ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly I would like to place on record my deepest gratitude to Dr. Sr. Mary K.A. (alias Sr. Sheila Kannath C.M.C.), my supervising teacher, for her illuminating guidance and constant encouragement. I consider it as a privilege to be guided by such an eminent teacher, writer and musician. She is and will remain a great inspiration in overcoming several obstacles.

I am immensely grateful to Dr. A.R. Vijayaraghavan, Rtd. Professor, Govt. College, Thrissur; Dr. Vijay Nair, Dept. of English, Govt. Victoria College, Palakkad and Ms. Vijayalakshmi, Dept. of English, Vimala College, Thrissur, for their help and valuable suggestions at the various steps of this study.

I am also grateful to the Principals and Heads of the Department of English, Mercy College Palakkad, since 2001, for the support I received from them.

I owe a great deal to the generous assistance I received from the Librarians and Staff of Rabindra Bhavana, Santiniketan; Central Library, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan; IACIS, Hyderabad; American Library, Chennai; Institute of English, Kerala University; Calicut University Library; Kerala University Library; Library of the Research Centre for Comparative Studies in English, Mercy College, Palakkad; Public Library, Thrissur and Library of Vimala College.

I am extremely thankful to my Principal and colleagues at N.S.S.H.S.S. Mundathicode for encouraging me to pursue my work earnestly.

I acknowledge my warmest thanks to all my teachers at the Institute of English, Kerala University; my friend Dr. Asha Thomas of St. Joseph’s...
College, Irinjalakkuda and Prof. G. Madhavan Nair, Rtd. Professor, N.S.S.College, Dhanuvachapuram for instilling a love for research in me.

A special word of thanks to my dear friends, Ani, Deepa, Sobha, Bindu and Mini for being towers of strength in hours of need.

Words become inadequate to express my sense of indebtedness to my parents who initiated me to the world of letters. Their love and understanding drive me forward. I remember fondly the help of my sister Remya, who often shouldered the burden of my household duties.

My husband, Pradeep, is my most discerning editor and critic. His unconditional love and strength of character are my greatest pillars of support. Thanking him will be a formal and futile venture on my part. Let me also thank my little ones Niranjan and Medha, who quite cheerfully adapted themselves to the research days of both their parents.

Finally, with deep love and veneration, I remember Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati for “his knowledge of God and his understanding of the earth.”