## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The writing of a dissertation is an engaging and tough experience that is obviously not possible without the personal and practical support of numerous people. Thus I would like to express my gratitude to all those who gave me the possibility to the successful completion of this endeavour.

I need to send my highest gratitude to my supervisor **Prof. Dr. Michael F.G. Schmidt,** Chairman, Institute of Immunology & Molecular Biology (IMB), Freie Universität (FU) Berlin, Germany, for giving me the opportunity to work in such a stimulating research area, his friendly and proficient counselling, his valuable suggestions and. I am deeply indebted to his constant dedication to the research, invaluable follow up of the data, organizing seminars regularly, and time devotion in reading and correcting my work. I am especially grateful to **Prof. Dr. Ferdinand Hucho,** Institute of Chemistry and Biochemistry, FU Berlin, for co-supervising my study and his constructive comments. I am deeply indebted to **Prof. Dr. Kürsad Turgay** for reviewing my dissertation

Many thanks to all the veterinarians and nutritionists of the Freie Universität Berlin, who set up the complete frame work and logistic for the *in-vivo* study of the effect of the probiotic. My special thanks go to **Dr. L. Tedin, Dr. H. Mafamane, Dr. S. Kleta** for their invaluable help in the collection and processing of the samples needed for the study. I am deeply grateful to the entire staff of the institute where this project was conducted, the Institute of Immunology & Molecular Biology (IMB), Freie Universität (FU) Berlin, Germany, without whose support, my work would not have been possible. I highly appreciate **Mrs. C. Palissa** and **Dr. L. Tedin** for isolating the cells used in my *in-vitro* study, which laid the ground for an important part of this project. Special thanks also to Mrs. C. Palissa for initially teaching me cell culture techniques and later for her technical assistance in the lab. I would like to extend my appreciation to **Dr. M. Burwinkel, Dr. A. Hermann** for their invaluable constructive suggestions and for playing a key role in the research and review of the data. My due thanks to **Dr. M. Veit**, for proof reading this thesis, his critical comments and for writing various recommendation letters for me. My heartiest thanks go to **Antje Römer** for writing the German version of the summary of this work.

I am very much grateful to **Prof. Dr. Palf Einspanier**, Institute of Veterinary Biochemistry, FU, Berlin, Germany, for allowing the use of the real-time PCR work of the *in-vivo* part of the study in his Lab. My special gratitude goes to **Mr. C. Holder**, for his technical assistance and creating a friendly working atmosphere. I owe a lot of thanks to **Dr.** 

**C. Gabler** for training me in the real-time PCR technology and for participating in the *in-vivo* project, designing the primers and analysing the data.

I am deeply indebted to all staff of the Institute of Veterinary Anatomy, FU Berlin, were part of the *in-vitro* study took place. It is a pleasure to acknowledge **Prof. Dr. Johanna Plendl** for their kin interest and in-valuable contributions in the morphological characterization of type I and type II cells using electron microscope. My special thanks to **Mrs. M. Sachtleben** for showing me how to use the electron microscope and all the techniques associated with it. I cannot leave without extending my appreciation for her being nice, friendly and willing to help.

I would like to employ this opportunity to give due thanks to **Prof. Dr. Armin** Saalmüller and **Dr. S. Hammer,** from Department of Immunology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Austria and to **Prof. Dr. med. Hartmut Lobeck**, Pathologie unit, Klinikum Ernst von Bergmann, Potsdam, Germany, for their interest and participation in the characterization of the intestinal cells used for the *in-vitro* study.

I am grateful indeed to the German Academic Exchange Service (**DAAD**) for giving me a full scholarship to undertake this study. I would also like to thank the management office of the **Addis Ababa University** and the former director of the Institute of Pathobiology, **Dr. Y. Mekonnen**, for granting me study leave and for their continued support for the last three and a half years of my study. My thanks also goes to **Prof. M. Ashenafi**, who helped me make the first contact with my supervisor.

Finally my heartiest gratitude and love goes to my **family** and **friends** for their moral and spiritual support, constant friendship and encouragements all through the last three and a half years of my study that made this work become a reality.

**Eden Ephraim**