So with all the struggle and hard work that went into writing this book, I expected this to be the easy part. After spending years weighing every word, every sentence, and every thought that went into this book a hundred times over, I expected this to be the part where I would just write down what I wanted to say: thank you. And yet writing these acknowledgements is proving to be one of the hardest things I have ever had to write. Not only does it bring back so many memories, it also comes with its own dilemmas about where to start and where to end, and how to do justice to all the people that helped me write this book. So I write this knowing that whichever words I end up putting down on paper, they will never be able to fully capture the tremendous gratitude that I have for those who have made this dissertation possible. Indeed, mere words will never be enough. But since we’re here now, I’ll just give it a go anyway.

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