PREFACE

This thesis deals with the aesthetic theory and the artistic creations of Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo as a metaphysician and a mystic is known the world over. His integral philosophy has dealt extensively with the nature of Reality, the goal of man and the theory of evolution and has bridged the gulf between Matter and Spirit. All the same his achievement as a literary artist and aesthetcian is no less outstanding than his metaphysical output and spiritual accomplishment. His metaphysics has accorded to beauty its rightful place in the scheme of human evolution and in man's march towards perfection. Besides his literary creations, his observations on the nature of beauty and its place in life, scattered as they are all over his works, philosophical, literary, social and cultural, make a significant contribution to the philosophy of beauty. The aim of this thesis is to highlight Sri Aurobindo's aesthetics, in theory and in practice.

The thesis is divided into two parts each of which is further divided into chapters. Part One deals with Sri Aurobindo's conception of beauty, his poetics and critical concepts which have added new facets to literary criticism
in general. **Part Two** which examines his works for their artistic quality, purports to assess how far Sri Aurobindo's critical credos have been honoured by him in their observance, and how far they have been operative in his literary works. The study of the poems and other writings of Sri Aurobindo in this thesis is mainly illustrative, confined as it is to a few selected pieces representative of the various branches of literature.

This thesis is the result of the research work undertaken by me as a part-time research scholar at the Dr S. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, from December 1977.

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S. VENKATARAMAN