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The Character of the Priest in Greene's Novel "The Power and the Glory" and Bakatheer's Novel "Salamat Alqes"

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Abstract- This research aims to discuss the character of the priest in two novels; one is English "The Power and the Glory"(PG), and the other is Arabic "Salamat Alqes" (SQ). The objectives of this research are to study; to what degree the priests have followed their religions, whether the priests are strong enough as they should be as religious persons or not, to what degree the circumstances around them effect on them, and are they able to follow their religions as they are or not. The researcher divides the research into three parts; the first part is the introduction that gives a summary of each novel and the meaning of a priest. The second part analyses and compares the two characters based on the five true religious characteristics that are to (be charitable, be compassionate, be spiritual and pure, have self-control, and finally practice your religion). Finally, the conclusion. After analyzing the two characters, the researcher notices that real religion appears in hard situations. The two characters have been through hard situations, but they never lose their faith. Moreover, both characters effect on others. The two writers send a crucial message that strong believers may suffer, have bad times, but their strong faith will help them overcome whatever they go through.

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I. Introduction

a) *Meaning of Priest*

A priest is known as, in Webster dictionary, "one authorized to perform the sacred rites of a religion especially as a mediatory agent between humans and God"[1]. Priests should be trustworthy. In general, priests must be role models. They are often asked for their opinion and advice. They should not get married. They also should be caring and helpful. Furthermore, in Islam, religious men must be good models and are asked for their advice and opinion. However, they have their job that is based on their religion. Nevertheless, those who are religious and do not think of getting married, people give them the nickname of "Alqes (the priest)" as in Bakatheer character " Abdurrahman".

b) *The Power and the Glory*

The Power and the Glory is a novel about a priest who refuses to convert his religion in a state that forbids religious rituals. He keeps eight years moving from a place into another in order not to be caught and killed. During his journey, he faces lots of things that make him suffer a lot to the degree that he does things he is not allowed to do as a priest, such as being drunk and having a child. He suffers a lot because of these things till the end of his journey when he is caught and killed.

c) *Salamat Alqes (SQ)*

Many critics consider the novel Salamat Alqes as a love story. They connect it with the story of its writer Ali Bakatheer. Dr. Hameed (15:2010) says :

> It is an ethical reaction to a young man that comes from a conservative society, Hadramot. He is shocked by the sensual love that is represented in the Arab movies and novels. So it is not strange for Bakatheer to choose this topic to represent the innocent love in the story of Salamh.[2]

Abdurrahman is called "Alqes (the priest)". He is known by it among people. Abdurrahman Alqes is an example of a young man who grows up worshiping God, staying in Mosque and praying.

Abdurrahman hears a voice of a slave woman that attracts him. Later, he meets her and falls in love with her. However, when he is about going to buy her and make her free to marry, he discovers that she is sold. From this point, his suffering starts. He tries his best to get her, but circumstances are against their love. Finally, they accept the idea that they will not be with each other and hope they will meet in the afterlife.

II. Characteristic of Religious Men

The most important thing to respect a person's belief is his way of behaving. Based on the behave, one can judge the person. For example, the pious woman, in PG, in the jail does not like the priest because he is not the example she feels she can follow. For her, "the sooner you {the priest} are dead the better." (PG: 131) When she talks to the priest, she tells him that "You and father Jose. It's people like you who make people mock at real religion" (PG:131). However, her way of understanding what is a real religion is wrong. Real religion is not based on how many books one can read. Real religion is based on love and how a person behaves and reacts which is something she cannot understand. So, the researcher will discuss both priests in the two novels based on

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the five true religion characteristics that are (be charitable, be compassionate, be spiritual and pure, have self control, and finally practice your religion), to see to what degree the two priests follow these characteristics though they have hard circumstances, and whether they remain religious men that deserve to be respected and trusted or not.

a) Be charitable

To be a real religious, one should help and take care of those who are in need. Looking at the priest in (PG), he is a person that takes care of others and helps them. When the priest is going to hear the gringo, he decides to leave money for poor people. He tells the schoolmaster:

- "You know people here better than anyone. If I leave a gift, will you spend it on things that do no harm I mean books, blankets- not books?""They need food more than books."
- " I have forty-five pesos here ..."The mestizo wailed, " Father, what are you doing?"
- " Conscience money?" The school master said." Yes."
- " All the same, of course I thank you. It's good to see a priest with a conscience. It's a stage of evolution." he said. (PG: 182)

The priest uses to feel guilty for the mistakes he has made. He also knows well that he will be caught and killed, so he prefers to spend the money he gains on poor people rather than keeping it for himself. He thinks to spend the money on something that is good for people and may help them. He knows well that poor people need food more than the religious books, so he insists that the money he leaves will be for what they need more.

Moreover, he thinks of animals, too. After fighting with a bitch for a piece of meat and getting it, he thinks:

> I will eat just so much and she can have the rest. He marked mentally a point upon the bone and tore off another piece. ... the priest reached the point he had marked, but know it seemed to him that his previous hunger had been imaginary: this was hunger, what he felt now. A man's need was greater than a dog's: he would leave that knuckle of meat at the joint. But when the moment came he ate that too after all, the dog had teeth: it would eat the bone itself. He dropped it and left the kitchen. (PG:145)

He keeps thinking of the bitch while he is eating, but his bad circumstances are the reason for eating all the meat, for he has nothing to eat for days.

Looking at Abdurrahman Alqes "the priest" in (SQ), he is also kind and helps others. His circumstances are not the same as the priest's in the (PG). He collects money to make Salamh, the one he loves, free to marry her. However, when he comes to his friend Ibn Suheel, the owner of Salamh, he discovers that Ibn Suheel loses all of his money, so he sells Salamh. Though Abdurrahman is shocked for losing Salamh, he never forgets that his friend Ibn Suheel needs money so he offers the money he collects to him.

- Abdurrahman said after a willed sign appeared: "I know that I will not get her all my life. I will be patient till Allah (God) does what should be done. So can you accept what I will give you? It is not hard for you if Allah wishes."
- Ibn Suheel said:" Ask what you want. I swear by Allah, I will not prevent anything for you if I can."
- Abdurrahman took the money and offered it to him saying: "Take this from me to help you in some of your affairs till Allah helps you get rid of what you are in."
- Ibn Suheel said with a strict tone:" If it is this what you want, I am sorry I can't accept for you need it more than me." (SQ:91)

Abdurrahman wishes to give the money to Ibn Suheel, but the later refuses.

b) Be compassionate

To be compassionate means to feel and understand the suffering of other people, and help them to ease their pain. It also means you have to leave selfishness and start thinking of the people around you. Looking at the priest in the (PG), he is kind and ready to do anything to help others. From the beginning of the story, he is about leaving the place he is in to be safe; however, when he feels that there is a woman who needs him, he misses the boat.

- Mr. Tench said, "You'll have a job not to miss the boat."
- "I shall miss it," he said. " I am meant to miss it." He was shaken by a tiny rage." ...
- " But if she is dying.." Mr. Tench said.
- "I know these people. She will be no more dying than I am."
- " You can do no good." ...
- "You know nothing ," the stranger said fiercely. "That is what everyone says all the time_ you do no good." The brandy had affected him. He said with monstrous bitterness, "I can hear them saying it all over the world."
- "Anyway," Mr. Tench said, " There will be another boat. In a fortnight. Or three weeks." (PG: 17)

Though the priest is not happy and is a little bet angry that he will miss the boat and thinks that he does no good to any, he could not just leave. He thinks of the woman and prefers to be in danger to help her rather than to be selfish and safe. Furthermore, at the end of the novel, though he knows

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well his return means his death, he couldn't ignore the gringo needs of him, so he goes back with the half-caste leaving behind him his chance to be safe. The priest thinks, " It wouldn't really have been a good dream- that confession in Las Casas when he would have had to admit, as well as everything else, that he had denied confession to a dying man."(PG: 180,181) He thinks what is the good of confession if he does not help the person who is in need even if this help means he loses his life. Sabau & Dima-laza (439:2012) claims

> Each time he is called back to perform the religious sacraments to a dying person the whisky priest's consciousness struggles with his doubts, with his urge to arrive to a safe place. After a long interior struggle, he finally chooses to succumb to God's will and sees all these obstacles as a part of God's plan for him.[3]

Moreover, When the priest moves in the huts, he sees an Indian woman with her child, who is shot. He tells his mother, " We must have water. To wash him. You needn't be afraid of me. I will do him no harm."(PG:151) He tries his best to save him, but unfortunately, the child has died. The priest moves on, but he feels that he must not leave the woman alone. He thinks:" I shouldn't have left her alone like that. God forgive me. I have no sense of responsibility: what can you expect of a whisky priest?"(PG:156) As a result, he goes back though he is shivering, sweating and soaked with rain. When he arrives at the place, he has left them in, he discovers that the woman has left the child with a small lump of sugar near the child's mouth. The priest is tired and has a fever. He feels shy to take the lump of sugar, but "The priest bent with an obscure sense of shame and took it"(PG:156). Though the child is dead, the priest feels shy to take his sugar piece. He could not just move to leave her behind. He tries his best to help those who need him.

Looking at Abdurrahman, he is also a kind person that cares about others. As Mr. Ki (186: 2017) clarifies:

> Abdurrahman is a devout worshiper who devoted himself to worship God. He is a man who remembered God when he is alone and thinks of God secretly and publicly. He was distinguished by noble morals, pure chastity, and good treatment. He is a great person who many Muslims imitate his morals and behavior.[4]

When the singer Jamila comes to Mecca, Abu Alwafa and his friends ask Abdurrahman to talk to Wali to kick her out of Mecca. Abdurrahman accepts though he is planning to stay in the Mosque that day.

– Abu Alwafa said:" You know your position among people for your goodness and righteousness. You are Faqih (scholar) in religion though you are still young. That is why people called you Alqes. They consider you the successor of Ibn Abi Rabah. However, you know the singer Jamila came to this safe country sitting in our neighbor's house' Ibn Suheel. She made me busy of my prayers last night and the night before because of her worthless singing. So could you please talk to Wali to kick her out before she rots our young men and women." ... Abdurrahman said:" but I decided to stay in the mosque (Itikaaf in Masjed) this day."
– Abu Alwafa replied:" I'tikaaf is Sunnah, but this is imposed on you, my son. So you should start with what you impose before the Sunnah."
– Abdurrahman kept silent for a while. then said: "Ok Abu Alwafa. Though I feel it is useless." (SQ: 36)

Moreover, the first time he talks to Ibn Suheel, he finds it a chance to give him an advice to stop listening to songs and spending nights in fun. Abdurrahman says advising Ibn Suheel, "I wish that you do something good to yourself by leaving fun and singing, so you get to rest and others do, too. "(SQ:55) Later, when Ibn Suheel becomes his friend, he helps him. They work together to collect money. He also helps the one he loves "Salamh" to be a good person and to overcome his lose. For her, Abdurrahman is the turned point to accept and think of the ideology of religion. Abdurrahman advises her to take care more of her religion. Salamh, in the end, promises him to pray all prayers and fast and stop drinking to meet him in the afterlife.

– Salamh said: "Do you think Omaween's palaces would make me forget you? By Allah, no, Ibn Ammar. You are better than me. You worship Allah near Alkaba. You find in talking to Allah the substituted of me and everything in this meaningless life but for me, no idea how I can meet Allah."
– "Why Salamh? Don't you fast Ramadan?"
– "Yes, I do, Abdurrahman."
– "And pray the five prayers?"
– "Sometimes, yes. Sometimes, no."
– "No, Salamh no. I won't leave you until you promise me that you will not leave any prayer forever... Don't you love me, Salamh?!"
– "Yes. Abdurrahman, I love you."
– "Don't you love to be for me, and I will be for you?"
– "This is what I wish Abdurrahman, but how is the way to that while Kalifa has bought me, so I have lost my wish to be with you."
– Then Abdurrahman says while tears have gone out of his eyes:" Yes. We have lost every wish to be together in this life, but in the afterlife, there is hope, Salamh. It is a big hope."

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- Salamh replied: "But how a singer like me who spends her hours in singing and drinking with others can hope for the afterlife?"
- Abdurrahman told her: "About drinking you can stop it. About singing you are forced and this is your job. I hope that it will not affect you since you care about your prayers and fasting. You become stronger with worshiping Allah. Then Allah will help you get rid of singing. I will ask Allah to forgive you, and I will give money to the poor instead of you whenever I have extra money. I will worship Allah as hard as I can wishing that I will not feed up or lose the will."
- Salamh said: "You have a kind heart and a great soul, Abdurrahman. You deserve that Allah listens to you and gives you what you want. I swear by Allah, I will stop drinking. I will take care of my prayers and fasting. I will keep myself away from guiltiness. I will give poor people the money that I get wishing that Allah forgives the rest."(SQ: 121,122)

So this is Abdurrahman who thinks of others and helping them to be better.

c) Be spiritual and pure

To be pure and spiritual, one should keep away from the sins of the world. Because of the circumstances the priest in the (PG) goes through, he has done some sins. He becomes drunk. He has an illegal daughter. He feels that he loses his faith through time. He suffers a lot because of that. He feels he is useless because he is drunk. "That is what everyone says all the time_ you do no good. "The brandy had affected him. He said with monstrous bitterness, " I can hear them saying it all over the world." (PG:17)

He never feels he may be a martyr because he feels that he is not good. When he is talking with Maria, she tells him, "Suppose you die. You'll be a martyr, won't you? What kind of a martyr do you think you'll be? It's enough to make people mock."

That had never occurred to him - that anybody would consider him a martyr. He said," It's difficult. Very difficult. I'll think about it. I wouldn't want the Church to be mocked..." (PG:79) He also tells the people in the jail. "Martyrs are holy men. It is wrong to think that just because one dies ... no. I tell you I am in a state of mortal sin. I have done things I couldn't talk to you about. I could only whisper them in the confessional. (PG: 126,127)

The priest keeps giving excuses to all he knows except himself. Even Padre Jose, he feels that he is better than him. "If I ever offended you, Jose, forgive me. I was conceited, proud, overbearing- a bad priest. I always knew in my heart you were the better man."(PG:118) Moreover, he gives excuses to the half-caste, who cheats him and works with the police to catch him "This man intended to betray him for money which he needed, and he had betrayed God for what? Not even for real lust"(PG: 99) He also gives excuses to the woman in the jail he meets and feels sorry for her. "She had, after all, as many excuses as the half caste. (PG: 131)

He suffers because of his love for his daughter, he feels that he must love all the same, but he could not. He said,

> Oh God, help her, Damn me, I deserve it, but let her live forever." This was the love he should have felt for every soul in the world: all the fear and the wish to save concentrated unjustly on the one child. He began to weep; it was as if he had to watch her from the shore drown slowly because he had forgotten how to swim. He thought: This is what I should feel all the time for everyone, and he tried to turn his brain away towards the half-caste, the lieutenant, even a dentist he had ones sat with for a few minutes, the child at the banana station, calling up a long succession of faces, pushing at his attention as if it were a heavy door which wouldn't budge. For those were all in danger too. He prayed, "God help them," but in the moment of prayer he switched back to his child beside the rubbish dump, and he knew it was for her only that he prayed. Another failure. (PG: 208)

He, as Zgierska (172:2014) explains, " torn between the love for his daughter and his idea of priest duties. He is not able to forgive himself for loving his sin." [5]

He also does not like himself being proud and does not think about others. He prayed in the half-light:" Oh God, forgive me- I am a proud, lustful, greedy man. I have loved authority too much. These people are martyrs- protecting me with their own lives. They deserve a martyr to care for them- not a man like me, who loves the wrong things. "(PG: 95) Siddiqi (2009:127) clarifies that

> The love of the priest which according to him is important for any mystical uplifting for his state in the eye of God. But before the priest learned the significance of love, it was his sense of duty that taught him the necessity of love and total surrender to the power of God.[6]

So, all that he goes through and suffers from, proof that he is pure and spiritual. He suffers because of his sense of God.

On the other hand, Abdurrahman never does any bad thing. He gets to benefit from the love he has to Salamh to become better. He refuses to kiss her though he has a chance. He knows well that God is there, and they should not make any mistake.

Once, they are together alone. Salamh tells him she loves him and wants to kiss him; he tells her not to

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forget that Allah is there. He never gives a chance to the devil to play on his mind.

Salamh said:" Ibn Ammar, I love you."

After Abdurrahman hesitated a little bit, he told her "Allah knows that I love you, too."

She said after looking at him and slopping her head, "and I love to put my mouth on yours."

He told her looking down: "Allah knows I would like to do that, too."

Salamh moved near him and caught his hand saying, " What prevents you? No one is there" .....

Abdurrahman shook and looked sharply at her saying, " Do you forget Allah, Salamh"(SQ: 80,81).

In this scene, one notices that Abdurrahman never forgets God even that he gets the chance to be with his lover alone. His belief is stronger than his love.

Moreover, when both characters (the priest and Abdulrrahman) lose hope, they start praying to God. When the priest loses hope that Padre Jose is coming to listen to his confess, he starts talking to God trying to confess.

> The priest sat on the floor, holding the brandy-flask. Presently he unscrewed the cap and put his mouth to it. The spirit didn't do a thing to him-it might have been water. He put it down again and began some kind of a general confession, speaking in a whisper. He said , "I have committed fornication...." (PG: 207)

He is deeply a believer. He says to Carol: "It's impossible. There's no way. I'm a priest. It's out of my power. "(PG: 40)

And when Abdurrahman feels that he loses the hope of marrying Salamh after she is sold to Kalifa, he gets up in the night praying and asking Allah to help him in his problem.

> When all slept, Abdurrahman moved from his place near his friend Ibn Suheel to the roof of the house. He chose a corner that no one could see him except Allah. The night was too cold to the degree that the bones are hurt. Abdurrahman suffered from it because he wore a light shirt, but he didn't feel anything because of the fire inside his chest. He started talking to Allah, crying, and praying. He prayed to Allah and asked Him to help him, and make him accept what He chose for him. He asked Him to help him get rid of the devil and his thought. He cried and cried, prayed and worshiped Allah a lot till he forgot everything expect Salamh, who he wished to be within the afterlife after he lost the hope to be with her in this life. He prayed deeply till he felt that there was a light appeared in the sky for a moment then disappeared and heard a voice echoing 'Ameen' (SQ: 120)

Abdurrahman's strong believe helps him overcome the hard situation he goes through. Moreover, though he sits with those who drink wine and say bad poems, he never does like them, he learns poetry and writes some poems that are pure and without using bad words.

d) Have self-control

To be a truely religious person, one must learn and be able to control himself. The priest tries to control himself and not hurt others; however, in some situations, he could not do that because of the tense he lives in. He gets angry when Mr. Tench tells him that he will do no good. He tells him: "That is what everyone says all the time_ you do no good." The brandy had affected him. He said with monstrous bitterness, "I can hear them saying it all over the world." (PG: 17). He is totally sad and angry because of the suffering he feels.

Moreover, he gets angry when the villagers refuse to make him sleep. He starts crying." Oh, let them come. Let them all come," the priest cried angrily. "I am your servant." He put his hand over his eyes and began to weep. (PG:45) Ironically the villagers think that "There he is in my hut now weeping for our sins." (PG: 45)

Though he loses his temper sometimes, he never hurts others.

Abdurrahman; on the other side, does his best to control himself. When Abu Alwafa starts to blame him because of his love for Salamh, he stops visiting him in order not to hurt him or be bothered.

> It is difficult for him to stop the strong friendship that he has with the Shiek {Abu Alwaf}. They spend a long time together worshipping God and helping each other doing good things, but things happened not as he wants so in order not to hurt his friend at that age, he decided to stop visiting him. He thinks that is better than hurting him in a useless argument. "(SQ: 74)

When he discovers that Salamh is sold, he tries his best to control himself. He does not shout or get angry. Later, he prays to God, asking for His help to keep as strong as he is.

> He started talking to Allah, crying and praying. He prayed to Allah and asked Him to help him and make him accept what He chose for him. He asked Him to help him get rid of the devil and his thought. (SQ:120)

His strong belief helps him to accept the idea that he will not marry Salamh. He has hope that they will meet in the afterlife. That is why he keeps reminding Salamh of the verse ' Friends on that day will be foes, one to another, except the Righteous.' (Az-Zukhruf: verse 67, translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali)[7]. Moreover, when he remembers his mother, he feels sad. However, his belief in destiny makes him strong as Orabi (83:2017) clarifies

> Fate is one of Islam pillars; a believer should accept it without making him stop his will which is also one of God's wills. This believer sees that the one, who does

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everything in this world is God. God who does what he wants and what he wills, so Abdurrahman Alqes when he remembers his mother who grows him in a good manner and does her best to do so. She also does her best to afford him all he needs to make him free for educating and worshiping God. He misses her and feels sad for losing her, but he accepts her losing by being patient and accepting God's will. Whenever he remembers her, he prays and worships God, and all he does is praying for her and asking God to have mercy on her. [8]

e) Practice your religion

Real religion is not what you know; it is what you do. The priest lives in a place where it is not allowed to practice religion. He spends eight years moving from a place into another to avoid being caught and killed. However, whenever he gets a chance to practice his religion, he does. He says masses and baptizes children, and when he is about dying, he asks for a priest to confess. Because he could not find one, he spends the night before his death, trying to confess to God and asking him for forgiveness. He prays to God most of the time.

The most important thing is that the priest practices real religion when he tries hunger and hard life; he breaches people and knows well what every word means. "For a matter of seconds he felt an immense satisfaction that he could talk of suffering to them now without hypocrisy- it is hard for the sleek and well-fed priest to praise poverty." (PG: 71)

Moreover, For the priest, the core faith of Catholics is to love, and he does love all people, even those who they hate him and want to kill him. He keeps giving excuses to all and pray that God forgives them all.

Looking at Abdurrahman, he has good chances to practice his religion, for he lives in Mecca. He goes to the mosque and prays all prayers there. And whenever he is sad and needs to talk to God, he goes to "Alkabah" and moves there as one of Muslim religion performing. When he feels that he has no chance to marry the one he loves, he spends the whole night praying to God and asking him for help. However, because of his love, Abdurrahman begins to understand that he has a new feeling when he reads the Quran or worshipping Allah.

He used not to care about this life, avoiding its faultiness and pride. But asceticism is not alike! There is a difference between the asceticism of the known one of this world who faces its lesions, and the unknown one who is away from it. Now, he goes to market, work in trade and he fears Allah in everything he does. How could he have the degree of honesty and truth in treating if he didn't be in what he had been? (SQ: 88)

Abdurrahman also keeps strong in front of all the things that may make him makes mistakes. He tries his best to get an advantage of the love he has to Slamah. He starts to understand the Quran better; he starts knowing that worshipping God in the mosque is not only what he should do, so he goes working to gain money.

III. Conclusion

To sum up, though the two characters have been through different situations, that the priest is chased by the police and wanted to be killed for he is a priest and Abdurrahman who goes through a love story of a girl that is totally different from him and could not marry her,

- Both characters do not lose their faith.
- Both keep blaming themselves for doing something bad.
- The two characters use to pray to God asking for forgiveness
- They use to give others excuses.
- Both characters discover that worshipping God is not their only mission in this world. After practicing real love and how people live, they discover that they become nearer to God. And they really could feel God.
- Because of their real religion, the two characters effect on the people around them. The priest effects on Carol, Luis and even Mr. Tench. As Grob (4:2016) clarifies, "It is evident that many of those whose lives have been intersected by the priest and the God he carries with him- Tench, Carol, even the lieutenant- discover within themselves, the deepest level, an intuitive responsiveness to the priest significantly alters their behavior or belief." [9] and Abdurrahman is a good influencer to many, so many people hope that they may have sons like him. As Ki (186:2017) clarifies, "Abdurrahman is a great person who is imitated by real Muslims because of his great morals and actions."[10] Abdurrahman also effects on Salamh, the one he loves. He gives her advices how to save herself. He makes her nearer to Allah. He reminds her of Allah and how she should be.
- Finally, both characters send a core message that those who have strong faith deeply in their heart will not lose this faith whatever they go through.

End Notes

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