

DIGAMBARA ATTITUDES TO THE ŚVETĀMBARA CANON¹

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0. No one would deny the importance of *anekāntavāda* or the doctrine of multi-foldness in Jaina philosophy. This doctrine teaches us to observe an object from many points of view. Jain literature can also be viewed from many sides. In other words, Jaina literature itself has an *anekānta* aspect. The Digambara Jaina 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 *pramāna* and *naya*.² In this paper I shall point out an example of such a multi-pointed discussion on the Jain canon.

1. As is well known, the two main Jain sects, Digambara and Śvetāmbara, have different attitudes toward the sacred texts. All Śvetāmbara sects accept the authority of Prakrit texts called *āgamas*, although the number and contents of the *āgamas* accepted are not always the same, because of different sectarian views. The *āgamas* are divided into three groups of works, known as *pūrva*, *aṅga* and *aṅgabāhya* (scriptures which are outside the *aṅgas*). The last one has five subdivisions: *upāṅga*, *chedasūtra*, *mūlasūtra*, *prakīrṇakasūtra* and *cūlikāsūtra*. Today, the Digambaras are generally said to deny the authority of the Śvetāmbara canon. It is unknown, however, who was the first Digambara philosopher that aired the opinion that the Śvetāmbara canon is 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 is therefore interesting to examine Digambara views of the *āgamas* and compare them with those held by Śvetāmbaras.

¹ This paper is a revised version of my article ‘Śvetāmbara Canons in the Digambara Tradition’ which appeared in *The Annals of the Research Project Center for the Comparative Study of Logic* 3 (2005) 101-105. Author’s acknowledgment is due to Dr Hideyo Ogawa, editor of the journal, who was kind enough to invite me to write the original article.

² *Svayambhūstotra* 103ab: *anekānto 'py anekāntaḥ pramāṇanayasādhanāḥ*.

2. Some Digambaras argue for the authenticity of the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* and the commentaries on it. According to them, the teaching of Lord Mahāvīra is partially preserved in this text, which was made accessible even for Digambaras only in the twentieth century.³ Others maintain that the original *āgama* tradition comprising the authoritative teaching of Mahāvīra completely vanished 683 years after his *nirvāṇa*.⁴ Even after that time, however, Digambaras seem to have preserved some portions of the *āgamas* in a different way.

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

3. Let us begin our discussion with the *Tattvārthasūtra* (hereafter TS) which is regarded as an authoritative text by both schools.⁵ The authorship of the TS is uncertain. According to the Śvetāmbaras the name of the author is Umāsvāti while the Digambaras call him Umāsvāmin. The TS has been commented on by many philosophers. The Śvetāmbaras claim that Umāsvāti himself wrote the commentary upon TS, and the Digambaras deny the fact. However, the sūtra of the TS which we will discuss is authorized by both schools. In the twentieth *sūtra* of chapter I, the author refers to *śruta* or authentic scripture which is one of five varieties of valid knowledge or *pramāṇa*. He explains that *śruta* can be categorized into three groups and that each of them has “two, many and twelve” subdivisions.⁶

3.1. Pūjyapāda in the sixth century⁷ is the first Digambara scholar to write a commentary on the TS. Commenting on TS I.20, he explains as follows:

"The word ‘division’ (*bheda*) should be construed with each of the words `two

³ On the publication of this text, see Dundas 2002: 63-65.

⁴ Dixit 1971: 79.

⁵ The Śvetāmbara school calls this text *Tattvārthādhigamasūtra*. In this paper the author will use the title given by the Digambara school.

⁶ TS I.20: *śrutam matipūrvaṃ dvyanekadvādaśabhedam*.

⁷ We cannot decide his date with certainty. But it can be said that he must be junior to Samantabhadra and senior to Akalaṅka.

subdivisions', 'many subdivisions' and 'twelve subdivisions.' First, by 'two subdivisions' are meant the outside *aṅga* (*aṅgabāhya*) and the inside *aṅga* (*aṅgapraviṣṭa*). The outside *aṅga* has many divisions including *Daśavaikālika*, *Uttarādhyayana*. The inside *aṅga* has twelve subdivisions:

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|-------------------------------|--|
| (i) <i>Ācāra</i> | (vii) <i>Upāsakādhyayana</i> |
| (ii) <i>Sūtrakṛta</i> | (viii) <i>Antakṛddaśā</i> |
| (iii) <i>Sthāna</i> | (ix) <i>Anuttaraupapādikadaśā</i> |
| (iv) <i>Samavāya</i> | (x) <i>Praśnavyākaraṇa</i> |
| (v) <i>Vyākhyāprajñapti</i> | (xi) <i>Vipākasūtra</i> |
| (vi) <i>Jñātr̥dharmakathā</i> | (xii) <i>Dr̥ṣṭivāda</i> |

The *Dr̥ṣṭivāda* comprises five sections:

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| (i) <i>parikrama</i> | (iv) <i>pūrvagata</i> |
| (ii) <i>sūtra</i> | (v) <i>cūlikā</i> |
| (iii) <i>prathamānuyoga</i> | |

Of these sections *pūrvā* has fourteen subsections:

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (i) <i>utpādapūrvā</i> | (viii) <i>karmappravāda</i> |
| (ii) <i>agrāyaṇīya</i> | (ix) <i>pratyākhyānanāmadheya</i> |
| (iii) <i>vīryānupravāda</i> | (x) <i>vidyānupravāda</i> |
| (iv) <i>astināstipravāda</i> | (xi) <i>kalyāṇanāmadheya</i> |
| (v) <i>jñānapravāda</i> | (xii) <i>prāṇāvāya</i> |
| (vi) <i>satyappravāda</i> | (xiii) <i>kriyāviśāla</i> |
| (vii) <i>ātmappravāda</i> | (xiv) <i>lokabindusāra</i> |

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 (*sarvajñas tīrthakara*), perfect masters of scripture (*śrutakevalin*) and 'remote' ones (*ārātīya*). Of them the omniscient highest saints, possessed of the highest knowledge, preached the *āgama*. The *āgama* is authoritative because the saints preached it after having perceived things directly and [because] they had destroyed all the faults. The perfect masters are the leaders of the religious

group (*gaṇadhara*) 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 the *Daśavaikālika* for the benefit of their disciples who could not enjoy longevity and had the weakness of mental power and vital power due to the defect of aging."⁸

First let us compare the titles of the texts in the inside *aṅga* category listed here with those of the inside *aṅga* category accepted by the Śvetāmbara tradition.⁹ All titles in both traditions are the same with little difference: in the Digambara tradition the sixth begins with *Jñātr-* while in the Śvetāmbara sources it begins with *Jñātā-*; and the seventh ends in *-adhyayana* in the former while it ends in *-daśāh* in the latter. The sequence of the twelve titles in the two traditions is quite the same.

Pūjyapāda mentions two titles among the outside *aṅga* category: *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.¹⁰ This fact suggests that he realized the importance of these two texts.

Now let us look at the contents of the *Dṛṣṭivāda* 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.¹¹ The titles of the

⁸ *Sarvārthasiddhi* §§ 210f.; *bhedaśabdaḥ pratyekaṃ parisamāpyate - dvibhedam anekabhedam dvādaśabhedam iti | dvibhedam tāvat - aṅgabāhyam aṅgapraviṣṭam iti | aṅgabāhyam anekavidham Daśavaikālikottarādhyayanādi | aṅgapraviṣṭam dvādaśavidham | tad yathā, Ācāraḥ, Sūtrakṛtaṃ, Sthānaṃ Samavāyaḥ Vyākhyāprajñaptiḥ Jñātrdharmakathā Upāsakādhyayanaṃ Antakṛddāsaṃ Anuttaraupapādikadaśaṃ Praśnavyākaraṇaṃ Vipākasūtraṃ Dṛṣṭivāda iti | Dṛṣṭivādaḥ pañcavidhaḥ - parikarma sūtraṃ prathamānuyogaḥ pūrvagataṃ cūlikā ceti | tatra pūrvagataṃ caturdaśavidham - utpādapūrvam agrāyaṇīyam vīryānupravādaṃ astināstipravādaṃ jñānapravādaṃ satyapravādaṃ ātmapravādaṃ karmapravādaṃ pratyākhyānanāmadheyam vidyānupravādaṃ kalyāṇanāmadheyam prāṇāvāyaṃ kriyāviśālaṃ lokabindusāraṃ iti | tad etat śrutaṃ dvibhedam anekabhedam dvādaśabhedam iti | kiṃ kṛto ‘yaṃ viśeṣaḥ | vaktṛviśeṣakṛtaḥ | trayo vaktāraḥ - sarvajñaḥ tīrthakara itara vā śrotrakevalī āratīyaś ceti | tatra sarvajñena paramarṣiṇā paramācintyakevalajñānavibhūtivīśeṣeṇa arthata āgama uddiṣṭaḥ | tasya pratyakṣadarśivāt prakṣiṇadoṣatvāc ca prāmāṇyam | tasya sāḥśāccchiṣyair buddhy- atīśayarddhiyuktair gaṇadharaiḥ śrutakevalibhir anusmṛtagrantharacanam aṅgapūrvalakṣaṇam | tat pramāṇam, tatprāmāṇyāt | āratīyaiḥ punar ācāryaiḥ kāladoṣāt samkṣiptāyurmatibalaśīṣyānugrahārtham Daśavaikālikādyupanibaddham | (translated by the author).*

⁹ On the titles of the inside *aṅga* given by the Śvetāmbara school, see Dundas 2001: 73f.

¹⁰ Dixit 1971: 8.

¹¹ See Kapadia 2000: 6f.

subsections of the fourth section, i.e. *pūrva*, are also the same in the two traditions. The only difference is, according to Pūjyapāda, that the subsections nine and eleven are called *Pratyākhyāna-nāmadheya* and *Kalyāṇa-nāmadheya* in the Digambara tradition, while in the Śvetāmbara tradition the former has the suffix *-pravāda* and the latter the suffix *-vañjha*.

In the *Sarvārthasiddhi*, Pūjyapāda seems to quote from the Śvetāmbara canon to fortify his arguments.¹² The original source cannot stem from the *aṅgas*, but must be a scripture accepted as authentic by Śvetāmbaras.¹³

Taking all these things into consideration, thus, we may safely say that Pūjyapāda does not deny the authenticity of the Śvetāmbara canon, although he does not accept its value.

3.2. Akalaṅka, another Digambara philosopher,¹⁴ gives more detailed information on the *āgamas*. In his commentary on TS, i.e. I.20-xii, he says:

"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.

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:

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| (i) <i>Ācāra</i> | (vii) <i>Upāsakādhyayana</i> |
| (ii) <i>Sūtrakṛta</i> | (viii) <i>Antakṛddaśā</i> |
| (iii) <i>Sthāna</i> | (ix) <i>Anuttaraupapādikadaśā</i> |
| (iv) <i>Samavāya</i> | (x) <i>Praśnavyākaraṇa</i> |
| (v) <i>Vyākhyāprajñapti</i> | (xi) <i>Vipākasūtra</i> |
| (vi) <i>Jñāṭṭharmakathā</i> | (xii) <i>Dṛṣṭivāda</i> |

In the *Ācāra*, different types of behavior, i.e. eight kinds of *śuddhi*, five of

¹² See *Sarvārthasiddhi* p. 165 (§426).

¹³ See *Jambūdvīpaprajñapti*, p. 91.

¹⁴ Akalaṅka must have lived in the eighth century. On his date, see Dundas 2001: 49.

Samiti and three of *Gupti* are described. ... The twelfth *aṅga* is *Dr̥ṣṭivāda*: ... In this book, the explanation of 363 (180+84+67+32) kinds of views and the refutation of them are made. This *Dr̥ṣṭivāda* is divided into five sections: *parikarma*, *sūtra*, *prathamānuyoga*, *pūrvagata* and *cūlikā*. Of them, *pūrvā* has fourteen subsections."¹⁵

Some of the titles in the following list are changed:

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (i) <i>utpādapūrvā</i> | (viii) <i>karmapravāda</i> |
| (ii) <i>agrāyaṇa</i> | (ix) <i>pratyākhyānanāmadheya</i> |
| (iii) <i>vīryapravāda</i> | (x) <i>vidyānuvāda</i> |
| (iv) <i>astināstipravāda</i> | (xi) <i>Kalyāṇanāmadheya</i> |
| (v) <i>jñānapravāda</i> | (xii) <i>prāṇāvāya</i> |
| (vi) <i>satyapravāda</i> | (xiii) <i>kriyāviśāla</i> |
| (vii) <i>ātmapravāda</i> | (xiv) <i>lokabindusāra</i> |

Akalaṅka defines the *aṅgabāhya* scriptures as follows:

"The 'remote' teachers who had been disciples or intermediate disciples of the leaders of the church 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."¹⁶

In addition, he quotes some passages from the *Āvaśyakaniryukti* to bear out his views.

¹⁵ *Tattvārthavārtika*, pp. 72f.; *aṅgapraviṣṭam Ācārādidvādaśabhedam buddhyatiśayarddhiyukta gaṇadharānusmṛtagrantharacanam | bhagavadarhatsarvajñahimvannirgatavāg-gaṅgā'rthavimala-salilapra-kṣālitāntaḥkaraṇair buddhyatiśayaddhiyuktair gaṇadhair anusmṛtagrantharacanam Ācārādidvādaśavidham aṅgapraviṣṭam ity ucyate | tad yathā, Ācārah, Sūtrakṛtam, Sthānam, Samavāyam, Vyākhyāprajñaptiḥ, Jñāṭṛdharmakathā, Upāsakādhyayanam, Antakṛddadaśā, Anuttaraupapādikaśā, Praśnavyākaraṇam, Vipākasūtram, Dr̥ṣṭivāda iti | Ācāre caryāvidhanaṃ śuddhyaṣṭakapañcam iti triguptivikalmaṃ kathyate | ... dvādaśamāṅgaṃ Dr̥ṣṭivāda iti | ... eṣāṃ dṛṣṭiśatānāṃ trayāṇāṃ triṣaṣṭyuttarāṇāṃ prarūpaṇaṃ nirgrahaś ca Dr̥ṣṭivāde kriyate | Sa pañcavidhaḥ - parikarma sūtraṃ prathamānuyogaḥ pūrvagataṃ cūlikā ceti | tatra pūrvagataṃ caturdaśaprakaraṇam (translated by the author)*

¹⁶*Tattvārthavārtika* p. 78: *yad gaṇadharaśiṣyapraśiṣyair āratīyair adhigataśrutārthatattvaiḥ kāladoṣād alpamedhāyurbalānāṃ prāṇināṃ anugrahārtham upanibaddhaṃ saṃkṣiptāṅgārthavacanavinyāsaṃ tad aṅgabāhyam | ... tadbhedā Uttarādhyayanādayo 'nekavidhaḥ | (translated by the author).*

For example, in his commentary on TS I.19, where he discusses *prāpyakāritva*, (reaching to the object) by sensory organs, he quotes the following verse as evidence from the *āgamas* to argue for *aprāpakāritva*, (not reaching to the object) by the visual organs and the mind:

puṭṭhaṃ suṇedi saddaṃ aputṭhaṃ puṇa passade rūpaṃ |
gaṇdhaṃ rasaṃ ca phāsaṃ baddhaṃ puṭṭhaṃ vijāṇādi ||

Sound is heard when the organ reaches to it while the shape is recognized without reaching; Smell, taste and touch are sensed when the organs reach to them closely.

This is the fifth *gāthā* of the *Āvaśyakaniryukti*. 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 *aṅga*. This shows that, although even in the Śvetāmbara tradition the *Āvaśyakaniryukti* is not regarded as an *āgama* text, it occupies a rather important position. We also know its importance from the fact that it has been published several times in modern India.

3.3. Another famous Digambara philosopher, 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, which is the first *sūtra* that deals with *śruta* or *āgama* exclusively. It is likely, therefore, that Vidyānandin had no information on the Śvetāmbara canon. But this does not necessarily mean that by the time of Vidyānandin, i.e., by the ninth century, the Digambara tradition had lacked any knowledge about the canon.

4. Nemicandra, a Digambara philosopher of the tenth century, has a good knowledge of the Śvetāmbara canon. In his *Gommaṭasāra Jīva-Kāṇḍa*, Nemicandra refers to eleven titles of *aṅgas*, as Pūjyapāda and Akalaṅka do, and enumerates fourteen outside *aṅga* texts, including *Daśavaikālika* and *Uttarādhyayana*.¹⁷ Moreover, he not only mentions the titles of the *āgamas* but also refers to the number of the *pādas* which are contained in the canon. With reference to the *Ācāraṅga*, for example, he says that it consists of eighteen thousand *pādas*.¹⁸ Furthermore, Nemicandra seems to take into consideration the

¹⁷ *Gommaṭasāra, jīva kaṇḍa*, vv. 355-356 (Nemicandra 1927: 202f.).

¹⁸ *Gommaṭasāra, jīva kaṇḍa*, v. 358 (Nemicandra 1927: 203).

twelfth *aṅga*, the *Dr̥ṣṭivāda*, when he mentions five kinds of *parikarma*, one *sūtra*, one *prathamānuyoga*, the *pūrvas* and five *cūlikās*.¹⁹ In this connection it is also interesting to note that the five kinds of *parikarma* consist of *Candraprajñapti*, *Sūryaprajñapti*, *Jambūdvīpaprajñapti*, *Dvīpasamudraprajñapti* and *Vyākhyaprajñapti*.²⁰ We come across these titles in the list of the canonical Śvetāmbara *upāṅgas*. As mentioned above, the *Dr̥ṣṭivāda* in which these five texts are included is regarded as extinct by both traditions. Nemicandra may have intended to deny the authenticity of the *upāṅgas*, especially of those dealing with Jaina cosmology.²¹

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

5. Many Śvetāmbara philosophers mention the titles of their own canon. Umāsvāti, for example, refers to the names of the *aṅgas* along with *Uttarādhyayana*, *Daśavaikālikā*, *Ṛṣibhāṣita* in the so-called auto-commentary on TS I.20.²²

Detailed information on the Śvetāmbara canon can also be found in the *Nandīsūtra*²³ which is part of the canon itself. Naturally, the *Nandī* distinguishes and enumerates the eleven inside *aṅgas*. The titles of the inside *aṅgas*, though they are mentioned not in Sanskrit but in Prakrit, correspond to those enumerated by the Digambara philosophers, as we have seen above.

6. Concluding remarks

In my view, it is difficult to decide who was the first Digambara philosopher to deny the authority of the Śvetāmbara canon. K. K. Dixit is of the opinion that by the seventh or eighth century the Digambaras began to neglect the Śvetāmbara canon.²⁴ However, as we

¹⁹ *Gommatasāra, jīva kaṇḍa*, vv. 361-362 (Nemicandra 1927: 204).

²⁰ *Gommatasāra, jīva kaṇḍa*, v. 361 (Nemicandra 1927: 204).

²¹ 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.

²² See TS I.20 (p. 20). The present author regards the so-called auto-commentary as a work belonging to the Śvetāmbaras.

²³ On the classification of the *aṅgas*, see *sūtras* 79-81. On the titles of the *aṅgas*, see *sūtras* 71-72.

²⁴ Dixit 1971: 2. On the dates of the Jaina councils see Wiles 2006.

have seen above, the Digambara philosopher Akalaṅka of the eighth century referred to the Śvetāmbara *āgamas*. He knows not only their titles but also their contents. Moreover, he quotes some passages from the *Āvaśyaka Niryukti* to add authority to his opinions.

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

From textual evidence we know of the long history of fierce debates on various subjects between the two traditions. The topics of *kevali-bhukti* (food taken by an omniscient person) and *strī-nirvāṇa* (emancipation of women) are, for example, controversial among both traditions. The Śvetāmbaras admit the appetite of the *kevalin* and the salvation of women, which the Digambaras both deny. Naturally, the former criticize 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 at least parts of the canon though they did not say so explicitly. This attitude may have continued until the time of Nemicandra.

In order to fully understand how the Digambaras viewed the Śvetāmbara canon, we must study the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* and the commentaries on them. Yet, even after the research on them has progressed, the tentative conclusion which we have arrived at in this paper will not need amending.

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