The theme of this present volume emerged out of the meaningful conversations and debates in the National Seminar on ‘Sociology of Marginality: Contemporary issues’ organised by Department of Sociology, Vidyasagar University, West Bengal on 19–20 March 2014. Instead of dissipating our energies in conversations, however meaningful, we decided to concretise the dialogues set in motion by those who were part of the seminar as well as those who were selected to be paper contributors, in the form of an edited volume.

We were initiated into the discourse on marginality by Debarshi Talukdar, who persuaded us to organise a conference on this theme. We are immensely grateful to him for that. The unstinting support and encouragement from Partha Nath Mukherjee, who provided the keynote address in the seminar, helped us embark upon this endeavour to come up with an edited volume on this theme. We benefitted immensely from our conversations on the theme with Pradip Kumar Bose during the seminar and later as well. Rekha Pande was generous with her time, and interactions with her gave us the much needed enthusiasm. Our thanks and appreciation goes to Ranjan Chakrabarti, Vice Chancellor, Vidyasagar University, for his constant encouragement and support in this venture. The receipt of grant from two of our funding agencies, viz. University Grants Commission (UGC) and Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) towards organising this National Seminar eased our work, and we could organise a national seminar. We are also grateful to Central University of Gujarat for providing institutional support. We are thankful to all the paper contributors of the book who have made sincere efforts to share their research ideas and work. We are also thankful to the anonymous reviewers of the book for their invaluable comments.

This edited volume has been a challenge to understand marginality in India, marginalised social categories and the pathways to social justice. It draws field/empirical experiences across varied Indian states. The volume’s contemporary thrust is sure to revive scholarly and policy interests among cross section of people from the academia, policy makers and activists. The multidisciplinary nature of the book will be instructive for students and researchers in the field of sociology,
anthropology, historical and political studies, demography, social work and gender studies, public policy in particular and broadly in the human sciences.

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