This thesis was undertaken and completed under the guidance of Dr. A.B. Dige, retired principal of Yashwantrao Chavan Warana Mahavidyalaya, Warananagar, Dist: Kolhapur. With his critical insight, patient guidance and keen interest, Dr. Dige was a great source of encouragement at every stage of the work. This formal acknowledgement is an inadequate expression of my gratitude to him.

I wish to express my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Subhasacandra Sarang, Head, Department of Geography, Yashwantrao Chavan Warana Mahavidyalaya, Warananagar, Dist: Kolhapur, for his valuable advice and constructive criticism. To Principal B.N. Kalekar, Venutai Chavan College, Karad, I owe a comprehensive debt as he constantly urged me to go ahead with this project.

This study was made possible by the award of Teacher Fellowship by the University Grants Commission and the grant of study leave by the Shivaji Education Society, Karad. In this respect I am particularly obliged to Shri. P.D. Patil, Chairman, Shivaji Education Society, Karad.

I would also like to thank ācārya Shri. Vidyānanda muni (Delhi) and Dr. Sudeep Jain, Director of Kundakunda Bharati Prakrit Bhavana, Delhi who provided me the rare material on sallekhanā. Warm thanks are also due to the ācārya Kalpasrutanandi muni and the celibate Vimalji Murabatte who offered their valuable time for the informal interviews and discussions on sallekhanā in general, and their duties as nirvāpakācārya in particular.
I would also like to thank Dr. Naciketa Vacasundar and Mrs. Neha N. Vacasundar (both āyurvedācāryas, Karad), Dr. Vilas Sangave (Kolhapur), Shri. Bipincandra Minace, Shri. Jinasena bhattraka, celibate Shri. M.J. Bhisikar, (Bahubali), Dr. J.R. Dabhole, Dr. Sarjerao Salunkhe, Prof. Mrs. Leelavati Jain (editor of 'Dharmamangala' Pune), Dr. S.S. Antarkar, (Mumbai), acārya Vidyānanda muni (kṣapaka), for their informal interviews on sallekhanā, suicide and euthanasia.

I would like to thank Shri S.S. Phiske, Shri. Vijay Doshi (Mumbai), Prof. S.N. Patil, Prof. S.H. Dixit, Dr. T.R. Patil, Dr. Aljapurkar, Prof. S.G. Mali and, Shri. Manohar Marwadkar (Nagpur) who always encouraged me to work.

I am also indebted to late Shri. Vidyacandra Kothari (Gulbarga), Late Shri. Hiralal Doshi (Solapur) and late Shri. Prof. D.S. Chaugule for their invaluable help and suggestions.

My warm thanks are also due to the members of the Department of English, Venutai Chavan College, Karad, especially Dr. P.A. Attar, Mrs. Vijaymala Langade and Shri. Rajendra Thorat. I would also like to thank Dr. J.J. Kadam, Shri. M.C. Mane and Shri. V.B. Gaikwad of Venutai Chavan College, Karad.

I would like to thank Shri. D.A. Wadkar, Mrs. P.D. Wadkar, Shri. B.A. Wadkar, Mrs. K.B. Wadkar, Shri. S.J. Magdum and Mrs. I.S. Magdum for the encouragement given to me. I would like to thank my wife Meenakshi and my loving kids Poonam and Preetam for sparing me from my household responsibilities.
I am also thankful to the librarians and the members of the staff of the following: Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Venutai Chavan College, Karad, S.G.M. College, Karad, Pharmacy College, Karad, Kundakunda Prakrit Bhavan, Delhi, Anekanta Sodhapitha, Bahubali and Pune University, Pune.

My warm thanks are also due to the prominent Jaina and Non-Jaina scholars and editors of Jaina periodicals who readily sent their replies to the questionnaire.

I am also indebted to Prof. Y.S. Kalamkar, Wai for editing the whole script and offering valuable suggestions.

I must also thank to Shripad S. Nadgouda and Miss Sampada Shriniwas Nadgouda (SN Computers, Karad) for their careful indefatigable and conscientious typing of this thesis.

If by some mischance I have failed to acknowledge wherever I should have done so, I hope those concerned will accept my apologies.

Karad.

Date: 28/6/2001

(P.B. Chaugule)