

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank the library of Western Oregon State College, especially the staff of the interlibrary loan office, for procuring even the most obscure material used in this work. As in the past, Provost Bill Cowart, Dean John Minahan, and Professor Denis Moran have been highly supportive of my scholarly enterprise and I thank them for their help and encouragement. My manuscript was substantially modified in the Oriental Section of the New York Public Library during June and July, and in the library of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, during August and September, of 1989. I thank the staff of both institutions for their usual cooperation. Messrs Subhendu and Amit Mānnā, proprietors of Sri Sri Ma Cold Storage Private Limited, hosted my stay at Sihoḍ (home of Hridayrām) and provided transport for travel to Jayrāmbāṭi (parental home of Śaradāmaṇi) and Kāmārpukur (home of Rāmākṛṣṇa). In this connection, I would like to place on record the almost professional service rendered by two young women of Kāmārpukur--Animā Datta and Mādhavī Māl--who would like to be remembered as my "guides."

Swamis Raghaveshananda of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Satyavratanaṇḍa of Udbodhan Office, Calcutta, and Swananda of Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati graciously granted permission to cite from a number of sources published by their respective establishments. Needless to mention, their permission in this regard does not in any manner imply their concurrence with the contents of this book. I also thank Mr. Priyagopāl Hāzrā, one of the descendants of the family of Rāṇī Rāsmaṇi through the female line, for having granted me an interview at his Jānbāzār (Calcutta) residence at an unusually short notice. Finally, I thank my colleagues at Western--those in the Department of Educational Media and Technology for their generous help in preparing the manuscript for the publishers and those in the Social Science and Humanities Divisions for their gallant forbearance on two occasions when they magnanimously subjected themselves to my harangues on Śrī Rāmākṛṣṇa.