

II-18. Legacy of Dharsen

There is absolutely no inevitability as long as there is a willingness to contemplate what is happening.

- Marshall McLuhan

Written language enables each generation to profit more fully from the thought and work of previous generations.

- Unknown

It is said that discourses of Mahaveer were accessible to humans as well as other beings.

More than 300 years after the departure of Bhadrabahu from Patliputr, some of the material was known to Dharsen. Seeing the inevitable, Dharsen, a recluse monk who lived in the Girinar hills in West India, made a suggestion of remarkable foresight. Through a letter to the convention of monks, that was to be held in Mahimanagar (Satara district), Dharsen suggested that the authenticated remaining *Shurt*- material be written down. The response initiated the preservation of what we know to be the Jain Agam.

Pushpdant and Bhutbali were chosen to study with Dharsen. Their task was to learn, understand, and then write down the fragment known to Dharsen. Over the next century, and 600 years after Mahaveer, the effort resulted in the written and reorganized text of *Mahakarm Prakrti Prbhat* part of *itthivay or* the 12th ang (Table II-4). As known now, some 15,000 steps of text (*pad*) is divided into three parts: ***Shatkhandagam, Karm Prabhat*** and ***Kashay Prabhat***. The first part of this work is ***Jeevatthan***.

The initiative of Dharsen preserved a large part, if not the entire, of the orally transmitted material (*shrut-agam*). The written

form freed the students from memorizing the material, which unleashed a surge of scholarship. The written material also reduced reliance on a direct teacher-pupil contact. Since written words are better suited for thoughtful scrutiny, copies of the written *pandulipis* inspired wide-ranging critical interpretations and reviews. Widely scattered *pandulipi* copies also preserved the textual and physical integrity of the written material (see the essay on *Uses of the Words from the Past* on this site about the current state of the Pandulipis).

What is *sadhna*? A need for self-motivated contemplation for critical understanding (*sadhna*) comes from the fact that no two events are exactly alike. By the same token, even with the same knowledge of the event, perceptions of two people are rarely alike. Humans express perceptions and thoughts through words. Yet the act of perceiving or thinking is not through words or even a linear process. Often a specific thought is formulated as a concept, and through words we share the concept with others. In the days when written material was rare, oral transmission of concepts required great parsimony and economy of words. Such a care is clearly restored in the formulation of the ancient material to be arranged in the step form such as Chapters A through H of Jeevatthan (Volume I). Steps are designed for *sadhna* by thoughtful individuals willing to work at it for understanding not only the content but also explore the boundaries with their own thought processes. Formulation and dissemination of thought in short steps requires a deeper understanding of the etymology and usage of the language as well as the reasoning in the intellectual and cultural contexts. In short, ***reasoning (nay) and analysis (anugam) build on representation (prarupana) through sadhna.***

Dharsen was concerned about preserving the integrity of the material. He set high standards for his disciples. As the story

goes, mentioned in The Dhavla, to guard against potential problems associated with inaccurate version and interpretation of the material for the generations to come, Dharsen chose his two disciples only after giving them a test. One was given a *sutr* (possibly a *gatha*) with one extra syllable, and the other was given another with one missing syllable. Both were asked to return when they understood the assignment. According to the anecdote, after their *sadhna* (critical-examination), a *devi* (goddess) appeared in the vision. It had extra body part (*bhut* or ghost) for the one with extra syllable. The *devi* seen by the disciple who was given the missing syllable had a missing *dant* (tooth). Both the disciples realized the significance. Instead of going back to the master for the correction, they did their home-work. After making what they considered to be the necessary corrections, both saw the beauty of the totally balanced form. On their return, the master was convinced about their suitability for the task that lay ahead.

Shrutpanchami: Anniversary of the day on which Pushpdant and Bhutbali completed their lessons with Dharsen is still celebrated by the Jain scholars as *Shrutpanchami*, the day on which the orally transmitted material was ready to be written down. Even to this day on this fifth day of the rising moon at the beginning of the monsoon season scholars take-stock of their written material for safekeeping. It was always a major event in the household of my parents.

In the tradition of conferring new identity to break away from the past, the master blessed the pupils with new names: Bhutbali for the one who had "sacrificed" the ghost, and Pushpdant for arranging "teeth as petals of a flower," Note the flower and teeth metaphors allude to matrix form with systematic

and incremental change. The analogy of teeth also goes to the content - as in "let us put some teeth in the argument." The anecdote beautifully underscores the strategy for documenting important works, including the importance of understanding that comes with Sadhna - the self-motivated contemplation for critical understanding.

Table II- 4. The Intellectual Legacy of Dharsen and Shatkhandagam

<i><u>Period</u></i>	<i><u>Author: Work</u></i>
ca. 37-100 CE	Shatkhandagam (based on Agrayaniy 2 nd Purv) by Pushpdant and Bhutbali. The first five Khand form the basis for Dhavla , and the sixth Karm Prabhat is the basis for MahaDhavla . Kashay Prabhat or Kashay Pahud (based on the Gyan Pravad 5 th purv) Gundev and Brashabh is the basis for JaiDhavla .
ca. 150 CE	Kundkund (Padmanandi): Parikarm tika, Shravakachar, Panchastikay Prabhat, and Samay Sar.
ca. 200 CE	Umaswami: Tatvarth Sutr
ca. 200 CE	Samatbhadr: Apt Mimansa
ca. 300 EC	Vidyanand: Apt Parikha
ca 300 CE	Shamkund and Pujoyapad: tika on Tatvarth sutr
ca 400 CE	Tumbluur: Chudamani
ca 600 CE	Bappadev: Vyakhya Pragypti
ca 700 CE	Aklank: Tatvarth Rajvartik
816 CE	Virsen and Jinsen: The Dhavla tika on Shatkhandagam. The Jai Dhavla tika also appeared in this period.
900-1400 CE	Hemchandr, Nemichandr, Mallikasen on topics from Dhavla .

Dharsen saw the urgency of the task. In about 4 months he taught Pushpdant and Bhutbali portions of the fifth and twelfth ang, *viahapannati* and *itthivay*. This material was apparently in the form of gatha - the two liner lyrical forms. Seeing his end near, the Master asked both the pupils to leave immediately after completing the studies even though the rainy season was upon them. To guard against potential dangers they were asked to go in different directions. Fortunately, both had a long working life with many students and supporters. Pushpadant apparently settled in Ankaleshwar (Gujrat). Palm trees grow in this area, however it is not known if the technology to write the first pandulipi of Jeevathan existed in this area. It appears that over the next seven decades Bhutbali with Jinpalit, a pupil of Pushpadant, organized at least four other parts of what is now known as Shatkhandaham.

The Dhavlas and other works

Dharsen had set in motion an intellectual push for organization, examination, and scrutiny of the ancient material that was orally transmitted. It allowed for the continuity of thought without an obligatory need for a teacher or a pupil. Over the next 800 years it inspired intellectual inquiry and scrutiny (Table II- 4). The original pandulipi of the work by Pushpdant and Bhutbali is not available. However, there are numerous cross-references to this work in the derived literature. One of the most complete of these, The Dhavla *tika* (completed 816 CE) was rediscovered as Moodbidri pandulipi scribed around 1060 CE (II-19). Besides Jeevatthan and parts of Shatkhandagam, Dhavla also contains commentaries on other contemporary works.

Tradition of intellectual integrity. The three Dhavlas are elaborate interpretation and review of Shatkhandagam, Karm

Prabhat and Kashay Prabhat. The Dhavla was completed on October 8, 816 by Virsen and Jinsen. The date is established on the basis of the planetary positions (*kundli*) given at the end of the work. The adjective *dhaval* stands for bright and luminescent white. Dhavla is an appropriate term for the remarkable synthesis of the ancient ideas that came to fruition in about 800 years through efforts of Dharsen, Pushpdant, Bhutbali, Gundev, Brashabh, Kundkund, Veersen, Jinsen and many others. It is not clear what happened to the original pandulipis of many of these works. However this work is extensively copied, cross-referenced, and commented on by subsequent scholars. Dhavlas are scholarly texts designed for *sadhna*, which has also encouraged numerous abridged versions.

Dhavla represent a synthesis of the collective work set in motion seven centuries earlier by Dharsen. It is an important point that is often missed even by the scholars. As a guide for future work and to appreciate the content and scope of Dhavla, it is useful to understand the constraints of time and historical changes. As a working hypothesis for the rest of this article, I propose that Dharsen and Dhavla set in motion a synthesis of orthogonal approaches: Synthesis of Apt, Nay (with Syad and Anekant) and anugam (analysis) are devices for representation. Individually each is useful as teaching and learning device. Dhavla bring out an appreciation of the orthogonality of two powerful tools used by humans: **The ability of humans to reason while entertaining doubt (*syad*), and to look at viable alternatives (*anekant*) to reduce remaining doubt in stages.**

A review synthesis is critical to arrive at a restatement of the inferences that shape our perceptions and world-views. Just being a skeptic is not enough. A believable person (*apt*) is a sincere inquirer who not only entertains doubt but also suggests

and develops alternatives. It is critical to move forward an argument and develop a process to resolve the future problem. Integrity of individual is in the integrity of the process, and not the other way.

Synthesis of Apt with Anugam and Nay. The tradition of open discussion and elaboration benefited from the availability of the written material. It provided a common basis for teaching, scrutiny, and further developments in the emerging contexts. For the continuity of this tradition of inquiry consider a critical question addressed in *Apt-mimansa* of Kundkond, and the *Apt-Pariksha* of Samantbhadra. Who is an *Apt*? The question 'Who should one trust?' is relevant for building the body of experience based shared knowledge created by and for people. This work also sets remarkably strict evidence based criteria for settling such issues to uphold intellectual integrity. It has become part of the *Nay* reasoning where *apt vachan* refers to their word construct rather than the person.

Shared knowledge by people is not inspired by the other worldly sources. Even if there was one how would one know Who is messiah? How do you know? Whose principles and conclusions are believable? Why should one trust such a person? Or it is all in the imaginings? Since one can neither deny nor demonstrate the existence of such omniscience, one can at least be beware of the fraud identified in terms of inconsistencies and contradictions. After that let the facts speak for themselves. A force of authority, even an imagined one, can only be detrimental. Such pragmatic solutions follow from the criteria based critical scrutiny. A system of criteria-based inquiry extends the reach of the established parts of the world along established ways of reasoning to validate perceptions.

Contents of Volume II

People and Places

Preface to Volume II

- II-1. Perception for Shared Knowledge
- II-2. People and Places
- II-3. Live, Let Live, and Thrive
- II-4. Millennium of Mahaveer and Buddha
- II-5. Socio-political Context
- II-6. Clash of World-Views
- II-7. On the Ashes of the Magadh Empire
- II-8. Tradition of Austere Monks
- II-9. Who Was Bhadrabahu I?
- II-10. Prakrit: The Languages of People
- II-11. Itthi: Sensory and Psychological Perception
- II-12. What Is Behind the Numbers?
- II-13. Rational Consistency
- II-14. Looking through the Parts
- II-15. Active Interaction
- II-16. Anugam to Agam
- II-17. Preservation of Legacy
- II-18. Legacy of Dharsen
- II-19. The Moodbidri Pandulipis
- II-20. Content of Moodbidri Pandulipis
- II-21. Kakka Takes the Challenge
- II-22. About Kakka
- II-23. Move for Shatkhandagam
- II-24. Basis of the Discord in the Teamwork
- II-25. Significance of the Dhavla
- II-26. Jeev Samas Gatha
- II-27. Uses of the Words from the Past
- II-28. Biographical Sketches