ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my thesis supervisor, V. K. Ramachandran, for his guidance and advice in writing this thesis. Ramachandran took a keen interest in my work from the very beginning. My discussions with him shaped my understanding of issues on development and agriculture. My experiences in the extensive fieldwork that I have done with him in different parts of rural India, enriched my understanding of the subject. His insightful comments on this thesis helped me build my arguments and interpret the data with a wider perspective of issues. His support and encouragement, in matters academic and personal, were invaluable for the completion of this thesis.

I am grateful to Madhura Swaminathan, for her comments and suggestions throughout the preparation of this thesis. She helped me formulate my research problem, and gave very useful suggestions on the quantitative methods applied in this study. She has read a number of drafts of the chapters in this thesis, and provided very useful comments. This thesis would not have been completed without her guidance and encouragement.

I am grateful to Vikas Rawal for use of data from the survey of “Landlessness and Debt in Rural West Bengal”. I am also grateful for his suggestions and help on data collection, data processing and analyses.

I began working on this thesis with a Junior Research Scholarship from the Foundation for Agrarian Studies. I am grateful to the trustees of the Foundation for financial assistance from February 2004 to August 2005. The following years of my research were completed as a Research Fellow at the Sociological Research Unit, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata. I thank the Institute for financial and institutional support.

I have benefited from discussions with T. J. Rao, Pronab Sen, Nityananda Sarkar on different aspects of the thesis. I sincerely thank them.

V. Surjit provided useful comments and help from the beginning of this thesis. I thank him.
I presented some findings of this thesis at a conference titled “Studying Village Economies: A Colloquium on Methodology,” held in Chalsa in December 2008. I am grateful to the participants of the colloquium for their comments. I presented the findings of this thesis at the Department of Economics, University of Calcutta in August 2009. I am grateful to the participants of the seminar for their comments.

I am grateful to Madan Ghosh, Dahareshwar Sen, Biresh Mandal and Sabyasachi Dey for their help during my fieldwork. I am grateful to the people in Daikati, Amarsinghi and Bidyanidhi, who allowed me into their lives and took care of me during the survey. I am particularly thankful to Ashim Mandal, Anukul Mandal, Lakshmikanta Chatterjee, and Sukumar Mallik.

Paritosh Mukherjee, Jibesh Chandra Das and Sumit Bhaduri helped me in my field survey. I thank them.

This thesis would not have been completed without the help and encouragement of my friends, Niladri Dhar, Paramita Ghosh, Navpreet Kaur, Suchismita Ray, Bheemeshwar Reddy, Anupam Sarkar, Kaustav Sarkar, Sandeep Sharma and Shamsher Singh. I am grateful to them.

The encouragement of my parents and Aravind Nambiar was invaluable for the completion of this thesis. My gratitude for them cannot be expressed in words.

Aparajita Bakshi