ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

What starts must end and student life is no exception. The completion of this work successfully and satisfactorily had inputs from so many persons that I cannot claim it to be mine solely though I have spent some of my best years of life on it. Words fail me to express my gratitude to Prof. Rajendra Prasad, my supervisor, mentor and guide, who has always been with me through all these years. I express my heart-felt gratitude to him for showing me the correct approach to pursue (to be at "it", as he says), both in academics and in general. I shall ever be grateful to him for his critical appraisals, exemplary counsel and soothing words of encouragement and kindness in times when I needed them most. I shall always feel proud of having worked with such a hard working and a good scientist.

My wholehearted gratitude is due to Dr. S. E. Hasnain at National Institute of Immunology, in whose lab I carried out part of this work. I will also cherish his amiable and friendly gestures during my stay in his lab. I am also thankful to him for his invaluable suggestions, unmitigated support and inspiration wherever and whenever I felt the need. Both Prof. Prasad and Dr. Hasnain helped me to inculcate an attitude of scientific reasoning and logical deduction.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Prof. S. G. Mukherjee, and Prof. N. Z. Baquer, former Deans, SLS, JNU, for the excellent facilities provided by the School. Carrying the spirit forward, Prof. Prasad, as the present Dean, has tremendously improved these facilities, and we are really proud to be members of such an excellent centre of study.

I shall always cherish the gentle, loving affection of Vibha mam. I have been greatly touched by the support and affection shown by Nazma mam and Dr. Ali Baquer. I am also thankful to Dr. Sher Ali and Dr. Shehnaz Ansari at National Institute of Immunology for helping me in densitometric analysis.

The staff of the Central Instrument Facility deserves a special word of gratitude, especially Mr. A. Ahmad, Mr. B. A. Khan, Mr. Alexander, Mr. S. P. Sharma and Mr. S.K. Mishra for their help in operating the instruments in CIF. I am also thankful to all CIF attendants Mr Rajendra, Mr. Aslam, and Mr. Balwant, for their help in day to day work in CIF and making my work as smooth as possible.

I am grateful to Mr R. N. Saini for his excellent skill in generating great quality photographs. I am also thankful for his kind words of encouragement to my hobby as an amateur photographer.

The highly competent staff at the Bio-Informatics Centre, Dr. Rao, Mr. Inderjit Singh, and Mr. Chari, has always been ready to help in case of any problem.

I still recall the time when I joined our lab, and the welcoming attitude of Rajkishor, Deepa and Pradeep. I shall always cherish the countless fond memories shared with Anjni and Jyotsna. It would have been difficult to have sustained my efforts to come so far without the shared strength and support of Pranab, Snehlata, Neeti and Smriti. It has been a joy exploring science as well as Urdu "Shairi" etc., in the company of Pranab. I am thankful to Dr. Ramashray Prasad and Vinita for helping me in RNA work. The affection shown by Archana, Sanjeev, Avmeet, Syed, Neerja, Nivedita, Savita, and Bharat will always be an inseparable part of my memories.
Nandkumar has always been eager to help me in every manner and I appreciate his friendly and helpful gestures. Sharmaji, Naresh, Jasveer and Anil have been very helpful in carrying out the apparently mundane but very important tasks of laboratory maintenance and assistance. I am especially grateful to Naresh for his affection.

The time I have spent with my most beloved friends, Anupama, Abhay, Veena, Mayank, Chandu, Tiwari and DC at Gopalan's canteen, 'Priya' and elsewhere has no comparison. I am also grateful to Dr. Sanjay Chauhan for his friendly and loving affection. I shall always remain grateful to the Almighty to have blessed me with such great friends. I am also grateful to Anupama's and Veena's family for giving a feeling of "home" away from home.

I am grateful to Udayan, Anjali, Parimal da, Saman, Natarajan, Irshad, Raies, Lakshmi, Sandeep, Bipasha, Sudeep, Gopal, Noman, Maneesha, Renuka, Dil-afroze, Nitin, Amol, Aruna, Shalu, Priya, Manjari, Seema, Dr. Sah, Shameem Da, Arvinda and others at N.I.I. for their affection for me.

In this very "short" time I have been with the company of some very nice persons including Askar, Azam, Vincent, Shiva, Praveen, Sidhu, Ritu, Suman, Meenu, Aparna, Sohita, Jyoti, Rana, Bisht, Pushpshankar, Preeti, Charu and JP. Besides them, many more have left an indelible impression on me, and to all of them I am thankful from my heart. The days spent with my other BSc and MSc friends Giri, Priya, Shashi, Ramakrishna, Jaspreet, Praveen and Raghu have become permanently etched in my memory. In retrospect, I also cannot forget my childhood memories, the time I spent with my friends Vishnu, Mahesh and others.

Words are insufficient to express my feelings towards my grandmother, my parents, brothers and other family members who have supported me under all the circumstances. It would have been impossible for me to have reached here without their unqualified, undemanding love and support. They are the ones who have showered most affection and praise whenever I have achieved something. I am also thankful to them for inculcating values and for helping me to become a better person.

Financial assistance from the UGC/JNU in form of JRF and SRF is gratefully acknowledged.

I would also like to extend my thanks to those whom I might have inadvertently forgotten to acknowledge.

S. KRISHNAMURTHY

July, 1998