Acknowledgement

You have your secret garden, to which you can retire
And lock the gate behind you.

This thesis is a vindication of poetry, of the poetic attitude to life rendered in the plays of T.S. Eliot. Working on Eliot for long is like thriving on sensations of sublime intensity – 'living in and out of time', as it were. I adore this experience and hope to be sustained by it for the rest of my life.

Professor Sati Chatterjee, my guide and mentor, led me through the difficult terrain of Eliot's formidable intellect, sacrificing her own valuable time and personal preoccupations. The magnitude of what I have gained from her is beyond formal acknowledgement. Eliot has taught me to attempt scaling speechless heights. I silence myself in total surrender and overwhelming gratitude.

Professor Malabika Sarkar, Joint Supervisor of my project, has been an angel tolerating me, almost a 'debit item' like Lucasta. My indebtedness to her is unbound.

My parents have waited for long with great patience. If there is any genuine poetic passion in me it is because of their homely exercise in poetry during my formative years. Without their nurturing of my ear for poetry, catching the Eliotean rhythm would have remained beyond my grasp.

My sister has been a keen watchdog throughout the project; my brother a silent source of strength. My daughter and husband have accepted and shared my academic preoccupation with a great sense of camaraderie. I also record fond remembrances of my departed father-in-law who would have been happy at this hour.
Other members of the family, friends and colleagues have helped me with generosity and kindness. Thanks to my friend Dr. Parna Ghosh of Lady Brabourne College for allowing me to share some of Eliot's texts presently out of print. Special thanks to Monita Chatterjee in the USA for helping me procure E. Martin Browne's *The Making of T.S. Eliot's Plays*, no longer readily available here. Grateful thanks to Mr. Subhashis Kundu for friendly advice in matters of typing technology. Thanks also to Ms. Anita Bhandary for her sincere good wishes and regular cups of tea at every meet with Professor Sati Chatterjee.

Sincere thanks are due to all the libraries I have worked in – the Osmania University Centre for International Programmes (OUCIP) and the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad, the National Library and the British Council Library, Kolkata, and Professor Sati Chatterjee’s private collection.

Finally, sincere words of appreciation to the Department of English and the Faculty of Arts, Office of the Principal Secretary and the Ph.D section of Jadavpur University, for allowing me to formally proceed with my work all these years. Thanks also to S.A. Jaipuria College, Kolkata, where I am presently placed, for granting me occasional leave and co-operating at all levels.

Last but not the least heartfelt gratitude to Mr Prantik Roy of 'Dhar Brothers' for helping me with typing out the text of the thesis.

Srimanti Chowdhuri

Kolkata, 2010