Graham Greene is one of the most widely read among the serious writers of fiction today. The reason is not far to seek. What he writes about is significant — it is no less than the human condition manifested in terms of modern existence. At the same time, we have a brilliant surface; the plots, the situations and the characters involved in them fulfil excellently the primary requirements of a story, namely, that they should be interesting. They arouse our curiosity, create suspense, and engage our interest and sympathy. Some of the story situations indeed have all the hallmarks of a crime thriller, and yet in the course of the excitement of pursuit and flight, we have
a sensitive moral exploration which elevates our enjoyment to a higher level. The remarkable thing about Graham Greene's work is indeed this fine adjustment between the themes and their externalization in terms of people and events. In the final analysis, they are neither mere thrillers nor mere thesis-novels, but partake of the excitement of one and the seriousness and significance of the other. It is this happy combination of form and matter, of body and soul, as it were, that draws not only "children from play" but also "old men from chimney corners" to hear his tales. What one has enjoyed, what one has been impressed by, one must talk about, and hence this dissertation.

The dissertation is primarily concerned with the themes emerging from Graham Greene's major novels, the ones which have established him in the public mind as a significant writer, though it is rounded off at the end with a necessary chapter on technique in order
to establish his credentials as an artist in addition to being a sensitive man and a thinker.

The work has been divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with Greene's religious concern, more specifically with his Catholic orientation, since this has been the feature most readily and widely noticed and commented upon with appreciation or with disapproval. The second chapter is an account of the author's childhood and the impact of early years on his life since, from the evidence as well as on his own admission, his work has been influenced by his experiences of an unhappy childhood. The three succeeding chapters (III, IV and V) present an analysis of the themes and the thematic motifs in nine of his major novels. The sixth chapter deals, though briefly, with his technique, the means by which the themes have been

(vi)
presented, mainly in terms of character, situation and event, as well as the manner of narration adopted. The chapter concludes with a brief evaluation of Greene's work based on the features noticed earlier in the dissertation.