

INTRODUCTION

Ancient Indian Literature was composed mainly in three languages i.e. Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit. Among these three, Pali is nothing but a shade of Prakrit language. As a literary language, Prakrit being a group of various local dialects as Magadhi, Pali, Paisaci, Sauraseni, Maharastri, was never developed as a single language but as a group of languages. Various types of Apabhramsa were also developed according to their different places and time. If we consider these three main languages from religious point of view, all the Vedic religious literature are found in Sanskrit while the Jain canonical and Buddhist literature is in Prakrit and Pali respectively. So far as the Jain religious literature of early period is concerned, it was mainly written in Prakrit, known as Prakrit canons. Jainas started writing from 3rd - 4th century A.D. in Sanskrit but, it is worth mentioning that these Sanskrit works were written on Prakrit works either as an independent or in the form of commentaries.

To bring this work in the present form, first I had to consult the available Prakrit, Sanskrit and Hindi work relating to my U.G.C. project, which includes dictionaries like 1-Volumes of Abhidhana Rajendra Kosh by Rajendra Suri 2. Jainendra Siddhanta Kosh by Jinendra Varniji 3. Prakrit-Hindi Kosh by Dr. K.R. Chandra, 4. Paeasadda Mahannavo by Hargovind Dasji 5. Volumes of Jain Lakshanavali by Balchandra Siddhanta Sastri 6. Volumes of Ardha Magadhi Sabda-Kosa by Ratna Candraraj 7. Prakrit Proper Names and Jain Technical Terms by Dr. M.L. Mehta and other works.

This is the first work I have tried to bring out, because it was so difficult for non-Hindi speaking scholars to understand the meaning of Prakrit technical terms as there is no such work available till now. Further, in the West also very few scholars are acquainted with Prakrit language. I have also tried to bring out maximum