Acknowledgements

All praise and thanks to Almighty Allah for his innumerable blessings and the courage and determination he endowed me with to take up this research work.

I was extremely fortunate to have Dr. Nikhat Taj as my supervisor. Her suggestions and support led me to take up this challenging topic for my research project. I owe a debt of profound gratitude to her for her immense patience, persistent encouragement, constant support, her perceptive suggestions and gracious ways. Her willingness to convincingly and continually motivate me contributed tremendously to my thesis.

I am also thankful to Professor S. N. Zeba Chairman, Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Professor Sohail Ahsan (Dean Faculty of Arts), Professor A. R. Kidwai, Dr. M. Amirullah Khan and all teachers of the department who have influenced and encouraged me on different occasions.

Special thanks are due to Seminar Incharge Mr. Khan Pervez Rafi, and all other non-teaching staff of the department for their assistance and cooperation in handling the official procedures related to this research. I am also grateful to the staff of Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University (Aligarh), Zakir Hussain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia (New Delhi), the Library and Information Centre, Swansea University
(Swansea) and the British Library (London) for extending all possible help and cooperation.

Finally, an honourable mention goes to my family and friends for their understanding and support. Deepest gratitude is owed to my beloved parents who have always inspired me with their hard work and perseverance; showered me with their indispensable love, prayers and blessings. Thanks to my sisters Aaisha, Fatima and Safia for their affection and motivation. I am also thankful to my keen-eyed and judicious brother Shakeeb, who volunteered to gather the primary sources for this research project during his stay in the United Kingdom and my diligent brother Mohammad for helping me with the final printing and compilation of this thesis. Sincere thanks are due to my dear friend Zeba for her treasured friendship and moral support over the years.

Last but not the least I thank my significant other Tanweer for his patience, support and constructive criticism and my adorable daughter - Sara whose innocent smiles and chuckles have made my life immensely beautiful.

(Tasneem Noshi)