Acknowledgement

Completing Ph.D. dissertation has been a challenge for me. Many people and institutions have stood with me to see me through this challenge successfully. One or two modest pages and my limited vocabulary cannot do justice to my expression of gratitude to them. However, I attempt to do so with the hope that my sincere acknowledgement will be accepted.

The primary data used in this thesis were collected as part of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India (PARI) of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies (FAS). I am grateful to FAS for allowing me to use these data. My participation in the surveys conducted as part of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India was an extremely valuable experience that helped me a lot in conceptualising my doctoral dissertation. Much of the fieldwork for the dissertation was done while I was associated with PARI. I am grateful for all the support provided by FAS during this period.

I am deeply indebted to V. K. Ramachandran and Madhura Swaminathan for their guidance and insightful comments at various stages of my thesis. I am also indebted to K. Nagaraj and Ravi Srivastava for their suggestions and comments.

Niladri, Shamsher, Anil, and Paramita, have contributed in important ways in various conceptual issues relating to the field study.

My sincerest thanks to all the people in the two villages who have
been so patient and kind in responding to the questions and co-operating with all of us during the course of the field survey.

My friends and classmates have been a constant source of inspiration to me. Sugato, Biswadeep, Sankarsan, Joyeeta, Suvro, Jhilum, Suman, Dibyendu, Parama, Shamik, Protiva, Gokul, Someendra, Arijit, Nilanjan, Saikat, Sapan, Sourav, Mandeep, Subrat, Vineet, Dipika, JP, JK, Nandan, Neena, Ashutosh, Souvik, Taposik, Rajen da, Shakti, Surojit da, Manish da and boudi, Srimon have always stood by me in difficult phases.

I was greatly benefited by the academic discussions with Arindam, Sona, Jyotirmoy, Shantanu, and Kingshuk da.

I am extremely thankful to Tathagata, who in spite of his immensely busy and tiring schedule took time out to do the initial editing of this work.

A very special thanks to Prosanto Babu, Prem ji, Bisht ji, Rajesh, and Ranjit of CESP office for their kind support and easing the administrative difficulties that cropped up many times.

Words will never suffice to express my deep sense of gratitude towards my parents and other family members for their concern and affection which motivated me to stay focussed on my work.

Last but not the least, I have no words to acknowledge the contributions of my supervisor, Vikas Rawal. He has guided me in each and every stage of this work, gave me suggestions whenever I
approached him, and was thoroughly involved in the entire process of this work. Given my extremely ordinary academic background, I am not sure whether I am fit for any intellectual engagement with him in future. Whichever way things may turn, the intellectual stimulus I gained through the long hours of discussions with him will remain as the most valuable input in all my future endeavours.

Partha Saha
July, 2009