

## Acknowledgement

There are innumerable people who have supported and helped me, directly and indirectly, to complete the work. I express my heart-felt gratitude and thanks to all of them and my sincere apologies for not being able to mention all the names individually.

I owe my heartiest thanks and gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Karubaki Datta, Associate Professor of History, the Centre for Himalayan Studies, North Bengal University, Darjeeling, without whose proper guide and encouragement, the research work would not have been completed. She has given me the opportunity to discuss so many things related to my topic. I will remain ever thankful to this Centre and the teachers Prof. S.R. Mandal, Prof. R. Sahu, Prof. M. Choudhury and Prof. U. Bhui, and non-teaching staffs for nurturing my academic pursuits. I am grateful to the staff of the Document Cell of this Centre for their help in tracing and providing different source materials. I want to thank specially Debiprasad Boot, cartographer of this centre who has helped me in making the maps given in the thesis.

On a more personal note, my husband Dr. Najmul Haque, has been my biggest source of confidence and support. He has directly assisted me during my door to door survey work in Darjeeling. My parents, brothers and sisters are my first and foremost source of motivation to continue higher studies and research. I express my deepest gratitude to them. I fondly thank my younger brother A. Salam who has encouraged and guided me in quest for knowledge and research, and instilled in me the confidence to surge forward.

Last but not least I express my heartiest gratitude to Imam Sir and his wife. They have not only provided me lodging and food during my stay in Darjeeling but also helped me to carry on the survey there by giving information about the old business families. I am also indebted to Jamshed Ansari whose direct support helped me to reach appropriate persons and to get necessary historical documents.

I am also grateful to the staff of the National Library, State Archive, Kolkata and Central Library, University of North Bengal for their help in tracing and providing necessary source materials.

I would like to thanks to all of my colleagues and friends without whose timely suggestions and critiques my work may have been incomplete.

*Hosneara Khatun*  
Hosneara Khatun 1/2/13