Acknowledgments

I would like to record my admiration and thanks to my supervisor, Dr GJV Prasad for his patience, cheerful encouragement, insightful interventions and helpful critical comments.

I am grateful to Prof. R. Raveendran, Department of Modern Indian Languages, Delhi University, for helping me locate books, publishers and encourage me to work independently. My thanks to Dr. Anand Prakash who raised questions that helped me clarify my readings and organize my arguments better.

My work was made less stressful through help and assistance extended by Mr. Padmanabhan of Sahitya Akademy Library and the staff at South Campus Library, NSD Library and JNU Library.

Writers Imaiyan, Sivakami, Bama, Dilip Kumar and Ambai responded to my queries over telephone and letters with warmth and promptness. Their insights on my translations and readings were helpful in ordering my thesis better.

I recall with gratitude and love my teachers Harishchandra Masterji, R. Sarada, Rama Rao, Dr. Som Raj Gupta, Dr Badri Raina, Dr. T.A.P. Singh, Dr Shanta Kadambi, Prof. Brij Raj Singh, Prof. G.K. Das, Prof. Vinod Sena and Dr. C.D. Siddhu.

My gratitude to Pitaji, Mataji and Appa for sharing my domestic responsibilities. My special thanks to Shashank, Parikshith, Aditya, Dilip, Bhawani, Seema and Anna, Girija, Ranjini, Bhuvana, Sundari, Rama for being there for me, always.

A special thanks to Broti for sharing my anxieties, frustrations and numerous (mis) adventures over the wooded paths and a maze of windows at JNU Campus.

A hearty thanks to my students for hounding me to complete my work on time.

This thesis could not have been completed without the support and help of Sharat. However, I shall not thank him for the simple reason that I never ever can thank him enough.

June 2006

B. MANGALAM