ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Any Ph.D. thesis is a product of the joint effort of the student concerned and his/her supervisor. Therefore it is a common practice to acknowledge one’s debt to one’s supervisor at the very beginning. In my case however it could not have been any other way. Prof. Prabhat Patnaik, my thesis supervisor, has been a constant source of inspiration over all these years, always supporting me in my moments of crises and self-doubts. Without his encouragement and guidance at each and every step, I could not ever have completed this work (for whatever it’s worth). It is not possible to express in words how much I owe to Prof. Patnaik – not only for guiding me through this thesis but also, and more importantly, for helping me in understanding the subject ‘Economics’. He taught us why economics is what it is – its significance and its relevance. If I still remain somewhat caught up in the trivia, then that is entirely because of my own inadequacy in dealing with matters of substance and depth.

Subrata-da was always there, helping me in clearing up my doubts, patiently answering all my silly questions and gently pointing out the errors in my arguments. I used to jokingly call him my “co-guide”, not entirely without reason though! I can never thank him enough.

At various stages of this work I have benefited from discussions with Professors Amitava Bose, Dipankar Dasgupta, Arup Mallik, Anjan Mukherji, Kunal Sengupta and Dr. Krishnendu Ghosh Dastidar. I gratefully acknowledge their help.

I am greatly indebted to Prof. J. Subba Rao who spent his valuable time in writing a computer programme for me. Words are not sufficient to thank him.

During my M.A. days, when I was still undecided about what to do in future, the encouraging words of Prof. Utsa Patnaik and Prof. Ram Prasad Sengupta gave me some confidence and helped me to choose a certain direction. They were probably unaware of how much those kind words meant to me! I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to both of them.

I have learned a lot from my friends and fellow researchers who were an integral part of the stimulating environment at CESP, something which I immensely
enjoyed. Our friendly discussions (academic as well as non-academic) often turned into violent arguments, but the general feeling of camaraderie was never missing. I wish to thank them all, but especially Ranja and Uday. Helpful suggestions of Sabyasachi at various points are also deeply appreciated. I also thank Suparna and Sutapa for being such patient hostel mates.

Papa-da (Sambit) showed tremendous patience in helping an absolutely computer-illiterate person like me to acquire a somewhat working knowledge of computers. I am grateful to him for this.

Finally, the emotional support that I received from my family members for all these years was one of my greatest strengths. My parents were there whenever I needed them. They always let me have things my own way – even when they did not agree with me. Babu, my brother, unfailingly supported me in everything that I did – no matter whether I was being logical or illogical in my demands. Tridip, my husband and friend, was extremely understanding, tolerated all my whims and idiosyncrasies and at times even acted as my librarian abroad! My debt to all of them is too great to express in words.

The faults that surely remain are mine and mine alone.