

# Śvetāmbara Canons in the Digambara Tradition

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0. No one would deny the importance of *anekāntavāda* or the doctrine of positive multifoldness in Jain philosophy. This doctrine teaches us to observe a thing from many points of view. Jain literature can also be discussed from many sides. In other words, the Jain literature itself has an *anekānta* aspect. The Jain philosopher Samantabhadra says in his *Svayambhūstotra* that according to the teaching of Mahāvīra the doctrine of *anekānta* is also of an *anekānta* character when it is observed through *pramāṇa* and *naya*.<sup>1</sup> In this paper I shall point out an example of such a multipoint discussion on Jain canons.

1. As is well known, the two main Jain sects, Digambara and Śvetāmbara, have different attitudes toward the traditional sacred texts. All the subjects in the Śvetāmbara accept the authority of Prakrit texts called *āgamas*, although the number and contents of the *āgamas* are not always the same because of the different opinions among the sects. The *āgamas* are divided into three groups of works, known as *pūrva*, *aṅga* and *aṅgabāhya*. The last one has five subdivisions: *upāṅga*, *chedasūtra*, *mūlasūtra*, *prakīrṇasūtra* and *cūlikāsūtra*. On the other hand, Digambaras today are generally said to deny the authority of the Śvetāmbara canons. It is unknown, however, who is the first Digambara philosopher that aired the opinion that the Śvetāmbara canons are not authentic. Moreover, some Digambara texts contain detailed information on the Śvetāmbara *āgamas* when they deal with *śruta* or scripture as one of five kinds of knowledge. It would be interesting to examine Digambaras' view of *āgamas* and compare it with that held by Śvetāmbaras.

2. Some Digambaras value the authenticity of the *Ṣaḍkhaṇḍa-āgama* and commentaries on it. According to them the teaching of Lord Mahāvīra

is partially preserved in this recently published literature.<sup>2</sup> Others maintain that the *āgama* tradition or precious teaching of Mahāvīra completely vanished by the time 683 years after his nirvāṇa.<sup>3</sup> Even after that time, however, Digambaras seem to have preserved some portions of the *āgamas* in a different way.

Both traditions agree that the twelfth *aṅga*, *Dṛṣṭivāda*, has been long extinct. Even so, they have some information on this text. We shall see how the text is described in the traditions of the Digambara and Śvetāmbara schools to find similarity as well as dissimilarity between their descriptions.

3. Let us begin our discussion with Umāsvāti's *Tattvārthasūtra* which is regarded as an authentic literature by both schools.<sup>4</sup> In the twentieth sūtra of chapter I, the author Umāsvāti refers to *śruta* or an authentic scripture which is one of five varieties of valid knowledge or *pramāṇa*, and he explains that *śruta* can be categorized into three groups and that each of them has two, many and twelve subdivisions.<sup>5</sup>

3.1. Pūjyapāda in the sixth century<sup>6</sup> is the first Digambara scholar to write a commentary on the *Tattvārthasūtra*. Commenting on TS I-20, he explains as follows:<sup>7</sup>

"The word 'division' (*bheda*) should be construed with each of the words 'two subdivisions', 'many subdivisions' and 'twelve

<sup>2</sup>On the publication of this text, see Dundas [2002: 63-65].

<sup>3</sup>Dixit [1971: 79].

<sup>4</sup>The Śvetāmbara school calls this text *Tattvārthadhigama sūtra*. In this paper I will use the title given by the Digambara school.

<sup>5</sup>TS I, 20: *śrutam matipūrvaṃ dvyānekadvādaśa-bhedam*.

<sup>6</sup>We cannot decide his date with certainty. But it can be said that he must be junior to Samantabhadra and senior to Akalaṅka.

<sup>7</sup>See *Sarvārthasiddhi* §§210-11.

<sup>1</sup>*Svayambhūstotra* 103ab: *anekānto 'py anekāntaḥ pramāṇanayasādhanāḥ*.

subdivisions'. First, by 'two subdivisions' are meant the outside and inside of *aṅga*. The outside of *aṅga* has many divisions including *Daśavaikālika*, *Uttarādhyayana*. The inside of *aṅga* has twelve subdivisions: 1) *Ācāra*, 2) *Sūtrakṛta*, 3) *Sthāna*, 4) *Samavāya*, 5) *Vyākhyāprajñapti*, 6) *Jñāīrdharmakathā*, 7) *Ūpāsakadhyayana*, 8) *Antakṛddaśa*, 9) *Anutaraupapādikadaśa*, 10) *Praśnavyākaraṇa*, 11) *Vipākasūtra* and 12) *Drṣṭivāda*. *Drṣṭivāda* comprises five sections: i) *parikrama*, ii) *sūtra*, iii) *prathamānuvya*, iv) *pūrvagata* and v) *cūlikā*. Of these sections *pūrvahas* fourteen subsections: i) *utpādapūrvā*, ii) *agrāyaṇī* iii) *vīryānupravāda*, iv) *astināstipravāda*, v) *jñānapravāda*, vi) *satyappravāda*, vii) *ātmapravāda*, viii) *karmappravāda*, ix) *pratyākhyānanāmādheya*, x) *vidyānupravāda*, xi) *kalyāṇanāmādheya*, xii) *prāṇāvāya*, xiii) *kriyāviśāla* and xiv) *lokabindusāra*.

This "scripture" is divided into three groups, which are respectively two-, many- and twelve-membered. Why are there such divisions? Because of different preachers. There are three kinds of preachers: omniscient saviors, perfect masters of scripture and "remote" ones. Of them the omniscient highest saints, possessed of the highest knowledge, preached *āgama*. The *āgama* is authoritative because the saints preached it after having perceived things directly and they had destroyed all the faults. The perfect masters are the leaders of the church and they are direct disciples of the saviors and possessed of special cognitive abilities. Depending upon their memory, the leaders wrote books which presupposed the *aṅga*. The books are authentic because the *aṅga* is authentic. The "remote" teachers wrote books such as *Daśavaikārika* for the benefit of their disciples who could not enjoy longevity and had the weakness of mentality and vital power due to the defect of aging."

First let us compare the titles of the inside of *aṅga* listed here with those of the inside of *aṅga* accepted by the Śvetāmbara tradition.<sup>8</sup> All the titles in both traditions are with little difference:

<sup>8</sup>On the titles of the inside of *aṅga* given by the Śvetāmbara school, see Dundas [2001: 73-74].

the sixth in the Digambara tradition begins with *Jñāīr-* while in the Śvetāmbara it begins with *Jñāī-*; and the seventh ends in *-dhyayana* in the former while it ends in *-daśāh* in the latter. A glance at this will clearly show that the order of the twelve titles in the two traditions are quite the same.

Pūjyapāda mentions two titles among the outside of *aṅga*: *Daśavaikālika* and *Uttarādhyayana*. In the Śvetāmbara tradition these two comprise a group of sacred literatures named *mūla* or 'root' and are regarded as being among the oldest texts.<sup>9</sup>

Now let us look at the contents of the *Drṣṭivāda* which is admitted by both the traditions to be extinct. The titles of the five sections mentioned by Pūjyapāda are almost the same as those handed down in the Śvetāmbara tradition.<sup>10</sup> The titles of the subsections of the fourth section, i.e., *pūrvā*, also are the same in the two traditions. The only difference is, according to Pūjyapāda, that the ninth and eleventh subsections are respectively called *Pratyākhyān-nāmādheya* and *Kalyāṇanāmādheya* in the Digambara tradition, while in the Śvetāmbara tradition the former has the title *-pravāda* and the latter is called *Vaṅjha*.

In the *Sarvārthasiddhi*, Pūjyapāda seems to quote from Śvetāmbara canons to fortify his arguments. The original source cannot be *aṅga* itself but must be a scripture accepted as authentic by Śvetāmbaras.

Taking all these things into consideration, thus, we may safely say that Pūjyapāda does not deny the Śvetāmbara canons, although he does not assess their values.

**3.2.** Akalaṅka, another Digambara philosopher in the eighth century,<sup>11</sup> gives more detailed information on *āgamas*. In *Tattvārthavārtika* I-20-xii he says:<sup>12</sup>

"The inside *aṅga* consists of twelve kinds of texts, such as *Ācārā*. They are written by the leaders of the church, who are possessed of special cognitive abilities, depending upon their memory.

<sup>9</sup>Dixit [1971: 8].

<sup>10</sup>See Kapadia [2000: 6-7].

<sup>11</sup>Akalaṅka must have lived in the eighth century. On his date, see Dundas [2001: 49].

<sup>12</sup>See *Tattvārthavārtika*, pp. 72-3.

The leaders have pure minds cleansed with the words of the Omniscient, compared to the water of the Gaṅga flowing from the Himalaya. They, being possessed of special cognitive abilities, wrote twelve books beginning with *Ācāra* depending upon their memory. The books are called the "Inside *aṅga*." Their titles are: 1) *Ācāra*, 2) *Sūtrakṛta*, 3) *Sthāna*, 4) *Samavāya*, 5) *Vyākhyāprajñapti*, 6) *Jñāṭḍharmakathā*, 7) *Ūpāsakadhyayana*, 8) *Antakṛddasā*, 9) *Anuttaraupapādikadaśā*, 10) *Praśnavyākaraṇa*, 11) *Vipākasūtra* and 12) *Drṣṭivāda*. In *Ācāra*, different types of behavior, i.e., eight kinds of *Śuddhi*, five of *Samiti* and three of *Gupti* are described. . . . The twelfth *aṅga* is *Drṣṭivāda*: . . . In this book, the explanation of 363 (180+84+67+32) kinds of views and the refutation of them are made. This *Drṣṭivāda* is divided into five sections: *parikarma*, *sūtra*, *prathamānuyoga*, *pūrvagata* and *cūlikā*. Of them, *pūrvā* has fourteen subsections."

Some of the titles in the following list are changed:

- i) *utpādapūrvā*, ii) *agrāyaṇa*,
- iii) *vīryapravāda*, iv) *astināstipravāda*,
- v) *jñānapravāda*, vi) *satyapravāda*,
- vii) *ātmpravāda*, viii) *karmpravāda*,
- ix) *pratyākhyānanāmadheya*, x) *vidyānuvāda*,
- xi) *kalyāṇanāmadheya*, xii) *prāṇāvāya*,
- xiii) *kriyāviśāla* and xiv) *lokabindusāra*.

The author Akalaṅka defines the Outside *aṅga* as follows:<sup>13</sup>

"The "remote" teachers who had been disciples or intermediate disciples and who gained the understanding of the reality of things composed compendia of *aṅgas*, for the sake of those who could not enjoy longevity and had deficient powers due to the defect of aging. The compendia are called the Outside *aṅga*. They are of many varieties: *Uttarādhyayana* and others."

In addition he quotes some passages from the *Āvaśyaniryukti* to bear out his views. For example, in his commentary on TS I-19, where he discusses *prāpyakāritva* of sensory organs, he

quotes the following verse as an evidence from *āgama* to argue for the *aprāprakāritva* of visual organs and mind:

*puṭṭhaṃ sunedi saddaṃ apuṭṭhaṃ puṇa pas-  
sade rūpaṃ / gaṃdhaṃ rasaṃ ca phāsaṃ  
baddhaṃ puṭṭhaṃ vijāṇādi //*

This is just the fifth *gāthā* of the *Āvaśyaniryukti*. It is clear that Akalaṅka does not quote the verse to refute what is said there but that he quotes it as the authority. We must note, however, that he does not mention this text when he enumerates the titles of the Inside *āgamas*. This shows that, although even in the Śvetāmbara tradition the *Āvaśyaniryukti* is not regarded as an *āgama* literature, it occupies a rather important position. We also know its importance from the fact that it has been published several times in India.

3.3. As we have seen above, unlike Akalaṅka, Vidyānandin, who belongs to the ninth century, does not refer to the titles and contents of the *āgamas* in his commentary on TS I 20, on which Pūjyapāda and Akalaṅka wrote commentaries. TS I 20 is the first *sūtra* that deals with *śruta* or *āgama* exclusively. It is likely, therefore, that Vidyānandin had no information on the Śvetāmbara canons. But this does not necessarily mean that by the time of Vidyānandin, i.e., by the ninth century, the Digambara tradition had lacked the knowledge about the canons.

4. Nemicandra, a Digambara philosopher in the tenth century, has a good knowledge of the Śvetāmbara canons. In his *Gomattasāra Jīvaṅgaṇḍa*, Nemicandra refers to eleven titles of *aṅgas*, as Pūjyapāda and Akalaṅka do, and enumerates fourteen *aṅgabāhyas* including *Daśavaikālika*, *Uttarādhyayana*.<sup>14</sup> What is more, he not only mentions the titles of the *āgamas* but also refers to the number of the *pādas* which are contained in the canons. With reference to the *Ācāraṅga*, for example, he says that it consists of eighteen thousand *pādas*.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, Nemicandra seems to bend his eyes even on the twelfth *aṅga*, *Drṣṭivāda*, when mentioning five kinds of *Parikarma*, one *Sūtra*,

<sup>14</sup> *Gomattasāra, jīva ṅgaṇḍa*, vv. 355-356 (pp. 202-203).

<sup>15</sup> *Gomattasāra, jīva ṅgaṇḍa*, v. 358 (p. 203).

<sup>13</sup> *Tattvārthavartika*, p. 78.

one *Prathamānuṃyoga*, *Pūrvā* and five *Cūlikās*.<sup>16</sup> In this connection it is also interesting to note that the five kinds of *Parikarma* consists of *Candraprajñāpti*, *Sūryaprajñāpti*, *Jambūdvīpaprajñāpti*, *Dvīpasamudraprajñāpti* and *Vyākhyaprajñāpti*.<sup>17</sup> We come across these titles in the list of the Śvetāmbara *Upāṅga*. As mentioned above, *Dr̥ṣṭivāda* in which these five texts are included is regarded as extinct by both the traditions. Nemicandra may intend to deny the authenticity of *Upāṅgas*, especially that of the ones which deal with Jaina cosmology.<sup>18</sup>

What is common among these Digambara authors is that they do not emphatically deny the authority of the canons which they enumerate with titles.

5. It is certain that the Śvetāmbara philosophers themselves mention the titles of their own canons. Umāsvāti, for example, refers to the names of the *aṅgas* along with *Uttarādhyāyana*, *Daśavaikārikā*, *R̥ṣibhāsitain* his autocommentary on TS I-20.<sup>19</sup>

More detailed information on the Śvetāmbara canons can be found in the *Nandīsūtra*<sup>20</sup> which consists a part of the canons itself. Naturally *Nandī* distinguishes and enumerates the eleven inside *aṅgas*. The titles of the inside *aṅgas*, though they are mentioned not in Sanskrit but in Prakrit, go with those enumerated by the Digambara philosophers, as we have seen above.

## 6. Concluding remarks

In my opinion, it is difficult to decide who is the first Digambara philosopher to deny the authority of the Śvetāmbara canons. The late Dr. K. K. Dixit is of the opinion that by the seventh or eighth century the Digambaras began to neglect the Śvetāmbara canons. However, as we have seen above, the Digambara philosopher Akalaṅka of the eighth century referred to the

Śvetāmbara *āgamas*. He knows not only the titles of them but also their contents. Moreover he quotes some passages from the *Āvaśyaniryukti* to add authority to his opinion.

Given all this, we may say that Akalaṅka accepts the authority of the Śvetāmbara canons, at least partially and not in whole. And it is also likely that he had some canons preserved in the form of manuscripts and not within the oral tradition. In his works he does not accept the validity of the Śvetāmbara canons. But it is also clear that he does not deny the validity and that sometimes he quotes passages to bear out his opinion. Thus not all the Digambaras by his time denied the authenticity of the Śvetāmbara canons.

From the textual evidence we know that there is a long history of fierce debates on various subjects between the two traditions. The topics of *kevalibhukti* and *strīnirvaṇa* are, for example, controversial among the Jains. The Śvetāmbaras admit the appetite of *kevalin* and the salvation of women, while the Digambaras deny them. Naturally the former criticizes the latter and vice versa. This does not mean, however, that both traditions oppose to each other on each and every point. On the contrary, there are quite a few topics on which they agree with each other. To be sure, the two traditions today have different opinions on the issue of whether the *āgamas* handed down by the Śvetāmbaras are authentic or not. But, as we have seen above, at least by the time of Akalaṅka, the Digambaras also accepted the authenticity of the canons though they did not say so explicitly. This attitude may have continued by the time of Nemicandra.

In order to fully understand how the Digambaras viewed the Śvetāmbara canons, we must study the *Ṣaḍkaṇḍāgama* and commentaries on them. Even with the research on them the tentative conclusion which we have arrived at in this paper will not need amendment.

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<sup>16</sup> *Gommatasāra, jīva kaṇḍa*, vv. 361-362 (p. 204).

<sup>17</sup> *Gommatasāra, jīva kaṇḍa*, v. 361(p. 204).

<sup>18</sup> It must be noted here that cosmology is one of the most controversial topics between the two schools. Different readings of the text of TS, chapters 3 and 4, which discuss Jaina cosmology, show a great discrepancy between the cosmologies of the Śvetāmbara and Digambara traditions.

<sup>19</sup> See TS I-20 (p. 20).

<sup>20</sup> On the classification of the *aṅga*, see sūtras 79-81. On the titles of the *aṅgas*, see sūtras 71-72.

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