ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis represents not only my workbook at the Department of Biochemistry, University of Calcutta, but it also symbolizes a long journey through crests and troughs towards fulfillment of a vision. As I have reached the near pinnacle of it, I am confident that I have not travelled in vacuum throughout this journey. This voyage has been kept on track and been seen through to completion with the support and encouragement of numerous people including my well-wishers, my friends, colleagues and numerous people from various institutions. At the end of my thesis, it is a pleasant task to express my thanks to all those who contributed in many ways to the success of this study and made it an unforgettable experience for me.

At the very onset I would like to thank my guide Dr. Anirban Siddhanta, Associate Professor, Department of Biochemistry, University of Calcutta for having the faith in me and entrusting me with the wonderful project. I had always been eager to work in the field of intracellular transport and signalling and I thank him for gifting me a fascinating problem to ponder over and dissect out. Being one of the very early students to work in his lab, I got to learn the very nuances of cell culture and microscopy directly from him. I was allowed to think independently over the problem and carve out experiments on my own that had helped me to build up a certain scientific acumen. Besides academic props, he also did provide the emotional back up that have helped me see through the rough roads to finish the study. Overall he made this long journey a very calm and pleasurable one.

The latter half of my study was entirely performed under the guidance of Dr. Chandrima Das, Associate Professor, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics. My association with her and her lab especially Sulagna Sanyal is one of the high points of this journey. A wonderful human being as
she is, it is only because of her that I now understand a bit of epigenetics. Discussing experiments with her was a very enjoyable experience as every time something new came up which kind of opened up new avenues in my study. I warmly thank her for all her valuable advice, constructive criticism and extensive discussions of my work.

This journey would have been a mundane one without the support and guidance of each and every faculty from the Department of Biochemistry, Biotechnology and Microbiology. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the H.O.D(s) of the Department of Biochemistry during my tenure. It would be utter stupefaction to name them one by one but all the professors of the above mentioned departments had a role to play in the final execution of the work done in this thesis. Their valuable comments and suggestions made this journey a smooth one. My special thanks to Prof. D.J. Chattopadhyay, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) whose able presence as a scaffold lets the whole of the scholar community of this department work without worries and tensions. I am also indebted to the staff and members of CU-DBT-IPLS programme for the infrastructural support, especially the confocal microscopic imaging which is one of the mainstays of this thesis. Timely help and support from the members of the departmental laboratory and office made work a lot easier and faster. I would also like to thank Flow-Cytometric facility of Centre for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, University of Calcutta, especially Dr. Sanjaya Mallick for smooth implementation of all the FACS related studies done in this thesis.

I would never miss the opportunity to extend by heartfelt gratitude to Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) for providing financial assistance for all these years which buttressed me to perform my work comfortably. I would also like to thank DBT, DST, UGC-CAS for funding my research without whose support this work would never have seen daylight.
The seeds of this journey were sown long back during my graduation and post-graduation days and I would like to thank each and every faculty who helped me prepare for this journey. Prof. Subir Dasgupta, Dr. Dipankar Sengupta, Prof. Tarak N. Khan, Prof Sanjib Das & Dr. Jayati Ghosh from Maulana Azad College deserve special mention. They were instrumental in inculcating the very essence of the subject within me. At this moment I also pay homage to Late Dr. Swapan Kumar Das, Professor, Department of Zoology, Asutosh College, under whose patronage I started understanding the quintessence of basic research during my graduation days.

The quaint miniscule questions that had propped up during my graduation days had started transforming into more pertinent ones under the able guidance of Prof. Chanchal Kumar Dasgupta, Prof. Utpal Chaudhuri, Prof. Uma Dasgupta, Prof. S. Raychaudhuri, Prof. Abhay S. Chakraborti and Dr. S. Sengupta, at the Department of Biophysics, Molecular Biology & Bioinformatics, University of Calcutta where I completed my masters in Biophysics & Molecular biology. I am indebted to them for preparing me ably for this journey. I am also beholden to Prof. J Gowrishankar and Prof. A.A. Sardesai, from Centre for DNA Fingerprinting & Diagnostics (CDFD), Hyderabad under whose able guidance, I had the first-hand experience of working in a laboratory and gained the much valuable experience of how to approach a given problem in a laboratory. In some way this experience had proved to be a foundation stone on which this thesis was constructed.

This whole journey would not have been a fun-filled and joyous one without the help and support of all my past and present lab mates. Debajit da and Kaushik Da were the potent seniors I could always fall back upon and expect a respite from any problem. Kaushik Da specially helped me out a lot throughout my Ph.D tenure, be it staying back in the lab for the night or coming to the lab at 5 am in the morning, he was the ideal person you could always fall back upon. Sudipta, Amit & Rajani created a friendly environment in the laboratory & Amit’s quick standardization of the
SDM protocol in the lab, accelerated my studies to a greater extent. My special thanks to Varsha Bhargava, project trainee in our lab without whose support, I would not have been able to publish my first paper. A special mention would be that of Mayukh Biswas, Project trainee in our lab whose continued encouragement kept up my spirits during trying times. He is now a research scholar at IICB, Kolkata and is still the one I fall back to for a healthy platter of HEK-293 cells to which he had never disappointed me. Last but not the least, Sohom, the junior most member of our lab has brought in the much needed zeal and enthusiasm that helped me spend greater hours in the lab with ease.

Not only my lab-mates but this work would not have been possible without the help, encouragement & support of scholars from the department of Biochemistry, Biotechnology & Microbiology. I would like to name a special few though there were others too whose encouragement and help meant a lot. Hirak Da deserves a special mention who taught me the nuances of animal cell culture when I knew nothing of it. Pradipta Da was the person I would always fall back to when I had troubled times with microbiological work. Presence of Sandip Da & Avijeet Da meant I could call upon someone for help literally 24*7, 365 days a year. I am indebted to Subhadipa Di & Shyamalina Di for all of my RNA & RT-PCR related work. Roshni di from Indian Statistical Institute not only helped me out in one of my experiments but provided me with the much needed encouragement during trying times. It’s only for them that I could complete my work without worrying much about standardizing the procedure(s). I am also thankful to Sushobhana & Madhurima in a lot of ways. Tanmoy Dey, Tanmoy Bhowmick, Neekan Da, Shinjini, Anindita, Sohini Di, Anindy, Bikram Da, Dibya Da and Arunava Da to name a few whose timely encouragement has helped me a lot in completing this thesis. In short I am indebted
to the whole scholar fraternity whose presence and words of encouragement has helped me saunter these five years with ease.

One person without whom, not only this thesis but the whole of my educational journey would have been incomplete is Avik Mukherjee. Right from my graduation days till today he has been like a mentor to me. He has been instrumental in making me understand the bookish stuff and has been the pioneer of many of the experiments that I have done throughout the course of these years. Last but not the least I would like to pay high regards to my dad and mom for their sincere encouragement and inspiration throughout my research work and comforting me during the trying times I had to undergo during the course of these years. They always worked hard so that I enjoyed the calmest of atmosphere in the house after the strenuous hours in the laboratory. They bore with patience all the tantrums I had caused and strived to make me comfortable throughout. We often savour the best for the last and thus the person who had immense contribution towards the completion of my thesis and thus deserves a special mention is my wife Amrapali Ghosh. My work schedule meant she had to adjust a lot; which she always did with a smile on her face so that I could finish off my thesis with ease. Encouragement from my father-in-law and mother-in-law also uplifted me during hard times and I thank them from the core of my heart at this juncture. Finally, this thesis would never have been possible without the help and encouragement of all the people mentioned above and all those people whom unwillingly I forgot to mention. Thank you everyone for making this journey a blissful experience and a treasure trove for life.

Date: Rajarshi Chakrabarti