Chapter One of this thesis, entitled Introduction, discusses the existing critical approaches to Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's writing, her unique position among the creative writers of fiction on India, the three distinct stages in her development as a woman and as an artist, her fiction as the expression of a sensitive writer, and the evolution in her mode and style from comic objectivity to ironic self-discovery.

Chapter Two, entitled Comic Observation of Indian life and Detached Objectivity, analyses To Whom She Will and The Nature of Passion, the first two novels of Jhabvala and shows how they are light-hearted comedies of social manners and morals, with no deep concern. It discusses Jhabvala's comic observation of Indian life and customs and her detached objectivity in the first phase of her writing.

Chapter Three, entitled Active Repulsion, Self-Awareness and Self-Knowledge, examines Esmond in India, The Householder and Get Ready for Battle. It shows how Jhabvala's initial fascination for India turns into active repulsion and how amusement thickens into irony and how objectivity leads to self-awareness and self-knowledge. It also shows that a fine line between comedy and tragedy can be noticed in this period.

Chapter Four, entitled Disillusionment with India, analyses Like Birds, Like Fishes, A Backward Place, A Stronger Climate, A New Dominion, Heat and Dust, How I Became a Holy Mother and Other Stories, In Search of Love and Beauty, Out of India, and Three Continents. It also shows that Indian characters are replaced at the centre of her fictional stage by Westerners caught up in the disillusionment with India that is part of her own experience.
Chapter Five, entitled *Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's Fictional Techniques*, studies the techniques that she uses in her narration. It also traces the steady progression in her narrative mode from dispassionate objectivity to ironic self-discovery.

Chapter Six, entitled *Conclusion* consolidates the findings of the earlier chapters and assesses Jhabvala's works in their chronological order with a view to seeing the development of both the mind of the artist and her technique.