CONCLUDING REMARKS

Rājaśekhara is a prolific writer. He is a poet as well as a poetician par excellence. It is already mentioned in the foregoing chapter that he had the following book to his credit. (1) Śaṣṭhaprabandha (six composition) articles no extant (2) The Bālarāmayāṇa (RM for the boys) a drama (3) The Bālabhārata (the Mbh for the boys) a drama, (4) Karpūramaṇjari (Camphor-cluster) drama in prākṛt language (5) Vidhacālabhaṇjikā (viddha – Hollowed wall or columns) a drama (6) Bhuvanakoṣa (a treatise on geography) (7) Kāvyamīmāṃsā (poetics) (8) Haravilāsa (Kāvyā or Poetry) non extant.

But his works are not out of criticism. Criticism is leveled against him both as a poet and a dramatist. “With Bhavabhūti the time of great dramatist in Indian literature comes to an end. Bhattanāraṇyaṇa and Rājaśekhara already belong to the category of imitator. This imitative literature, however, has not come to its real and end even up to this day. Down up to own days, new dramas, following old models have been and are being composed. The old tradition stories have throughout supplied the themes for the recent dramas. In this connection the Rāma-tale stands
in the front line.¹ Rājaśekhara as a poet and as a dramatist, he is equally disappointing. He has no psychological Perception which a dramatist needs to develop the plot, to delineate the sentiment and to figure out in distinct sheds and colours, the character of the drama. He lacks restraint, sense of proportion and prority and hence, like Bhavabhūti he does not know when and where to halt in his descriptions and lyrical out bursts. With all his familiarity with stage and friendship of the actors, he was not well advised, in the matter of the stage craft or the shape and size of the drama, as in the case of BR a mistake which no doubt he rectified later, when he wrote his other dramas. The result is, his dramas are puny and puerile in their plots; insipid in their sentiments and state and lifeless in their characterisation. Although Pompous in the gorgeous display of his poetic fervour, Rājaśekhara has indeed, no dramatic sense in him.²

Rājaśekharas excessive attention to Sragdharā and Śārdulavikrīḍita metre has done a great harm to his play for want of dramatic action his works bear no dramatic charm and as such it has not won the approbation of renders.³

But if one goes through his works in depth one finds that in spite of his short comings as a poet and a dramatist, he holds an important place in Sanskrit literature. He wrote poems, dramas, and treatises on poetics. He claims himself as Kavirāja, in the drama, BR, i.e. he is a poet par excellence. As a poetician, in “Kāvyamīmāṃsā”, he mentions nine kinds and ten stages of poets. He has stated that one possessing qualities is called ‘Mahākavi’ (eminent poet). Out of the ten stages, the seventh one is ‘Kavirāja’ (poet-par-excellence). One who has the capability to compose freely epics and other forms of narratives in different languages using various states of emotions (rasa) is called Kavirāja.

The poet claims himself to be the re-incarnation of Vālmīki, Bhatṛmeṇṭha and Bhavabhūti, ‘Haravilāsa’ a poetry assigned to Rājaśekhara, but it is not extent to-day. Hemacandra of Jaina writer of 11th century has quoted him in his poetics “Kāvyamuṣāsana”, Ujjvaladatta of 13th century has also quoted him. The great classical epic RM (5th century BC) of Mahārṣi Vālmīki is the oldest representative of Mahākāvya and

4. yoanyataraprabango prabinaḥ mahākaviḥ, -KM, Ch. V. 62.
5. babhuva valmīkahavah purā kavistataḥ prapede bhuvir bhatṛmeṇṭhatām. sthitah punaryo bhavabhutirekhayā sa vartate samprati rājaśekharah.

BR. 1. 16.
referred to as the Ādikavya (first ornate poetry). The epic has tremendously influenced the life and literature of India. It is a store-house and source of dramatic plots too. The great poetic genius of Vālmīki with enviable creative power, abundantly rich in the use of figure of speech and metrical verses, use of apt. Simile and various sentiments (i.e. ‘vīra’ ‘karuna’ etc.) with perfection and maturity have placed Vālmīki as one of the foremost and greatest poets (Mahākavi) not only in the Sanskrit literature, but in the world literature. Not so much is known about the poet Bhatṛmeṇṭha. But what is known is that he is a Kashmirian poet of 900 A.D. Kolhana in his “Rājatararāṅgini” has stated that Rājaśekhara has written a poem named ‘Hayagriva Vadha(HV)’. Now it is a lost poem. The ‘Kiśkīndhā Kāṇḍa’ of Vālmīki’s RM holds that ‘Hayagriva’ is a demon, who was killed by Viṣṇu.6 The poet wrote the poem on the basis of the RM story. The first verse of HV is quoted by Rājaśekhara in his KM. Probably he considers his poetical work equivalent to the verse of Vālmīki’s RM. The verses of Vālmīki’s RM bear lyrical and rhythmical beauty. It may be noticed in Canto II (verse 18) of the Bālakāṇḍa of

6. asti daityo hayagrivah suhadvesmasu yusya taḥ
    prathayanti valam bahih sincchatrasmitaḥ sryaḥ.

Paramanik Kosh, p. 546
Vālmīki’s RM, “Bom as they are out of my sorrows, these words are so arranged that they follow a metre. They seem to form a ‘Śloka’ or verse, which can even be sung to the accompaniment of strange of ‘Veena’. I am amazed that this is none but rhythmical verse. Even his drama BR is more lyrical than dramatic. He owes allegiance to Bhavabhūti also. Bhavabhūti wrote three dramas – UC, MC and MM. He is one of the most prominent Indian poets. Deepness of thought and eloquent expression of violent emotions and wonderful command of Sanskrit language are reflected in the writings of Bhavabhūti.

Rājaśekhara asserts in ‘Ṣaṣṭha Prabandha’ (six composition) as refused to in the BR that – “If intelligent on says that there is defect in BR than I want to ask the clever one, whether there is merit in the speech or statement (Bhanktiukti) or not? If yes please know any six compositions. If it is not so, then the poetry would dry and forbid any lips.

7. pādabadhākṣara samastaraṅtrilaya samanvitaḥ
   śokārtaśya prāvṛttau me śloko bhavatu nānyathā.

   RM, Balakanda Sarga II, 18.

8. brute yaḥ koapi doṣaṁ mahaditi śumatibalarāmāyaṇasmin
   praṣṭavyauasau pataianiha bhanātiguna vidyate vā na vetti
   yadyasti svasti tubhyaṁ bhava paṭhanarucirvidhi naḥ śat prabandha
   naivāṁ ceddisrghamāstāṁ nāṭabṛtuvadene jarjarā kāvyakaṇṭhā.

   BR. I. 12.
Rājaśekhara’s dramas ‘Km’, VB, BR and BB contain four, four, ten and two Acts respectively. Apparently it seems that the author has shown no intention of adhering to the rules of drama. These might have occurred either because the author had the tendency of the liberty of the dramatist or it might have been that due to his enthusiasm as a poem, overlooked certain aspect of dramaturgy, ignoring realistic and psychological aspects of situation, sentiment, plot making and characterisation.

However, even with a few defects, Rājaśekhara’s plays exhibit some strikingly interesting features, which are undoubtedly his merits. He was, no doubt, influenced by some earlier dramatists. But it should not be taken as a case of plagiarism or serious imitation. Again, excess of poetic flavour than dramatic ones, is a feature marked in the works of most of the Sanskrit dramatists. Rājaśekhara could successfully establish himself as dramatist with innovative ideas. He has his own singular features. The Bālarāmāyaṇa as a drama and Rājaśekara as a dramatist should be viewed in such a perspective.