Acknowledgements

A research project can never be completed in isolation. Though the following dissertation is an individual work, I could never have understood the meaning of research from within without the help, support, guidance and efforts of a lot of people.

First, I would like to thank my supervisor and mentor, Professor Bijay. K. Danta. He has been my teacher and has been a source of courage, information and inspiration. The completion of this dissertation is in many ways an evidence of the feeling of collegiality and the spirit of democracy that he insists on in all spheres of life including research. He allowed me to make this project my own even as he watched the growth of the project from early fascination through spirited engagement and the desperate need to finish.

I also express my deepest gratitude to Professor Farheena Danta for always caring, helping and giving the best suggestions throughout my career as a student of literature and a research scholar.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Tezpur University, specifically to the Department of English and Foreign Languages, for extending all kinds of help and support in carrying out my research work. I must acknowledge the help and support of the faculty members and members of the Doctoral Committee who helped me at every stage.

I take this opportunity to express gratitude to the University Grants Commission for granting me a two year Teacher Fellowship under the FDP Scheme. I am grateful to the erstwhile Principal of Debraj Roy College, Golaghat, Dr. T.C. Bhuyan, who readily helped and encouraged me to avail the fellowship.

I am indebted and thankful to the present Principal, Dr. P.C. Saikia, to the Department of English, the staff of administrative office, and all my colleagues of Debraj Roy College, Golaghat, for extending full co-operation, support and guidance in my research venture.

I would never have been able to finish my dissertation without consulting scholarly materials made available to me by the OUCIP Library, Hyderabad, the FCT Library, Vadodara, Tezpur University Library and online journals and libraries. I must acknowledge the help and guidance from both senior and junior scholars of the department, help and goodwill of

friends, relatives and domestic staff, and above all the unceasing encouragement, support and out of the way sacrifices of my parents, elder brother and sister-in-law.

My son has borne a major burden of this project by ungrudgingly accepting the frequent withdrawal of care and quality time. His participation in the project clearly went beyond moral support when he started carrying books to my table when I prepared the list of works cited. Finally, a word of gratitude to my husband is surely in order. He has been there through the good times and bad, though it would perhaps require the skills of a Holmes or a Poirot to see his contribution.

Anindita Dey