ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I received a Master of Philosophy from Sambalpur University in 1986 working with Professor R.S. Mishra. Later, under his supervision, I prepared the first draft of my doctoral dissertation as a Research Fellow in the Post Graduate Department of English, Sambalpur University. I thank the authorities of Sambalpur University for awarding me a Research Fellowship. As my supervisor, Prof. Mishra has been an unfailing support sustaining me through many hard times. I am thankful to my teacher Professor Madhusudan Pati for his encouragement and advice. I thank Dr. Subha Dasgupta, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University for suggesting some improvements in this dissertation.

I thank the Director, American Studies Research Centre, Hyderabad for awarding me a grant to do some reading at the centre in connection with my work.

I thank Mrs. Rita Mishra for being a source of inspiration as a friend during the preparation of this dissertation.

I thank the learned Examiner, who gave me an opportunity to revise and to improve this dissertation. I believe that all human writings, in some ways or other, are always improvable. It is needless to mention, however, that I have used the learned Examiner's advice within the limits of my ability and circumstances, and that I am solely responsible for the mistakes and shortcomings which still remain in this revised dissertation.

(Snehalata Mishra)