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Character Analysis of Andrews in Graham Greene's *The Man Within*

Sresha Yadav, Ph.D. Scholar and Smita Jha, Ph.D.

Abstract

Why does an individual find himself in a strange predicament and commit crime? Why do the uniqueness and singularity prompt an individual to behave in a different way?

For a very long time, Criminologists have been trying to assess and analyze the character of an individual, and have offered some sort of explanations on the basis of different theories pertaining to crime and guilt.

The present paper seeks to identify and analyze the character of Francis Andrews in Graham Greene's *The Man Within*, in the light of psychoanalytical trait theories and strain theories of criminology, while answering some specific questions about Andrews' childhood, his relationship with his parents and his betrayal of his fellow shipmen in this novel.

The major theme of the novel revolves round the betrayal and Andrews' disturbing relationship with his father, and how this ultimately moulds up his personality as a double-dealing hero, depicted by the author on account of his actions and inactions.

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Introduction

“Crime is a category which is the result of a process involving different individuals, different institutions, and different settings”.(Howitt;2002,37)An individual can’t escape the environment in which he lives, the settings, the complex social processes, and from different individuals like him who are also part of the same environment. He can’t afford to live alone; he is part of the system. His behaviour and his actions are the result of the social interactions.

As C.R. Bartol’s (2002) book entitled *Criminal Behavior – A Psychosocial Approach* delineates the theme of human reaction to the present situation is a subject matter of his own interpretations and perceptions, which are strongly affected by his experiences and thought processes. In this present extract these key words ‘experience’ and ‘thought’ will help us to understand the perceptions, interpretations, and decision making capability in the prevailing situations of Francis Andrews’ life in Greene’s *The Man Within*.

Exploring Man’s Divided Selves

Greene’s first published novel *The Man Within* (1929) explores the theme of man’s divided selves. Greene portrays the character of Francis Andrews as ‘the Judas figure’ who had betrayed his fellow shipmen and Captain Carlyon. The story of the novel revolves round Andrews who is a victim of unhappy childhood and has always been chased by haunting memories of his brutish and cruel father. He remembers his father as, “a damned old hypocritical bully” (Greene; 2001, 13). He calls his father “a bully who killed his wife and ruined his son” (Greene; 2001, 16). During his conversation with Elizabeth, who sheltered him while he is escaping from his fellow smugglers and Carlyon, after writing secretly to the custom officer about the arrival of the cargo ship, he declares:

My father was a smuggler. ... A common bullying smuggler, but damnably clever. He saved money on it and sent me to school .What was the use of having me taught Greek, if I was to spend my life like this?.....I will tell you why he sent me to school,....it was so that he could brag about it. He was proud of his success. He was never caught and they never had any evidence against him. His crew worshipped him.(Greene;2001,71).

Andrews believes that his father sent him to school to learn Greek, which seems to be irrelevant and of no use to him in his present condition. “He blames his father and lack of integrated education for what he is”. (Rai; 1983, 13).He confesses to Elizabeth that his fear and cowardly attitude are not his own fault, they are the result of the inherited parental qualities which had put into him the seeds of a double-dealing person: “It’s not a man’s fault whether he’s brave or cowardly. It’s all the way he’s born. My father and mother made me. I didn’t make myself”. (Greene; 2001, 52)

Revealing the Hidden Past

Graham Greene reveals Andrews' hidden past through his memories of unhappy childhood in flashbacks. Andrews' father was a drunkard, who used to beat up his mother and when one day he was at his school, his mother died. Andrews believes that his mother died because she could not bear the intolerable pain of her broken heart as well her husband's continued torture. He thinks that, ".....he broke her heart, if there's such a thing as a broken heart. He broke her body anyway". (Greene; 2001, 72).

Andrew's father used to ill-treat him, as he used to think that it would make Andrews strong and courageous. But on the contrary, as a result of this ill-treatment, which bore great pain and suffering in Andrews' life, shape up his character as a cowardly, fearful human being whose mind is always in a state of turmoil. Andrews inherited qualities from both his parents - a brutish, hypocritical father and a lovable, romantic mother. After his father's death, he persuaded Carlyon to come down to his school and make arrangements for him, as, his father had left his boat and every penny he had saved to Carlyon.

Andrews was allowed to sail with the other members of the smuggler gang because, 'his fearless and brutish father, now deceased, had once been their hero figure'. (Brenann; 2006, 134-136). His fellow shipmen always remind him of his father and they evaluate his deeds and actions in terms of his father's clandestine action. After his father's death he hopes to remain in peace, but the shadow of fear doesn't leave him and haunts him on board. The other members of the gang worship his deceased father as their role model and they are of the belief that he has also inherited the fearless attitude of his father. But they soon realize that Andrews is utterly unlike his father.

Character Orientation of Greene's Novels

It is true that, Greene's novels are character-oriented, as he says in his book titled *In Search of a Character: Two African Journals*. His protagonists occupy the centre-stage in his novels.

The protagonist of the present novel is a projection of Greene's own childhood experiences. "Greene in the dual role as author, one who persistently projects literary experience into his own view of life, and who subsequently projects both his experience and its 'literary' interpretation into his created fiction". (Hoskins; 1999, xvii)

Motives, Intentions and Inheritance of Criminality

For a very long time, criminologists have been trying to explain the motives and intentions behind any anti-social human behaviour. They have tried to trace down several

instigating factors, which sometimes act as an initiation point, or as a catalyst underlying to commit any sort of criminal behaviour.

Walmseley et al. (1992) have found that, "Crime runs in family, to a degree". (Howitt; 2002, 76) He further emphasizes two factors: first, inheritance of criminality, and secondly, adverse family circumstances.

These two factors do play an important role in every human individual's life, in a sense, that it is the interplay between the surrounding, adverse family conditions and inherited factors which ultimately put the seed for any antisocial human behaviour. Andrews' unhappy childhood, haunting memories of his wicked and brutish father, and his act of betrayal could be explained in the light of some of the criminological theories.

Glueck and Glueck (1962), have identified certain important criminogenic factors like "punitive child rearing practice and attitude, lack of love or rejection, laxness (poor monitoring) and family disruption (marital conflict)" (Howitt 2002:77) which affects the mental and physical health of a child in his early rearing years.

Child-rearing Practices and Acquired Personal Characteristics

In this regard, we may point out the fact that, Andrews' hatred towards his father and his gang members is the result of those child rearing practices and the environmental criminogenic factors which he had undergone during his childhood days. After a survey on the group of delinquents and their criminal behaviour, it was found that, "... the seed of aggression in them (delinquents) were best predicted by the father's rejection of the boy". (Ruchkin and others; 1998, 275-182)

Psychiatrist Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) believed that all human beings carry the remnants or the residues of their most significant emotional attachments to their childhood experiences, which, in turn, affect their future relationships and social interactions with others. He proposes the psychodynamic theory, in which he emphasizes the major influences of early childhood in addition to social factors which play a catalytic role in shaping up of their personality. His theory is based on one of the most significant facts that those individuals who have unhappy childhood experiences may suffer from personality disturbances in their adulthood.

Inferiority Complex and Low Self-esteem

Andrews' hidden inferiority complex, low self-esteem and lack of confidence finally reinforce him to prove his superiority over others and thus he writes a letter to the revenue officers. When he is testifying in the court against those smugglers of the contraband cargo ship, he admits: "betraying them thus openly I stand above them." (Greene: 2001, 135).

Andrew's state of victimization and sufferance is the prime factor in motivating him for demonstrating his deep-rooted drive for superiority. As Alfred Adler (1870-1937), the founder of individual psychology, points out, the people who have feelings of inferiority will compensate with a drive for superiority. He coins the term 'inferiority complex' and argues that it is the natural tendency of human beings to strive for superiority, to do better than others. He asserts that the most important factor is 'stress' on a person because of social interactions and social contributions which over time develops into the 'inferiority complex'. Thus, in this novel the main protagonist Francis Andrews is a victim of 'inferiority complex'.

The Role of Jealousy

Andrews' confession in the court, when Sir Edward Parking interrogates him, reveals that it is the forcefulness of sheer jealousy which impels him to betray his comrades. Every time he is despised by them, he feels lonely and hurt as a result of which his lack of confidence and inferiority complex overshadows his self esteem. He says:

It was because I had a father whom I hated and he was always being put before me as a model. It made me mad. And I'm a coward. You all know that'.'I was afraid of being hurt and I hated the sea and the noise and the danger. And unless I did something it would have gone on for always and anyways. All I wanted to show those men that I was someone to be considered, that I had the power to smash all their plans.(Greene;2001,140)

Consequences of Strain

The condition which we infer from Andrews' present state of mind is referred to as – 'Strain' which will certainly reinforce any individual to participate in or gets motivated for any antisocial act.

According to strain theorists, any sort of deprivation faced by people eventually develops the sense of discontent and distrust towards the societal norms and this leads to violence and crime. Individual strain theorists suggest that individual's life experiences cause some people to suffer pain and misery, feelings that are then translated into antisocial behaviour. They believe that those "who consider themselves as 'losers' begin to fear and envy others". (Siegel 2007, 190-191) Individuals who feel economically, socially, psychologically humiliated may perceive that they have the right to do the same things to others. They have a tendency to harm others in some or the other way so as to get satisfaction either physically or mentally and thus consider that they are supreme and have the power to control the fate of other individuals.

To Conclude

Thus, the facts which have been highlighted in this present paper, occasionally supported by psychoanalytic trait theories and strain theories of criminology, help us to understand a more comprehensive and analytical approach of the character of Greene's protagonist, Francis Andrews.

This present study of Greene's *The Man Within* leads us to conclude that individual's life experiences are the significant factor to determine his course of action in the present contemporary situation in which he lives in. Experiences condition his present thought process which, in turn, moulds up his overall personality. "The significance of Greene's own life experiences is often reflected in most of his novels. ... the unhappy memories of Greene's own childhood which has had a great influence on all of his novels do also accounts for his novels' seedy background, obsessed characters, and extreme situations portrayed in them". (Chandramohan; 2005)

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Sresha Yadav, Ph.D. Scholar
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)
Roorkee 247667
Uttarakhand, India
sresha85@gmail.com

Smita Jha, Ph.D.
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)
Roorkee 247667
Uttarakhand, India
smitaitr@gmail.com