ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to recall with gratitude the support and help of many individuals which were instrumental in the compilation of the present work. I am sincerely grateful to my teacher and the supervisor of the present work Dr. Rupendra Kumar Chattopadhayay, Department of Archaeology, University of Calcutta who has inculcated to develop my archaeological sense and guided me to handle such an extensive database. I am greatly indebted to his motivation for the completion of the present work. I am grateful to Dr. Swati Ray, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta for giving me invaluable suggestions and timely advice. The present work owes much to her training to acquire the sense of clarity in my thinking and writing.

I am thankful to Shri Amal Roy, Deputy Director, Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of West Bengal for granting me permission to collect some photographs of the retrieved iron objects excavated from a few sites of West Bengal and to Shri Siharan Nandy for providing me with those photographs. I express my gratitude to Dr. Tapas Bandyopadhyay, Keeper, State Archaeological Museum, Behala for sharing some of his doctoral database.

I am indebted to Dr. Pranab Kumar Chattopadhyay not only for his suggestions on various issues of archaeo-metallurgy but for providing me with some of his database.

I take the opportunity to convey my gratefulness to Dr. Bijoy Choudhary, Director, K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna who was the one to provide me all the materials from the site of Panr and give me permission to do the documentation works on the same. I am thankful to Dr. Priyanka Chanda for her help rendered during this documentation work. I am also grateful to Dr Ajit Prasad, Former Director, Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Bihar for discussing many aspects of the iron using phases of Taradih. I also convey my sincere thanks to Dr. C. P. Sinha for giving access to the library of the Bihar Puravid Parishad.
Special thanks should be given to the authority of Vikas Bharati, Bishunpur, Ranchi who have given me the opportunity to do a documentation work on the traditional iron smelting activities of the Asura-Birjhia tribe. This work definitely served as one of the yardsticks of the present discourse.

I express my gratitude to Professor Vibha Tripathi, Department of AIHC and Archaeology, Benaras Hindu University for sharing her views on various issues of the Indian Iron Age. She also gave me the scope to see some of the materials from the site of Raipura, recently excavated by the same department. The students of Professor Tripathi have also helped me in doing library works during my stay at Varanasi.

I am also grateful to Late Dr. Asok Datta for his valuable suggestions and for giving me some of his photographs. I also convey my gratefulness to Professor Arun Nag for sharing his views on iron bearing sites and assemblages of Birbhum.

I am also thankful to Dr. Rangan Kanti Jana, for providing me access to see the displayed materials of Bharatpur, presently in the collection of Rajbati Museum, University of Burdwan.

Among my seniors, I whole-heartedly recall the constant help from Dr. Goutami Bhattacharya without whom I could not get access to many of invaluable research papers and books. I also thank with gratitude to Dr. Rajat Sanyal and Dr. Kumkum Bandyopadhyay for their suggestions.

I have no words to express my gratitude to all the staff members of the libraries of the University of Calcutta (Alipur campus and College Street campus), Asiatic Society, Kolkata, Geological Survey of India, Kolkata, Indian Museum, Kolkata and the Centre for Archaeological Studies and Training, Eastern India (CASTEI). I am also thankful to Shri Avick Biswas and Smt. Soumita Chatterjee, for their help in library works at CASTEI.

Among my co-researches, I specifically mention the academic association with Shri Shubha Majumder, Shri Bijan Mondal, Smt Pampa Biswas for their assistance in field works and untiring support in collecting database. I am also thankful to Shri Rik Chattopadhyay, M.A. student of the Department of Archaeology, University of Calcutta for reproducing iron smelting activities of the Asura-Birjhia tribe in his sketches.

This work could not have been possible without the affection and blessings from my late grandparents and Amma. I am grateful to my parents in law and sister in
law for their constant support and motivation and they were remarkably patient and helpful throughout my hectic schedule. I would like to convey my loving thanks to my sister and brother in law for their emotional support and for providing me with some rare books. Thanks Riju and Rimmi, your cheerful faces always kept my spirits high. This work could not have been possible without the constant support, encouragement and affection from my parents. Souradipta, in particular should be accredited for his unfailing interest in improving my work and his cooperation in accompanying me to the field area and in preparing maps and charts.