I had the pleasure and privilege of studying the Bhāsāpariccheda as a text book in the M.A. Class of the Gauhati University during the years 1959-1961. My present Supervisor was then the teacher, and the training I received under him resulted in developing a keen interest in epistemological studies. Later on I had the scope to teach the second chapter of the Sāhityadarpāṇa in the M.A. Classes of the Gauhati University for the last fourteen years.

In respect of the contents of the Ābdakhaṇḍa of the Bhāsāpariccheda and the second chapter of the Darpana, there are a number of points of agreement and disagreement. As I explained things to my students and tried to reconcile the trends of these two different texts, I came to realise that the Ābdakhaṇḍa itself requires a more comprehensive exposition. Thus, I have been toying with the idea of studying the said Ābdakhaṇḍa more seriously as a research project for over a decade or so. But the idea could not be more promptly translated into action mainly because of physical disabilities. For many a year, I had simply to remain satisfied with a burning urge within my heart to serve the cause of learning.

The present work is hence an outcome of my intellectual efforts carried on with the untiring assistance of my Supervisor, friends and students during the last few years.
The scheme of the present work is somewhat unusual as a Ph.D. dissertation. It does not have the usual chapterwise divisions. It is simply divided into two broad parts. The first part comprises of the Introduction which again consists of three sub-sections A, B, & C. The section A is devoted to a general survey of Indian Philosophy with special reference to the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika school. The section B is devoted to the details about the Bhāṣāpariccheda and the section C is concerned with the Pramāṇas and the various aspects of the concepts of Śabda and Śabdabodha.

The second part of the present thesis is an exposition of the text of the Śabdakhaṇḍa. Here the Kārikā is given first, then it is followed by a translation and a general exposition. Then the relevant Vṛtti is presented piecemeal. Each piece of the Vṛtti is followed by a translation and a critical and comparative exposition word for word. The mode of presentation is explained more clearly in the Introduction, section B (p. 37).

With these prefatory words, I now humbly present this work for its assessment, for, I cannot be sure of its merits so long as it is not endorsed by the authorities.

'ā paritoṣād viduṣāṁ na sādhu manye prayogavijñānam'.

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