

Preface

The author would like to express the utmost gratitude to everybody who has contributed to this thesis in one way or another. As there are certainly many more such individuals than I could reasonably accommodate here, I list only the most immediate ones.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my mother, Brigitte Servatius. She has always offered her advice and supported my endeavors, most importantly by letting all final decisions rest with me. Growing up (though some challenge this is indeed accomplished) she gave me all the of freedom I desired and with it the greatest of all goods: The confidence that I would choose to do the right thing, or, as often as this could not be determined a priori, avoid obviously wrong choices. Looking back, I could not have wanted much more.

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But despite all of the helpful input I have received, some errors are bound to remain in this document. Needless to say, the responsibility for these is entirely mine.

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