

INTRODUCTION TO SATKHANDAGAMA

The only surviving pieces of the original Jain Canon of twelve Angas, **Dhavala Jai-** are, according to Digambara tradition, preserved in what are **dhavala and** popularly known as **Dhavala, Jaidhavala and Mahadhavala Mahadhavala** Manuscripts of these were preserved only at the Jain pontifical seat of Mudbidri in South Kanara. It is only during the last twenty years that copies of the first two have become available, while the last still remains inaccessible.

The story of the composition of Sathkandagama is told in the introductory part of the Dhavala which is the commentary. The teachings of **How Shatkhanda-** Lord Mahavira were arranged into Twelve Angas by his **gama was reduced** pupil Indrahuti Gautama, and they were handed down from preceptor to pupil by word of mouth till gradually they fell into oblivion. Only fractions of them were known to Dharasena who practised penances in the Chandra Gupha of Girinagara in the country of Saurashtra (Modern Kathiawar). He felt the necessity of preserving the knowledge and so he called two sages who afterwards became famous as Puspadanta and Bhutabali, and taught to them portions of the fifth Anga Viahapannatti and of the twelfth Anga Ditthivada. these were subsequently reduced to writing in sutra form by the two eminent pupils. Puspandanta composed the first 177 Sutras which are all embodied in the present edition of **Satprarupana**, and his colleague Bhutabali wrote the rest, the total being 6000 Sutras.

As regards the time of this composition we are told definitely that **Date of Shat-** Dharasena lived after Loharya the 28th in succession after **khandagama** Mahavira, but how long afterwards is left uncertain. Most of the succession lists available show that the time that elapsed from the Nirvana of Mahavira up to Laharya was 683 years. But the **Prakrit Pattavali** of Nandi Sangha carries on the list of succession from Loharya to five more Acharyas ,the last three of which are Dharasena, Puspadanta and Bhutabali, and makes them all fall within the 683 years after Vira Nirvana. According to this account Dharasena succeeded his predecessor Maghanadi 614 years after Vira Nirvana. Though this account stands by itself in opposition to the unanimous account given in the Dhavala commentary and many other works, it is in a way supported by an old list **Brihad-tippanilka** which attributes a work by name **Joni pahuda** to Dharasena and assigns it to 600 years after Vira Nirvana. The reliability of

this **tippana** has been unquestioned so far and the statement is corroborated by the fact that in the Dhavala itself is found a reference to **Jonipahuda** as a work on **Mantra** Shastra and with the knowledge of this subject Dharasena has also been associated. There is, thus, a strong case for identifying our Dharasena with the author of the Jonipahuda and then the combined evidence of the Brihat tippana and the Prakrit Pattavali would make the composition of Satkhandagama fall between 614 and 683 years after Vira Nirvana. i.e. between the 1st and 2nd centuries of the Christian Era.

This inference about the period of the composition of Sathandagama is corroborated by the account of its commentaries as given by **Commentaries of** Indranandi in his Srutavatara which work I have **Shatkhand agama-** now come to regard as authentically preserving old traditions. According to Indranandi, Six commentaries were written on Sathkhandagama in succession, the last being the Dhavala. The first of these commentaries was **Parikarma** written by **Kundakunda**. Reference to Parikarma are many and various in the Dhavala itself, and a careful examination of them has led me to believe that it was really a commentary by Kundakunda on this work. The time of Kundakunda is approximately the 2nd century A.D. and so the Shatkhandagama has to be assigned to a period before that. Other commentators mentioned by Indranandi are **Shamakunda**, **Tumbulura**, **Samantabhadra**, and **Bappadeva**, before we come to Virasena the author of Dhavala, and we would not be far wrong in separating them each in succession by about a century, and assign them to 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th century respectively. None of these commentaries have so far been discovered, but traces of most of them may be found in the existing literature.

As regards the time of the commentary Dhavala there is no **Dhaval, its Date** uncertainty. Its author Virasena has recorded many **& author.** astronomical details of the time of his composition in the ending verses. But unfortunately the available text of those verses is very corrupt. After a careful scrutiny of the text and its contents, however, I have been able to interpret it correctly, and it yields the result that the Dhavala was completed by Virasena on the 13th day of the bright fortnight of Karttika in the year 738 of the Saka era, when Jagattunga (i.e. Govinda III of the Rashtrakuta dynasty) had abandoned the throne and Boddana Raya (probably Amoghavarsha I) was ruling. I have worked out the astronomical details and found them correct, and the date corresponds, according to Swami Kannu Pillai's Indian Ephemeris, to the 8th October, 816 A. D., Wednesday morning.

In the ending verses of the Jayadhavala we are told that Virasena's pupil Jinasena completed that commentary in Saka 759. The Volume of 60 thousand slokas, thus, took 21 years to compose, which comes roughly to 3000 verses per year. If we take this as the average speed at which Virasena wrote, it gives us the period between 792 and 823 A.D. for the vigorous literary activity of Virasena alone, which produced the complete Dhavala equal to 72 thousand slokas, and the first one-third of the Jayadahavala i.e. equal to 20 thousand slokas. This single man, thus, accomplished the stupendous and extraordinary task of writing philosophical prose equal to 92 thousand slokas in the course of 31 years, and he was succeeded by an equally gigantic writer Jinasena, his pupil, who wrote the 40 thousand slokas of the Jayadhavala, the beautiful little poem Parsvabhyudaya and the magnificent Sanskrit Adipurana, before he died. What a bewildering amount of literary effusion ?

The various mentions found in the Dhavala reveal to us that there was a good deal of manuscript material before Virasena, and he. **Literature before Virasena** utilised it very judiciously and cautiously. He had to deal with various recensions of the Sutras which did not always agree in their statements. Virasena satisfied himself by giving their alternative views, leaving the question of right and wrong between them to those who might know better than himself. He also had to deal with opposite opinions of earlier commentators and teachers, and here he boldly criticizes their views in offering his own explanation. On certain points he mentions two different schools of thought which he calls the **Northern** and the **Southern**. At present I am examining these views a bit more closely. They may ultimately turn out to be the Svetambara and Digambara schools. Works mentioned and quoted from are (1) Santa-kamma Pahuda, (2) Kasaya Pahuda, (3) Sammaisutta, (4) Tiloya-Pannatti Sutta, (5) Pancatthi Pahuda (6) Tattvartha Sutra of Griddhapinchha, (7) Acaranga, (8) Sarasamgraha of Pujayapada, (9) Tattvartha Bhasya of Akalanka, (10) Jivasamasa (11) Chhedasutra (12) Kammavavada and (13) Dasakarani Samgraha, while authors mentioned without the name of their works are Arya-mankshu, Nagahasti, Prabhachandra and others.

Besides these, there are numerous quotations both prose and verse without the mention of their source. In the Satprarupana alone there are 216 such verses of which I have been able to trace many in the Acaranga, Brihatkalpa Sutra, Dasvaikalika Sutra Sthanaga tika, Anuyogadvara, and Avasyaka Nirukti of the svetambara canon, besides quite a large number of

them in the Digambara literature. These mentions give us an insight into the comparative and critical faculty as well as the coordinating power of Virasena.

The Satkhandagama, was reduced to writing, as told before, just at the time when the whole Jain Canon was on the point of being forgotten. **Relation with the Canon, and the Six Khandas** In this connection it is important to note that according to the Digambara tradition all the twelve Angas have been lost except these portions of the last of them i.e. Dittihvaya and a bit of the fifth Anga. According to the Svetambaras, on the other hand, the first eleven are preserved though in a mutilated form, while the Dittihvaya is totally lost. Thus, to a certain extent, the two traditions mutually complement each other.

A look at the tables showing the connection of the present work with the original canon will convey some idea of the extraordinary extent of the **Purvas** in particular and of the whole canon in general. The section dealing with the twenty four subjects Kriti, Vedana and others was called in the canon **Mahakamma –Payadi Pahuda**. The same twenty four subjects have been dealt with in the present work which was called Santa Kamma-Pahuda, but which, owing to its sub six sub-divisions acquired the bandy title of **Shatkhandagama**. Its six sub-divisions are **Jivatthana Khudda Bandha, Bandha-Samitta-Vichaya, Vedana, Vaggana and Mahabandha**.

The whole work deals with the Karma philosophy, the first three **Subject matter of the present work.** divisions from the point of view of the soul which is the **of** agent of the bondage, and the last three from the point of view of the objective karmas, their nature and extent. The portion now published is the first part of the **Jivatthana** and it deals with the quest of the soul qualities and the stages of spiritual advancement through some expressed characteristics such as conditions of existence, senses, bodies, vibratory activities and the like. I propose to deal with the subject in some detail in the next volume when Satprarupana will be completed.

The present work consists of the original Sutras, the commentary **Language** of Virasena called Dhavala and the various quotations given by the commentator from the writings of his predecessors. The language of the Sutras is Prakrit and so also of the most of the quoted Gathas. The prose of Virasena is Prakrit alternating with Sanskrit. In the present portion Sanskrit predominates, being three times as much as Prakrit. This condition of the

whole text clearly reflects the comparative position of Prakrit and Sanskrit in the Digambara Jain literature of the South. The most ancient literature was all in Prakrit as shown by the Sutras and their first reputed commentary Parikarma as well as all the other works of Kundakunda, and also by the preponderance of Prakrit verses quoted in the Dhavala. But about the time of Virasena the tables had turned against Prakrit and Sanskrit had got the upperhand as revealed by the present portion of Dhavala as well as its contemporary literature.

The Prakrit of the Sutras, the Gathas as well as of the commentary, is Sauraseni influenced by the older Ardha Magadhi on the one hand and the Maharashtri on the other, and this is exactly the nature of the language called Jain Sauraseni by Dr. Pischel and subsequent writers. It is, however, only a very small fraction of the whole text that has now been edited critically so far as was possible with the available material. Final conclusions on this subject as well as on all others pertaining to this work must wait till the whole or at least a good deal of it has been so edited.

I have avoided details in this survey of **Shatkhandagama** because I have discussed all these topics fully in my introduction in Hindi to which my learned readers are referred for details. The available manuscripts of the work are all very corrupt and full of lacunae, being very recent copies of a transcript which, so to say, had to be stolen from Mudbidri. My great regret is that inspite of all efforts, I could not get at the only old manuscript preserved there. So the text had to be constituted from the available copies as critically as was possible according to the principles which I have explained in full in my Hindi introduction. Inspite of all these difficulties, however, I hope my readers will not find the text as unsatisfactory as it might have been expected under the circumstances.