PREFACE

This thesis is a result of four years of research. The conceptualization of the problem for research was arrived at on the 2nd of June, 1998. I was on my way to Delhi and the trip was a decisive one; for, till then I had not seriously thought of what I wanted to do in life. The discussions with my guide, Dr. Susan Visvanathan, on the topic ensured me that I am not wrong and there is a world to explore ahead of me. I must particularly thank my guide for keeping me steady in the track of research with offers of appropriate selection of books periodically. I also thank Jayasankar, Kiran, Peggy, Subrato, Rahul, Sabari, Mohinder and Manmohan for their help in various ways. Notwithstanding all, the singular inspiration behind everything has been my parents.

Of the libraries first comes our own alma mater, the JNU library. The true wealth of this library was revealed in stages, and one wonders what more lay between the stacks. The shortcomings are glaring and often frustrating, but, the text book, basement, fourth and fifth floors have been a coveted treasure for me. Other sources have been equally effective, even if, not as benevolent. The NMML or the Teen Murti library, the CSSS library, the CHS library, the CESP-Exim Bank library, the CPS library, the Sahitya Academy Library have all been very dependable. I thank the staff of these libraries for their co-operation in tracking down the books. The Bookworm proved a rewarding spot to look for publications found missing elsewhere.

In the field work, I must thank first of all Ravi, with the enduring vision of a Communist, who in the course of the many dialogues we had, fused harmoniously the many images of his past, present as well as future. My native place, a place where I had also grown up, playing games, was coming back to me in rock hard concepts of politics and history. But, I was not one to be defeated. The strength of every one of them who collaborated with this research helped me in this. Thattarapurackal Chennukutty, English Velayudhan, Panikkettil Chandru, Kochupennu, Arackaparambil Aappu, Pengan, Abhimanyu(late), Kalarikkal Narayanan(late), Monappil Sankaranarayanan, Asokan, Arackaparambil Korappan, Kumbalaparambil
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Notwithstanding all, any error or omission is totally mine.