STATEMENT

The Siddhāntabindu of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī is a well-known Vedānta manual embracing all important topics relating to Kevalādvaita Philosophy. In other words, it is somewhat, within limited precincts, a comprehensive and comparative evolution of the Advaitic theories. Fascinated by the rational and progressive tendency of 'Siddhāntabindu' of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, I decided to attempt a critical study of it. It is hardly necessary to state that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī was one of the followers of Śaṅkara. All the later Advaitist dialectics, polemics and epistemology hover round the interpretations of the chief currents of Śaṅkara's tradition. And Madhusūdana also has mentioned some of them in his Siddhāntabindu. In this respect, I have tried to bring forward all the main issues of the Post-Śaṅkara Vedāntic views along with those found in Siddhāntabindu and fill up the big gap in the history of Vedānta literature.
In the first chapter I have tried to collect all available information regarding Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, his date and works. I have referred to legends as well as facts recorded by scholars and thereby decided the exact date of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. I have discussed the identification of Madhusūdana and Madhavānanda. I have also discussed whether Madhusūdana was contemporary of either Tulasīdāsa or Appaya Dīksita. I have tried to go through the available published works of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī and also noted his unpublished works referred to by scholars in their articles and thereby concluded the topics on the works by Madhusūdana.

While preparing my first chapter I have referred to the Catalogus Catalogorum of Aufrecht, History of Indian Philosophy of Dasgupta, and the editions of 'Siddhāntabindu' of P.C. Divanji and P.M. Modi. I have also referred to the articles of Mr. P.C. Divanji, Mr. Taōpatrikara, Mr. Chintāparana Chakravarti, and Miss. Sulochana Nachne. I have also consulted the introduction of Siddhāntabindu by Abhyankaraji and the introduction of Vedānṭakalpalatikā by R.D. Karmarkar and Rāmaśīrṣa Pāṇḍeya.
Much have been written on Śaṅkara's philosophy. So I have not touched him but have tried to ascertain the Pre-Śaṅkara Vedāntic concepts. The second chapter of my thesis contains the earliest epoch in the Pre-Śaṅkara advaitic thought and deals with the important topics of the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavadgītā and the Brahma-Sūtra. Beginning with the hoary Upaniṣadic time and ending on the threshold of Śaṅkara's philosophy, this chapter opens an objective study of the Pre-Śaṅkara concept of Advaita Vedānta. Taking the major Upaniṣads as the basis, I have tried to arrive at a fair appreciation of the philosophy as revealed in this phase, assess the doctrines of Brahman, Jīva and their relation, the size of the Ātman and the concepts of māyā and avidyā.

Taking up the Bhagavadgītā as the most representative work of the epic age I have tried to bring forth the main Vedāntic thoughts contained therein. I have pointed out that Bhagavadgītā revitalizes the idea of the Upaniṣadic Brahman in the form of Puruṣottama. The concept of māyā and avidyā as the power of Īśvara in the Gītā has been noted by me. The Vedāntic views of Bādarāyaṇa and
the other Vedāntins referred to by him in his Brahma-
Sūtra have been noted and discussed. Some other
Vedāntins in the field of Advaita Vedānta before
Sāṅkara viz- Dāmīśācārya, Vākyakāra, Bhartrprapaṇca,
Bhartrhari, Brahmadatta and Sundara Pāṇḍya
have been mentioned and their views have been discussed.
I have tried to gather as much information as I can
regarding them. I have also mentioned Gauḍápāda as a
teacher of Sāṅkara and surveyed his philosophy and
discussed the topic whether he was a Buddhist or not?
In this way I have done a minute and vivid survey of
pre-Sāṅkara Advaita Vedānta. The close view of the
thought-contents of this chapter helps immensely in
having a fairly accurate idea of the Pre-Sāṅkara Vedānta,
whose contribution to the Advaita Vedānta is fundamental
and resourceful.

In the third chapter I have expounded the view
of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī regarding Brahman as the cause
of the universe. Here I have given an account of the
views of other Vedānta Schools. I have also discussed
the identity between jīva and Brahman and reviewed the
concept of Brahman as depicted in Siddhāntabindu in details. Madhusūdana's central theme in his Siddhāntabindu has been pinned to the cardinal Advaita doctrine 'Tattvamasi' which I have followed it up as faithfully as possible.

In the A section of the fourth chapter, I have expounded the concept of God in various systems and discussed them. I have humbly tried to trace all the views regarding God and discussed them thoroughly.

And in section B of the same chapter, I have traced the concept of God in Advaita system in general and in Siddhāntabindu in particular. Madhusūdana has discussed the concept of God in details. He has divided God in three aspects and their incarnations have been noted. He describes God's esses also. Here he seems to be the follower of devotion.

In the A section of the fifth chapter, I have discussed various views regarding jīvātman in Indian Philosophy, because Madhusūdana has mentioned and referred them while commenting upon the first verse of the Daśāsloki. I tried to give detailed description of
Jīvātman according to different schools of Indian Philosophy. I have surveyed the views regarding Jīvātman from the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas. In the B section of the same chapter, I have refuted the rival views and discussed the concept of jīva according to 'Śidhāntabindu'. Madhusūdana seems to be nearer to Saṅkara when he regards jīva and Brahman to be one but seems to be somewhat far removed from him on the point of avidyā. I have tried to discuss the concept of jīva and God. According to Madhusūdana Sāksin cojoins all and is present in all forms of consciousness. The most interesting part of this chapter is the discussion about the four conditions of jīvātman. Madhusūdana has elaborately dealt it, since Gauḍapāda no one has thoroughly discussed this topic. I have quoted the text while discussing the topic. Madhusūdana has also discussed how can a jīva have the knowledge of external objects like pot etc. This jñanaprakāriya is discussed by me.

In the sixth chapter on Avidyā, I have expounded the Post-Śaṅkara views regarding Avidyā first and then discussed Madhusūdana’s concept of Avidyā and shown where he stands in the field of Advaita Vedānta.
In the A section of the chapter seven, I have explained the nature of world as depicted in the 'Siddhāntabindu' of Madhusūdana Sarasvati. Being a staunch kevalādvaitin, Madhusūdana firmly believes that the things other than Brahman are tuccha and anṛta. In section 'B' of the same chapter, the cosmogony as depicted in the Siddhāntabindu has been discussed by me. The process of pañcīkaraṇa and trivṛtkaraṇa has been thoroughly explained.

In the chapter eight called Emancipation, I have discussed the view of muktī according to Siddhāntabindu.

In the last chapter, I have attempted to evaluate Madhusūdana as an eminent thinker of the kevalādvaita Vedānta school, especially on the basis of my knowledge of Advaita Vedānta, that I gained while studying the Siddhāntabindu.

Thus after my critical study of Siddhāntabindu I came to the conclusion that Madhusūdana's works especially the Siddhāntabindu is an important landmark in the history of the kevalādvaita literature.
I have humbly made an attempt for the first time to give a through exposition line by line of the text of the Siddhāntabindu and the rival views as depicted in it have also been studied from the original works and put in a proper perspective.

The purpose of this thesis is to bring the problems, concepts and theories of the Madhusūdana Sarasvati as depicted in his Siddhāntabindu within the focus of Kevalādvaita Vedānta. I have dealt the important topics such as Brahman, jīva, God, avidyā in this connection. It is my humble effort to arrive at the impartial and objective appreciation of Madhusūdana's contribution to the school of Advaita Vedānta.

The present thesis aims at a critical study of the kevalādvaitic outlook as understood and evolved by Madhusūdana Sarasvati and tries to evaluate and assess the chief significance of his remarkable contribution to this principal school of Indian thought. I have not tried to fathom the deep philosophical genius of Madhusūdana in its entirety but have humbly attempted to understand Madhusūdana Sarasvati as a kevalādvaitin, as revealed
to us by his contribution of this specific school of thought. Madhusūdana, like Siddhántalinga of Appaya Dīkṣita, Madhusūdana has noted various views regarding avidyā, jīva, sāksī, and as a philosopher he has noted and refuted the views of different schools.

I have attempted to bring into light all the post-Śaṅkara views regarding the main topics of the kevalādvaita while discussing the topics of the Siddhāntabindu. I have tried to arrive at an impartial evaluation of only those contributions of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in the domain of the Advaita Vedānta, which are traditionally held as major. This does not mean that the thesis completely ignores the points of minor importance.

A detailed survey of the philosophical conditions prevailing during Pre-Śaṅkara and Post-Śaṅkara period is taken up for the first time; and the study of different tendencies that arose immediately after the Śaṅkara is attempted on the grounds of textual evidences for the first time. A close study of the different views yielded by these different tendencies and their detailed comparison are equally new and original.