ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My Ph.D. thesis has undoubtedly marked the threshold of an academic pursuit. The unwavering guidance, endurance and support of my mentor Prof. S.A. Rahman, despite my many lapses have been my strength. Not once did I encounter the fear of approaching him with my problems for I knew that he would certainly understand them. He gave me ample space to incorporate my ideas besides providing me an opportunity to undertake primary research on the customs and traditions of the Muslims of India which have developed or some changes taken place during last fifty years or so.

I wish I could find a better word than ‘thank-you’ to express how I feel but this wish is truly heartfelt that may God give every researcher a patient, encouraging and perceptive guide like him.

I express my sincere thanks to Prof. F.U. Farooqi who has played a pivotal role in my research by administering as guide, and supervised the entire research formalities. I would also like to thank Dr. Rizwanur Rahman who has always been helpful not only to my research giving a lot of useful advices but also throughout my study period in JNU. Similarly, I am grateful to other faculty members of the Centre particularly Prof. A. Islahi, Dr. Bashir Ahmad and Dr. Mujeebur Rahman and Dr. Qutbuddin who have always been kind to me as regards my studies and other skills.

My sincere gratitude to Allama Syed Jilani Ashraf and other learned Sufi personalities, social scientists, academicians, researchers as well as scholars for providing me with keen insights during their interviews with me. My special gratitude to my dear friend Mr. Sajjad Alam Rizvi, who has not only provided me with insight in the research but also sent me soft copies of many books and journals from Germany where he is earning his Ph.D. from a top ranked Institute. I am also abetted to my friend Mrs. Sara Wali Aafaqi who helped me all the way, from arranging the materials and sources to typing, while writing the first chapter of the thesis.

My sincere gratitude to the staffs of Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Library, New Delhi, British Council Library and Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna.

I would like to thank my parents, brothers and sisters for their constant encouragement. This arduous task would have taken its toll on me had it not been for my Late. Grandfather Mufti. Nasiruddin Ashrafi who resided as a pillar of strength in my subconscious.

Without my friends Khalid Mustafa, Meraj Ahmed and Firoz Alam, who helped me sort out my mess, be it my Xeroxes, typing, binding, proof reading or the state of mind, this dissertation would not have been possible.
The incredible support of my friends – Malik, Hafeez, Shamshad, Sweta, Jawed, Anwar, Rustam, Fuzail, Jalil, Rashid, Amish, Atroz, Nabil, Mahmood, Shaheena, Babul and Simpy – throughout my research is also highly worth mentioning.

At last, it would be unjust if I ignore to express my gratitude to the software giant Mr. Bill Gates and his Microsoft Corp. The miracle software MS-Word simply resolved the entire editing issues – from formatting to spell checks, grammar checks and replace-alls – without which, this research would not have been possible.

Finally, all the errors therein, I claim solely as mine.

Md. Jalis Akhtar Nasiri