

University of Pardubice
Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Historical, Cultural, and Literary Analysis of Graham Greene's *Our
Man in Havana*

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Bachelor Thesis

2023

Univerzita Pardubice
Fakulta filozofická
Akademický rok: 2022/2023

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení: **Daniela Svec**
Osobní číslo: **H20292**
Studijní program: **B0231A090018 Anglický jazyk**
Specializace: **Anglický jazyk pro odbornou praxi**
Téma práce: **Historická, kulturní a literární analýza románu Grahama Greena Our Man in Havana**
Téma práce anglicky: **Historical, Cultural, and Literary Analysis of Graham Greene's Our Man in Havana**
Zadávací katedra: **Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Zásady pro vypracování

Ve své bakalářské práci se studentka nejprve zaměří na historicko-kulturní kontext, ve kterém se zvolená díla odehrávají. Jde zejména o období těsně po 2. světové válce a 50. léta, kdy se formovaly první obrysy studené války. Kromě toho studentka představí i literární kontext špionážního románu, do kterého díla G. Greena patří a ze kterého se např. černý humor románu Our Man in Havana značně vymyká. Dále se bude věnovat zejména náboženským tématům a jejich propojení se špionáží a komunistickou doktrínou tak, jak je reflektují zvolené romány Our Man in Havana. Praktická část se tedy bude opírat především o tematický literární rozbor spojený s kulturněhistorickou a literární analýzou vybraného období.

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:
Rozsah grafických prací:
Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

Seznam doporučené literatury:

Brown, Archie. *The Rise And Fall Of Communism*. Online, New South Wales: Pymble, 2009. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=3086659>
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Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **3. dubna 2023**
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **31. března 2024**

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Daniela Svec

Acknowledgments

I extend heartfelt thanks to my advisor, Mgr. Olga Roebuck, Ph.D., for guidance throughout the I extend heartfelt thanks to my advisor. I would also like to especially thank my family for unconditionally supporting me during this journey.

ANNOTATION

This bachelor thesis provides an in-depth exploration of Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* within the Cold War era, examining its historical, cultural, and literary contexts, including the historical background of Cuba and the geopolitical tensions of the time. It analyzes the novel's characters, themes, and literary techniques, emphasizing moral dilemmas and satirical elements. Additionally, it explores how the novel represents postmodernism through its literary techniques and genres, reflecting morality amidst political turmoil and espionage.

KEYWORDS

Cold War, Espionage, Graham Greene, Cuba, Morality, Satire

NÁZEV

Historická, kulturní a literární analýza románu Grahama Greena *Our Man in Havana*

ANOTACE

Tato bakalářská práce se podrobně zabývá románem Grahama Greena *Our Man in Havana* v období studené války a zkoumá jeho historický, kulturní a literární kontext, včetně historického pozadí Kuby a geopolitického napětí té doby. Analyzuje postavy, témata a literární postupy románu s důrazem na morální dilemata a satirické prvky. Kromě toho zkoumá, jak román prostřednictvím svých literárních technik a žánrů reprezentuje postmodernismus a odráží morálku uprostřed politických otřesů a špionáže.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Studená válka, špionáž, Graham Greene, Kuba, morálka, satira

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Introduction

Amid the tense times of the Cold War, specific ideas in literature echo throughout time and place, overcoming cultural and historical barriers. Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* offered a breath of fresh air as a satirical novel during those times. It captivated the readers by accurately portraying a historical and cultural representation and offering an exciting spy tale that delved into themes like morality, deceit, and espionage. The primary purpose of the thesis is to provide a thorough analysis of Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* through the historical, cultural, and literary lens concerning the greater array of Cold War literature. This research employs an integrative methodology to examine Greene's *Our Man in Havana* from several angles, emphasizing the cultural phenomena, thematic patterns, and the sociopolitical complexities of 1950s Cuba and the world.

The first theoretical chapter delves into Communism as a whole and how it reached a global setting. It briefly defines the ideology and intends to provide more detail on the pertinent historical events, concentrating on the rise of communism and its confrontation with the West. It continues portraying Cuba's history and sociopolitical events until the Cuban revolution and how communism had a part in it.

The second theoretical chapter, which puts particular emphasis on the events that occurred in the UK and Cuba in the 1950s, seeks to give a thorough overview of the Cold War, including its foundation and pivotal incidents. To clarify the historical context of this period of international tension, it examines the geopolitical, economic, and sociopolitical elements that produced the Cold War. The chapter aims to provide ample historical and cultural background that proves vital to Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*. In addition, this article seeks to improve understanding of how the Cold War's legacy continues to influence the development of the global order.

The third theoretical chapter delves into the literary trends of the 1950s used in British literature, focusing on the ones relevant to *Our Man in Havana*. I also point out the themes present in the novel that were popular in the 1950s. Additionally, the chapter briefly summarizes Graham's biography, highlighting the relevant parts that influenced the story.

The main subject of this thesis is Graham Greene's historical, cultural, and literary analysis of *Our Man in Havana*. The chapter is divided into three parts: a detailed analysis of the characters and their actions in the story by highlighting the themes they represent, a historical and cultural examination of the historical context of Cuba's Cold War setting, and a literary analysis of the novel by portraying how where the literary techniques and genres were

demonstrated in the book. Through examining the intricacies of Cuban culture, Cold War politics, and narrative structure, the goal is to enhance the comprehension of Greene's timeless masterpiece and its continued significance in a constantly evolving global landscape.

1 Communism and Cuba

This chapter briefly defines Communist ideology and characterizes and discusses the global rise of communism, later focusing on communism in Cuba and the Cuban Revolution. This chapter aims to elaborate on the relevant historical events, focusing on the development of communism and communism's conflict with the West, to accurately grasp what occurs in the book and the characters' circumstances. Moreover, the chapter explores the political setting in Cuba in the years prior to the Cuban Revolution, which acts as a background to the novel later analyzed, showing how communism became increasingly militant and resulted in the events of the Cuban Revolution.

Acknowledging communism's impact on the world is essential to comprehending historical and contemporary events. It has been among the most influential economic philosophies throughout history. This ideology was first explained in *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx, published in 1848, which is a crucial document in the history of communism. Karl Marx was a political thinker, historian, and philosopher from Germany who preached revolution. As stated in a text of the Center for European Studies at Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, Communism is a political philosophy and form of governance in which the state controls most of a society's resources, including land, means of production, institutions of higher learning, food production, and transportation.¹ In essence, communism advocates for a society where everybody benefits from labor equally and abolishes the class structure by redistributing income. The manifesto's major points center on how the lower-class struggle shapes class consciousness, emphasizing the proletariat's will to overthrow the ruling classes and communism's transformational goals of establishing a more equitable society. Therefore, what is mentioned previously is reiterated in the manifesto, which states:

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a [Communist] revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.²

This passage gave people who were previously alienated from society hope for equality and improved living conditions. It was a far reality when Marx made his statement in the nineteenth century. Still, by the middle of the 20th century, the spread of communism was nearly underestimated. However, the so-called communism that prevailed worldwide did not resemble

¹ "Communism: Karl Marx To Joseph Stalin," Center for European Studies a Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, accessed on November 9, 2022, <https://europe.unc.edu/iron-curtain/history/communism-karl-marx-to-joseph-stalin/>,

² Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Penguin Classics, 2002), 258.

Marx's ideas. Brown contrasts the efforts and objectives of democratic socialist parties and communist parties who were eager to impose that governance system on society in the majority of the nations they ruled, as reported in *The Rise and Fall of Communism*.³ The majority of communist government enforcement relied on foreign help and violent action because they could not rely on democratic elections. The Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 marked the first global expansion of communism, where laborers, soldiers, sailors, and lower classes revolted with Vladimir Lenin to overthrow the imperialist government and establish The Communist Party. Reiman describes that this revolution is notable because, in addition to installing a leftist government, it was the first revolution in a developing nation lacking an industrial society's social and educational institutions.⁴

Subsequently, communism continued growing, and just two years after the revolution, a Moscow-based conference, the Third International, often known as Comintern, was established in 1919. As stated by Vatlin and Smith, it was called the Third International as they deemed it imperative to stress its link with the First International and the Second International, in which Marx had a significant role and where the labor movements had been elevated as a political player on a global scale, respectively.⁵ The Bolsheviks envisioned a new organization to advance the international communist revolution and strengthen Soviet Russia's security, aiming to replace global capitalism with a communist economic system. Its main goal was to supplant global capitalism with a communist economic system, using force if necessary. The American Historical Association highlights that the Russian Communists held significant power in the Third International since its founding due to their Moscow headquarters and unprecedented ability to gain and maintain governmental authority over a nation since 1919.⁶ Additionally, the events mentioned before caused other revolutions in other countries, and during the following years, other communist parties came into power in Europe. Fayet explains that post-war, the Soviet Union attempted to impose a communist regime in countries like Poland and Hungary, using their success in World War II to promote the establishment of communist governments worldwide while also utilizing their troops in Romania and Bulgaria.⁷

³ Archie Brown, *The Rise And Fall Of Communism* (New South Wales: Pymble, 2009), 4,

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=3086659>

⁴ Michal Reiman, *About Russia, Its Revolutions, Its Development and Its Present*, (Berlin: Peter Lang Verlag, 2016), 13–24.

⁵ Vatlin, Alexander and Stephen A. Smith. “The Comintern,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, ed. Stephen A. Smith, 187–197. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 187–197.

⁶ “What Was the Third International?,” American Historical Association, accessed January 15, 2023, [https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/gi-roundtable-series/pamphlets/em-46-our-russian-ally-\(1945\)/what-was-the-third-international](https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/gi-roundtable-series/pamphlets/em-46-our-russian-ally-(1945)/what-was-the-third-international)

⁷ Jean-François Fayet, “1919,” in *The Oxford Handbook Of The History Of Communism*, ed. by Stephen A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 110–119.

The Soviet Union's WWII victory facilitated communism's expansion in Eastern Europe, significantly influencing global power dynamics and defining international politics for decades. This alarmed the United States government, so they decided to apply a policy of containment by establishing the Truman Doctrine. Mentioned in the Office of the Historian government website, the Truman Doctrine, founded by President Harry S. Truman, states that the United States will offer political, military, and financial aid to any democratic nation under attack from internal or external authoritarian forces.⁸ It also set global military alliances against communist governments, ergo against the Soviet Union. This simultaneously started an arms buildup, better known as the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union.

To illustrate the spread of communism globally more precisely and its interconnectedness and impact on communist movements worldwide, mentioning The People's Republic of China is imperative as it became one of the most prominent socialist states. As Cheek affirms, the Chinese Communist Party was first established in 1921 in Shanghai; at that moment, they actively collaborated with the Nationalist Party under the framework of the First United Front.⁹ The Republic of China's government was exposed to the Communist threat due to these anti-democratic policies, like lack of freedom of speech in Nationalist areas and military corruption. Also, this demonstrates that communism extended beyond Russia, reaching Asia and, subsequently, Cuba, which can emphasize how *Our Man in Havana* serves as a globally understood narrative.

Additionally to the Asian continent, the communist agenda was also able to reach the American continent. Latin America also had inequality and poverty problems, allowing the communist ideology to introduce itself into society. Moreover, one of the most notorious Latin American communist governments, which lasted until the present day, is Cuba. The dawn of the Cuban Revolution stemmed from Cuba's war of independence from Spain. The United States joined them and helped Cuba gain independence, but for a price: The Platt Amendment. Per the American government's National Archives, The Platt Amendment is a treaty between the United States and Cuba approved on May 22, 1903, that sought to safeguard Cuba's independence from outside interference, which made it possible for the U.S. to intervene heavily in both domestic and international issues in Cuba and the authority to set up bases on

⁸ "The Truman Doctrine, 1947," Office of the Historian, accessed January 20, 2023, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/truman-doctrine>

⁹ Timothy Cheek, "Mao And Maoism," in *The Oxford Handbook Of The History Of Communism*, ed. Stephen A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 91–92.

Cuban soil.¹⁰ Additionally, Kaplan explains that the U.S. leased Guantanamo Bay in 1931, granting them unlimited authority over the area. Despite the amendment's abrogation in 1934, the lease persisted, granting the U.S. perpetual control over the naval base.¹¹ Guantanamo's strategic significance was to govern Cuba and wield power across the Caribbean and Latin America. Rodríguez and Targ emphasize that while the U.S. was instrumental in freeing Cuba from Spanish authority, they institutionalized neocolonial power over Cuba to maximize their wealth and delay true Cuban independence.¹² The passage of the Platt Amendment made Cuban citizens harbor intense distaste toward it as the United States, thus furthering the long-standing trepidation and hostility between the two nations.

An important term to be defined before introducing the next step in Cuba's history is populism. As Kleinfeld reports, it is a collection of strategies politicians employ to control citizens and retain their place in office by creating social divides, centralizing power, and supporting majoritarianism above liberal democracy by claiming to reflect the will of the people to delegitimize dissident citizens and stifle institutionalized limits on their authority, such as the press, judges and, public advocates.¹³ Examining populism in conjunction with communism offers valuable insights into the political dynamics during this period. Additionally, it shows how populism influenced Cuba's political past and continues to affect modern politics.

An essential character in Cuba's history is Fulgencio Batista, a populist reformist turned authoritarian leader. Whitney expresses that Batista, in 1933, played a crucial role in the mutiny that overthrew the Havana government, establishing a provisional; later, afterwards, Batista used populist tactics to reel in voters, resulting in his triumph, which fostered an economically prosperous era comparatively open politics.¹⁴ This made it possible for the Communist Party in Cuba to organize legally. Thomas explains that under his rule, Cuba and the U.S. established strong political and economic ties, with American businesses acquiring most of Cuba's resources and Cuba profiting from high sugar prices.¹⁵ Domínguez affirms that Batista's presidency ended in 1944, as Cuba's constitution does not allow a head of state to be in office for two consecutive terms; therefore, he handpicked a successor.¹⁶ According to Domínguez,

¹⁰ "Platt Amendment (1903)," National Archives, last reviewed on February 8, 2022. <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/platt-amendment>

¹¹ Amy Kaplan, "Where Is Guantánamo?," *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2005): 831–58.

¹² Raúl Rodríguez, and Harry Targ, "US Foreign Policy towards Cuba: Historical Roots, Traditional Explanations and Alternative Perspectives," *International Journal of Cuban Studies* 7, no. 1 (2015): 16–37.

¹³ Rachel Kleinfeld, "What Is Populism?," *How Does Business Fare Under Populism?* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2023), 5–7.

¹⁴ Robert Whitney, "The 'Populist' Batista," *The Wilson Quarterly* (1976-) 24, no. 4 (2000): 121–22.

¹⁵ Hugh Thomas, "Cuba: The United States and Batista, 1952-58," *World Affairs* 149, no. 4 (1987): 169–75.

¹⁶ Jorge I. Domínguez, "The Breakdown of the Political System," in *Cuba: Order and Revolution* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 110–113.

the new government destabilized Cuba, as corruption and legitimacy issues arose, additionally because political violence was expected and the absence of effective governance during this time, which led to the formation of gangs.¹⁷ As Sadler mentions, political volatility, social unrest, pervasive corruption, eroded confidence in parliamentary systems, and socioeconomic inequalities marked Cuba's years between 1944 and 1952, laying the groundwork for significant political turmoil.¹⁸ During these years, the complex social and political climate set a stage for future events in Cuban history. In Greene's *Our Man in Havana*, there is an understanding of the need for information from the Secret Intelligence Service because of the delicate society. Furthermore, as Thomas mentions, in 1952, Batista, fearing he would lose the upcoming election, staged a coup d'état, taking military control of Cuba and suspending the constitution.¹⁹ Thus, Cuba developed into a despotic state and made him a dictator. As the Office of the Historian describes, the American government had various economic interests in Cuba, hence supporting Batista's coup despite concerns about how the coup could affect Latin America.²⁰ Olson notes that this new authoritarian government curtailed political freedoms, allied with landowners and American corporations, developed profitable ties with the American mafia, increased corruption and criminal activity, widened the wealth divide, and exacerbated social unrest and economic downturn.²¹ This interest-aligned dictatorship, which was encouraged by the U.S. for commercial purposes, fostered social discontent, inequality, and corruption, which in turn prepared the way for the Cuban Revolution. Similarly, the novel *Our Man in Havana*, set during Batista's rule, gives a picture of the Cuban political scene and enriches our understanding of the reasons for the Cuban Revolution by emphasizing the interplay between internal problems and outside influence.

A pivotal figure in the context of the Cuban Revolution was Fidel Castro, who emerged as a commanding presence and wielded significant influence over the events of this revolutionary time. Since Batista's oppressive government was so prejudicial to the Cuban citizens, the following year, in 1953, under the leadership of the revolutionary Fidel Castro, the first revolts started. According to the web supplement for Modern Latin America, born in 1926, Fidel Castro studied at the University of Havana, where he got involved in politics and

¹⁷ Domínguez, "The Breakdown," 110–114.

¹⁸ Louis R. Sadler, "The Cuban Democratic Experience: The Auténtico Years, 1944-1952," review of *The Americas* by Charles D. Ameringer, *The Americas*, 2000.

¹⁹ Thomas, "Cuba": 169–75.

²⁰ "Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President," Office of the Historian, accessed March 23, 2024, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v04/d327>

²¹ James S. Olson, *Historical Dictionary of the 1950s* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 67–68.

promoted decolonization and Cuban nationalism, later supporting the Orthodox Party.²² This party was characterized by radicalism, anti-imperialism, protesting political agreements, and devotion to José Martí's values, him being an independence hero. Fidel Castro did not start as a communist, but his mission was to free Cuba from the imperialist United States. As Gleijeses adds, Castro dreamed of a broad revolution that would overthrow his country's harsh socioeconomic system despite lacking a clear vision for Cuba he desired.²³

Castro stepped up his involvement after Fulgencio Batista's 1952 takeover. Kapcia explains that in July 1953, the first anti-totalitarian government revolt against Santiago's Moncada barracks took place, but it was unsuccessful, which led to Castro's apprehension and conviction.²⁴ In the trial, he gave a long, intense speech and finished with the famous words: "Condemn me. It does not matter. History will absolve me."²⁵ Castro's speech laid the groundwork for establishing a Communist state by igniting a nationalist passion for the revolution, emphasizing the importance of equitable society and democracy. He used populist language to give nebulous opposition to capitalism and Batista's rule. As stated in the web supplement for Modern Latin America, Castro's humanistic style, focusing on Cuban suffering and dictatorship abuses, effectively engaged the public since he presented revolutionary ideals as approachable.²⁶ By fusing nationalism and populism, Castro optimized support and minimized resistance, effectively tapping into widespread discontent with Batista.

Castro was not imprisoned for long because, after intense international pressure, in 1955, he and various prisoners were released as part of Batista's amnesty. Consequently, Castro and multiple insurgents were banished to Mexico, where they regrouped and started planning for future strikes against Batista's autocracy. Also, in exile, he met Ernesto "Che" Guevara, an Argentinian Marxist revolutionary. Castro's rendezvous with Guevara during his exile was a watershed point in his path as his Marxist doctrine complimented Castro's changing political views. As described by Kapcia, 82 rebels boarded the yacht "Granma" to Cuba; upon arriving on the southeast coast in December 1956, they were attacked; this onslaught caused several casualties and forced the group to scatter, gathering later in the Sierra Maestra mountains where

²² "Cuban Profiles and Personalities," Modern Latin America: web supplement for 8th Edition, accessed January 20, 2024 <https://library.brown.edu/create/modernlatinamerica/chapters/chapter-4-cuba/figures-in-cuban-history/>.

²³ Piero Gleijeses, "The Cuban Revolution: The First Decade," in *The Cambridge History of Communism: Volume II the Socialist Camp and World Power 1941-1960s*, ed. Norman Naimark, Silvio Pons, and Sophie Quinn-Judge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 364–365.

²⁴ Antoni Kapcia, *Historical Dictionary of Cuba* (3rd Edition, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022), 62.

²⁵ "History Will Absolve Me," Fidel Castro Internet Archive, accessed January 30, 2023, <https://www.marxists.org/history/cuba/archive/castro/1953/10/16.htm>.

²⁶ "The Castro Touch," Modern Latin America: web supplement for 8th Edition, accessed January 18, 2024, <https://library.brown.edu/create/modernlatinamerica/chapters/chapter-4-cuba/moments-in-cuban-history/the-castro-touch-populism-and-ambiguity/>.

they established their headquarters for the guerilla.²⁷ Castro knew that the cause needed media attention, so he extended an invitation for reporters to cover his fight against the atrocities of Batista's regime and mainly that he was still alive, as rumors of his death were catching on. Hence, he invited Herbert Matthews, a reporter from the newspaper the New York Times, who wrote the article *Cuban Rebel Is Visited in Hideout; Castro Is Still Alive and Still Fighting in Mountains*. In the piece, Matthew portrays Castro's unwavering determination to fight the Batista dictatorship, highlighting his strategic brilliance and the loyalty of the rural population, for instance, in phrases like: "The personality of the man is overpowering. It was easy to see that his men adored him and to see why he has caught the imagination of the youth of Cuba all over the island".²⁸ This effectively undermined Batista's dictatorship by showcasing the people's support and his leadership conviction. Also, Castro's revolutionary chronicle intertwines the topics explored in *Our Man in Havana*. The secret military facility in the Sierra Maestra mountains where Castro and the revolutionary soldiers formed their guerrilla base is reminiscent of secretive intelligence reports of similar places in Graham Greene's book.

Thomas notes that a civil war was fought between the revolutionaries and Batista's army for years; during these years of conflict, the lower-class population supported the revolutionaries, consolidating the fact that Batista's rule was coming to a definite end.²⁹ As Kapcia outlines, in 1958, Castro extended the battle against Batista by establishing a second guerrilla stronghold and targeting other critical locations; as a result, his counteroffensive in August 1958 led to a crushing loss, forcing subsequently Batista to leave Cuba for good.³⁰ Gonzales describes that ultimately, in January 1959, the Cuban Revolution was a triumph for Castro as commander of the revolutionary forces, and thereby, he became the leader of Cuba.³¹

To foster a comprehensive understanding of Fidel Castro, there is a need to discuss the evolution of his ideological beliefs. Thereby, in the book *My Life: A Spoken Autobiography*, where Fidel Castro was interviewed by Ignacio Ramonet, Cuba's leader delves into the development of his beliefs, indicating that in his time at university, he acquired revolutionary ideals; consequently, he became a socialist, Marxist, and Leninist additionally his efforts to

²⁷ Kapcia, *Historical Dictionary of Cuba*, 105.

²⁸ Herbert Matthews, "Cuban Rebel Is Visited in Hideout; Castro Is Still Alive and Still Fighting in Mountains," *The New York Times*, February 24, 1957.

²⁹ Hugh Thomas, *Cuba Or The Pursuit Of Freedom* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) 988–990. <https://archive.org/details/cubapursuitoffre0000unse/page/n5/mode/2up>.

³⁰ Kapcia, *Historical Dictionary of Cuba*, 104–106.

³¹ Mike Gonzalez, "Communism In Latin America," in *The Oxford Handbook Of The History Of Communism*, ed. Stephen A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 259–261.

establish a connection with the Soviet Union.³² As Johnson, Walker, and Gray point out, Castro initially faced criticism for leading a non-Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movement but later labeled the Cuban Revolution socialist in 1961, integrating Cuba with the Soviet Union, overseeing nationalization of enterprises, crop production regimentation, and establishing a one-party state.³³ Castro subsequently adopted a more communist government, enacting significant societal changes and integrating Cuba closely with the Soviet Union.

Moreover, it is imperative to indicate that during the Cuban Revolution, the Soviet Union had a part as an indirect active participant in Cuba for communism to be present in the American continent. Boughton affirms that in 1959, the Soviet government's interest in Cuba, fueled by Cold War propaganda and worldwide revolutionary ambitions, led to support for the Cuban Communist Party and Castro's cause; this Soviet propaganda portrayed Batista's dictatorship as a tool of American imperialism while supporting Castro's efforts.³⁴ Also, as Boughton mentions, Cuba aimed for economic independence, which led to agreements forming the foundation of Soviet-Cuban collaboration in February 1960, including purchases of Cuban sugar and loans for industrial growth.³⁵ Cuba's relationship with the Soviet Union and its commitment to the Communist doctrine significantly influenced the history of communism. It impacted the nation's political environment and future Cold War dynamics. The Soviet Union gained a significant advantage by having an ally within striking distance of the United States, making communism a more global ideology. As the summary highlights, the Soviet Union's backing for communism in Cuba parallels Graham Greene's novel *Our Man in Havana*, which focuses on the need for information and manipulation for political gain as the protagonist's fabricated intelligence reports for personal advantage.

Overall, this chapter thoroughly reviews the history of worldwide communism and its enormous influence on the Cuban Revolution and, later on, Cuba as a Communist state. It began defining the communist ideology, examining the roots of communism and how it expanded worldwide in Europe, Asia, or the American continent, tracking the rise of socialist groups in various worldwide locations. Next, the chapter delves into pre-revolutionary Cuba during Fulgencio Batista's democratic and later totalitarian regime, examining the economic inequities, corruption, and social injustices. All these circumstances paved the way for characters like Fidel

³² Ignacio Ramonet and Fidel Castro, *My Life: A Spoken Autobiography*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Scribner, 2009), 89.

³³ Elliott Johnson, Daniel Gray, and David Walker, *Historical Dictionary of Marxism* (2nd Edition, Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 67–68.

³⁴ George J. Boughton, "Soviet-Cuban Relations, 1956-1960," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 16, no. 4 (1974): 436–453.

³⁵ Boughton, "Soviet-Cuban," 436–453.

Castro to take a stance and develop a nationwide revolution. After that, the focus was on the events that transpired during the years of guerrilla wars in the country, emphasizing Castro's leadership and broad appreciation and backing among the people, precipitating the downfall of Batista's undemocratic regime, some key moments showed the development of communism in the region within the years that followed. The Cuban Revolution became one of the most critical moments in Cuban history until the present day, as it shaped its politics and relationships with world powers. Finally, the chapter explored the Cuban Revolution's overall influence, particularly how the new government in Cuba, led by Fidel Castro, made economic reforms and social changes by instituting a new leftist government and how Cuba stopped relations with Western democracies like the United States, imposing an anti-imperialistic stance and started being politically aligned with the Soviet Union.

This research paves the way for a more in-depth look at comparable topics in Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*. Greene's work, told in fiction, sheds light on the complexity of Cold War politics and the interaction between international powers. As the book took place during the years of the Batista regime, it was vital to understand the social and political climate during that time to understand the characters' circumstances. By comparing historical events to literary narratives, it is easier to understand the geopolitical environment and everyday lives of people from that time.

2 The Cold War in the 1950s

This chapter characterizes the definition of the Cold War while defining essential terms and critical moments of this era. Furthermore, the chapter thoroughly explains its origins and developments in the United Kingdom and Cuba in the 1950s through a concise summary. Also, it expands on its historical context to clarify the geopolitical, economic, and sociopolitical environments that molded the Cold War paradigm. Recognizing the historical background is critical for comprehending the era's larger ramifications and appreciating Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*, as the novel, set in 1950s Cuba, the story provides a fresh viewpoint on intelligence activities during the Cold War told from the perspective of a British man recruited by the Secret Intelligence Service. Greene's work also provides insight into how the tense political climate affected civilian lives and an unfamiliar perspective on the complexities of espionage. Additionally, this text aims to increase understanding of how the Cold War left behind difficulties and disputes that continue to influence current advancements in the global order.

The name "Cold War" was initially coined by author George Orwell in *You and the Atomic Bomb* in 1945, where he said the phrase "that is, the kind of worldview, the kind of beliefs, and the social structure that would probably prevail in a state which was at once unconquerable and in a permanent state of "cold war" with its neighbors."³⁶ This quote describes his critique of the social institutions and worldview of the Allies and the Soviets after the happenings of World War II.

To express some needed historical background, Britain's geopolitical involvement, significant contributions to the Allies, and tactical choices offered throughout World War II provide the essential context for understanding its Cold Conflict-era actions and policies. French argues that Britain's policy of avoiding continental commitment in the war unraveled after Germany's takeover of Prague in 1939; after that, when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, it forced Britain and France to declare war.³⁷ These actions had far-reaching effects on international affairs, the economy, and society. According to The Office of the Historian, the Soviet government became an ally of the Western democracies in 1941 after Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June of the same year because of the common danger that Nazi Germany presented during World War II.³⁸ Later on, as said in *The World War II*

³⁶ George Orwell, "You and the Atomic Bomb," *Tribune*, October 19, 1945.

³⁷ David French, "British Military Strategy," in *The Cambridge History of the Second World War: Volume I Fighting the War*, ed. John Ferris and Evan Mawdsley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 30–32.

³⁸ "U.S.-Soviet Alliance, 1941–1945," Office of the Historian, accessed December 2023, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/us-soviet>.

Book, in December of the same year, Japan made a surprise attack on the Pearl Harbor naval base, which resulted in numerous loss of life, prompting the United States to declare war on Japan and consequently to Germany as it continued to pose a threat to the United States, according to President Roosevelt, war was inevitable.³⁹ During World War II, coalitions like the Allied Powers established a foundation for mutual defense and collective security and later created Cold War alliances. They established the framework for the post-war world. Despite differing political ideologies, the Allies, Russia, the United States, and Great Britain united to fight the common enemy.

Another essential part of history to mention was the Tehran, Yalta, and Potsdam Conferences, which were crucial because they established the groundwork for developing the Cold War conflict. Knowing the policies and agreements made at these meetings aids in placing the Cold War in perspective. As the Office of the Historian describes, these noteworthy conferences, attended by The Big Three, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union, were crucial diplomatic meetings for military strategy and post-war international order, resulting in significant decisions on Germany's dismemberment, post-war Europe and Asia's restructuring of territories and borders and the institution of the United Nations.⁴⁰ As seen in the journal *Chronology of International Events and Documents*, the main goals of the 1943 Tehran Conference between Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin, U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill were to coordinate military tactics against Japan and Germany and to reach an accord in the post-war world.⁴¹ Subsequently, in February 1945, as the war was drawing to a close in Europe and the defeat of Germany looked inevitable, the three great Allied powers met again in Yalta. Williamson highlights that the Yalta Conference, attended by Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill, reorganized Germany into zones, agreed on the Declaration on Liberated Europe, and restructured Poland's borders with vague terms, allowing Stalin to control conditions later on.⁴² Because the United States still needed soviet support to defeat Japan, they conceded the restructuring conditions. Shortly afterward, in the summer of 1945, after Germany's surrender, another meeting was held by The Big Three in Potsdam, near Berlin. This meeting was attended by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, President Harry Truman, as Roosevelt passed away months before, and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, replaced

³⁹ Adrian Gilbert, *The World War II Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained* (London: Dorling Kindersley, 2022), 11, <https://www.amazon.com/World-War-II-Book-Explained-ebook/dp/B09TNLZKP2>

⁴⁰ "The Tehran Conference, 1943," Office of the Historian, accessed June 2, 2023. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/tehran-conf>

⁴¹ "The Agreements Signed at Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam," *Chronology of International Events and Documents* 3, no. 7 (1947): 206–207.

⁴² David Williamson, *Europe And The Cold War 1945–91* (2nd Edition Hodder Education, 2006), 28–30.

in July by newly elected Clement Attlee.⁴³ As Friedrich describes, the conference focused on central German territory governance, with agreements being achieved on German demilitarization, denazification, deindustrialization, decentralization, and democratization, commonly titled the Five d's.⁴⁴ Moreover, it was in this forum that Truman informed Stalin about the Manhattan Project; he not being surprised as soviet spies had already infiltrated Los Alamos, the site of the secret research facility. Streifer defines the Manhattan Project as a top-secret wartime initiative to create the atomic bomb, led by Dr J. Robert Oppenheimer, a theoretical physicist and professor.⁴⁵ Holloway claimed that the United States and Britain, being a junior contributor, made efforts to develop the atomic bomb, having the nuclear bomb operable by August 1945 after Germany's surrender.⁴⁶ Recalling what was alluded to before, the new distribution of Europe was divided into the Western block and the Eastern one. As the Center for European Studies states, Germany was partitioned into four zones of occupation controlled by Great Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union, and Berlin, geographically in Soviet territory, was subdivided into four occupied zones as well.⁴⁷ Despite agreements on democracy in freed territories, the Cold War saw various disputes sparked by fresh developments that intensified friction among Stalin and Western powers owing to inherently opposing ideas on democracy. The analysis of Britain's role in Cold War politics, as portrayed in Graham Greene's novel *Our Man in Havana*, is crucial in understanding the historical events and the role of Britain in shaping the global geopolitical scene. As described above, after the Second World War, differences in opinion grew and caused divisions between former "friends." As specified in an article from the JFK Library, the Cold War can be delineated as the period following World War II, where the United States, Britain and its allies, and the Soviet Union had a protracted fight for domination in which both powers participated in propaganda and armament building, for example, nuclear bombs, indirect conflicts, covert operations, and political maneuvering.⁴⁸ These world powers did everything so they would not

⁴³ "The Potsdam Conference," The National WWII Museum, New Orleans, published July 18, 2022, <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/potsdam-conference>

⁴⁴ Carl J. Friedrich, "The Peace Settlement with Germany-Political and Military," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 257, (1948): 119–28.

⁴⁵ Bill Streifer, "The Investigation: J. Edgar Hoover and The Manhattan Project," *American Intelligence Journal* 33, no. 2 (2016): 54–62.

⁴⁶ David Holloway, "Nuclear weapons and the escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I Origins*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler, and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 376–377.

⁴⁷ "The End of WWII and the Division of Europe," Center for European Studies a Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, accessed August 20, 2023, <https://europe.unc.edu/the-end-of-wwii-and-the-division-of-europe/>.

⁴⁸ "The Cold War," John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, accessed May 24, 2023, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/jfk-in-history/the-cold-war>.

fight each other directly and that the Cold War stayed “cold.” Consequently, the global geopolitical environment underwent a substantial transformation during this period of tension, typified by opposing perspectives amongst erstwhile allies. Essentially, the USSR adhered to Lenin and Marx's theories that capitalism and Communism would eventually clash.

Furthermore, to comprehend the complicated power dynamics of the Cold War era, it is critical to reference the United Kingdom's role in it. As Deighton puts it, before World War II, British military strategists prioritized containing Soviet strength, despite a limited budget, to preserve national interests worldwide. This policy was fueled by deep suspicion of Communism, and Britain struggled to balance its internal welfare state ambitions with retaining its global prominence.⁴⁹ The British government's strategic decisions and global ambitions significantly influenced the direction of the Cold War. The focus on foreign power caused friction with domestic social initiatives. Deighton highlights that Britain stayed active in global affairs, such as the formation of NATO in 1949, a military alliance of Western nations for collective security and mutual defense in future conflicts, for instance, the Korean War that started in 1950.⁵⁰ This demonstrated the UK's commitment to its allies to keep the peace when tensions ran high. During the 1950s, the UK's Cold War strategy and partnerships were diverse, including its vital position as an inaugural member of NATO and broader attempts to negotiate the era's complicated geopolitical terrain. As Watts describes, the UK's involvement in intelligence-sharing agreements, such as the Five Eyes alliance with the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, demonstrated its commitment to improving surveillance skills and exchanging intelligence to combat threats during and after the Cold War; additionally, the UK developed partnerships with European allies like France to enhance regional cooperation and security.⁵¹ This alliance enabled substantial collaboration in signal intelligence efforts, hence boosting member nations' collective security against a possible prospective threat.

To understand espionage during the Cold War, it is crucial to mention the intelligence agencies, which were critical in gathering information and carrying out covert operations. The UK has several autonomous intelligence and security agencies that collect and evaluate foreign and domestic information to assist in military strategy and uphold national security in the UK, specifically MI6. The UK's National Archives additionally characterizes the Secret Intelligence Service, or MI6, as the branch of the Secret Service Bureau that works overseas to acquire

⁴⁹ Anne Deighton, “Britain And The Cold War, 1945–1955,” in *The Cambridge History Of The Cold War, Volume I Origins*, ed. Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 114–117.

⁵⁰ Deighton, “Britain,” 112–129.

⁵¹ Carl Watts, “Britain and the Formation of NATO,” *Journal of International Relations* 62, no. 6 (1999): 4–12.

intelligence.⁵² Per GOV.UK gives the authorities an overseas clandestine potential to foster and safeguard the country's safety and financial stability.⁵³ The novel *Our Man in Havana* has MI6 intelligence officers as main characters, showing that MI6 has maintained a prominent role in world affairs, particularly in Cuba. The story, set in Havana under the Fulgencio Batista government, mocks intelligence organizations, such as MI6, for their readiness to rely on civilian informants as the protagonist becomes one of them.

To gain a thorough understanding of the UK's diplomatic relations and strategic concerns during the Cold War era, it is imperative to include a section on the country's attitude towards Cuba. Because of the need for information, the United Kingdom employed diplomats stationed in Havana and later civilians to gather intelligence in Cuba. Cushion affirms that The British Embassy in Cuba reports revealed a strategic alignment with Batista's dictatorship, which supported the 1952 coup to lower labor costs and increase the profitability of British investments as well as the British perspective on communism in Cuba, the Batista government's anti-communist position, and issues about the viability of the Cuban communist party during the 1950s, before the revolution.⁵⁴ As stated by Norman, British diplomats' perception of Fidel Castro's government was unclear during his 1953 attempt to gain power, but as the Cuban Revolution gained momentum, they began to worry about Castro's political ideas and goals; later, in 1959, British diplomats were skeptical of Castro's long-term goals and ability to rule effectively.⁵⁵ Some years later, with the change in the political climate, British intelligence also evolved its operation on Cuban territory. Cushion also describes how British intelligence officers strived to obtain information about the changing political scene and revolutionary groups led by personalities such as Fidel Castro.⁵⁶ The British diplomat's reports on Cuba reveal the strategic alignment of the Batista regime, driven by economic interests and communism fears. Greene's novel *Our Man in Havana* and Cushion's Historical Records highlight the complex interaction of espionage, diplomacy, and ideological difficulties during these pivotal years in Cuban history, as the novel outlines a story about espionage being congruent with the boom of spy fiction.

⁵² "Intelligence and security services," The National Archives, accessed February 20, 2024, <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/intelligence-and-security-services/#6-joint-intelligence-committee-records>

⁵³ "Secret Intelligence Service," GOV.UK, accessed February 20, 2024, <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/secret-intelligence-service>

⁵⁴ Steve Cushion, "Organised Labour And The Batista Régime: A British Diplomatic Perspective," *The International Journal Of Cuban Studies* 2, no. 1 (June 2009): 4–9.

⁵⁵ "British Diplomats On Castro, 1953-1959: Mystery Man," The National Archives, published December 22, 2016, <https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/fidel-castro-british-diplomats-1953-1959-mystery-man/>.

⁵⁶ Cushion, "Organised Labour," 4–9.

Moreover, it is imperative to mention Cuba's role in the Cold War; as pointed out before, the Cuban government underwent an enormous transformation during the decade of the 1950s, first with the coup d'état of dictator Fulgencio Batista, which led to the Cuban revolution and the institution of the new communist regime under the control of Fidel Castro, causing changes in partnerships and beliefs and upended established systems of power. Therefore, in the 1950s, the United States became more concerned about the expansion of communism to Cuba. Hence, they devised a plan for paramilitary action against Cuba, which resulted in the Bay of Pigs. McLean and McMillan describe the Bay of Pigs invasion as a failed assault on Cuba in April 1961, aiming to topple in attempting to topple Fidel Castro's Cuban government, which exposed the United States' involvement and increased hostility toward Castro.⁵⁷ The failed invasion raised tensions among the United States and Cuba, as did the United States government's aim to destabilize Fidel Castro's governance. This antagonistic attitude, along with Castro's worries about a potential U.S. invasion, drew Cuba closer to the Soviet Union. As described in the U.S. Department of State's Archives website, in November 1961, as retaliation, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev clandestinely installed nuclear weapons in Cuba.⁵⁸ The U.S. Department of State's Archives website details that when President Kennedy discovered this, he placed a naval blockade on Cuba, ordering the evacuation of the missiles, but later on, a deal was achieved with the Soviet Union that accepted to transfer the missiles out of Cuba in return for the United States lifted the blockade and promised not to attack Cuba.⁵⁹ This event was one of the most critical moments of the Cold War; if both powers had used their arsenal or weapons, it would have been catastrophic for the world as it is known today. The Cuban Missile Crisis is seen as a turning point in past times, emphasizing the terrible perils of nuclear confrontation and the importance of discussion and collaboration in averting world calamity. Additionally, Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* predates the Cuban Missile Crisis. Still, several parts of the story, particularly the fear of weapons of mass destruction, appear to foreshadow the events of 1962.

To summarize, the chapter digs into the complex dynamics of the Cold War era, concentrating on the United Kingdom's role and effect on world events, particularly concerning Cuba. The chapter illuminates the geopolitical, economic, and circumstances that molded the Cold War narrative by studying historical contexts and significant events such as the Tehran,

⁵⁷ Ian McLean, and Alistair McMillan. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics*. (3rd Edition, Oxford University Press, 2009), 39.

⁵⁸ "The Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1961-1962," U.S. Department of State – Archive, accessed March 16, 2023, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/ea/17739.htm>

⁵⁹ "The Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1961-1962."

Yalta, and Potsdam Conferences. The chapter also introduces the Secret Intelligence Service and its intricacies during times when information was vital for peace.

Moreover, the chapter defines the Secret Intelligence Service and its aim. Also, the UK's involvement in information-sharing agreements, such as the Five Eyes alliance and its ties with European allies, underlined the importance of surveillance skills and intelligence exchange in confronting threats during and after the Cold War. The narrative progresses to the UK's diplomatic ties with Cuba, illustrating shifting perspectives of Fidel Castro's leadership and fears about the Cuban Revolution.

Moreover, the chapter defines the Secret Intelligence Service and its aim.

Overall, the chapter examines the Cold War's influence on the United Kingdom, emphasizing the country's strategic moves, military engagements, and diplomatic issues within the larger framework of global power dynamics. This historical research lays the groundwork for a more in-depth discussion of Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* and the Cold War's long-term impact on modern world events.

3 British Literary Context of the 1950s and Graham Greene

The 1950s were a crucial moment in the literary world, which is why this chapter examines the literary trends of the time in Britain, such as the Angry Young Men movement, post-modernism, and genres like spy novels or satire, later exemplifying it in Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*. Also, the chapter goes into Graham Greene's personal background as a former MI6 asset. In Cold War literature, Greene's writings delve into the difficulties of espionage and the moral quandaries that intelligence personnel face during political unrest, notably during the Cold War, capturing the general climate of distrust and deception that characterized the time. Important literature such as *Our Man in Havana* satirized the political milieu of the time. Additionally, betrayal and deceit were common themes in 1950s literature and represented ideological clashes between the Soviet Union and Western nations. Finally, the following section will examine how political criticism manifested in 1950s fiction, specifically how authors such as Greene used their novels to provide insightful comments on the political landscape.

The 1950s were a period of inventiveness, diversity, and social criticism in British literature. Literature in the 1950s represents a significant shift in literary trends because, looking into the works that characterized this decade, insight into the cultural environment and changing ideas on identity, politics, and everyday life can be inferred. Ferrebe describes that this era's literature addressed various themes that are still important in this day and age, including immigration, education, youth behavior, the nuclear danger, and feminism.⁶⁰

First, Britain underwent a cultural transition in the 1950s due to the shifting social dynamics in postwar Britain and the society's discontent during this time. It consolidated with the birth of the Angry Young Men literary movement. According to Paul, the Angry Young Men movement was a significant literary and social trend that arose in Britain during the 1950s, defined by an array of young authors and playwrights dissatisfied with the existing social conventions and structures in post-World War II Britain.⁶¹ As Kroll describes, they criticized several parts of British society, demonstrating a solid and acute disillusionment with the world in which they lived; furthermore, they aspired to extend their liberal, individual foundation to eliminate class stratification and increase upward mobility within social classes from what they considered the trivialities of contemporary existence.⁶² Paul additionally exemplified this

⁶⁰ Alice Ferrebe, *Literature Of The 1950S: Good, Brave Causes* (1st Edition, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 394–2.

⁶¹ Leslie Paul, "The Angry Young Men Revisited," *The Kenyon Review* 27, no. 2 (1965): 344–347.

⁶² Morton Kroll, "The Politics Of Britain's Angry Young Men," *Social Science* 36, no. 3 (June 1961): 157–166.

movement in pieces like "Look Back in Anger" by John Osborne, which portrays the disappointments and worries of the newer generations.⁶³ Ultimately, The Angry Young Men movement rendered an enduring impression on the period's literature by depicting the fears and disappointments of a new generation in a changing world, a theme that is frequently discussed nowadays. Similarly, Graham Greene's work, *Our Man in Havana*, digs into disillusionment, social critique, and transformation in pre-revolutionary Cuba, reflecting the era's social turmoil as the novel's protagonist demonstrates the problems of postwar Britain's government organizations, reflecting the Angry Young Men's plea for societal transformation.

A fundamental literary movement to be defined in the literary context of *Our Man in Havana* is post-modernism. Postmodernism, which emerged in the mid-twentieth century, was a reaction to modernist ideals and a rejection of the very concept of traditional storytelling. Ferrebe explores postmodernism as a notion that emerged in the 1950s and is represented by questioning human identity in the absence of religion; she investigates how various perspectives shaped the idea of selfhood.⁶⁴ Hutcheon defines post-modernism as a multidimensional approach that presents different, temporary substitutes to classic conceptions while criticizing modernism's homogeneity and ideological goals.⁶⁵ Through the view of postmodernism, *Our Man in Havana* explores themes of identity and critiques existing conventions reflecting the changing landscape of literature. Post-modernism used various literary techniques that were innovative and unorthodox for 1950s Britain; through these techniques, authors utilize narrative devices to encourage readers to engage with the story and consequently reflect on it by adding their view to it. Hutcheon mentions through *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, the literary techniques used in post-modernist works include self-reflexivity, talks about the nature of the text blurring the lines between fact and fiction, intertextuality, the reference of other texts inside one narrative to connect the works, metafiction, self-referential elements or the breaking of the fourth wall for storytelling purposes, parody, a critique or satire of already established conventions, fragmentation, a broken narrative structure, and pastiche, borrowing of techniques and genres from the past in an ironic way.⁶⁶ All these new techniques for the times invited the reader to participate in the experience of consuming this kind of literature. Additionally, *Our Man in Havana* is considered a post-modernist novel as it was contemporary with the starting

⁶³ Paul, "The Angry," 348–352.

⁶⁴ Ferrebe. *Literature of the 1950s*, 9–10.

⁶⁵ Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History Theory Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1988), 55, 59–60.

⁶⁶ Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*.

years of this movement, and it shares many of the techniques mentioned above in their themes and storytelling forms, which will be thoroughly analyzed in the subsequent chapter.

Moreover, the novel is one of postmodernism's most known written forms. British novels, a wide range of literary works, have greatly influenced the scenery of British writing as they represent society's values, cultural trends, and experiences from authors. The interaction of postmodern methods such as self-reflexivity, inter-textuality, and metafiction may explain the growth of British novels within postmodern literature. Ferrebe defines the British novel of the 1950s as a dynamic and complex item that mixed classic features and creative techniques that contributed to the rich fabric of postwar writing.⁶⁷ Connor also mentions that the novels of this decade were distinguished by how they dealt with themes of decline, change, and redefinition of the public's identity in the face of shifting political and social circumstances.⁶⁸

It is important to define more precisely what a satirical novel is, as *Our Man in Havana* is considered to be one. Knight distinguishes the satirical novel by its direct criticism of society to expose societal problems and describes it as a genre that depicts a shift in the targets of satire, from the shortcomings of the anti-heroes to the vulnerability of their sources.⁶⁹ In addition, the satirical novel uses some elements to further its goal, critiquing a specific subject. Knight outlines these elements as parodies by mimicking other styles to highlight mistakes, commentary on human behavior by emphasizing the absurdity or hypocrisy of certain behaviors or ideas, and critique social hierarchies by demonstrating how people or organizations misuse their authority for personal benefit or to preserve control.⁷⁰ By defining the traits and purposes of the satirical novel mainly, a glimpse is obtained of how works such as *Our Man in Havana* interact with and question established conventions, providing a satirical lens by which to see the intricacies of human behavior as the novel focuses on satirizing institutions as the British Intelligence offices.

To correctly analyze *Our Man in Havana*, it is imperative to define the spy novel. The spy novel is significant in literature, enthralling readers with stories of espionage and political power struggles. According to Cuddon, the spy story genre combines aspects of adventure, thriller, and political intrigue; also, during the 1950s, it witnessed a revolution in espionage fiction with Ian Fleming's James Bond series, but also with authors such as Graham Greene,

⁶⁷ Ferrebe. *Literature of the 1950s*, 39–49.

⁶⁸ Steven Connor, *The English Novel In History 1950-1995*, (1st Edition, London: Routledge, 1996), 3–4.

⁶⁹ Charles A. Knight, *The Literature Of Satire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 215.

⁷⁰ Knight, *The Literature of Satire*, 219–231.

who added to the genre's growth by focusing on espionage and geopolitical inquiries.⁷¹ As Denning argues that the spy genre explores issues of loyalty, betrayal, and ethical quandaries in the setting of intelligence operations, converting political landscapes into ethical conflicts and stressing the duality of good and evil above merely political reasons by using covert agents to link individual acts to global historical effects.⁷² Denning additionally mentions that Greene's spy novels examine the intersection of personal and professional life, questioning traditional conceptions of responsibility and morality and emphasizing individuals' sacrifices in the spy world.⁷³ The spy novel proves an essential literary genre that captivates readers with stories of espionage and power battles for their ability to illustrate the human experience's intricacies and emphasize global implications. Contextualizing *Our Man in Havana* against the bigger picture of the spy novel genre allows for a more in-depth understanding of the novel's themes, characters, and narrative complexities, providing perspective on the lasting significance and intricacy of spy writing.

To briefly mention the author Graham Greene's history is crucial, as he is the author of *Our Man in Havana*. Greene, a towering figure in 20th-century literature, brought a unique perspective to the spy novel genre through his narratives and insightful exploration of moral ambiguity. It is essential to contextualize his life within the landscape of 1950s literature, recognizing the impact of his unique background and worldview on his literary creations. Henry Graham Greene was an English author, journalist, and dramatist. As Donaghy describes, Henry Graham Greene, an English author, journalist, and dramatist, was born on October 2, 1901, in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire; he grew up in a complex environment marked by isolation and bullying, which created a sense of betrayal given these hurdles, he struggled with suicidal thoughts however, psychotherapy brought him comfort and a greater understanding of self-awareness, helping him to overcome his mental anguish and follow his passion for writing.⁷⁴ Despite the intricacies of his private affairs, he would be among the most prominent novelists of the twentieth century. Donaghy describes that during his years at university, Greene met Vivien Dayrell-Browning, initiating a romance that prompted him to join Catholicism in 1926, marrying a year later even if, despite his initial reservations about religion; later, in 1969, he referred to Greene as "a protestant in a Catholic society" and claimed last year that he

⁷¹ J.A. Cuddon, *The Penguin Dictionary Of Literary Terms And Literary Theory* (3rd Edition, London: Penguin Books, 1992), 908–913.

⁷² Michael Denning, *Cover Stories: Narrative And Ideology In The British Spy* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 2, 13–14.

⁷³ Denning, *Cover Stories*, 130–131.

⁷⁴ Henry J. Donaghy, *Graham Greene, An Introduction To His Writings* (Amsterdam: Rodopi R.V., 1986), 11–12.

considered himself a "Catholic atheist."⁷⁵ Following Donaghy, with the outbreak of World War II, he was recruited by the Secret Intelligence Service, best known as MI6, and, in 1942, came under the command of Kim Philby, an infamous double agent, being assigned to particular tasks in Sierra Leone, Greene's wartime experiences informed his subsequent writings, especially his observations on Philby's actions and objectives.⁷⁶ Per the American Society of Authors and Writers, after WWII, he traveled as a freelance writer, and given his anti-American rhetoric, he obtained liaisons with Communist leaders such as Fidel Castro; furthermore, his successful thrillers, dubbed "entertainments," were inspired by his life circumstances and familial links to espionage, which frequently matched his books, focusing on events in places such as Vietnam or Cuba, demonstrating his flexibility and lasting effect as a novelist and reporter; later in 1991 he passed way.⁷⁷ These novels include *Our Man in Havana*, whose portrayal of the society and events accurately predicted the Communist Revolution in Cuba. Chevalier points out that Greene was a successful writer nominated multiple times for the Nobel Prize for Literature for numerous novels, essays, plays, collections of short stories, and travel writing but failed to win.⁷⁸

This chapter examined the major literary trends of the 1950s in British literature, emphasizing the literary landscape of the period and investigating movements such as the Angry Young Men, post-modernism, and genres such as espionage thrillers, with a particular emphasis on Graham Greene's landmark book *Our Man in Havana*. The 1950s were an age of innovation and social critique in British writing, with essential topics both then and now. Furthermore, Greene's experience as a former MI6 agent greatly impacted his works, notably depicting ethical ambiguities of espionage throughout the Cold War.

The 1950s literature mirrored post-World War II Britain's cultural unhappiness, as seen by movements such as the Angry Young Men, which questioned social traditions. Greene's writing mirrored this disenchantment, providing observations on social change and moral quandaries. Post-modernism applies novel storytelling approaches to explore individual identity and societal critique. Greene's *Our Man in Havana* delivers an inside look at the complexity of that time and place through satire and criticism of political institutions, including methods such as self-reflexivity, intertextuality, metafiction, and parody. Moreover, during this time, the spy book genre flourished, grabbing readers' imaginations with stories of espionage

⁷⁵ Donaghy, *Graham Greene*, 13–14, 24.

⁷⁶ Donaghy, *Graham Greene*, 16–17

⁷⁷ "Graham Greene," American Society of Authors and Writers, accessed March 10, 2024, <https://amsaw.org/amsaw-ithappenedinhistory-100203-greene.html>

⁷⁸ Tracy Chevalier, ed., *Encyclopedia Of The Essay* (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997), 766.

and politics. These works investigated loyalty, betrayal, and ethical quandaries in spying activities while highlighting more significant ideological disputes between East and West.

Finally, knowing Greene's background and viewpoint is critical for interpreting his input to 1950s literature. Because of his previous MI6 expertise, he provided a new view of the spy novel genre with his storytelling and analytical study of moral ambiguity. Greene's impact as a novelist and journalist endures, establishing his status as an unparalleled figure in twentieth-century literature.

4 Analysis of Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*

Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* is a gripping tale set during the Cold War that explores themes of satire and critiques, reality vs. illusion, disillusionment, revenge, deception, betrayal, ethics, and morality. This chapter will examine the novel's historical, cultural, and literary components, including its portrayal of the Cold War era, the characters and their moral quandaries, and the literary strategies used by Greene in his narrative.

To accurately understand this chapter, it is crucial to give an overview of the *novel Our Man in Havana*. The novel centers on a British vacuum cleaner salesman needing more funds to support his daughter's wishes and further education, whom the Secret Intelligence Service recruits as an asset. Since he has no information to send, he makes up fake reports and assets, which gets him tangled in a web of lies that brings him trouble.

Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* presents a diverse cast of characters whose stories develop under the setting of Cold War Cuba, all of whom have motives and secrets that play a distinct role in the novel's complex web of espionage and political intrigue.

The first character to be introduced and the protagonist is James Wormold, a vacuum cleaner salesman who becomes a British spy against his moral reluctance. Wormold is first portrayed as a humble and anxious man, but after he gets more involved in the spy world, he develops into a more confident person with fixed goals that he must achieve. While navigating the intricacies of his manufactured intelligence reports to the Secret Intelligence Service and the fallout from his choices, some ended gravely for people not involved with him. Therefore, he demonstrates an internal battle between duty and personal ideals. His profound moral quandaries are specifically exhibited when he plans to assassinate Carter as revenge for the murder of Dr. Hasselbacher. Wormold finds himself at a crossroads as he considers killing another person. His internal anguish is evident as he rationalizes his decision, recognizing the seriousness of the situation and the future permanent ramifications of his actions and attempting to justify them as exemplified in:

Wormold said to himself, At least if I could kill him, I would kill for a clean reason. I would kill to show that you can't kill without being killed in your turn. I wouldn't kill for my country. I wouldn't kill for capitalism or Communism or social democracy or the welfare state – whose welfare? I would kill Carter because he killed Hasselbacher. A family-feud had been a better reason for murder than patriotism or the preference for one economic system over another. If I love or if I hate, let me love or hate as an individual. I will not be 59200/5 in anyone's global war.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Graham Greene, *Our Man in Havana* (Penguin Books Vintage Classics, 2019), 192.

Wormold even shows empathy and a hint of regret after killing Carter when telling Beatrice about it by saying, “Poor Carter.”⁸⁰ Wormold’s character combines a mix of innocence, ingenuity, and moral ambiguity, mirroring the moral difficulties encountered by those caught up in the web of espionage.

Wormold, moreover, represents the theme of deception in *Our Man in Havana*, as the whole story revolves around his lies and manipulation of the Secret Intelligence Service. Wormold's journey throughout the novel is marked as he fabricates intelligence reports and creates fictitious spies to mislead MI6. His deceit can be understood as a way for him to get what he needs: money. But this did not come without taking a toll on this morality because as Wormold goes deeper into the lie’s efforts, the line between reality and deception gets increasingly muddy. Morality and deceit are interwoven themes that compel him to consider the moral ramifications and the consequences of his deceptions on his environment.

Additionally, there is the character of Milly, Wormold’s catholic 17-year-old daughter. Greene writes Milly as a devout catholic who internalizes a duenna in her life to guide her behavior in accordance with religious standards. This non-existent presence works as a symbolic guardian for Milly, highlighting her dedication to catholic values as stated. by the narrator in the phrase “[...] sometimes it seemed to him that Milly too carried a duenna about with her, invisible to all eyes but her own.”⁸¹ She additionally represents themes of naivety and innocence in the novel, even if she was surrounded by many dangers during that time, such as her father’s deceitful operations or even the presence of Captain Segura. Milly additionally acts as a beacon of morality for Wormold, reminding him of the value of integrity in a society such as theirs.

Another essential character to mention is Dr. Hasselbacher, a German doctor who emigrated to Cuba in 1934. He is described as an old friend of Wormhold as they always meet in the Wonder Bar as he seeks consolation in liquor and engages in philosophical speculations that blur the lines between reality and illusion when he says, "You would not exist if I didn't believe you existed, nor would those dollars. I believe; therefore, you are."⁸² Additionally, Dr. Hasselbacher's persona represents the theme of pessimism and disillusionment that many people experienced throughout the 1950s' cultural shifts and uncertainty for the future as he spends most of his time in bars, only looking forward to the next drink. Furthermore, another theme of Hasselbacher's character is betrayal, as he unwillingly is implicated in Wormold

⁸⁰ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 210.

⁸¹ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 11.

⁸² Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 36.

schemes. Some unidentified agents blackmail him into giving information about Wormold and his spy tactics; thus, he is forced to betray his oldest friend. He later confesses and shows great regret as, because of these actions, one of the fake assets was killed by saying, “We were both responsible for his death, you and I.”⁸³ These events resulted in his death as he refused to provide more information on Wormold further demonstrating that loyalty to his friends was more important than his life.

Moreover, there is the character of Captain Segura, a police chief in Havana who is interested in Wormold's teenage daughter. He is nicknamed the Red Vulture because “He specializes in torture and mutilation”⁸⁴, as described by Dr. Hasselbacher. Captain Segura is represented as an arrogant, sadistic, and manipulative figure who serves as the novel’s antagonist as he often gets in the way of Wormold’s operations. His lack of morals and empathy directly juxtaposes Wormold’s morals. Additionally, the theme of revenge is depicted in Captain Segura’s story throughout the novel, mentioning that his cigarette case was made from human skin. This item resurfaces at multiple points repeatedly in the book, with the captain steadily dismissing it at once until the end of the story when Wormold asks about it once more, and Segura answers, “A police officer who tortured my father to death [...]”⁸⁵

Lastly, another important character in the story is Beatrice Severn, a secretary from the British Intelligence office who gets assigned to Wormold in Cuba. She pushes Wormold to take responsibility for his actions, highlighting the necessity of accountability in a deceptive society, consequently forcing him to wrestle with the moral quandaries, emphasizing the theme of morality in the novel once more. She also plays a role as his confidante by bringing him a sense of reality to the made-up world he created. When asked by Milly, Beatrice talks about her husband, she goes on about how he “He sort of faded away.”⁸⁶ This represented that he progressively became emotionally detached, and consequently, they lost all contact. In the novel, Beatrice makes clear that her estranged husband is not real in her mind, but as she got emotionally attached to Wormold, she saw him as “real,” as shown when she states, “No, but I’ve never had a boss like you before [...], And I don’t want you murdered. You see, you are real. You aren’t *Boy’s Own Paper*”⁸⁷, once again highlighting the theme of reality vs illusion.

Moreover, *Our Man in Havana* by Graham Greene is a gripping examination of the Cold War era; as the story explores the realm of espionage in a society characterized by secrecy,

⁸³ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 144.

⁸⁴ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 35.

⁸⁵ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 217.

⁸⁶ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 96.

⁸⁷ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 171.

duplicity, and the constant danger of nuclear devastation, Greene skillfully evokes the core characteristics of Cold War Cuba during Fulgencio Batista's governance via the figure of James Wormold and the complex web of espionage weaved within the story. The novel is set in no specific year, but it is understood that it is supposed to be during the 1950s. Those years were a time of great tension in Cuba as, as mentioned earlier, for most of the decade, the nation was under the regime of dictator Fulgencio Batista, which prompted a revolution finalizing at the end of the same decade. Furthermore, Greene's narrative goes into the economic and social reality of the Cuban people, highlighting the sufferings and inequalities that exist in society by detailing different parts of the city by juxtaposing the wealthy neighborhood of Vedado, the bustling neighborhood of Obispo, which homed the American bank, and the poorer parts of the town that included Lamparilla street as a location where Wormold's store is often located mentioning beggars and procurers near it. The contrast between wealthy suburbs and destitute districts emphasizes the city's social stratification and economic disparities during Batista's time in power. The societal problems caused many Cubans to back the revolution as it promised massive changes for impoverished citizens. As needed context, Taber affirms that the Sierra Maestra mountains are located near Santiago and along the coast of the Oriente Province.⁸⁸ Greene also confirms in the text that guerrillas were supported, especially in more rural areas like Santiago, as remade in a thought that Wormold had: "If Raul had taken off at midnight, he would refuel just before dawn in Santiago, where the ground-staff were friendly, everyone within the Oriente province being rebels at heart."⁸⁹ Upholding what the article *Cuban Rebel Is Visited in Hideout, Castro Is Still Alive* by Herbert Matthews represented about Castro settling in the Sierra Maestra Mountains and having the support of the population nearby, which was quoted previously. Greene's novel accurately portrays this by mentioning rebels and revolts in the locality, for instance, in:

Perhaps in any case it was quicker and safer that way, for in the Oriente Province, where the usual rebels held the mountains and Government troops the roads and cities, blocks were frequent and buses were less liable to delay than private cars.⁹⁰

Furthermore, Greene remarks that these revolts are common in rural areas, as multiple times mentioned that Havana has regular power outages. The power outages in the novel represent uncertainty and instability, emphasizing the population's vulnerability as essential services such as electricity were unguaranteed, additionally causing problems for people like Wormold as

⁸⁸ Stephen Taber, "The Structure of the Sierra Maestra near Santiago De Cuba," *The Journal of Geology* 39, no. 6 (1931): 532-533.

⁸⁹ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 110.

⁹⁰ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 64.

they limited his capacity to sell the merchandise successfully as a vacuum cleaner salesperson. Consequently, his business was unsuccessful, explaining his need for extra income for Millie's expensive preferences. This is illustrated in the novel when Wormold states, "All these disturbances are very bad for trade. What's the good of a vacuum cleaner if the power's cut off?"⁹¹ Overall, it can be understood that the Cuban Revolution was one of the indirect causes of the occurrences in the novel.

The 1950s in Cuba were an age of totalitarianism as Dictator Fulgencio Batista ran Cuba. This is represented in the novel with the character of Captain Segura. He is a figure who symbolizes the harsh characteristics of autocratic governments. Segura illustrates the oppressive methods used by authoritarian administrations to keep the citizens in order and submissive to the government by inspiring terror in them by engaging in acts of torture, blackmail, and excessive force. Interestingly, Greene based the character of Captain Segura on a real person, Captain Esteban Ventura. Hulme describes Segura as a representation of a real captain in Batista's time, named Esteban Ventura Novo, who was responsible for many atrocities, which symbolized Batista's persecution of people opposed to his regimen from 1956 to 1958.⁹²

Moreover, Greene accurately predicts the end of Batista's regimen by stereotyping the American tourists as self-centered; this was depicted after an incident with a stray bullet killed an American while snapping a photograph of a beggar, which upset tourists prompting the narrator to state that "[...] tourists were sadly reduced nowadays in number, for the President's regime was creaking dangerously towards its end".⁹³ Evidencing that even if the novel was written years before Batista's downfall in 1959, Greene foresaw the future of Cuba, demonstrating his acute awareness of the era's sociopolitical setting.

The main topic of Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* is the intricate workings of espionage in the context of the Cold War. It emphasizes the enigmatic and sometimes ludicrous aspects of intelligence operations and the political manipulation of information. The epitome of representation of espionage in the novel is Wormold. His portrayal as a spy and motivation for spying is different from what is expected in a character of a spy novel. Wormold's concocting fake intelligence reports and producing fictional agents to meet British Intelligence's requests provides insight into ethical and moral dilemmas faced by spies. Greene favors

⁹¹ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 5.

⁹² Peter Hulme, "Graham Greene and Cuba: *Our Man in Havana*?" *New West Indian Guide* 82, (2008): 190, 204–205.

⁹³ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 22.

Wormold's deceptive operations, suggesting they react to MI6's willingness to deceive itself and others.

Furthermore, the novel explores the consequences of living a life as a spy, with problems ranging from inner and outer deceit, manipulation, and danger from both internal as well as external sources. A concrete example is Carter, a character who is initially presented as a fellow vacuum cleaner salesman but later turns out to be suggested as an enemy agent. He is tasked with poisoning Wormold, but Wormold ultimately discovers Carter, as he identifies a lisp and purposely spills the poison. This scene highlights potential dangers coming from anywhere and anyone. Shaken by this, Wormold states in the speech he was supposed to give:

‘I don’t know whether I’ve got any friends here. I’ve certainly got some enemies.’ [...] ‘We hear a lot nowadays about the cold war, but any trader will tell you that the war between two manufacturers of the same goods can be quite a hot war. Take Phastkleaners and Nucleaners. There’s not much difference between the two machines any more than there is between two human beings, one Russian – or German – and one British. There would be no competition and no war if it wasn’t for the ambition of a few men in both firms; just a few men dictate competition and invent needs and set Mr Carter and myself at each other’s throats.’⁹⁴

Symbolically, Greene’s character, Wormold, expresses uncertainty about who to trust or not to trust by additionally using a double entendre. He contrasts the competitiveness of salespeople with the ever-present Cold War, implying that a geopolitical conflict such as the Cold War can be as tense as competition between salespeople. It also emphasizes deception and competitiveness that influence human relationships and, subsequently, global politics.

In addition, the Cold War was an era of apprehension and uncertainty for many reasons, one of them being the fear of nuclear weapons. *Our Man in Havana* represents this accurately on various occasions as governments and individuals share those worries. This can be expressed when Hasselbacher tells Wormold, “We live in an atomic age, Mr. Wormold. Push a button – piff bang – where are we?”⁹⁵ Wormold and Hasselbacher's debate also delves into societal problems and ethical quandaries surrounding atomic developments and additionally mentions the clergy's distaste for scientific exploitation. This dialogue in *Our Man in Havana* emphasizes the intricacies of the atomic era, merging scientific advancement and moral concerns. Furthermore, the fear of weapons of mass destruction is later portrayed in a scene in which the chief of the Secret Intelligence Service received fake schematics from Wormold depicting components of a supposed new weapon. Therefore, the chief, with surprise and fear, states:

‘Fiendish, isn’t it?’ the Chief said. ‘The ingenuity, the simplicity, the devilish imagination of the thing.’ He removed his black monocle, and his baby-blue eye caught the light and made it

⁹⁴ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 181.

⁹⁵ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 5.

jig on the wall over the radiator. 'See this one here six times the height of a man. Like a gigantic spray [...]'⁹⁶

Greene's narrative masterfully strikes describes the lasting effects of nuclear anxiety on people and organizations throughout the turbulent atomic era.

In addition, one of the most unique characteristics of the Cold War was the fear of Communism. It is represented in Greene's novel by the recruitment of Wormold as he was given a list of the topics that the Secret Intelligence Service was interested in, such as "Possible Communist infiltration in the armed forces. Actual figures of sugar- and tobacco-production last year."⁹⁷ British Intelligence's emphasis on reports about communist infiltration of the armed services suggests a strategic interest in detecting communist sympathizers as they were perceived to pose a threat to both national security and political objectives. Furthermore, the demand for data on sugar and tobacco output underscores the financial component of intelligence collecting in Cuba. The data about the production of materials presents an advantageous perspective of the nation's economic status and possible future weaknesses. In *Our Man in Havana*, a substantial demand for this crucial information in a country like Cuba makes the Secret Intelligence Service employ a simple civilian who had no real possibility of getting this precise and complicated information.

Graham Greene incorporates a variety of genres and literary techniques in *Our Man in Havana* to properly portray the Cold War era and achieve the novel's goal, which is to satire and critique the world of espionage. The book delves into the complexities of Greene's narratives, evolving characters, politics, and moral quandaries via its literary structures.

Our Man in Havana can be described as a satirical novel and a spy novel with elements of post-modernism. The main post-modern characteristics of the story are metafiction and self-reflexivity, fragmentation, and parody.

First, metafiction and self-reflexivity shown by Greene's description of Wormold's creation of agents and false intelligence reports reflect a consciousness of the process of storytelling within the novel by additionally questioning Wormold's "narrative," which blurred boundaries between fact and fiction and demonstrates a self-awareness of storytelling by the characters.

Next, fragmentation is employed in *Our Man in Havana* multiple times throughout the novel, the prominent examples being the interludes in London. The novel consists of five parts,

⁹⁶ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 85.

⁹⁷ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 57.

all but the fifth one ending in an interlude in London, as the latter ending with an epilogue in London. These interludes are evidence that the perspective of the narrative changes from the Wormold in Havana to the chief of the Secret Intelligence Service in London. Additionally, Greene uses fragmented scenes that cause confusion and question linear conceptions of time and space. An example of this is from the first scene to the second one in chapter four, part one, in which from a meeting with his handler about book codes, spy tactics, and monthly payments suddenly, it jumps to the next scene, where Wormold is having breakfast with Milly, after an undisclosed amount of time later.

The following element to be described is a parody, which can be better grasped as *Our Man in Havana* is considered a satirical novel. As mentioned above, the novel aims to satirize espionage and the organizations that handle it. Greene utilizes comedy to highlight the foolishness of intelligence agencies, combining aspects of humor with sharp social criticism. Firstly, the main character, Wormold, is the novel's most prominent representation of satire. He is an unqualified spy who makes up fake information and, surprisingly, gets taken so seriously by the British Intelligence Agency that his reports reach high places in the agency and the British government, exemplified in the third interlude in London where the chief of MI6 discusses the reports with the Permanent Under-Secretary.

Another satirical element in the novel is naming one of the models of the vacuum cleaners that Wormold sells, the Atomic Pile Cleaner. The name aims to juxtapose the everyday task of vacuuming a house with such a prominent name, additionally criticizing the consumer culture at the time by upping mundane products with extravagant names that aimed to promote sales. But as described in the novel, this marketing strategy for the Atomic Pile Cleaner was unsuccessful as Wormold states, “[...] try and sell him an Atomic Pile. We haven’t sold one yet.”⁹⁸ Moreover, Greene satirizes the theme of vacuum cleaners in the interlude in London after Wormold has sent the drawings of parts of the Atomic Pile Cleaner on a large scale as if they were parts of a new type of weapon. In this scene, the Chief comes across phony drawings, and his reaction emphasizes the gravity and intricacy of the issue, even if an agent points out that they look like parts of a vacuum cleaner:

[...]And this – what does this remind you of?’
Hawthorne said unhappily. ‘A two-way nozzle.’
‘What’s a two-way nozzle?’
‘You sometimes find them with a vacuum cleaner.’
‘Vacuum cleaner again. Hawthorne, I believe we may be on to something so big that the H-bomb will become a conventional weapon.’⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 99.

⁹⁹ Greene, *Our Man in Havana*, 80.

Furthermore, another representation of satire in the text is written in the epilogue after his deceptions are discovered and Wormold is sent back to London. Instead of being punished, he is offered a job as a training officer and even awarded an O.B.E or Order of the British Empire. Hence, Greene satirizes the spy genre in that at the end of the story, the character who prevailed is Wormold, a simple vacuum salesman.

Lastly, *Our Man in Havana* can also be considered a spy novel as it explores the topics of espionage set during the Cold War. Greene's writing portrays a world of espionage, deception, and political intrigue from the perspective of James Wormold, an expatriate and reluctant spy. The novel also has aspects of loyalty, betrayal, ethical conflicts, and personal responsibility as Wormold navigates the hurdles of his clandestine assignment while encountering unforeseen developments. The story becomes even stronger in its status as a spy novel by the location, Havana, during a volatile political era, adding to the lore of espionage and covert activities.

In conclusion, *Our Man in Havana* by Graham Greene is a broad narrative that explores several themes of satire, reality vs. illusion, deception, betrayal, ethics, and morality within the context of the Cold War era. Beyond a straightforward narrative, Greene's work explores the moral difficulties faced by people entangled in politics and the intricacies of espionage.

Moreover, the chapter delves into characters to portray the novel's themes as it examines the moral and ethical problems that arise in the field of espionage in the story of James Wormold's journey from a humble salesperson to a spy. His internal struggle to balance duty and morality highlights the many moral problems that beset individuals. The work includes characters such as Milly, Dr. Hasselbacher, Captain Segura, and Beatrice Severn, who contribute to the story by representing different themes.

Furthermore, the chapter connects the historical and cultural context of Cold War Cuba represented in the novel by portraying the political and social reality at the time and how it is written in the book. Greene's depiction of Cuba during the Cold War captures tensions, such as nuclear apprehensions, anxiety over communism, and the harsh Fulgencio Batista regime. In addition, the chapter depicts how the novel's British literary trends of the 1950s are represented through satire, fragmentation, and metafiction, which are post-modernism literary techniques.

Lastly, the novel aims to satirize the spy world and the agencies that control it by examining satirical aspects of the story and, later, what makes this narrative a spy novel, too.

Conclusion

To conclude, the first three chapters supply a deep dive into the historical, cultural, and literary contexts relevant to Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* against the setting of the Cold War. The examination starts by examining the worldwide spread of communism and concentrating on how it affected Cuba and the Cuban Revolution. It also focuses on the foundation of communism and how it developed globally, consequently clashing with the opposite ideologies of Western nations, laying the groundwork for accurately grasping the circumstances in which the characters are involved in the story.

Furthermore, the chapters investigate the Cold War era, focusing on the social, economic, and geopolitical factors that influenced this time of friction between the East and the West. The chapters provide an important historical and cultural backdrop by offering a detailed examination of the events that involved the UK and Cuba throughout the Cold War.

In addition, the British literary tendencies of the 1950s are examined, emphasizing the topics and literary devices pertinent to *Our Man in Havana*. A brief biography of Graham Greene, the author, is also discussed, highlighting the elements that shaped the plot and organization of the book. The discussion of communism, the Cold War environment, and literary tendencies of the period prepare the reader for an in-depth analysis of the novel's themes of morality, deception, espionage, and the connection between reality and illusion in a postmodern milieu. Greene additionally uses the looming political background as a vital part of the story, as the political instability in Cuba acts as an indirect root for the problems in which the protagonist gets involved.

Within the framework of the Cold War, the analysis of Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* explores the complex issues of satire, reality vs. illusion, deceit, betrayal, ethics, and morality through a thorough examination of the characters and the literary devices used by Greene to create a story that satirizes the spy industry.

With further examination, it is clear that Greene's writing goes beyond the scope of a typical espionage book, as it explores the intricacies of human nature, religion, geopolitical tensions, and the unclear boundaries between reality and fiction. The characters are examined closely for their roles in defining the story's themes and emphasizing the moral quandaries of espionage, especially James Wormold, Milly, Dr. Hasselbacher, Captain Segura, and Beatrice Severn. Each of these characters in the novel represents a theme or an essential part of society at the time. Their relationships and interactions further serve as a representation of the era in which the story is set.

Moreover, Wormold's moral dilemmas are examined as he evolves from a modest salesperson to a spy caught up in a web of falsehoods and deception. A primary theme is the interaction of duty, loyalty, and personal morality, highlighting one of Greene's goals for the story: the ethical predicaments people encounter in espionage.

Wormold, being the main character, was not chosen at random. Throughout the book, Green's personality, beliefs, and actions perfectly communicate what he wants to do with the novel: critique the Secret Intelligence Service. Their naivety, carelessness, and ignorance regarding Wormold and his reports achieved Greene's goal of portraying them badly as the satirical novel seeks to change satirized individuals from the anti-heroes' flaws to their sources' susceptibility.

To sum up, the thesis on Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* delves deeply into the book using literary, historical, and cultural perspectives, illuminating the intricacies of morality, espionage, and social criticism in the setting of the Cold War.

Resumé

Cílem práce je poskytnout komplexní analýzu románu Grahama Greena *Our Man in Havana* v historickém, kulturním a literárním kontextu doby studené války. Jejím cílem je prozkoumat témata satiry, reality vs. iluze, podvodu, zrady, etiky a morálky zobrazená v románu a osvětlit tak složitost špionáže a společenské kritiky v tomto období. Kromě toho se práce zabývá postavami, vypravěčskými technikami a souhrou historických událostí, aby nabídla diferencované pochopení významu románu v širším kontextu politiky studené války a špionážní literatury.

První kapitola diplomové práce o románu Grahama Greena *Our Man in Havana* se zabývá historickým kontextem komunismu, zejména jeho celosvětovým vzestupem a dopadem na Kubu, který vedl ke kubánské revoluci. Definuje komunistickou ideologii, rozebírá vývoj komunismu ve světě a zaměřuje se na jeho konfrontaci se západem. Kapitola zkoumá politické prostředí na Kubě před revolucí a zdůrazňuje, jakou roli hrál komunismus v událostech, které vedly ke kubánské revoluci. Kromě toho zdůrazňuje význam pochopení historického vlivu komunismu pro pochopení situace postav a událostí v románu. Kapitola se také dotýká Komunistického manifestu Karla Marxe, který nastiňuje základní principy komunismu a jeho revoluční cíle. Dále se zabývá šířením komunismu, bolševickou revolucí, založením Třetí internacionály (Kominterny) a následným nástupem komunistických vlád v Evropě po druhé světové válce. Kapitola propojuje tyto historické události se společensko-politickým klimatem na Kubě a nastiňuje situace pro kubánskou revoluci a přechod země ke komunistickému státu pod vedením Fidela Castra. Zdůrazňuje, jak se kubánská revoluce stala klíčovým momentem kubánských dějin, který formoval její politiku a vztahy s globálními mocnostmi, zejména se Spojenými státy a Sovětským svazem. Kapitola zdůrazňuje význam pochopení historického kontextu Kuby, ekonomické nerovnosti, korupce a sociální nespravedlnosti, které měly vliv na následné události vylíčené v románu Grahama Greena *Our Man in Havana*, a nabízí hlubší vhled do složitosti politiky studené války a špionáže v románovém příběhu.

Druhá kapitola práce se zabývá obdobím studené války a zaměřuje se na Spojené království a Kubu v 50. letech 20. století. Charakterizuje studenou válku, definuje základní pojmy a kritické momenty této éry a zkoumá její počátky a vývoj v tomto období. Kapitola poskytuje důkladný přehled historických souvislostí a zkoumá geopolitické, ekonomické a sociopolitické prvky, které formovaly paradigma studené války. Tím, že se kapitola zabývá událostmi, které se odehrály ve Velké Británii a na Kubě, si klade za cíl nabídnout komplexní pochopení napětí a dynamiky, které definovaly éru studené války. Zdůrazňuje význam

historického pozadí pro pochopení širších důsledků této éry a jejího vlivu na literaturu, zejména ve zmiňovaném díle Grahama Greenea.. Román, jehož děj se odehrává v 50. letech 20. století na Kubě, poskytuje jedinečný pohled na činnost zpravodajských služeb během studené války a nabízí pohled na to, jak politické klima ovlivňovalo životy civilistů a složitost mezinárodních vztahů. Kromě toho se kapitola zabývá rolí Británie v politice studené války a zdůrazňuje spory, které vznikly mezi bývalými spojenci po druhé světové válce. Analýzou zapojení Británie do utváření globální geopolitické scény kapitola připravuje půdu pro hlubší zkoumání toho, jak historické události a politické napětí ovlivnily děj Greeneova románu, a vrhá světlo na složitosti špionáže a dynamiky mezinárodní velmoci v tomto období.

Třetí kapitola práce se zabývá literárními trendy padesátých let v britské literatuře a zaměřuje se na ty, které se vztahují k románu Grahama Greenea *Our Man in Havana*. Zkoumá témata přítomná v románu, která byla v této době populární, a osvětluje, jak Greeneovo dílo zapadá do tehdejšího literárního prostředí. Kromě toho kapitola poskytuje stručné shrnutí životopisu Grahama Greenea a zdůrazňuje klíčové aspekty, které ovlivnily vyprávění románu *Our Man in Havana*. Hlavní náplní této kapitoly je provedení podrobné analýzy postav románu s důrazem na témata, která představují. Zahrnuje také historický a kulturní rozbor prostředí studené války na Kubě, který poskytuje základní kontext pro pochopení románu. Dále se kapitola věnuje literární analýze románu a ukazuje, jak se v Greeneově díle projevují literární techniky a žánry. Zkoumáním složitostí kubánské kultury, politiky studené války a struktury vyprávění si kapitola klade za cíl zlepšit čtenářovo porozumění Greeneovu mistrovskému dílu a jeho trvalému významu v neustále se vyvíjejícím globálním prostředí.

Čtvrtá kapitola práce se zaměřuje na analýzu klíčových postav románu Grahama Greenea *Our Man in Havana* a jejich role v zobrazení témat morálky, podvodu a špionáže. Zabývá se postavou hlavního hrdiny Wormolda, který je kvůli naplnění svých finančních potřeb vtažen do sítě podvodů a špionáže, čímž se stírají hranice mezi realitou a iluzí. Kapitola zkoumá, jak Wormoldova morální dilemata a důsledky jeho činů utvářejí příběh, a poukazuje na etické složitosti, kterým jedinci ve světě špionáže čelí. Dále se zabývá postavou Milly, Wormoldovy dcery, která symbolizuje nevinnost a morálku uprostřed nebezpečných okolností a pomáhá Wormoldovi s integritou. Dr. Hasselbacher. Tento Wormoldův starý přítel, představuje pesimismus a deziluzi, odrážející kulturní změny a nejistotu padesátých let. Kapitola se dotýká i dalších postav, jako jsou kapitán Segura a Beatrice Severnová a ilustruje morální výzvy, kterým čelí jednotlivci ve složitém a klamném světě. Dále propojuje historický a kulturní kontext Kubu za studené války, který je v románu vylíčen a zachycuje politické napětí, obavy z jaderných zbraní a společenskou realitu té doby. Kapitola analyzuje, jak

Greeneův obraz Kubu v období studené války odráží úzkosti, politickou dynamiku a literární trendy 50. let 20. století, přičemž k obohacení vyprávění využívá satiru, fragmentarizaci a metafikci. Poslední kapitola se zaměřuje na satiru světa špionáže a agentur, které se na ní podílejí a zkoumá satirické prvky příběhu a jeho zařazení mezi špionážní romány.

Závěr práce o románu Grahama Greenea *Our Man in Havana* vystihuje složité zkoumání historických, kulturních a literárních souvislostí na pozadí doby studené války. Syntetizuje důkladnou analýzu vlivu komunismu na Kubu, geopolitického napětí studené války a literárních směrů padesátých let, které ovlivnily Greeneovo dílo. Závěr zdůrazňuje význam pochopení historických událostí, které formovaly vyprávění, a zdůrazňuje etická dilemata, morální složitosti a satirické prvky zobrazené v románu. Zdůrazňuje, jak Greeneovo líčení špionáže, podvodů a politických intrik v Havaně během nestálé politické éry dodává vyprávění hloubku a ukazuje témata loajality, zrady a osobní odpovědnosti. Závěr se rovněž zabývá rolí postav, která odráží různá témata a etické otázky a ilustruje morální výzvy, jimž čelí jedinci zapletení do špionáže. Dále se zabývá tím, jak Greeneovo využití postmoderních literárních postupů, jako je metafikce, sebereflexe a fragmentace, obohacuje vyprávění a poskytuje odstíněný pohled na složitost lidského chování a špionážního světa. Závěr práce celkově shrnuje zkoumání Greeneova díla a zdůrazňuje jeho trvalý význam při zobrazování složitostí špionáže, morálky a společensko-politického prostředí éry studené války.

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