Acknowledgements

To Prof. Sriraman, I owe a sea of gratitude for being available all the time, and correcting my otherwise unsure language. He gave me confidence and encouragement whenever I needed them badly. He doesn’t know that his research scholars affectionately call him “guru”, considering the weight and spirit the word carries.

I would like to thank Prof. Alok Bhalla, Prof. P. Madhavan, Prof. P. Marudanayagam, Prof. V. D. Singh, Dr Rajiv Krishnan, Dr Hany Babu and Mr Anand Mahanand for their encouragement.

I owe the peace that I relished to my friends on the campus: Abdulla for being my “shock absorber”; Sunil for all the “first hand opinions”; Nisha Mary Mathew for “carrying this cross” for long; Vipin Kumar for his “critique of metacriticism”; and Rajesh for all the theoretical discussions which made me sharpen my arguments.

To my Hyderabadi friends I owe my mental and physical health: Arvind Sunder for being there at the station entrance whenever I landed in Hyderabad; Dr Arif Ahmed Farooqui for being available always at a phone call’s distance and for all those weekend expeditions; Shilpa Sathyam and Dr Sathyanarayana for all those peppy words whenever I was down and out.

I fondly remember the good times I had with Jenny Rowena, Prince George, Rajat Kumar Mohanty, Noushad Alam, Indu Eapen, Anirudha Pal, Nandini,
Monmi Mozimdar Baruah and Jaya Srinivasa Rao during the years I spent as a research scholar.

To the mothers in Hyderabad—Jenny's mother, Arif's mother and Rajesh's mother—I am thankful for those affectionate dinners.

I also owe sincere gratitude to: Pramod for making me feel closer to my mother tongue; Nalin for spending some valuable time with me when I was in dire need of a companion; Krishnaraj for baptising me into the world of literature and aesthetics; Olivier Moreu, Yvan Torres, Prof. Phil Powrie and Dr Corrado Micheli for their priceless assistance during various stages of my work; the unassuming wardboys; Asif, Dasrath, Narsimha and Gonaiah for all the errands they ran; and the mess staff for giving me a unique "taste" of Hyderabad.

I thank IACIS, Hyderabad for the study grant they offered me.

I understand now, painfully though, that it would have been easier to thank her, for her being the hurrying factor of this marathon race, if she were near, about whom Eric Clapton sang "It was you, who broke my heart into pieces. It was you, who made my blue eyes blue".