In the pages that follow I have presented a critical study of the Natyadarpana of Ramaçandra and Gunaçandra, one of the most important works dealing with the science of drama. It is, I believe, a valuable contribution of the Jaina writers to the subject of dramaturgy.

As a student of Alankāra literature I came across this work when I was reading for my M.A. Degree in the year 1955-56. As I went through it I was much impressed by the simple, lucid and systematic treatment of the various topics concerning dramaturgy.

At the same time it was rather curious to find that most of the eminent scholars and historians of Sanskrit literature should have ignored this important text. With a view to judging and evaluating its worth and proper place in the sphere of works dealing with dramaturgy the present study of the work is undertaken. Here I have critically studied the whole text from various points of view. I have compared the text with the celebrated works on dramaturgy. On a critical and comparative study of the Natyadarpana and others' works on the same subject I could find that the authors of the ND have carefully gone through all the literature on dramaturgy that was available to them and had fully exploited these sources. At
good many places they have considerably drawn upon their early predecessors. Very often they refer to the views of the earlier authorities under the words "Anye", "Kecit", etc., and at times criticize them. I have given the full list of the works that I have consulted in the bibliography at the end of the thesis. Still however, I mention here the important works which have been consulted by me while writing this thesis.

(A) Original works in Sanskrit:

(i) The Abhivanavabhāratī, the commentary of Abhinava on Bharata's Nātyaśāstra.

(ii) The Bhāvaprakāśana of Sāradatamaya.

(iii) The Dasārūpaka of Dhananējaya with the commentary Avaloka of Dhanika.

(iv) The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana.

(v) The Kāvyādarsā of Daṇḍin.

(vi) The Kāvyālaṁkāra of Bhaṭṭa.

(vii) The Kāvyānūsāsana of Hemacandra.

(viii) The Kāvyaprakāśa of Māmata.

(ix) The Kāvyaprakāśakhandana of Siddhācandrasūri.

(x) The Nātakalakṣāṇaratrakosa of Sāgaranandin.

(xi) The Nātyaśāstra of Bharata.

(xii) The Rasārṇavaśuchākara of Śīṅgabhūpāla.

(xiii) The Sāhityadarpana of Viśvanātha.

(xiv) The Śrīṅgārprakāsa of Bhoja (MS).
Method of treatment and approach to the problem:

The method which I have adopted in this work will be quite clear from the table of contents that follows. At the outset I have presented in a systematic form whatever information I could gather about the life, date and works of the authors of the Nāṭyadārpana from various sources out of which the historical works of the Jaina writers relating to the life of king Kumārapāla deserve a special note.

In chapters No. 3 to 6 I have made a critical study of the text. I have devoted one chapter to each of the four Vivekas of the Nāṭyadārpana. I have dealt with the topics in the same order as is found in the Nāṭyadārpana. My treatment of each
topic is usually divided into two parts; in the first part I have summarised and elucidated the views of the Nātyadarpana on that particular topic and in the second part I have added my critical remarks wherein I have pointed out how far our authors have drawn upon their predecessors and how far they are original. Here I have added my own comments and at places have given my own interpretation to certain problems connected with the discussion after having fully consulted whatever literature was available to me on the particular topic. This type of critical study which has not been undertaken so far will certainly give the reader a clear picture of the views of the authors of the Nātyadarpana on the various topics connected with dramaturgy.

I have devoted one chapter on Rāmacandra as a dramatist on the basis of his works that are published. Rāmacandra, as we know, is not merely a critic but a poet as well, and in the ND he has extensively quoted from nearly a dozen of his plays. In fact a complete evaluation of the dramatic art of Rāmacandra is not possible at the present stage when only a small fragment of the total number of his works is published. Moreover it is not possible to do full justice to the subject in this thesis as the "plays of Rāmacandra" can be an independent subject of research. Here I have summarily given the subject-matter of all his published plays.
and poems and have evaluated his art in the light of the principles which he has elaborated in the ND and which we naturally expect him to follow and put into practice.

One full chapter (no.8) has been devoted to the comparative study of the Nātyadarpaṇa and the earlier important works on dramaturgy such as the Nāṭyasāstra, the Abhinavabhāratī, the Dasarūpaka, the Kāvyamāsāsana, the Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakosa and others. Here my purpose is to find out to what extent the authors of the Nātyadarpaṇa are indebted to their learned predecessors. I have vigilantly pointed out where our authors followed their predecessors verbally and where they have merely borrowed the ideas with suitable modifications or alterations.

I have examined what influence this work exercised over the later writers on dramaturgy where it was rather surprising for me to discover that it had very little influence over the later writers as they completely ignored this work for one reason or the other.

By this comparative study I have for the first time established the position of the Nātyadarpaṇa among other works on dramaturgy, by clearly bringing out the extent of its indebtedness to its preceding works, the extent of its originality and its influence on the later works on the same subject. Here I have taken utmost care to the study as
I have shown how the Nāṭyadarpana surpasses the most of the earlier works on dramaturgy from the point of view of the style and presentation of the subject-matter. I have concluded my thesis by offering a critical evaluation of the Nāṭyadarpana from the point of view of originality, method, style, representation, language, etc. in the light of the detailed critical and comparative study.

At the end I earnestly hope that this critical study of the work which deserves to be known better but is less known possibly on account of its Jaina authorship will enable the students of Sanskrit dramaturgy to judge the work in its proper perspective.

In spite of all my efforts, for reasons beyond my control the typing work could not be done satisfactorily. I hope the learned scholars will ignore this drawback and excuse me for the same.