Acknowledgements

My interest in feminist readings of the Renaissance was sparked off by Professor Supriya Chaudhuri’s inspiring classes during my postgraduate years in the Department of English, Jadavpur University. I am very grateful to Professor Chaudhuri that she agreed to be my supervisor for my doctoral dissertation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for everything that she has done for me, in spite of her extremely demanding schedule. I am especially grateful to her for pointing out the flaws in my argument and writing style and for her meticulous correction of the first and final drafts of the chapters. I have learnt that a thesis is as much about a rigorous form of writing as about researching a field of inquiry. I could never thank Professor Chaudhuri enough for having taught me this; her approval has been the most rewarding aspect of working on this dissertation.

Dr. Paromita Chakravarti, my friend at the Department of English, Jadavpur University, has been the shaping spirit of this thesis from its inception. She has generously let me access the valuable secondary source material that she documented during her own research at Oxford. I have also benefited immensely from her unpublished doctoral dissertation. This thesis would not have been possible without her, and a thank you is just a very inadequate word for everything that she has done.

My numerous visits to the National Library, Kolkata during the course of my research were fruitful primarily due to the cooperation I received from the library staff. I wish to thank them.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues at the department—Professor Niranjan Mohanty, Dr. Amrit Sen, Sudev Pratim Basu, Ananya Basu, Saurav Dashtakur, Dr. Indrani Das and Romit Roy—for their support and encouragement. My students, Nitesh, Arindam, Tamoghna, Gargee and Diganta, have always been ready to run errands and assist me in all possible ways. I want to thank them for being so generous and supportive. I am grateful to the authorities at Visva-Bharati, who were very kind to grant me a year’s study leave to pursue my research.

Several colleagues, friends and well-wishers went out of their way to assist me. I wish to thank them all: Professor Abhijit Sen, for giving me generously of his time to listen to my arguments, and helping me think cogently; Dr. Rangan Chakrabarty, for lending me Bakhtin’s Rabelais and his World, the theoretical
backbone of this thesis; Dr Samantak Das for lending me Jeanette Winterson’s *Sexing the Cherry*, without which the conclusion would not have been possible; Soumik Nandi Majumdar for his insightful comments on the grotesque in visual arts; Aveek Sen, for his comments on the first draft of my chapter on *Titus Andronicus* and for his generosity in lending me books whenever I have needed them; Sarmistha Dutta Gupta for telling me that she was baffled by the topic of my research—I had that in mind when I sat down to write the Introduction to the thesis; Dr Sutanuka Ghosh for sending me photocopies of articles, especially on feminist theories of the grotesque, from the SOAS library at London; Sudeshna Banerjee for very kindly agreeing to copy edit, check the endnotes, format and prepare the final draft of the thesis; Samik Bandopadhyay for his generosity in letting me access to his art collection; Rajiv Kundu and Sujit Mondal for valuable last-minute assisance; Dipankar Roy for coming to my rescue in several cases of computer malfunction and for being so resourceful in accessing visual material from websites.

I am greatly indebted to my parents Ratan and Manjari Ganguly for their care, concern and unfailing support. My physician, Dr. Rajat Subhra Ghosh, has seen me through a period of critical illness. I wish to thank him for everything that he has done.

My friends Aditto, Sanjukta, Paromita, Rangan, Raghavendra, Keya, Satish, Soumik, Vandana, Sutanuka and Sudeshna have lifted my spirits—with cakes and ale—during periods of despondency, a big thank you to them all. My sister Arundhati and brother-in-law Anirban have been source of lightness and laughter in my life regaling me with anecdotes about my four-year-old nephew Aryav. But how could I ever thank them? I want Aveek, Sarmistha, Sheila and Debarati to know that our twenty-three years of togetherness, has been a source of great emotional strength and joy that has seen me through periods of depression and anxiety.

And finally I want to thank Achyut who has been my major intellectual and emotional support during the last phase of my work. He has been ever so resourceful in getting me the books which I had given up hope of laying my hands on. Achyut has also been an exacting reader and his perceptive comments have helped me chart out the theoretical premise of the thesis. This work would not have been possible without his incisive analysis and our long hours of brainstorming. I want to thank him for his faith in my ability and for ensuring that I give my best.