Preface

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Prof B Ghosh, SINP for his guidance. Throughout my research work, he has been a constant source of inspiration to me. His intellectual vigour and generous support have been invaluable.

I owe very special debt to my predecessors Prof A N Das, Dr P Chowdhury, Dr P Mandal and Dr A Poddar. They have always shared their vast experiences and knowledge which have been of immense help to carry out this work satisfactorily. In numerous occasions, they have critically analysed my work which helped me to understand the subject better.

I should also like to thank my seniors in the laboratory Dr J B Mandal and Dr B Chattopadhyay for their helpful attitude at discussions. Working with them on different problems was an excellent experience.

I shall be failing in my duties if I do not express my gratitude to Mr Arun Pal, Mr S N Dutta and Mr P Das for their technical assistance and support.

I thank the staff members of Low Temperature Physics division and workshop of SINP for their adequate help to complete the work.

This work was taken up with the financial support from CSIR, India in the form of a fellowship. I acknowledge CSIR, India for such assistance. I would also like to thank SINP authorities for extending financial support in the final year of this work.

I fondly acknowledge with great respect, the unfailing persuasions of my parents Late G N Banerjee and Smt Abha Banerjee to take up a research career. Completion of this work would have remained as a day-dream to me without the heartiest cooperation of my parent-in-laws Sri Suprakash Chatterjee and Smt Ira Chatterjee. Special thanks go to my sister Manisha and brother Sujan for their constant encouragement. My sincere thanks are due to Pradipda, Joy, Jhuma, shrabani and Archana. My husband Sujit has been a constant source of inspiration to me. Without his support and cooperation, it would have become impossible for me to complete this persuasion. My little son Shirso, who has grown up almost unnoticed with the progress of this work, has shown an unbelievable sense of patience and endurance since his infancy days.

Bedisa Bandyopadhyay
29.12.99