

PREFACE

The material which has gone into this thesis was collected during four expeditions undertaken between 1951-1954. The duration of the field-work amounted in all to just under twelve months.

It would not have been possible to undertake this work but for the award of a Research Scholarship (1950-1951) and later a Research Assistantship (1952-1954), by the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. I am extremely grateful to the University for the financial help given to me. My thanks are also due to the Mer leader Shri Maldeobhai Ranabhai Keshwara but for whose help I could not have carried out research among the Mers. I wish to express my thanks to my teachers. Further acknowledgement of my various obligations will be made at the time of publication.

I may point out here that I have preferred the word 'Mer' instead of 'Mehar' or 'Maher' used by earlier writers, for the simple reason that 'Mer' is in current usage.

Baroda,
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