

Acknowledgements

Completing this work required an effort similar to that needed when hiking up a mountain, whether on boots or skis, and with or without a rope and harness. It was filled with ups and downs, fluctuating between a lack of motivation and an inability to stop. These two experiences, my academic work and hiking, provided practice for one another, as I learnt in one what I needed for the other. Both require a clear mind, mental strength, determination, and endurance. However, one does not only require strength for this endeavour, one also gains it; at times, one lacks motivation and must regain determination; at other times, one is hungry for food and must take a break to eat; or one becomes hungry for more input. Hiking and writing are iterative processes that do not always feel like uphill battles; in addition to detours, there are sections where you feel like you are going downhill before reaching the peak. However, any good mountaineer knows that mountains, particularly daunting ones, should not be climbed alone. To those who accompanied me on this adventure and supported me as best they could on my way up, I want to express my deepest gratitude.

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