The Mahābhārata has been a subject of ever increasing interest of mine from my childhood. I have the opportunity to meet with the epic story and its characters right from my childhood by the means of bed time stories. The furious valour of Bhīma covers most of those stories. His vows leading to the destruction of the Kauravas is one of the favourites. But, during my graduation I came to meet with the drama Veṇīsaṁhāra and it really astonished me that the stories I believed to be a part of the Mahābhārata is actually found in the drama only. The drama inflicts such a huge influence in the society that it has changed the epical story to some extent.

The Mahābhārata has been a treasure house for all sorts of knowledge and is highly appreciated especially in the Indian society. It influences all the people of the society bereft of any class or creed. Its influence in the literary world is unparalleled. A good number of the Sanskrit dramas come into existence due to the influence of the epic on the dramatists. Therefore, the popularity of the epic in the literary world can be imagined easily. The story of the Mahābhārata is known to all the people of society more or less. But, the question arises here how can a drama raises to such a popularity that is enough to change the source itself. It can be easily imagined that the drama must have possessed extra ordinary merits in the field of literature. Moreover, it has not hurt the emotions of the devotee of the Mahābhārata or else it would not have grown to be such a popular creation in the field of dramaturgy.

Therefore, to meet with the question regarding the literary beauty of the drama an endeavour is made in my dissertation entitled ‘A Literary Study of the Veṇīsaṁhāra’. The present work is just a modest attempt to find out the origin of the drama and its dramatist and with what literary merits it has changed the mighty course of the literary giant like the Mahābhārata. It shall be a success to me if my work can encourage in readers towards the Mahābhārata and the drama.

(Lokesh Chakraborty)
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na guroradhikaṁ tattvaṁ na guroradhikaṁ tapaḥ /
tattvajñānātparaṁ nāsti tasmai śrīgurave namaḥ //

- Salutation to the noble Guru, beyond whom there is no higher truth, there is no higher penance and there is nothing higher attainable than the true knowledge.

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