Acknowledgements

It is time to express my appreciation and gratitude towards all those people who have been associated with this thesis during the various phases of its evolution.

First and foremost, I must thank the Department of English, University of Pune, for giving me the opportunity to be associated with them through the Ph.D. Programme. The friendly and stimulating atmosphere of this place made the learning process especially rewarding. A very special thanks goes to my supervisor, Prof. Sudhakar Pandey who was always open to fresh ideas and extended whole-hearted support at all times. I thank Prof. Prashant Sinha who was generous with his time whenever I needed him. A word of appreciation for Dr. R. Raj Rao for being there, for discussing important issues with me and for being a source of encouragement. Another person who can simply not be forgotten is Freya Barua with whom it was always a pleasure to share thoughts and ideas. She was one of the first people who reassured me of the validity of my project, thereby giving me the confidence to go on.

I thank my brother, Amit who took the trouble to locate crucial and valuable resource materials in various libraries in America, materials inaccessible to me here in India. My mother-in-law, Dr. Padma Srivastava, who reiterated the importance of this enterprise deserves a word of thanks too. Administrative problems had to be tackled sometimes and it was reassuring that my uncle, Dr. G. P. Srivastava, was always there for me. My family who lived so tirelessly with me for these past years while I lived and breathed with Doris Lessing should not go unnoticed. I acknowledge their contribution.
And then there are my friends, some of whom tried very hard to become invisible so that they would not impinge on precious time.

The last one month has been a revelation, in terms of showing me what it is possible to achieve when the goal gets into sharp and clear focus. It showed me too the faces of those who really care. There are three such people without whose consistent support this thesis would truly not be there today. Words fail me when I try to express what my friend Nita Kumar has done for me, both in terms of giving so generously of her time, never once communicating the feeling that I was encroaching, as also giving me tremendous emotional sustenance during the last and most traumatic moments. Few people have the rare ability to make the problems of others their personal business. She does and I shall remain eternally indebted to her. I ought not forget my husband, Rajat who very cruelly set for me impossible deadlines, leaving me no choice but to meet them. He has been the driving force behind this endeavour and I thank him very specially. There is Jai Devi too to whom I am truly grateful. She virtually took over the running of my home in response to a need she perceived on her own, making sure that everyone got what they needed. I thank her for the spontaneity with which she cared for me so that I could meet this deadline.

And last but not the least, I thank Madhu for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself.