Acknowledgements

Prof. Atul Sarma is the main architect of this study. Despite the innumerable problems encountered in the collection of data and selection of appropriate methodology for analysis, he kept on encouraging me and ensured the timely completion of the thesis. I am extremely grateful to him for the valuable advice and suggestions that made this analysis sharper and cogent.

Many friends in the academic line and colleagues in the Customs and Central Excise Department appreciated and assisted me in this endeavor although some of them were sceptical about the choice of the subject which appeared too complex and chaotic for any systematic approach or scientific analysis. Moreover, since no analytical study of excise duties has been attempted in the past, it has been extremely difficult to formulate hypothesis and to develop insights into the probable effects and behavior of the tax structure. Prof. G.V.S.R. Murthy helped me in this area by giving guidelines for the calculation of optimal tax rates for excise duties. Dr. P.M. Pillai, Kewal Ram, Jayashree and other friends helped me in collecting and analyzing the voluminous tax data. Kirit Thakkar, Dominic, Ashok Bhadra and Mukes assisted me in compiling the data and carried out the laborious typing work. I am extremely thankful to all of them.

Finally, I must acknowledge the total involvement of my wife Girija whose motivation has initiated me into this study. In fact, the entire credit for this work rightly goes to her.