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**“This strange, rather sad story”: The Reflexive Design of
Graham Greene’s *The Third Man*.**

The circumstances surrounding the genesis and composition of Graham Greene’s *The Third Man* (1950) have recently been recalled by Judy Adamson and Philip Stratford, in an essay¹ largely devoted to characterizing some quite unwarranted editorial emendations which differentiate the earliest American editions from British (and other textually sound) versions of *The Third Man*. It turns out that these are changes which had the effect of giving the American reader a text which (for whatever reasons, possibly political) presented the American and Russian occupation forces in Vienna, and the central character of Harry Lime, and his dishonourable deeds and connections, in a blander, softer light than Greene could ever have intended; indeed, according to Adamson and Stratford, Greene did not “know of the extensive changes made to his story in the American book and now claims to be ‘horrified’ by them”². Such obscurely purposeful editorial meddlings are perhaps the kind of thing that the textual and creative history of *The Third Man* could have led us to expect: they can be placed alongside other more official changes (usually introduced with Greene’s approval and frequently of his own doing) which befell the original tale in its transposition from idea-resuscitated-from-old-notebook to story to treatment to script to finished film. Adamson and Stratford show that these approved and ‘official’ changes involved revisions both of *dramatis personae* and of plot, and that they were often introduced for good artistic or practical reasons. From evidence of this and other kinds, Adamson and Stratford show that - as they put it - “the story of turning *The Third Man* into film stands as a classic case-history of what can happen when in the great arena of contemporary culture the armies of finance, art and politics clash by night”³. Adamson and Stratford’s various observations are likely to prompt a reconsideration of the standing of the text of *The Third Man* in relation to the more famous film⁴ - and also (and perhaps more signifi-

cantly) as a work of literature which deserves to have its own place in Greene's canon.

The essence of the more significant changes which overtook *The Third Man* between Greene's original story and Reed's finished film was familiar to us already from Greene's own comments in prefaces to re-issues of *The Third Man* in both the earlier Uniform Edition (1950) and the more recent Collected Edition (1976) — and could also be glimpsed in various annotations to the published filmscript⁵. The story, written according to Greene as raw material for the screenplay ("To me it is almost impossible to write a film play without first writing a story"⁶), was never, it seems, "written to be read but only to be seen", and was "never intended for publication": it was "written for the films". "The film, in fact," concludes Greene, "is better than the story because it is in this case the finished state of the story." This story was itself developed (with some help from circumstance, desperation, and chance encounter) out of an old, unused idea of Greene's about a dead man apparently resurrected a week after his funeral. This was all Greene had to offer when he was sent by Sir Alexander Korda to Austria to write a film (for Carol Reed to direct, but which Korda specifically wanted to be about — or to relate to the background and setting of — the four-power occupation of post-war Vienna).

The various indications of the chanciness and practicality which surrounded the development of the story of *The Third Man* might seem to bear out the deprecatory terms in which Greene nowadays introduces the book, and especially his emphatic claim that "*The Third Man* was never intended to be more than the raw material for a picture". But emphasis on the provisional status of the story can perhaps be taken too far, or accepted too readily. It does not square all that easily with the story's being included (fairly solemnly prefaced, and once or twice revised in minor but still significant details of wording) in both the Uniform and the Collected Editions, these both being compilations from which Greene has not hesitated to exclude other material (admittedly from much earlier in his career, but in its jejuneness also raw). Adamson and Stratford also note the significance of the inclusion of *The Third Man* in the Collected Edition, and as a contrast to Greene's saying that it was only "raw material for a picture", point to the work's continuing availability and its considerable popularity⁷:

The story, however, was not only published (1950) and included in the Collected Edition of Greene's work (1976) but is one of his best-known fictions - the one, together with *The Power and the Glory* most popularly associated with his name.

Rather than discounting the independent literary standing of *The Third Man*, Greene's preface may only seem to do so by being equivocal. For Greene to have adopted an ironic or equivocal tone may not only seem characteristic but may have been advised and judicious as well, especially if in writing his preface to *The Third Man* he wanted to seem to deprecate, but not really to dismiss, the literary significance of this piece of fiction. Some kind of authorial deprecation may be appropriately part of the whole literary exercise centred on the novel, and what Greene may be saying in his preface is that, while the film may have some kind of priority, the novel is an independent literary work, embodying a special kind of literary exercise that also involved its author in seeming to make dismissive or belittling remarks about the work in question. For instance, if *The Third Man* were to turn out to be designed, in part, to reflect and comment upon critical misjudgement of Greene's work, then an author's preface tending to bear out or to warrant critical neglect of *The Third Man* would be one way of (and certainly not an obstacle to) mocking the critics — so that the seemingly corroborative preface becomes part of a complex literary design whose whole purpose is to rebut and confuse critical judgements in general. This, in fact, is very much what I will want to argue concerning *The Third Man*.

Besides, we ought not to be entirely at ease with the idea of the film's superiority as a 'finished' (rather than simply an altered, and perhaps diluted) version of the story. The circumstances of film production must dictate that the transposition from script to celluloid exposes any imaginative work to practical limitations, and compromise and adjustment can always be expected to intervene. And while *The Third Man*, is in almost every cinematic aspect, well-made, nevertheless parts of the finished film occasionally seem contingent; a check of the published screenplay will show several instances of things that are last-minute, ultimately non-authorial, or only capriciously established: the business of Orson Welles's cuckoo-clock speech (apparently interpolated by the actor, as his own contribution, at the last minute and while on camera) is only the best-known of these. But quite apart entirely from the relative standing of film and book, it is obvious that they are in certain respects very significantly different, with several features of the book going unrepresented in the film.

Among the deletions introduced as the story developed into the film is the matter, as noted by Adamson and Stratford, "of the mix-up between Buck Dexter (Martins' pseudonym as a writer of Westerns) and Benjamin Dexter the British novelist (modelled on E.M. Forster)"⁸. According to Greene in his preface, this particular deletion among others arose for "obvious superficial reasons", and was one of

those which followed from "the choice of an American instead of an English star". Greene explains: "An American . . . could hardly have been mistaken for the great English writer Dexter, whose literary character bore certain echoes of the gentle genius of Mr. E. M. Forster. The confusion of identities would have been impossible, even if Carol Reed had not rightly objected to a rather far-fetched situation involving a great deal of explanation that increased the length of a film already far too long." What Greene says is convincing, and there can be no reason to doubt that he willingly accepted the changes asked for by Reed. But curiously, Greene's comments, rather than persuading us that the sparer film is an improvement on the more complicated story, seem only to remind us of ways in which the book is intriguingly different from the film. As we shall see, the business of the confusion over the writers called Dexter, among other things, gives an important literary dimension to *The Third Man*, so that one cannot help wondering just how helpful Greene's preface is intended to be, especially when one realizes that the parts of the book not represented in the film are its most bookish, its most self-consciously literary parts. Greene's claim that "The film, in fact, is better than the story because it is in this case the finished state of the story", can, in fact, be countered by pointing to the fact that the film does without something that the reader of the book senses is not superfluous. Perhaps the most reasonable view is expressed in the balanced conclusion of Adamson and Stratford, who see different merits in both story and film, and who concede the "finished" status of the film without accepting that that reflects the inferiority or insignificance of the book. Even while they note the vagaries of the story's treatment cinematically and editorially, and even though they have evidence that the authorial tendency to discount or down-grade the story is borne out by clear authorial neglect⁹ and are thus very keenly aware of just how provisional the status of the story must seem, nevertheless Adamson and Stratford conclude that "The film may indeed be 'the finished state of the story'; but in its first state *The Third Man* is still part of Greene's *oeuvre* and deserves to be known as it was written."¹⁰

Whatever turns out to be the final assessment of the relationship between *The Third Man* and the scripts and the film that it led up to, the idea that the story itself deserves to be known and treated as a piece of writing, and is to be judged entirely by literary standards, is a view that seems to be upheld when the story is seen in relation to Greene's fiction as a whole.

The Third Man is, on its own literary terms, not only a relevant but also a significant part of Graham Greene's *oeuvre*. Rather than dismissed as screenplay-fodder, it deserves to be seen as having a self-

parodic design, as being a piece of writing with a special and literary significance in relation to the rest of Greene's work. *The Third Man* presents a case on behalf of Greene's own special kind of fiction, and (in a summary way) this is what the novel is "about", so that it has an inward-looking, stance-taking function of the kind that is frequently associated with the kind of self-conscious, mildly self-parodic and professedly-utilitarian fiction that it itself is an example of. *The Third Man* stands as a representative of much of the whole of the *oeuvre* to which it belongs, offering a justification of Greene's fictional style and methods, while schematically but faithfully enough exhibiting the properties and qualities of that fiction. In *The Third Man* Greene shows a self-conscious sense that the writer's own conception of his fiction needs to be asserted against the misunderstandings or mistaken emphases of critics and readers at large.¹¹ *The Third Man* is a Greene novel with the additional dimension that it was written by Greene with the whole question of what a Greene novel was very much in mind. It is a self-parody with a serious literary purpose — and as such has to be regarded at one and the same time as detached and mocking, as asking to be regarded a little less than totally seriously *and* as specially intimate, worthy of serious attention since it is so specially privileged.

David Lodge has remarked¹² that Greene's volume of autobiography, *A Sort of Life* (1971), reads more like the story of his life as if it was written by the person who writes Graham Greene's novels rather than by Graham Greene, Esq.; it is just such a quality that one can detect in *The Third Man*, that it is not simply by Graham Greene, Esq., but by the "other man", the person who writes Graham Greene's novels, and that what it is about is how this person, this literary figure, writes. This quality, whereby an important theme of *The Third Man* is as much as anything else itself, and particularly its author's characteristic techniques and themes, that in this case the frame — or rather, the canvas — *is* the picture, can be identified in the novel on several levels.

The most obvious level is that of explicit (and sometimes seemingly frivolous) hints of reflexivity in the novel, with references being made to the novel itself or to recognizable qualities of Greene's work, either as a whole, or in specific instances. *The Third Man* incorporates a telling reference to itself. Rollo Martins, asked what he is presently working on (under the mistaken impression that he is the famous novelist Benjamin Dexter: Martins writes Westerns under the pseudonym Buck Dexter), blurts out a spurious title, "The Third Man", which has nothing to do with any current writing project but is an idea prompted by his puzzlement over who a third stranger, present when Harry Lime is said to have died, might have been. The suggestion in the reference (which occurs in Chapter 9) is that *The Third Man* is itself

impromptu, unconsidered, just something thrown off, but this suggestion is made in a reference which is calculated, deliberate, intentionally designed to seem the opposite of what it really is. If *The Third Man* is indeed unreflective, opportune, simply utilitarian, then this reference is a contrary part of it, since it is intentional, contrived, and meant to be significant. And to see this particular reference as significant seems to involve our reading *The Third Man* as being more than circumstantial and material in its design, for otherwise this reference, if not seen in its proper reflexive function, will itself seem capricious, isolated, pointless. Just as the suggestion that *The Third Man* is off-hand is made by a contrived and self-conscious reference so the seemingly insignificant novel has to be seen as having some wider, more considered point.

A similar, reflexive import surrounds the following reference, from early in *The Third Man*, when Martins is still searching for the cemetery where Harry Lime (or so everyone assumes) is being interred:

Then Martins remembered that Lime was a Catholic and was unlikely to be buried in the British zone for which they had been vainly searching. So back they drove through the heart of a forest where the graves lay like wolves under the trees, winking white eyes under the gloom of the evergreens. Once from under the trees emerged a group of three men in strange eighteenth-century black and silver uniforms with three-cornered hats pushing a kind of barrow: they crossed a ride in the forest of graves and disappeared again. (2)¹³

The brief transition and almost immediate disappearance of these three men seems stray, trivial, beside the point: they are introduced only to be dismissed. But dismissal may be very much what Greene had in mind in introducing a reference to them at all, since these three representative figures from a historical Ruritania must stand for (and their disappearance for the authorial dismissal of) Greene's first three novels - *The Man Within* (1929), *The Name of Action* (1931), *Rumour at Nightfall* (1932). I have seen only the first of these (while he has dismissed all three, Greene has more effectively disowned the latter two by preventing their republication) but the reference in *The Third Man* becomes more sensible when one sets it beside the following description by Kenneth and Miriam Allott of Greene's first three novels:¹⁴

The Man Within and *Rumour at Nightfall*, unlike any of the later books, are historical novels, while *The Name of Action*, nominally set in the nineteen-twenties, is a Ruritanian fantasy almost equally divorced from the representation of the contemporary scene.

There are other references in *The Third Man* which seem to connect with our sense of the whole character of Greene's work rather than

specifically to recall any particular instance or feature of it. Martins's summary of one of his own Westerns (*The Lone Rider of Santa Fé*) — "This lone rider had his best friend shot by the sheriff of a town called Lost Claim Gulch. The story is how he hunted that sheriff down quite legally — until his revenge was completed." (3) — is a good indication, at least in Buck Dexter's terms, of the plot of *The Third Man*, at least as Martins sees his own involvement in it in the early stages. (Martins sees himself as "gunning just the same way for Colonel Callaghan".) But it is more than simply a standard summary of a rather unusual Western: it also suggests other notions — pursuit, trust and loyalty, the hunter hunted, the claims of personal friendship over public and civic duty, the dull anonymity of the morally authoritative figure against the greater sympathy prompted by the outlawed or alienated individual, the way a literary idea is given a paradoxical treatment — all of which recall features of Graham Greene's own fiction.

The Third Man invokes many of the most typical characteristics of Greene's novels. There are references to dentists, funerals (in fact, the novel is structured or arranged circularly, beginning and ending with Harry Lime's two interments), a recurrent image, in the mind of a character, of a dead body and hovering vultures, several dreams that are characteristically disappointing or foreboding, and which seem portentous rather than predictive, an upstart character called Carter, a man whose surname is that of a bird (Corporal Starling), a naive, abandoned, waif-like heroine, a recollection of the literary Africa of a childhood hero, Allan Quatermain, and of Rider Haggard, a character who is regretful and anxious about his drinking and about mixing his drinks, references to basements and the related subterranean world of the Vienna sewers, a mix-up over surnames beginning with the letter 'C', a middle-aged police officer, responsible, serious, resigned to his position, hard-headed about those he pursues and sceptical about those he protects, a wise, knowing, intuitive child, who embodies wisdom and who points to concealed or imaginative truth by an accidental innocence, but who is regarded all the time by those around as being just childish. There are many other things: relationships cemented at school, people with unexpected and secret literary interests, middle-aged schoolboys, men involved in the small-scale corruption of the black market, and so on. Greene's fascination with funerals and resurrections (and with redemption too, of course), and with animated corpses, finds a seemingly rational focus in the story of Harry Lime's (as it turns out, faked) death, in the search for the puzzling, unrecognized third man present when Lime is supposed to have died (in fact, Lime himself), and in the chance glimpsing of the

ghostly, and supposedly-dead Lime in the light thrown from an upstairs window as Lime stalks Martins along the darkened streets of Vienna, and in what develops as the climax of all that - the underground pursuit of Lime, through the politically-neutral sewers of Vienna, until he is gunned down by Martins. That pursuit not only takes us underground, so that the scene of "Lime's last stand" (16) is characteristic Greenean territory which — as the narrator notes — belongs with the scene of Allan Quatermain's adventures: it is also the point where, through the pursuit, various ironically-reversed and paradoxical new truths are established — in the relation between hunter and hunted, in the sense of friendship (Martins shoots down his schoolboy hero Lime) and comradeship (the uncomplicated Sergeant Bates dies trying to protect Martins, whose Westerns he devotedly admires). In this scene too are brought to the fore those other themes of *The Third Man* which have left the whole novel tinged with hints of Greene's various moral pedimenta, such as treachery, betrayal, and the idea of betrayed and misplaced trust.

Formally and structurally, too, *The Third Man* is typical of Greene's fiction. There is an important observation of David Lodge's that Greene has "described Liberia as a country 'saved from melodrama by its irony' and the same might be said of his own fiction, particularly the early work":¹⁵ it is a judgement which seems particularly applicable to *The Third Man*. Lodge, developing the aptness of the 'saved from melodrama by its irony' formula when applied to Greene's work in general, sounds most of the time as if he were discussing *The Third Man* in particular¹⁶:

It is melodramatic insofar as moral choice is dramatized by extreme circumstances, often arising out of crime, war, revolution, and espionage, and the narrative aims to excite and engage very basic emotions: horror, compassion, fear, admiration. The irony resides in the fact that in Greene's stories the conventions of melodrama are handled with a sophisticated and very personal sense of values so as to displace the usual melodramatic distribution of sympathy and antipathy. We are led to identify, not with the honest and brave, but with the criminal and cowardly; not with the rich and beautiful, but with the poor and ugly; and there is rarely an unequivocally happy ending. In Greene's own words: "The little duke is dead and betrayed and forgotten: we cannot recognize the villain, and we suspect the hero, and the world is a small cramped place" (*The Ministry of Fear*, [1943]).

There are many points of correspondence in style, theme, and idea between *The Third Man* and the rest of Greene's work. Sometimes these are correspondences with one particular book, or with a set of them, sometimes they are more general; some points are specific and local, others are typical and recur from book to book. Sometimes what

is involved is a habit of expression, sometimes a quirk of thought, and frequently, of course, both. Limitations of space mean that these stylistic correspondences will have to be treated here as assumed rather than being demonstrated in full¹⁷, but some of the details which clearly suggest the self-parodic design and quality of *The Third Man* need to be briefly mentioned.

The Viennese setting of the story, as described by Colonel Calloway in the prologuial first chapter, is an essential and caricatured Greenland, the essence and caricature of this imaginary landscape being conveyed by recognizable details of style, vision, and technique.

I never knew Vienna between the wars, and I am too young to remember the old Vienna with its Strauss music and its bogus easy charm; to me it is simply a city of undignified ruins which turned that February into great glaciers of snow and ice. The Danube was a grey flat muddy river a long way off across the Second Bezirk, the Russian zone where the Prater lay smashed and desolate and full of weeds, only the Great Wheel revolving slowly over the foundations of merry-go-rounds like abandoned millstones, the rusting iron of smashed tanks which nobody had cleared away, the frost-nipped weeds where the snow was thin. I haven't enough imagination to picture it as it had once been, any more than I can picture Sacher's Hotel as other than a transit hotel for English officers or see the Kärntnerstrasse as a fashionable shopping street instead of a street which exists, most of it, only at eye level, repaired up to the first storey. A Russian soldier in a fur cap goes by with a rifle over his shoulder a few tarts cluster round the American Information Office, and men in overcoats sip ersatz coffee in the windows of the Old Vienna. At night it is just as well to stick to the Inner City or the zones of three of the Powers, though even there the kidnappings occur - such senseless kidnappings they sometimes seemed to us - a Ukrainian girl without a passport, an old man beyond the age of usefulness, sometimes, of course, the technician or the traitor. This was roughly the Vienna to which Rollo Martins came on February seventh last year. (1)

The experience of reading this extract is a recurrent experience in reading *The Third Man*. One constantly has a sense of Greene engaging in the exercise of writing a Greene novel.¹⁸ Where descriptive or atmospheric details do not seem to recall features of some other novel or novels by Greene, they seem deliberately to parallel them — so that the passage conveys a sense of urban Greenland (that particular landscape so firmly identified in imagination as the characteristic and schematic setting of Greene's fictional world) as much as it does any sense of being a documentary description of war-torn Vienna. The passage also echoes with highly recognizable traits of Greene's individual narrative style — the phraseological triples, the cinematic montage of separate close-up images, the pointed (sometimes disconcerting) adjectival — and other — descriptions, the strong sense of human alienation established through emphasis on the seedy, the squalid and

the wretched, and the prompting of ambivalent moral attitudes by neutral and reportive statements. In its own particular ways such an extract typifies a quality found generally in *The Third Man* — the sense of a style being exercised and applied self-consciously, and along with that the sense that *The Third Man* is a book which has been written in Greene's style as much as it has been written by Greene, and that the writing consistently seems to seek to parallel (even if it does not rehearse) devices and phrases and techniques familiar from Greene's earlier fiction.

When it is not — in some way — recalling antecedent novels of Greene's, *The Third Man* still establishes other links with the *oeuvre*. There are features which point forward to Greene's next serious novel, *The End of the Affair* (1951). That book too, shows a writer's impatience with the simplifying categorizations of critics and reviewers. The narrator, Bendrix, is "a professional writer who — when he has been seriously noted at all — has been praised for his technical ability" (Book one, 1). Of his last book, "The reviewers said it was the work of a craftsman: that was all that was left out of what had been a passion" (Book one, 6). Bendrix has dealings with one critic "called Waterbury who was going to write an article on my work in one of the little reviews. . . I knew too well the pompous phrases of his article, the buried significance he would discover of which I was unaware, and the faith I was tired of facing. Patronizingly in the end he would place me — probably a little above Maugham . . ." (Book five, 2). When Bendrix does meet Waterbury (Book five, 2), the critical inquisition — and Bendrix's impatience with it — strongly recall Martins' encounter with the British Council audience in Vienna.

The Third Man, in several ways, seems also to be a technical anticipation of *The Quiet American* (1955)¹⁹ — indeed, these two novels and *the End of the Affair* are linked in a formal way, since all three make use of temporally artificial and discontinuous narrative schemes. The links between *The Third Man* and *The Quiet American* involve especially similarities of narrative format. Thus, both novels are related by narrators who seek, unconvincingly, to present themselves as dispassionate, objective, and uninterfering (so that they want their manipulations, whereby — in each case — narrative form interferes with narrative content, to be seen as clumsy or artless rather than contrived and tendentious). Calloway and Fowler (the narrator of *The Quiet American*) want us to see them as unliterary reporters who transmit things without opinion or evaluation, and who do not take sides. But both narrators interfere considerably, and are not simply to be seen as secretarial spectators. Thus, in the narrating of both novels, the temporal sequence of events is played around with, so that the sequence of

events in the narrative ("things as they are told to us") does not iconically square with the sequence of events in the action of the novel ("things as they happened"), and as a result the narratives acquire literary qualities (suspense, irony, ambivalence, paradox, and so on) and themes centred on the narrator-as-character (connections between responsibility and causality, the respective morality of agency and initiative, and of involvement by action or complicity, and so on) that the narrators would claim themselves not to be capable of, nor interested in, achieving.

In a very strong sense, both these novels are as much about their narrators as they are about their ostensible and titular heroes. Fowler is an "unquiet, talkative Englishman" who comes to interest us more than does Pye, Calloway a kind of "third man" in a triangle of forces with Martins and Lime; both narrators despite their affectations of *ennui* and protests of disaffection, claim their lack of involvement a little too strongly (Fowler that he is only a reporter, Calloway that he has not even invented a line of dialogue). They both betray literary and constructional skills that they have emphatically disavowed. And in the end, although in different degrees and in differing ways, Fowler and Calloway both turn out to be less innocent and less detached than they would have had us believe, not at all simple figures on the sidelines, their individualities absorbed into and lost in their 'semi-official' roles of reporter and policeman, but revealed instead as men of literary instinct and sympathy, complex Greenean figures rescued from thrillerish, two-dimensional anonymity by disowned, uncomfortable, inescapable literary inclinations. Both Calloway and Fowler are betrayed by their own technique, a notion Bendrix applies to his own writing in *The End of the Affair*: their narratives, organized 'ineptly and without an eye to literary consequence, seeking in their amateurishness to guarantee only documentary reliability, turn into literary, tension-bearing, irony-yielding structures which implicate and vivify their 'disinterested' narrators. Calloway and Fowler, valuing fact over imaginative detail and outward accuracy over introspective fancy, are brought to life in a literary way — they begin to interest us imaginatively and poetically. The roles of reporter and policeman fail to maintain a sought-for, anonymous cipherhood. Calloway and Fowler, whose duties as reporter and policeman require that they treat words as straightforward and referential, and whose everyday experience of writing leaves no room for the imaginative and the personal, nevertheless cannot help but write creatively, conveying a literary sense of the indirect, rhetorical, equivocal and depictive qualities of words and of their meanings.

Calloway and Fowler, as two novelists *manqué*, seem to be dramati-

zations of overlapping aspects of an issue (also raised in other ways, in *The End of the Affair*) that seems to have concerned Greene in the early fifties - the subtlety and unstraightforwardness of literary creation and the crudity of judging literary work with foregone or facile or tendentious categorizations. Greene seems to have been saying that there is no easy separation of (among other things) the melodramatic and the mythic, the thrillerish and the legendary, and no clear dividing line between 'serious' fiction and 'entertainments' (or at least between writers associated with one or other, or both, of these kinds), nor between the literary artist and the professional writer, nor indeed between the professional and the amateur, nor accidental writer. All critical assessments are factitious, and false to the unfathomable, and yet crafty, act of writing.

A sense that literature can emerge without, or without any direct link with, any literary intention, and the associated notions of writers being betrayed both by technique and by the apparent absence of technique, are fully explored in *The End of the Affair* and *The Quiet American*: but all these notions are also anticipated technically in *The Third Man*, and this is a small part of what makes that *nouvelle* a significant item in Greene's fictional canon.

There is a significant scene in *The Third Man* which comes at the end of Martins's unintentionally literary evening with his audience of British Council enthusiasts. The climax of the evening comes when one of Calloway's military policemen comes for Martins, and Martins makes a headlong panic-stricken bid to escape, looking vainly but not unexpectedly (remember that he is a character in a novel by Graham Greene) for the lavatory:

Martins grabbed his coat from the cloakroom as he went and made down the stairs. On the first-floor landing he heard someone mounting the stairs and, looking over, saw Paine, whom I had sent to identify him. He opened a door at random and shut it behind him. He could hear Paine going by. The room where he stood was in darkness; a curious moaning sound made him turn and face whatever room it was.

He could see nothing and the sound had stopped. He made a tiny movement and once more it started, like an impeded breath. He remained still and the sound died away. Outside somebody called, 'Mr. Dexter, Mr. Dexter.' Then a new sound started. It was like somebody whispering - a long continuous monologue in the darkness. Martins said, 'Is anybody there?' and the sound stopped again. He could stand no more of it. He took out his lighter. Footsteps went by and down the stairs. He scraped and scraped at the little wheel and no light came. Somebody shifted in the dark, and something rattled in mid-air like a chain. He asked once more with the anger of fear, 'Is anybody there?' and only the click-click of metal answered him.

Martins felt desperately for a light switch, first to his right hand and then to his left. He did not dare go farther because he could no longer

locate his fellow occupant; the whisper, the moaning, the click had all stopped. Then he was afraid that he had lost the door and felt wildly for the knob. He was far less afraid of the police than he was of the darkness, and he had no idea of the noise he was making.

Paine heard it from the bottom of the stairs and came back. He switched on the landing light, and the glow under the door gave Martins his direction. He opened the door and, smiling weakly at Paine, turned back to take a second look at the room. The eyes of a parrot chained to a perch stared beadily back at him. Paine said respectfully, 'We were looking for you, sir. Colonel Calloway wants a word with you.'

'I lost my way,' Martins said.

'Yes, sir. We thought that was what had happened.' (9)

This passage, too has strong overtones of self-parody, of being an archetypally Greenean set-piece,²⁰ done by Greene as if he were writing an exercise in the Greene manner. But the passage seems to have another significance, of confirming for us the deliberateness of, and the reasons for, the self-parodic quality of *The Third Man*.

Scobie, in *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) shared his bathroom, his place of retreat, with a rat; in *The Quiet American*, in a strongly similar scene, Fowler looks to escape from himself, and from his guilty, fearful, anxious cowardice in the company of what he takes to be some animal; perhaps there is something appropriate in an ordinary, humdrum writer (the hero of a novel where Graham Greene is taking literary stock) coming face to face with a writer's inescapable fear, in the form of the animal world's symbol of the mimic and imitator. Scobie's rat stood for corruption, and in his bathroom, in Scobie's 'home', for domesticated corruption — meanness, underhandedness, untrustworthiness. Birds are a well-known part of Greene's symbolic menagerie, and are not confined to exotic vultures and buzzards either. They can be everyday, or the exotic made commonplace and unthreatening: the seagulls of *Brighton Rock* were "half vulture and half dove". Martins's parrot, again suggesting the exotic caged and made incidental, represents mechanical and thoughtless imitation of language, the writer's sense of his own achieved and habitual style as what cages and mechanizes his creativity as a writer. Becoming his own parrot, and lapsing mechanically into the repetition and imitation of his own style and themes, seems to have been a main preoccupation of Graham Greene's while writing *The Third Man*.

Greene has recently confirmed this possibility, in comments (recalling his writing of *The Third Man*) which he includes in his second volume of mainly literary autobiography, *Ways of Escape* (1981).²¹

The slow discovery by a novelist of his individual method can be exciting but a moment comes in middle age [Greene was 45 when *The Third Man* was published] when he feels that he no longer controls his

method; he had become its prisoner. Then a long period of ennui sets in: it seems to him he has done everything before. He is more afraid to read his favourable critics than his unfavourable, for with terrible patience they unroll before his eyes the unchanging pattern of the carpet. If he has depended a great deal on his unconscious, on his ability to forget his own books when they are once on the public shelves, the critics remind him - this theme originated ten years ago, that simile which came so unthinkingly to his pen a few weeks past was used nearly twenty years ago in a passage where . . .

The methods and devices of Greene's literary self-examination in *The Third Man* are those of any literary assessment that is also creative literary activity — parody, or in such an instance as this, self-parody. Though Greene's ultimate point is a serious literary one, it is achieved through the application of a self-parodied style to dramatic instances that are trivial or only schematically archetypal. The action, too, often seems to be parodic, to be an imitation of standard cinematic clichés. The same is true of the dialogue, so that Calloway's prefatory point about not having invented a line of dialogue seems not only advisedly in character but to make a point for Greene as well. In *The Third Man* dialogue is often of the most hackneyed, film-script kind, and amounts to an assured sending-up of B-feature conversations - for instance, in the following scene between Martins and the girl Anna:

Unlike most actresses' rooms this one was almost bare; no wardrobe packed with clothes, no clutter of cosmetics and grease-paints; a dressing-gown on the door, one sweater he recognized from Act II on the only easy chair, a tin of half-used paints and grease. A kettle hummed softly on a gas ring. She said, 'Would you like a cup of tea? Someone sent me a packet last week - sometimes the Americans do, instead of flowers, you know, on the first night.'

'I'd like a cup,' he said, but if there was one thing he hated it was tea. He watched her while she made it, made it, of course, all wrong: the water not on the boil, the teapot unheated, too few leaves. She said, 'I never quite understand why English people like tea.'

He drank his cupful quickly like a medicine and watched her gingerly and delicately sip at hers. He said, 'I wanted very much to see you. About Harry.'

It was the dreadful moment; he could see her mouth stiffen to meet it. 'Yes?'

'I had known him twenty years. I was his friend. We were at school together, you know, and after that - there weren't many months running when we didn't meet...'

She said, 'When I got your card, I couldn't say no. But there's nothing really for us to talk about, is there? - nothing.'

'I wanted to hear -'

'He's dead. That's the end. Everything's over, finished. What's the good of talking?'

'We both loved him.'

'I don't know. You can't know a thing like that - afterwards. I don't'

know anything any more except -'
 'Except?'
 'That I want to be dead too.' (5)

A good deal of *The Third Man* is conducted at the level of parody or self-parody, a sure sign of the reflexive concerns of the novel, since self-parody especially is one of the main devices of the writer who creatively engages the issue of his own literary position and standing, and who steps back one or two paces so as to establish the creative distance from which to examine the nature of his own literary personality.

Perhaps it was inevitable that, at the time he was writing *The Third Man*, Graham Greene should have been taken up with the issue of his literary achievement and literary aspects of the theme of duality (or complexity) of personality. This was a theme of his earliest work that had been continued into his later development, and it was one that was coming to be much emphasized in contemporary criticism of Greene's work. The first full-length study of Greene,²² which acknowledges Greene's help and co-operation, must have been being prepared just about the time *The Third Man* was being sketched out or written. It was a study which would have reminded Greene of his early theme of the divided mind, and of the related interest (shared with admired writers like Conrad and Stevenson) in the theme of the *alter ego*. But whatever prompted it, it seems to me that in *The Third Man* Greene is claiming for his literary personality a doubleness, a yoking of opposite impulses, so that he seems to speak with Dr. Jekyll (or Mr. Hyde?) of the need to see that "of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both".²³

The Third Man is full of hints of, and references to, dual personality, and confusions and doubts over names and identities. For instance, the narrator regularly goes in for an amateurish sort of psychologizing about which aspect of Rollo Martins's personality is uppermost at any one time - the unpredictable, impulsive, intuitive side (with the clownish name - Rollo) or the sturdy, rational, tenacious side (Martins, of Dutch background): at one point the narrator remarks,

There was always a conflict in Rollo Martins - between the absurd Christian name and the sturdy Dutch (four generations back) surname. Rollo looked at every woman that passed, and Martins renounced them for ever. I don't know which one of them wrote the Westerns. (2)

A particular source of our awareness of the interest pursued in *The Third Man* into aspects of identity and personalty involves the confusions and mistakes over names which crop up throughout the novel.

Martins deliberately annoys and belittles Dr. Winkler by consistently calling him "Dr. Winkle" and that cold, sexless, bewigged shell of a man reacts as if he understood the overtones of his miscalled name. When he first meets Colonel Calloway, Martins does not quite catch Calloway's surname, and mistakenly calls him "Callaghan", getting from Calloway the firm reproof: "Calloway. I'm English, not Irish." (2) Other confusions seem to have a much wider significance. An important confusion is the one involving the two writers called Dexter - quite unconnected and of utterly distinct literary natures. Martins, who writes formulaic Westerns under the name "Buck Dexter", innocently answers to the name "Mr. Dexter", and gets mistaken for his near-namesake, Benjamin Dexter, a modernist writer of novels with titles like *The Curved Prow*, who is famous — according to Calloway — for his "subtle, complex, wavering style" (3). Calloway, who confesses himself "a great admirer of Dexter" speaks of him as being "ranked as a stylist with Henry James". When, at the height of the confusion over "Mr. Dexter", Martins is persuaded by an unsuspecting audience to sign their copies of Dexter's novels, he rapidly signs "B. Dexter" in one book after another, and as the narrative points out, "it was not after all a lie" (9): the personality may be false, incomplete, different - but the name (pseudonymous though it is) *does* fit. More than that, it seems to be implied that some kind of truth is involved: at the right point ("B. Dexter"), two distinct literary personalities, Buck and Benjamin, jobbing entertainer and serious novelist of major standing, become indistinguishable and are as one. At the signing session, in only one case - the first book presented - is Martins more explicit than "B. Dexter", writing "From B. Dexter, author of *The Lone Rider of Santa Fé*". The recipient of this meets it with "a puzzled expression", reflecting just how easily and disconcertingly confused the apparently unrelated literary personalities and achievements of the two Dexters (self-consciously modernist fictioneer and workaday Western-story hack: in Greene's terms, 'serious' novelist and 'entertainer') have become. B. Dexter is the author of *The Lone Rider of Santa Fé* no less than B. Dexter can also be called the author of *The Curved Prow*. We seem to be expected to see this duality as applying closely to Graham Greene's own position as a writer who seeks to be accepted, without any distinction being made, both as a serious novelist and as the seasoned writer of his 'entertainments'.

Both Dr. Winkler and Colonel Calloway may be committed to the concept of the unity of name and nature (change or confuse the one and you change or misrepresent the other) but for Greene the question — as a question involving a double literary personality — is more complex, and for him, two complementary literary natures can belong

under the same name, and the same name can encompass distinct personalities. The two individual writers called Dexter, distinct literary personalities unexpectedly brought together by an overlapping name (albeit in one case a pseudonym, so that the link is contrived rather than natural, one of the names adopted rather than given: the point merely seems to be reinforced), underpin Greene's argument for the legitimacy of his own literary duality, wherein the distinct impulses of the 'entertainer' and the 'serious' novelist overlap within the figure of one individual writer and are each represented by the same name (not a pseudonym, not conveniently abbreviated or truncated, not mistaken or misapplied) - Graham Greene.

But there is an even more telling instance in *The Third Man* involving dualities of name and literary nature, which reflects — and can be applied to — Graham Greene's position, and his own sense of that position. At the literary evening where his unchosen and externally imposed impersonation of Benjamin Dexter emerges, Rollo Martins is faced with (among other similar questions about his influences and tastes) a particularly direct inquiry:

'Mr. Dexter, could you tell us what author has chiefly influenced you?'

Martins, without thinking, said, 'Grey'. He meant of course the author of *Riders of the Purple Sage*, and he was pleased to find his reply gave general satisfaction - to all save an elderly Austrian who asked, 'Grey. What Grey? I do not know the name.'

Martins felt he was safe now and said, 'Zane Grey - I don't know any other.' and was mystified at the low subservient laughter from the English colony.

Crabbin interposed quickly for the sake of the Austrians, 'That is a little joke of Mr. Dexter's. He meant the poet Gray - a gentle, mild, subtle genius - one can see the affinity.'

'And he is called Zane Grey?'

'That was Mr. Dexter's joke. Zane Grey wrote what we call Westerns - cheap popular novelettes about bandits and cowboys.'

'He is not a great writer?'

'No, no. Far from it,' Mr. Crabbin said. 'In the strict sense I would not call him a writer at all.' Martins told me that he felt the first stirrings of revolt at that statement. He had never regarded himself before as a writer, but Crabbin's self-confidence irritated him - even the way the light flashed back from Crabbin's spectacles seemed an added cause of vexation. Crabbin said, 'He was just a popular entertainer.'

'Why the hell not?' Martins said fiercely.

'Oh, well, I merely meant -'

'What was Shakespeare?'

Somebody with great daring said, 'A poet.'

'Have you ever read Zane Grey?'

'No, I can't say -'

'Then you don't know what you are talking about.'

One of the young men tried to come to Crabbin's rescue. 'And James

Joyce, where would you put James Joyce, Mr. Dexter?"

'What do you mean put? I don't want to put anybody anywhere,' Martins said. It had been a very full day: he had drunk too much with Colonel Cooler; he had fallen in love; a man had been murdered - and now he had the quite unjust feeling that he was being got at. Zane Grey was one of his heroes: he was damned if he was going to stand any nonsense.

'I mean would you put him among the really great?'

'If you want to know, I've never heard of him. What did he write?'

He didn't realize it, but he was making an enormous impression. Only a great writer could have taken so arrogant, so original a line. Several people wrote Zane Grey's name on the backs of envelopes and the Gräfin whispered hoarsely to Crabbin, 'How do you spell Zane?'

'To tell you the truth, I'm not quite sure.' (9)

The confusion involving the name Gray (or Grey - however spelt, 'Gray' or 'Grey-with-an-e', they sound the same, grey, and are the same name), pointedly applies to the case of another chromatically-named writer, whose own name has a clear and consistent sound, no matter that it is unusually or variantly spelt—Greene — with-an-e. The correspondence is more especially apt given that the two figures Crabbins tries to keep distinct, Gray and Grey, Thomas and Zane, gentle poet and Western pulpist, not only recall the opposed traditions of the two Dexters, but also represent a distinction which applies to Greene's own career. Since *Stamboul Train* (1934), Greene has intermingled two kinds of novels in his writing — serious novels with considerable claims to literary significance, and exercises in a thrillerish generic kind known (and labelled) as 'entertainments'. Even Evelyn Waugh, who saw "no great difference between the two categories ... no Ruth Draper switch from comic to pathetic," accepted the greater complexity of the serious novels: "the 'Novels' have been baptized, held deep under in the waters of life".²⁴

The two names, of the unworldly poet and the Western writer, belong to two quite distinct types with quite different literary qualities and philosophies. But the two names sound exactly the same, grey, however spelt - "Gray" or "Grey" - and, indeed, coincide with the first syllable of the name 'Graham'. Just as "B. Dexter" was not a lie - it covered both Benjamin and Buck Dexter - so the names "Gray" and "Grey", associated though they are with antithetically extreme kinds of writing, are linked in a fundamental, confusion-promoting identity. Martins when he gives the answer "Grey" means one (Zane), Crabbins takes him to mean the other (Thomas). Under the confusion, it seems to be suggested, something fundamental, some sharedness of identity has been given a name.

Other denominative features of *The Third Man* deserve brief annotation. The villain of the piece, Harry Lime, is nominally connected to

Greene the person and Greene the jokey, self-mocking writer: 'Harry' is a diminutive, popular form of the name 'Henry', Greene's other name (which he apparently dislikes) and a favourite name for sad or ineffectual ('Poor Henry') characters in Greene's fiction. And 'Lime' takes us to a colour name connected with 'green', usually a pale or yellowy green, so that the name 'Harry Lime' is on two counts ('Harry' for 'Henry', 'Lime' for 'Green(e)') a contrivedly nominal reflection of his author: perhaps the point of this obvious connection is that it is so contrived and artificial that it can have no significance at all. At the same time, 'Lime' is also the name of a tree, so that 'Harry Lime' reminds us of 'Henry Ash', one of the pseudonyms Greene has hidden behind in making some not-entirely-serious point in a letter to the press. The name 'Lime', indeed, seems very appropriate to the villainous Harry: lime is used in the treatment of sewage so that Lime is really where he belongs, in the sewers of Vienna, a nether region that suits his devilish and rat-like nature.²⁵

The main matter of *The Third Man*, framed within first and last chapters which act as prologue and epilogue, is the narrator Calloway's derivative rendering of Rollo Martins's first-hand account of his adventures in search of Harry Lime. Thus the narrative not only involves the subtle and ironic voice of Calloway, the policeman — now soldier — who is experienced in the ways of the world, is a good judge of men, has literary interests and who seems to betray secret hankerings to be a writer; it also embodies the voice (and tale) of Rollo Martins, the ordinary professional writer who finds himself having to become a man of action, who slowly learns from experience that people are not as they seem, and who turns out to be something of an amateur detective. In a paradoxical mingling of antitheses—something typical of Greene—the professional policeman makes a good amateur's stab at the elements of fiction (plot, character, tension, irony), and the professional writer gets along as an amateur detective, helping to unravel a most recalcitrant mystery and in the end pursuing Lime much more aggressively than do the police. Their complementarity within the action serves to underline how Calloway and Martins complement each other at another level—within the narrating of *The Third Man*, where their voices and renderings stand as mutually essential elements of the whole narrative.

As Calloway several times reminds us, what he tells us derives from his files, these being records based on Rollo Martins' account of his pursuit of the truth about Harry Lime, and then of his literal pursuit (with Calloway's help) of Harry Lime himself. Calloway emphasizes, at the beginning, that his narrative involves no conscious invention, or material or dramatic embellishment by Calloway: "It is as accurate as I

can make it - I haven't invented a line of dialogue, though I can't vouch for Martins' memory." (1)

As Chapter Two opens, the narrator's presence is perceptible, as Calloway intervenes to give background explanations and to offer his own occasional assessments, and his presence can be felt in various intrusive references — to himself (*He told me vaguely*), in references explicitly quoting Martins (*Lime could also, he said, keep him*), and in obtrusive pluperfects (*An odd incident had occurred at Frankfurt*), all of which keep Calloway before us, transcribing and rendering Martins' antecedent talk. But the pluperfectly verbal form is soon deftly and silently elided to a simple preterite that suggests direct narratorial awareness, and insinuates narratorial authority, by removing or effacing or subduing our sense of two narrating voices, one original but indirectly rendered for us by an intervening second.

At stages throughout the novel, the narrator in various ways reminds us of, or at his prompting we become suddenly aware of, his presence. But for considerable parts of the novel our sense that we are reading Calloway's account of Martins' account of the pursuit of Lime is deflected, and we see (or are aware of) only what is contained within the innermost frame — the pursuit of Lime. Indeed, what switches there are between frame and picture — from picture of action to narrative frame and back to picture — are done easily, not unawares but not obtrusively. All of this is important to Greene's purpose in *The Third Man*: the reader, as he is supposed to be, is aware — in some sense — that what he is reading is "in quotes" (in fact, in quotes twice over), but it is hardly something of which he is continuously, or even all that much, or even distractedly, aware. The narrative framework of *The Third Man* is an amalgam of two distinct individual voices — those of Calloway and Martins — and the fact that this complex narrative frame does not supervene, even though it sporadically intervenes, is important, because with the suppression of any strong sense of a complex narrative frame there is removed any sense of disharmony or discord between the distinct vocal elements on which that complex narrative frame depends. With the frame out of mind, even though it is occasionally not out of sight, the reader is shown not to be disconcerted by the distinct strains within the narrative voice of *The Third Man*. These distinct strains become harmonized and homogenized, and at the same time it becomes impossible to say (indeed, the question does not arise) that such-and-such a stylistic feature of the narrative originates with Calloway, or with Martins as quoted by Calloway. The reader's sense of the narrative voice of *The Third Man* is not that its elements are counterposed and discordant (albeit that Martin and Calloway are presented as antithetical and seem, to begin with, to be mutually

unsympathetic), but that it is one voice — wholesome, unified, and natural-sounding. The dualistic but vocally unified narrative of *The Third Man* is a dramatized argument for the stylistic genuineness of its author's complex literary personality — neither unreflective hack (Martins) nor would-be self-consciously great writer (Calloway) but a writer embracing both the functional and the artistic — a crafty storyteller (Martins) with interests in character, motive, and style (Calloway). This figure is not Graham Greene, Esq., nor even Graham Greene the author and public personality, but the "other man", Graham Greene as the person who writes Graham Greene's novels, the literary person so aptly identified by Kingsley Amis, some years later, as "Grim Grin".²⁶

Occasional awareness of the duality of the narrative framework never detracts from the sense of a unified narrative voice, so that it is a sense of the inter-dependence, not of the separateness, of the constituent sources which consistently comes across. Thus, in the following extract, it becomes impossible to allocate the force of various prominent devices, such as the pluperfects, the indexical *now*, and the idiomatic *be damned if*. Who can tell if they are imaginatively, creatively, attributed by Calloway, or instead silently quoted from Martins' account? Instead, the passage has to be read with a sense of a narrative voice that transcends, then emerges distinctly from, the contributing voices of Calloway and Martins:

One of the young men tried to come to Crabbin's rescue. 'And James Joyce, where would you put James Joyce, Mr. Dexter?'

'What do you mean put? I don't want to put anybody anywhere,' Martins said. It had been a very full day: he had drunk too much with Colonel Cooler; he had fallen in love; a man had been murdered - and now he had the quite unjust feeling that he was being got at. Zane Grey was one of his heroes: he was damned if he was going to stand any nonsense. (9)

Calloway's contributions (apart from occasional, slightly empurpled and self-consciously modernist embellishments, such as playing around paradoxically with poetic relations of sound and meaning — "little sharp pointed names like Stein, round pebbles like Woolf" (9)) are most recognisable in the procedural, staccato factuality of his police-report style:

I had kept a very careful record of Martins' movements from the moment I knew that he had not caught the plane home. He had been seen with Kurtz, and at the Josefstadt Theatre; I knew about his visit to Dr. Winkler and to Colonel Cooler, his first return to the block where Harry had lived. For some reason my man lost him between Cooler's and Anna Schmidt's flats; he reported that Martins had wandered widely, and the impression we both got was that he had deliberately thrown off his shadower. I tried to pick him up at the hotel and just missed him.

Events had taken a disquieting turn, and it seemed to me that the time had come for another interview. He had a lot to explain.

I put a good wide desk between us and gave him a cigarette. I found him sullen but ready to talk, within strict limits. I asked him about Kurtz and he seemed to me to answer satisfactorily. I then asked him about Anna Schmidt and I gathered from his reply that he must have been with her after visiting Colonel Cooler; that filled in one of the missing points. I tried him with Dr. Winkler, and he answered readily enough. 'You've been getting around,' I said, 'quite a bit. And have you found out anything about your friend?'

'Oh, yes,' he said. 'It was under your nose but you didn't see it.'

'What?'

'That he was murdered.' That took me by surprise: I had at one time played with the idea of suicide, but I had ruled even that out.

'Go on,' I said. He tried to eliminate from his story all mention of Koch, talking about an informant who had seen the accident. This made his story rather confusing, and I couldn't grasp at first why he attached so much importance to the third man. (10)

Correspondingly, the narrative voice is most genuine and engaging when it is neither overdone nor colourless, neither drab and procedural nor schematically aesthetic or thrillerish, and that is when we have a sense of Calloway relaying what Martins has told him. Then both elements of Greene's narrative voice come together as an amalgam, so that one cannot associate the workings with one or the other side, and there is no false note that clearly derives either from Martins or from Calloway: then the narrative voice is not poetic or prosaic, subtle or practical, literary or utilitarian, but naturally combines and exceeds these to become the unique and distinctive voice of Graham Greene.

The Third Man is a self-conscious literary exercise, and the literary matter that is most self-consciously at issue is Greene's fictional style. The novel is an argument for its author's own voice — unusual but recognizable, complex but unified. The novel gives embodiment to the two almost contradictory elements in Greene's literary style and personality — the 'entertainer' and the serious, 'literary' novelist. Giving the self-examination an added, and very genuinely Greenian touch, these embodiments of the distinct strands in Greene's literary nature are represented in the figures of characters already recognizable and well-established in Greene's fiction. Thus the narrator, Calloway, representing literary seriousness is a policeman, a standard figure of Greene's, the representative of trust who cannot himself be trusted: and correspondingly, the embodiment of old fashioned virtues of bravery, loyalty, guileless honesty, the unreflective man of action, is a writer, and only an ordinary writer — a humdrum and unpretentious hack. In a characteristically Greenian reversal, the representative of literary seriousness is a guileful policeman while it is a heroic and guileless man-of-action who stands for unpretentiousness in the writer.

Perhaps such characteristic and paradoxical complexity is Greene's way of pointing to the necessary and complementarity of Calloway and Martins, and of what they stand for. It is only when these two elements are in harmony that they sound genuine. When we are aware of Calloway on his own he sounds hollow, mechanical, literary, laboriously contrived, ungenue, content only with what he senses as proper or conventional. Similarly, Martins glimpsed on his own, separate from Calloway, is filmic, predictable, flat, a cipher, not a man but a man in a book, not even a book perhaps, but a film-script.

In *The Third Man* Graham Greene is arguing that he is the same novelist, whether he is being 'serious' or being an 'entertainer', and that his complex literary voice and personality embrace elements that are only apparently discordant. Greene is making the point that a literary personality such as his, and his kind of fiction, hold together (within his characteristic amalgam) distinct, but not antithetical, impulses and techniques. In a variety of ways (by self-parody, by otherwise dispensable embellishments, and by dramatic embodiments that have roles in both the action and narration of his novel) Greene tries to show how elements which can be distinguished within his literary make-up are not incompatible, and are indeed essential to his personality and stance. The author of *The Lone Rider of Santa Fe*, and Greene the 'entertainer', are — and are the same as — the author of *The Curved Prow*, and Greene the 'serious' novelist. Any attempt to distinguish them threatens to impoverish both and any evaluation which separates one from the other is tendentious rather than judicious. Genre-bound thrillers, and 'Great Tradition' novels of character and of stylistic complexity, both belong in the wide stream of English fiction. Divisions that separate the writer from the artist (and, in Greene's case, which belittle the 'entertainments' against the 'serious' novels) are unhelpful critical dogmas which are not in touch with the inclinations or writers and readers. In all kinds of ways, *The Third Man* is a more interesting — and more significant — piece of fictional writing than it has (usually and tendentiously) been assumed to be. And it is certainly more than the "strange, rather sad story" Calloway calls it in his opening chapter.

NOTES

1. Judy Adamson and Philip Stratford, "Looking for the Third Man. On the trail in Texas, New York, Hollywood", *Encounter*, L (June, 1978), 39-46.
2. *Ibid.*, 42.
3. *Ibid.*, 45.

4. Studies of *The Third Man* are typically of the film rather than the book: a rough-and-ready count of articles on *The Third Man* shows eight dealing principally with the film, perhaps two with the book.
5. *The Third Man - a film by Graham Greene and Carol Reed* (Modern Film Scripts), New York, 1968.
6. Graham Greene, "Preface", *The Third Man and The Fallen Idol* (Collected Edition), London, 1976. No specific citation will be given for subsequent quotations from this source: their provenance should be obvious.
7. Adamson and Stratford, *op. cit.*, 39.
8. *Ibid.*, 40.
9. Adamson and Stratford note that "Greene's memory, usually quite sharp about such matters, is vague as to the early publishing history of *The Third Man*" (41), that "he cannot recall any special arrangements for American publication except that he was not enthusiastic about seeing the story in print" (41), that he concurred in its publication only because it would be "good publicity for the film" (41), that he did not know of the bad state of the American text, and that he "must never have taken the [American publication] deal seriously enough to read the proofs if he ever saw them" (45).
10. Adamson and Stratford, *op. cit.*, 46.
11. Perhaps the most pointed of such instances centres around what at one time was the acute critical discussion of the relevance of Jansenist doctrine (of the exclusiveness of elective, predestined salvation) to Greene's work. A scene in *The Third Man* (chapter 6) shows us that Rollo Martins - in some respects, Greene's partial representative - knows nothing about, and (apart from momentary curiosity) shows no interest in, Jansenism.

Turning away from Dr. Winkler, he confronted yet another crucifix, the figure hanging with arms above the head: a face of elongated El Greco agony. 'That's a strange crucifix,' he said.

'Jansenist,' Dr. Winkler commented and closed his mouth sharply as though he had been guilty of giving away too much information.

'Never heard the word. Why are the arms above the head?'

Dr. Winkler said reluctantly, 'Because He died, in their view, only for the elect.' (6)
12. Ian Gregor and David Lodge, "Graham Greene", in Cedric Watts (ed.), *The English Novel* (Questions in Literature), London, 1976, 152-171.
13. Hereafter, quotations from *The Third Man* will be identified, as here, by giving the appropriate chapter number at the end of each quotation. Whenever a sequence of quotations come from the same chapter, only the source of the first of these will be identified.
14. Kenneth Allott and Miriam Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, London, 1951, p. 35.
15. David Lodge, "Graham Greene", in *The Novelist at the Crossroads and other essays on fiction and criticism*, London, 1971, 87-118, p. 92. (This essay was originally published in 1966 as No. 17 in the series *Columbia Essays on Modern Writers*, published by Columbia University Press).
16. *Ibid.*, 92.
17. I hope to catalogue and discuss these various correspondences in a separate paper.
18. That Greene is amused by the possibilities of self-parody, and that he can treat writing in his own style as an exercise, can be shown from the fact that he has at least twice (30th April, 1949; 7th April, 1961) won *New Statesman* Weekend Competitions which had asked for parodies of Graham Greene. Greene, of course, submitted his entries under pseudonyms (M. Wilkinson; H. A. Baxter) revealing his involvement in letters to the editor after the results of the competitions had been announced.
19. The connections are not entirely technical ones - there are some material links as well. The American Colonel Cooler (in *The Third Man*) anticipates Alden Pyle (cognominally *The Quiet American*). Cooler, for instance, is described ironically as "a man with tousled hair and a worried kindly face and long-sighted eyes, the kind of humanitarian who turns up in a typhus epidemic or a world war or a Chinese famine long before his countrymen have discovered the place in an atlas" (8). Perhaps when he wrote *The Quiet American*, rather than finding - with typical percipience - a theme that drew attention to an area, Greene at last found an area that gave an opportunity to develop a long-standing theme.
20. The lineaments of the scene prompt recall of scenes in other novels of Greene's, as well as anticipating one in *The Quiet American*. Perhaps more strikingly, some of its scenic and atmospheric details remind one of a skilful parody of Greene - that done by David Lodge in his novel, *The British Museum is Falling Down* (1965), chapter VI.
21. Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape*, London, 1980, chapter 5.

22. Kenneth Allott and Miriam Farris, *The Art of Graham Greene*, London, 1951.
23. This quotation from Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is used by Allott and Farris as an epigraph to chapter two of their study of Greene.
24. Evelyn Waugh, "Felix Culpa?", reprinted in *A Little Order: a selection from his journalism edited by Donal Gallagher*, London, 1977, 160-167, p. 162.
25. In the film, Martins' first name was changed from Rollo to Holly [Joseph Cotten, the actor playing Martins, objected to the name Rollo, but then accepted Holly, apparently derived by Greene from the name of a bad American poet of the nineteenth century, Thomas Holly Chivers] and that gives some kind of a link between Martins and Lime - birdlime, a sticky substance once used to trap young birds, comes from the holly tree. Speculation of this kind, where the evidence may seem only accidental, may be too close to the kind (rightly derided by Greene in the introduction to his play *Carving a Statue* (1964) with which "a rather learned reviewer expounded [the] symbolism" of the film of *The Third Man* in a monthly paper. The critic concerned was Lawrence Alloway (in an essay, *Symbolism in The Third Man*, in *World Review* N.S. 13 (March, 1950) 57-60), and Greene continued his pointed dismissal of this 'reading' of the film by summarizing Alloway's main claims: "The surname of Harry Lime he connected with a passage about the lime tree in Sir James Frazer's *Golden Bough*. The christian name of the principal character - Holly - was obviously, he wrote, closely connected with Christmas - paganism and Christianity were thus joined in a symbolic dance." Greene goes on to give "the truth of the matter", telling why and how he got the name Holly, and explaining that for his 'villain' he needed "a name natural and yet disagreeable, and to me 'Lime' represented the quick-lime in which murderers are said to be buried. An association of ideas, not, as the reviewer claimed, a symbol." (*Carving A Statue*, London, 1964: "Epitaph for a Play"). Fair enough, but - what was that critic's name? Alloway? Even if there was such a man (and there *is*: he is a critic and educator with several books on painting and the visual arts), how seriously could we ever take anything by someone whose name is almost 'Calloway', and who is thus almost a character invented by Graham Greene? The name 'Calloway' is not special to *The Third Man*: it (and at least once an allotrope - 'Galloway') is used by Greene in several novels and stories.
26. Kingsley Amis, *I Like It Here*, London, 1958, chapter 4. *I Like It Here* is a novel which shows an extensive and significant dependence on *The Third Man*, which I have traced in other articles.