

# PREFACE

This thesis is the end of my journey in obtaining my Ph.D. I have not traveled in a vacuum in this journey. This thesis has been kept on track and been seen through to completion with the support and encouragement of numerous people and blessings of Almighty. At the end of my thesis, it is indeed 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 this moment of accomplishment, first of all I pay homage to my guide Dr. Shilpi Ghosh. I am very much thankful to her for picking me up as a student at the critical stage of my Ph.D. This work would not have been possible without her guidance, support and encouragement. Under her guidance, I successfully overcame many difficulties and learned a lot. Her unflinching courage and conviction will always inspire me and I hope to continue to work with her noble thoughts. I can only say a proper thanks to her through my future work.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Payel Sarkar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Payel Sarkar