

CHAPTER- I

INTRODUCTION

Life of Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa:

There is a great problem of almost all Sanskrit poets regarding their personal history, it has concealed under a thick veil of obscurity which appears an impossible task to remove in the present condition. It is naturally created in the mind of a reader, when he starts the study of an author, as to what type of person he was, where from he belonged and how he had passed his life but the answer is not cleared in the case of many poets of Indian literature, only the source to know the life of a poet is from the appreciation of his poetry. Mostly the Sanskrit poets are informed by their works, who has the tendency to write the historical subjects indirect contrast with the authors of the *kāvya*s or *Mahākāvya*s and sometimes given their names to their compositions. Dramatist also forward some personal details like names, lineage, patronage, their life and date sometimes in the prelude to their plays. Such as prelude to the plays of *Bhavabhūti*, especially that of his *Mālatīmādhava*¹. In the prelude to the *Mudrārākṣasa* of *Viśākhadatta*.²

¹.cf.asti dakṣiṇāpathe vidarbheṣu padmapuram nāma nagaram| tatra kecittaittirīyaṇaḥ
kāśyapaścaranaguravaḥ pañktipāvanāḥ pañcagrāyo dhrtavratāḥ somapīthina udumbaranāmāno
brahmavādinaḥ prativasanti smā| te śrotriyāstattvaviṅgnīścayāya bhūri śrutam
śāsvtamādriyante.dṛṣṭiāya pūrtāya ca karmanerthāndārānapatyāya taporthamāyuhḥ.
tadāmusṣṇayanasya tatrābhavataḥ sugṛhītānamno bhaṭṭagopālasya pautraḥ

Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa is also a dramatist, who has no distinct communication in this respect. Nothing is found about himself except the title *Kavimṛgarāja*³ in the prelude of the drama *Veṅṅisamhāra*. Perhaps he did not feel the necessity to add more details about himself thinking as he was well known in his days. Whatever that may be but the prelude fails to give such information in the case of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*. Though, there are no sufficient references in the concerned text but from some references available in other sources, one comes to know that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was of *Śāṅḍilya* family.⁴ He originally belonged to *Kaṇyakubja* or Kanouj as narrated in “*Kṣitīśavaṁśavalīcarita*” of Bengal where it is clearly mentioned that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was one of the five Brahmins brought to Bengal with special request of king *Ādisūra*⁵. After the performance of the sacrifice to please the deities like *Indra*, *Varuṇa*, *Mitrāvaruṇa* and others for a shower in the rainless territory of *Ādisūra*, having seen the scholasticity, ritual expertise of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*, king *Ādisūra* became very much impressed and gave him a territory of land (jamindāry) to *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*; mythically he became a king, *Sāmantarājā*. The

pavitrakīrternīlakaṇṭhasyātmasambhavo bhaṭṭasrīkaṇṭhāpadalancchano bhavabhūtināmājātukarṇīputraḥ kavirnisargasauhr̥dena bharateṣu svakṛtīmevamprāyagaṇabhūyasīmāsmākamarpitavān. M.M, 2nd Act p-11,12,13.

².cf. *ājñāpīto 'smi pariśadā yathādya tvayā sāmantavatesvaradattapautrasya mahārājapadabhākr̥ṭhusūnoḥ kavervisākhādattasya kṛtīrabhinavaṁ mudrārākṣasaṁ nāma nātakam nātayitavyamiti.* -M.R, by M.R.Kale 1st Act p-13.

³.cf. *tadidam kavermṛgarājalakṣmano bhaṭṭanārāyaṇasya kṛtīm veṅṅisamhāraṁ nāma nātakam prayoktumudyatā vyaṁ.* V.S. by M.R.Kale 1st Act, p-5,6

⁴.cf. *T.V.S.O.B, by Lt.col.A.B.Gajendragadkar p-3*

⁵.cf. *The Veṅṅisamhāra, by The late Lt.col.A.B.G p-3*

illustrious Tagore family of Calcutta ⁶ was believed to be descended from him though no one of this family at present claim the said identity.

The five *brāhmaṇas*, who migrated from *Kānyakubja* to Bengal are called *Sārasvatas* and after their settlement they came to be known as *Gauḍa Sārasvatas*⁷. *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was the leader of *Sārasvata* settlers and thus he became the founder of *Gauḍa Sārasvata* Brahmanism in that province.

There is some confusion regarding the caste of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*. Some scholars opined that he was a *Kṣatriya* on two grounds viz (1) In the *Kṣitīśavamśavalīcarita Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* and his descendants referred as *Kṣitīśas* and the word *Kṣitīśa* like *Rājan* indicates to the *Kṣatriya* caste. (2) In the prelude of *Veṇīsamhāra* also *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* distinguishes himself as a *Kṣatriya* by the epithet *Mṛgarājalakṣmanah*, which means one whose surname or family name is *Mṛgarāja* or *Simha* or *sinha*. Which is usually found to the names of *Kṣatriyas* such as *Pratāpa-Simha* or *Sinha*, *Jaya-Simha* and others. So *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was a *Kṣatriya*.

But both these are not sufficient to prove him as a *Kṣatriya*. First, *Kṣitīśa* just means a king or *Rājan*. Where as a *Brāhmaṇa* also may hold the position of a king. So there is nothing wrong if the designation of

⁶ .cf. *Bhattachanarayana*, by A.C.Sastri p-9

⁷ .T.V.S, by Lt.col.A.B.G p-3

Kṣitīśas to be given to *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* who was by caste supposed to be a *Brāhmaṇa* and his descendants. Secondly the elaboration given on the epithet *Mṛgarājalakṣmanah* is not a strong ground to prove *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* as a *Kṣatriya*. So also the word *Mṛgarājalakṣana* is preceded by the *Kavi*. By the term *lakṣaṇah* it indicates a distinctive personal designation or title, consequently it cannot signify a surname or a family name which is common to all family members of a family. Again *Kavemṛgarāja* means lion among poets which finds a place in distinctive titles such as *Kirtana-Keśarīn*, *Vedānta-Keśarīn*. Similarly, *Kavimṛgarāja* is just a title of the poet.

On the contrary there are positive evidences to believe that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was a *brāhmaṇa* by caste. At first the particular word *Bhaṭṭa* clearly proves that he was a *Brāhmaṇa*. *Kṣatriya* are never designated in this way as *Bhaṭṭa*. The meaning of the *Bhaṭṭa* and *Bhaṭa* is well known to all. Secondly the traditional chronicles say that *brāhmaṇas* are invited by *Ādisūra* from *Kānyakubja* to Bengal and he was the chief of the *Brāhmaṇas*. Thirdly, the *Kṣitīśavamśavalīcarita* is enough to give certain incidents and records of these settlers as *Brāhmaṇas*. Fourthly, there are some points in the *Veṅṣamhāra* which clearly indicate that its author was a *Brāhmaṇa*- (a) The character of the *Viduṣaka* brings in the comic or lighter sentiments in a Sanskrit drama and as he is always a

Brāhmaṇa. Such a character is absent from the *Veṅṅisamhāra*. He has not introduced any brahmanic qualities. Where the readers enjoyed full of mockery. A *Brāhmaṇa* author did not want to introduce in his drama such a character which will only serve to cast a stain on his caste. *Kālidāsa* has given the character of *Viduṣaka* in his drama but the caste of him is unknown. *Bhavabhūti*, obviously a *Brāhmaṇa*, has not introduced *Viduṣaka* in his dramas. Similarly, *Viśākhādatta*, a *brāhmaṇa*, has no *Viduṣaka* in his drama *Mudrārākṣasam*. In other side *Śrīharṣa* and *Rājaśekhara*, who were *kṣatriyas*, have introduced the character of *Viduṣaka* in their plays. Therefore *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* is a *brāhmaṇa*, who has not delineated *Viduṣaka* in his drama. (b) The human body is essentially constituent with blood, flesh, marrow and others which are needed for a body. There is no difference between the *brāhmaṇa* blood and *kṣatriya* blood flowing from the bodies of both. But the author with a sense pride showed his superiority of caste in the *Veṅṅisamhāra*. Which is obviously focused in the third Act of the drama, when *Vasāgandhā*, the demoness was known the death *Droṇācārya* then she proposed to her husband *Rudhirapriya*, the demon that they should go and drink the blood of *Droṇācārya*. But *Rudhirapriya* remarked with fear (surprisingly) that *brāhmaṇa* –blood burn the throat when drunk.⁸ Such a remark only can come out from the mouth of a *brāhmaṇa* writer.

⁸ .cf.vasāgandhe brāhmanaśoṇitam khalvetadgalam dahaddahatpravisati.V.S,by M.R.Kale ,3rd Act p-58

(c) In the third Act of the drama *Veṅṅisamhāra* also it has been noticed that the superiority of *Aśvatthāmā* and mean-mindedness and back biting⁹ of *Karna* while the quarrel occurs in between them. Here the dramatist supports to the *Brāhmaṇa* as they are mild and gentle by the expression of *Duryodhana*-

*athavā sūktamidamabhiyuktaih prakṛtirdustyajeti. yataḥ śokāndhamanasā tena vimucya kṣātradharmakārkaśyam dvijāti dharmasulabho mārdo vapari grahaḥ kṛtaḥ*¹⁰

(d) Most of the time the author has shown his importance and respect towards *Brāhmaṇa*. In the ending part of the battle i.e. in the sixth Act of the drama though the situation is not favourable for hospitality but *Yudhiṣṭhira* and *Draupadī* have shown their duty as a *Kṣatriya* by showing honour to a *Brāhmaṇa*¹¹. At the same time it is also seen that the *Brāhmaṇas* do not will any harm of the any one which is found in the expression of the Chamberlain- *ding mune rākṣasasadrśam hrdayam bhavataḥ*¹².

Moreover, the benedictory verse of the drama also exhibits that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was an intense devotee of Lord *Śiva* and Lord *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*.

⁹.cf. *evam kilasyābhiprāyo yathā aśvatthāmā mayā pṛthivīrajye abhiṣektavya iti. tasyābhāvādvṛddhasya me brāhmaṇasya vṛthā śastragrahaṇamiti tathā kṛtavān. V.S by M.R.Kale 3rd Act, p-71*

¹⁰.cf. *V.S by M.R.Kale 3rd Act p-70*

¹¹ .cf. *mune nirvartyamudanyapratikārah, buddhimatike vijaya maharṣimanena tālavṛntena. V.S by M.R.Kale 6th Act p-141, 142.*

¹².cf. *V.S by M.R.Kale 6th Act p-149*

He had profound knowledge of *Purāṇas*, especially the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and different branches of Philosophy. Among the three verses of the benedictory, two are praised to Lord *Kṛṣṇa*¹³ and the last one has been prayed to Lord *Śiva*¹⁴. The author has shown his inner devotion to *Hari* is seen in the first Act of the drama also from the mouth of *Draupadī-*

*nātha asurasamarābhimukhasya hareriva maṅgalaṃ yuṣmākaṃ bhavatu*¹⁵

It may be gathered more about *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* from the *Veṅṭsamhāra*. According to the traditional view he was invited for the sacrificial work as he was expert in that field and in the science of *Karma Mimāṃsā*. This is found in the first Act of the drama where the dramatist compares war with a sacrifice.¹⁶

Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa had a knowledge of figures of speech and he had studied the *Alamkāra* in the same time. At the same time his knowledge on *Rājanīti* or polity is also focused in the sixth Act of the drama through the application of political wit of *Yudhiṣṭhira-*

¹³.cf. niṣiddhairapyebhirlulitamakarando madhukaraiḥ. karairindorantaśchurita iva sambhinnamukulaḥ. vidattām siddhim no nayanasubhagāmasya sadasaḥ. prakirnah puspānām haricaranayanoranjirayam. V.S by M.R.Kale , 1st Act p-1

¹⁴ .cf. dṛṣṭaḥ saprema devyā kimīdamiti bhayātsambhramāccāsūribhiḥ. sātāntastattvasāraiḥ sakaruṇamṛṣibhirviṣṇunā sasmitena. ākṛṣyāstraṃ sagarvairupaśamitavadhūsambhramairdaityavīraiḥ. sānandaṃ devatābhirmayapuradahane dhūrjaṭiḥ pātu yuṣmān. V.S by M.R.Kale , 1st Act p-3

¹⁵.cf. V.S M.R.Kale 1st Act p-26

¹⁶.cf. ka eṣa yajñāḥ. raṇayajñāḥ. V.S.M.R.Kale , 1st Act p-25

*kruddhasya vṛkodarasyāparyuṣitadāruṇām pratijñāmupalabhya
pranaṣṭasya māninaḥ kauravarājasya
padavīmanveṣṭumatiniṣṭamatayasteṣu teṣu sthāneṣu
paramārthābhijñāścaraḥ susacibāśca bhaktimantaḥ
paṭupaṭaharavavyaktaḥṣaṇḍāḥ suyodhanasaṁcāravedinaḥ
pratiśrūtadhanapūjāpratyupakriyāścarantu
samantatsamantapañcakam.¹⁷*

In the conclusion regarding the life of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* almost all the rhetoricians are in the view that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was invited by the King *Ādiśūra* according to the Bengal. M. Krishnamachariar believes in tradition and says that the author migrated from Kanouj to Bengal at the invitation of *Ādiśūra*. He is also known as *Niśā- Nārāyaṇa* by anthologists because of his beautiful description of the night (*Niśā*). A.B. Keith also complies view. Different editors of the drama *Veṅīsamhāra* referred about *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* in their introductory chapters that he was the chief amongst the five *Brāhmaṇas* and perhaps the founder of Tagore family. Which is found in a book on *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* by A.C. Śāstrī, Sāhitya Academy and M.R. Kale, in his *Veṅīsamhāra* in the page about the poet. M.J. Rotate in his introduction of *Veṅīsamhāra*, has referred more about a popular talk that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* suffered for prevalent Buddhism in *Kānyakubja* and he has to come in Bengal as because he

¹⁷ .cf.V.S by M.R.Kale 1st Act p-130

was a follower of Vedic tradition. Late Lt. Col. A.B. Gajendragāḍkar Mombay-28 has also given the similar opinion with that of chronicles.

Hence, it may rightly be assumed that it was the same *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* who had to migrate from *Kānyakubja* at the advent and dominance of Buddhism in the said place due to royal patronage and search for a safe heaven for the followers of ritualistic culture and that came to him in the form of Bengal. It may also be added that the term '*Bhaṭṭa*' generally connotes a *Brāhmaṇa* and its inclusion in the dramatists name reassures that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* is by caste a *Brāhmaṇa*.

Date of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*:

It is always a difficult matter to determine the dates of Indian poets. But some India author and critiques give clear hints particularly their dates. Such as *Bhasa* has been mentioned as of 3rd Century B.C. in his introductory chapter of *Svapnāvāsavadattam*. It is clearly mention that the date of *Harṣavardhana* falls in between 606-647 from which the date of *Bānabhaṭṭa* because he was the court poet of *Harṣavardhana*. Like *Bānabhaṭṭa Bhavabhūti* was also popular for his '*Uttararāmacarita*' being a court poet of *Yaśovarman* in the first part of 8th Century. Like other poets there is no clear reference about the date of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*.

The most accomplished writer of Sanskrit prose *Bānabhaṭṭa*, in his introduction to the *Kathākāvya Harṣacarita* did not mention the name of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*, while eulogizing other poets of great repute. That proves that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was either posterior or contemporary to *Bānabhaṭṭa*, for which the later either was not aware of his name and caliber nor did bother to mention and praise him and thus he might be placed in the middle of the seventh century or the later of the seventh century A.D. The same may again be affirmed on the ground that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* had to leave his native place due to kings *Harṣavardhana*'s intervention in promoting Bhuddism and being a firm believer in ritualism *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* could not comply with kings wishes and migrated to Bengal along with some followers.

It is pertinent that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was more a scholastic poet than a spontaneous one. Because of the richness of his vocabulary appropriacy in word application and correct technicalities *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* attracted the attention of later rhetoricians. *Vāmana*, the author of *Kāvyaślokaśāstra* Sutra exemplified from *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s usages. Scholars place *vāmana* in between 750 A. D. to 800 A. D. It is evident from this fact that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* attained certain degree of popularity by 750 A.D. It may also be mentioned that *Bhāmaha*, the author of *Kāvyaślokaśāstra*, a predecessor of *Vāmana* and *Daṇḍī*, the author of *Kāvyaadarśa*, another

predecessor of *Vāmana* as rhetoricians are placed chronologically in the first half and second half of the seventh century respectively. Both *Bhāmaha* and *Daṇḍī* did not quote from *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s work, that also signify that the scholasticity and the treatise of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* were not much known to the said rhetoricians and hence it can safely be said that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* might be a contemporary of *Daṇḍī*, who flourished in the second half of the seventh century and *Daṇḍī* could not make it to refer *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* because of geographical distance and unavailability of the text beforehand. It is something striking that none of the later rhetoricians ranging from *Ānandavardhana* to *Viśvanātha Kavirāja* skipped to quote from *Veṅṭisamhāra* of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*. *Ānanda Vardhana* the author of *Dhvanyāloka* flourished in between 840 A. D. to 870 A. D. quoted several verses from *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s work. Other rhetoricians like *Dhanañjaya*, the author of *Daśarupaka* who flourished in and around 950 A. D. and *Bhojaraja*, the author of *Sarasvati Kanṭhābharana* who flourished in between 1005-1054 A. D. also referred and quoted verses from *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s *Veṅṭisamhāra* as examples of rhetoric interpretations of their respective works. *Kṣemendra*, the author of *Aucityavicāracarcā* and *Kavikanthabharana*, who flourished in between 1025-1075 also referred to *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*. *Mammata*, the author of *Kāvyaaparākṣa* flourished in between 1050 A. D. to 1100 A. D. also exemplified from *Veṅṭisamhāra Ksirosvāmī*, the happy commentator of

Amarakośa also quoted *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*. All these above mentioned references make it clear that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s brilliance of composition was very striking and all major rhetoricians greatly valued that when a rhetorician of *Daṇḍī*'s magnitude did not quote *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*, one intends to say that *Daṇḍī* was either contemporary who did not know much about the author or was an anterior to him and thus the epoch of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* stands to be second half of seventh century A. D.

In support of above statement it may be added that the Bengal tradition where *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was invited by king *Ādiśūra* was considered as the progenitor of the *Senā* dynasty. According to Cunningham the *Senā* dynasty reigned in Bengal in between 650 and 1108 A.D. That means *Ādiśūra* was reigning in the later half of the 7th century A.D. Consequently *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* may also be considered to belong to same period of *Ādiśūra*.

Hiuen Tsang in his journey he mentioned the name of a king of Nepal , who was *Aṃśuvarman* and whose sister *Bhojadevi* was married with Prince *Śūrasena* . This *Śūrasena* is no one else *Ādiśūra*, the founder of *Senā* dynasty, and *Amsuvarmana*'s period of ruling was about 644-652 A.D. which was known as the latter half of the 7th century and as the period of *Ādiśūra* and automatically of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*.

Secondly the epoch of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* may also be confirmed from contemporary history. Buddhism was mostly popularized in Kānyakubja in the second half of the 7th century. Because of the ascended of Buddhism Brāhmaṇas felt troubled and have to prohibit the practices of the ancient Vedic religion of sacrifices such as slaughtering of animals and other rituals. Consequent the author *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* and his associates migrated to Bengal from *Kānyakubja*. In this regard about *Samgrāma* of *Harṣavardhana* i.e prohibition of slaughter of any living creature is found.¹⁸

Thirdly as a writer *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* tried to follow the naturalness of poet *Kālidāsa* while he himself is an artificial poet. This is evident in the description of autumn season as indicated-

*prāleyamiśramakarandakarālakośaiḥ. puṣpaiḥsamam nipatitā rajanīprabuddhaiḥ
arkāṅsubhinnamukulodarasāndragandhasamsucitānikamalānyalayaḥ patanti.*¹⁹

Also-

*jṛmbhārambhapravitatadalopāntajalapraviṣṭair
hastairbhānornṛpataya iva spr̥śyamānā vibuddhāḥ
strībhiḥ sārđham ghanaparimalastokalakṣyāngarāgā
muñcantiyete vikacanalinīgarbhasayyām dvirephāḥ*²⁰

¹⁸ .cf. *The life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, by Shaman HwuiLi, p-83

¹⁹ .cf. *V.S* by M.R.Kale sl -6 p-33

²⁰ .cf. *V.S* by M.R.Kale sl-7 p-33

The style and ideology of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* were greatly influenced by *Bhāravi*'s style. Very often *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* is noticed to follow the ideas and language of *Bhāravi*.²¹ Macdonell refers that *Bhāravi*'s name was found in an inscription of 634 A. D. This implies that *Bhāravi* flourished earlier than the referred date and is pertinent that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* flourished not before the said date, because had he flourished before the said age his name would also have got a place in the referred inscription.

Max Muller suggested that *Bhadranarayana*, who was mentioned in the *Harṣacarita* as a companion of *Bāna* in his wanderings was identical with *Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa*. This makes our poet a contemporary of *Bana*. This idea is reflected in the "History of classical Sanskrit literature" by *Krishnamacariar* that *Bānabhaṭṭa* and *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* are contemporary to each other. This also thus says that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* belonged to 7th century A.D.

Study conducted on *Veṅīsamhāra*:

The efforts made by different scholars to explore *Veṅīsamhāra* in different dimensions are reckoned below:-

²¹.cf.A.H.O.S.L,Arthur A. MacDonell. P-277

Ratnamayi Devi Diksit in her work ‘women in Sanskrit Dramas’ discussed the female characters of *Veṅṅisamhāra* in an elaborate manner.

Veṅṅisamhāra is an extraordinary drama in Sanskrit literature. The importance of the drama and dramatic skills of Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa are highly discussed in different works. However substantial research works are not available on *Veṅṅisamhāra*.

Maurice Winternitz in his “History of Indian literature” Vol–III has mentioned the main source of the drama *Veṅṅisamhāra* and briefly given a clear picture of the drama till the war description at the end . According to him the popularity of *Veṅṅisamhāra* among the scholars is possibly based on its language alone but not because of the subject-matter. However, the Indian rhetoricians have noticed certain short comings in this drama *Veṅṅisamhāra*.

M. Krishnamachariar in his “History of classical Sanskrit literature” has mentioned that the drama is taken from the incident of *sabhaparvan* of *Mahabharata*. As a heroic drama it is predominated by heroic sentiment with certain inclusion of pathos. According to him dignity of thought and for easy expression the last Act deserves high appreciation. He has also mentioned the names of rhetoricians who have quoted *Veṅṅisamhāra* considering it as a most illustrious work.

“A history of Sanskrit literature” by Arthur A. Mac Donell, has highlighted the theme of the *Veṅṅisamhāra* and explained there how Duḥśāsana dragged Draupadī in the Assembly Hall. At the same time he has mentioned the date of the author *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* and also referred the writings of *Rajasekhara* and his date. A MacDonell thinks that though *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was not prominent for his poetic genius, but the drama was a great favourite in India because of great devotion of *Srikr̥ṣṇa* and glorification of *Kṛṣṇa* cult.

“The Sanskrit drama “of A. Berriedale Keith, also discussed the date of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* in detail. A.B. Keith mentioned the tradition which told that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was a Brahmin who came from Kānyakubja to Bengal being the invited by Ādiśūra ĀdityaSenā, who was alive in 671 A. D.

Sushil Kumar De in his “Treatment of love in Sanskrit literature” has referred that *Veṅṅisamhāra* is the second drama which does not delineate love sentiment , the other drama is *Mudrārākṣasam*.

“The cultural heritage of India”. Vol- V, languages and literature also mentioned about *Veṅṅisamhāra* while discussing sentiments other than love”. Accordingly to the work *Veṅṅisamhāra* is undoubtedly a popular drama without love interest. The *Veṅṅisamhāra* is a great drama, which very tactfully managed the great-war of *Mahābhārata* within a six

limited Acts. The drama is enough of fire and energy, horror and pathos but the style is laboured and which is fully undramatic. The drama is a good example of half poetic and half dramatic effort, which is a peculiar kind of composition. It may be called declamatory drama. So it bears the merits and defects of this class or work.

Moreover in the column of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* the theme is given briefly and again the *Veṅṅisamhāra* and its features are discussed.

“The concept and treatment of dream in Sanskrit literature” authored by Dr. Swapna Devi. In this text in the column- Dream in the *Veṅṅisamhāra*:- dream episode of *Bhānumatī* is very clearly described by the author, which has been occurred in the 2nd Act of the drama *Veṅṅisamhāra*. The author has also narrated the story along with the belief of auspicious and inauspicious happenings.

Gaurinath Śāstrī in his “A concise history of classical Sanskrit literature” has referred *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* and mentioned the probable date of flourishing of dramatist to be 8th century A. D. basing on the quotation of *Vāmana* and *Ānandavardhana* in their works. Then he mentioned that drama is written mainly basing on *Mahābhārata* and also mentioned the number of Acts in the drama like other writers. He also mentioned the theme briefly and the main sentiment of the drama to be heroic. According to him the first three Acts of the drama are full of action i.e.

the predominant emotion there is enthusiasm. Moreover he also quoted the criticisms about *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* made by other critics.

There is a book “*Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*” by Asoke Chatterjee Sastri which is very elaborately discussed *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*’s *Veṅṅisamhāra*. There in the first Chapter i.e in the introduction the author has discussed *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*’s date basing on references of other rhetoricians on him. And there the author does not forget to refer *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*’s devotion to *Viṣṇu* and *Śiva* and about his knowledge on orthodox philosophical schools or systems like *Sankhya* and *Yoga*. *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* is also appreciated for his skill in prosody and rhetorics. Moreover A. C. Sastri also discusses other writings of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*. **Sastri mentions that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* was credited with authorship of *Jānakiharāṇa* and *Purvapithika* of *Daśakumara carita*.** The author has also referred that the later period and contemporary period do not accept it. In the 2nd chapter i.e. *Veṅṅisamhāra* there the back ground of the story has been narrated and then the theme of the six Acts of the drama briefly chapter three described the source, deviations and additional made in the drama. In the chapter four there is discussion on the *Veṅṅisamhāra* and the rules of Dramaturgy involved in it. The Dialogues, Hero, Sentiment and Characterizations are given due attention in this chapter. With so many examples the place of *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* in Sanskrit Literature is narrated in

the fifth chapter along with style, aesthetic value of the Drama. *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s contribution to the Cultural Heritage of India is found in the sixth chapter. And the last i. e. seventh chapter gives the list of Quotable Lines from the *Veṅṅisamhāra*.

“A companion to Sanskrit Literature” is a book authored by Suresh Chandra Banerji (*Motilal Banarassidass* Delhi, Varnasi, Datna Bangalore, Madras). In this book the author discusses *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* as the author of *Veṅṅisamhāra* and says that probably he has been flourished between the 8th and 9th Century A. D. And *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* is supposed as the writer of the introduction of *Daśakumara Charita*.

In “The theory of Rasa in Sanskrit Drama” by *Hariram Mishra*, the author discusses the Rasa in *Veṅṅisamhāra*. The author of the book feels that the excellence of Principal Rasa i.e. *vira rasa* in *Bhīma* and the *Bhayānaka* in the enemies are depicted by *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa* in a very appealing manner. Moreover the author thinks that the intervention of *Duryodhana*'s love with *Bhānumatī* in the second Act is not relevant rather spoils the scope of a happy and pleasant delineation of love sentiment there.

“Sociology of Sanskrit Drama” is a major work on Sanskrit drama. This work was carried out by Bhagirathi Biswas (1999). This book discusses along with other Sanskrit dramas discusses the sociological

aspects of *Veṇīsamhāra*. While doing that the author discussed prevailing customs, ritualistic culture, language and value system and their co-relation with *Veṇīsamhāra*.

Purpose of the study:

The drama has always been critically appreciated by literary technicians or rhetoricians. The dramatist has chosen the most crucial portion of Mahābhārata, The *Kurukṣetra* was along with its precursors and successive events. As it is known to all that *Kurukṣetra* war was being fought in between kiths and kins all the closests of relations were messed in those eventualities. When relations suffer or fail women happen to be worsely affected. These very things are very wel-executed in the drama and that appeals to an inquisitive reader. Again, the drama also has delineated very compatible relations of two pairs of spouse, one that is of *BhīmaSenā* and *Draupadī* and the other pair is of *Duryodhana* and *Bhānumatī*. It may again be mentioned that *Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*'s *Veṇīsamhāra* is the only Sanskrit work where the character of *Bhānumatī* is portrayed with so much of attention and care. Even the concern of *BhīmaSenā* to *Draupadī* is though a theme of Mahabharata is very wel-portrayed in the drama. In this drama the female characters exhibit a commendable effort to *smoothen* the war-torn hearts of dear ones, be it *Gāndhārī*, *Draupadī* or *Subhadrā*. The drama is also appealing on the

ground that the author has been very successful in creating pathos in the fourth Act and brilliant heroic sentiments in the earlier Acts. The technicalities, sociological aspects, character delineations and deviations from the original story make the drama an interesting subject of style. The paucity of substantial research works on this work also make it a major point of attraction .Hence the present study is being carried out on *Veṇīsamhāra*.