PREFACE

I had the pleasure and privilege of studying Śrīharṣa's Naiṣadhacarita in the M.A. class of Gauhati University during the years 1998–1999. My present supervisor taught me this mahākāvyā in that class. During that period, I developed a keen interest in this work. Later on as I approached my present supervisor Dr. (Mrs.) Shrutidhara Chakravarty with a desire to carry on research under her guidance, then she was kind enough to initiate me to this specific study.

It is well known that Śrīharṣa's Naiṣadhacarita is a great storehouse of religious, philosophical, historical, social and political information of ancient India. It is also full of information on subjects like caste, marriage, education, music, dance, art and painting, food, drink, games and many more things of the Indian society of 12th century A.D.

Though various research works are done on this tough epic, no work on the socio-cultural aspect of the Naiṣadhacarita has come to our notice so far. So, as desired by my preceptor, I have made in this present work a study of this mahākāvyā from the socio-cultural point of view with my level best.

It is needless to say that the present work is the result of my own investigation carried on for last four years with the untiring guidance of my supervisor.