PREFACE

The Working Class- Is it just another phrase in English language or is there anything more to it? Is it worthy enough to be a subject for historical research or is it the ‘Subject in history’? These are the questions that concern part of debate, discussions, workshops- all conducted in subject of these exercises affirm their specific role through protests and struggles at various moments in history. The affirmation of their own role is an aspect of their protest repressive machinery of the state. The memory of the labour movement is filled with the recollection of strikes that were concern and completely forgotten elsewhere, although they left a deep mark on the region where they occurred.

My interest and efforts in carrying out research on the working classes stem not only from my subjective sympathies towards the Working Class, but also from my conviction that every experience of the working class belong to the collective experience of the Indian Working Class. And more important, the working class struggle against challenging questions that must be revised on the level where they actually arise- that of political effectiveness and not of scholarship alone. This is the basic purpose of my research.

It is my mother who is responsible for my involvement in the student and youth movements from my early days in college. She was unflinching in her conviction that what father does was correct. She was instrumental in moulding me into an activist- by seeing to it that i get up early in the morning and get ready on days when I Had a meeting to attend or a strike or procession to organise in one of the schools or colleges. She never hesitated to stay awake and serve my dinner on
those days when I reached home late night. Well, she was herself a participant in many such movements.

The thirsty of my supervisor Prof. B. Maria John Head, Dept. Of History, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu, in promoting this desire of mine is the most important of all factors that enabled me to take up such a topic. He had his reservations on very few statements of mine, but his expressions were never against the research design and its basic purpose. I can never forget his reminders on various occasions to discharge my political responsibilities as well as to take care of my studies.

My mother and Father vied with each other in ensuring that I am not deprived of any opportunity to study. They ensured that money was never a constraint in as far as my requirements to pursue my studies are concerned. But for their determination, and efforts, a smooth uninterrupted educational career up to this stage would not have been possible.

This atmosphere at home was conducive to build in me a determination to take up this subject for research. However, there were other factors which had their influences in building up this desire to study the role of the Working Class in making the history of our country.

I also sincerely remember My beloved Principal Dr. R. Dhanalakshmi and among the many friends whose companionship I enjoyed through this work Dr. A. Renuka, H.O.D. of History, Govt. Arts college, Salem-636007, Dr. V. Krishnakumar, Head, Dept. Of Physics, Periyar University, Salem-636011, Dr. M. Tamilmaran, Professor of Tamil, Periyar University, Salem-636011 and
Dr. S. Gunasekaran, H.O.D. of Tamil, Govt. Arts College, Salem-07 are the ones whom I can never forget. In my days of frustration, it is my wife Mrs. P. Mangayarkarasi M.A., M.Phil., who succeeded in instilling the confidence in me that Marxism is scientific and it shall never fail.

Let me express that Prof. K.A. Manikumar, who contributed a lot in ensuring the completion of this thesis by putting up with a lot of problem in the process. Mr. Gowthaman was extremely nice to me whenever i went to him for my typing work. But for their cooperation i might not have been able to complete this thesis so soon.

Last but not the least, let me make a note of clarification on my subjective sympathies to the cause of the working class- that this does not mean in any sense to relegate the mistakes committed by them and their leadership and romanticise the story. On the other hand, the effort is to construct the history of the working class to learn from the experiences in order to go ahead in fulfilling a historical necessity.

The urge to do this is more important today when the social fabric, the base on which the edifice of a revolutionary struggle is to be built up by the working class is being threatened by forces of reaction in the country.

(M. Maaravarman)