PREFACE

The thesis is prepared under the guidance of Prof. R. D. Karmarkar, the Director of the Research Department, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona 4.

It was first proposed to divide the thesis into six sections, one of which was to be devoted to Buddhist ideology and the much contended problem of the indebtedness of Advaita to it. However, while discussing the philosophy of Gaudapāda and Śaṅkara, it was thought necessary to discuss certain concepts of Baudhāya philosophy, and to point out their difference with the Advaita. Independant elaboration of Baudhāya philosophy would then have been a repetition, and such an account of Baudhāya thought could not have been included in "A Survey of the Pre-Śaṅkara Advaita Vedānta". That section was, therefore, left out. The general scheme of the thesis, however, is the same as intended before, though now it appears in eleven chapters.

The first chapter contains introductory re-
remarks about the Vedic philosophy, which, in my opinion, need not be taken as primitive. This view was first promulgated by western scholars; but we need not follow the same, especially when many western thinkers too have strongly felt the necessity of overhauling their own system of study. Advaitic concepts in the Vedas are dealt with in brief. But the development of the Advaita presupposes other speculations also, which are pointed out in the appendix to chapter I.

Chapter II deals with speculations in the Brāhmaṇa, which can easily suggest Advaitic ideology.

The etymology of the word Upaniṣad and the Advaitic thought in that lore, forms the subject of the third chapter. The account given here is brief, because many scholars have written on the Upaniṣadic thought.

The Sūtras are an attempt to systematise the Upaniṣadic thought, and hence they too represent the Advaita in my opinion. With a brief consideration of the chronology of the Sūtras, the interpretation of some Sūtras is given in the fourth
fourth chapter.

The epics are held in esteem next to the Vedas, by the Hindus. They too record the existence of Advaita, is shown in the fifth chapter.

The Purāṇas were written to stem the current of decadence that followed the terrific blood-shed of the Mahābhārata war. They give a spectacle of various forms of religion and shades of thought. In the sixth chapter citations are given to prove that Advaita was not precluded by them.

The seventh chapter contains citations from various texts. The Baudhāyas categorise Advaita philosophy as different from their thought, and hence it is clear that it existed as a separate school in their times as well as earlier. The Tantra cult most probably ante-dates Buddha. In different Tantric texts, we find Advaita. Citations from the Sūtras and Smṛtis, some classics and some grammatical works, etc. that suggest Advaita are given. The chapter ends with brief accounts of Vedāntins, most of whom were perhaps Advaitins, and lived probably before Śaṅkara.
The most systematic work on the Advaita philosophy before Śaṅkaraśārya is the work of Gauḍapāda. Though recent writings on his Kārikās are many, I could not but resist devoting the whole of the eighth chapter for his thought.

A good deal of controversy prevails about the date of the Yogavāsiṣṭha. On the strength of some evidence, I have attempted to show, that not a negligible portion of the work existed before Ānandapada. After some discussion on the point the ninth chapter deals with the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, marking its difference with European subjective Idealism.

The chronology and philosophy of Śaṅkara are discussed in chapter ten. The main theme of the thesis ends here.

The eleventh chapter takes stock of the whole thesis in conclusion.

The Advaita philosophy in fact can be interpreted in various ways. Its development too can be traced from diverse viewpoints. Its application in
in practical life in India's past, is an important and interesting thought independent subject. All these subjects could not have been included in this thesis, and hence discussion was restricted mostly to three points: (a) the nature of Brahman or God, (b) the nature of the individual soul (c) and the nature of creation. Finally it is concluded that the message of Advaita was first pronounced by the seers of the Vedas, and it continued to stir the depth of Indian mind till Sañkaracārya, whose teachings can be condensed in the famous adage:

श्रृंहुम सत्त्वं जगिन्मकृष्या
जीवो श्रृंहैव नापरः।