For quite a many years in past it was lingering in my mind that the role played by Marathi women in the history of freedom movement of India deserves to be studied deeply as it had remained unattended so far by the scholars of modern Indian history. While preparing this work on the role of Marathi women in India's struggle for freedom inadequacy of sources—both original and secondary, was one of the problems that I had to face, especially while filling in the gaps between certain events. Not much has been written even about the freedom movement in Maharashtra, not to speak of the work done by Marathi women in this field. Inspite of these difficulties I had to cut across my path.

In the course of my study I found that women of India and Maharashtra in particular, when given opportunity did not lag behind in any field, whether political, social or educational. This made the subject fascinating from the very start and I enjoyed it throughout my study. Ventures made by various women kept interest lively and created in me a desire to dig deep into available sources and to know more about Marathi women.

The first three chapters of the thesis cover the awakening and progress of Marathi women. The remaining four chapters deal with the role played by Marathi women from the Non-Cooperation Movement to the Quit India Movement.
It is only during the Gandhian era that women got chance to come forward for the nation's cause. Gandhiji, after he became the accredited leader of the Congress, the freedom movement which was still then class-movement became mass-movement. And for the first time because of Gandhiji's advise and inspiration, Marathi women, who were till then behind the bars of social barriers, came forward for the nation's cause and played their legitimate roles as equal parteners of men in the movement of our country. Women from urban and rural areas as well as literate and illiterate showed their enthusiasm and power while fighting for the cause of nation. And all these features have been well attempted to give graphic information of women's spirit and participation in nation's movement.

All these developments of Marathi women in the freedom struggle have been carefully analysed with the help of various sources. The main source was the "Home political and Home Special" records from the Maharashtra State Record Office Bombay. I have also tried to tap records of Yeravda Jail, Poona, but it could not help me as it had kept no separate records for freedom fighters in Maharashtra. Information available from newspapers and journals was, however, very much limited on account of the fact that whenever any major political agitation took place in the country, the British censorship was rigorously to clamp down on the news papers. In addition to that there were
numerous difficulties to contact some women freedom fighters in Maharashtra. But through correspondence and personal interviews I have tried to get as much information as was possible to me. And contacted wherever necessary to confirm the role of women freedom fighters. And thus, the records from Home Political and Home Special from the State Record Office, Census Reports, native papers, Imperial Gazetters and a number of official reports are carefully used to make this dissertation quite authentic and even interesting.

At last I must mention that, although, I desired to work on the role of Marathi women in the struggle for our country's freedom, I was not clear in my mind about the depth, gravity and essence of the subject. Besides not only methodology but places of source material and other matters were not known to me. However, when I approached Dr. M.D. Nalawade, from the department of History of Shivaji University, he gladly accepted to guide in my pursuit. And it, because of his live interest and deep knowledge, I am very much benefitted. I must therefore, record my deep sense of gratitude to him and Mrs. Nalawade, also, as she took trouble every time to encourage me in my work. I must also mention the services of Shri. B.B. Maharaj, and Prof. V.K. Kulkarni who led me to many sources of information on my subject. I shall ever remain grateful to Prof. Shri. B.S. Odeyar, my husband, for his constant encouragement and
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Gargoti.
30-12-1989.

Mrs. S. B. Odeyar.