Acknowledgement

This study would have never been complete without the help and support from several individuals. I owe this thesis to my Supervisor, Professor Debarshi Prasad Nath who has not only groomed me academically but also has aided in my growth as a person. I thank him for being my friend, philosopher and guide.

I also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my Co-supervisor Dr Parasmoni Dutta. His help and support with all critical inputs and resources helped me develop as a researcher.

The faculty members of the Department of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University namely, Prof Pradip Jyoti Mahanta, Prof Sunil Kumar Dutta, Dr Madhurima Goswami, Dr Juri Gogoi Konwar, Dr Mandakini Barua, Dr Jayanta Vishnu Das and Dr Hashik N. K have been kind and generous to me with their valuable comments and suggestions which helped me a lot in giving shaping this thesis. I am grateful to all of them.

I would like to convey my gratitude to Prof Bijoy Kumar Danta and Prof Farheena Danta for always being there with me and boosting my morale. I offer my sincere gratitude to Dr Juri Dutta, Dr Mayuri Bordoloi, Dr A Nagraj and Dr P Anbarasan for being a source of support and inspiration.

I would like to thank the Honorable Vice Chancellor of Tezpur University and the Tezpur University fraternity for their kind support and help during my research.

My heartfelt and sincere thanks to my friends Minakshi Dutta, Piyashi Dutta, Swikrita Dowerah, Jayashree Saikia and Dina Swargiari for helping me in every way that they could. I express my love and gratitude to them.

My special thanks Kiron ba, Dipak da and Ashish da.

Deuta was always at my back. Thank you for your trust and belief in me and for not letting anything stop me in reaching my goals.

Dhan, you have been my best mate ever. I owe a great part of every achievement to you. This thesis would have never been complete without your help. Thank you for the fights and loving me.

Maa, Koka and *Aita* though you are not here, I know your blessings are. Thank you for inspiring me to be independent and teaching me the value of education early in life.

Date: (Reetamoni Das)