

Write a critical note on the central theme of *The Heart of the Matter*.

Introduction :-

The Heart of the Matter, *Brighton Rock* and *The Power and the Glory*, the three novels of Graham Greene are very religious in character. They obviously disclose his preoccupation with Roman Catholicism. Religion is one of the major themes in the novel. The Hero of it, Major Scobie embraces death as a result of his interaction with Roman Catholic faith.

Religion as the theme of *The Heart of the Matter* :-

Greene as a Roman Catholic, deals with some vital problems created by his firm faith in Roman Catholicism which implies regular going to Church for Confessions for attending Mass and Communion. If a sinner goes to Communion in a state of sin, it forces him towards his damnation. Scobie has committed the sin of adultery with Helen, yet he goes to the Church for Communion. He can neither give up his amorous relations with his mistress Helen, nor can he refuse to go for Communion with his wife. According to his religious Roman Catholic faith, a person who commits suicide, is also damned finally. Scobie commits a suicide. His damnation is inevitable in both the cases.

Moral Decline and Downfall of the Hero :-

Another theme of the novel is obviously the moral decline and downfall of the Hero, Major Scobie. He is fundamentally a man of excellent qualities, yet he is a sinner. He

displays his natural pity and sympathy for those who come in his contact. He is irresistibly drawn towards a sinful life, though his sinfulness does not make him a repulsive character. His earthly sins culminate in the sin of suicide. Father Frank suggests in the end of the novel that Scobie gets salvation.

Greene's obsession with sin and evil :-

It is very correct to say that the heart of the matter is the innate sinfulness of man and his need of divine according to the critical situations. Scobie the hero of The Heart of the Matter experiences a feeling of intancepity for the sick and the wounded who have survived a shipwreck but are in a deplorable condition. Scobie feels that not only human beings but planets would also probably excite our pity if the truth about them were to be known to us. If The Heart of the Matter were non, he would also feel pity even for the stars and planets. Scobie is in urgent need of getting divine mercy. He feels that committing a suicide is a divine mercy as he has established an illicit physical relationship with his mistress Helen Rolt. Scobie has been infatuated (257, 197-11) towards Helen that he is not ready to live her at any cost. On one occasion Helen even scolds him and says, "clear out and go to Hell" now this could have been an opportunity for him to end his affair with her, but instead he writes a love letter to her confessing that he cannot

for shake her and that he loves her more than himself, more than his wife, even more than god. It is quite surprising that he has involved god in his sinful affair. He expresses his disgust in this way, "O God I have deserted you. Don't you Desert me". These words explicitly indicate that Scobie is very much conscious of his the generation and moral decline.

Conclusion :-

Scobie's faith in catholicism is always wavering. his religious decline is particularly sin when he goes to church in a state of mortal sin. The themes of the novel The Heart of the Matter are very impressive Scobie's Sceptic attitudes about religion and God are beyond imagination and discription. He expresses his doubts about Gods attitudes towards human being.