

**Tribhuvan University**

**Miracle as an Underlying Phenomenon in Graham Greene's novel:**

*The End of the Affair*

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Central Department of English**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the**

**Degree of Master of Arts in English**

**By**  
**Surya Raj Tiwari**

**University Campus**

**Kirtipur**

**November, 2006**

**Tribhuvan University**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Approval Letter**

This thesis entitled "Miracle as an Underlying Phenomenon in Graham Greene's novel: *The End of the Affair*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Surya Raj Tiwari has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Internal Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

External Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

Head

Central Department of English

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Acknowledgement**

First of all my best compliment and deep sense of gratitude to my respected thesis advisor, Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Associate Prof. at Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, for his invaluable supervision, constructive comments and suggestions, which helped me to give the final shape of this thesis. This dissertation would never have appeared in its present form without his kind and invaluable guidance.

Again, I would like to express my profound gratitude to Associate Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Head of the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, for granting me an opportunity to carry out this thesis. I am very much grateful to my respected teachers, Prof. Chandra Prakash Sharma., Prof. Dr. Abhi Narayan Subedi, Dr. Arun Gupto, Devi Gautam and Ghanashyam Sharma for their encouraging and inspiring ideas.

I express my deepest sense of gratitude to my father, Kul Prasad Tiwari and mother, Bashundhara Tiwari for providing me love and inspiration to be a thesis writer. I am deeply indebted to my brothers who are laboring abroad to fulfill financial need of the family. With the core of my heart I thank my wife, Rita Tiwari who always co-operated and encouraged me to complete this work.

I acknowledge my heartfelt indebtedness to my friends, Rishi Ram Adhikari, Tilak Tiwari, Dharma Raj Subedi, Madhu Shudhan Dawadi and Chiranjibi Koirala whose affection and co-operation so profound and ungrudging inspired me to achieve this long-cherished object.

Surya Raj Tiwari

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

November, 2006

## **Abstract**

Mauric Bendrix and Sarah Miles illustrate Graham Greene's brilliant handling of religion. Greene examines a religious person in all aspects of humanity and encourages protesting against social limitations. The protest extends up to the extent of accepting the existence of God and His miraculous deeds. Bendrix and Sarah confront a challenge to their autonomous life experience. Life does not give them anything except making them participants in a losing battle. When all other possibilities are over they surrender to God to prevent them being abused and affirm miracle as an underlying phenomenon in the novel.

## Contents

Acknowledgements	III
Abstract	IV
Chapter - I	1
Introduction	1
Chapter - II	11
Mysticism	11
Religion	19
Miracle	26
Chapter – III	28
Miracle as an Underlying Phenomenon in Graham Greene’s novel:	
<i>The End of the Affair</i>	28
Chapter - IV	45
Conclusion: Sarah's and Bendrix's Surrendering to God	45
Works Cited	48

## Chapter - I

### Introduction

The research work is a critical reading on Graham Green's most moving novel, *The End of the Affair* (1951). Graham Greene was born on 2 October 1904 in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, England. On coming down from Balliol College, Oxford, he worked for four years as a sub editor on *The Times*. He established his reputation with his fourth novel, *Stamboul Train*. In 1926 he had been received into the Roman Catholic Church and visited Mexico in 1938 to report on the religious persecution there. As a result he wrote *The Lawless Roads* and, later, his famous novels *The Power and Glory*, *Brighton Rock*, *The Heart of the Matter* and *The End of the Affair* (1951) which are generally considered as the religious novels. He died in April 1991. Many people paid tribute to him on his death, among them was Alec Guinness: "He was a great writer who spoke brilliantly to a whole generation. He was almost prophet-like with a surprising humility" (qtd. in Greene, *The End of the Affair* i). Another leading critic who paid tribute to Greene was William Golding: "Graham Greene was in a class by himself ... He will be read and remembered as the ultimate chronicler of twentieth-century man's consciousness and anxiety" (qtd. in Greene, *The End of the Affair* i).

*The End of the Affair* generally considered as masterful blend of diary entries, letters, and shifting viewpoints from a technical standpoint. And from a religious standpoint, it is the most spiritually challenging record of obsessive jealousy and hate that Greene ever produced, specifically because God stands as the omnipotent third point of a love triangle involving Sarah Miles and Mauric Bendrix. Present thesis is the study of Sarah Miles and Mauric Bendrix who are affected by the mystery of God. Therefore, it has little to do with the style, technique, aesthetics and other qualities of

the novel. It is the testing of a tentative hypothesis that the novel has miracle as an underlying phenomenon.

Sarah breaks the love- relation with Bendrix and atheist Bendrix surrenders in front of God at last. The research investigates the reason behind their mysterious actions.

The situations are miraculous which are not easily acceptable. But the novelist makes it interesting and acceptable, scratching the inactive religious belief that is not completely erased from the mind of modern man. A miracle is merely some events which shock the speaker with surprise, with perhaps some presumption that others will or should react to it in the same way. It is said that miracle can be worked only by God or by his specially deputed agents. Dr. Eric Mascall insisted in his article in *Chambers' Encyclopedia* that the word "miracle" "signifies in Christian theology a striking interposition on divine power by which the operations of the ordinary course of nature are overruled, suspended, or modified-" (346). According to George D. Smith ed., *The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, the miracle is a sign of Divine power and an appeal to man's intelligence. *The Vatican Council* has described miracle as "most certain signs of divine revelation, and suitable to the intelligence of all" (13). Then miracle takes place because of the disbelief and hate of Sarah and Bendrix upon God.

While going through the novel, the lovers Bendrix and Sarah are not tormented for their adultery. This gives an evidence of Greene's changed attitude to sex. John Atkins lauds Greene for his realistic approach to sex in this novel, "a mature group of sexual relations rare in English literature ...." (Atkins 198; "*Graham Greene*"). Bendrix is an excessively jealous, suspicious lover whereas Sarah is a balanced and serene lady who wants to make happy her lover as well as her husband

and intends to desert none from her side. None of them is a confirmed believer but a blitz accident unexpectedly establishes faith in Sarah's life.

At a night when Bendrix and Sarah were making love the blitz started all over London. The lower part of Bendrix's apartment is blown and Bendrix is buried under the debris. Touching his hand Sarah felt him demised. In the state of utter confusion and anxiety caused by the aftermath of the blitz, she prayed to God intensively for the first time in her life for the life of her lover as a condition to believe that there is God: "Dear God, let him be alive .... I'll give him up for ever let him be alive". (Greene 99-100; "*Affair*"). It is really amazing that Bendrix returned to the apartment alive. This incident is the turning point in the life of Sarah. Her vow to God gives rise to the state of predicament as she longs for the companionship of Bendrix and has to comply with her own vow "give him up for ever". She attempts to defy her own vow and forget God assuming that there is no God. In order to console herself she attends the speech of a rationalist speaker Mr. Rycker Smith who intends to disprove all arguments concerning the existence of God. But all these attempts instead of disproving, fortify her faith in God, and lead her to the stage of absolute faith. There remains no doubt, no uncertainty but unflinching faith. She writes about her absolute faith in her diary:

I believe there is a God .... I believe the whole bag of tricks, there's nothing I don't believe, they could subdivide the Trinity into a dozen parts and I'd believe .... I've caught belief like a disease, I've fallen into belief like I feel in love. (Greene 159; "*Affair*")

She presents the superb model of unflinching faith and religiosity. She has transformed the intensity of physical love into spiritual love, from human love to Divine love. Her faith in God has unfailing impact on her agnostic lover who finds it



impossible at last not to believe in God. The research work attempts to see the miraculous phenomenon behind the changed attitude of Bendrix and Sarah.

There is a sensuous apprehension and emotive perception of religious thought. Greene viewed the problem of divine love and affection intelligently and imaginatively. *The End of the Affair* (1951), a sequel to such powerful novels as *Brighton Rock* (1938), *The Power and the Glory* (1940) and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) is searching and a probing exploration into the nature of love of God. As A.C. Ward puts, "As Catholic convert he has inevitably been inclined to employ the novel as an instrument of social and spiritual purgation" (Ward 84; "*English Literature*"). *The End of the Affair*, despite its quasi-religious motifs, is ingenuous and startling. Anne Freemantle writes about Greene's eschatological preoccupation that "He pre-eminently builds his stories with ends, not means.... death is not merely a period, a full stop. Always present in all his books it is sometimes a goal, a consummation devoutly wished .... And, inevitably, it is an event of more than private or physical significance" (Freemantle 11; "*Saturday Review*"). J. P. Kulshrestha goes on to say "If *Brighton Rock*, Greene's first religious novel, marks the climacteric of his obsession with evil which thwarts man's redemption *The End of the Affair* marks the high point of his concern with the redemption through love and suffering" (Kulshrestha 113; "*Graham Greene: The Novelist*").

The action of the novel, *The End of the Affair*, takes place in early and mid Forties- in war time, London. It is categorized as a novel which deals with varieties of religious experiences. It explores the psychology of religion from the Christian point of view. The story is concerned with the eternal triangle of love. Sarah Miles, the heroine, is the central figure. She is wife of Henry Miles, a white-colored, high-ranking bureaucrat in the Defense Ministry. Maurice Bendrix- the third man as well as

narrator - is a novelist. *The End of the Affair* lacks the finely controlled organic unity of his earlier works, and the mechanics of the story are less acceptable which is expressed by J.P. Kulshrestha:

As the action is more interiorized than in his other novels, Greene does not resort to naturalistic descriptions of objects which evoke the usual milieu of decay and corruption. There are, of course, a few details of physical environment to suggest that the world of this novel is barren of beauty and joy as that of the other novels. (Kulshrestha 113; "*Graham Greene: The Novelist*")

Through the story of triangular love and hatred Greene soars to the 'world - divine' in search of salvation and damnation. This is what, S. Diana Neill writes in *A Short History of the English Novel*:

The central figure in the book is a woman, ripe for spiritual experience. Two years before the story begins she has had a live affair with a middle-aged novelist, but has ended the relationship suddenly without apparent reason. Attempting to discover what has happened to his former mistress. The novelist comes upon her diary and learns that she still loves him. But believing that he had been killed in an air-raid, she had prayed to god and promised that if he were restored to life she would give him up. The novelist tries to persuade her to come back to him, but she falls ill and dies soon after. After persuading her husband to have her cremated, the novelist learns that she was born a catholic. From this point in the story, Greene invokes a series of miraculous intervention which strain credulity in order to bring about the desired ending. The central episode, however, the finding of the diary, is

handled brilliantly, and the struggle between passion and the spirit is honestly examined. (Neill 394)

It is the atmosphere of T.S. Eliot's post-war "*Waste Land*" written in the aftermath of the First World War of 1914 to 1918. In *The End of the Affair* the landscape is dreary and drab. To quote Robert Graham Davis:

In Greene's novel everything is as drab and dreary as possible. London is bomb-damaged, it rains all the time, the heroine has a bad cough, the meals are boring or never-racking, love is described largely in physical terms, and those repellent ones. The characters turn to the church because they find life intolerable. (Davis 60; "*Highlights of Modern Literature*")

Gwenn R. Boardman emphasizes miracle as the appropriate tool for the narrator "We might even say that God has selected his proofs with the hand of a truly creative artist, the very literary quality of the miracles making them particularly appropriate for the writer Bendrix" (Boardman 98; "*Aesthetics of Exploration*").

Neil McEwan commenting on the novel shows defeat of Greene in front of God: "A serious objection, brought by Ian Gregor against *The End of the Affair* and equally applicable to its predecessor, is that we ought to know, because a novelist is omniscient in his own book: Greene surrenders his decision to God..." (McEwan 68 "*Macmillan Modern Novelists*").

Harry Sylvester treats Greene as catholic:

Like William Golding, he is intimately concerned with the nature of evil and sin, which he avers, in the Augustinian way, is built into humanity and is redeemable only by the witness of Grace. This earned

for him the title of the first major English novelist who was a catholic.

(Sylvester 98; "*Commonweal*")

We may also view Greene's own attitude of non-religious stand that is poured in *The Power and Glory*. He tries to do this in the following lines in the novel when he gives an exposition of what he regards as crude, materialistic, even animalistic world-view of the lieutenant. He writes:

It infuriated him (the lieutenant) to think that there were still people in state who believed in a loving and merciful God. There are mystics who are said to have experienced God directly. He was a mystic, too, and what he had experienced was vacancy - a complete certainty in the existence of a dying, cooling world, of human beings who had evolved from animals for no purpose at all. (Greene 24-25; "*The Power and Glory*")

The view of the lieutenant is the view of the novelist himself. Here, he is trying to be far from the religious and divine power which would not be acceptable. While we point out the other remarks that are frequently used in *The End of the Affair* are quite similar but there underlies the religious sense. "In each case that reaction seems excessive, an excess that grows from the way this book challenges the particular kind of truth-claim on which fiction conventionally relies. *The End of the Affair* does not simply ask us to suspend our disbelief. It instead demands that we do believe, and believe in the religious sense of the term" (Gorra, On *The End of the Affair*; "*The Southwest Review*").

Keshava Prasad in *Graham Greene: The Novelist* criticizes the novel pointing out the God as plot creator:

The natural man feels alienated as soon as his mind is invaded by God. Bendrix's predicament is invented by God. His intolerable position is plotted by God, and by a writer who is in dialogue with God. It seems that the book is not plotted by Bendrix by God Himself. (Keshava143)

This is the case taken by critics which evokes the existence of God. If God were not there in universe how would He create the plot of the novel? How would we feel difference between plot created by God and the plot create by the novelist Graham Green. This sort of religious feeling seems even in those critics, not only in the novelist and his characters.

Krishna Chandra Sharma in PhD dissertation evaluates the novel as the thrust of miracles. He sees this novel as solution of mortal sin that Scobie has faced in the novel "*The Heart of the Matter*":

The novel *The End of the Affair* (1951) with its thrust of miracles brings solution to Scobie's problem of absolving himself from mortal sin. It appears with a new attitude to sex. Sex and especially adultery which has been a cause of mental torment as 'mortal sin' in earlier novels is released from religious

Critic J.D. Scott acknowledges Greene's focus on religious experience in the novel. This most interesting review was in *The New Statesman and Nation*. Scott quotes a single sentence, "I've caught belief like a disease"(Greene 159; "*Affair*") and then writes:

No English novelist since the death of Lawrence has written a phase which is at once (a) so memorable, (b) so characteristic, and (c) so compressed a statement of the content of novel. It seems to me that this phase alone poses the question of whether Graham Greene is in fact a

writer of the same order of importance as Lawrence, Conrad, or the other great English novelists who commanded such phrases. (Scott 13)

Though Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair* has got a number of critical responses, there is no single authoritative criticism on this novel. The theme of love, hate, jealousy, and a sensuous apprehension and emotive perception of religious thought gets dominant position in most of the criticism. We come across these criticisms which will explore the position of the protagonist and the central character "Sarah" from the perspective of religious mysticism. The research will primarily focus on the issues like religion, mystery, miracle, faith and God. The study will give special attention to the theme of the novel and radical change that seems in Bendrix and Sarah.

The thesis has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outline of the study, which contains the title clarification, hypothesis elaboration, the introduction to the novel, and the critics' views on author and his writing.

In the second chapter theoretical modality is developed that is to be applied in the textual analysis. It provides a short introduction to religion and mysticism. This part of the work defines different terms that will be dealt in the course of this research. Terms like religion, mystery, miracle, love, jealous, hate, belief faith and God will also be defined in the light of the subject of the study in this chapter.

The third chapter of the research is an analysis of the text at a considerable length on the basis of the second chapter. It will sort out some extracts from the text to prove the hypothesis of the study.

The fourth chapter is the conclusion of entire study. On the basis of the analysis of the text done in chapter three, it will conclude the explanations and

arguments put forwarded in the preceding chapters and show the miraculous change of Sarah and Bendrix from atheist to theist.

## Chapter - II

### Mysticism

Mysticism is the practice of those who are initiated into the mysteries. It can be traced back to the Greek *Mystens* meaning "One" initiate into the mysteries. The mystic is one who practices mysticism or tries to become united with God through prayer or meditation. One who practices mysticism tries to understand important things that are beyond normal human understanding. It is the practice of putting oneself into direct relation with God or Goddess. Mysticism is inseparably linked with religion and mystical experience is a major form of religious experience. It is difficult to outline by the simple definition. There are two major reasons. The first one is that mystics often describe their experiences partly in terms of doctrines invariably associated with mysticism. Nature of the mysticism makes the objectives studies of its impossible. Bernard McGinn, Professor of theology at the university of Chicago Divinity School and a leading authority on mysticism, explains mysticism as "that part of belief and practice that concerns the preparation for, the consciousness of, and the reaction to what the mystics understand as a direct, immediate and transformative encounter with the presence of God" (McGinn 59).

Mysticism, in general, can be understood as a spiritual and non -discursive approach to the possibility of union of the soul with whatever is taken to be the central reality of the universe or God. Smith Margaret in his book *An Introduction to Mysticism* defines Mysticism as:

an innate tendency of the human soul, Which seeks to transcend reason and to attain to a direct experience of God, and which believes that it is possible for the human soul to be united with Ultimate Reality.(3)



Margaret, thus, throws light upon the presence of intrinsic quality of the individual to establish himself /herself in the divine existence. It is this quality that renders a blissful ecstasy to the untarnished soul of the individual. He further mentions:

Mysticism, going beyond religion, aspires to intimate union with divine, to a penetration of the Divine within the soul and to a disappearance of the individuality, with all its modes of acting.

Thinking and feeling, in the Divine substance. The mystic seeks to pass out of all that is merely phenomenal, out of all lower forms of reality, to become being itself.(4)

According to him, a mystic is one who believes in the immortality of soul, in the existence of the Divine spirit, and in capacity of a human of a human being to establish a communication between individual soul and the Divine spirit through spirituality looks inward, away from the world, toward union with the transcendent One. The mystic sees the world or presence of Divine spirit within oneself. This is called an "introvertive" (inward-looking) mysticism. There is another type of mysticism that is called "extrovertive "(outward-looking) mysticism. In this type of mysticism, it is held that the subject looks out upon the multiplicity of objects in the world and sees them transfigured into living, numinous unity, their distinctness somehow obliterated. The subject senses his unity with the universe, with all there is. But in introvertive mysticism, the mystic becomes progressively less aware of one's environment and of oneself as a separate individual.

The introvertive type of mystical experience has greater importance in the history of religion. In all cultures this state is normally reached by turning the mind in upon itself and plunging down below all layers of superficial experience to the very foundation of the mystic's own mind. All sensations, images, thoughts, desires, and

volitions, the entire empirical content of consciousness- have to be suppressed. Then the Bare unity of the self takes place. Perhaps the earliest description of this completely paradoxical experience is found in the Mandukya Upanishad before 600 B C. It is there said to be

pure unitary consciousness wherein awareness of the world and of multiplicity is completely obliterated. It is ineffable peace. It is the supreme good. It is One without a second. It is the Self. (qtd.

*Encyclopedia of Americana* - Vol. 697)

There is undifferentiated unity. The unity of the finite mind of the individual is interpreted first, and then unity of the cosmic One, the Universal Self, Brahman. The last word of the quotation, the word "self," means both the individual self and the Universal Self, which are identical.

The extrovertive mystic perceives physical objects as "all One" and as permeated by the One or the Divine. Thus the medieval philosopher Meister Eckhart expressed that the oneness of all blades of grass, wood, and stone. And Jakob Bohme in the 16th century said: "In light my spirit saw through all things and I recognized God in grass and plants" (qtd. *Encyclopedia of Americana* 697). This type of experience tends to philosophical pantheism.

In melding Eastern subjective spirituality with Western self-assurance, Catholic mysticism has done much too effectively hijack public and private religious life and to invert core beliefs and values of the West. For centuries, the Roman Catholic Church has assimilated to herself the mystery elements of pagan religions. Subjective religions experience, or mysticism, continues to be the meeting point of pagan religions and Catholicism. The marriage between Romanticism and paganism is documented in official statements from Rome.

In Hinduism men explore the divine mystery and express it both in the limitless riches of myth and the accurately defined insights of philosophy. They seek release from the trials of the present life ascetical practices, profound meditation and recourse to God in confidence and love. Buddhism in its various forms testifies to the essential inadequacy of this changing world. It proposes a way of life by which man can, with confidence and trust, attain a state of perfect liberation and reach supreme illumination either through their own efforts or by the aid of divine help.... The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. (*Vatican Council II*, 739)

Catholicism stands hand-in-hand with Buddhism and Hinduism. Well-known Catholic mystics such as William Johnston and Thomas Keating emerged to describe the effect of enlightenment, "Self-realization lies at the very heart of Buddhism .... In self-realization I become one with God just as Jesus is one with his father" (Johnston 33).

now I realize what we all are. And if only every one could realize this!  
.... I suddenly saw all the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God's eyes. If only they could or see themselves as they really *are*. If only we could see each other that way all the time. There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed.... I suppose the big problem would be that we would fall down and worship each other.  
(Merton 157-158)

Shannon endorses the idolatrous self-identification with God and cites his mentor, Merton, "A person of true faith travels, not without a difficulty, towards the heart of mystery. Such a person, as Merton puts it, 'works his way through the darkness of his own mystery until he discovers that his own mystery and the mystery of God merge onto one reality, which is the only reality.' DQ180" (Shannon 73). These quotations are standard descriptions of the pantheistic myth that we are all in God. In their own minds, Merton and Shannon have literally transmuted God Himself into their own image, having exchanged Him for human beings as an object of worship.

Through the early eighteenth century the meanings attached to mystic and mystical were inextricably woven in to a larger system of Christian theology, landed at the level of practice to a recognizable set of devotional and exegetical habits. Mysticism, as an actual term unto itself in the English language, first crystallized within the mid-eighteenth -century critique of enthusiasm. Hints of this larger turn were apparent, for example, in Chambers' association of the mystics with unregulated spiritual impulses, But it was Henry Coventry (ca. 1710-52), a relatively minor player in the larger world of the English Enlightenment and a confrere of Horace Walpole and Conyers Middleton, who first employed the term mysticism as part of a sustained critique of sectarian fanaticism In a series of dialogues entitled *Philemon to Hydaspes: Or, The History of false Religion*, the initial installment of which appeared in 1736, Coventry explicitly contrasted "the seraphic entertainments of mysticism and ecstasy" with the " true spirit of acceptable religion" (56,60). By the later, he meant a liberal and reasonable commitment to civic virtue, tolerant cosmopolitanism, public decorum, and aesthetic proportion.

Mysticism becomes a global species of religious experience with innumerable subspecies, historical, geographic, and national: oriental mysticism, Neo-Platonic mysticism, Greek mysticism, German mysticism, Persian mysticism, Spanish mysticism, and French Quietism in 19th century.

Mysticism is, indeed, the great foundation upon which revived love of spirituality has been built, "The mother sea and fountain head of all religions lies in the mystical experiences of the individual, taking the word mystical in a very wide sense" (James 501). Understanding how mysticism took on such a wide sense is an important step in fathoming how spirituality itself has now become such an expansive term in the religious vernacular of the twenty first century.

Nailing that history down is not a straightforward task, and the dire warning of an unsigned essay in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1896 still rings true:

There are certain terms of general classification that seem predestined to breed confusion in criticism and thought; and among these the term Mysticism might be almost considered one of the most pre-eminently bewildering.... The epithet, indeed, is one of those of which the significance embraces such varying characteristics that no dictionary can keep pace with the subtle developments it is perpetually acquiring.... The friction of common use wears away old limits, and the daily language of daily life, hurrying past, confesses its poverty of invention by a constant adaptation of old verbal symbols -begged, borrowed, and stolen from the most unlikely sources-to its own immediate exigencies. Thus it is, as we all know and continually forget that, while the diction of bygone days survives, senses utterly unfamiliar to the past attach themselves to every part of speech,

making, in the matter of meanings, a recurrent game of definitions.

*(Edinburgh Review 298)*

The historical excavation of modern mysticism is, to be sure, a delicate undertaking in which the historian acts as archaeologist dusting away sedimented layers to arrive at an array of subtle shifts and everyday frictions.

By the turn of the twentieth century, that mysticism should come to stand as the universal quintessence of religious experience was anything but obvious. Through the early decades of the eighteenth century, the English category of "Mysticism" did not exist. The prevailing classification instead was "Mystical theology," and it signified a specific devotional branch within Christian divinity.

There is no way of knowing the real origins of mysticism. Various experiences, mental or spiritual, with seen or unseen force are sometimes considered mystical, but they are far enough removed from mainstream mysticism. However, the basic ideas of mystics can derive from the main literate religious traditions. There basic ideas of mysticism can derive from the main literate religious traditions. There have been mystics in nearly every religion. Most of them gain mystical experience by longer prayer.

Buddhist mystics concentrate on realizing the oneness of the universe. They believe in inner peace to attain Nirvana or the Absolute. For Buddhist, "when the fire of lust is extinct, that is Nirvana; when the fires of hatred and infatuation are extinct, that is Nirvana; that is the mystic, embraces Unity (Margaret 61). For them, to have an insight into the truth of the actuality of things, the first requisite is to dispel the cloud of ignorance. The Knowledge of reality leads to enlightenment. "It is through this experience of enlightenment that every being individually and collectively attains Buddha hood" (Suzuki 100).

Christian mystics seek to attain union with God through the higher qualities of love, compassion and devotion. "Only by means of love could man's soul return to its divine source and find the ends of its quest in reunion with the One, the Truth" (Margaret 63). In Christianity, the crucifixion is the climax of all the sufferings of man. "Christian would say that crucifixion means crucifying the self or the flesh. Since without subduing the self we cannot attain moral perfection" (Suzuki 103). Mysticism is an attempt to gain ultimate knowledge of God by a direct experience that by-passes the mind. The strong influence of catholic mysticism has helped immensely to transform the New Age Movement from being merely a counter-culture sub-culture to becoming a new source of spiritual vision for the world.

Hindu mystics try to achieve complete union, through the practice of Yoga. With Brahma, the supreme spirit that fills the universe, H. K. Kesavan in science and Mysticism writes:

Hindu philosophy has preferred to probe into the mystery of this universe starting from what is experienced at the human level...A withdrawal from sensory experience even while remaining in the conscious state is entirely possible in order to facilitate an inward journey. (52)

The Hindu mystics, thus, believe that complete union is possible only through the mortification of the senses and the physical appetites. In The Bhagavad Gita, the sacred book of Hindus, the Lord speaks:

He, whose mind remains unattached to external enjoyments, derives through meditation the unmixed joy, which is inherent in the soul; then that Yogi, having completely identified himself. Through meditation with Brahma enjoys eternal bliss. (132)

The word mysticism, like the word spirituality, is a modern one. Neither of the terms came into play until the 17th century. Before that, people saw no reason to separate the concept of spirituality or mysticism from the rest of the Christian life. Today, many people use the word mysticism to denote strange and wondrous happenings, but in the early church, figures from Paul to Augustine wrote of having dreams and vision and revelations of God's presence. Mysticism has always been the highway into the occult, as many seek to find their identity in God consciousness. Mystical God consciousness is an attempt to replace Christ's redemption and salvation.

### **Religion**

Religion is the chief differentiating characteristic of human being. No other creatures, except the mankind, have displayed any evidences of religious life, nor has any animal ever done any thing which might be interpreted as a preparation for a life beyond death. Certain human individuals do seem to be lacking in religious interest, just as they are lacking in the higher mental and moral interests, yet mankind as a whole is universally religious.

In the history of mankind there never has been a tribe of men without some form of religion. Even the bushmen of Central Australia and the Indians of Patagonia, who represent the lowest forms of existent human life, cherish some belief in the spirit of world and engage in some kind of worship. In the oldest monuments of civilized man, as shown in the pyramids of Egypt and the early Vedic scriptures of India, religious conviction, aspirations, and practices are in evidence.

Religion has been one of the powerful factors in human history. Religion has been the noble characteristic of man throughout his/her entire history. S/he is convinced that mankind stands in certain superhuman relations, and is satisfied that mankind has received needed superhuman help.



It is very difficult, virtually impossible, to place the comprehensive meaning of religion in a definition. It seems that we can only analyze it, but cannot define it. But all religions, in one way or other, believe in the existence of God or Gods. Regarding religion, *Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary* says: "Religion is a belief in the existence of God or Gods, especially the belief that they created the universe and gave human beings a spiritual nature which continues to exist after the death of the body" (988). Generally, God, is believed to have created the universe, and is seen as the creator. Though some theories, especially Charles Darwin's (1809 - 1882) theory of evolution does weaken the power of God in the process of creation as Darwin explains the evolution theory without any mention of God as its cause. But Darwin's theory of evolution, according to Christians, in no way disapproves God's existence - indeed, many Christians accept it as the best explanation of how plants, animals, and human being came to be as they are: they believe that God created the mechanism of evolution itself.

In religion man turns towards the transcendental with the conviction that in and above everything there is a superior power, and he tries to understand it as God's will. In this he attains knowledge, freedom from misery and pain, and he finds some objective power which he can approach in reference.

The ways in which religion and philosophy can be related to each other are shown in the following two quotations from S. Radhakrishnan:

If properly pursued, it arms us against failure, against sorrow and calamity, against boredom and discouragement. It may not prepare us for success if we mean by it accumulation of material wealth. But it helps us to love those aims and ideals the things beyond all price on

which the generality of men who aim to success do not set their hearts.

To form men is the object of philosophy. (McDermott 55-56)

Radhakrishnan goes on:

If the central truth of mysticism and charity, inwardness and love are brought home to our hearts and thoughts, the temptations to irreligion ... will have little power to overcome us. ... Religion is what we do with ourselves when we are alone. (McDermott 56)

Radhakrishnan refers here to an interaction between philosophy and religion, which to him are inseparably one. It seems that it is this that makes it so much easier to see in everything concerning man's life the role played by God's will.

Different scholars have explained religion from different perspectives. Max Muller expressed the intellectual emphasis on religion. He opines: "Religion is a mental faculty of disposition which independent of, nay in spite of, sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names and under varying guises" (*The World's Living Religions* 5). In his opinion Max Muller has associated religion with our intellectuality.

Immanuel Kant and Matthew Arnold, in their famous historic definitions, have expressed their view on the moral aspect of religion. They state: "Religion is the recognition of all duties as divine commands. Religion is morality touched by emotion" (*The World's Living Religions* 5). These two critics believe that the duties human beings perform are all divine commands. Our morality and moral duties are determined by divine force and that divine force is nobody other than God himself.

The emotional emphasis has been expressed by the great theologian, Schleiermacher: "The essence of religion is the feeling of absolute dependence" (*The*

*World's Living Religions 5*). This is the emotional statement made by a theologian who declares total dependence on religion.

All through ages, mankind has been worshipping some kind of God to meet his needs and also to save him from natural catastrophe. It is also believed that the practice of worship came out of fear of some unseen forces. Allan Menzies opines in this connection: "Religion is the worship of higher powers from the sense of need" (*History of Religion 13*).

Man has a tendency of seeking advantage in everything. An emphasis on self advantage has been expressed by Albert Reville, one of the early modern historians of religion. He says: "Religion rests, above all, upon the need of man to realize a harmonious synthesis between his own destiny and the opposing influences he meets in the world" (*The World's Living Religions 5*).

There are scholars who have tried to relate religion to society. They are of the view that religion enables a man to be sensitive to social values. Professor Edward Scribner is one of the scholars who believe in these lines. He states: "Religion is the consciousness of the highest social values" (*The World's Living Religions 5*).

Another emphasis, quite different, is the individual emphasis which has been stated with extreme precision in a well-known volume by the late professor William James: "Religion, therefore, as I now ask you arbitrarily to take it, shall mean for us the feelings, acts and experience of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine" (*The World's Living Religions 5*).

Religion as the supreme idealizing process is the point of view presented by Professor G. W. Stratton:

Religion is the appreciation of an unseen world, usually an unseen company, and religion is also whatever seems clearly to be moving toward such an appreciation, or to returning from it. Or perhaps, it might better be described as man's whole bearing toward what seems to him the best or greatest" (*The World's Living Religions* 5).

Religion here it is seen, has been analyzed by various scholars from different perspectives - intellectual, emotional, moral, social, individual, and like. Professor William Adams Brown has attempted to include all the others. He states:

By religion is meant the life of man in his superhuman relations; that is, his relation to the power on which he feels himself dependent, the authority to which he deems himself responsible, and the idea of religion, dependence, responsibility and communication belong together. (*The World's Living Religions* 6)

When we go deep into the meaning of religion, we find no field and aspect of human's life that is untouched or unaffected by religion. Owing to the limitlessness of its meaning, religion looks all-inclusive. Religion is seen as associated with the history, society and civilization of mankind. *The Encyclopedia of World Faiths* claims: "Religion is a nearly-universal phenomenon. Religious activity, religious rites and religious language are woven into the fabric of most great civilizations, and the study of religions is part of any comprehensive attempt to understand history and society" (120).

The universality of religion, however, results in a great variety of beliefs and practices and the identification of religion with social activity on the one hand and with deeply personal feelings on the other leads almost inevitably to paradox.

Ad midst the comprehensiveness of the meaning of religion, there are many paradoxes associated with it, especially when it comes to a connection between religion and God. A Theravada Buddhist, for example, might remind us that early Buddhism appears to have taken no account of the question of God, and certainly did not teach or require belief in God. By universal consent, Buddhism is a religion. Is that the result of a mistaken understanding, and should Buddhism be described as something else? Or should we revise our definitions in the light of the actual existence of Buddhism? However we respond to the questions, the difficulties of definition appear immediately. The historical and cultural context in which we live is likely to have considerable influence upon our understanding of what religion is.

Religion is so vast a subject that it cannot be understood by any single kind of investigation. It has to be studied from many points of view. One important approach is the historical. Along with the economic, geographical, political, cultural, and other factors which have influenced human society, religion too must be studied, particularly because of its tendency to organize communities of people around a religious faith in a superhuman power or powers.

Religion can be studied from psychological perspective, in which religion is taken as a characteristic of man, involving his entire equipment of thinking, feeling and willing. A man attaches himself to particular religion only when the religion moves him psychologically.

Philosophical approach is also applied in the study of religion - for philosophy is part of the human quest for knowledge of supreme reality. "Philosophy helps to study religion because both are concerned with questions about what could loosely be called the meaning of life" (Warburton 2). Both religion and philosophy are part of

the human quest for knowledge of God. Religion is differentiated from philosophy, because religion is an attempt, not merely to know about, but also to live in vital relation with the supreme.

Religion may also be studied as one of man's many social activities because religion has also a social dimension. A man endeavors through religion to produce an ideal social order by means of a vital relationship with the supreme order or one who orders to operate the world. In this sense, he interacts with God to improve the society. In recent times, religion is interpreted bearing in mind existing social realities.

A very rich approach is seen in literature. Religious issues are subtly discussed in it. In literature man has tried to express in word his/her ideas and feelings, often seemingly beyond words, concerning the supreme being. There are literary writers who take help of religion to depict the complexities of human kind in literature. So, we learn a great deal about religion when we study literature. Moreover, religion may be studied comprehensively in the scriptures of each and every organized religion.

Another significant approach is aesthetic. Religion has been a method of expressing, appreciating, and creating beauty, not only through literature, but also through music, sculpture, architecture, and all the other arts. The reason is that the supreme has been regarded specifically as the supremely beautiful. Truth is always depicted as beauty and vice versa. So, beauty is praised in every religion.

By an ethical approach religion may be viewed as man's effort to attain unto the supremely good kind of life for himself by a vital connection with what deems the supremely good power in control of the affair of men. In this approach, religion can be studied in term of morality for moral principles are closely associated with relation.

Another, perhaps the most intimate approach is the personal. A man can personally approach God. Even religions help in this connection "Every religion offers some specific method whereby an individual may attain personal relation with God" (Hume 8).

## **Miracle**

According to many religions a miracle is derived from the old Latin word *miraculum* meaning 'something wonderful'. It is a striking interposition of divine intervention by God in the universe. As this universe is created by God which is presupposed by the religious knowledge. The universe is so vast. And the Nature in this universe is moving in its own rule which isn't interrupted by any other facts, even the most powerful science of the 21st century. Only the God, who knows every thing in the Nature, Universe and about us, can overrule, suspend and modify the ordinary course and operation of Nature. This is called miracle in general. It is said that miracle can be worked only by the God or by his specially deputed agents. Dr. Eric Mascall insisted in his article in *Chambers' Encyclopedia* that word "miracle" "Signifies in Christian theology a striking interposition on divine power by which the operations of the ordinary course of nature are overruled, suspended, or modified" (346).

George D. Smith ed., *The Teaching of the Catholic Church* defines miracle as sign of Divine power and it is also forced that miracle is an appeal to man's intelligence. There, we don't get any difference in explanation of miracle except the quiet similarity in the term of God's power and wonderful change in Nature. One more thing that Smith puts forward is that miracle is an appeal. It means that sort of Divine power appeals human mind and intelligence to feel that the unseen participation of divine power in the human affair. Though, human being couldn't see

the participation of third person, specially the omnipotent divine power, which is working and leading the path to human being to reach close to Him. *The Vatican Council* has described miracle as "most certain signs of divine revelation, and suitable to the intelligence of all" (13).

God shows His power and presence by the wonderful image or some signs that couldn't by other ordinary creatures according to the religions. These signs are what religions have defined as miracle.

So, the miracle is preternatural occurrence that is viewed as the expression of a divine will. Its awe and wonder lies in the fact that the cause is hidden. The idea of the miracle occurs especially with the evolution of those highly developed religions that distinguish between natural law and divine will. Many supernatural or inexplicable events have been called miracles, but in the strict religious sense a miracle refers only to the direct intervention of divine will in the affairs of men.



### Chapter - III

#### **Miracle as an Underlying Phenomenon in Graham Greene's novel:**

##### *The End of the Affair*

The emotive eschatological and theological concept of Heaven, Hell, Grace, Penitence, Damnation, Blessedness and Blasphemy etc., are intellectually apprehended in Graham Greene's novels. There is a sensuous apprehension and emotive perception of religious thought. Greene viewed the problem of divine love and affection intelligently and imaginatively. *The End of the Affair* (1951) is a searching and a probing exploration into the nature of love of God.

*The End of the Affair* is an artistic fusion of eschatological and romantic secular- element. From the literal point of view, it is a story of tragic love like Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. In the words of J.P. Kulshrestha, "It brings to mind Greene's childhood conviction of love and despair being inseparable" (*Graham Greene: The Novelist*, 114). The lovers are Mauric Bendrix, a novelist, and Sarah Miles, the wife of civil servant. Graham Greene reveals all the painful happenings that lovers experience. The novelist narrates the story through the consciousness of Bendrix.

Though Graham Greene exploits the stream of consciousness technique evolved in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Through the consciousness of the narrator, Bendrix, the bleakness and the air of abandonment are conveyed. His consciousness projects the physical environment.

The gulls flew low over the barges, and the shot tower stood black in the winter light among the ruined warehouse. The man who fed the sparrows had gone, and the women with brown paper parcel, the fruit sellers cried like animals in the dusk outside the station. It was as if the

shutters were going up on the whole world, soon we would all of us be abandoned to our own devices. (Greene 68; "*Affair*")

The novel is a sort of epilogue to the intense love between Sarah and Bendrix.

The novel begins with the speculation of the narrator,

A STORY has no beginning or end: arbitrarily one chooses that moment of experience from which to look back or from which to look ahead. I say 'one chooses' with the inaccurate pride of a professional writer who-when he has been seriously noted at all- has been praised for his technical ability, but do I in fact of my own will choose that black wet January night on the Common, in 1946 the sight of Henry Miles slanting across the wide river of rain, or did these images choose me? It is convenient, it is correct according to the rules of my craft to begin just there, but if I had believed then in a God, I could also have believed in a hand, plucking at my elbow, a suggestion, 'Speak to him: he hasn't been you yet.'<sup>(7)</sup>

Bendrix sees no beginning or end of the novel. Especially this is the novel made up of diary entries. Sarah Miles the lover of the narrator suddenly breaks the love relation and begins to write her feeling and love experiences in her diary which are later woven as to form a novel. Book Three of the novel is full of diary written on different dates and times which are particularly mentioned. In Book One and Book Two, Bendrix narrates the novel. This is Greene's initial attempt at the use of a first person narrator.

Bendrix goes on to contemplate on love and hate, "If hate is not too large a term to use in relation to any human being, I hated Henry - I hated his wife Sarah too"<sup>(7)</sup>. He pre-supposes the term 'hate' as a tiny in relation and he declares that he hated

Henry. Not only Henry, he hated Sarah too, with whom he has passed many nights making very secular love. Bendrix is also aware that Henry knew about the love affair between him and Henry's wife Sarah. The event of that evening made Henry to hate Bendrix and Sarah. So, Bendrix feels that this novel is not a story of love but it is a record of hate "this is record of hate for more than of love ...."(7).

Bendrix's heart is compound of love and hate. He hate for more than the love. He marks no attempt to conceal the hatred that has become his state of mind. It is indistinguishable from love as he tells:

Hatred seems to operate the same glands as love: it even produces the same actions. If we had not been taught how to interpret the story of the Passion, would we have been able to say from their actions alone whether it was the jealous Judas or the cowardly Peter who loved Christ? (27)

Bendrix, further confesses frankly, "JEALOUSLY, or so I have always believed, exists only with desire. The Old Testament writers were found of using the words ' a jealous God' and perhaps it was their rough and oblique way of expressing belief in the love of God for man"(42). He discusses about the kinds of desire which leads a man to pour hate or love towards the creatures or God. Bendrix here states that his desire "now was nearer hatred than love ...." (42). He means he is a jealous man who hates more than he loves.

Bendrix asserts that, "I am a jealous man - it seems stupid to write these words in what is, I suppose, a long record of jealousy, jealousy of Henry, jealousy of Sarah and jealousy of that other whom Mr. Parkis was so maladroitly pursuing" (54). Without Henry's knowledge, Bendrix has employed Parkis, an inapt and slightly grotesque private detective, to follow Sarah's movement, in suspicion of her relation

with someone else. His hatred is aggravated by his misery and loneliness which induce in him a 'monstrous egotism.' According to Kulshrestha, "Bendrix is, like other Greene's protagonists, the imperfect man, the good - bad man, who is in the grip of a demonic passion. In him, jealousy has turned obsessive love into obsessive hatred" (*The Novelist* 115). The same egotism characterized his love. Greene, here, gives a realistic treatment of love. The grasping 'coarse', crude in aesthetic love of Bendrix and Sarah on a hardwood floor, is an adult love. Eighteen months have passed since Sarah and Bendrix met last. Before that, they had been lovers for five years, for nearly every minute of which Bendrix had been agonizingly jealous. The jealousy flames up again when Henry tells him that he suspects Sarah of unfaithfulness. As Keshava Prasad remarks:

Sarah is the pain of life. But she has also been Bendrix's last hope of happiness. She has also been his dream and desire. She is a mental anguish. Sarah and Bendrix, practice every possible deception to take advantage of the situation. But Bendrix can't escape his destiny. He, too, must suffer. He is filled with self- disgust. His love is masochistic. His obsessive love becomes a source of pain for him. Scobie was flowed by pity, Bendrix by hatred. Bendrix is in the grip of negative emotions. He represents the self- tormented lonely and dejected man out off from the world. His self- inflicted pain leads him to an in-drawn world. (Prasad 141)

Greene has depicted a complex and complicated nature of love- hate relationship between Bendrix and Sarah. To cite Atkins' words, "It has managed to discard the notions of romance, pity, morality and, equally important, spiritualized psychology. It requires no justification and does not resort to abstraction. It just

is"(*Graham Greene* 20). In the words of J.P. Kulshrestha, egotism gets rid over love." In the carnal passion of Bendrix and Sarah, his masculine self- assertiveness and possessiveness are combined with her feminine ecstasy and self- effacement. For both, it is a physical expression of emotion and nothing more"(*The Novelist* 116). Bendrix is a person with a considerable store of natural unpleasantness which has been aggravated and stimulated by circumstances. Sometimes, the readers begin to realise his moral degradation, particularly when he follows and treats Sarah like a Prey. He exults over her fear. In this novel Greene has achieved the rare feat of depicting a man in process, rather than in a series of disconnected states. Later on, with Sarah dead, the hatred has lost its object, and so it is shifted to God. God should be hated as bitterly as Sarah for God has Sarah with him.

Graham Greene in this novel, *The End of the Affair* has exploited documentary technique as well. The inner-self of heroine, Sarah, has been revealed and paraded through her diary, her feelings, her beliefs, her love and her hatred all these things have been unfolded through the pages of her diary. The detective Parkis purloins Sarah's diary from which Bendrix learns the truth- about Sarah's conduct. Paradoxically enough the secular passion of human love leads her to divine love. B.P. Lamba in *Graham Greene: His Mind and Art* sataes:

Here we have a still more clear view of the mystery of God's love turning man's behavior from human lust to Divine Passion. Bendrix till the end states that he hates God. It is only in the end that he acknowledges the existence of God whom he has always considered his enemy. And Sarah believes that Bendrix loves even his enemies. (Lamba 62)

Graham Greene shows, in this novel, a mature greasy of sexual relation rare in English Literature. Surpassing all human love, Sarah has 'caught belief like a disease'. On 12th June, 1944 she writes in her diary about her need and choices. She seems very aristocratic because she says, "I want every thing, all the time, everywhere. I'm afraid of the desert" (91). But it is not on the sense of wealth or riches; it is in the sense of God and a belief. Sarah sometimes visits in the Church. People in the Church teach her that god loves the human beings as well. For them, God is everything. So, people who believe that don't need admiration. If a person believes in God, s/he feels safe in loneliness too. Sarah knows all that but she couldn't be a believer of God. Her inner vision doesn't see the God who could make her safe. She is atheist in this sense. Sarah in her diary states, "People who believe that don't need admiration, they don't need to sleep with a man, they feel safe. But I can't invent a belief" (91). She strongly believes that she couldn't invent a belief, which means she couldn't be a theist.

Further she elaborates in her diary on the same day about her beloved 'Bendrix' who is sweet to her forever. The more Bendrix hates Sarah the more Sarah loves him. Here, the case is different. Sarah remembers the words of Bendrix that he had told her; he had never loved another woman so much. She feels that Bendrix told it to her to make believe it. But Sarah doesn't need it. She is not like Bendrix in love affair. She always tries to keep her love balanced in between Bendrix and Henry. She herself believes that Bendrix loves her, "But I believe it simply because I love him in exactly the same way" (91). Sarah couldn't stop loving him. She fears to forget him in any condition. She loves Bendrix so she believes in his love for her, "If I loved God, then I would believe in His love for me. It's not enough to need it. We have to love

first, and I don't know how. But I need it, how I need it" (91-92). She is keenly interested to love him. Bendrix knew it when he was reading her diary.

Maurice Bendrix can win her back to human love, she dies of pneumonia. Her death is followed by miracles which indicate her sanctity. Book Five of *The End of the Affair* describes a string of events in which Sarah's touch or even the touch of one of her possessions – a relic – works a cure, as if through the intercession of a saint. These miracles both bring Bendrix himself to faith just of God's existence, but of a specifically Catholic God at that; for Greene's plotting reveals that through Sarah was raised outside the Church, she was nevertheless baptized as a child. Keshava Prasad puts it shrewdly:

Sarah had been baptized by her mother when she was very young. In her last letter to Bendrix, she confesses that it didn't take: This reminds us of Pinkie in *Brighton Rock*. Sarah's salvation is suggested by a string of miracles which Bendrix tries to rationalise. Bendrix is seen praying to Sarah to save him from seducing a girl whom he encountered on Sarah's funeral. The detective's child is cured of high fever by the touch of Sarah's child book. The rationalist Smythe is cured of his strawberry birth - marks after he has been kissed by Sarah. Sarah's faith is the sign of her love for God. (*The Novelist* 141)

Bendrix left alone after the death of Sarah. Till the death of Sarah, Bendrix never remembered God and he never prayed. The death of Sarah brought change in Bendrix because her death is followed by miracles. He prayed to Sarah to save him from seducing a girl. No doubt, here Bendrix tries to rationalize. He prayed Sarah because Sarah is his lover. He is afraid of Sarah even after her death and tries to

control himself which he feels impossible and prayed her to get strength. This is incident in which he became safe because of the pray.

Later Bendrix is left alone praying not only to Sarah but also to God, rather chiding to God, “It wasn’t you that ‘took’, I told the God I didn’t believe in, that imaginary God whom Sarah thought had saved my life....” (164). Here seems Bendrix trying not to believe in God. But he couldn’t and confesses about his happy experiences which are now ruined. He blames that it is ruined by the God and he talks about the magic. He feels magic would have taken place which he believes less than the God, “I believe in magic even less than I believe in you: magic is your cross, your resurrection of the body, your holy Catholic church, your communion of saints” (164-165). Now, God took birth in the mind of Bendrix.

Further the protagonist furiously complains to God that about the closeness of Sarah. He raises the question to God, who is close to Sarah, either you or me. He states that Sarah slept with him in the same bed. At that time you were not with her. I was there, “When she slept, I was with her, not you. It was I who penetrated her, not you” (165). He claims that Sarah is with Him which is a horrible coincidence at the end. Rest of this time Sarah was very close with Bendrix doesn’t believe that a bit of water and a prayer can mark a two year old child for life. It means miraculous deed by the God is impossible for him. So he states, “You can’t mark a two- year- old child for life with a bit of water and a prayer. If I began to believe that, I could believe in the body and blood” (165). This is what; Bendrix means to say he owned Sarah much more time than God has owned.

Being an atheist Bendrix is aghast by the miracles. In a pensive mood he broods:



All the light went out, darkness was over the bed, and I dreamed I was at a fair with a gun in my hand. I was shooting at bottles that looked as though they were made of glass but my bullets bounded off them as though they were coated with steel. I fired and fired, and not a bottle could I crack, and at five in the morning I woke with exactly the same thought in my head: For those years you were mine, not His. (165)

Graham Greene is obsessed with the Roman Catholic sense of Original Sin. It is, however, to be noted that it is the full realization of the imperfect and egoistic love that Sarah and her lover Bendrix begins to have glimpses of the God. In the ebb and flow of love, she refuses to make the next assignation and told Bendrix:

You needn't be so scared. Love doesn't end. Just because we don't see each other...' she had already made her decision, though I didn't know it till next day, when the telephone presented nothing but the silent open mouth of somebody found dead. She said, 'My dear, my dear. People go on loving God, don't they, all their lives without seeing Him? (69)

No doubt they try to destroy in themselves anything that may be dear to God. Sarah writes in her diary on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1946 that she felt free and happy suddenly. She had made a vow to God to give Bendrix up for ever if Bendrix comes back from blitz accident where he was missed. Luckily, Bendrix came back safe and Sarah had given him up. But she couldn't stay without visiting him and going to break the vow. She doesn't care whether the God exist or not. Whether the god gave Maurice a second chance or whether she imagined everything. Only she wants to make Bendrix happy which is her second vow. She says it to God when she was walking through the common. She doesn't like to be worry about Bendrix in such a situation. Her interest

is to make Bendrix happy breaking the vow that she had made. She decided from her side and request God to stop her, "I'm going to make him happy, that's my second vow, God, and stop me if you can, stop me if you can" (116). For though her actions correspond with what Greene insists is God's plan, Sarah does indeed make her own law. Perhaps Greene's novel defines a period in which one can only pay in the conscience. Sarah would pay in her conscience were she to break her vow. But the novel offers no suggestion of any other payment at all. Sarah's bargain with God is above all a bargain with herself. This is to say that *The End of the Affair* stands as the religious novel of a fundamentally secular age. We believe that she believes or rather that she wants to believe-for through she later comes to accept "the whole bag of tricks" (146), the most affecting aspect of her diary is her own uncertainty that the God to whom she prays does in fact exist. But Greene isn't satisfied with describing faith's partial victory over doubt, and the novel itself looks for something more....

Here is an open challenge to God. Sarah and Bendrix are obstructed by a fiendish design, as it were, to destroy everything:

If there is a God who uses us and makes his saints out of such material as we are, the devil too may have his ambitions; he may dream of training even such a person as myself, even poor Parkis, into being his saints, ready with borrowed fanaticism to destroy love wherever we find it. (59-60)

Sarah is a woman of 'free-will', "I have free will to break my promise, haven't I" (100). The question of belief and the existence of God always haunts in her mind. As she has noted in her diary:

If I believe in you, I suppose I'd believe in the immortal soul, but is that what you love? Can you really see it there under the skin? Even a

God can't love something that doesn't exist; he can't love something he can not see. When he looks at me, does he see something I can't see? It must be lovely if he is able to love it. That's asking me to believe too much, that there's anything lovely in me. (101)

Sarah, puzzled for her love to Bendrix and her love to God, is driven to consult Richard Smythe, an agnostic and free- thinker, for his seemingly valuable counseling. But paradoxically, as it may sound, Smythe's antitheistic arguments only provide her with a sense of what Greene calls 'inverted belief '. She writes in her diary. "I came out feeling tired and hopeless. I had gone to him to rid me of a superstition, but every time I went his fanaticism fixed the superstition deeper" (115). She goes to a church in a world- weary spirit only to learn the bitter truth that she can not have God and Bendrix together. In an emotional state she addresses to God:

Let me forget me. Dear God, I've tried to love and I've made such a hash of it. If I could love you, I'd know how to love them. I believe the legend. I believe you were born. I believe you died for us. I believe you are God. Teach me to love. I don't mind pain. It's their pain I can't stand. Let my pain go on and on, but stop theirs. Dear God if only you could come down from your Cross for a while and let me get up there instead. If I could suffer like you, I could heal like you. (120)

There is a struggle between physical love and spiritual love. Sarah is shifting from Mundane World to Divine World, from macrocosm to microcosm. Her letter took Bendrix reads like this," I thought; God has more mercy, and then I came out of the church and saw the crucifix they have there, and I thought , of course , he's got mercy, it sometimes looks like punishment" (146). A little further she writes:

I believe there's a God - I believe the whole bag of tricks, there's nothing I don't believe, they could sub divide the Trinity into a dozen parts and I'd believe. They could dig up records that proved Christ had been invented by Pilate to get himself promoted and I'd believe just the same. I've caught belief like a disease. I've fallen into belief like I fell in love I've never loved before as I love you, and I've never believed in anything before as I believe now. I'm sure. (146-147)

And again she writes, "I fought belief for longer than I fought love, but I haven't any fight left" (147).

Sarah has a sincere and earnest perception of God's love. It is this divine love which has rid her heart and mind of disbelief and hatred. She realises the nature of the ever flowing mercy of God, which sometimes 'looks like punishment'. In surrendering herself to the Divine Will, Sarah soon discovers, like St. Augustine, the "Way which leads not only towards the discovering but also to the inhabiting of that country where alone is true blessedness"(*Confession* 189). Sarah admits the value of suffering as a creative process, a mode of spiritual regeneration.

Like St. Augustine, Sarah comes to experience the delight of unfolding oneself up to God in a spirit of absolute surrender. She makes a fervent appeal to God and prays Him to give her peace to Bendrix: "But you are too good to me. When I ask you for pain, you give me peace. Give it him too. Give him my peace - he needs it more"(123). This is an indication of the Christian virtue of charity. This love may be described as a kind of mystical communion in whom agony and ecstasy are compounded, "It is the 'burn that sea rest never', it is the 'wound of deep delight'" (St. John 23). Sarah's leap into faith seems improbable of far-fetched. Her act of faith is represented as one of those irrational acts; Sarah herself recognizes it as 'hysteria',

which appears out of character. God reaches down into Sarah's private hell of lust and adultery and she succumbed to him.

The epigraph to *The End of the Affair* has been derived from Lean Bloy: "Man has places in his heart which do not yet exist, and into them enters suffering in order that they may have existence"(Greene 6; "*Affair*"). Sarah's vow enables her rise from carnal love to divine love. It reveals to her the true significance of her for the gratification of her physical passion. This love presages the greater love. In the words of Kulshrestha, "God used the anger and jealousy Bendrix to bring about her separation from him. He made the lovers fight to exhaustion to gain each other. He taught them to squander their love so that there was nothing left except love of Him" (*The Novelist* 120).

*The End of the Affair* is concerned with affairs of the heart, carnal and spiritual. It explores varieties of erotic as well as religious experience. Pascal thinks that about the logic of heart which it has can't be understood by the head ever. The irony that informs the action of the novel is that Bendrix, confident of his success, has no idea how infinitely more jealous his divine rival is. Through the resistance of Sarah and Bendrix, God emerges as a character, a lover who must have his way. Thus Sarah, like Scobie in *The Heart of the Matter*, becomes a type of Jesus- figure,-she dies of pneumonia while visiting a Church. It appears, from the Roman Catholic point of view - which God exhausts and exploits Sarah, Bendrix and other to carry out His own ends. The protagonist, amazed by the miracles, feels less hate than fear. Before that Bendrix hated Sarah and God as much as he can. Bendrix even now doesn't believe in God. But he realizes that God has taken Sarah away from him. God made him alone. She was the lady whom he loved much than he hated in general. He himself says, "I have no peace and I have no love, except for you, you. I said to her,

I'm a man of hate. But I didn't feel much hatred...." (190). It means he doesn't believe in God, he doesn't love God. He does have no fear of God rather he said to God, "God: You've taken her, but You haven't got me yet" (190-191). Over such a situation of mourning he doesn't like to be safe being in the side of God. Bendrix's only interest is that to be with Sarah for his lifetime which is ruined by the God that he assumed "I wanted Sarah for a lifetime and You took her away. With Your great schemes You ruin our happiness like a harvester ruins a mouse's nest: I hate You, God, I hate You as though You existed" (190-191). Since Bendrix- a writer can not have faith till positive proofs are put forth, God has produced proof positive of his presence. Bendrix goes on to say,

I believe you live and that He exists, but it will take more than your prayers to turn this hatred of Him into love. He robbed me and like that king you wrote about I'll rob Him of what he wants in one. Hatred is in my brain, not in my stomach or my skin. It can't be removed like a rash or an ache. Didn't hate you as well as love you? (191)

Bendrix reflects how hatred of God can take a man to Him; he feels that hatred creates belief. If he were to hate, he would believe God then. So, here, the real point is that, as puts Keshava Prasad,

The natural man feels alienated as soon as his mind is invaded by God. Bendrix's predicament is invented by God. His intolerable position is plotted by God, and by a writer who is in dialogue with God. It seems that the book is not plotted by Bendrix by God Himself. (*The Novelist* 143)

Here is a realistic presentation of the natural man. Absence of sin is not virtue. Bendrix lives on the plane of sensations. The novel concludes with the expression of

the protagonist," O God, you've done enough. You've robbed me of enough, I'm too tired and old to learn to love, leave me alone for ever" (192).

The prayer echoes the utterance of The Holy Bible, Book of Job - 10:20 in the midst of his suffering:-

"Are not my days few? Cease then,  
and let me alone, that I may take  
comfort a little"(Job 15).

Greene's novel, *The End of the Affair*, suggests the incompatibility between 'human and divine love'. Sarah, like Scobie (*The Heart of the Matter*), tends to conceive God as an enemy. This reminds us of Job's designation of God as an enemy who is persecuting and torturing him like Satan, the Arch- enemy. As J.P. Kulshrestha, in *Graham Greene: The Novelist*, writes:

But the Hound of Heaven wants one and all, first Sarah, then Bendrix, Henry and Smythe. Their story is being plotted by an omniscient Author who imposes His will on them all, just as Bendrix imposed 'his' on the characters in his own novel. Sarah and Bendrix are the types of character created by God the Novelist. (Kulshrestha 125-126)

Here Greene's religious beliefs hark back to the concept of God in Judaism. In this novel the author is concerned with the subject of sainthood which requires active demonstration of a transcendental power in the field of human experience. The vital point is here, like Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the effects produced by events upon the mind of the narrator. Thus, the miracles play an important role in this novel. The mode of progression is from nature to super nature.

Sarah's redemption is warranted by Christian belief. A sinner can achieve salvation with a sincere belief. *The Bhagavat - Gita* says: "Even of the most sinful

worship me, with undivided heart he too must be accounted righteous, for he hath rightly resolved. Speedily he becometh dutiful and goeth to eternal peace. O Kaunteya, know thou for certain that my devotee perisheth never" (verses 30-31). The goodness of Sarah works in the lives of other. One man, an atheist, returns to God, another is brought to the brink of belief, and two men. Henry and Bendrix are brought together in companionship. As such, to employ the terms of the novel, Sarah is in the moral, if not in the canonical, sense a pious, saintly woman, entitled to life eternal.

God demands the annihilation and elimination of human love for a human being. In this novel the experience of human, sexual love and passion is projected as a pre-requisite for the consummation of the love of God. God is persistently projected as an enemy in this novel. It is a bombshell for the devout. This novel shocks the believer and stimulates the disbeliever. One may say, 'Greene is of devil's party'. There are flashes of humor in this book. The novel is a slice of life. The concern with miracles and with God's being makes *The End of the Affair* a part of the tradition of the religious novel. According to Greene that he has recorded his view in his *Collected Essays*; "a tradition which had been lost with the death of Henry James"(Greene 115).

In the metaphysical poets like John Donne, George Herbert, Andrew Marvel, love of God is presented in erotic terms. God is conceived as the lover and the ravisher. In Richard Crashaw and Henry Vaughan the mystical love of God is portrayed. The Vaishnava poets of India- Surdas in Hindi, Chandidas in Bengali and Vidyapati in Maitheli - present God in the idiom of erotic poetry. Evidently a good influence of these poets is apparent in *The End of the Affair*. This novel introduces a



sort of intellectual and emotional debated on the existence of God. Lamba holds the view:

Greene himself has a cross, if not on the top of the novel, then tucked away inside the novel to be displayed as and when needed. Most of his work is apparently based on Catholic dogma and belief, on assumptions of sin and the presence of the son of God in the Eucharist, of grace and strong possibility of miracles even in the rationalist age. (Lamba 154)

Theistic, Atheistic, Anti-theistic and Agnostic points of view are presented in ample and elaborate length in this novel. Greene is a God like omniscient author who impresses His will on all his creatures just as Bendrix- the hero, imposes 'his' on tactful manner. Bendrix, in the beginning didn't care God and he never believed in God. If he had any trace of belief on God and religion, he would never keep the physical relation. He was in love with Sarah the wife of Henry, "If two people loved, they slept together; it was a mathematical formula, tested and proved by human experience" (154). In religion, specially in Catholicism keeping sexual relationship with other's wife is strictly prohibited. This is what "Bendrix in *The End of the Affair* is also an atheist ..." (Vulcan 59). But, the novel ends with the pray of Bendrix: "O God, you've done enough, you've robbed me of enough, I'm too tired and old to learn to love, leave me alone for ever"(192). It means that the change in Bendrix is because of miracles after Sarah dies. Greene, in this novel, does not demand dedication, only recognition is enough for mystery of God and miracles.

## Chapter - IV

### Conclusion: Sarah's and Bendrix's Surrendering to God

Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair* is an exploration of the protagonist Mauric Bendrix's and the chief character, Sarah Miles' surrendering position to God to accept His participation in their love affair. Mauric Bendrix, the novel's principal narrator and the lover of Sarah Miles, the principal character, is an atheist. He is lover of Sarah Miles but he always hates her. He not only hates Sarah Miles but also God, the divine power. God is an enemy for him. The whole book is smoked dry like a fish with his hatred.

On the other hand Sarah Miles feels that Bendrix loves even those whom he hated or in other words he loves even his enemies. It means Sarah loves Bendrix and wants him to make her forever. Sarah Miles is the wife of Henry Miles, a white colored, high-ranking bureaucrat in the Defense Ministry. But in the novel we don't get active participation of Henry. Just after the death of Sarah Bendrix exchange his grief with him. Even Sarah, his wife, loves Bendrix and fulfills her physical passion. It means she makes Secular love with Bendrix. For Sarah and Bendrix, it is a physical expression of emotion.

Sarah is a balanced and serene lady who wants to make happy her lover as well as her husband and intends to desert none from her side. None of them was a confirmed believer. A blitz accident took place and Sarah lost her lover for the time being. It was great sorrow for Sarah which she could never believe and bear. So she prayed to God intensively for the first time in her life for the life of her lover as a condition to believe that there is God, who could overrule, suspend, or modify the operations of the ordinary course of nature. She prayed to God with a vow "give him up for ever". It is really amazing that Bendrix returned to the apartment alive.

The very amazing incident became the turning point in the life of Sarah. It was miracle for her to see Bendrix in front of her. Gradually her belief on God increased and the gap between Bendrix and her was widened. She felt free and happy when she cut off her relation with Bendrix. But later she made second vow to make Bendrix happy and warns God to stop if He can. Sarah and Bendrix are obstructed by a fiendish design, as it were, to destroy everything. The question of belief and the existence of God always haunts in Sarah's mind. She goes to a Church in a world-weary spirit only to learn the bitter truth that she cannot have God and Bendrix together. There is a struggle between physical-love and spiritual-love. Her later expression and behavior shows that she is shifting from Mundane World to Divine world.

She realizes the existence of God. She has a sincere and earnest perception of God's love. It is this divine love which has rid of her heart and mind of disbelief and hatred. She realizes the nature of the ever-flowing mercy of God, which sometimes 'looks like punishment'.

Sarah comes to experience the delight of unfolding on self up to God in a spirit of absolute surrender. She makes a fervent appeal to God and prays Him to give her peace to Bendrix.

As Sarah has tried to be self dictator in her life and will but couldn't and surrenders to the God. Bendrix too hate Sarah as well God and tried to construct own way to run and rule his personal life. He didn't care Henry and God, and continuously made love affair as well physical contact with Sarah. Eighteen months have passed since Sarah and Bendrix met last. Before that, they had been lovers for five years for nearly every minutes of which Bendrix had been agonizingly jealous. The jealousy flames up again when Henry tells him that he suspects Sarah of unfaithfulness. It

seems that Sarah is the pain of life. But she has been Bendrix's last hope of happiness because she embodies his dream and desire.

Bendrix is a person with a considerable store of natural unpleasantness which has been aggravated and stimulated by circumstances. Sometimes, the readers begin to realize his moral degradation, particularly when he follows and treats Sarah like a prey. He exults over her fear. Later on, with Sarah dead, the hatred has lost its object, and so it is shifted to God. Bendrix learns the truth about Sarah's conduct from her diary. Paradoxically enough the secular passion of human love leads her to Divine-love.

Mauric Bendrix can win her back to human love, she dies of pneumonia. Her death is followed by miracles which indicate her sanctity. Bendrix seems to pray to such to save him from seducing a girl whom he encountered on Sarah's funeral. He knew that the detective's child cured of high fever by the touch of Sarah's child book. He found the rationalist Smythe's strawberry birth-marks cured after he has been kissed by Sarah. It is what he is enforced to believe that Sarah's faith is the sign of her love for God. Such is the case miracles work one by other to lead the path towards Godhood by interrupting the human affair that was being in the novel.

In the end, Bendrix acknowledges the existence of God whom he has always considered his enemy and prays to God to leave him for ever. It is what he is feeling that he is with God after the death of Sarah.

Thus, as much dictator and strong Sarah and Bendrix seem to be, they surrender to the God because of the miracles, the underlying phenomenon in the novel.

## Works Cited

- Alleva, Richard. *Commonweal*. New York: Jan 28, 2000. Vol. 127, Iss.2; pg. 18, 3pgs  
<<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=48963479&sid=14&Fmt=3&clientId=19371&RQT=309&VName=PQD>>.
- Atkins, John. *Graham Greene*. London: John Calder, 1957.
- "Catholic Mystic of Middle Ages." *Edinburgh Review* 184/October 1896: 298-321.
- Boardman, Gwenn R. "Graham Greene," *The Aesthetics of Exploration*, ed.  
Gainesville: University of Florida Press USA, 1971.
- Brown, Francis. *Highlights of Modern Literature*, ed. New York: Mentor Books,  
1954.
- Erdinast-Vulcan, Daphna. *Graham Greene's Childless Fathers*. London: The  
Macmillan Press Ltd, 1988.
- Freemantle, Anne. *Saturday Review*. 27 October 1951.
- Greene, Graham. *The End of the Affair*. London: Heinemann, 1951.
- . *Collected Essays*. London: Uniform Heinemann, 1971.
- . *The Heart of the Matter*. London: Heinemann, 1948.
- . *The Power and Glory*. London: Heinemann, 1940.
- Gorra, Michael. *Southwest Review*. Dallas: 2004. Vol. 89, Iss. 1; pg. 109, 17pgs  
<<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=64469717&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=19371&RQT=309&VName=PQD>>.
- Goyandka, Jayadayal., ed. And trans. *The Bhagavad Gita*. 12th ed. Gorakhpur: Gita  
Press, 1971.
- Hume, Robert Ernest. *The World's Living Religions*. New Delhi: Crest Publishing  
House, 2000.
- James, William. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Penguin, 1982.

- Johnston, William. *The Mirror Mind*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1990.
- Keshavan, H. K. *Science and Mysticism (The Essence of Vedic Philosophy)*. New Delhi: New Age International (P) Limited, 1997.
- Kulshrestha, J. P. *Graham Greene: The Novelist*. Delhi: Macmillan Indian, Ltd., 1977.
- Lamba, B.P. *Graham Greene: His mind And Art*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 1987.
- Lees, F.N., "Graham Greene: A Comment," *Scrutiny*, xix, October, 1952.
- Lodge, David. *Graham Greene: Criticism and Interpretation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.
- Margaret, Smith. *An Introduction to Mysticism*. London: Sheldon Press, 1977.
- Matthew, Sir Tobie. *The Confession of St. Augustine's Book-VII* Tr. Collins. London: Fontana Books, 1963.
- McDermott, Robert A., ed. *Basic Writings of S. Radhakrishnan*. Delhi: Jaico Publishing House, 1981.
- McEwan, Neil. *Graham Greene: Macmillan Modern Novelists*. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 1988.
- Merton, Thomas. *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. New York: Doubleday, 1966.
- Neil, S. Diana. *A Short History of the English Novel*. Ludhiana: Kalyani Publishers, 1971.
- O' Prey, Paul. *A Reader's Guide to Graham Greene*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1988.
- Prasad, Keshava. *Graham Greene: The Novelist*. New Delhi: Classical Publishing Co., 1987.

- Reinhardt, K.F. *The Theological Novel of Modern Europe*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1969.
- Shannon, William. *Seeds of Peace Contemplation and Non-Violence*. New York: Crossroad Pub. Co., 1996.
- Sharma, Krishna Chandra. *Social Vision in the Novels of Graham Greene*. Diss. Banaras Hindu University, 1994.
- St. John of the Cross. *The Complete Works of St. John of the Cross* Tr. G. A. Peers. London: Burns and Oates, 1967.
- Suzuki, Daisetz Teitaro. *Mysticism, Christian and Buddhist: The Eastern and Western Way*. New York: Collier Books, 1962.
- Sylvester, Harry. "Graham Greene," *Commonweal*, No. 25, 1940.  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=867911431&sid=6&Fmt=4&clientId=19371&RQT=309&VName=PQD>.
- The Holy Bible. *Book of Job -10: 20*. London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1932.
- Turnell, Martin. *Modern Literature and Christian Faith*. Westminster: The Newman press, 1961.
- Vatican Council II Document, No 56, *Nostra Aetate*, "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to No-Christian Religions," 28 Oct. 1965.
- Warburton, Nigel. *Philosophy: The Basics*. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 1992.
- Ward, A. C. *20<sup>th</sup> Century English Literature*. London: University Paperbacks, Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1969.
- Watts, Cedric. *A Preface to Greene*. Delhi: Pearson Education Limited, 2003.
- Weales, G., *Religion in Modern English Drama*. London: Oxford University Press, 1961.