(In) The eyes of the serpent: perceptions and representations of the Mexican in Graham Greene

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Palavras-chave: Perceptions, representations, travel narratives, Graham Greene

Resumo

This paper aims to present an analysis considering the works “The Lawless Roads” (1939) and “The Power and the Glory” (1940) by Graham Greene from the perspective of perceptions and representations of the Mexican people constructed by the author. In order to do so, the paper is grounded on theories of post-colonial literary criticism and travel literature, specially regarding topics on identity, otherness and hybridism, in order to make a brief observation on the perception and representation of the Mexican by Greene, particularly regarding the role of the eyes of the Mexicans, with the purpose of outlining his personal point of view that is universalizing towards the native and of framing how he characterizes the Mexicans from a Eurocentric and colonial perspective. This research adopts qualitative, interpretative and documental methods in the proposed analysis and points towards the prevalence of perceptions and representations of the Mexicans that set forth a hostile gaze over the Mexican natives.

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Referências


Read about Graham Greene, one of the most-acclaimed English writers in the biography and come across all the important information about his profile, childhood, life and timeline. His family was the descendant of the wealthy and influential owners of the Greene King brewery. He attended the St. John’s House in 1910, where his father was appointed the headmaster. As a student he was quiet and reserved, which made him vulnerable to bullies. Severely depressed, he tried to commit suicide a number of times, for which in 1920, at the age of 16, he was sent to London to be treated through psychoanalysis. Six months later, he returned to school and in 1922, and for a brief period he was a part of the Communist Party of Great Britain. The death of the unnamed whisky priest in The Power and the Glory is highly ambiguous. In revolution-torn Mexico, Greene pits the weak, corrupt priest with his promises of heaven against the strong lieutenant, exponent of equality and heaven on earth. Eventually the priest is executed; the lieutenant has won the battle against him, and yet since the influence of priest and priesthood remain, the lieutenant has lost the battle for the people’s loyalty. The ambiguities and ironies emphasize Greene’s theme of human love as a destructive and redeeming force which clouds all moral issues and makes the world an even more dangerous place. Thus in Greene’s world, lives, deaths are all ambiguous, and it is difficult to tell saint from sinner. Post navigation. As such, the setting put forth by Graham Greene could be representative of anything that hides, under a cover of good and light, a dark and evil side. This allegory can then take on multiple meanings, the first that comes to mind being an exterior representation of Pinkie. Being the central character of the novel, we get the chance to see things from his perspective and know him like no other character. He really is evil to the core, as he himself says to Dallow: “Credo in unum Satanum.” It gives the reader a chance to explore the religious beliefs and workings that take place in the mind of each of the characters. Religion is not only a matter of the character’s beliefs, but is also an important factor in the dilemmas and situations they confront.