ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply indebted to Dr. P. Geetha, my supervising teacher, for her infinite patience in going through this work several times, paying attention even to the minute details; for her insightful suggestions which motivated me to explore deeper in to the texts; and most importantly, for inspiring me to put in my best into the work without ever making me conscious of the hard work involved.

I am thankful to my friends in my department for their support and encouragement; for their creative suggestions and critical perceptions. Words are inadequate to express my love and gratitude to them.

I remember with gratitude the various scholars and officials in the different libraries in Madurai, Mysore, Hyderabad, Thiruvananthapuram and Kottayam for their valuable help in locating and collecting reference books. I also thank all in the School of Letters, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam for their wholehearted cooperation.

R. Mrudula