Sankaradeva, the great patron saint, the apostle of the Neo-Vaisnavism of Assam, occupies an important place in the religious and the cultural history of India. The sixteenth century, which is known as the period of Renaissance in the cultural history of Assam, had been emerged with distinctive identity shaped by Sankaradeva. Sankaradeva, a man of multidimensional excellence had contributed tremendously in the fields of religion, literature, language, music, drama, education, art and culture. Sankaradeva was not a professional philosopher, yet the whole of his teachings establishes him as a great humanistic philosopher. As a religious preacher, his Neo-Vaisnavism is different from all other forms of Vaisnavism. It is the most fruitful way to convey his messages to the heart of the common people. He himself makes his life as life of some grand lessons and unique ideals.

The topic of my present work is one of the most important topics of philosophical investigation. The concepts of Puruṣa, P r a k r t i and Līlā play an important and significant role in Sankaradeva’s philosophy. He upholds the philosophy of ‘One’. He believes in the existence of one Absolute, which is the ‘Puruṣa’ and all others are unreal or illusory. This unreal or illusory universe or the material world is Māyā - the eternal power of God. This God is Puruṣa and Māyā is P r a k r t i in Sankaradeva’s philosophy. As a religious philosopher, he preaches the supremacy of one God i.e. Kṛṣṇa is an ideal concept of his religion - “Eka sāraṇa nāma dharma”. It is a humble attempt to give a detailed account of these concepts from the different aspects in Sankaradeva’s philosophy. He also gives an important role to Līlā in his philosophy; because he believes that the creation of the world is a cosmic game i.e. Līlā of the Puruṣa according to his will. The God of his religion or
the *Puruṣa* of his metaphysics, the *Māyā* or the *Prakṛti* of his philosophy and the relation between God and nature, mind and matter are to be viewed both philosophically and scientifically.

The present study intends to provide a threefold task. Firstly, it attempts to provide a detailed description of these concepts in Sankaradeva’s philosophy. Secondly, it attempts to show how does Sankaradeva apply these concepts to solve the problem of mind and matter, one becoming many and the dichotomy between Nature and supra nature. Thirdly, this work attempts to satisfy the quest for creative understanding. As Sankaradeva’s whole philosophy is based upon the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, his teachings are more religious than philosophical. He propounded his religion to carry his messages to the common people.

It has been stated that although Sankaradeva is not a systematic philosopher yet his literature and culture are enriched with his profound religious and philosophical ideas. He has made tremendous contributions to the different fields like religion, literature, education, art and culture.

In order to make an intricate and comprehensive study of the concepts of *Puruṣa*, *Prakṛti* and *Līlā* in Sankaradeva’s philosophy, the proposed scheme of this research work has been divided into six chapters including an introduction and the conclusion.

In the introductory chapter, I have attempted to focus on the meaning of these fundamental concepts of philosophy. The origin and the historical development of these concepts with an introduction of Sankaradeva’s philosophy are presented in this chapter.
The second chapter deals with Sankaradeva's concept of *Puruṣa*. It emphasizes that the highest Absolute in 'one' Non-dual principle. It is Mind, Soul-Ātman, Consciousness, Brahman, Absolute etc. Though it viewed as many according to man's different mental dispositions, yet basically *Puruṣa* is one only reality from all the different aspects.

The third chapter is an elaborate study of the concept of *Prakṛti* in Sankaradeva's philosophy. His *Prakṛti* is also known as Nature, Matter, Body, *Māyā* etc. By this concept, he explains how the material world is originated, how the dependent world or the physical world arrived at non-dual entity - at the Supreme *Puruṣa*.

The fourth chapter is devoted to an understanding of the problem of *Līlā* in Sankaradeva's philosophy. The problem of relationship between God and man, God and Nature -- *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* -- Nature and Supra Nature, God and the individuals etc. has been analysed and in this connection, the principles governing that relationship are also discussed in this chapter.

In the fifth chapter, I have delineated the peculiarities and significances of Sankaradeva's teachings, as even after five hundred and fifty years, he is found to be relevant in this modern age. Sankaradeva's attitude towards caste system, social reform, secular ethics, humanism, status of women, aesthetics etc., all these pertinent questions are also associated with this discussion.

In the conclusion, I have humbly tried to sum up my findings regarding the foregoing chapters and endeavour to arrive at the underlying principles of unity which is the chief concern of all philosophers of the west as well as of India. It also attempts at an appraisal of his thought along with the consideration of his contemporary relevance.
Now, it is time to record my acknowledgement with great pleasure. First of all, I offer my deepest sense of gratitude and indebtedness to my respected Guide Dr. Nilima Sharma, Professor (Retd.) of the Department of Philosophy, Gauhati University, who supervised my work with her keen interest, able guidance and valued suggestions despite her busy schedule. It would not have been possible for me to complete this work without her good will and inspiration for which I shall remain ever grateful to her.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Prof. Dr. S.N. Sarma, Head of the Department of Philosophy, G.U. for his valued ideas and suggestions. I also thankful to all the teachers of Philosophy Department, Gauhati University, for their help during the preparation of my thesis.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge my gratitude to our Principal, Sri A. Bora, for his encouragement from time to time for expeditious completion of my thesis. I also extend my gratefulness to the Head and colleague of my department Dr. B. Das and A. Chakraborty respectively for their support and good will.

I take the opportunity to offer my sense of indebtedness to Dr. Tandra Borbora, Lecturer, Department of English of our college and Sri N.N. Thakuria, Lecturer, Department of English, Pragjyotish College, Guwahati for their onerous help.

I am also very much indebted to the Librarians and staffs of the following Libraries: (1) National Library, Calcutta, (2) I.C.P.R. Library, Butler Palace, Lucknow, (3) J.N. University Library, New Delhi, (4) Assam University Library, Silchar, (5) K.K. Handique Library, Gauhati University, (6) Cotton College Library, Guwahati, (7) District Library, Guwahati, (8)Vivekananda Kendra Library, Guwahati, (9)The Library of
I also extend my gratitude to the Satradhikars of the following Satras who helped me immensely during my visits to these Satras. These are (1) Barpeta Satra, (2) Sundaridiya Satra, (3) Batadrawa Satra, (4) Kamalabari Satra, (5) Madhupur Satra, (6) Nikamul Satra, (7) Dhekia Khowa Namghar, (8) Gumura Satra, (9) Samariya Satra etc.

The managing authority of the Library and Research Centre of Batadrava, Nagaon, Srimanta Sankaradeva Sangha, Rupnagar, Guwahati, Ramkrishna Mission, Ulubari, Guwahati etc. also deserve special mention in this connection from which I am immensely benefited.

I take the opportunity to acknowledge my gratitude to my father Sjt. K.N. Talukdar and mother Smt. K.B. Talukdar of Tinsukia, who greatly helped and encouraged me with their valuable inspiration and support in my research work.

I shall really be ungrateful, if I do not acknowledge indebtedness to my husband Sri D.N. Choudhury, Lecturer, Department of Law, Gauhati University, my daughter Yashomana, my son Udit Sankar, my sisters Malabika and Anamika who extended their co-operation and helped me in all respects for completion of this thesis.

Last but not the least, I acknowledge my gratitude to Sri Khagen Kalita and Sri Nayan Kalita of Preetkamal Graphics, Lankeswar, Guwahati-14 for computer typing of this work with patience and endurance.

Dated: 17.10.2005

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