

Some salient features of *Pañcagranthī* grammar

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Pañcagranthī grammar composed by Ācārya Buddhisāgara belongs to the first quarter of 11th century. Its most striking feature is its composition in metrical verses. In recent times, there have been attempts by scholars to present grammar through metrical compositions. One such effort was made by Paṇḍita Sureśa Jhā who successfully reproduced the entire *Siddhāntakaumudī* in verses. But to write a metrical grammar, a thousand years earlier was really unique. *Pañcagranthī* is the first compact, comprehensive and complete metrical grammar of classical Sanskrit. It is also the first Sanskrit grammar of Śvetāmbara sect of Jains, as Pūjya Devanandī and Ācārya Śākaṭāyana, the predecessor of Buddhisāgara belonged to Digambara and Yāpanīya sects respectively.

All the existing systems of Sanskrit grammar have a tradition of treating the work in two parts, viz. Sūtrapāṭha, the mainstream aphorism, and Khilapāṭhas, the supplements. The Khilapāṭhas are provided in the Pāṇinian and other systems as book-supplements but *Pañcagranthī* has assimilated there in the main text as parts of the author's auto commentary on the aphorisms. Buddhisāgara's auto-commentary is in both prose and verse but the Khilapāṭhas consisting of Dhātupāṭha, Gaṇapāṭha, Uṇādipāṭha, and Liṅgānuśāsana are woven in meters. They comprise 131, 46 and 38 verses respectively. The Sūtrapāṭha or the mainstream aphorisms divided into 14 pādas or quarters and 4 chapters compromise only 207 metrical verses where one thousand nine hundred and twenty two aphorisms are fitted. But actually there are many more aphorisms incorporated in the verses of auto-commentary which makes it very difficult to count their number exactly.

In the very first verse, Ācārya Buddhisāgara tells us about the name, form and purpose of his book. The next verse underlines the reason of composing the text in metrical form. To activate the listeners' interest has been cited as the reason of versified composition. The third verse of Sūtrapāṭha throws light on merits of Pratyāhāras, the group symbols. From the fourth verse of Sūtrapāṭha enlisting of aphorisms starts. The very first kārikā encompasses nine aphorisms which have been explained in the auto-commentary. The author of *Pañcagranthī* apparently intended the kārikās or verses for the readers to get a grip over the main rules in their sequence. The auto-commentary is meant to give a more comprehensive coverage of rules, extensions, limits, exceptions and the like. We may liken *Pañcagranthī* to works like the *Kārikāvalī* in verse and the *Nyāyasiddhāntamuktāvalī*, the prose commentary, both by Viśvanātha.

The principal motive in composing a new Sanskrit grammar in Jaina tradition has always been to inculcate characteristics of brevity, simplification and clarity in descriptive grammar. It will be my endeavor to show exhaustively in this paper how *Pañcagranthī* has improved on various fronts by adopting the merits and abandoning the demerits of his predecessors.