CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I propose to take a brief review of the noteworthy points emerging from the discussions in the previous chapters. The critical study of the Udayasundarī-kathā reveals important facts from different points of view, especially literary and historical.

Contribution of Soḍḍhala to the Literary form Campū :

Udayasundarīkathā is a work of the period from 1020 A. D. to 1050 A. D. In connection with the history of the literary form called Campū, it may be observed that before Soḍḍhala Campūs were written only on stories taken from the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas. The Jains used this type of literature for the spread of their religious doctrines. Biographical Campūs like Yaśastilaka Campū and Jivaṁdhara Campū were already in existence; but Soḍḍhala is the first author, who composed a Campū work with an imaginary plot. In this respect Soḍḍhala's Originality is noteworthy. He is by nature a writer of romance, but he developed the traditional conception of a prose romance like Kādambarī and gave it a new direction by a copious but apt mixture of verses. Thus Udayasundarīkathā is nothing but a prose

romance freely mixed with verses and thus he calls it a Campū. Credit may be given to Soddhala for this novel experiment in literary form.

It is regrettable that no one followed Soddhala, in his pioneering experiment which deserves appreciation from all people of literary taste. Despite all the failings and shortcomings of Soddhala, his attempt to present a romance in mixed prose and verse is certainly a milestone in the development of the Campū literature. If circumstances would not have prevented the circulation of the manuscripts of his work, Soddhala would have already gained a high place in the galaxy of Sanskrit poets.

Soddhala's spirit of experimentation in the literary form of Campū can be noted in different directions also. Like Bāna in the Harṣacarita, he puts his autobiography as a prelude to the text and tried to connect his own account with the main plot of the romance. Even though his attempt was not quite happy from the point of view of literary taste, still we may credit Soddhala for experimenting a mixture of two literary forms Kathā and Akhyāyikā and presenting it in the mixed form of Campū. As noted above Soddhala does not find any follower in this respect also.

SODDHALA'S STYLE ANALYSIS :

While discussing the characteristics of a good composition Soddhala has referred to three kinds of poets. He seems to propound a theory about Gunas and the Classification of style. The theory seems to be original and somewhat different from that propounded by previous writers.

Soddhala does not agree with the previous writers on poetics in the number of Gunas. He does not consider that all the ten gunas are of any importance for a good literary composition. He mentions[1] only four Gunas, Masrnatā (smoothness), Māmsalatā (force), Komaltā (ease) and Lālitya (polish); so it seems that he includes all the ten qualities in these four Gunas. This view of Soddhala is followed even by later writers, for example, Hamacandra who reduces the number of Gunas from then to three; so also Mammata. These writers on poetics thought that Mādhurya, Ojas and Prasāda were the only three literary qualities; some of the others could be easily included in them and the remaining were only negative in character, since their nature was absence of a defect.

As regards the classification of style Soddhala partly follows the old writers on Poetics and mentions that the styles are to be classified as vaidarbhī, Gaudī and Pāñcālī.

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1. UK : P. 18.

He does not increase the number of different varieties of style as Bhoja did. Bhoja in his Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa[1] and Śṛṅgāraprakāśa[2] says that there are six styles, Vaidarbhī, Gauḍī, Pāñcālī, Avantī, Māgadhī and Lāṭī. Even though Soḍḍhala was Bhoja's contemporary, he does not subscribe to his view.

If we observe the special case of Lāṭi it can be said that poets of Lāṭa appear to possess distinctive literary traits. A kind of style favoured by authors of Lāṭa, had acquired the name of Lāṭi. Rudraṭa (A. D. 800 - 850) was the first to enumerate Lāṭīyā.[3] It is indeed curious that Rājaśekhara who came after Rudraṭa and was conversant with this view did not accept Lāṭi. Soḍḍhala even though, he was a resident of Lāṭadeśa, did not refer to Lāṭīyā. Probably they did not consider it to be different from Pāñcālī and hence did not see any necessity of accepting a separate style beyond Pāñcālī.

In the classification of style Soḍḍhala introduces innovation by naming the styles as Kaukilī, Māyūrī and

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1. Bhoja : Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa, II - 27
2. Rāghavan V. : Bhoja's Śṛṅgāraprakāśa, Vol. I, Part I, Chap. XIV, 196-200
3. Rudraṭa: Kāvyālaṁkāra, II - 4 . 5.

Mārālī.[1] These are synonymous with Vaidarbhī, Gaudī and Pāñcālī respectively. Accordingly, he classified poets in three varieties as Kaukila, Māyūra and Mārāla.

The most important point in the discussion of style is Soddhala's analyiss of the principles on which different styles may be distinguished. Previous writers like Vāmana and others base the distinction of styles on the presence and absence of certain Guṇas; but Soddhala seems to hold a different view altogether. He distinguishes the styles on the principle of Saprāṇatva[2] (liveliness) Ghanaprāṇatva (force) and Alpaprāṇatva (lack of liveliness). Saprāṇatva is liveliness, the characteristic of Vaidarbhī style. This style possesses polish (Sauṣṭhava). Gaudī is with the characteristic of Ganaprāṇatva, very forceful. It also possesses a very great polish (Analpa Sauṣṭhava). The Pāñcālī lacks force (Alpa prāṇatva) and it consists of limited polish (Mita sauṣṭhava).

It is expected that all the four qualities Maṣṛṇatā, Mamsalatā, Komalatā and Lālitya should be present in the case of all the three styles and it's immaterial whether all the four are present or not. The presence and absence

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1. UK : P. 18
2. UK : P. 18.

does not change the nature of the style but Alpaprānatva, or Ghanaprānatva.

The analysis of style suggested by Soddhala is not taken note of by later writers. Mammata and others base their classification on the presence and absence of a particular Guna, for example, Mammata asserts that Mādhurya is essential in the Vaidarbhī style while ojas in Gaudī, and Pāñcālī, according to him is midway between the two.

Soddhala is of the opinion that the author is entitled to the use of different types of style according to necessity and should show his excellence in all the different types. Soddhala has tried to do so in his work and takes pride in achieving what he has professed.

Thus in classifing style Soddhala gives a detailed and critical analysis, which brings into relief his literary acumen. This analysis presents new point of view about the style and thus stands separately from the traditional writers. This theory of Soddhala being original deserves appreciation from literary critics.

EMENDATIONS :

Emendations in the text are suggested in the Appendix IV; but there is one particular occasion in which, there

seems to be a great lacuna. It occures in the tale of Kumārakesarī (P. 62). From the story of the demon[1] we can indirectly supply the details of the situation; which is missing on account of the defective manuscript. After the sentence " Nabhasi nikṣiptacakṣurāsthat "[2] we have to supply sentences with the following purpot. "In a moment there appeared from somewhere a great sharp sword blue and resplendant like a cloud; the Kāpālika gave it to me with his blessings. I accepted it politely and bowing down to him, I retired, taking a very great care of that sward. While I was trying to get sleep, being engrossed in various thoughts, I heard a noise of people as if engaged in gambling. My mind being attracted, I got up and went to see where the gambling was going on. Having come to the crowd of gamblers, I immediately took part in the game as one of them. In the gambling, sometimes I lost and sometimes gained. Ultimately I found that I lost my sword and won an aerial car; so I began to think that gambling was a sort of an exploit possible only by people with strong arms."

Some such details of the situation are lost to us on account of a lacuna in the manuscript. As the emendation is

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1. UK : P. 88.
2. UK : P. 62.

long, I have supplied it here as it forms an important link in the development of the story.

SODDHALA AS A STORY - TELLER :

Soddhala's literary insight can be seen from his analysis of the characteristic features of a good romance. He notes that the beginning of the story should be attractive. The plot should be wellconstructed. The romance should be rich in the delineation of sentiments and the style should be pleasing. As a literary critic Soddhala has presented in a nutshell the characteristics of a good story. From the appreciation of Udayasundarīkathā, we can come to the conclusion that Soddhala has become somewhat successful in reaching the mark of a good story-teller.

In the text there are various tales which are intervowen in such a way that they make up a complete tales dependent on it. They are as follows : The tale of Vasantaśīla, the tale of a parrot, the tale of Kumārakesarī, the tale of a demon, the tale of a female ascetic and the tale of a monkey. These six subordinate tales are so skilfully intervowen by the poet that they make up the main tale which concerns the Nāyaka Malayavāhana and the Nāyikā Udayasundarī.

SODDHALA AS A POET :

Even though, there is artificiality in the work of

Soḍḍhala his poetic excellence cannot be rated low on that account. Krishṇamāchāry rightly says,[1] "In sweetness and melody of language and beauty of ideas, he is uniquely happy and his creative fancy is peculiarly his own." I have already considered Soḍḍhala's sweetness and melody of language in Chapter IX. Here I wish to point out certain characteristics of the poetic ideas and fancies of Soḍḍhala. In this connection it can be said that Soḍḍhala's fancy is mostly orinal. Even though bound by poetic convention, he does not depend on the ideas presented by previous masters like Bāna and others whose debt he acknowledges.

In the description of the procession of Malayávāhana and Udayasundarī, when they returned to the city, Soḍḍhala depicts the impatience and haste of city-women. There he does not imitate Aśvaghoṣa[2] or Kālidāsa.[3] Indeed he gives the new idea by depicting the women as Ardhanārīśvara on account of their decoration of only half of the body.[4]

In the description of evening, Soḍḍhala imagines the moonlight to be the milk of the buffalo in the form of night. He fancies that it was spilt on the expanse of the sky while

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1. UK : Introduction.
2. Aśvaghoṣa : Buddhacaritam, III, 14 - 24.
3. Kālidasa : Raghuvaṁśa, III, 5 - 15.
4. UK : P. 146.

being boiled by the flames of the glances of love-lorn people.[1] moreover, when the sun has disappeared, the lotus plant, with its hair-like bees gone, is fancied to be like a widow putting on a white garb of the wide spread light[2].

He describes the winds as tired travellers resting in the villages near the sea coast,[3] like children sporting in the cradles of the waves of Tāmraparṇi, like guests worshipping in the bowers on the bank of the Kāveri, like travellers crowding in the sprays of water of the Godāvarī ect. The whole passage proves that Soddhala's flight of fancy was quite original.

In describing the glory of Malayavāhana, he gives a complicated fanciful idea that as his great elephants moved, the earth suffered depression and consequently the ocean was greatly agitated and the serpent-couch of viṣnu toppled down and thus Laksmī lost her place on the chest of Viṣnu.[4]

He describes the fame of Kalindaketu as a swan becoming whiter by plunging in the milky ocean, and while flying

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1. UK : P. 73. चान्द्रे गेहे --- श्रीगतले लुलीठ ॥
2. UK : P. 74 , 149. कमलिनी --- सितांशुकम् ॥
3. UK : PP. 121 - 122. त्रिभुवनानन्ददायिनो --- गन्धवाहा: ।
4. UK : P. 23. दिग्यात्रा प्रस्थितायु --- शय्योत्सङ्गस्थ ॥

from earth to heaven the drops of water falling from the wings of that swan became stars and the halo of the lustre of its body became the universe.[1]

While describing hunting, he fancies the teeth of boars to be their bones coming out from their bodies on account of the fear of the fall of the sharp arrow of the king.[2]

Sometimes his fancies are complicated and their implication is difficult to be grasped. He describes the exploits of Śilāditya as possessing surging flames like the fire emerging from the thunderbolt and so it was but natural that hardness (pride) of kings (mountains) was melted; only Himālaya was not melted; since it possessed supernatural herbs.[3] The whole idea of identifying the king's exploit with Vajra is complicated. It's implication that Śilāditya was as great as Indra becomes clear only after some consideration.

While describing the great lake, he says that all the seven oceans became frightened and as it were agitated with the thought that again the sage Agastya has returned and the Vindhya who has fulfilled his promise rose up in the form of

1. UK : P. 55. अद्य क्षीरनिधौ - - - विश्वं शशी ॥
2. UK : P. 44. चापे निशितशरे - - - माकुलमारब्धा ॥
3. UK : P. 4. अस्योजदीप्त - - - मन्ये हिमाद्रिः ॥

~~in the form of~~ its bank.[1] Here the mythological story of Agastya drinking the water of seven oceans is referred to. In the second part of the verses, he refers to the mythological story that Vindhya who has obstructed the path of the sun, bowed down to Agastya, his preceptor and became stunted. He was told to keep in that position by Agastya till his return. Here we have complicated ideas of mythology as the basis of his fancy.

Sometimes he exaggerates an idea to a very great extent. For example, in praising king Malayavāhana, the parrot says that the hut built by your enemy was expected to be durable as it was built on a high place and the floods of mountain rivers were unable to reach that place; but while the enemy consoled his beloved in that way, the flood of her own tears washed away the hut.[2] The exaggeration in this idea is quite plain.

Sometimes his ideas rely too much on the pun of words. He describes that the whole family of kings bowed down to Malayavāhana and therefore their joints were not broken.[3] Even though the idea is original, it relies solely on the pun upon the word 'Vamśa.'

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1. UK : P. 130. व्यावृत्त्य चुलमागत; - - - विन्ध्यश्च वृद्धिं ययौ ॥
2. UK : P. 41. वर्षाम्बुविद्यकुटीकृते - - - नीताऽऽस्पदे; ॥
3. UK : P. 41. स्वामिन्नवेक्ष्य - - - वचनामपि भङ्ग; ॥

While describing a poet as swimming with the help of his composition in the ocean of poetry, he states that he has a great danger from the acquatic monster in the form of an ignorant human being.[1] The charm of the idea lies in the pun upon the word Jala to be taken as Jada i.e. a dull person, devoid of the power of poetic appreciation. Here Soddhala solely relies on the artificial pun on the word Jala.

Soddhala's ideas are very rarely tainted with the defects of impropriety. While describing the princess in the assemblage of girls, Kumārakesarī describes her to be Laksmī emerging from the orb of the moon,[2] but Laksmī is never known to have emerging from the moon but from the milky ocean. Thus the idea is tainted with the defect of impropriety but such cases are rare in Soddhala's work.

DEFECTS OF SODDHALA :

Construction of the Plot :

While evaluating Udayasundarikathā as a literary work, we have to note its defects also. Udayasundarikathā has

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1. UK : P. 17
कुर्वतः कविताम्भोधौ प्रबन्धेन विजृम्भणम् ।
कवेः प्रौढस्य कस्यास्ति जलमानुषतो भयम् ॥

2. UK : P. 66.
मध्ये च तस्य ... लक्ष्मीरिव चन्द्रमसो मण्डलाद्विलसन्ती ...।

followed the model of Kadambarī from the second Ucchvāsa onward. In the first Ucchvāsa, he has adopted the device of Harsacarita in order that he may prelude the work with his own biography. This device does not serve any purpose in enhancing the literary excellence of the story; on the other hand, the narration of the poet's lineage and the history of Kāyasthas, so also the general discussion of literary excellances of a work are all redundant from the point of view of the main story. In this respect, we cannot compare the Harṣacarita with the Udayasundarīkathā, since Bāṇa was a protege of Harṣa and in this way the lives of Bāṇa and Harṣa were connected. In the case of the Harṣacarita, the autobiography of the poet has relevancy with respect to the life of the hero of the story; but here in the Udayasundarīkathā, the life of Soḍḍhala is not connected with that of the hero Malayavāhana; since he is not patronized by that king. Malayavāhana is only the hero of an imaginary story. Hence Bāṇa was right when he did not attach his biography to Kādambarī. But Soḍḍhala could not think of this discropancy and so a grave defect in the construction of the plot has crept in. The biographical account in the first Ucchvāsa of Kavivaṁśanivedana seems to be quite detached and irrelevent to the main story; even though Soḍḍhala has very carefully tried to fill up the gap between the real life of Soḍḍhala and the imaginary story by introducing the

marvellous episode of Tilaka and Tālaka.

The second important defect in the plot construction is the delaying of the main theme in the body of the work. The theme of the work is the love affair of Malayavāhana and Udayasundarī. This theme takes certain shape only in the fifth Ucchvāsa, that is in the later part of the work. In the first half of the work the main tale is relegated to the background. Even the beginning of the main subject-matter is delayed up to the end of the third Ucchvāsa. This delaying of the main theme is a defect in the plot construction as well as in the delineation of sentiments.

From the beginning of the story Soddhala has tried to hold the interest of readers by following the principle of suspense; but the elements by which suspense in the story is created are only indirectly and distantly connected with the main theme. Moreover, he has relied too much on the element of marvel. Even in an imaginary story too much reliance on marvellous incidents is to be considered as a defect. For example, the transformation of the marble images into human beings, namely Tilaka and Tālaka, the transformation of the parrot into a young man, Kumārakesari's journey in an aeroplane and his being involved in an accident, his visit to Nāgaloka where he is transformed into

a parrot by the curse of an old female ascetic, Tārāvalī's journey with the pair of wooden shoes to Laṅkā[1] and her transformation into a mare by drinking the water of a lake are noteworthy in this respect. Moreover, the mare was transformed into Tārāvalī by the touch of a gem, king Tārākirīṭa of Kosātakī was transformed into a monkey by the curse of a sage, the monkey was retransformed into the original form of Tārākirīṭa, the demons and the Nāgas are said to assume their forms at will[2] and can fly in the sky, Māyābala and Dambholi assumed the form of a bird, while they were in search of Udayasundarī, the king, Udayasundarī and Tārāvalī were brought to the city by the demon Māyābala assuming the form of an aerial car, Kaṅkālaka also assumed the form of an aerial car and carried Kumārakesarī. All these incidents are fully of marvellous elements.

All these marvellous elements, no doubt create interest in the story, but still to rely solely on them cannot be an ideal method of plot construction. In this respect it is worthwhile to compare Soḍḍhala's method with that of Bāṇa in Kādambarī. If we assume that his son Bhūṣaṇa guessed the intention of his father correctly, we can confidently say

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1. UK : P. 109.
2. UK : P. 143

that Bāna intended to make use of the element of marvel only in the latter part of the story, namely the Kādambarī, Uttarabhāga. The first part of Kādambarī is free from such marvellous episodes. Therein suspense is created by the story itself. The main characters such as Candrāpīḍa and Puṇḍarika etc., are shown to be transformed only in the latter part of the story. The interest of the story, in the case of the first part of Kādambarī lies in the clever weaving of episodes and the pleasant presentation of different situations. In the Udayasundarīkathā, we are sorry to note that instead of making use of the element of marvel for revealing the different features by which suspense is created and thus winding up the story, we find that the element of marvel is used for creating suspense by complicating the story. The dictim "Kuryāt nirvahaṇedbhutam" should be taken as true for all forms of literature as for Nāṭaka. Soḍḍhala has not followed this dictum and thus failed to give us an ideal romance free from defects.

The plot construction of Udayasundarīkathā is somewhat loose, even though, Soḍḍhala asserts at the end that he has presented a well-connected story. His assertion is only partly true. For example, the story of the parrot in the beginning is expected to run throughout the whole text; but in the middle there is a gap caused by the transformation of

the parrot. The device of a story within a story is not faithfully followed by Soḍḍhala. Indeed he has made use of the device of many sub-stories within the main story narrated by the author and there again some of the sub-stories contained subordinate tales within them. This sort of arrangement has created breaks in the continuous flow of the story.

Certain elements in the plot construction seem to be totally redundant, For example, the incident of the meeting of Vasantasīla with a ploughman and the narration of the latter's account and Kumārakesarī's visit to the house of Pippalaka. Even if these episodes are removed from the story the plot does not suffer. Neither is there any deficiency in the main interest of the story nor is there any deficiency in the delineation of the sentiments Practically, these episodes serve no purpose and hence their inclusion in the work should be considered as defect.

In the construction of the plot of Udayasundarīkathā, Kumārakesarī who becomes the friend of Malayavāhana and Tārāvalī who is the friend of Udayasundarī must be considered as sub-hero and sub-heroine. Their union in the end points out that the union of these two persons is without any love affair whatsoever. In order to give a suitable background to the love between Malayavāhana and Udayasundarī,

Soddhala should have depicted the love between Kumārakesarī and Tārāvalī. He had an opportunity to do so, since Tārāvalī and Kumārakesarī had met in the Nāgaloka at the time when Kumārakesarī was cursed by the female ascetic, but he had not availed himself of that opportunity. Moreover, Kumārakesarī along with Malayavāhana sees Tārāvalī in the hermitage of Viśvabhūti[1]. He had an opportunity at that time to depict the love between the two; but he did not avail himself of it and thus failed to give a suitable parallel to the love affair of the hero and the heroine.

A case may be found out where Soddhala through eversight has allowed discrepancy to creep in the thread of the story. For example, the parrot narrates about his childhood that he was born of old parents, abandoned by his mother and the birds of his own species, that he was taken care of by a Syivan deity Śāradī etc., but all this is obviously false. The parrot is no one else but Kumārakesarī transformed into a parrot, So as the story of Kumārakesarī proves, the narration of the parrot becomes untrue. The parrot is not likely to tell a lie there, before kind, where he is expected to give a true account of his life. It was only proper for him to say that he forgot every thing about his young days. He only remembered that he was shunned by the fellow parrots because he had a crest and for a long time he wandered from

tree to tree in the forest. The account given by the parrot and that given by Kumārakesarī come into conflict and thus a discrepancy has arisen in the plot construction of Udayasundarīkathā.

SENTIMENTS :

As regards the depicting of sentiments, there are certain defects noticeable in the work. First of all, the whole love affair between Udayasundarī and Malayavāhana appears to be very artificial. Even if we accept the fact that love was aroused in the minds of both by looking at the picture-canvass as plausible, still that love is not properly developed and enhanced by the poet in suitable stages. For the proper delineation of Śṛṅgāra, this sort of development is quite necessary, otherwise the ultimate union of the hero and the heroine seems to be devoid of any sentimental value. The artificiality in the main theme has created a serious flaw which prevents us from ranking Udayasundarīkathā as a very great work.

Soddhala sometimes overlooks the fact, that propriety must be observed in the delineation of sentiments. For example, in order to show his skill in depicting the Bibhatsa rasa, Soddhala has made Tārāvalī in the garb of a young Tāpasī to describe the cemetery. The whole situation seems to be very artificial. Tārāvalī had gone through the

harrowing experience of being pursued by a demon. Moreover she was afflicted by the loss of her dear friend Udayasunda Under these circumstances a young girl only fourteen years old, as Tārāvalī was, is not expected to describe the cem tery in all its details. But Soddhala makes her give us very detailed and touching description of the cemetery would have been otherwise very much appreciated, if gi through the mouth of a proper character, in appropria circumstance.

As we have seen before, in the delineation o ments, Soddhala follows the traditional way and gives arti-ficial descriptions. His depiction of a sentiment does not seem to rise from personal experience or deep knowledge of the inner working of human mind. The psychological complications of human mind seem to be ignored by Soddhala. His treatment of human feelings and sentiments is straight-forward and follows the model of previous poets.

Artificiality :

The artificial nature of the work is observed in other features also. For example, in the case of descriptions, the artificiality of Soddhala is quite noticeable. In describing the various aspects of nature, he has followed the models of previous poets. He appears to be original, not

on account of his keen observation of nature, but on account of clever imagination and flights of fancies with which he adorns his descriptions. In great masters like Kālidāsa and others nature is made to sympathise with human feelings and thus we discover an inner bond of affinity of the world spirit and the human spirit; but Soddhala is not able to present nature in that higher aspect. There are rare examples in Udayasundarikathā where we find nature associated with human feelings. On account of the lack of appealing personification Soddhala's descriptions of nature seems to be only artificial.

Characterisation :

In the case of characterisation, we have noted previously how Soddhala has used all his skill in making his hero and heroine ideal characters, But his character, including the hero and the heroine, lack individuality and become only types. They do not present special traits of behaviour consistant with their personality. Almost all the characters of Udayasundarikathā seem to live in a fairy world, and moving in the realm of imagination. They seem to have little connection with the affairs of every day world.

Style :

His attitude towards the reader is sometimes not

praiseworthy. He perhaps considers them to be inferior in intellectual capacity and unable to grasp his clever puns. This attitude makes him explain his puns. In the same way a sentiment is depicted, he himself gives its name. Both these must be considered as defects of his style. Among other defects of style a mention may be made about Soddhala's use of bewildering compounds and out-of-the-way words and formations. The details of this topic are noted in the section on the language of Soddhala.

There are two solitary instances where Soddhala has committed the fault Chandobhanga.[1] In the verse 'Tadimamatādṛg...' which is in Gīti metre, there is one Mātrā less in the fourth pāda, so also in the verse 'Sā jayati...' which is in Āryā metre, there is one Mātrā less in the first pāda.

Obscinity :

Sometimes Soddhala even borders on obscinity in the description of sensuous love. For example, in order to show, how very greatly and city-women were attracted by the handsomeness of Malayavāhana,[2] Soddhala mentions, that the

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1. UK : P. 3.

1. UK : P. 146 - 147.

women were pursuading themselves to hand over their bodies to the king for sexual enjoyment. They were uttering their grief of not being able to unite with the king in the presence of their mothers-in-law. They were tutoring their sisters-in-law to approach the king as messengers and thus they degraded themselves. He also says that the city women became intimately friendly towards each other on account of the same character and the same infatuation, and as co-wives shared the same sensuous love for the king. The mother-in-law with the daughter-in-law shared the same sensuous love, so also the sisters-in-law. This sort of description of the city women may not be considered as appealing to good taste.

HISTORICAL DATA :

The significance of the historical data available in the Udayasundarikatha is discussed in connection with the life of Soddhala. As compared with the authors of the time, Soḍḍhala seems to presses historical sense to a considerable extent. The historical references given by Soḍḍhala are corroborated by the facts available from other sources. His information about the Valabhī dynasty, and the cālukyas and Śilāharas fairly approximate to the information available from the copper-plate-grants and inscriptions. Some of the inscriptions are given in Appendix II. Still we are not to view the Udayasundarīkathā, as a source of historical

information. It is primarily a literary romance and the historical references serve only a subordinate purpose in the scheme of the work.

In connection with the story of Udayasundarīkathā, I have noted a point hitereto not discussed in Indian history, and on which Soḍḍhala throws new light. It refers to the friendship of Lāṭakings and Koṅkaṇa kings in the eleventh century A. D. The influence of this friendship must have been felt in the social and cultural life of both these regions. The cultural friendship of these two regions made it possible for Soḍḍhala to receive honours from the kings of both the regions and received the patronage of both the courts.

In describing his life Soḍḍhala has given incidentlly some important facts about the history of Kāyasthas. Soḍḍhala's information about Vāllabha Kayasthas is most important. I have devoted a separate chapter to the history of Kāyasthas and their contribution to literature. Soḍḍhala traces his descent from Kalāditya whom he praises as an incarnation of a Gaṇa, called Kāyastha. This Kaladitya left behind him an extensive family of Kāyastha Kṣatriya caste. One of the branches of that caste was Vāllabha, belonging to Valabhī.

Invasion of Sōmanātha :

Soḍḍhala lived at a time when great historical events

took place in the Gujarat region. Sometimes Gujarat was shorn by internal fights of its kings. Sometimes confederacy of Gujarat kings fought with Bhoja, the king of Mālwā, and the most important of all was that atleast some of the invasions of Mahmud of Gazni took place during the life time of Soḍḍhala. Rawlinson points out that in 1024-5 Mahmud carried out his last and most remarkable raid, directed against the rich temple of Somanātha standing on the sea - coast of Kathiawad.[1] The same view can be corroborated by the clear remarks of Shri Jote. He mentions that Mahmud arrived at Somanātha on Thursday, the 30th of January 1025 A. D.[2] Thus Soḍḍhala was the contemporary of this historical event as it can be shown by the date of the composition of his work. He has referred to Somanātha, but he does not give us the slightest mention about the invasion of Mahmud. Whether the poet was totally unaware of this historical event or whether he purposely kept silence about the mortifying fact remains a moot point.

In this respect he might have behaved in the same way as other Hindu writers. Commissariat says, "The most

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1. Rawlinson : A concise history of the Indian people. P.86.
2. Jote R. B. : Gujarātno Sāmskṛtika Itihāsa, P. 78. Islāma Yuga, Khaṇḍa I, Part 1-2.

memorable event of Bhīma's time (1022-64 A. D.) viz., the sack of Somanātha is passed over in sullen silence by the Hindoo chroniclers, a silence which finds a parallel in the complete absence of any reference to the name of the invasion of Alexander the great either in Sanskrit or in Buddhistic books."

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA :

Geographical data available in Udayasundarikathā though interesting are not very scientific and so possess very little importance. The information about the world given by Soḍḍhala is mostly taken from legendary accounts of the Purāṇa literature; and as all the information does not tally with facts, we cannot lay any stress on the scientific authority. In this respect, we may clearly infer that Soḍḍhala was not a man who had travelled widely. He was intimately acquainted only with the regions of North Koṅkaṇa and South Gujarat. There are references to these two regions in the text and thus we can show traces of his intimate and personal knowledge of these two regions; but Soḍḍhala seems to be quite ignorant about the Southern part of Koṅkaṇa or the Northern part of Gujarat. Even though he refers to

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1. Commissariat M. S. : A History of Gujarāt, Vol. I, Preface, LVII

several places of North Gujarat and Saurāṣtra, it is doubtful whether he had personally visited those places.

Soḍḍhala knew different regions of India. He mentions[1] the countries, Pāṇḍya, Kuntala, Āndhra, Koṅkana, Mahārāṣtra, Lāṭa, Karṇāṭaka, Tilinga, Kerala, Cola, Abhīra, Kāñcī, Murala, Siṁhala etc. So also he mentions the rivers, Tamraparṇi, Kāverī and Godāvarī. Most of the regions mentioned by Soḍḍhala belong to the central and the southern part of India. But it is doubtful whether he visited all these regions and had direct knowledge about them.

Most of the geographical descriptions are conventional and show only Soḍḍhala's book-knowledge of the literature available at the time.

His weakness in geography has created a baneful effect on his work. Udayasundarīkathā is all pervaded with an atmosphere far away from the realities of the world at the time of Soḍḍhala. The descriptions of cities, rivers and mountains only artificial and conventional and they do not show individuality of their own. All this is clearly due to the fact that Soḍḍhala was not a widely travelled man and consequently without intimate knowledge of the places which

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1. UK : PP. 121 - 122.

he intended to describe. It is therefore not possible to compare Soddhala with great marters like Kālidāsa and others whose knowledge of the different parts of India was personal and intimate.

Soddhala's Native Place :

The personal account of the author as shown before does not give us the exact location of the important places connected with the composition of Udayasundarīkathā. Soddhala does not give the name of his native place where he was born and where he retired for the composition of the work. He only refers to it as his native place where he could get all facilities for the composition of a great work.[1]

The text refers to the fact that Soddhala was the hereditory Dhruvaprabhu of the districts of Sikkarahāra, Vahirihāra and Annāpallī of Lāṭadeśa.[2]

As regards the indentification of these places, even though certain evidence is not available, we can make plausible guesses. The district Vahirihāra may be indentified with Bahirika viṣaya referred to in the copper-plate grant of Śryāśraya Śilāditya.[3] Dr. Hariprasad Shāstrī suggests that Bahirikahara may be indentified with the

1. UK : P. 13.
2. UK : P. 152.
3. Sastri Hariprasad: Maitraka Kalina Gujarat, I, P. 323.

village Beharā situated between the rivers Purnā and Ambikā in Navsārī Tālukā. Dwivedi suggests that Bahirika may be identified with Vahara or Vasam in the Navsārī Tālukā of the Surat District.[1] Sikkerhara may be identified with Siker, a village near Bardoli of the Surat District. Ammāpallī may be identified with Anāval, a village in the Mahuwā Taluka of the Surat District, on the analogy of Parnapallī being identified with Panolī, Suryapallī being identified with Surālī[2] and Āśāpallī being identified with Āsaval.[3]

All these places namely Bahira (Vasar or Behera), Siker and Anaval are situated in the Surat District of South Gujarat. So the inference that Soddhala's native place belonged to the region between the rivers Mindholā and Ambikā seems to be plausible. The poet must have been the Dhruvaprabhu of this region.

Location of the Shrine of Sarasvatī :

The other point which remains unanswered is the location of the temple of Sarasvatī on the walls of which Soddhala has written the eulogy of former poets. In the

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1. Dwivedi Manibhāi : Purātana Daksina Gujarāt, P. 204.
2. Śāstrī Hariprasāda : Maitraka Kalīna Gujarat, I, PP. 203-204.
3. Jote R. B. : Gujaratano Sāmskrtika Itihāsa, P. 84.

text it is said that the shrine was originally established by Bhārgava i.e. Paraśurāma in a secluded forest. This shrine of Sarasvatī must have been somewhat famous in South Gujarat and North Koṅkaṇa during the times of Soḍḍhala, but where the shrine of Sarasvatī was remains a problem, because it cannot be identified with certainty with any of the temple-remains available at present. We can only infer that this temple of Sarasvatī might be somewhere near Śūrpāraka, modern Sopārā; since Vatsarāja informs Mummuṇirāja about the Praśasti after he came to the court of the Koṅkaṇa king from Śūrpāraka.[1] At least it can be said that the temple of Saraṣvatī might be on the route from Brgukaccha to Sthānaka i.e. Thānā via. Śūrpāraka, because this was the route which was followed by Vatsarāja.

His religion :

As regards the religious views of Soḍḍhala, we may note that he seems to be a devotee of Śiva. In the beginning and at the end of his work he bows down to Śaṅkara in special stanzas. He calls him his favourite deity. Even in the beginning of his Praśasti, he has a eulogistic stanza dedicated to Śaṅkara. Moreover, he referred to Somanātha and Hāṭakeśvara in terms full of devotion. He considers that

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1. UK : P. 156.

Śaṅkara is a god who fulfils desires. As the spouse of Śaṅkara he refers to Gaurī and in the story he describes a temple of Caṇḍī and gives eulogistic stanzas in honour of that Goddess. All this shows that he was a Śaiva in his religious inclinations.

Soḍḍhala's Life :

Even though Soḍḍhala remained at the courts of the Lāta king Vatsarāja and the three royal brothers of Koṅkaṇa kings, he does not seem to have got himself involved in the political intrigues of the court. There is not even an indirect reference to show that he took part in the political intrigues of the time. His knowledge of men and matters is obtained from books of literature and Sastras. It seems that he has not seen the world as an adventurer, as Bāṇa had done in his young days. Soḍḍhala must have spent the life of a Paṇḍita away from the general public, the secluded life of a learned man.

The list of his friends includes Jain Sūris, like Caṅdanācārya, Vijayasiṁhācārya, Mahākīrti and Indra the author of a Campū namely Ratnamañjarī. All these men seem to be somewhat eminent and learned. His friendship with these people proves that he moved in an elite society; but the society is not much helpful to widen the writers' horizon

of the worldly experience.

The effect of this sort of life is seen in his work also. We find that his characterisation is all flat and conventional. There is no individuality which differentiates one person from the other. The delineation of sentiments and feelings which he gives does not throb with life emanating from similar personal experience.

Two Soddhalas :

The poet Soddhala is not to be confused with another Soddhala who was a physician. This latter Soddhala lived in the 12th Cent. A. D. He was a Raikvāla Brāhmana and his works Gunasamgraha and Gadanigraha are considered to be of exceptional merit.[1] He belonged to Vatsagotra. The Raikvala Brāhmanas generally reside in Gujarat. It is almost certain that he was a Gujarati. He seems to be a famous and learned physician and his works take a complete survey of all the medical literature available at the time. This physician is referred to as Soddhala[2] or Śoddhala.[3]

Kaviprasasti :

Soddhala has given a kaviprasasti, in which he has

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1. Munshi K. M. : Gujarat and its literature, P. 118.
2. Sastri Durgasankar : Aitihasika Samsodhana, P.501.
3. Sandesa (Gujarati Daily) Ahmedabad, dated, 3-4-61.

mentioned poets in the order of Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Guṇādhya (1st A. D.), Bhartṛmentha (430 A. D.), Kālidāsa (450 A. D.), Bāṇa (630 A.D.), Bhavabhūti (720 A. D.), Vākpatirāja (720 A. D.), Abhinanda (905 A. D.), and Yāyāvara (880 - 920 A.D.). Among other poets, he has mentioned Kumāradāsa and Bhāsa. The order of the principal list shows that Soḍḍhala has broadly followed the chronological order, as is shown by their approximate dates. Soḍḍhala does not arrange them according to their poetic excellence.

Estimate of Soḍḍhala :

Soḍḍhala is referred to as being honoured by Cchittarāja as Kavipradīpa,[1] as the Koṅkaṇa king was pleased with his brilliant stanzas. In the Udayasundarīkathā also, we find that his stanzas are purposeful, apt and frequently give some poetic idea. After hearing Udayasundarīkathā, Tālaka addressed him as Kavipradīpa,[2] thus Soḍḍhala fully justifies his title Kavipradīpa by means of his brilliant stanzas in the Udayasundarīkathā.

Soḍḍhala has no doubt worthily tried to emulate Bāṇa in all his good points, yet we have to accept the view of

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1. UK : P. 152.
2. UK : P. 150.

Paṇḍita Krishṇamācārya[1] with some reservations. In this chapter, we have pointed out certain defects in Soḍḍhala's composition. The work of Soḍḍhala lacks in some of the charms which we find in Bāṇa's Kādambarī and Harṣacarita. However, he represents the literary activities of the Lāṭa-deśa during this period when literary history of Gujarat remained dim, till it is lighted up by Hemacandrācārya. (1089 - 1173 A.D.) We can be proud of Soḍḍhala, both as a story-teller and a poet, though not of the first rank, still worthy of an honourable position in the line of poets in which he places himself in the Praśasti.

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1. UK : Introduction.