ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Surreal! This is the one word that pops up into my head as I sit down to write this page which in a way declares that my PhD is done. Even when I write this I seriously doubt if it is really done. Or this might be one of those side effects of working on Kamala Das – closure is always a myth! But it is a fact now universally acknowledged that I joined for this course on 23 July, 2010 and has been floating through this somehow ambivalent space of research for a really long time. At least this is the longest time that I have set aside for something in my lived and imagined reality!

If I had imagined at one point that my PhD is a myth, I have successfully proven it is not and this is possible not entirely because of me, but there are a lot of pushes and pulls that initiated the process of demystification. So here and now, I attempt to put on record my courtesy to all those who have made this possible.

Almighty God! Thank you for blessing me with all the faculties and facilities that enable me now to pen down a few words in your name. Even though I believe you to be the architect behind all these accidents, I consider myself lucky that you remember me all the time!

Professor M.E. Veda Sharan, though officially my supervisor, is in fact, my saviour. When I joined here at EFLU, I did not know a soul and in my endless search for guidance he was the one who extended a helping hand instantaneously. Thank you, Sir for the interest you have shown in my work, for the questions, the suggestions, and mostly for bearing with my insistent inconsistencies and procrastination. Even though our spans of discussions were comparatively short, I will always treasure the advice you gave me, not just on my research but also on how to be an ideal teacher. I will always cherish those moments, especially those anecdotes from your research life! Thank you!

In this long drawn out and desolate journey, hope was frequently sought and came to me in these words “Don’t worry, Buddy! I will take care of it” When I look back at these five years these are the words that had led me on. Prof. P Kona Reddy is one person who can attest to my growth as a researcher as it has been possible mainly through the interactions with him as the supervisor of my three courses, as a member of my advisory committee and more importantly as a friend. For constantly hurling away the hurdles in my path, for your patience, for your humility, for being a reassuring presence, for your confidence in me…Thank you!

Prof. Sunaina Singh, our VC, will always be an inspiring presence in my life. The very fact that I have been able to achieve this milestone attests to her unrelenting support. As I pen down these words of gratitude, I hope that someday I would have half her strength and resilience to stand up for one’s beliefs, against all odds.

Thank you, Dr. Rajiv C Krishnan, for your timely intervention on my behalf which helped me bypass the official scruples that threatened my existence as a PhD scholar at EFLU, when I had to migrate to University of Delhi to don another role.
I also place on record my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Sachi Madhavan, my advisory committee member. Her understanding of Kamala Das and her practical inputs into my research have helped me in tackling the elusive heroine of my research.

Dr. Shilpaa Anand is fondly remembered here for helping me out when I was taking my baby steps as a researcher.

Prof. G. Thirupathi Kumar have been of immense help during my early days as a researcher and had facilitated me with official support that opened the door of any library or research centres. Thank you, Sir!

I express my gratitude to the office staff at the Department of English, especially Ms. Sulochana.

I thank UGC for the grants that sustained my long journey.

A special thanks to Ms. Chaitanya P.C for informing me about the conference on Kamala Das at St Aloysius College, Trichur, it was a turning point in my research and in our friendship. On a similar note, I place on record my gratitude to Dr. Udaya Kumar for leading me to the Symposium on Kamala Das held on 25 March 2015, which made considerable impact on the last phase of my research. I thank Dr. B. Hariharan, Professor, Institute of English, University of Kerala for insights on Kamala Das.

I also place on record my gratitude to the librarians and staff at Ramesh Mohan Library, EFLU for the time and space.

I remember fondly Dr. Anjali V. Bagde, Associate Professor, Department of French and Franchophone Studies for lessons beyond French.

Bhanumathy Mám, has also been a part of my research life here.

I thank Valli Mám and the workers of the Women’s Hostel and mess for making my life easier. Thank you, Sagar Bayya & his bayya, for being an unchanging presence, at times, ensuring sanity!

The staff at the following institutions have been of immense help during the various stages of my research WSDC, University of Delhi; Kendra Sahitya Academy Library, Delhi; SCILET, Madurai; Osmania University Library; OUCIP; Central Library, University of Hyderabad, Public Library, Trivandrum; Central Library, University of Kerala.

Five years is a really long time and my tryst with EFLU have opened many paths for me. Not all paths were easy to trod, and there were paths which were deceptively clear, but which led to hidden snares. But I should say both have enriched me in ways unique, making me who I am today. It is impossible to acknowledge all the people I have met on these paths, but I thank each one of you for making me who I am today. But there are many wayfarers who have been a constant and tangible presence, who mark their presence even in their absence.

Neilam, for shared apprehensions, the research meetings, for being my constant companion in distress…
Val, knowing that your prayers are with me is reassuring always…

Selina, even though you missed my pangs of giving birth to this, I am sure that you would have been a smiling and strengthening presence have you been here, wherever you are, your presence is treasured.

Anusree Sreenivasan, for all the running around, for all the triumphs and near triumphs, and more… I can never thank you enough.

Malu, you will be fondly remembered whenever I think of my PhD mainly because of your quirky texts, which made me stay alive and humane during my draft preparations.

A huge chunk of gratitude to Satveer Singh, Subbu, Mangi, Lavanya, Jithin (Bellu), Appu, Nimisha, Firoz, Mir, Yogi, Bhawani, Priyank Varma, and Sai for animating my life in your own ways.

Upender… for the huge help in formatting my bibliography, running around to settle the last minute scruples before submission

Venkanna for being there and joining in with pleasure.

Deepak, Anu and Kabir for the love and laughter

Anu (Monish) for the occasional boost and unarming jokes which made the sail easy. And yeah! I am finally submitting!

Uncle and Aunty and the whole gang of and from “Sree”. If I intend on thanking Kamala Das ever the only reason might be that it was a conference on her that brought you guys into my life.

I express my gratitude to Sharon Aunty, Derick Uncle and Calvin for their support when I came for interview here. Elvis Uncle is also fondly remembered for his constant encouragement and the high pedestals he envisions for me.

Late Alexander K Abraham is remembered here fondly. Uncle, your happiness knew no bounds when I told you that I have got through in EFLU – the erstwhile CIEFL. That smiling face of yours is my last memory of yours. Even though you are not here with us I am sure that you will brim with pride and happiness wherever you are.

My family have always been there through thick and thin.
Amma for escorting me through life with infinite patience, love and understanding, for the pickles and the phone calls that made research and loneliness bearable and many things more…This is to officially let you know to cut off one item from your list of worries! Appa for being that silent reassuring presence…

Tom, my brother with whom I proudly share the gift of procrastination, for being there no matter what, when or where, especially for coming to my rescue whenever technology fails me or I fail technology, and for your spirited “Aadipoli!s”, for your night vigil on the day before my submission, which I believe started as early as 3:00pm… and thank you Ponnu for bearing with all this…

I remember my extended family here. Amma, Pramod Chetan, Prathibha Chechi, little Avantika, Chechi, Chetan and our Three Musketeers in Chennai. Even when they do not know what I am up to they have been patient enough to bear with my frequent “PhD work burden” excuses for not visiting or calling them often.

Last, but not at all the least, Pradeep Sukumaran, my dear husband, who is the sole person responsible for my many achievements, specially this milestone. True to his name he has been the light that has been leading me through dark times, and sometimes even through bright ones. Even though it verges on a level of annoyance, his constant push has made this possible! Thank you for being in my life… With you around I believe this is just the beginning…

This would not have been possible without you!

Thank you… Thank you one and all!