Acknowledgements:

This dissertation would not have been possible without the unstinting support of my supervisor Dr Moinak Biswas whose meticulous attention and severe critical interventions have enabled me to clarify and consolidate my nascent arguments into cogency. I am immensely grateful for the patience and care with which he has seen me through to the completion of this project. I also thank my co-supervisor Prof Sibaji Bandyopadhyay for his comments and questions and for the occasional dialogues that have helped me organize my thoughts and have prompted me into exploring new directions of enquiry.

I am also deeply indebted to Prof Lakshmi Subramanian, who had been my supervisor for the first few years of my research and without whose encouragement and support I could not have embarked on this project.

I thank Prof Tapati Guha-Thakurta for having gently instigated me into conceiving this project while I was still a student under the Research Training programme at the CSSSC. Her consistent interest in my work and her pointed questions, observations and suggestions have helped me unravel some of the most stubborn knots in my arguments.

I have also gained vastly from the questions and comments put forth not only by faculty members but also by fellow students who have attended my doctoral presentations at the CSSSC and from my continued interactions with them both within and beyond the institutional confines of courses, seminars and lectures that I have attended.

Among my friends, Paulomi Chakraborty has been an invaluable co-conspirator in the act of dissertating; she has supported and inspired me through the most isolated and despondent stages of writing—our discussions, arguments and disagreements have often been constitutive to my responses to particular films and Bombay cinema in general. Anindya Sengupta has patiently read all my earlier drafts and made crucial observations and suggestions at a time when I was still struggling with the rhetoric of genres like the action film. Varuni Bhatia, Sharmadip Basu, Rajlaxmi Ghosh, Susmita Ghosh, Kallo Ray, Manas Bhattacharya, Madhuban
Mitra and Kamalika Mukherjee have provided generous material support and stimulating dialogue and altercations on subjects academic and otherwise. Sraman Mukherjee, Sanjukta Sunderason and Manidipa Mandal have brought me back from the brink of insanity several times over with their reassurances and help with tasks small and large at times when I was too overwhelmed with work. Thanks are due to Madhumita Pyne, Sahana Bajpai, Rhea Sinha and Subhadeep Ghosh for rescuing me with food, board and sparkling company in Bombay, London and Pune. I must also thank Sahana and Daminee Basu for their subtle rebukes which have spurred me into expediting the final stages of writing.

Among my seniors, I thank Anustup Basu for suggesting and e-mailing me necessary resource materials in response to my often under-articulated queries and for reading my chapter draft at a time when I found myself assailed with self-doubt. Madhuja Mukherjee and Subhajit Chatterjee have been instrumental in keeping up morale and suggesting numerous films for my perusal. I also thank Abhijit Roy for the several informal conversations that we’ve had on topics directly or indirectly relating to my area of research.

I thank all the members of the library staff, especially Sanchita and Jayati at the CSSSC and Mrinal Kanti Mondal at the Department of Film Studies at Jadavpur University, as well as the library staff and resource personnel at the National Film Archive of India, Pune and the SOAS Library, London for letting me access books, films and other materials.

I could not have undertaken this project without the institutional and infrastructural support of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta and my home department of Film Studies at Jadavpur University. I must also thank the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) for providing me with a research grant for the first few years over which this thesis gradually began to take shape.

Finally, no words of thanks or expressions of gratitude are adequate for my mother, who has been the most constant and inexhaustible source of comfort, succour and affection through the many difficult years that it took me to write this dissertation.