

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rural India is passing through the process of change in the present time. The ancient ideal village which had existed socially and economically as an independent, self-reliant, autonomous organization and was as soft as wax has nearly disappeared today. In other words, there has been a change in its social, economic, religious, political and educational aspect. Not only that but also the village itself has become changeable altogether.

In the present study, I have tried to give introduction of the Hindu *Kshatriya Karadiya* Rajput community living in the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area in Gujarat, its structure as well as the changes in it as accurately as possible keeping in view my own understanding, ability and time-limit. The study, I believe, is of a primary level and a lot could be written about the topic for which a scholar may get inspiration. If someone gets such an inspiration, I would consider my effort worthwhile.

Perhaps the present study may or may not be useful to anybody but it has undoubtedly proved to be very useful to me at the personal level. I think I have certainly grown wiser in my thoughts and have started thinking about anything afresh and that is quite sufficient for me. The subsequent work will automatically follow.

Actually, the beginning of my present thesis had already taken place when its idea occurred in my head that under any circumstances I would prepare work under the guidance and supervision of Prof. P. S. Choondawat. I was very happy when I got his consent finally after a couple of visits for discussions about the possibility of such a study. After getting a supervisor, now what about the topic of study? He suggested the topic, 'A Sociological Study of the Changing Status of *Kshatriyas* in Gujarat' (With Special Reference to *Bhal-Nalkantha* Region) which, after some discussions, we finalized. I felt happy because I myself belong to the *Bhal-Nalkantha* region and also to the Rajput community but at the same time self-pride, too, peeped in. I felt proud and relieved because I thought it would be easier to prepare the thesis. I thought it wouldn't be too difficult to prepare the thesis but when I began to work in the field and got involved in the framing of the project, I got shockingly surprised as difficulties and obstructions melted my complacency. Although difficulties arose, doors to the road ahead began opening up as I walked further on my way to explore.

The experiences especially those related to economic, social, religious, political, cultural and educational system which I came across during my research work and fieldwork, I got help in solving my problems in my work from persons to whom I express here my thankfulness. I have given in appendices a list of the reference works, questionnaire and names of people whom I met in order to collect data.

The writing of a thesis as a result of the present study has suggested a new direction to me. However, if it gives inspiration to others in order to expand or take the study further, I will feel content for my effort.

I believe in successfully completing any work, support from others is essential. I, too, got help from a number of persons in preparing this thesis and I express my gratitude to them.

It's a matter of great pride and honour for me to acknowledge all the help and guidance provided to me by my Gurus, Friends and relatives while working to complete my doctoral thesis. When it takes shape and it is submitted successfully, it's like a big battle won and a dream come true. I humbly want to acknowledge the help and guidance given to me by my well-wishers from the depth of my heart.

To begin with, I would like to thank my Guru and guide Prof. (Dr.) P. S. Choondawat. Prof. (Dr.) Choondawat has been a constant source of inspiration, right from the beginning. He has displayed great patience throughout and has been a wonderful Guru and guide. Without the help of Prof. (Dr.) P. S. Choondawat my task wouldn't have been completed. He gave me his invaluable suggestions and guidance, along with much needed motivation and encouragement to keep me going. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to him. I am also very thankful to my guide for sparing his precious time out of his busy schedules. He has been very supportive and has always provided his useful suggestions and help whenever required.

First of all, I thank Prof. P. S. Choondawat for his immense and constant help right from deciding the topic and throughout my study. I believe this thesis is the result of his love and affection and constant guidance. He guided and encouraged me in every respect by sincerely guiding me throughout my study. I will remain indebted to him forever and I do not want to diminish my sense of gratitude by formally thanking him. I am indeed thankful to him in completing my research work/study by sparing no

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It is obvious that it is very difficult and almost impossible to travel on an unknown road without a guide. Prof. Choondawat has provided me guidance constantly and diligently and with a lot of affection. Once again I express my gratitude to him for which I find words inadequate.

I also express my sincere thankfulness to the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda for giving me admission into the Ph.D. program. My sincere thanks to all the members of the staff for giving me their guidance and constant love and affection. I express my thankfulness to the members of the staff in the University for providing me necessary books valuable material useful in my study.

I owe a special thanks to my parents who always prayed for my success and were always curious to know about my progress, while I was working to complete the thesis. I don't know how to express my gratitude with an open heart to my father and mother and I admit sincerely that I could complete my work due to their blessings. I admit that my father Shri Pratapsinhji Ahujibha Dodiya and my mother Fulba. My wife and children have been my constant well-wishers. My wife, Smt. Rekha deserves a special mention here because she was a constant Source of support and at times a staunch critic. My daughter Kumari Swara and son Kumar Rutvij have been very helpful and encouraging throughout. I am equally grateful to my family members and other relatives for showing their concern for me and provided me cooperation, love and affection and strength to complete this work. I touch feet of elders and sincerely thank them all for their love and help.

I am also thankful to members of my Rajput community of the *Bhal-Nalkantha* region and especially the respondents to provide me necessary data and information about different aspects of the Rajput community useful in my study. I feel extremely happy to express my pleasure and thanks to the members of Rajput community for helping me in my study of the structure of and the changes in the Hindu *Kshatriya Karadiya* Rajput community of the *Bhal-Nalkantha* region.

I have got help from many persons especially my colleagues and friends who have

helped me in classification and analysis of the data and in reference work as well as wherever I needed help. I sincerely express my deep sense of gratitude to all of them.

There have been many ups and downs in my research journey to prepare the thesis, namely, ‘A Sociological Study of the Changing Status of *Kshatriyas* in Gujarat’ (With Special Reference to *Bhal-Nalkantha* Region) but I have got help, inspiration, cooperation and good wishes and guidance at every stage from many persons for which I feel indebted to them all. I sincerely thank Dr. Nanubhai Dakorwala for completing the typing and formatting this thesis in time and going through the thesis patiently.

I am sure Sociologists, Social Anthropologists, social workers as well as scholars will find this study useful. It is not possible that the final product any research work would be useful to research scholars only and it cannot be beneficial to the researcher herself/himself. So, I am confident that this study has not only benefitted to me but it will also be beneficial, beyond doubt, to the scholars of Sociology and Social Anthropologists as well as to the Rajput community to an extent.

Finally, I express my sincere thanks to all who have helped and given cooperation in my present study directly or indirectly. I take here an opportunity to hope that this study will prove useful in the direction to further research in this area. I will pleasantly welcome and try to accommodate any suggestions regarding this thesis.

Above all I thank the almighty to help realize my dream and being with me all the time. I believe that all our actions are geared to reach our goal which will be accomplished without anxiety or worry, if we take care of the work right at hand.

Finally, in the words of Emerson,

“Don’t waste life in doubts and fears; spend yourself on the work before you, well assured that the right performance of this hour’s duties will be the best preparation for the hours or ages that follow it.”

At the end (To Conclude).....

To begin with first and foremost I would like to greet and thank Prof. (Dr.) P. S.

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It would be unfair and improper if I don't express my heart-felt thanks and greetings to my Parents. They have showered lots of love and given inspiration and encouragement while I was doing my research work.

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I also thank all those friends and relatives who have been directly or indirectly responsible for supporting my work.

Once again-whom should I remember? and whom should I forget?

Thanking

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Mahendrasinh P. Dodiya