ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This piece of work would not have come to its present shape without the sustained help, guidance and supervision of my respected research guide Dr. D.C. Goswami, Reader in Geography, Gauhati University. I owe a special debt of gratitude to him for his deep involvement in my work and very careful scrutiny of my drafts.

I like to gratefully acknowledge the encouragement and advice received from my colleagues in the Department of Geography, Darrang College, Tezpur. My erstwhile teachers Prof. S.P. Mandal and Dr. P.K. Sharma of the said department deserve special mention as their wise advice and necessary administrative help had immensely encouraged me to have the privilege of the guidance of Dr. D.C. Goswami. My thanks are also due to my esteemed teachers Dr. M. Taher, Dr. H.N. Sharma, Dr. N.N. Bhattacharyya, Dr. M.M. Das, Dr. R.Barman and Shri A. K. Bhagabati of the Department of Geography, Gauhati University for encouraging me in every step of my research.

I would like to pay a tribute to Principal, Darrang College, Tezpur and the University Grants Commission, New Delhi for granting me the valuable one-year fellowship and leave from the college to complete my doctoral research.
I thank my father and other members of the family for taking ample pains to extend all possible help to me during the period of my research. Thanks are also due to many of my well-wishers including Sri J.C. Bora, Ms. Sandhya Goswami and my friends Ramen, Bipin, Hiteswar, Sarbeswar, Thingo, Kailas, Jyotish and others whose continuous support and encouragement are in no small part responsible for the eventual completion of the work.

Besides, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the various authors, publishers, organizations and institutions for using their learned papers, books, journals, reports and scientific data in connection with my research work.

Last but not least, I would like to express my deep sense of indebtedness to Shri Sidhi Nath Sharma for rendering the valuable cartographic assistance and to Shri K.C. Das for providing the excellent typographical service.

Above all, I reserve a word of appreciation and gratitude for all those countless individuals and institutions who have, directly or indirectly, contributed towards completion of my doctoral research.

August 20, 1990
Guwahati

( Ashok Kumar Bora)