ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would be foolish for someone to claim that the work done over a period of five and half years is a standalone enterprise (unless one is doing a PhD on meditation by meditation). In IGCAR, Kalpakkam where the intellectual density is high, it is impossible to move in the above said timescales without an inelastic knowledge scattering resulting in a change of one’s career trajectory. The work also benefits from the emotional and intellectual growth attained during the period prior to the doctoral work. Hence the number of people to be remembered and acknowledged far exceeds the page limit set by the university. The order in which people appear has no bearing on their relative importance and if someone important is missing it is the drawback of the random wiring of neurons inside this brain.

I am deeply indebted to my guide and mentor Dr. G. Amarendra for taking me as a student under him for this thesis project. Through intellectual and emotional support he has helped me to embrace the project and the ensuing PhD life with vigor and an open mind. His method in human interaction is a guide for any person to see how humanity and kindness can lead to success and most importantly happiness. I also express my deep sense of gratitude for the infinite amount of freedom in work which has helped in my growth as an individual and independent researcher.

I am also thankful to the Doctoral committee members Dr. C. S. Sundar, Dr. K. G. M. Nair and Dr. A. K. Arora for providing me with valuable guidance, tips and necessary experimental support during the research work. On a personal note, I extend my special gratitude to Dr. C. S. Sundar and Dr. A. Bharathi for their personal interest in my scientific and career growth. I am also thankful to Shri. M. C. Valsakumar for his interest in the pulsed positron project and for his stimulating classes.

I thank Dr. P. R. Vasudeva Rao, Director IGCAR and former directors Shri S. C. Chetal and Dr. Baldev Raj for allowing me to work in IGCAR with all the material comforts. I thank Dr. M. Sai Baba for his continuous support and for the help to have my family with me during this period.

I was extremely lucky to be in the company of kind hearted and helpful people in Metal Physics Section whose efforts are instrumental in bringing out the thesis in this form. I am in awe of two highly intelligent and magnanimous people, Dr. R. Rajaraman and Dr. G. Venogopal Rao who have helped to sharpen my thinking and experimental
skills. They have stood shoulder to shoulder to bear the weight of the project and many failures. I am also indebted to Dr. S. Abhaya and Ms. J Parimala for the initial training in positron spectroscopy and for carrying out numerous works on my behalf. I thankfully remember Ms. M. Premila, Dr. R. Govindraj, Dr. J. Jayapandian and Dr. T. N. Sairam for their support.

I have enjoyed the friendship, company, collaboration and stimulating discussion with Dr. R. N. Viswanath, Mr. C. David, Dr. Sujoy Chakravarty and Mr. V Raghunathan. I have enjoyed the company of Dr. Shamima Hussain, Dr. G. Bhalerao and Dr. Neeraj Shukla during this period. I am also thankful to Dr. J. Arunkumar, Mr. P. Magudapathy, Dr. M. Kamaruddin, Dr. Prabhakar, Mr. Balamurugan, Dr. Gomathy Natarajan, Dr. Rajagoapalan and Dr. K. K. Mishra for their help and support at various stages of my research work. I have had the luck to interact with Ms. Annalakshmi, Mr. Gururaj, Mr. Satyanarayan and Mr. Rajeev Ranjan who have helped in clarifying many doubts. I am thankful to the staff of liquid Nitrogen plant for their tireless efforts which keep our instruments running. I am also thankful for the stimulating corridor discussions with Mr. P Manojkumar and to Dr. Ajikumar for the innumerable borrowed consumables.

I have some great friends with whom I have had lot of quality time in the lab and at tea shops discussing, gossiping and in some occasions fighting. The people who define these five years for me are Mr. S. Hari Babu, Mr. R. Renjith, Mr. L. Herojith Singh, Mr. Shilpam Sharma, Mr. Ashok Bahuguna, Mr. Y. Sorb, Mr. Trinadh Raja, Mr. Girish Padhy, Mr. K. Panda and Dr. Prasanna Kumar Sahoo. I am also thankful to all my PhD batch mates as well as seniors and juniors for their well wishes.

I acknowledge Dr. G. Ambika, Dr. C. Sunil Sunny and Cpt. Viji Varghese for being my role models and mentors. I am also thankful to all my teachers who have given the knowledge I have and who has shaped my character.

I am thankful for all near and dear family members for their love and support during all these years. I am especially thankful to my parents for their continued support and love.

I am who I am because of two people near me. They are an intrinsic part of my physical and mental being and all my pain and effort belong to them.