

The Cinematic Technique in Graham Greene's "The Power and The Glory"**Ass. Lec. Muhanned Rehaif Khorsheed****Asst. Lect. Ali Khalid Hasan****College of Arts/ University of Kufa****التقنية السينمائية في رواية غراهام غرين "السلطة والمجد"****م.م. علي خالد حسن****م.م. مهند رهياف خورشيد****كلية الآداب/ جامعة الكوفة**

Ali.almaslawi@uokufa.edu.iq

muhannedr.alsultani@uokufa.edu.iq

المخلص:

تناول هذا البحث رواية "السلطة والمجد" كواحدة من أهم روايات الروائي الانجليزي Graham Greene. حيث أظهر البحث كيفية خلق الكاتب لتأثير خاص في هذه الرواية وعلى كيفية توجيه إهتمام القراء بإسلوب فريد من نوعه. إستخدم الروائي Greene تقنية سينمائية في روايته حيث تطلبت هذه الطريقة السينمائية إنتباه خاص من قبل القارئ تجاه الحوارات والاحداث ونوع وطول الجمل المستخدمة والصورة والتناقض والمناجاة الفردية الباطنية للرموز الاساسية. لذلك حاول البحث أن يسلط الضوء على كيفية قيام الكاتب بخلق هذا التأثير السينمائي في هذه الرواية. ولغرض البحث عن هذا الاسلوب السينمائي، قسم الباحث العمل الى مبحثين رئيسيين. حيث قدم المبحث الاول منه تلخيصاً لحياة الكاتب والنقاط الاساسية لرواياته. بينما أظهر المبحث الثاني خلاصة عن العلاقة ما بين الادب والسينما بشكلها العام مع الاشارة الى Graham Greene إنتقل الباحث فيما بعد ليعرض تحليلاً يعكس إستخدام التقنية السينمائية في رواية "السلطة والمجد".

الكلمات المفتاحية: غراهام غرين، السلطة والمجد، التقنية السينمائية، التشويق، الصورة الذهنية.

Abstract

The present study tackles one of the most important novels of the English novelist Graham Greene, namely The Power and the Glory. The study deals with how the writer creates a special effect in this novel and how he directs the audience's attention in a unique way. Greene uses the cinematic technique in his novel and this technique requires that the writer pays a special attention to the dialogues, the events, the type and length of sentences, the imagery, the contrast, and the interior monologue of the main characters. So, the study tries to investigate how Graham Greene creates his cinematic effect in the novels and through which means. In order to fulfill the aim of the study, it is divided into two sections. The first section summarizes the main points about the life of the writer and the main key points about the novel. The second section presents an overview of the relationship between literature and cinema in general with a particular reference to Graham Greene, then it presents some analysis that reflects the utilization of the cinematic technique in the novel. The study ends up with a conclusion drawn upon by the means of the analysis .

Key Words: Graham Greene; The Power and the Glory; cinematic technique; suspense; visual imagery.

1. Introduction

"The Power and the Glory" is a standout amongst the most dominant of Greene's real works, and the one considered by most commentators to be his best. The topic of the chased man builds up an energizing and nightmarish environment to the novel which resembles a thriller. Greene has made characters that are human and emblematic in the meantime. The cleric and the lieutenant speak to the dualism in the human soul authenticity rather than atheism, love as against disdain, otherworldliness as against realism, and worry for the person as against worry for the country (source 1).

These events and many other that can be seen and realized by any reader can inevitably create a sense inside the readers' mind. They feel like that they are not only reading a book but rather they are

watching the events in front of their eyes. This sense of the novel is never done by a coincidence, it is done through the wit and the amazingly techniques that the writer adopts in his novel. One and the most important of these is the cinematic technique.

1.1 An overview of Graham Greene's Life

Henry Graham Greene was born in 1904 in a boarding school named Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire England. The headmaster of the school was his father. Greene has five siblings in which he was the fourth (John, 2009: 31).

He is known by the name Graham Greene. This English writer is considered as one of the greatest novelists in the 20th century (Diemert, 1996: 5). He has got a good reputation in his early life as a notable writer. He is nominated for the Nobel Prize two times in the years 1966 and 1967. Greene wrote over 25 novels throughout 67 years of his career as a writer. His focus of writing is centered on the political issues of the modern world but through an eye of a Catholic (ibid, 183).

Bosco (2005: 3) states that Greene is described by many as a Catholic novelist rather than a mere novelist, but he does not like to be described in this manner, that is why he objected on this. The critics and literary commentators described him as a Catholic novelist not out of nothing but rather according to many of his religious themes. Four of his major works are seen as Catholic novels, these are: *The End of the Affair*, *The Heart of the Matter*, *The Power and the Glory*, and *Brighton Rock*. These four works are referred to as "the gold standard"

In addition to his career as a novelist, he also worked in journalism and as a book and film reviewer (source 2). The depression that shaded over Greene's life has a great impact on his personality and most importantly on his writing (source 3). He wrote a letter to his wife telling her that he has "a character profoundly antagonistic to ordinary domestic life,"(12). Greene was died on 3 April 1991 (aged 86) in Vevey, Switzerland.

1.2 The Style and Common Themes

Greene initially separated his fiction into two sorts: the first is (mystery and suspense books) which he calls (thrillers) such as *The Ministry of Fear*, which he depicted as entertainment regularly with remarkable logical edges. And the second type is literary works such as *The Power and the Glory*, which he portrayed them as novels (Barrett, 2009: 423)

As his vocation protracted, both Greene and his perusers found the differentiation between entertainments and novels as progressively difficult. The last book Greene named entertainment is *Our Man in Havana* in 1958. When he wrote *Travels with My Aunt* eleven years later numerous analysts noticed that Greene had assigned it as a novel, despite the fact that, as a work distinctly comic in tone, it seemed nearer to his last two. Greene, they estimated, appeared to have dropped the classification of entertainment. In the *Collected Edition* of Greene's works distributed in 22 volumes somewhere in the range of 1970s and 1980s the distinction between entertainment and novels is never again kept up. All are novels (Miller, 1990: 56).

Greene was one of the most "cinematic" of twentieth-century writers; the greater part of his books and a significant number of his plays and short stories have been adjusted for film or television. The Internet Movie Database records 66 titles between 1934 and 2010 dependent on Greene material. He likewise composed a few unique screenplays. In 1949, subsequent to composing the novella as "raw material", he composed the screenplay for a great movie noir (source4).

Greene's style was portrayed by Evelyn Waugh in as "not a specifically literary style at all. The words are functional, devoid of sensuous attraction, of ancestry, and of independent life". Another critic says "nothing deflects Greene from the main business of holding the reader's attention" (Bergonzi, 2006: 39). Greene's books frequently have religious subjects at their inside. In his literary analysis he assaulted the innovator scholars Virginia Woolf and E. M. Forster for having lost the religious sense which, he contended, brought about dull, shallow characters (ibid.). Only in recuperating the religious component, the consciousness of the novel of spirit that conveys the perpetual result of salvation or perdition, and of a definitive magical substances of good and

wickedness, sin and heavenly elegance, could the novel recoup its sensational power. Enduring and despondency are inescapable on the planet Greene delineates; and Catholicism is displayed against a foundation of unvarying human malevolence, sin, and uncertainty. Greene focused on depicting the characters' inner lives, their psychological, enthusiastic, and otherworldly profundities. His stories are regularly set in poor, hot and dusty tropical places, for example, Mexico, West Africa, Vietnam, Cuba, Haiti, and Argentina, which prompted the begetting of the articulation "Greenland" to portray such settings (source 3).

The works regularly depict the sensational battles of the individual soul from a Catholic point of view. Greene was condemned for specific unorthodox views in the world; sin is ubiquitous to the extent that the careful battle to keep away from corrupt is bound to disappointment, thus not fundamental to heavenliness. Greene reacted that developing a dream of unadulterated confidence and goodness in the novel was past his gifts. Applause for Greene from a standard Catholic perspective by Edward Short is in Crisis Magazine, and a standard Catholic scrutinizing is introduced by Joseph Pearce (Sherry, 1989: 89).

1.3 Summary of the Plot

This novel is first published under the title "The Labyrinthine Ways". In 1941 the writer received Hawthronden prize for this novel. It has been screen played as well as turned into plays (source 5).

The story bases on a priest who is endeavoring to get away from the Mexican state in which he lives which has prohibited religion. The priest dodges catch for a long time and helps numerous individuals that he meets on his way. Inevitably, he makes it to a neighboring state however rapidly finds that he cannot discover harmony there for he feels excessively regretful inside himself (source5).

He enables himself to be "deceived" into returning home to see the confession of a withering bandit, a man named the "Americano." It is there that he is caught by the Lieutenant who has been searching for him for a considerable length of time and he has been executed by means of terminating squad not long after (ibid.).

1.4 List of Characters

The Priest

The Lieutenant

The Mestizo

Maria

Brigitta

Padre José

Mr. Tench

Coral Fellows

Captain Fellows

Mrs. Fellows

The Woman

Luis

The Gringo

The Chief of Police (ibid.)

2. The Cinematic Technique in "The Power and The Glory"

Critics and authors have typically treated the possibility of film and literature from one point of view, considering the impact of writing on film. This might be sound, since writing has been there far before the development of film. In this manner, commentators are more often surveying how much a motion picture is unwavering to content or a novel. Numerous authors establish a forward and in reverse impact. They underline that film has the capacity to decipher profoundly and uniquely thoughts and musings to the screen as splendidly as writing does. Moreover, Gualda (2010: 201) states that "In the period of interdisciplinary, nothing is more beneficial than endeavoring to see the writing's

verbalism from the point of view of film and the motion picture iconicity from the viewpoint of writing".

The novels of Graham Greene including "The Power and The Glory" are written in a cinematic method. He controls the action but he is not a part of it. The cinematic techniques are various and numerous they are used in film industry to emphasize certain aspect of the story. In the Power and the Glory, Greene has utilized the method of shooting pictures in his novel to create particular effects for his story events. This is the reason why we see that this novel and many of Greene's other works have been screen played. The cinematic technique of this novel can be discussed as follows:

2.1 The Beginning of the Novel

The cinematic nature of the technique of "The Power and The Glory" is found in the very beginning of the novel. The opening paragraph of the novel can be taken as a shooting script.

".... Mr. Tench's heart, and he wrenched up a piece of the road with splintering finger-nails and tossed it feebly up at them. One of them rose and flapped across the town: over the tiny plaza, over the bust of an ex-president, ex-general, ex-human being, over the two stalls which sold mineral water, towards the river and the sea. It wouldn't find anything there: the sharks looked after the carrion on that side. Mr. Tench went on across the plaza. The hot wet riverport and the vultures lay in the waste-paper basket, and he picked them out. We should be thankful we cannot see the horrors and degradations lying around our childhood, in cupboards and bookshelves, everywhere" (p, 8) (Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory)

The camera, first, takes a long shot of the street, then, turns to the vultures; it gives us a close up of Mr. Tench and then follows a flying vulture across the town. The camera would move as no human eye could move. That is why the writer uses the term "ex-human being". There are strong emotions in the scene but they are expressed mainly through imagery which is the expressive element of a film. In this extract the writer gives a picture about the misery and the hard conditions of human beings in that time. Mr. Tench can be taken as a symbol of that situation; he represents how humans are spiritually empty.

In this piece of the novel the reader imagines himself as he is watching things, Mr. Tench is the first character that a reader sees in the novel and presenting him in this manner and through this technique inspires the reader' minds about the general atmosphere of the whole novel.

2.2 The Use of Visual Imagery

One more quality of the novel is the use of visual imagery. "The General Obregon was about thirty yards long. A few feet of damaged rail, one lifeboat, a bell hanging on a rotten cord, an oil-lamp in the bow, she looked as if she might weather two or three more Atlantic years—if she didn't strike a norther in the gulf. That, of course, would be the end of her. It didn't really matter: everybody was insured when he bought a ticket automatically. Half a dozen passengers leant on the rail, among the hobbled turkeys, and stared at the port: the warehouse, the empty baked street with the dentists' and the barbers'." (p, 8) (Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory)

The site of the boat named General Obregon serves as a fine example of this fact. The boat is thirty yards long and contains many things along with the passengers. Another example of visual imagery is the squalor of the villages visited by the priest. A few other examples include the site of Brigitta in the village of Maria, and the priest's travel and his travels with the Mestizo. Such scenes can be successfully filmed. Similarly, the image of the snakes, vultures and other creatures can also be a subject of a film.

2.3 The Element of Suspense

The next quality of the novel which can make it suitable for a film is the elements of suspense. A film cannot be devoided of suspense. The suspense in the action of the novel surely arouses the curiosity of the reader. For example the priest is about to escape from the state but he misses the boat as he goes with the boy. Additionally, the priest once is in the house of the fellows. He is given shelter by Coral in the barren and the Lieutenant is chasing him. He, then, makes enquiries about the priest. Some

other situations of suspense are: the Lieutenant drinks with the priest as he does not know his real identity, Maria's saving of the priest from getting arrested by calling him as her husband, the priest journey with bereaved mother and his travels with the Mestizo. Such events could increase the dramatic tension within the audience and create the element of suspense and so they will wait for what will happen next.

2.4 Interior Monologues and Dreams

Interior monologues and dreams are the next aspects of the novel which qualify the novel for getting filmed. The thoughts of the characters are expressed through the voice of the concerned character. For example the priest thoughts can be expressed through this technique. Similarly, film makers also show dreams in the films.

"His eyes closed and immediately he began to dream. He was being pursued: he stood outside a door banging on it, begging for admission, but nobody answered—there was a word, a password, which would save him, but he had forgotten it. He tried desperately at random—cheese and child, California, excellency, milk, Vera Cruz. His feet had gone to sleep and he knelt outside the door." (p, 112)(Graham Greene, *The Power and the Glory*)

The dreams reveal the inner working of the mind of the character. The priest sees various dreams which can be effective in a film. For example, the priest's dreams of his past reveal to us that he is guilty of being proud. In addition, the Lieutenant's memories of shooting the priest can be considered as an effective element on the screen.

2.5 Juxtaposition of Characters and Scenes

Juxtaposition of characters and scenes is regarded as another feature that reflects the technique of the novel. For example, the hatred of the pious woman regarding the sinners is juxtaposed with the Whisky Priest's support to the sinners. Moreover, the faith of the Whisky Priest is juxtaposed with the secular views of the Lieutenant. Also, his daughter Brigitta is juxtaposed to Carol.

Once again, the land, like the land in this novel, is an abandoned one, the landscape, the building, the climate, the darkness, the loneliness and the abandonment.

"There was an enormous sense of freedom and air upon the gulf, with the low tropical shore-line buried in darkness as deeply as any mummy in a tomb." (p, 17) (Graham Greene, *The Power and the Glory*).

Consolo (1965:75) states that juxtaposition lies in two different perspectives of two different paragraphs. According to him, the contrast is underscored dramatically and our interest consequently heightened. We watch the land slips away but only for necessary moments, then we plunged into its dark interior with the central character of the novel, the priest who is the unwilling bearer of light.

2.6 The Scenes of Love

The scenes of love add more to the effectiveness of the film. Modern films mostly English films contain such scenes. *The Power and the Glory* is actually a politico-religious novel, yet it has love and interest though to some extent. The Whisky Priest has sexual relationship with the village girl whose name is Maria. Moreover, the man and the woman perform the sexual act in the prison and the Priest speaks of the beauty of sin.

Maria and Brigitta help the priest to remember his corruption. He does not hint at needing to revive his fondness for Maria, yet he is frantically enamored with Brigitta, imploring God that he saves her regardless of whether it implies interminable condemnation for him.

In the novel Maria the priest's former lover always reminds him of his past sins. She centers more on condemning the priest for his poor garments. In her mind, he should look good and refined.

2.7 The Effective Dialogue

Finally, a film script needs effective dialogues and the novel has this feature. The priest's talks with Coral, his dialogue with Briggitta and his talk with the Lieutenant are quite effective. Moreover, the Lieutenant's conversation with Luis and the Priest is also very effective.

Moreover, "The Power and the Glory" such as any good and rhetorical preaching is meant to be heard than to be read. The reader is more likely would love to hear the novel this very feature qualify the novel to have a technique which can be described as cinematic. We as readers are willing to form a complete picture of the event throughout little details. The writer tries to maintain the narration process moving around. When he creates prolonged sentences, he comes again to break them up into concise clauses.

"He leant his head back against the wall and half closed his eyes—he remembered Holy Week in the old days when a stuffed Judas was hanging from the belfry and boys made clatter with tins and rattles as he swung out over the door. Old staid members of the congregation had sometimes raised objections: it was blasphemous, they said, to make this guy out of Our Lord's betrayer; but he had said nothing and let the practice continue—it seemed to him a good thing that the world's traitor should be made a figure of fun. It was too easy otherwise to idealize him as a man who fought with God—a Prometheus, a noble victim in a hopeless war."(p, 78) (Graham Greene, The Power and the Glory).

The above quote consists of three sentences; these sentences are relatively long ones. Then, the writer divides them into short clauses by means of the punctuation marks such colons, dashes, and semicolons in which the ideas are kept and never corrupted. This is the case if we read the novel. On the other hand, the structure of the paragraph causes the mind to be in a motion, not static searching for the next idea to be revealed. This is the case when we hear the novel. Consequently, in both cases the selectivity in choosing words, and the motion pictures in the novel can surely be said to be read like a film more than a prose.

3. Conclusion

It is not strange that Greene's novel "The Power and the Glory" to be considered as an iconic literary work in the world of literature because of a variety of factors. First of all, as a writer, Greene is distinguished from the other writers of his age in that he is described by many as a Catholic novelist. Accordingly, this brings an important impact on the style and the techniques he uses in his literary work. The novel under scrutiny represents a good example of this fact. This novel is a politico-religious one in which there is a conflict between power and religion. The conflict is conveyed to readers in a unique manner. The uniqueness and one of the most important factors is the utilization of the cinematic technique to visualize the events and themes of the novel.

As discussed in the previous section, Greene's main technique to convey his ideas to audience is the use of the cinematic technique, when one reads the novel he will think that he is watching the events not only reading them. Through reading "The Power and the Glory", one feels that he is a camera man pursuing the objects and the other characters in the novel. This helps the reader to create a better mental picture and swallow all the action of the novel. This is the reason that makes the novel got shot and filmed many times. It seems that the novel is originally intended to be watched and heard rather than to be read. So, the film technique employed by Greene is what makes "The Power and the Glory" as a distinguished novel.

References

- Barrett, D. (2009). Graham Greene. In A. Poole (Ed.), The Cambridge Companion to English Novelists. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bergonzi, B. (2006). A Study in Greene: Graham Greene and the Art of the Novel. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brian, D. (1996). Graham Greene's Thrillers and the 1930s. McGill-Queen's Press.
- Consolo, D.P. (1965). Graham Greene: Style and Stylistics. In Evans, Robert O. (ed.) Graham Greene: Some Critical Considerations. Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press.
- Cook, J. (2009). A Glimpse of our History: a short guided tour of Berkhamsted. Berkhamsted: Berkhamsted Town Council.
- Gualda L. C. (2010) Literature and Cinema: link and confrontation., São Paulo: MATRIZES.
- Mark, B. (2005). Graham Greene's Catholic Imagination. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Miller, R. H. (1990). Understanding Graham Greene. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.
- Sherry, N. (1989). The Life of Graham Greene: Vol. 1, 1904–1939. London: Penguin Publishing.

Web Sources:

- (source, 1)
- Encyclopedia of English Literature, (2015). Graham Greene's Biographical Notes. Retrieved from [http://www.tmv.edu.in/Distance_education/\(English\)/English%20Fiction/Ch-10](http://www.tmv.edu.in/Distance_education/(English)/English%20Fiction/Ch-10). [Accessed at 15, January, 2019]
- (source, 2)
- The Charnel-House (n.d). Graham Greene's infamous review. Retrieved from <https://thecharnelhouse.org/2014/02/25/graham-greene-infamous-review-of-wee-willie-winkie-1937-starring-shirley-temple/> [Accessed at 15, December, 2018]
- (source, 3)
- The Times, (2007). Extract from Graham Greene: A Life in Letters Edited by Richard Greene. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20110517070311/http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/books/article2439198.ece [Accessed at 19, November, 2018]
- (source, 4)
- UCLA, (). Archive Research and Study Center. Retrieved from <https://www.cinema.ucla.edu/education/archive-research-study-center-arsc> [Accessed at 17, November, 2018]
- (source, 5)
- Book Reports, (n.d). The Power and the Glory. Retrieved from <https://www.bookreports.info/the-power-and-the-glory/> [Accessed at 19, November, 2019]