PREFACE

During the month of October, 1984, I had come back from Madras University after completing my M.Phil Degree Course under the FIP scheme of the UGC. In the month of March, 1985, I was told that the UGC has accorded sanction for three staff members of our College, to pursue higher studies. I was fortunate enough to be asked to take up Ph.D Course along with two of my colleagues.

In this regard I consider it my bounden duty to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to our College authorities and the UGC. But for the three years study leave granted to me between March, 1985 and March, 1988, it would not have been possible for me to make a deep study of this sort and prepare the thesis.

Earlier I had toyed with the idea of making a thorough study of the mahākāvya Rukminīkalyāṇa of Rāja-coodāmaṇi Dīkṣita. Some portions of this work, which I had gone through had attracted me. However, I was destined to change the topic. One day when I met our College Principal Prof.C.N.Mangala, she, with her passion for serving the cause of women, had asked me "why don't you to do something about women ? If we do not take the works of women seriously, who else will ? " This suggestion gave me the much needed fillip to settle on the topic
of research. After making a preliminary search for the works of women in Sanskrit Literature, I decided to make a detailed study of three authoresses viz., Gangādevī, Tirumalāmbā and Rāmabhadrāmbā whose works are in no way inferior to the works produced by men in their respective periods. Thus Prof. C. N. Mangala was instrumental in hinting the topic of research. I will be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge this and thank her most sincerely. I also owe a deep sense of gratitude to her for the incessant encouragement she gave me to pursue my higher studies.

It is very difficult to express my gratitude in words to Prof. K. Rajagopalacher, M.A., Ph.D, formerly Principal of Vijaya College, Basavanagudi, Bangalore and presently Professor, department of Sanskrit, Mysore University, Mysore, my esteemed guide and supervisor. As a student, though I had known him for a long time, it was only during my studies as a Ph.D student under him I had the opportunity to realise his depth of scholarship and magnanimity of heart. I found in him the ideal guide, who allows the student to think for himself. He never imposed his opinion on me. Even when he differed from the opinion I expressed, he used to suggest the same in a very acceptable manner. I was very much impressed by this aspect of his guidance. As the head of a reputed institution, he hardly had any time to spare in the College.
I used to call on him at his residence during late hours in the evening when he would be back from the college after strenuous day's work. His deep love of learning, gave him the strength and he happily spared the time I needed for my discussions with him. I am deeply indebted to Prof. K. Rajagopalachar for the guidance he gave and the cooperation he extended during the past four years.

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1. Bangalore University Library, Bangalore
2. The Mythic Society, Bangalore
3. Kannada Sahitya Parishad, Bangalore
4. Gokale Institute, Bangalore
5. NMKRV First Grade College for Women's Library, Bangalore
6. Gazetteer Library, Kaveri Bhavan, Bangalore
7. Oriental Research Institute, Mysore University, Mysore
8. Government Manuscript Library, Madras
9. University Library, Madras
10. Adyar Library & Research Centre, Madras
11. Connemara Library, Madras.

S.R. LEELA.