# Jain Ägam Literature

##  Introduction

In most of the religions, there is one main scripture book. Hinduism has Gita and 4 Vedas, Christians have the Bible, Muslims have Koran, Persians have Avesta, Sikhs have Guru Grantha Sahib, and Buddhists have 3 Pitikäs. Likewise, Jains also have their own scriptures called Ägams, also called the Jain Shruta. Jains are people of books, they do not have one main scripture book but they have many.

The teachings by an omniscient Lord Tirthankar to his enlighten principal disciples, called Ganadhars was first composed in fourteen Purvas and then in twelve Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams (main canons) an `Anga' being a `limb') by Ganadhars themselves. All Purvas are included in one part of the twelfth Anga, called Drishtiväda. It is said one Jain scripture that, "Having climbed the tree of perfect knowledge, an omniscient Lord Tirthankar showers flowers of knowledge to enlighten principal disciples, called Ganadhars. They collected all these flowers in the cloth of the intellect, and have interwoven them into the garland of Dwädashängi" (Dwädashängi means twelve Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams).

The composition of scripture has a specific purpose of showing the listener the path of everlasting happiness and liberation. The Ägam Sutras teach the eternal truth about conduct, equanimity, universal affection, friendship, the eternal truths on thinking, namely, the principle of relativity, principle of non-one-sided-ness. It also teaches many spiritual things including great reverence for all forms of life, soul, Karma, universe, strict codes of asceticism, rules for householders, compassion, nonviolence, and non-possessiveness.

In addition to the twelve Anga-Pravishtha works composed by the Ganadhars, other canonical literature (Anga-Bähya-Ägams) that were composed by Sthavirs or elder monks are also included as part of the Jain Ägams.

The Jain Ägams consists of 14 Purvas, 12 Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams and Anga-Bähya-Ägams (34 for Shvetämbar Murtipujak, 21 for Shvetämbar Sthänakaväsi and 14 for Digambar).

Consistent with Shvetämbar Murtipujak beliefs, there are three Ägam temples, which have 45 Ägams engraved either on wall or on copper plate. They are in Palitana, Surat and Shankheswar. There are several places (Jnän-Mandirs) like Ahmedabad, Patan, Surat, Khambhat, Jesalmer, Pindvada, Mehsana, Ratalam, Ahor, Tharad, Guda, and Surendranagar where all Ägams are available.

Jains believe that Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams were at all times in the past, are in the present, and will be at all times in the future. They are eternal, firm, permanent, non-destructive, non-decaying and everlasting.

For some time after Lord Mahävir's Nirvän, the Jain Shramans did not pen down their Ägams in the book form, but preserved them by memorizing them. They considered the possessing books would constitute violation of the vow of non-attachment and non-possessions. Then came the time, they totally changed their attitude towards the possession of books because there was a fear of the destruction of the Jain Shruta. Whatever wealth of the Ägam, which was still extant at that time, remained protected and preserved.

## Vächanä (Recensions)

With a view to establish order in the preaching of Lord Mahävir, Jain Ächäryas assembled three times and prepared three recensions of the preaching. Whenever the Ächäryas saw that the Shruta was waning and that there was disorderliness into it, they assembled and established order in it. No documentation occurred during the first recension but during the second and third conferences, most of the scriptures, commentaries, and other works were documented.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Recension Place | Time |
| 01 | Patliputra Recension | @320 BC  |
| 02 | Mathura and Vallabhi Recensions | @380 AD  |
| 03 | Vallabhi Recension | @520 AD  |

Around 1400 to 1600 AD, the Shvetämbar sect also divided into three sub-sects known as Shvetämbar Murtipujak, Sthänakaväsi, and Teräpanthi. Differences also exist among all three Shvetämbar Jain sects in their acceptance of the validity and interpretations of the documented Jain scriptures (Ägam Sutras) and other literature.

### The First Recension in Pataliputra (First Vächanä)

The Order of the Jain monks assembled in Patliputra about 160 years after Lord Mahävir's death, and also after a terrible famine, which lasted for many years. At that time, the middle region of the country (Madhyadesh) was under the sway of this severe famine, causing the dispersion of Jain monks in various directions. Naturally, the Anga Ägams fell into a bad state.

The monks assembled after the famine, and asked one another what they could recollect and thus collected and arranged eleven of twelve Angas. But they found that nobody recollected the entire Drishtiväda, the twelfth Anga. At that time, Ächärya Bhadrabähu alone possessed the knowledge of Drishtiväda, but he had taken recourse to the yogic path of a special sort and was in Nepal. So, the Jain community requested Ächärya Sthulibhadra with many other monks to go to Bhadrabähu to learn the text of the Drishtiväda from him. The Drishtiväda, being the twelfth Anga Ägam book, contained fourteen Purva-Sutras. of those monks, Sthulibhadra alone was successful in acquiring the knowledge of it. After acquiring the knowledge of ten Purvas, he misused the miraculous power earned through their use. When Bhadrabähu came to know this, he stopped giving lessons to Sthulibhadra. After beseeching by Sthulibhadra, he agreed to teach him only the text of remaining four Purvas, but he forbid Sthulibhadra to teach these four Purvas to others.

As a consequence of this, there existed the Order of Jain monks, the knowledge of 14 Purvas up to Sthulibhadra. After his death, the Order possessed the knowledge of eleven Angas and only ten Purvas. Sthulibhadra's death occurred 215 years after Lord Mahävir's Nirvän.

In short, of the twelve Angas (Anga-Pravishtha) composed by the Ganadhars, eleven Angas bereft of the four Purvas were recovered by the Order assembled at the first council.

### Second Recension in Vallabhipur and Mathura (Second Vächanä)

After this twelve yearlong famine, the monks assembled in Mathura under the leadership of Äryä Skandil and collected, and arranged the Kälik Shruta on the basis of what they could recall and recite. Since this Vächanä was done in Mathura, it is called Mathuri Vachan. This happened about 830 years after Lord Mahävir's Nirvän.

Synchronous with the council at Mathura, Ächärya Nägärjun convened a council of monks at Vallabhi (Saurashtra) and tried to collect and arrange the Ägams. Then they were written down and the recension was prepared after having corrected lengthy portions according to the context. The Vachan is called the Nägärjun Vachan as well.

### The Penning down by Devardhi-Gani

Then a council of monks presided over by Kshamä-Shraman Devardhi-Gani was held at Vallabhi (Saurashtra), 150 years after the councils presided over by Skandil and Nägärjun at Mathura and Vallabhi respectively. It was decided to document all available Prakirna Sutras, and preserve the Anga and other Sutras that were documented in the two former councils. In addition, it was to bring uniformity in Sutras as far as possible by resolving the differences in Sutras. of course, the most important differences were documented in Churnis and Tikäs.

This task was accomplished 980 years after Lord Mahävir's Nirvän. After that event, the text of most of the Ägam works available at present was settled at this time.

## Subject-matter & Status of Jain Ägams

Both the Shvetämbars and the Digambars unanimously agree on the point that the Purva works have become extinct. There are several works, which refer to the Purvas. The Satkhand-Ägam and the Kashäya-Prabhrut have been composed by the Digambar Ächäryas on the basis of the Purva works. Many literatures recognized as Ägams by the Shvetämbars are also having their source in the Purvas.

### Purvas

There are fourteen Purvas and they are huge. First Purva is written by the volume of the ink that is equivalent to the size of one elephant. Second one is two times larger, and third one is two times larger than second one and so on. Here is the list and its subject matter:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Name of Purva | Subject-matter |
| 01 | Utpäd-purva:  | Living (Jiv), non-living (Ajiv), and its modes (Paryäya) |
| 02 | Agräyaniya-purva:  | Nine realities (Nav-Tattva), six substances (Shad-Dravya), etc. |
| 03 | Virya-praväd-purva:  | Relating to energy of soul, non-living, etc. |
| 04 | Astinästi-praväd-purva  | Multiplicity of views (Anekäntaväda), Sapta-Bhangi, etc. |
| 05 | Jnänorväd-purva | Five types of Knowledge and three types of ignorance, etc. |
| 06 | Satya-praväd-purva | Truth, Restraint, Silence (Maun), Speech, etc. |
| 07 | Ätma-praväd-purva | Analysis of soul from different angles (Naya) |
| 08 | Karma-praväd-purva | Karma, its bondage, its nature, fruition, balance, etc |
| 09 | Pratyäkhyän-praväd-purva | Giving up (Pachchakhän), restraint, detachment, etc |
| 10 | Vidhyä-praväd-purva | Expertise (Vidhyä), exceptional abilities, practice, etc. |
| 11 | Kalyän-praväd-purva | Spiritual alertness (Apramäda) and laziness (Pramäda) |
| 12 | Pränväy-purva | Ten types of life substances (Präna), life span, etc. |
| 13 | Kriyävishäl-purva | Art, 64 arts of women, 84 arts of men, etc. |
| 14 | Lokbindusär-purva | Three parts of universe, mathematics, etc. |

### Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams

There is no difference of opinion among the sects of the Jains, on the point that the basic source of the entire Jain literature is a group of twelve Anga works composed by the Ganadhars. The Digambars maintain that within a period of time after the Nirvän of Tirthankar Mahävir, the entire Ägam preached by him became extinct. However, the Shvetämbars tried to preserve the Ägams, having compiled them, they found many things, which have come down from ancient Ächäryas through oral tradition are in the Jain Ägam.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jain Sects | Total Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams | Number of Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams Lost | Number of Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams Survived |
| Shvetämbar Murtipujak | 12 | 1 | 11 |
| Digambar  | 12 | 12 | 0 |
| Shvetämbar Sthänakaväsi | 12 | 1 | 11 |
| Shvetämbar Teräpanthi | 12 | 1 | 11 |

### List and subject matter of Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams are as follows:

1. Ächäräng Sutra (Äyäräng): This Ägam describes the conduct and behavior of ascetic life. It also describes the penance of Lord Mahävir. This is the oldest Ägam from a linguistic point of view.
2. Sutrakrutäng Sutra (Suyagadäng): This Ägam describes nonviolence, Jain metaphysics, and the refutation of other religious theories such as Kriyä Väda, Akriyä-väda, Ajnän-väda, and Vinaya-väda.
3. Sthänäng Sutra (Thänänga): This Ägam defines and catalogues the main substances of the Jain metaphysics.
4. Samaväyäng Sutra: This Ägam defines and catalogues the main substances of the Jain religion from a different perspective than the Sthänäng Sutra.
5. Vyäkhyä Prajnapti or Bhagawati Sutra (Viyäh Pannati): This Ägam explains the subtle knowledge of soul, matter, and other related subjects. Thirty-six thousands (36000) questions and answers are presented in discussion form. It is the largest of the eleven Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams.
6. Jnätä Dharma Kathänga Sutra (Näyädhammakahäo): This Ägam explains Jain principles through examples and stories. This text is very useful in understanding the mode of Lord Mahävir's religious preaching.
7. Upäsaka Dashänga Sutra (Uvasagadasäo): This Ägam explains the code of conduct of the ten lay followers (Shrävaks) of Lord Mahävir. This Ägam is very useful for understanding the code and conduct of ordinary people (Shrävak Dharma) in the Jain religion.
8. Antakritdashänga Sutra (Antagadadäsao): This Ägam tells the stories of ten sacred monks attaining liberation (Moksha) by destroying their karmas.
9. Anuttaroupa Pätika Dashänga Sutra (Anuttarov Vaiya Dasao): This Ägam contains the stories of additional ten sacred monks who attained the top-most heaven, known as Anuttara heaven.
10. Prashna Vyäkaran Sutra (Panha Vagarnai): This Ägam describes the five great vows (Mahävratas) and the five worst sins defined in the Jain religion.
11. Vipäk Sutra (Vivägasuyam): This Ägam explains the results of good and bad karmas through several stories.
12. Drishtiväda Sutra: The twelfth Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams Drishtiväda is considered lost by all Jain Sects. The description, which is found in the other Jain Sutras relating to Drishtiväda, indicates that this Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams was the largest of all Ägam Sutras. It was classified in five parts, (l) Parikarma (2) Sutra (3) Purvagata (4) Pratham-Anuyoga and (5) Chulikä. The third part, Purvagata contained 14 Purvas. They contain the Jain religion's endless treasure of knowledge on every subject.

### Anga-Bähya-Ägams

In addition to the twelve Anga works composed by the Ganadhars, other canonical literature, (Anga-Bähya) which composed by Sthaviras or elder monks are also included as part of the Jain Ägams. Such Sthavirs are of two types, Shruta-Kevalis (one who comprehends the entire Shruta-14 Purvas) and Das-Purvis (one who has acquired knowledge of the ten Purvas). Shruta-Kevalis are those, who are especially well versed in the meaning and essence of the Ägams.

The Digambar sect believes that all Anga-Bähya-Ägams were also gradually lost starting about two hundred years after Lord Mahävir's Nirvän. Hence, in their opinion, the complete Jain Ägam literature is lost within few hundred years after Lord Mahävir's Nirvän.

The Digambars have accepted 14 works, the Shvetämbars 34 works, and the Sthänakaväsis 21 works as Anga-Bähya-Ägams.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jain Sects | Total Anga-Bähya Ägams | Number of Anga-Bähya Ägams Lost | Number of Anga-Bähya Ägams Survived |
| Shvetämbar Murtipujak | 34 | 0 | 34 |
| Digambar  | 14 | 14 | 0 |
| Shvetämbar Sthänakaväsi | 21 | 0 | 21 |
| Shvetämbar Teräpanthi  | 21 | 0 | 21 |

Per Shvetämbar tradition, Anga-Bähya-Ägams are consisted of Upänga-sutras, Ched-sutras, Mool-sutras, Chulikä-sutras and Prakirna-sutras.

### Upänga-sutras:

The scriptures, which provide further explanation of Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams, are called Upänga-Ägams. The scriptures, which were created in relation to Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams, are called Upänga-Ägams. They provide further explanation of Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams.

Aupapätika Sutra (Ovavaiya): This Ägam describes the splendid procession (view) of King Konika when he visited Lord Mahävir. It also explains how a person can attain heaven in the next life.

Räja-prashniya Sutra (Raya Pasen Ijja): This Ägam describes the story of Monk Keshi. Monk Keshi was the Gunadhara of Lord Pärshva-Näth. He removed the doubts of King Pradeshi regarding the existence and attributes of the soul. Monk Keshi made the king a follower of the Jain religion. After his death, the king was born in heaven as a Deva. He appeared from heaven to shower Lord Mahävir with unprecedented pomp and splendor. The thirty‑two dramas (plays) described in this Ägam throw light upon the ancient dramatic art of India.

Jiväbhigama Sutra: This Ägam describes the universe and the subtle description of all living beings (souls) of the universe. It gives very important information to the scholars of biology and botany.

Prajnäpanä Sutra (Pannavana): This Ägam describes the form and attributes of souls from a different perspective.

Surya-prajnapti Sutra (Surya Pannati): This Ägam describes the Sun, the planets and the associated mathematics regarding their motion.

Chandra-prajnapti Sutra: This Ägam describes the Moon, the planets and the associated, mathematics regarding their motion. Both of these Upängas, the Chandra Prajnapti and Surya Prajnapti, are very important in understanding the astrology of olden times.

Jambudvipa-prajnapti Sutra: This Ägam provides a description of Jambudvipa. Jambudvipa is a big island located in the center of the middle world as explained in the Jain geography. It also provides information on ancient kings.

Nirayärvali Sutra: This Ägam describes the story of ten bother princes. All ten princes fought with King Chetak of Vaishäli in cooperation with king Konika. King Chetak was the half brother of the ten princes. In the end, all ten princes went to hell after dying in war.

Kalpävatansikä Sutra (Kappavadamsiao): This Ägam describes the story of King Konika's children. They did not fight with King Chetak in the war. They renounced the world and became monks. After their death, they went to heaven.

Pushpikä Sutra (Puspiao): This Ägam describes the previous lives of certain Devas (angels) who worshiped Lord Mahävir.

Pushpa Chulikä Sutra: This Ägam describes stories similar to those in the Pushpikä.

Vrashnidashä Sutra (Vanhidasäo): This Ägam explains how Lord Nemi-Näth convinced ten kings in the Vrashni region to follow the Jain religion.

### Chheda Sutras:

The subject matter described in the Chheda‑sutras is for ascetics and not for lay people. It provides the rule of conduct, punishment, and repentance for ascetics. It also explains how they can repent for their sins and mistakes.

Nisheetha Sutra (Nisiha): This Ägam explains the procedure of repentance (Präyashchitta) in the form of punishment for the monks and nuns who have violated the rules of ascetics.

Brahat Kalpa Sutra: This Ägam explains which of the ten kinds of repentance (Präyashchittas) is appropriate for a particular wrongdoing done by monks and nuns. It also defines the acceptable conduct of monks and nuns.

Vyavahär Sutra\*: This Ägam describes the system of confession for monks and nuns who fall from proper conduct. It explains the qualifications of the listening monk or nun and with what sort of feeling the confession should be made. It also explains what sort of repentance (Präyashchitta) the monk should perform. There are several other indications of the limits of ascetic life.

Dashä Shruta Skandha Sutra (Ächärdashä): There are ten chapters in this Sutra. It contains information relating to 20 places of Asamädhi, 21 major faults bringing weakness in conduct, 33 Äshätanäs of Guru, 8 Sampadäs of Ächäryas and their kinds, 10 places of Chitta Samädhi, 11 Pratimäs of layperson, Pratimäs of ascetics (monks and nuns), Kalpa-Sutra (recited during the Paryushans), 30 places of bondage of Mohaniya Karma and 9 Nidänas (Niyane)

Pancha Kalpa Sutra \*: This sutra explains the daily rituals the monks and nuns have to perform. Only scattered chapters of this Ägam are now available. However, the commentaries (Bhäsya and Churni) written about this Ägam by some elder monks are available.

Mahänisheetha Sutra: This Ägam explains the process of confession and repentance (Präyashchitta) for monks and nuns. It explains the magnitude of pain one has to suffer if he or she breaks the fourth vow (chastity). It also describes and explains the conduct of good and bad monks.

### Mool-sutras

The scriptures, which are essential for monks and nuns to study in the early stages of their ascetic life, are called Mool‑sutras.

Ävashyaka Sutra: The daily rituals or routines, which it is necessary to perform during the day and night for the purification of soul, are called Ävashyaka. A description of the six routines (Ävashyakas) is explained in this Ägam. The six routines are, Sämäyika, Chaturvimshati-Stava, Vandanaka, Pratikraman, Käyotsarga, and Pratyäkhyän.

Dasha Vaikälika Sutra: This Ägam briefly describes and explains the conduct of ascetic life.

Uttarädhyayan Sutra: This Ägam has the same place in Jain literature as the Dhammapada in Buddhism and the Geeta in the Hindu religion. It contains preaching regarding religious principles and practices, and many stories, dialogues, and examples based on such principles and practices.

Ogha Niryukti or Pinda Niryukti Sutra\*: This Ägam explains certain rules and procedures for monks with respect to traveling, staying, and accepting food and other necessities from lay people.

### Chulikä‑sutras

The scriptures, which enhance or decorate the meaning of Anga-Pravishtha-Ägams are known as Chulikä‑sutras or some times known as Sutras.

Nandi Sutra: This Ägam contains an elaborate description of Tirthankars, Ganadhars, and five types of Knowledge (Jnän); Mati, Shruta, Avadhi, Manah-paryav, and Keval-Jnän.

Anuyogadvära Sutra: This Ägam provides the description of many rights regarding the mode of preaching.

### Prakirna‑sutras

The scriptures, which describe independent or miscellaneous subjects of the Jain religion, are known as Prakirna‑sutra.

Chatuh Sharana \*: This Ägam contains prayers to the four benevolent beings: a) Arihanta ‑ God in the form of perfect human being, b) Siddha ‑ God in the form of pure consciousness, c) Sädhu - Ascetics and d) Dharma Religion

Ätur Pratyäkhyän (Äyur‑Pachakhäna)\*: This Ägam explains differences in the death of children, youths, adults, and old people. It also describes the types of vows a wise person should take during various states of illness and how he should beg the pardon of all living beings in the universe.

Bhakt Parijnä (Bhatta Parinnä)\*: This Ägam describes the process of fasting and how one should reflect at the time of death.

Sanstäraka (Santhärä)\*: This Ägam describes the process of dying by one's own desire and its glory.

Tandulavaitälika\*: This Ägam describes the state of pregnancy and provides knowledge about the human body.

Chandra‑Vedhyaka\*: This Ägam describes the method of concentrated meditation (Dhyäna) that one should observe through the description of Rädhävedha.

Devendra -Stava\*: This Ägam describes the names, positions, and residences of Devas (angels) that live in heaven. It also provides a description of the moon, sun, planets, and stars.

Ganita Vidhyä\*: This Ägam describes palmistry and how it is used to predict the future (Nimitta).

Mahäpratyäkhyäna\*: This Ägam explains how to completely give up the worst sins and how to repent these sins.

Virastava\*: This Ägam is considered lost. However, it appears from literature referencing this Ägam that it contained prayers of Lord Mahävir.

Note\*: the Sthänakaväsi and Teräpanthi Jain sect does not recognize These 13 Anga-Bähya-Ägams.

Following is the list of number of Anga-Bähya-Ägams recognized as authentic scriptures by different Jain Shvetämbar Sects:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Category of Anga-Bähya-Ägams  | Shvetämbar Murtipujak | Sthänakaväsi and Teräpanthi |
| Upänga‑Ägams | 12  | 12 |
| Chheda‑sutra‑Ägams | 6  | 4 |
| Mool‑Sutra‑Ägams | 4  | 3 |
| Chulikä‑sutra‑Ägams | 2  | 2 |
| Prakirna‑sutra-Ägams | 10  | none |
| Total Anga-Bähya-Ägams | 34  | 21 |

Though the Digambars contend that Sthavirs composed the fourteen Anga-Bähya Ägams, different from the twelve Anga Ägams,, they also believe that those Anga-Bähya Ägams too have become extinct. The titles of these fourteen Anga-Bähya Ägams are: 1. Sämäyika, 2. Chaturvimshati-Stava, 3. Vandanä, 4. Pratikraman, 5. Vainayiks, 6. Kritikarma, 7. Desävakäsika, 8. Uttarädhyayan, 9. Kalpavyavahär, 10 Kalpakalpik, 11. Mahäkalpik, 12. Pundarik, 13. Mahäpundarik, and 14. Nisithik

### Commentaries on the Ägams

The commentaries on the Ägams have been written in Präkrut and Sanskrit. Those written in Präkrut are known as Niryukti, Bhäsya, and Churni. Niryuktis and Bhäsyas are composed in verses while Churnis are in prose.

Bhadrabähu II has composed all the present Niryuktis. He flourished in the fifth or sixth century V.S. In his Niryuktis, he has conducted philosophical discussions in an attractive style. He laid the firm foundation of the Jain philosophy by writing on the subjects of Pramäna, Naya, and Nikshepa.

One should study the Bhäsyas, if one wants to have a complete picture of the full discussion on any particular subject that had been carried on till the date of their composition. Among the authors of the Bhäsyas, Samghadäs-Gani and Jinabhadra are famous. They belong to the seventh century.

The Churnis that are available to us belong to the seventh or the eighth century. Among the authors of the Churnis, Jindas Mahattar is famous.

The oldest Sanskrit commentaries on the Ägams are those written by Ächärya Haribhadra. He has been assigned to the periods between 757 V.S. and 857 V.S. Haribhadra had mainly given the Sanskrit version of the Präkrut Churnis.

After Haribhadra, Shilänk-Suri wrote Sanskrit commentaries in the tenth century.

After Shilänk-Suri, the famous Sanskrit commendatory by Santya-Ächärya flourished. He wrote Brihat-Tika on the Uttarädhyayan.

After him, the well -known commentator Abhaydev, who, lived from 1072 to 1134 V.S., wrote Sanskrit commentaries on nine Angas.

Here we should mention the name of Maladhari Hemchandra who was also a Sanskrit commentator. He was a scholar of the twelfth century.

However, among the authors of Sanskrit commentaries on the Ägams, Malayagiri holds the supreme position. He was a contemporary of Ächärya Hemchandra.

Other scholars started writing Bälävabodha commentaries in contemporary Apabhramsa, which is a Old Gujarati language.

Dharmasimha-Muni of 18 century rejects the interpretation given in the old commentaries and gives his interpretation. However, his interpretation fits in well with the tenets of his own sect (Loka-Gachchha), which had arisen in opposition to idol-worship.