

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a pleasure to place on record my profound sense of gratitude to **Dr. S. R. Prabhakar**, Professor and Head of metallurgical engineering department of Punjab Engineering College Chandigarh for his inspiring guidance, constant encouragement and support during the course of my Ph.D. work. I am deeply indebted to **Dr. Subrata Ray**, Professor and Head of Metallurgical and Materials Engineering Department for his invaluable guidance and painstaking checking of the manuscript. Without his guidance, it would not have been possible to complete the work. My heartfelt thanks are due to both of them.

I acknowledge with deep sense of gratitude for the help extended by M/s Krishna Engineering works, Jalandhar for providing the raw material with specific composition required for the present research work. I am thankful to Mr. C. R. Panesar for helping me to conduct tensile testing at Chandigarh Industrial Facility Center, Chandigarh.

I am thankful to Sh. M. L. Sharma for his assistance in carrying out SEM studies at RSIC, Panjab University Chandigarh. My thanks are also due to Sh. Navtej Singh of RSIC for developing the metallographs for the present dissertation.

Assistance rendered by the technical and laboratory staff of Metallurgical Engg. Department of Punjab Engineering College, Sh. Suman vasudev, Sh. Gurmail Singh, Sh. Uma Shankar, and Sh. Ram Blak during fabrication of experimental set-up, sample preparation for mechanical testing and metallography is acknowledged thankfully.

My husband Mr. O.P. Batra deserves special note of appreciation for his forbearance and constant encouragement during the period of preparation of this dissertation. My most affectionate thanks is due to my sons Nimish and Saurabh for giving up part of their share of my time during my involvement in this work. I take this opportunity to thank my father for his blessings and encouragement.

*Uma Batra*  
30/3/2001