

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was conducted under the SHODH scholarship offered by the Government of Gujarat. I am grateful to the Government of Gujarat for the award of the scholarship and instituting this scheme to promote research in the state. I am grateful to the role played by The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, and to Dr. B.S. Chakrabarty, nodal officer of the SHODH scholarship for the university, for his administrative support with availing the scholarship benefits.

The research was conducted at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, where my journey began as an undergraduate student. The role and contribution of this institution in my academic journey is invaluable. I thank Prof. Hitesh D. Raviya, Head of the Department of English, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, for kindly extending administrative and institutional support to the research, and his role in facilitating research infrastructure at the department. I thank Prof. Sachin Ketkar, Prof. Madhurita Choudhury, and Mr. G. Venkateswaralu, for their intellectual recommendations, and sharing important scholarly sources pertaining to my research area; all the faculty members of the department for their kind encouragement; and the administrative and non-teaching staff of the department — Pallaviben G. Patel and Rameshbhai S. Vaghela, for their generous and kind support with all the stages of the process.

I thank the Dean, Faculty of Arts, the administrative staff of the faculty; all the office-bearers and the entire administrative staff of the university head office, especially Sonalben, Mayurbhai, and Ujjwalbhai at the university head office, for their support with the administrative process of the research.

I thank the staff at the Forbes Gujarati Sabha, Mumbai, especially, Mr. Rajesh Doshi for helping with access to archival sources during the pandemic. I thank the staff of the Smt. Hansa Mehta Library, Vadodara; the Central Library, Vadodara; and the Gujarat Vidyapith Library, Ahmedabad, for their support and assistance, where archival research for this study was conducted. Their role in preserving these rich repositories, and warm enthusiasm towards the research process make such a study possible. I also put on record the critical contribution of the digital archive repositories in aiding historically driven research.

It is a challenging task to express my gratitude to my research supervisor — Prof. Deeptha Achar, with whom my academic connection dates back to my first year of undergraduate study. She was also the supervisor for my M.Phil. research, and this intellectual journey with her has shaped organically much like the idea for my Ph.D. research

was built out of the discussions during the previous research project under her. I am indebted to her for her intellectual mentorship that has built confidence and convictions in my research abilities. Her peculiar ability to identify the intellectual inclinations and potential of each researcher working under her has always fascinated me. I thank her for helping me find an order in the chaos of the myriad intellectual directions I am inclined to pursue at the same time. But I thank her more for never rejecting any idea as ‘too ambitious’ and pushing me to aim higher and perform to the best of my capacity. I thank her for equipping me with theoretical rigour, critical depth, and linguistic precision. Above all, I thank her for her inexhaustible kindness and unconditional support through all the challenges of this process.

It is the same kindness that keeps the doors of her personal library always open for all researchers. It spills on to the research community she builds around her, which I have had the privilege to be a part of. I thank my co-researchers under her supervision — Kesha, Bhavesh, and Lancy, for their prompt support and help with the thesis submission process. I especially thank Kesha for also helping with the synopsis submission process. I thank Pratiksha and Grishma, alongside Kesha, for the stimulating discussions during the coursework.

I am not only grateful to Prof. Achar but to everyone around her who supported her contribution to my research. I thank Dr. Santosh Dash for sharing his work with me. I thank Kathya and Manu for allowing me a huge share of the time and attention of their mother. I warmly acknowledge Maggie whose kind and gentle presence helped me unwittingly overcome my fear of pets while I was busy negotiating the challenges of research.

I thank the Forum on Contemporary Theory, Vadodara, and the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar for organising academic sessions where I could meet and interact with some of the important theorists, I have consulted in the research like Ashis Nandy, Walter D. Mignolo, and Riho Isaka.

I acknowledge my intellectual debt to the late Prof. Avadhesh Kumar Singh — a chance meeting with whom at a seminar in Saurashtra University turned into an inspiring intervention of the approach of alternative modernities in my theoretical repertoire. Little did I expect him to become a mentor to me not only in an intellectual but a personal capacity. This research is dedicated to his fond memory.

My research journey would be impossible without my mother—Nayana, whose inspiring presence has shaped both my research questions and inclinations. I have grown up watching her celebrate a life of the mind marked by critical thinking, fearless questioning, deep reflection, and breadth of vision. It is to her I owe my grounding in a strong sense of

identity, and an understanding of my histories and culture. I have drawn my passion for literature and penchant for language from her. I thank her for always dreaming my dreams before me, and doing more than what is in her power to turn them into realities.

It is to her and my sister — Devashree, that I owe the successful completion of this research. I thank them both for being the strong support system to fall back on, and the inspiration that kept me going. I thank Devashree for helping me negotiate the labyrinth of technology, for managing every logistic issue, and helping me fulfil all the material processes of research. I thank my father, Nitin, for being the silent yet constant support for all of us in the family.

I thank my extended family for their support and appreciation for my pursuit of research and being the source of endless encouragement. I thank my friends Preeth, Puja, Sumith, Deepika, Dhaval, Naman, Hardik, Mayur, and Anant, for putting up with my long absences, and being a source of warmth and love that has had an invisible but invaluable contribution in my journey.

I specifically thank my research colleague and friend Ajay, who was also a co-recipient of the SHODH Fellowship. Our research journeys converged by beginning on the same date, making him a kind and helpful companion through all the administrative and other procedures. I thank all the research scholars at the Department of English, with whom I have shared warm moments of friendship, laughter, and joy, that made this journey more memorable.