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The Shadow of Kim Philby: Deceit, Betrayal, and British Espionage Literature

Kyra McComas

Introduction

Late on the stormy evening of 23 January 1963, pedigreed Cambridge graduate and top British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) Officer Kim Philby boarded the Dolmatova freighter instead of attending a dinner party. The ship embarked across the tempestuous Mediterranean Sea towards Odessa and Philby's ideological home.¹

Philby's appearance in Moscow under political asylum rocked British society and plunged his fellow SIS officials and Cambridge colleagues into a world of doubt and anxiety. Philby had been one of them, a charming, skilled bureaucrat. He humiliated the British espionage system as the third man, the most prominent and dangerous, of the Cambridge Five Spy Ring. With the achievement of his top SIS position revealed as a result of masterful manipulation and back-stabbing, associate spies and citizens alike began to question who they could trust, if not each other, in a world threatened by the Soviet Union and Communism. British newspaper headlines read "Britain Betrayed" and the trust of the citizenry was shaken.²

¹ Neil Tweedie, "Kim Philby: father, husband, traitor, spy," *The Telegraph*, January 23, 2013, accessed January 13, 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/9818727/Kim-Philby-Father-husband-traitor-spy.html>.

² Bruce Page and David Leitch, *The Philby Conspiracy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968).

Not only did they feel threatened by Communism, but now they also feared their own government's ability to protect them. Such anxiety contributed to the transformation of the literary spy figure, especially in the writing of John le Carré.

Beyond undermining the reputation of the British SIS and the global image of the British Empire, Kim Philby had an enormous impact on British espionage literature. The new narrative of the spy deviated from the bold, charismatic superhero spy figure of Ian Fleming, James Bond, who used illusion as a tool. The spy became an inauspicious intellectual, constantly at odds with his human inclinations for betrayal at both a personal and communal level; illusion became his anxiety. This essay seeks to illustrate that Philby's impact was reflected primarily through the deceit of spy characters as well as specifically in the decay of John le Carré's spy figure, George Smiley, in his 1974 novel, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. Not only did Philby influence the spy figure, but he also prompted novelists like le Carré to be more realistic and consider the ineptitude of espionage institutions, as their deception triggers a confrontation with ambiguous inner loyalty struggles that all humans face.

Three primary British novelists and their works will be analyzed, including Ian Fleming, Graham Greene, and John le Carré, with emphasis on le Carré and his 1974 novel, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. Philby is not only directly embodied in le Carré's writing, namely as Bill Haydon, but also as a paradigm of the consequences of self-betrayal. Le Carré's cultural commentary calls us to remain loyal to ourselves above institutional ideology. To prevent the destruction of our individualism, we must maintain a skeptical perspec-

tive on an inherently duplicitous world in which espionage institutions justify any means to a noble end.

The Broader Impact of Kim Philby's Betrayal

The British government has worked diligently to maintain the secretive barricades that surround the intelligence service, and they were largely successful until after World War II. Pressure to release government secrets increased as transparency became a hallmark of liberal democracies. With the government unsure how to handle this pressure, the threads of the empire of secrecy began to wear thin.³

The British Empire was suffering from post-war economic declines and social cooperation struggles. This contributed to the increasing revolutionary impulses that largely affected the educated upper-class, due to their less stable wealth and declining social status in the face of liberalist notions. One such incidence of rebellion was evident when British spy Kim Philby defected to the Soviet Union.⁴

Kim Philby was born into the British ruling class as the son of a British Arabist and intelligence officer, who was well-versed in the language of betrayal and double-dealing. He followed in his father's elite schooling at Westminster, Trinity College, and Cambridge, but found it altogether uninspiring. By 1936, he was

³ Richard James Aldrich, "Policing The Past: Official History, Secrecy And British Intelligence Since 1945," *The English Historical Review* 119, no. 483 (September 2004): 922-53.

⁴ Margaret Scanlon, "Philby and His Fictions," *Dalhousie Review* 62, no. 4 (December 1982): 533-553.

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a Soviet agent. Recruited by the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) in 1940, he became one of the famed Cambridge Five who were double agents for the Soviet Union.⁵ It is unknown how many British agents died as a result of his betrayal, as they followed the orders of their admired MI6 director of anti-Soviet operations, who plotted their doom behind the Iron Curtain. Philby was suspended from the SIS in 1953 following the disappearance (and successful escape to Russia) of his fellow Soviet agents, Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, in 1951. A “secret trial” was held, but the SIS failed to indict Philby⁶ (which many argue was reflective of the faltering British system, as it could no longer distinguish betrayal). Interestingly, Philby was reinstated to a position in the United States working with the CIA. By 1956, he was stationed in Beirut, where he disappeared on 23 January 1963. After having been granted political asylum in Moscow, the British government revealed that Philby was known to have been a Soviet agent and the “third man” of the Cambridge Five since 1946,⁷ which once again, reinforced the image of the British system as a failing world power.⁸

Philby’s defection was a hard blow to the British

⁵ Scanlon, “Philby and His Fictions.”

⁶ Richard Norton-Taylor, “MI6 Defended Kim Philby Long after He Was Exposed as KGB Spy,” *The Guardian*, February 24, 2014, accessed January 13, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/feb/24/mi6-defended-kim-philby-spy>.

⁷ Kim Philby, *My Silent War* (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

⁸ Philip Boobbyer, “Review: Deceiving the Deceivers: Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, and Guy Burgess by S. J. Hamrick,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 84, no. 1 (2006): 174-75, accessed January 14, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4214247>.

Empire and the SIS. Since the SIS mistakenly linked social class to national loyalty,⁹ it blinded itself to the potential that Philby was subversive, prolonging its decay as a stagnant social entity and arguably impairing its ability to protect British citizens. Society came face to face with the opacity of these theoretically protective institutions; it is not surprising that they experienced a collapse of trust. Spies had long been leery of national foes, but this broader breakdown of institutional faith imposed on their personal circles. Le Carré illustrated this wariness in his character of Jerry Westerby, a British spy journalist who claims, “[It] comes from being on the outside: you don’t trust your best friends. Trust them - well, less than strangers.”¹⁰ Philby himself reflected upon this failing trust in his autobiography, stating, “I began to hear from the grapevine things which had never been told us officially.”¹¹ Rumors permeated every corner of British society. As an apparently efficient agent of the SIS, Philby’s exposure as a longstanding member of the Soviet KGB prompted attempts at psychological analyses,¹² which were monumentally influential on British espionage literature after 1963. Historian Richard James Aldrich argues that “molemania” was unleashed by Philby’s autobiography, published in 1968, prompting Whitehall to evaluate its public image.¹³ Realizing that their government was intention-

⁹ Scanlon, “Philby and His Fictions.”

¹⁰ John le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 250.

¹¹ Philby, *My Silent War*, 33.

¹² Scanlon, “Philby and His Fictions.”

¹³ Aldrich, “Policing the Past,” 923.

ally withholding local and international policy development and execution, in addition to the broader image of a fading empire, British citizens became increasingly wary of their organizational institutions. How were they supposed to trust the protective measures of an opaque system? Such anxiety was the impetus for a cultural shift among the British people, as they recognized the pervasive mistrust in their world.

In truth, espionage literature already reflected a new era of secret intelligence laced with poison and double agents. Enter James Bond. Ian Fleming's first sensational spy novel, *Casino Royale*, was published in 1953 and included a seductive double agent named Vesper Lynd.¹⁴ The plot reflects the dubious espionage environment fostered by the defections of Burgess and Maclean, but the tone remains generally optimistic.

Very differently, the Philby affair was pivotal to exposing the lies of the government and society at large. David McKnight is in agreement with historian S.J. Hamrick, who condemns the British government as well as the "Establishment" elites who concealed Philby's duplicity to protect their own class image.¹⁵ Such greed represented the fallibility of human nature, which Philby's defection linked to society, revealing the humanistic imperfection and tendency for deceit inherent to institutions. The resulting scenes of social deterioration prompted John le Carré to regard Philby's story as one of the maladies and demonstra-

¹⁴ Ian Fleming, *Casino Royale* (New York: Macmillan, 1953).

¹⁵ David McKnight, "Review: Lies Upon Lies: Deceiving the Deceivers: Kim Philby, Donald MacLean and Guy Burgess by S. J. Hamrick," *The Review of Politics* 67, no. 4 (2005): 807-808, accessed January 14, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25046490>.

tive of the decay of the class system. He called Philby's life "a Marxian novel" and commentary on social welfare, such that the SIS was a paradigm of the "British condition... our social attitudes and vanities"¹⁶ in response to imperial decline. Le Carré's social analysis of Philby heavily influenced his writing, just as many other spy novelists of the time incorporated the increasingly conspiratorial nature of reality in their writing. Philby was the key to exposing institutional corruption, which inadvertently had novel ramifications for the psychology of human existence.

For le Carré and others of this generation, Kim Philby exemplified human complexities in a way that further obfuscated institutional trust. The man himself was an enigma, only partially known, even to his four wives, and still hidden behind a mask that he helped create, especially with his apolitical autobiography. Margaret Scanlon argues that novelists like John le Carré, Graham Greene, and Joseph Hone imparted moral, psychological, or publicly historical consequences to Philby as a spy figure, but they only served to blur the line between fiction and history, further complicating the mystery of Philby's identity.¹⁷ His obscure life was an impetus for the manifestation of human nature as a paradoxical struggle in espionage literature, epitomized in le Carré's writing.

John le Carré: The Spy Who Wanted to Write

John le Carré was born David John Moore Cornwell

¹⁶ John le Carré, introduction to *The Philby Conspiracy*, by Bruce Page and David Leitch (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968), 15.

¹⁷ Scanlon, "Philby and His Fictions."

in 1931 in Poole, England. In 1959, he joined the Foreign Office at the British embassy in Bonn, working as second secretary until 1964. His first novel, *Call for the Dead*, was published in 1960 under the name John le Carré, since the Foreign Service forbade publishing under a real name.¹⁸ But it was not until 1963 that his first successful novel, *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold*, was published, which brought him recognition at a national level.¹⁹ The book was named the Best Crime Book of 1963 by the Crime Writers' Association.²⁰ Le Carré continued to write spy novels until 1991, influenced initially by his exposure to double agents through his work in Bonn (as part of an MI6 undercover job in 1960), and then later by current events, such as Kim Philby's defection, *perestroika* and *glasnost*, and Cold War developments.²¹

The heavy influence that Philby had on le Carré and his writing is not only evident in the characters of his spy novels, but also in his biographical writing and commentary. In 1974, immediately following the publication of *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, le Carré told

¹⁸ LynnDianne Beene, *John le Carré* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992).

¹⁹ Myron Joel Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carre': Balancing Ethics and Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

²⁰ "Best Crime Books Awards," *The Times*, April 17, 1964, accessed 15 January 15, 2015, <http://find.galegroup.com.libproxy.scu.edu/ttda/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=sant38536&tabID=T003&docPage=article&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&docId=CS420177553&type=multipage&contentSet=LTO&version=1.0>.

²¹ Tom Maddox, "Spy Stories: The Life and Fiction of John le Carré," *Wilson Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (Fall 1986 1986): 158-170, accessed January 14, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40257078>.

James Cameron, "I feel Philby was essentially dead wrong... [and I] attempted to prove that Philby was a born deceiver and that his Marxism was nothing but a rationale."²² Le Carré's disgust with Philby stemmed from Philby's betrayal to his own morals and humanity.

Hence, le Carré prioritized some loyalties, which in fact, went against the current of the espionage genre as defined by Ian Fleming. LynnDianne Beene notes that in le Carré's world of espionage, "betrayal of and by security institutions, bureaucracies, ideologies, or country is expected but seldom excusable; betrayal of individuals or of self is unforgivable,"²³ supporting the notion that le Carré saw Kim Philby as a despicable character. This sheds light on le Carré's potential motives and underlying political and ethical commentary.

While some prioritization of loyalties (antithetical to Ian Fleming's novels) exists, le Carré's aphorisms are less than revealing, and in fact, further complicate the situations they attempt to illuminate. Le Carré demonstrated much skepticism, and called his readers to do likewise. He illustrated a human conscience that questions the cost of democracy, being an institution designed to protect liberties through a covert espionage institution. This was further explored in the mind of his fictional spy figure, George Smiley, who is torn by personal sentiments and morals and political necessity, bringing to light the debate of a national *need* for spies. New considerations must be made if one is to assert the natural imperfection of humanity

²² Quoted in Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carre'*, 46.

²³ Beene, *John le Carré*, 1.

and realize that “humanism, no matter how ponderously reexamined, cannot avoid inhumanity,”²⁴ echoing the sentiments of Joseph Conrad’s “heart of darkness” and Graham Greene’s “human condition.”²⁵ This can become a rather depressing reality, as Smiley reflects in le Carré’s 1977 novel, *The Honourable Schoolboy*, saying, “I have learned to interpret the whole of life in terms of conspiracy.”²⁶ As such, le Carré’s writing was arguably reflective of the *need* to reveal the secrecy of the government and the SIS in a realistic fashion, not blown up by fantasy as was the norm for the espionage genre prior to le Carré, namely in Ian Fleming’s novels. Beneath le Carré’s broader social commentary lies a specific criticism of the espionage system, stating that the dangers of spying are not just related to national image and global relations, but have significant impact on the inner workings of the spy’s (and any espionage employee’s) humanity and consciousness. The spy is especially susceptible to self-deception because he creates an illusory life to give his existence meaning, since otherwise he functions solely as an appendage of the political espionage machine.²⁷ But if recognition of personal values is ignored, as it was by Kim Philby, decency goes to the wind and deception takes root, negating the “ambiguous moralism”²⁸ of the conflict between personal and institutional loyalties that

²⁴ Beene, *John le Carré*, 15.

²⁵ Beene, *John le Carré*, 15.

²⁶ John le Carré, *The Honourable Schoolboy* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977).

²⁷ Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carre’*.

²⁸ Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carre’*, 10.

makes us human.

Thus, Philby's influence on le Carré was a microcosm of Philby's influence on society. Amidst mounting distrust, le Carré sought to instill a little more transparency in the world. His spy figure, George Smiley, epitomizes the human struggle and change in reaction to conspiracy, providing society with a relatable character who prioritizes decency.

The Emergence of a New Spy Figure

In order to understand the changes in the espionage fiction genre instigated by Kim Philby's defection, the context of the genre prior to 1963 must be explored. George Smiley, although a stark contrast with James Bond, was a different spy character without the influence of Philby. James Bond was the archetypal spy of the time, but did not last to see Philby's duplicity.

Before Kim Philby defected and unleashed a torrent of anxiety upon society, le Carré's spy figure was a moral, unsuspecting character with very little will to deviate from orders. He was the opposite of James Bond, whom le Carré denigrated as a ludicrous myth. Smiley first appears in *Call for the Dead* (1960) as a short, overweight, clumsy intellectual and seventeenth-century German poetry scholar.²⁹ A classless "toad... without schools, parents, regiment or trade, without wealth or poverty, traveled without labels in the guard's van of the social express, and soon became lost luggage."³⁰ As a socially nondescript

²⁹ Beene, *John le Carré*, 8.

³⁰ John le Carré, *Call for the Dead* (New York: Walker, 1962), 7.

character, Smiley can be anyone, thus providing a template into which readers can place themselves.

Throughout the novel, Smiley displays decency, integrity, sympathy, and compassion. Although he is remarkably ordinary, he embodies the simple notion of being a good human. Yet he is still torn by the inevitable inner loyalty struggles of humanity living in a social contract with higher institutions. This bodes ill for Smiley in *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold*, when his concern and care for agent Alec Leamas indirectly contribute to Leamas's death.³¹ Smiley is torn by the guilt that although his actions were noble, the ends were tragic. This evidences the nascent theme of means-to-an-end that permeates Le Carré's later writing; it is an issue that was brought to light by Philby's defection.

Such moralistic notions are largely lacking in espionage literature before 1963. Le Carré himself only hinted at morality and was much more vague in his earlier novels. Meanwhile, Ian Fleming characterized James Bond by escapism and moral cynicism.³²

A Culture of Betrayal: James Bond and Britishness

Double-dealing has long been characteristic of the espionage fiction genre. The differences arise in how the spy figure deals with it. While Smiley struggles to accept a victorious result achieved by foul methods, Ian Fleming's spy figure, James Bond, does not feel this human guilt. A sexual "hyena" and the "ultimate prostitute" who replaces "love with technique"³³ and

³¹ Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carré*.

³² Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carré*, 18.

³³ Quoted in Beene, *John le Carré*, 8.

relies on charms and seduction, Bond is a far cry from Smiley's cuckoldry, according to John le Carré. Moreover, le Carré maintained that through Bond, espionage was perpetuated as an extension of diplomacy, reinforcing the "gilded dream of James Bond"³⁴ and the myth of the espionage institution as a salubrious organization. Yet James Bond is a global phenomenon. Especially with the success of the films, the first of which, *Dr. No*, grossed nearly \$60 million in box office receipts in 1962,³⁵ Bond is an internationally recognizable character.

However, it is important to note that the film version of Bond deviates from the literary character, who is more moody, ironic, less loyal, and even humorous. He debatably represents what a British hero should be as a clean-cut heterosexual, with "masculine prowess and sardonic wit... [and] a very British kind of snobbery,"³⁶ according to Klaus Dodds. Yet such emphasis on physical savoir faire and masculinity as well as charm remains true to Fleming's literary Bond.

James Bond, code name 007, is an officer in the SIS (also called MI6) and a commander in the Royal Naval Reserve. He was allegedly modeled off the "Ace of Spies," Sidney Reilly, a Jewish Russian-born SIS agent whose life is largely unsubstantiated legend,³⁷ reinforcing the fictitious nature of the Bond spy figure. Furthermore, all of Bond's adventures are rather formu-

³⁴ Quoted in Beene, *John le Carré*, 48.

³⁵ Klaus Dodds, "Shaken and Stirred," *History Today* 62, no. 10 (October 2012): 50-56.

³⁶ Dodds, "Shaken and Stirred," 53.

³⁷ Dodds, "Shaken and Stirred."

laic. Upon receiving a new mission, Bond embarks on an adventure involving extravagant combat scenes and a troupe of allies, enemies, and lovers. After killing the bad guy and foiling a ludicrously conceived evil plan, Bond typically has a closing scene with his lover in a final display of dominance by sexual prowess.³⁸ Such a formula prevents Bond from really developing as a character, making Fleming's novels less of a character study than le Carré's.

The moral cynicism of Bond is illustrated by his acknowledgment that his profession involves killing people and then "[forgetting] about it... it was his duty to be as cool about death as a surgeon... regret was unprofessional."³⁹ Bond essentially buries his natural humanness in order to be an effective appendage of MI6. For example, on one mission, he catches himself reminiscing about "Cadbury milk-chocolate Flakes and the fizzy lemonade" of his youth, but quickly "slammed the mawkish memories back into their long-closed file. Today he was a grown-up, a man with years of dirty, dangerous memories - a spy."⁴⁰ Such devotion to duty and profession exemplifies his complete loyalty to Britain and her protection, as well as exempts Fleming from discussing relevant moral implications and tensions with which humans naturally struggle. As such, Bond, embodying the "handsome and strong"⁴¹ British gentleman, becomes an imaginary character whom society can idolize, but to whom it can never

³⁸ Dodds, "Shaken and Stirred."

³⁹ Ian Fleming, *Goldfinger* (Seattle: Thomas & Mercer, 1959), 3.

⁴⁰ Fleming, *Casino Royale*, 2.

⁴¹ Fleming, *Casino Royale*, 31.

relate.

Bond's unwavering loyalty and inhumanity are precisely what makes him unrealistic. Smiley would never betray love ("the sin of sins"⁴²), which Graham Greene identified as the human factor and used to define his spy as good.⁴³ Bond, on the other hand, has love affairs of "cold passion"⁴⁴ with a parade of different women with caricaturally invented names like Honeychile Rider, Pussy Galore, Kissy Suzuki, and Mary Goodnight, further implying their titillating roles.⁴⁵ Such fantasy and unscrupulousness lends itself to an entertaining, yet unrealistic vantage. And Scanlon notes that sexual deviance is "a dead giveaway for fictional spies."⁴⁶ George Smiley embodies the very real struggle that love evokes. In contrast, Bill ... usually ... Philby, who had four wives as well as a mistress, rumored to be the wife of his Cambridge Five colleague, Donald Maclean.⁴⁷ LynnDianne Beene agrees that le Carré "makes love and individuality - not spy fiction's super-

⁴² Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 157.

⁴³ Graham Greene, *The Human Factor* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978).

⁴⁴ Ian Fleming, *Moonraker* (Seattle: Thomas & Mercer, 1955), 9.

⁴⁵ James Chapman, "Bond and Britishness," in *Ian Fleming and James Bond: The Cultural Politics of 007*, ed. Edward P. Comentale, Stephen Watt, and Skip Willman, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

⁴⁶ Scanlon, "Philby and His Fictions," 540.

⁴⁷ Page and Leitch, *The Philby Conspiracy*.

ficial patriotism... determine a protagonist's fate,"⁴⁸ as is true in real life.

Ian Fleming's inclination towards fantasy writing is likely a result of his desk work as a Naval Intelligence Division officer in Whitehall during World War II. As an overseer of intelligence units, he never worked in the field.⁴⁹ Espionage fiction provided an outlet for his fantastical ideas about the glory of spying. This is highlighted by the fact that Bond will never die, and even if he does die, "he can die twice."⁵⁰ Thus, he is never really defeated. And as the British gentleman in perfect symbiosis with the espionage institution, he does not demonstrate natural human struggles that come with the process of growth, change, or maturation of the mind.

The highly idealized nature of British society that Bond embodies and the fact that he is a fantasy hero who could never exist, suggest that popular culture reflects what people want rather than the often painful reality. Bond is frequently recognized as a "sexist, misogynistic hero of British imperialism,"⁵² but his

⁴⁸ Beene, *John le Carré*, 137.

⁴⁹ Edward P. Comentale, Stephen Watt, and Skip Willman, ed., introduction to *Ian Fleming and James Bond: The Cultural Politics of 007* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

⁵⁰ Patrick O'Donnell, "James Bond, Cyborg-Aristocrat," in *Ian Fleming and James Bond: The Cultural Politics of 007*, ed. Edward P. Comentale, Stephen Watt, and Skip Willman, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

⁵¹ Chapman, "Bond and Britishness," in Comentale, Watt, and Willman.

⁵² Comentale, Watt, and Willman, ed., introduction to *Ian Fleming*, xvii.

adventures are thrilling and entertaining. They also echo nostalgia for the omnipotent British Empire that was declining in the mid-Twentieth Century, providing a certain comfort that was much more satisfying than le Carré's disheartening conclusions. At the same time, the viciousness of reality could not be totally ignored, especially after the multilevel deceit of Kim Philby. Graham Greene recognized this by asserting the unavoidable human inclination to love, and how love itself can be a source for self-deception.

Graham Greene and the Love of a Traitor

Bond became the popular image in spy fiction, bolstered by his popularity on the screen and endorsements by men in power, like United States President John F. Kennedy.⁵³ But Graham Greene's spy figure, Maurice Castle, is notably more human than Bond, and this is a result of Greene's fascination with Philby and his motives.

Graham Greene was a member of the SIS in 1941 and worked in Africa and England during World War II. The most obvious evidence for Philby's influence on Greene is the fact that Greene was under the direction of Kim Philby at MI6.⁵⁴ *The Human Factor*, published in 1978, specifically mentions Philby in light of the fact that his exposure "could be more damaging than the leak itself,"⁵⁵ suggesting a bigger issue with the institution's duplicity than Philby's. The spy figure and

⁵³ Dodds, "Shaken and Stirred."

⁵⁴ *Arena*, "The Graham Greene Trilogy," aired October 11, 2013, on BBC Four, accessed January 20, 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01jm63d>.

⁵⁵ Greene, *The Human Factor*, 43.

protagonist, Maurice Castle, is clearly comparable to Philby, since Castle is a British double agent for the Soviet Union who believes it is “always safer to be inconspicuous,”⁵⁶ just as Philby demonstrated in his autobiography by claiming his “right to veil in decent discretion” recent events, providing only “a few hints at the truth.”⁵⁷ Similar to Smiley, Castle is aging, ordinary, nostalgic, and self-deprecating, “apologizing for [unexpressed] criticism[s]” and expressing the “defensive humor of a lonely man.”⁵⁸ Such loneliness is reminiscent of Philby’s isolation after his defection. And Castle’s conscience is riddled with dissatisfaction, as was Philby’s when he was not warmly welcomed into a lush Russian life, as he expected.⁵⁹ His internal instability is a function of his career in espionage such that “Castle felt anxiety like the prick of an insect,”⁶⁰ hinting at the notion that the espionage institution is at fault, not the spy.

Greene further explored the inner tensions of the human mind by a constant confrontation of opposites: habit and chaos, love and hate, joy and fear, loyalty and betrayal, camaraderie and solitude, and reality and myth. Yet Castle remains firm in his convictions to be a good human. The reader is thus stimulated to respond to the pathos of Castle’s inner traumas and moral battles, because “except on really important

⁵⁶ Greene, *The Human Factor*, 20.

⁵⁷ Philby, *My Silent War*, 178.

⁵⁸ Greene, *The Human Factor*, 17.

⁵⁹ Aldrich, “Policing the Past,” 941.

⁶⁰ Greene, *The Human Factor*, 27.

occasions, he always preferred the truth.”⁶¹ So while it may not be an accurate depiction of Philby, Greene’s novel emphasizes the degeneracy of the institution, revealed by the spy’s retaliatory actions. With an emphasis on goodness, Greene suggested that any means can justify the end if it is a noble cause. In Castle’s case, the cause is love for his black South African wife, Sarah.⁶² The human factor is love and its omnipresence creates tension in the emotionless espionage institution.

Accordingly, Greene’s evaluation of Kim Philby was not one of condescension merely because his focus was on Philby’s potential motives to remain true to a certain cause. Whether or not this cause was noble is a debate for another time. Much of Greene’s admiration for Philby stemmed from his talent as a “craftsman.”⁶³ Greene maintained that “the end, of course, in his eyes is held to justify the means, but this is a view taken, perhaps less openly, by most men involved in politics, if we are to judge them by their actions,”⁶⁴ essentially denouncing the institution for harboring depravity.

While Greene’s literature lacks the comprehensive didacticism of le Carré, Greene asserted that “the storyteller’s task... [is] to elicit sympathy and understanding for those outside state sympathy,”⁶⁵ which has perplexing implications for the true meaning of his

⁶¹ Greene, *The Human Factor*, 20.

⁶² Greene, *The Human Factor*, 28.

⁶³ Graham Greene, introduction to *My Silent War*, by Kim Philby (New York: Grove Press, 1968), 8.

⁶⁴ Greene, introduction in Philby, 7.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Scanlon, “Philby and His Fictions,” 542.

writing, since his spy figure was essentially modeled off Philby as a hero. Greene allowed the reader to sympathize with the isolating punishment of the traitor – not by apologizing for political betrayals,⁶⁶ but by simplifying the spy figure. By recognizing the naturalness of betrayal, as a mark of the human factor influenced by the external environment, Castle becomes a relatable figure. He avoids ignobility by maintaining his decency; for Castle, his personal loyalties justify his national disloyalty. But the institution has already negated any potentially satisfying outcome due to its exploitation of human nature to accomplish a goal. And in a realistic manner, Castle is forced into isolation, separated from his love in an ending marked by hopelessness and despair.

Although Green favored the paradox of human loyalties, Scanlon argues that he ignored the real consequences of a career in espionage.⁶⁷ Yet by dabbling in the moral stress that afflicts humanity, Greene provided a much more realistic perspective than Fleming, largely as a result of the very real circumstances of the questionable methods of the British Empire as a power for good. Philby, having exposed these doubts, was thus a model for Castle whose quest was essentially a search for identity. Thus, Greene did not pardon Philby's actions, but rather, revealed the capacity for betrayal in us all as a consequence of institutional sickness.

⁶⁶ Scanlon, "Philby and His Fictions."

⁶⁷ Scanlon, "Philby and His Fictions," 543.

***Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*: Bill Haydon as Kim Philby**

Prior to Greene, le Carré capitalized on this capacity for deceit as a medium for the inner struggles of humanity, thereby expanding upon the realities at which Greene only hinted. Greene, like le Carré, was cynical about the methods of the West and his spy figure reflects the struggle to remain decent despite regular treachery by the “good guys,” but this is the limit of his political undertones. With Philby’s depravity as a guide, le Carré delved much deeper into the complexities of the human psyche as it exists in a cruel world of lies.

Evidence of a Philby character in le Carré’s writing is seen directly through the defector in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, Bill Haydon. Both Scanlon and Aronoff reference John Halperin, who maintains there is an incredible resemblance between Kim Philby and Bill Haydon.⁶⁸ Halperin also notes historically similar plot points, such as Jim Prideaux’s Czech network betrayal paralleling Philby’s betrayal of Albanian and Ukrainian anti-Communist factions.⁶⁹ Although Haydon was a bisexual, unlike Philby, his sexual deviancy is indicative of treachery (realizing that the novel was written at a time of high homophobia, with emphasis on traditional patriarchal gender roles). The notion of multiple lovers was present in Fleming’s writing, but it was a show of masculinity, not betrayal, as in le Carré’s and Greene’s writings. These reflect Philby’s carnal unfaithfulness and betrayal of friendship, evidenced by his

⁶⁸ Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carre’*, 45.

⁶⁹ Scanlon, “Philby and His Fictions,” 540.

mistress, the wife of his cohort, Donald Maclean.⁷⁰

Like Philby, Haydon was never suspected of being a mole. He was admired as the “father to them all... [who] draws them like bees... [with] star quality... [such that] women literally bow down before him.”⁷¹ Described as an “artist”⁷² and “favourite boy”⁷³ who “had a dazzling war. He was ubiquitous and charming; he was unorthodox and occasionally outrageous. He was probably heroic. The comparison with Lawrence was inevitable.”⁷⁴ The reference here is to Lawrence of Arabia, a heroic World War I British military figure who struggled to balance loyalty to his native British Empire with loyalty to his newfound comrades of the Arabian desert tribes. This suggests foreshadowing that Haydon will deviate with regard to loyalties, but Smiley does not realize it yet; he only sees the British hero, Lancelot “rebuilding Camelot.”⁷⁵ Furthermore, this echoes of Kim Philby, whose father was often compared to Lawrence of Arabia from his work opposing British government policies.

Soon enough, Smiley begins to recognize the deceit in Haydon, thinking, “while his admirers might find in him completeness, Bill’s real trick was to use them, to live through them to complete himself... and finally submerging this dependence beneath an artist’s

⁷⁰ Page and Leitch, *The Philby Conspiracy*.

⁷¹ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 24.

⁷² Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 288.

⁷³ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 135.

⁷⁴ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 150.

⁷⁵ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 108.

arrogance.”⁷⁶ Le Carré argued just as much about Philby in his introduction to *The Philby Conspiracy*, saying, “Deceit [is] Philby’s life work” and beneath all his layers of lies is “the self-hate of a vain misfit for whom nothing will ever be worthy of his loyalty.”⁷⁷ And just as Philby enjoyed playing the game of betrayal, Smiley notes, “Bill had loved it... playing world against world.”⁷⁸ The result is a manipulative character who remains behind a mask, unknown for who he truly is.

Haydon is the embodiment of the human paradox. He is “disreputable and high-minded at the same time,”⁷⁹ enhancing his enigmatic nature. Smiley concedes, “Like the Cheshire cat, the face of Bill Haydon seemed to recede as soon as he advanced upon it, leaving only the smile behind.”⁸⁰ Thus, he maintains his mystique, just as Philby did, fading from sight only to leave the reader with more questions than answers.

The major difference is Haydon’s fate, which spells death at the hands of his former lover, Jim Prideaux. Here, le Carré delivered a more satisfactory termination of the mole, in contrast to Philby’s final dreary isolation in Moscow⁸¹ that is also the case for Greene’s spy figure, Maurice Castle. Le Carré leaves the reader to answer the moral questions that arise from the reality of the situation and instead “provides the rough

⁷⁶ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 151.

⁷⁷ Le Carré, introduction in Page and Leitch, 7.

⁷⁸ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 353.

⁷⁹ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 150.

⁸⁰ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 157.

⁸¹ Aldrich, “Policing the Past,” 941.

justice we want in our thrillers”⁸² through Haydon’s death.

The deception of Kim Philby is Bill Haydon. Philby’s reflection is apparent in le Carré’s writing, but there is also a potent cultural commentary that emphasizes remaining loyal to oneself. Otherwise, individualism is destroyed. This intent is further revealed by developments in George Smiley’s character, illustrating the innate loyalty tensions in all humans that Philby abandoned. At the end of the novel, Smiley asserts that Haydon betrayed as a lover, colleague, and friend, as well as a patriot. Smiley knew “he did not grasp the scope of that appalling duplicity; yet there was a part of him that rose already in Haydon’s defence. Was not Bill also betrayed?”⁸³ Ergo, Smiley’s character has undergone a dramatic change, as he questions human motives and his own loyalties. He is disgusted, but also feels “a surge of resentment against the institutions he was supposed to be protecting... The Minister’s lolling mendacity, Lacon’s tight-lipped moral complacency, the bludgeoning greed of Percy Alleline... why would anyone be loyal to them?”⁸⁴ For once, Smiley doubts the institutions he has believed to have been so altruistic, reflecting the larger anxieties of British citizens at the time of Philby’s defection. Both Haydon and Philby functioned as channels for British people’s larger concerns about their supposed protectors, and not surprisingly, society felt betrayed. Although he does not condone Haydon’s actions, Smiley achieves an understanding of Haydon’s predic-

⁸² Scanlon, “Philby and His Fictions,” 540.

⁸³ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 332.

⁸⁴ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 332.

ament because he had been played in the “world’s game,”⁸⁵ just as we all have; it is the reason for our struggle to remain loyal and is evidence of the unavoidable ambiguity of life as a social being.

George Smiley: A Changed Spy, Consumed by Unavoidable and Irresolvable Ambiguities

The changes in George Smiley not only reflect the sentiments and struggles of the British citizens in the mid-Twentieth Century, but also reveal the internal human paradox that we all battle: the crusade for loyalties and the battle of opposing instincts. Smiley is quite the antithesis of James Bond and embodies the humanistic struggle in response to Philby’s negligence. Smiley was always an unexceptional character, but he was never bold enough to assert institutional loyalties. Kim Philby was an impetus for change. Le Carré’s work is predicated heavily on the notions of betrayal, trust, and mystery that became evident by Kim Philby. Interestingly, the new spy figure that was born holds few answers and in fact prompts more questions, as le Carré delved into the tangle of obscurities that plague human existence.

Smiley is a tactful, strategic, and talented interrogator,⁸⁶ but his good-naturedness is challenged in order to cope with the ambiguities exposed by Haydon, just as people were challenged by Philby. Smiley compromises his humanity in order to defeat Karla at the end of *The Quest for Karla* trilogy (which begins with *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*). Beene agrees that “succumbing to the absolutism of the-ends-justify-

⁸⁵ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 332.

⁸⁶ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 308.

any-means, Smiley loses the moral superiority that set him apart from Karla.⁸⁷ Such is the cost of the game of espionage. But unlike Philby, Smiley does not become lost in it. Rather, he seeks to gauge, as we all should, whether democracies can justify authoritarian methods, but still remain societies worthy of defense.⁸⁸ Recognition of this incongruity is a result of Smiley encountering himself as the enemy, yet another irony. He encounters Karla as his doppelgänger, his darker half. At the finale of the trilogy, Smiley realizes he has defeated Karla “with the weapons I abhorred, and they are his.”⁸⁹ Such a confrontation with means-to-an-end is the climax of Smiley’s transformation, which originates in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.

At the start of the novel, Smiley is insecure and weak, with “an inability to live a self-sufficient life independent of institutions.”⁹⁰ He later acknowledges how he had been “living with terror in his mouth.”⁹¹ But midway through the story, with the knowledge that Ann is unfaithful to him, although he is wholeheartedly loyal to her, he begins to deviate from his persistent morality and loyalty to love. He says, “I have a theory which I suspect is rather immoral... Each of us has only a quantum of compassion.”⁹² Such skepticism about the most essential part of humanity, the

⁸⁷ Beene, *John le Carré*, 12.

⁸⁸ Beene, *John le Carré*, 48.

⁸⁹ John le Carré, *Smiley’s People* (1979), quoted in LynnDianne Beene, *John le Carré* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992), 108.

⁹⁰ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 24.

⁹¹ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 275.

⁹² Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 196.

human factor, love, is the gateway to Smiley's metamorphosis into a Karla-like spy figure. He becomes "distrustful as ever of the standard shapes of human motive."⁹³ But Smiley's heart is still good. At the end, he "wonder[s] whether there [is] any love between human beings that [does] not rest upon some sort of self-delusion," and admits to the inevitability that "whatever intellectual or philosophical precepts he clung to broke down entirely now that he was faced with the human situation."⁹⁴ He still finds that he is concerned about his personal loyalties, and importantly, he feels responsible for those loyalties he believes he has betrayed. Although he may find himself employing the means of the enemy, his ends are very noble and are rooted in the fact that he maintains his loyalty to compassion.

Haydon, like Philby, has "no home, no woman, no faith."⁹⁵ In short, he has no love, making him a model for what not to do when facing battling loyalties. He calls Smiley's love, Ann, "The last illusion of the illusionless man."⁹⁶ By sleeping with Smiley's wife, Haydon manipulates Smiley's genuine loyalty to love. But because Smiley cannot equate love with illusion as Haydon and Karla can, he maintains his humanity. Even despite the fact that he betrays his humanity at the end of the trilogy, by exploiting Karla's love for his daughter and using the very fanaticism characteristic of Karla's lunacy and evil, he acknowledges this. Smiley's struggle to reconcile himself with his victory

⁹³ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 353.

⁹⁴ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 327.

⁹⁵ Le Carré, introduction in Page and Leitch, 7.

⁹⁶ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 350.

by malevolent means is evidence of his faith in compassion. He does not deceive himself. Thus, Smiley is a model (not a solution) that prompts people to endure the duplicitous nature of existence. He is forced to deal with the guilt derived from his compassion. Although his intentions are just and rooted in genuine concern, the means require manipulations that deviate from his personal morals. The physical outcome is a victory overall, but the ethical outcome does not correspond ideally, suggesting unavoidable inconsistencies in life that often seem unfair. In the face of such disheartening and conflicting realities, Smiley is meant to be a source of comfort for people.

Le Carré's lack of admiration for Philby⁹⁷ stemmed from the fact that he did not meet the struggle as Smiley did. Instead, Philby wrapped himself in lies and admirers, becoming a multifaceted enigma just like Haydon. Le Carré attributed attempts to understand Philby as a man to "the peeling of an onion; even the most gifted interrogator may never reach the heart."⁹⁸ Indeed, Smiley could not fully unravel Haydon, suggesting that a certain amount of deceit is inevitable in humanity.

Smiley reveals our deepest convictions, making him a very different hero from James Bond. Thus, with Kim Philby's defection, a new narrative of the spy was born. He is a hero who may encounter shifts from morality to loyalty, while simultaneously being tormented by loyalty to self.

The Cost of a Career in Espionage

⁹⁷ Le Carré, introduction in Page and Leitch, 16.

⁹⁸ Le Carré, introduction in Page and Leitch, 13.

The espionage system demands that spies bury their humanity. It does not exist on the foundation of spies like Smiley; it chews them up and spits them out. What remains of the spy is the disheartening rubble of shattered morals and loyalties. Rather, the system requires dehumanized spies like James Bond who are wholeheartedly faithful to their national and professional duties. After all, the purpose of the institution is to protect the nation. But the cost to the individuals involved is an invidious world of self-doubt.

Essentially, the espionage institution employs a cruel gambit to dehumanize spies. This is manifested by the title of le Carré's novel, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, which is a play on a British children's counting game. In the novel, the SIS uses the rhyme to code-name their spies: Bill Haydon is "Tailor" and George Smiley is "Beggarmen".⁹⁹ The system is capable of making something as innocent as child's play duplicitous. Le Carré proposed that these corrupt centers, reminiscent of real life espionage systems and national institutions, toy with the lives of individuals to advance their larger goals. Obsessed with "national self-advancement,"¹⁰⁰ they fail to recognize ideology. Haydon recognizes this, echoing Philby's disgust with the British SIS, saying, "Too much lost, wasted, too many scandals... The ordinary principles of tradecraft and security have gone to the wall in this service... We're losing our livelihood. Our self-respect."¹⁰¹ Smiley similarly questions institutional integrity when he asks the incarcerated Karla, "Your own side is going to

⁹⁹ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*.

¹⁰⁰ Le Carré, introduction in Page and Leitch, 9.

¹⁰¹ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 134.

shoot you. Don't you think it's time to recognise that there is as little worth on your side as there is on mine?"¹⁰² Le Carré's doubts are also evident in *The Philby Conspiracy*, having written, "I believe that SIS in its worst years, far from being a putrescent arm upon a healthy body, was infected by a general sickness which grew out of the sloth and disorientation of afterwar."¹⁰³ He further contended that "Philby, spiteful, vain and murderous as he was, was the spy and catalyst whom the Establishment deserved."¹⁰⁴ Philby was a source to reveal the degeneracy of the system and the game it played. The pain of the game is the savaged individuals that conclude *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.

Moreover, the espionage institution, and arguably the British government too, was in stasis in the mid-Twentieth Century. Philby himself recognized that the British government was "helpless"¹⁰⁵ in comparison to the Soviet Union's increasing power, which is why he maintained that "one does not look twice at an offer of enrolment [sic] in an elite force."¹⁰⁶ His degeneracy aside, this line of thinking clearly influenced le Carré's fiction, in which Smiley condemns the "British capacity to spike the advance of history"¹⁰⁷ and not contribute; "the Circus wasn't just silent, it was frozen."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 204.

¹⁰³ Le Carré, introduction in Page and Leitch, 15.

¹⁰⁴ Le Carré, introduction in Page and Leitch, 15.

¹⁰⁵ Philby, *My Silent War*, 15.

¹⁰⁶ Philby, *My Silent War*, 17

¹⁰⁷ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 346.

¹⁰⁸ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 76.

Such paralysis impaired the system to recognize treachery among its own, such as Philby's and Haydon's, when it had previously recognized that "a service that did not struggle did not survive."¹⁰⁹ Just as people must actively face the paradoxical loyalty struggle, so must institutions if they are to effectively protect the people in a fluctuating world of betrayal.

Such broader evidence for institutional deterioration also supports the realistic nature of le Carré's writing. He provided crucial social understanding for his readers in order to endure life in the British Empire. Consequently, espionage literature became a valuable asset to humanity and may in fact have been a *necessity*. Grayson Clary called this "spy-novel nationalism," whereby British espionage authors labored by "the twilight of imperial dignity."¹¹⁰ The rally to counter declining patriotism is perhaps a reason for Bond's continued popularity as a patriot who inspires hope. And the battle against the "professional vanity"¹¹¹ of institutions is where le Carré's novel provides a slightly more satisfactory conclusion than reality, as mentioned with Haydon's death. Such literature thus provides a mechanism for coping with the vicissitudes of the world (or not coping and becoming one with the inhumanity of the institution, which often occurs in real espionage as in the Philby case). Even when figures like Kim Philby threaten to destroy

¹⁰⁹ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 134.

¹¹⁰ Grayson Clary, "Essays Kim Philby, Jack Reacher, and Spy-Novel Nationalism," *The Millions*, September 26, 2014, accessed January 16, 2015, <http://www.themillions.com/2014/09/kim-philby-jack-reacher-and-spy-novel-nationalism.html/comment-page-1>.

¹¹¹ Le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor*, 99.

all trust and hope, we must follow Smiley's example to remain steadfast in our convictions and skeptically face adversity, accepting the burdensome fact that many moral dilemmas are ambiguous and cannot be satisfactorily solved. But if these issues are disregarded and entombed in illusion, then self-loyalty breaks down and individual humanity is essentially negated. Perhaps the British people *needed* to hear this narrative in order to maintain some semblance of hope amidst omnipresent despair.

Traces of Philby in the Spy Figure and Beyond

While other factors, particularly Cold War events, contributed to the mounting anxiety that motivated espionage literature in the mid-Twentieth Century, Kim Philby most dramatically influenced the figure of the spy. Philby helped to paint an image of a faceless, unidentifiable enemy in each one of us, in addition to the unknown enemies of nations. Grayson Clary is not alone in his assertion that Greene and le Carré broke the mold of espionage literature in the mid-Twentieth Century by exposing the tension between the spy and the institution.¹¹² While Ian Fleming's spy was an imaginative amalgamation of hero and villain who pursued amoral adventures, London newspapers like *The Times* endorsed the "drab uncertainty" and betrayal that marked le Carré's realistic writing.¹¹³ His

¹¹² Clary, "Essays Kim Philby, Jack Reacher, and Spy-Novel Nationalism."

¹¹³ "Two Worlds of Espionage," *The Times*, February 1, 1966, accessed January 15, 2015, <http://find.galegroup.com.libproxy.scu.edu/ttda/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=sant38536&tabID=T003&docPage=article&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&docId=CS67594817&type=multipage&contentSet=LTO&versio>

work was viewed as the “grubby truth”¹¹⁴ and helped the public face the betraying realities of institutions as well as humanity.

All espionage literature reflected the new era of secret intelligence that was ripe with treachery, as demonstrated by Ian Fleming’s works. It was not until after Philby defected that le Carré’s archetypal spy partially morphed into the immoral enemy; *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* and George Smiley embody the reaction to Philby. Not only is *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* modeled off the story of Philby as a double agent, but it analyzes the psychosis of the traitor and reveals that everyone is capable of and subject to betrayal. Life’s great question then, is how do we balance diverging personal and moral loyalties with institutional and ideological loyalties? This is Smiley’s great struggle, and it is within each of us. Le Carré’s intents for writing his novel delved deeper than reflecting imperial corruption or elitist betrayal, they considered the human condition, as it was forsaken by Philby, and how the vicissitudes of an increasingly shadowy world mandate that we face the struggle between the sins and scruples that plague our souls. It is not so much that we must accept Conrad’s “heart of darkness” as Maurice Castle did, but we must be inquisitive of institutional ethics when the methods mimic those of the adversary. This was le Carré’s point. And because of the ubiquitous ambiguities, the result is

n=1.0.

¹¹⁴ "Screen Version of John Le Carré's Famous Spy Thriller," *The Times*, January 13, 1966, accessed January 15, 2015, <http://find.galegroup.com.libproxy.scu.edu/ttda/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=sant38536&tabID=T003&docPage=article&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&docId=CS235104813&type=multipage&contentSet=LTO&version=1.0>.

actually a “heart of confusion.” Le Carré’s only solution to this was *de facto* not a solution at all, but merely a coping mechanism via active skepticism. As a result of Philby’s exposure of the treacherous nature of espionage, as well as the corruption of the institutions that claim to protect, George Smiley becomes a dynamic character who is torn by the struggles that inevitably torment every human soul. The “Philby shift” is reflected as Smiley becomes more entangled in the debauchery of the system and begins to lose sight of his human loyalties, just as Philby lost sight. We all possess the inevitable human inclination to betray, and according to le Carré, our communication is “obstructed by qualifications and often with concern about how our messages are received - whether we will lose face,”¹¹⁵ becoming more confusing when funneled through bureaucracy. The stagnancy of bureaucratic institutions, like espionage systems, is unacceptable and demands reform involving “remedies outside the framework of conventional bourgeois thinking,”¹¹⁶ as Philby told *The Times*. But forsaking one’s humanity is not the answer, even though it may be easier than facing the contradictory realities, as le Carré revealed in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. By calling for a “moral order beyond ideology,”¹¹⁷ le Carré instructed readers

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carré*, 137.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Daniel Priollet, "Philby Says 'I Would Do It Again'," *The Times*, November 15, 1967, accessed January 15, 2015,

<http://find.galegroup.com.libproxy.scu.edu/ttda/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=sant38536&tabID=T003&docPage=article&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&docId=CS17788271&type=multipage&contentSet=LTO&version=1.0>

¹¹⁷ Aronoff, *The Spy Novels of John Le Carré*, 2.

to be critically analytical and inquisitive, but be warned of the side effects of succumbing to the degeneracy of one institution and thereby abandoning personal loyalties. In le Carré's spy world, the real world, morality and human paradox cannot be ignored. Betrayal cannot be condoned as schoolboy adventures and fantasies and institutions cannot be acquitted of foul play. In the real world, there are real traitors, like Kim Philby, who threaten to undermine the society that struggles to be stable. Yet this struggle is crucial to the development of the society as well as individuals, like George Smiley, in order to understand opposing loyalties and accept the reality of their contention. Otherwise we turn to illusion and become appendages of the immoral, ideological machine, losing sight of our humanity and propagating a world of lies. Such is the inverted legacy of Kim Philby. It is not one of hope as much as it is one of caution and awareness, requiring the compassion and determination of George Smiley, and most of all, endurance. While humanity may prefer to be blissfully ignorant, history demands that we face the unscrupulous nature of humans and institutions. Only then can we begin to grasp the mystery of existence in an ironic world flooded with ambiguous moralities.

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