It is painful to find that no mention of Indian philosophy has been made in most of the histories of philosophy written by Western thinkers. Is it due to their ignorance or national prejudices? We may confess that perhaps it is due to our own short-coming in not making them sufficiently acquainted with our systems of philosophy. Recently, some very useful books have been written by distinguished Indian scholars in English, which have created among the western readers a real interest in Indian philosophy. This is a step in the right direction. On the other hand, some western thinkers also have done splendid work by translating original books on Indian philosophy, but both Indian and western scholars should have made as many attempts as possible to compare and synthesise similar systems of philosophy in either country.

An impartial study of both eastern and western philosophies will reveal that the writers have been making genuine efforts to solve the fundamental problems of philosophy, and it will not be surprising that they have reached some-times similar conclusions independently. It is,
however, necessary that the interpreters of those philosophies should seek to find out points of similarity and contrast between them and try to synthesise them by laying stress on their affinities. Such studies are badly needed in these days of scientific and cultural advancement when the different nations are coming closer together. Thus the vision of the common world-culture may be realised.

Our effort in writing this thesis is not merely a piece of antiquarian investigation into the philosophies of Sāmkhya and Descartes, but to make a comparative study of them and to form a synthetic view of the two philosophies.

We have to see and appreciate what their metaphysical problems are. Are they similar in certain respects? We have already noticed that the two systems are very much alike so far as the problem of the world is concerned. Both explain the universe with the help of two principles, one conscious and the other unconscious. They believe in one principle of matter and many souls. Both believe that the souls are immortal, while the material objects will one day cease to exist. Both believe in the same theory of causation, that is, the effect lies in the cause in a potential form. Both have chalked out their systems of philosophy without blindly following the
established traditions of their own countries, but they have respect for their scriptures. Both believe that the world is real and the substance of which the objects of the world are made is all-pervading. There are other points of similarity which have been incorporated in the main thesis. There may be points of contrast also, because, as we know, the two systems have originated, and developed in countries having different cultures. But we need not emphasise the points of difference if we want to bring them closer together. The mission of philosophy is to unite all, not to divide. We should therefore study it with this viewpoint. Our critical appreciation and synthesis of two similar systems of philosophy of two different countries will promote better cordial relations between them than any number of good-will missions.

My respectful thanks are due to Dr. H.N. Misra, Department of Philosophy, D.A.V. College, Kanpur, who has been the supervisor and guide of this thesis. But for his directions from time to time, this thesis could not have been presented in this form. I have also to express here my most heartfelt gratitude to Prof. R.S.S. Naulakha, M.A., Ph.D., for his most seasonable advice and valuable suggestions.
particularly with regard to the closing chapters of this thesis. My best thanks are due to the enlightenment I received from Prof. N.K. Devaraj, M.A., Ph.D. with regard to a disputed point in this thesis.

In the end I may mention that I am heavily indebted to all those authors and thinkers whose books I have studied for this thesis.

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