense. God, the Trinity, the Immaculate Conception . . .’

‘I *want* to believe. And I want others to believe.’

‘Why?’

‘I want them to be happy.’

‘Let them drink a little vodka then. That’s better than a make-believe.’

‘The vodka wears off. It’s wearing off even now.’

‘So does belief.’

Father Quixote looked up with surprise. He had been gazing with a certain wistfulness at the last drops in his glass.

‘Your belief?’

'And your belief.'

'Why do you think that?'

'It's life, father, at its dirty work. Belief dies away like desire for a woman. I doubt if you are an exception to the general rule.'

'Do you think it would be bad for me to have another glass?' (p.29)

Here is a hint to clarify the components of Father Quixote as a priest and also as an ordinary human being which Father Quixote comes to recognize himself to be. As a priest he only wishes to believe what the Church teaches and do the office of priesthood. However, the ex-Mayor's remark: "an exception" makes him conscious of himself and his faith, and he wonders if he as a human being is different from others. And if so, he will lose his grounds as a priest, as described in the later scene where, after he saw a pornographic film, he prays, "Oh God, make me human, let me feel temptation. Save me from my indifference" (p.122). He is afraid that he might be an exception indifferent to human factors.

Therefore, when Father Quixote finds the ex-Mayor and himself alike in having doubt of their own belief, he feels "affection"(p.52) between them. Driving Rocinante, his dear Seat 600 car, he honestly speaks his feelings of uncertainty to the ex-Mayor, and when the ex-Mayor answers, "I try not to doubt," Father Quixote recognizes himself to be similar to the ex-Mayor and feels sympathy with him.

'Oh, so do I. So do I. In that we are certainly alike.' . . .

It's odd, he thought, as he steered Rocinante with undue caution round a curve, how sharing a sense of doubt can bring men together perhaps even more than sharing a faith. The believer will fight another believer over a shade of difference: the doubter fights only with himself. (p.52)

Father Quixote has come to understand himself to be one of the



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many ordinary human beings who are living in uncertainty of their faith. Neither the Christian nor the Communist knows exactly whether what he believes in is true or not, but the two men have similarity in the doubt. Thus Father Quixote identifies with the ex-Mayor as a human being.

Father Quixote comes to feel more friendship with the ex-Mayor, while at the same time he holds a secret fear of losing the identity that founds the grounds of his priesthood. This is his agony, described as "the chill of despair," (p.67) which derived from the haunting dream (p. 64). The following description of the dream "stayed with him like a cheap tune in the head" (p.67).

He had dreamt that Christ had been saved from the Cross by the legion of angels to which on an earlier occasion the Devil had told Him that He could appeal. So there was no final agony, no heavy stone which had to be rolled away, no discovery of an empty tomb. Father Quixote stood there watching on Golgotha as Christ stepped down from the Cross triumphant and acclaimed. The Roman soldiers, even the Centurion, knelt in His honour, and the people of Jerusalem poured up the hill to worship Him. The disciples clustered happily around. His mother smiled through her tears of joy. There was no ambiguity, no room for doubt and no room for faith at all. The whole world knew with certainty that Christ was the Son of God. (p.67)

On the surface, the dream seems to be welcomed by the people who believe in Christ, because they can see Christ really proving his power over the legion of angels, as the Devil and people expected, and showing His glory. However, the dream expresses the negation of a Christ who is the Saviour and who as the Resurrected Son of God redeems people's sin. The dream only presents the historical existence of a hero who testifies himself to be the Son of God, requiring no explanation nor

relationships between Him and human beings. This is a world of scientific clarity without the love of God redeeming men's sins and giving eternal life. It deprives Father Quixote of his identity as a man who believes in Christianity and also the grounds of his office. The dream continues to irritate and make him uneasy: he "felt on waking the chill of despair felt by a man" whose profession "is of use to no one, who must continue to live in a kind of Saharan desert without doubt or faith, where everyone is certain that the same belief is true"(p.67). Accordingly, in the world of the dream, "there was no ambiguity, no room for doubt and no room for faith at all," and everything is "*proved* to be absolute truth"(p.71).

This paradoxically negative dream leads to a further uncovering of Father Quixote's innermost thoughts, not only as a priest but also as an ordinary human being, that without the Resurrection and the Redemption any belief in God cannot be possible.

'Hope in this world perhaps, but I have a greater hunger—and not for myself alone. For you, Sancho, and all our world. I know I'm a poor priest errant, travelling God knows where. I know that there are absurdities in some of my books as there were in the books of chivalry my ancestor collected. . . . Whatever absurdities you can dig out of my books I still have faith . . .'

'In what?'

'In a historic fact. That Christ died on the Cross and rose again.'

'The greatest absurdity of all.'

'It's an absurd world or we wouldn't be here together.' (pp.74-75)

Faith in the absurdity of a Christ who died and rose again, which reveals the love of God, is the innermost hope of Father Quixote. This is the greatest difference between Father Quixote and the ex-Mayor, the Communist, and also the Father's ancestor, Don Quixote. Don

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Quixote has faith in chivalry and travels while cherishing pure love for Dulcinea. His life has been absurd in the eyes of others, but he becomes sane at his deathbed, while Father Quixote has faith in the absurdity of Christ and has to live the absurdities in a dual quality of himself: as a priest and simultaneously as an ordinary man.

In other words, people have to continue to live as human beings in keeping with their own identity: their own role in the world. People play their own role in accordance with individual characteristics, and, like actors, they wear their costumes to show their characters. In this meaning, the scene where the ex-Mayor puts the priest collar on is very short but suggestive. When the ex-Mayor wears the collar to feel how hot it is, he notices that without the collar Father Quixote would never be taken for a priest nor a monsignor. Father Quixote replies that without his spear, Don Quixote would never have been taken for a knight but for a crazy old man (pp.80-81). The scene signifies the two components of Father Quixote: that he is an ordinary human being but also a priest, a role given by God. This duality of roles also becomes clear in the scene in which Father Quixote gets drunk and claims his own individuality and freedom as an ordinary man:

'Why are you always saddling me with my ancestor?'

'I was only comparing . . .'

'You talk about him at every opportunity. . . . Those Guardia were Guardia, not windmills. I am Father Quixote, and not Don Quixote. I tell you, I exist. My adventures are my own adventures, not his. I go my way — my way — not his. I have free will. I am not tethered to an ancestor . . . .'

'Oh, I know what you think. You think my God is an illusion like the windmills. But He exists, I tell you, I don't just believe in Him. I touch Him.' (p.139)<sup>16)</sup>

This outburst is a proclamation of his individuality. He is not a knight but a priest, and he is not only a believer but also a man who cannot help but say that he is sure that God exists. He cannot help saying he knows God's existence beyond reason. His remark: "I touch Him" is an excessively simple but allusive description of what cannot be proved with rationales.

### III

In Part I, the components of Father Quixote are indicated: his faith in God and his recovery of his identity, through his uncertainty or doubt in his belief which lurks behind them. In Part II, Father Quixote acts according to his own will or fulfills what his own life is qualified for.

According to Leopoldo Duran, there are three scenes that especially stimulated Greene to write the novel and which "had been vital" in his mind (*Graham Greene: Friend and Brother*, p.224). They are the scenes of the Mexicans, "the biblical fig tree," and the Trappist monastery at Osera. These three scenes each make a specific scene in Part II and Part II begins with the scene where Father Quixote meets the Bishop of El Toboso before the second journey. The scene reveals Father Quixote's secret contempt for the Bishop, as well as for the rigorous and dogmatic attitudes of the Church. Convinced of the difference between the Church and himself, Father Quixote escapes from his room, leaving for a new world where he is to be himself. The following quotation expresses the significance of the second journey: anxiety Father Quixote and the ex-Mayor feel and the uncertainty that they, as "party outsiders," have.

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... he told the Mayor, 'that you have more belief in Communism than in the Party.'

'And I was just going to say almost the same, father, that you seem to have more belief in Catholicism than in Rome.' ...

'We are getting into dangerous waters, father.'(p.178)

His second journey with the ex-Mayor means, therefore, that they start for the place where they can live their own life, though the journey is to navigate "dangerous waters." Besides, Father Quixote is still in doubt about his belief. He can tell Teresa that there is no goodbye ever for a Christian, but he cannot complete making the sign of the cross in blessing (p.171). He thinks that he believes what he told Teresa, but he is aware of "the shadow of disbelief."

I believe what I told her ... I believe it of course, but how is it that when I speak of belief, I become aware always of a shadow, the shadow of disbelief haunting my belief? (pp.171-172)

'How wrong you were, Sancho. I am riddled by doubts. I am sure of nothing, not even of the existence of God, but doubt is not treachery as you Communists seem to think. Doubt is human. Oh, I want to believe that it is all true—and that want is the only certain thing I feel. ...' (p. 179)

The quotation above, especially "the shadow of disbelief" and "that want is the only certain thing I feel," is the expression of the uncertainty of his belief, but simultaneously it is a paradoxical expression suggesting the existence of God, which human beings cannot see or prove with rationales.

Being under "the shadow of disbelief," the scene of the fig tree is the most peaceful in the novel, and Father Quixote is given a kind of real beatitude or blessedness under the shade of it. Avoiding the Guardia's

search, he and the ex-Mayor travel along the mountainside roads and visit Señor Diego and his grandson, Father José, to buy some bottles of wine. They enjoy the hospitality of Señor Diego, the best wine grower and the owner of the finest vine orchard, who has real respect for a monsignor. In the Old Testament, fig trees and vine trees symbolize “peace and prosperity,” protected by God from enemies,<sup>17)</sup> and the fig provides shade and sustenance for the family it protects.<sup>18)</sup> Also, “sitting under a fig-tree and vine” is the symbol of the ideal life in quietness, safety, and peace.<sup>19)</sup> Father Quixote feels warm camaraderie among them, but he notices that the ex-Mayor is an exception to their sympathetic circle.

One of the important points of this scene is Father Quixote's recognition of the ex-Mayor's sadness, uncertainty and change. They toast to “the Holy Father and his intentions” (p.192), but only the ex-Mayor does not toast because he is not a Catholic. The ex-Mayor says,

‘One can't know a man's intentions and one can't toast them. Do you think that the monsignor's ancestor really represented the chivalry of Spain? Oh, it may have been his intention, but we all make cruel parodies of what we intend.’ There was a note of sadness and regret in his voice which surprised Father Quixote. He had been accustomed to aggression from the Mayor: an aggression which was only perhaps a form of self-defence, but regret was surely a form of despair, of surrender, even perhaps of change. He thought for the first time: Where will this voyage of ours finally end? (p.193)

Here Father Quixote certainly understands that the voyage into “dangerous waters” is really seriously involving the ex-Mayor's life. He also understands his despair and loneliness derived from uncertainty. Father Quixote has recognized that both of them are in the same sphere

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of uncertainty as human beings.

The scene of the Mexicans emphasizes Father Quixote's anger toward the procession in the feast. "This is blasphemy," (p.197) he says to the corrupted priests and believers who buy their religious piety. The scene clarifies Father Quixote's straightforward righteousness; nevertheless, the description of his preparation for the attack on the feast is much more meaningful. He dresses up in his *pechera* and collar, and is about to play the role of a monsignor like an actor. The characteristic of "an actor" is also one of the attributes Don Quixote has and one of the interpretations of Don Quixote is as follows: he has the quality of "an actor who memorizes and practices a role. This is a reasonable viewpoint and Cervantes provide ample evidence to justify either the madman theory or the actor theory, just as Shakespeare has done for Hamlet" (*Don Quixote Notes*, p.10).<sup>20)</sup>

Now, to wear his *pechera* and collar, Father Quixote,

got out of the car and a small group gathered in the street to watch him dress. He felt like an actor who is watched by friends in his dressing-room.

'We are going into battle, Sancho. I need my armour. Even if it is as absurd as Mambrino's helmet.'

He sat again behind the wheel of Rocinante and said, 'I feel more ready now.' (p.195)

His awareness of his role of a monsignor implies his sincerity in his office and simultaneously his decision to fulfill his responsibility. His faith in his priesthood manifests itself in his dressing up as a monsignor.

This attitude of his playing the role of a monsignor, his sincerity to his office, is described again in the scene of the last Mass, which he cannot say because of a *Suspensión a Divinis* announced by the Bishop

of El Toboso. The last Mass scene can be interpreted in various ways, because Greene has set Father Quixote in an illusion or given him the atmosphere of noctambulism. It might be said it is in the situation of the equivocal atmosphere that Greene can express the realities in the religious sphere, which is beyond reason and insinuated between fact and fiction.

Greene has employed Father Loepoldo, who studies Descartes, and Professor Pilbeam, who majors in Hispanic Studies, to suggest the meaning of the last Mass. They witness Father Quixote saying the fragmentary Mass and giving a nonexistent Host to the ex-Mayor: they “saw no bread or wine” (p.219). This is an absolute fact, but Father Leopoldo says that the ex-Mayor received a Host “in *his* mind,” namely, in Father Quixote’s mind. The authenticity of the Host “in *his* mind” belongs to the sphere of believing in fiction, in the same meaning that the existence of human beings can really be “fictions . . . in the mind of God” (p.22). This recognition can only be proved as the matter of choice between belief and disbelief. Father Leopoldo says that according to Descartes, this idea is essential to faith, and at this point all people can do is choose between fact and fiction because fact and fiction cannot be distinguished (p.206). What is certain is only that “The Mayor opened his mouth and felt the fingers, like a Host, on his tongue” (p.217), an image which reverberates the wording of Father Quixote: “I touch Him” (p.139).

In one aspect, the description of the last Mass leads to one interpretation of the ‘fact and fiction’ idea that there are two spheres of recognition which human beings achieve: one is what can be seen and accordingly is recognizable; the other is what can exist only in the mind of human beings but is recognizable as a fact by believing. In this meaning both of them can be real to human beings. The last Mass by



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Father Quixote, therefore, signifies the realms of possibility in religious faith.

In another aspect, Father Quixote, who says the last Mass, embodies the idea that, insofar as human beings are concerned, there is a sphere beyond rational explanation and it is only caught in ambiguous boundaries between fact and fiction. The last Mass takes the ex-Mayor into a new comprehension of human beings: "an idea quite strange to him had lodged in his brain . . . the love which he had begun to feel for Father Quixote, seemed now to live and grow in spite of the final separation and the final silence. . . ." (p.221). He "had lost his freedom," because "to doubt . . . is to lose the freedom of action" (p.220). He is bound to doubt the authenticity of what he has seen and felt. For him a new life has begun in "the shadow of disbelief," just as Bendrix, who came to know a new kind of love through Sara's love of God, has inevitably come to a recognition of God, in *The End of Affair*, and just as Fowler, who in his bitter and lonely happiness has to realize that he needs someone yet unknown to whom he can say he was sorry, in *The Quiet American*. The ex-Mayor also "with a kind of fear" (p.221) begins to live, remembering Father Quixote's love for him expressed in "compañero" and "By this hopping" (p.217). These are the last words of Father Quixote when he puts an unseen Host onto the tongue of the ex-Mayor, who repeats in his turn the word "*compañero*" and says, "this is Sancho" (p.217). This moment is the moment of accomplishing the life of Father Quixote,<sup>21</sup> who has lived in sincerity as a priest and in sympathy with the ex-Mayor. In other words, Greene has described the figure of integrity in Father Quixote, who has fulfilled what he is qualified for: a priest who has love and sympathy for the ex-Mayor as "*compañero*."

#### IV

Among the three priests Greene has described, Father Quixote seems to be the most accomplished character whose attributes and actions are natural, convincing and appropriate to such a priest who has lived as a “party outsider” of the Church and also as an ordinary human being. He leaves nothing unsettled as a character after his death except the query about the essentials of life to the ex-Mayor. There is no question left about the personality or character of Father Quixote except that concerning the authenticity of the last Mass. The figure of Father Quixote, therefore, is an accomplished one as a character in a novel.

It seems valid to compare Father Quixote’s qualities of liberality and maturity to those which Greene has attained as a novelist who has quested for the intrinsic meaning of human life as a Catholic. It might be said, in other words, that the figure of Father Quixote is an ideal one externalizing the image that Greene cherished in his later years, trying paradoxically to affirm his faith in “the shadow of disbelief.”

#### Notes:

- 1) Allan, Marie-Françoise, *The Other Man: Conversations with Graham Greene*, Tr. Waldman, Guido (London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 1983).
- 2) Duran, Leopoldo, *Graham Greene: Friend and Brother*, Tr. Cameron, Euan (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994).
- 3) Edwards, Philip, Ed., *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, The New Cambridge Shakespeare (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.129.
- 4) Higgins, Michael W., “Greene’s Priest: A Sort of Rebel”, *Essays in Graham Greene: An Annual Review*, Vol.III, Ed. Wolfe, Peter (Missouri: Lucas Hall Press, 1992).

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- 5) Salvatore, Anne T., *Greene and Kierkegaard: The Discourse of Belief* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1988).
  - 6) Couto, Maria, *Graham Greene: On the Frontier* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1988).
  - 7) DeVitis, A. A., "The Later Greene", *Essays in Graham Greene: an Annual Review*, Vol. I, Ed. Wolfe, Peter, (Missouri: Lucas Hall Press, 1987).
  - 8) Sharrock, Roger, *Saints, Sinners and Comedians: The Novels of Graham Greene* (Kent, England & Indiana: Burns & Oates & University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).
  - 9) The text used in this paper is *Monsignor Quixote* (London: The Bodley Head, 1982). All subsequent references to *Monsignor Quixote* will be to this edition, with the relevant page number incorporated within parentheses.
  - 10) Cervantes Savedra, Miguel de, *The Adventures of Don Quixote*, Tr. J. M. Cohen (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1950), p.938.
  - 11) Unamuno, Miquel de, *Our Lord Don Quixote: The Life of Don Quixote and Sancho with Related Essays*, Tr. Kerrigan, Anthony, 2nd. Ed. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1976).
  - 12) Choi, Jae-Suck, *Greene and Unamuno: Two Pilgrims to La Mancha* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1990).
  - 13) Edwards, Paul, Ed., *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol.7, Rpt. (New York, London: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1972).
  - 14) Greene has extracted the passage from the following:

"In the most secret chamber of the spirit of him who believes himself convinced that death puts an end to his personal consciousness, his memory, for ever . . . there lurks a shadow, a vague shadow, a shadow of shadow, of uncertainty . . . the silence of this secret chamber speaks to him and murmurs, "Who knows! . . ." He may not think he hears it, but he hears it nevertheless. And likewise in some secret place of the soul of the believer who most firmly holds the belief in a future life, there is a muffled voice, a voice of uncertainty, which whispers in the ear of his spirit, "Who knows! . . ." These voices are like the humming of a mosquito when the south-west wind roars through the trees in the wood; we cannot distinguish this faint humming, yet nevertheless, merged in the clamour of the storm, it reaches the ear. Otherwise, without this uncertainty, how could we live?" Unamuno, Miquel de, *The Tragic Sense of Life*, Tr. Fitch, J. E. Crawford (New York: Dover

Publications, Inc., 1954), pp.118-119.

- 15) *ibid.*
- 16) *The Other Man*, p.156.  
Greene mentions that every year he goes traveling with a Spanish priest and that "I touch Him" is the priest's remark, but he does not tell his name.
- 17) *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, 11th Rpt. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980).
- 18) Achtemeier, Paul J., Ed. *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 1985).
- 19) DeVries, Ad., *Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery*, 2nd., Rev., Ed. (Amsterdam · London: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1976).
- 20) Sturman, Marianne, *Don Quixote Notes* (Nebraska: Cliffs Notes, 1964).
- 21) Leopoldo Duran writes that "Father Quixote's mission in life was accomplished when he saw his friend kneel to receive communion." *Graham Greene: Friend and Brother*, p.218.