PREFACE

My interest in the novels treating ideological murder dates back to my M.Phil. years in Pondicherry University, when I listened to a lecture by one of our teachers on Richard Wright's *Native Son*, in the Research Club. The teacher's justification of the protagonist of the novel, Bigger Thomas's act of murder of a white girl on ideological grounds had sown the seeds of thought in my mind. I started thinking deeply about the logic behind even such a cruel act as murder and understood that murder could also be good and creative sometimes. That is, the murder of a monstrous villain who has been a constant peril to the lives of the society is good and it could be justified on all grounds. When the villain is killed for public cause it involves an ideology, the socialist ideology. Literature, which is a reflection of life, also evidences such ideological murders committed by men who employ it as a weapon in order to realize their goals. The seeds of the thought of justification of murder and the treatment of such justification in literature have been dormant in my mind for quite long. These seeds had fruitfully sprouted when I joined Ph.D. under my teacher Dr. N. Natarajan, Reader in English, and has now grown into a tree, the present thesis.

I have been helped in innumerable ways by people around me in realizing the completion of this research. Foremost of them all is Dr. N.
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R. RAJAVELU