PREFACE

A close study of Kuntaka's *Vakroktijīvita* led me to take up a detailed study of the concept of *vakrokti* in Sanskrit poetics. The concept of *vakrokti* took altogether new significance and supreme position as all-pervading poetic concept in Kuntaka. His concept of *vakrokti* emerges as a viable theory of poetic language par-excellance. In order to comprehend Kuntaka's theory, it is necessary to trace the ideas on the concept in earlier and later Sanskrit poetics. A remarkable divergence of conception is noticeable in the same theory of *Vakrokti* as treated by Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin, Vāmana, Rudrata and so on. Infact, it is interesting to note that, the very concept was taken up for a detailed discussion by Kuntaka, Bhoja and Abhinavagupta who belongs to the same age. Thus, in Sanskrit literary context, *Vakrokti* theory shows remarkable divergence of conception and treatment from writer to writer.

A critical study of the *Vakrokti jīvita* and the isolated concepts of Kuntaka like *sāhitya, mārga-guṇa, svabhāvokti, rasavadalaṅkāra* etc., have been made by modern scholars in detail. However, the comprehensive study of *vakrokti*, through the ages, has not been done in a systematic way. On the other hand, there is a need of unified study of the concept. "None of the concepts can be studied in isolation, tearing them apart, either from each other or from *rasa* which is the overall end and aim of all literature. This need for an integrated approach was fully realized by masterly writers like Mammatā, Viśvanātha and Jagannātha in their works. What is most needed today in our *Alaṅkāra* studies is a similar integrated perspective." * These words of Dr. K. Krishnamoorthy inspired me to take up this concept and to study in the said perspective.

* K. Krishnamoorthy, *Indian Literary Theories, A Reappraisal*, Delhi, 1985, p 130
Thus, the main object of this research work is to present the comprehensive study of the concept of *vakrokti* with an integrated approach. The important original works concerning the concept of *vakrokti* have been taken for the study. And, all the available sources related to the field, both primary and secondary, have been utilized as far as possible.

The views of respective theorists on various aspects have been treated after a careful and critical observation. We have entered into the details of all difficult problems and have left no point worth notice.

The method adopted in this thesis is critical-cum-comparative, historical and objective. In studying the history of *vakrokti* much emphasis is given to the ideas behind the concept, not only to the term. Hence, the inter-related concepts are also discussed occasionally. While dealing with Kuntaka's views on various literary concepts, the views of different theorists too, are discussed. And, Kuntaka's influence on his successors is highlighted throughout the thesis. The value of *vakrokti* theory to modern critical thought is also indicated occasionally. Thus, an attempt is made to present the critical exposition of the concept of *Vakrokti* with an integrated perspective.

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