Since my childhood, I had an interest to read storybooks based on mythological events. Among these, the Rāmāyaṇa story had a very special appeal time. As I started my master degree classes of Sanskrit, I got a chance to read many books and legends of my interest. Fortunately in my M.A. course, I was selected to present paper on the topic of Rāmāyaṇa in all the seminars of every semester. I also availed an opportunity to attend an international conference on the Rāmāyaṇa, which intensified my interest on the topic.

Dramas are undoubtedly the most fascinating of all the works of Sanskrit Kāvya. My guide helped me to select this drama i.e, the Kundamālā of Dīnāga. It generated my interest a lot and I decided to take up the topic of “A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE KUNDAMĀLĀ OF DĪNĀGA” for my Ph.D. dissertation.

The Rāmāyaṇa, in present form consists of seven Kāṇḍas, five hundred of chapters or cantos and twenty four thousands of ślokas. The later part of the Rāmāyaṇa story i.e. the Uttarakāṇḍa is very interesting. This kāṇḍa is full of pathetic sentiments. Rāma and Sītā could not reunite as Sītā entered in Vasumati’s lap.
Dirināga’s *Kundamālā* (KM) is based on the *Uttarakanda* of the *Rāmāyana*. The second banishment of Sītā was displayed here in a very dramatic manner. Towards the end of the play, the hero and the heroine get reunited. The pathetic sentiment was converted to erotic sentiment, towards the end of the play.

Dirināga, the dramatist of the KM, is one of the celebrated personalities of Sanskrit literature. His only drama KM made him a renowned writer in Sanskrit dramatic literature. He named the play *Kundamālā* on the basis of an event which is at the root of the story. Therefore it seems proper that the work of a writer of the stature of Dirināga, deserves an appreciative as well as critical examination. With the inspiration and advice of my Supervisor, it has been proposed to prepare a dissertation entitled “A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE KUNDAMĀLĀ OF DĪNNĀGA”, which is divided into six chapters.

While preparing the dissertation, I have depended primarily on the edition of the *Kundamālā* of Dirināga edited by Lokamoni Dahal, which was published by Chowkamba Surabharati Prakashan, Varanasi, in 1992.
I, with all my humble submission, place this dissertation to the scholar for assessment. I am fully aware of the inadvertent shortcomings. I shall be highly rewarded, if the learned one finds something valuable in it and assesses its worth.

NILAKSHI DEVI