Acknowledgments

Some debts can never be repaid. As I begin to acknowledge those to whom I owe so much, I cannot help but reel in the whirlpool of memories. The submission of this thesis marks an end to my university life. I do not know whether I will find another opportunity to be a part of campus life, either as a student or teacher. Perhaps the university years are the most wonderful to live in one's life. University is a place where we live in the ever flowing current of contradictory, fascinating and provoking ideas — ideas that shape history. In my knowledge, there is no place in the country, other than JNU, where one has such animated dialogue with the ideas of history, of present and of future. Therefore, I consider myself fortunate enough that I have spent better part of my life in JNU deciphering, understanding and engaging so many old and new ideas. This university has given me an exposure to the world of knowledge. And yet there was much that I could have engaged with more meaningfully. My sojourn in JNU has been full of expectations — expectations from life and self; despairs — despairs that come from lost opportunities, and then again new hopes. JNU has taught me many lessons in many ways, some enriching and some rude. It has taught me new meanings of life. I am indebted to JNU for all that.

As I am on the verge of departure from JNU, I must confess that my imagination and thoughts have been totally encircled by one person — my guide Dr. D. Varaprasad Sekhar. I could never understand how a person could be as considerate of others as he has been to me. I would never have been able to complete and submit my thesis but for his guidance and consideration. The way he checked all the drafts of my thesis was amazing and beyond anybody's imagination or expectation. This alone was sufficient to show the virtuous side of his character. While checking my drafts, he has not only supervised my PhD but has also taught me English like a school teacher. When I say that I would never have been able to complete and submit my thesis but for his guidance and consideration, I mean it. It was, absolutely, not his job to correct my English, but he did it without mentioning it even once. Sir, if a student like me who comes from vernacular educational background gets PhD from JNU, it is simply because of you. I run short of words to express my thanks and gratitude.

Professor Madhu Bhalla, like Dr. Varaprasad, has seen me growing. She supervised my Master of Philosophy dissertation. She inculcated a passion for
academics in me. She helped me understand what academics mean and how one could fruitfully pursue it. I cannot forget her kindness that considering my inadequate English skills, she encouraged me to write my dissertation in Hindi, which was really an extraordinary favour. I would also like to thank all my teachers at the centre, particularly Prof. G. P. Deshpande, Dr. Alka Acharya, Prof. Lalima Verma and Prof. Srikanth Kondapalli.

At this point of time, I remember Dr. Arunodaya Vajpai, Dr. N.K. Ghosh, Shri P.S. Bais, Shri Arvind Kumar Singh and Shri R.P.S. Yadav, all excellent teachers in their respective fields who were helpful in training me in the subjects they taught as well as instilling in me a sense of multifarious, multitudinous meanings of the value of identity and existence. I, probably at this last juncture of academic adventurism, pay my humble respects to the unparalleled contributions made by each and every teacher who has taught me something in my life.

Netajee Abhinandan, my sole classmate from 2001 to 2008, needs special mentioning. We sailed in the same boat for seven years. Now that he has submitted his PhD and gone back home, I wish him all success in life.

Abhijit Pathak, Girijesh Tiwari, Vikas Pathak, Jagdish, Ravikant Mishra, Kundan and Sonakshi are my friends who must be acknowledged for their conscious or unconscious contributions to my intellectual growth. In fact, I must individually acknowledge the much required moral support that I have received from Kundan and Sonakshi over the last couple of years.

I should not forget acknowledging Atul Mishra, a rising IR scholar with whom I enjoy having academic conversations, and who, even in the busiest academic situations of his daily life, spared time for making critical suggestions.

I thank Krishna Dev, a very dear friend, for his constant and valuable support.

Mayur Shekhar Jha facilitated my first employment. In fact, I should not hesitate in saying that he has been instrumental in so many exposures and opportunities I have got in my life. Some of the opportunities he has made available to
me came at critical junctures in life. No words of gratitude can arrest my sense of indebtedness to him.

V.S. Ramani is my friend, philosopher and guide who has spoonfed me politics. I thank Nadeem Javed, a senior youth Congress leader, who has gone out of way for me whenever required.

I thank Harsh Vardhan Shah Shyam and Atul Mishra for helping me edit the thesis. And special thanks to Kundan who has gone through this thesis more than once.

Lastly, I remember my parents and sisters who have stood by me all the years since I left my home to pursue higher studies.