DEDICATION

In what started as a sibling rivalry to seek everybody’s appreciation was soon followed by a realization that it is futile to compete with perfection. This enlightenment was followed by ever-growing admiration to the extent of worship. I dedicate this thesis to my sister Jhanjha Chakravarty who is my ardent admirer, my fiercest critic, and my companion, with whom the hardest times of struggle seemed like a joy ride, the one person whose contribution is outstanding for my pursuit of academics and voyage of accomplishments.