Preface

This work pretends in no way to present a comprehensive account of higher education in Bengal during 1919-1947. It rather throws shafts of light into the areas of major concern. The topics included in each chapter are justified on the following criteria:

1. The topic affected a large section of society.
2. It was not transient.
3. The contemporary account of each topic has been brought to light from diverse points of views.

Administration and management in the modern sense of the terms were unknown during the colonial period. Ordinarily reform, reorganisation, administration and management were interchangeable terms. That the University was in urgent need of management studies was evident from the terms and conditions of Viharilal Mitra Fellowship. One of the conditions of this endowment was that the awardee would be sent abroad to study University management in different countries. It would be awarded to a competent Hindu Bengali lady graduate for a term of two years. Its object would be the investigation of methods and organisation of secondary education and university education for girls including the study of the problems of co-education and residence in India and abroad. The Fellow would have to travel in India and study conditions in selected centres to
be approved by the Syndicate and submit a report after six months. She would then proceed to Japan, America, Great Britain and selected centres of Europe and study the problems under investigation in such places. On an average, she would spend three or four months in each of the four mentioned countries. The report submitted by the fellow would deal exhaustively with the methods and arrangements in existence in these countries and would have a special chapter on the question of reform of the educational system in India (Minutes of the Syndicate, University of Calcutta, Part 3, 1936, pp. 2629-30).

Needless to say, the main focus of discussion of my thesis concerns on the problems of the University of Calcutta. This is unavoidable. A report of the Calcutta University aptly argued: "The relations between the Government and the universities here are more intimate and more complex than is the case in most other countries . . . Since the very beginning of the development of Western education in India, the ultimate guidance and control have been largely in the hands of Government . . . On the well-being of the Calcutta University, its proper administration depends the well-being of almost every educational institution in this province, every Arts College, every Science College, private and Government, every high school, in fact the whole system depends on it" (Proc. of the Bengal Legislative Council, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1923, P. 19). The role of the University of Calcutta in the development of higher education in Bengal was strongly emphasised by Bidhan...
Chandra Ray. He said, "I take it that the University had been established as a constituted authority to act on behalf of the Government whose primary duty it is to provide for higher education for the people. The University is charged to do that duty as the agent of the Government. Therefore, if the University is wanting in funds, the Government cannot absolve itself from all liability with regard to that" (Proc. of the Bengal Legislative Council, Vol. 14, No. 3, 27 February, 1924, pp. 99-102). By and large, the central argument of this work rests on the analytical study of the administration and management of the system of education established by the University of Calcutta. The thesis is divided into nine chapters and Appendices. The contents of each chapter are indicated below:

**Chapter - I**: This chapter highlights the role of philosophy of education and the issues involved in policy and practice. It mentions also the thrust areas covered by some selected research works, published and unpublished. The outlook of the Indian National Congress has been explained in this chapter as a documentary illustration of the response of the intellectual and political elite of the country to the challenge of Western education in India.

**Chapter - II**: This chapter is divided into two parts. 1. The All India Scenario, and 2. Educational Progress in Bengal. The entire chapter is mainly based on relevant Government reports. The Government reports, indeed, reveal the colonial perception that the higher education in India suffered from extravagance, overlapping of subjects of study
provincial particularism and qualitative deterioration. The nationalist perception of the problem was that expenditure on education in India was not excessive or wasteful. There was no overlapping or duplication of subjects in the Indian Universities. These were not overburdened with overwhelming number of students.

Chapter - III: Management and superintendence form the subject matter of this chapter. The genesis of the University of Calcutta under the Act of Incorporation, 1857 and the Indian Universities Act of 1904, composition of the Senate, reorganisation of the Secondary Education are, inter alia, included in it. The question of university autonomy was sharply argued and stoutly defended in the letters of Asutosh Mookerjee which he addressed to the Viceroy in connection with the draft Calcutta University Bill. The same theme found echo in the proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council when the members debated the question whether the post of the Vice-Chancellor should be a salaried one. This chapter brings to light a note, hitherto unpublished, prepared by Gooroodas Banerjee on the Dacca University Committee's Report. Banerjee's note is replete with suggestions, the historical value of which can hardly be ignored.

Chapter - IV: The subject matter of this chapter is quest for equality or special privilege demanded by Moslems, Scheduled Castes and Women. No doubt, the grievances of these underprivileged sections of society have been adequately
discussed in quite a number of recent research works. The arguments in this chapter deal mainly with administrative and managerial problems associated with their demand of equal educational opportunities. I have ignored sociological or historical aspects of the problem. I have simply delved into the administrative problems. Moreover, the grievances of the Anglo-Indian community have not been discussed in this work. The reason is that under the Government of India Act 1919, it was a reserved subject and not a transferred one.

Chapter - V: This chapter deals with the problems of Scientific, Technical and Vocational Education and that of Educated Unemployment. The development of Science in India during our period was epoch-making. The Bengal Engineering College provided leadership in Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Mining courses of study in this province. The proposals for vocational education as a remedy to educated unemployment attracted the attention of Bengal legislature and the Syndicate of the University of Calcutta. The latter urged on the Government to bring pressure on commercial firms and agencies for the establishment of more effective contact between education on the one hand and trade, industry and commerce on the other. An Appointment Board for selection of Graduate and Under-Graduate candidates in different lines of trade, industry and commerce was constituted, but its function became restricted on account of the war situation.
Chapter - VI: This chapter deals with financial crisis which was a nagging factor in the proper development of the University. The Accountant-General of Bengal suggested some remedial measures which included amalgamation of a number of funds, preparation of a monthly statement of accounts and also an official manual containing rules and regulations. Pramatharnath Banerjea, an influential member of the Syndicate, suggested investment of the receipts from the sale of University publications and the Matriculation examination fees, retrenchment in different departments, long-term investment of the Law College Reserve Fund and increase in the rate of Post-Graduate admission fee, non-collegiate fee, mark-sheet fee, and Matriculation and I.A. Examination fees.

Chapter - VII: The mechanism of financial management has been elaborately dealt with in this chapter. A Special Officer was appointed to investigate the entire matter of financial mismanagement of the University. In accordance with these suggestions Syndicate approved the proposals for appointment of a Treasurer, a University Finance Committee, a Post-Graduate Finance Committee and Provident Fund Management Committee. During the war period, the Government directed the University to finance the scheme of dearness allowance from its own funds. The emergency situation affected the Fee Income of the University.

Chapter - VIII: This chapter deals with Imperial Grant to non-government colleges. The most notable feature of this
item was that since 1941 the Syndicate resolved not to allow any grant to any college which did not follow the recommended pay scale for the teaching staff.

Chapter IX: This chapter contains some concluding remarks. On the basis of the findings of the previous chapters and giving due considerations to the opinions of some eminent educationists, I have concluded that there was no planned task-based systemwise managerial practice in the administration and management of higher education during the colonial period. The higher education was elitist in character, purposeless as an instrument of social change and irrelevant in the problem ridden context of Indian society. This study shows that the post-Independence development in the field of education have not yet been able to shake off the shackles of colonial legacy.

The Appendices in this thesis have been selected with utmost care and scrutiny. Their documentary value is self-evident. The inclusion of some of these documents in the Appendices demands explanation. A draft Bill to amend the Act of Incorporation of 1857 and the Universities Act of 1904 has been incorporated in the Appendices. This Bill could not be passed on account of the opposition of Asutosh Mookerjee. So, the entire system of higher education during our period of investigation was governed by the Indian Universities Act, 1904 and the Regulations, 1907. Nevertheless the historic value of this Bill remains unimpaired. The colonial Government
wanted to curb the autonomy of the University and Mookerjee strongly upheld it. This may be treated as a glorious episode in the history of modern India. The two documents containing the alphabetical list of affiliated institutions and the number of candidates appearing and passed successfully in the various examinations of the University of Calcutta respectively are of enormous significance to a student of history of education in Bengal. With the help of these two documents, the trend of educational pattern can be studied from various standpoints and analysed from different perspectives. The Inspection Reports reveal that the problem of higher education in Bengal was, indeed, a problem of management. The list of private investments belonging to the Trust and other Funds is illustrative of the deep concern for education that the people of Bengal at different layers of society felt. Moreover, it gives an indication of what type of education the people preferred most. The financial tables relating to higher education in India, U.K. and U.S.A. provide a comparative framework. No doubt, the test of comparability of educational budgets of these three countries is open to objection, because both U.K. and U.S.A. were advanced and industrially developed countries and India had just won independence with backward economy and stagnant social system. The figures in the document had an agonising tale to tell. To analyse the precise nature of Indian investment to education compared to that of U.K. and U.S.A., is the main purpose for the incorporation of the document in Appendices. In the text, the lamentable financial crisis confronting the
system of higher education has been elaborately discussed. The computerised tables showing the receipts and expenditure of the Fee Fund of the University of Calcutta are self-explanatory. These tables throw enough light on the acute financial stringency which at every step impeded the development of higher education in Bengal. The story of struggle for survival against these heavy odds is undoubtedly a heroic saga which enlivens the memories of Indian national struggle for independence. All the documents included in the Appendices deserve further study on their own merit, and not simply as corroborative evidence of what I have argued in different chapters of this work.

In the preparation of this dissertation I have consulted thoroughly and minutely the Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council and Assembly, the Minutes of the Senate and Syndicate, Regulations and Calendars of the University of Calcutta. The materials that I have gathered from the sources throw light on the issues in dispute in the study of policy formulation, administration and management of higher education in Bengal. The private papers of Gooroodas Banerjee, Asutosh Mookerjee and Shyamaprasad Mookerjee preserved in the custody of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi are invaluable sources that helped me considerably in my investigation of the genesis of the Dacca University, problems of university autonomy and those of educated unemployment and the development of higher scientific education in Bengal. Among other significant documents that I have consulted may be included Census Reports, Report on the Administration of Bengal, Quinquennial Review
on the Progress of Education in India and Progress of Education in Bengal (Decennial Review). Be it mentioned that the volumes of Indian Annual Register edited by P. Mitra have proved to be an invaluable mine of information in my research work. The Convocation Address of different universities and the proceedings of different organisations like Indian Science Congress, Indian Universities Conference, All India Muslim Educational Conference, All India Adult Education Conference, All Bengal College Teachers Association, All Bengal Women Education Conference have widened the horizon of my investigation and have added a new dimension to the subject matter of my enquiry. I have also consulted a large number of books on the subject under discussion written by eminent scholars and educationists. The materials I have culled from newspapers and journals have also provided new insights into the subject matter under investigation. The Centenary Commemoration volumes of the renowned colleges, such as Hooghly College (1836-1936), Krishnagar College (1846-1946), Berhampore Krishnath College (1853-1953), Presidency College (1855-1955), Bethune College (1879-1979), Vidyasagar College (1872-1972), B.E. College (1856-1956), Bangabasi College (1887-1987) and A Brief History of Chandernagore College (1862-1981), contain massive array of facts. It is quite possible to reconstruct the history of the growth and development of higher education in Bengal on the basis of data furnished by these commemoration volumes. The great contribution of private munificence in promoting higher education is enshrined in golden letters in the pages of these volumes. The autobiographies and biographies of eminent educationists and scientists provide
abundant materials which are not available in archival sources, Government reports, gazetteers and elsewhere. In that sense, these may be treated as original and primary sources for the purpose of my investigation.

I am indebted to the Library of the University of Calcutta, Shri Arun Basu and Srimati Ela Das, the Assistant Librarians, and Shri Ratan Das, a member of the staff, deserve special mention in this connection. I am grateful to the West Bengal Secretariat Library, National Library, Calcutta and the National Archives, New Delhi for the most sincere and prompt assistance I received from them. Shri Ghera of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, made available to me some precious documents which have enhanced the worth of this work. Shri Saurav Howlader of N.I.I.T. took the trouble in computerising and processing some statistical data.

I have been immensely benefited by the generous counsel and fertile suggestions of the members of the teaching staff, Department of History, University of Calcutta.

Special acknowledgement must be made to Dr. Jahar Sen, Reader in History, University of Calcutta, for his affectionate care, helpful guidance and valued supervision.

Shri Somendra Nath Chatterjee, my father, has always been a constant source of inspiration. My debt to him is too deep for words. I have incurred a heavy debt to Srimati Swapna Chakravarty, my mother-in-law, for her constant encouragement in the preparation of this thesis. Without the active support
of Shri Gautam Chakravarty, my husband, this effort would simply not have been possible.

I convey my thanks to Shri Nripendra Nath Karmakar for the most strenuous and superb secretarial assistance I received from him.