

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements are due to a number of people and institutions for the completion of the present thesis. First of all I would like to thank Indian Council of Historical Research for awarding me scholarship for Ph. D. I am extremely indebted to my guide, Dr. Aruna Awasthi who's meticulous and sincere supervision of my work, her unfailing encouragement and inspiration, valuable and suggestions helped me to complete this study. I also owe a lot to Dr. Maitree Vaidya for her help and support throughout my work. I am thankful to all the teachers of the Department of History.

During my research work I visited many repositories, libraries and archives. I am thankful to Baroda Archives- Southern Circle, Gujarat; Maharashtra Archives, Mumbai; Poona Archives, Poona; Central Library, Vadodara; Hansa Mehta Library; Palace Library; and Sayaji Viabhav Sarvajanic Pustakalaya, Navsari. I also acknowledge the assistance I was rendered by the staff of all the above institutions and that of Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts, Faculty Performing Arts and Head Office of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.

I appreciate the help of Mr. Janak Joshi, Cartographer, with the Geography Department, who helped me in making the maps. I am also grateful to S.R. Patel, Prof. Bindu Bhatt, Prof. Bharat Mehta, Ms. Priti Dave and Dr. Pandey for their help during my thesis.

I owe my deepest regards and gratitude to my parents; my father, late Mr. Rajendraprasad Upadhyay. Although I have little memory of him, but his presence in spirit was a guiding force. I am especially thankful to my mother Ranjan Upadhyay, who has always been present as a strong pillar in my life. In times of difficulties and challenges her rock solid support had motivated me to not give up but move forward towards my goal. I am equally thankful to my husband Swapnil Pandya, who had encouraged me to take up research work and had been by my side throughout. I am grateful for the patience shown by my little daughter Misha, which allowed me to complete the work. I am obliged to my Aunt Rashmika for giving motherly warmth to my daughter during my absences. I am thankful to my parents-in-law for their support and blessings. I also appreciate the encouragement given by my sister and Jiju (brother-in-law). Last but not the least; I am thankful to my God Almighty.