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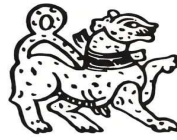
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*Rupees Twenty*

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# The Jain Heritage of Odisha

-Arpit Shah

Enriched with forests, waterfalls, rivers, valleys, beaches, lakes and temples, Odisha is a kaleidoscope of past splendor and present glory. Being the meeting place of Aryan and Dravidian cultures, with its delightful assimilations, from the fascinating lifestyle of the tribes, Odisha retains in its distinct identity. **Once, a stronghold of Jainism, the Jain heritage of Odisha has now been lost in the pages of history.** Such was the dominant presence of Jainism in the ancient era, that a Vedic Puran named “*Adityapuram*” placed Kalinga in the list of “*Anarya Bhumis*”[\[1\]](#) (a land where the Dharma is not established), whereas Jains gave Kalinga, a place in its list of 25 *Arya Bhumis* (where Dharma was established).

**Following is the timeline of Jainism in Odisha -**

**~850 BC** - The revered Jain Agam, **Shri Uttaradhyayan Sutra** mentions that **Lord Parshwanath visited this region in 850 BC** when the King Avakinnayo **Karakandu** became a great devotee of the 23rd Tirthankar and took *Diksha* (monkhood)[\[2\]](#). *Jain KshetraSamsa* as well as Jain texts like *VyavaharBhashya* and *HarivashPuran* also show that Lord Parshwanath had preached in places like **Tamralipti** (Tamluk in West Bengal), **Kopatarka** (Kupari, Balasore) and **KumariParvat** (Udaygiri and Khandgiri, Bhubaneswar) in the Kalinga region[\[3\]](#). Therefore, as early as 9th century B.C, Jainism had already created its place in the religious life of the people of Odisha, and continued to flourish under the royal patronage.

**558 BC** - As per Jain scriptures like *Shri Bhagwati Sutra*, *Shri Avashyak (Niryukti) Sutra*, *HarivanshPuran* and *Haribhadravritti*, **Lord Mahavir visited various places like** Valuyagam, Subhoma, Succheta Malaya, Siddharthgram and **Tosali** (Sisupalgarh, Bhubaneswar) in Kalinga after 11 years of *Diksha* with MankhaliputraGoshal[\[4\]](#) [\[5\]](#).

**~ 530 -510 BC** - Emperor **Shrenik** Bimbisar of the Magadh empire, who was a great devotee of Lord Mahavir made a pilgrimage to **KumariParvat** (Udaygiri and Khandgiri, Bhubaneswar) and constructed a beautiful temple on the hill and placed a golden idol of Lord Adinath which was installed by **GandharSudharma Swami**. This idol came to be known as the “**Kalinga Jina**” and was deeply revered by the entire populace of Kalinga. King Shrenik also constructed rock cut caves in Kumargiri for the use of Jain monks and nuns during monsoon[\[6\]](#) [\[7\]](#).

**509 BC / 468 BC** - King Chetak who was the maternal uncle of Lord Mahavir, ruled over Vaishali in 5th century BC. His son, **Shobhanraya** was married to Kalinga emperor Sulochan's daughter. After Chetak lost Vaishali to KonikAjatshatru, Shobhanraya fled to Kalinga. As Sulochan had no sons,

Shobhanray was crowned the ruler of Kalinga. Shobhanraya was a staunch Jain and during his rule Jainism flourished making KumariParvat a major pilgrimage[8].

**378 BC - Chandaraya** was crowned as the 5th successor of Shobhanraya. During that time, **the 8th Nanda emperor Kaivarta Nanda attacked the kingdom of Kalinga**, destroyed the temple on KumariParvat **and took away the idol of Kalinga Jina** to Patliputra[9].

**357 BC - HimavantSthaviravali by Acharya**

**HimavantKshamashraman** (composed in ~2-3rd century AD) states that the last Purvadar, (i.e. who had the knowledge of all the 14 Purvas) **Acharya Bhadrabahu Swami arrived in KumariParvat**, 170 years after the nirvan of Mahavir. **He attained Kaldharma (death) through an Anshan** (meditative penance known as Santhara/ Sallekhana) of 15 days of fasting without even consuming water[10].

**282 BC – Arya Mahagiri** arrived in KumariParvat and attained Kaldharma by practicing Anshan[11]

**265 BC** - Emperor Ashok Maurya attacked the Kalinga empire and annexed it to the Mauryan empire.

**236 BC - Arya Suhastisuri** (guru of Emperor Samprati) arrived in KumariParvat and attained Kaldharma by practicing Anshan[12]

**232 BC –** Kalinga regained independence from Mauryan empire post Ashoka's death[13]. Kalinga's ruler, **Vudharaja** (Vridharaja) **built 11 caves** on KumariParvat for the use of Jain monks and nuns during monsoon[14].



Udaygiri Caves (Source: Wikimedia Commons)



**165 BC** – Vudharaja’s son, **MahameghvanBhikhshurajKharavel** ascended to the throne of Kalinga[15].

**157 BC** – **Kharavel attacked and defeated Magadha**, which was then ruled by Bahasatimita or Pushyamitra of the Shunga dynasty **and recovered the idol of Kalinga Jina** which was captured by the Nandas[16].

**156 BC** –The temple on KumariParvat was renovated and the **idol of Kalinga Jina was reinstalled** in the presence of **Arya Shri Susthitsuri** and **Achrya Shri Supratibuddhsuri**[17]. Both the Acharyas conducted one crore chants of the holy “Suri Mantra” there.[18]



Image of the Apsidal Chaitya structure at Udaygiri where the Kalinga Jina was installed



Top view of the Apsidal Chaitya structure at Udaygiri



To preserve the knowledge of Jain Agams, **Kharavel initiated an AgamVanchana (council)** for a verbal **compilation of the Agams and especially the Purvas (Drishtivad)**. Kharavel invited Acharya Balissah, Acharya Bodhiling, Devacharya, Acharya Dharmasena, Acharya Nakshatra along with 200 Jinakalpi monks (naked monks who used to imitate the life and penances of Tirthankars as per Shwetambar Agams; now extinct.) and Sthavirakalpi Acharyas (Cloth bearer monks) namely Arya Susthitisuri, Acharya Supratibuddhsuri, Acharya Umasvati, Acharya Shyamacharya along with 300 Sthavirakalpi monks. Arya Poini along with 300 nuns and 700 Shravaks- Shravikas were also present during the compilation[19].

Based on the compilation, **following scriptures were composed** later[20] [21]–

- **“Pragnapana Sutra”** (Pannavana) by Arya Shri Shyamacharya
- **“Angavidya Sutra”** (from a Purva named Vidyaprasad) by Arya Shri Balissah
- **“Tattvartha Sutra”** by Acharya Umasvati.

Kharavel also **constructed rock cut cave shelters** for Jain monks on both the hills of KumariParvat (Udaygiri and Khandgiri). On one hill, he constructed caves for Jinakalpi monks (Udaygiri) and on the other he constructed caves for the Sthavirkalpi monks (Khandagiri) [22].

**152 BC** – The **Hathigumpha inscription** was carved on the KumariParvat (Udaygiri) which mentions the life of Kharavel in Prakrit. The inscription begins with the words[23] – **“NamArhantanam, NamSavasidhanam”** making it the earliest archaeological evidence of Navkar mantra. Other important highlights of the inscription are –

- In the 8th year of his reign, Kharavel expelled members of the Ajivika sect (followers of MakkhaliGosala) from the Barabar caves in Gaya and mutilated their inscriptions[24] [25].
- In the 12th year of his reign, Kharavela caused panic amongst the people of Magadha by driving (his) elephants into the Sugamgiya (Palace), made the King of Magadha, Bahasatimita, bow at his feet and **recovered (the image) 'the Jina of Kalinga'** which had been taken away by King Nanda[26] [27] [28].
- In the 13th year of his reign, on the Kumari Hill where the Wheel of Conquest had been well-revolved (i.e., the religion of Jina had been preached), **he offered respectfully royal maintenances, silks and white clothes to the Jain monks who by their austerities had extinguished the round of lives**. As a layman, Kharaval realised the nature of “jiva” and

“deha” and brought a Council of the wise Jain ascetics and sages, from hundred (i.e., all) quarters near the temple of Kalinga Jina on the top of the hill, with stones brought from many miles (yojanas). He restored and renovated the Arhat temple on the Kumari Hill by spending twenty-five hundred thousands; and caused to be compiled expeditiously the (text) of the seven-fold Angas (Jain Agams)[\[29\]](#)



The Hathigumpha inscription

**~150 BC** – Maharaja **Kudepasiri** succeeded Kharavel as the ruler of Kalinga[\[30\]](#). He also built caves for Jain monks on KumariParvat. Inscriptions in the Manchapuri cave in the KumariParvat (Udaygiri) mentions his name[\[31\]](#). **The cave also depicts a relief representing two male figures and two female figures worshipping the Kalinga Jina**[\[32\]](#).



Relief in Manchapuri Cave depicting the worship of Kalinga Jina (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

**40 AD -50 AD** – Due to an acute famine in northern India, **Acharya Vajraswami** (who had the knowledge of the 10 purvas) arrived at the coastal town of **Puri**[\[33\]](#) where there was a **Jain temple dedicated to Shri JirawalaParshwanath**[\[34\]](#). He also successfully made the local Buddhist king embrace Jainism. **Currently a Jain idol can be seen on the outer walls of the JagannathPuri Temple.**



JagannathkiVividhPehchan by DevduttPattnaik

**2nd Century - 3rd Century AD** – A tribe called *Murundas*, who ruled over an extensive territory from Chota Nagpur region of Bihar to the district of Ganjam in Odisha patronized Jainism[35] [36]. Gold coins excavated from Sisupalgarh near Bhubaneswar show that **MaharajadhirajaDharmadamadara** who belonged to



the *Murunda* tribe was a patron of Jainism[37]. This fact is corroborated by the Jain text *PrabodhChintamani*. The last ruler of the Murunda tribe also practiced Jainism and worshipped the Nirgranth tradition (Jainism)[38]

**Early 4th Century AD - Satrubhanja** ruled from the Keonjhar district of Odisha and the **Asanpat inscription** from Keonjhar district states that he donated large amount of wealth to Bhikshus, **Nirgranth**s although he himself remained a staunch follower of Brahmanism[39].

**7th Century AD** – Buddhist traveler **Hiuen-T'sang**'s records state that Kalinga had 10 Buddhist Sangharamas (monasteries) with 100 priests and 500 temples with different sorts of unbelievers most of whom were Nirgranth (Jains)[40]. He adds that **Buddhist temples were about 100 in numbers whereas those of (Jain) Tirthankars were more than 1000**[41].

The Inscriptions of **Shailodbhava dynasty** who ruled over the Kangoda region (parts of the present-day Ganjam, Khordha and Puri districts in the Odisha state) inform that Jains followed extreme penance and austerity to attain supreme knowledge[42]. The Banapura copper plate records that Shailodbhava king Dharmaraja II alias Sri Manabhita's wife **Kalyandevi** was a Jain and **she made grants for Jain monks** namely Arhatacharya Nasichandra and his disciple EkasataPrabuddhachandra **who wore only one piece of cloth**[43].

**10-11th Century AD** – The **Somavamshi dynasty** gave royal patronage to Jainism and erected Jain temples at various places including Bhubaneswar[44]. King **Uddyotakeshari** of the Somavamshi dynasty **built cave temples and installed idols of 24 Tirthankars on the KumariParvat** (Khandgiri) as per the three inscriptions engraved inside the Lalatendukesari cave and Navamuni cave of the Khandagiri hill [45] [46].

**12th Century AD** – **Ganga dynasty** rose into power in Kalinga who were staunch followers of Vaishnavism. AnantavarmanChodaganga constructed the temple of Shri Jagannath at Puri. A **stone inscription**[47] from **Bhogpur** village (Bhimilipatnam Taluk of the Vishakhapatnam district) reveals that in 1178 A.D (11th regnal year of AnantavarmaRajaraja II of the Ganga dynasty) one **KannamNayak** (Sreshthi), a subordinate of the Utkal King, **installed a sacred image of Tirthankar at Ramaramagiri** (the modern Ramatirtham) in a temple called RajarajaJinalaya which is undoubtedly named after his overlord, Rajaraja II.

Thereafter, the presence of Jainism gradually declined in the region because of lack of royal patronage and intolerant attitude of other sects.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCES OF ANTIQUITY OF JAINISM IN ODISHA

Based on the documented resources available in Research papers, museum directories, historical publications and Archaeological newsletters, **I have been able to list more than 120 cities/ villages**[\[48\]](#) [\[49\]](#) [\[50\]](#) **where Jain archaeological remains** have been found within the state boundaries of Odisha. The entire list has been provided at the end of the article.

It is important to note that **the list is not exhaustive** and there could be various other sites as well. I have tried to sort them from north to south based on their districts and locations. **Out of the 30 districts in Odisha, Jain historical remains have been identified in 15 districts** in form of idols of Tirthankars, Yaksh/ Yakshini's, votive tablets etc. Five Districts namely Koraput, Jajpur, Balasore, Cuttack and Khordha account for more than 76% of the Jain historical remains.

**While most of these idols are kept in Hindu temples** and worshipped as Bhairav's, Gramdevata's, Devi's etc. some are well preserved in the museums in the state. **Sadly, animal sacrifices are offered in front of many idols which are worshipped as local deities.**

### Mayurbhanj District

Major Jain archaeological sites can be found in the towns of **Baripada, Khiching** and **Badasahi** in Mayurbhanj district. The **Jagannath temple of Baripada** houses three Jain images out of which two images date back to the 9th century AD. The outer wall of **MaaKichakeswari Temple**, Khiching depict a relief showing a Jinakalpi Jain monk giving a sermon to a King/ prince. Jain images are also preserved in the Baripada state museum and Khiching museum.



Jain idols from Mayurbhanj District, Odisha

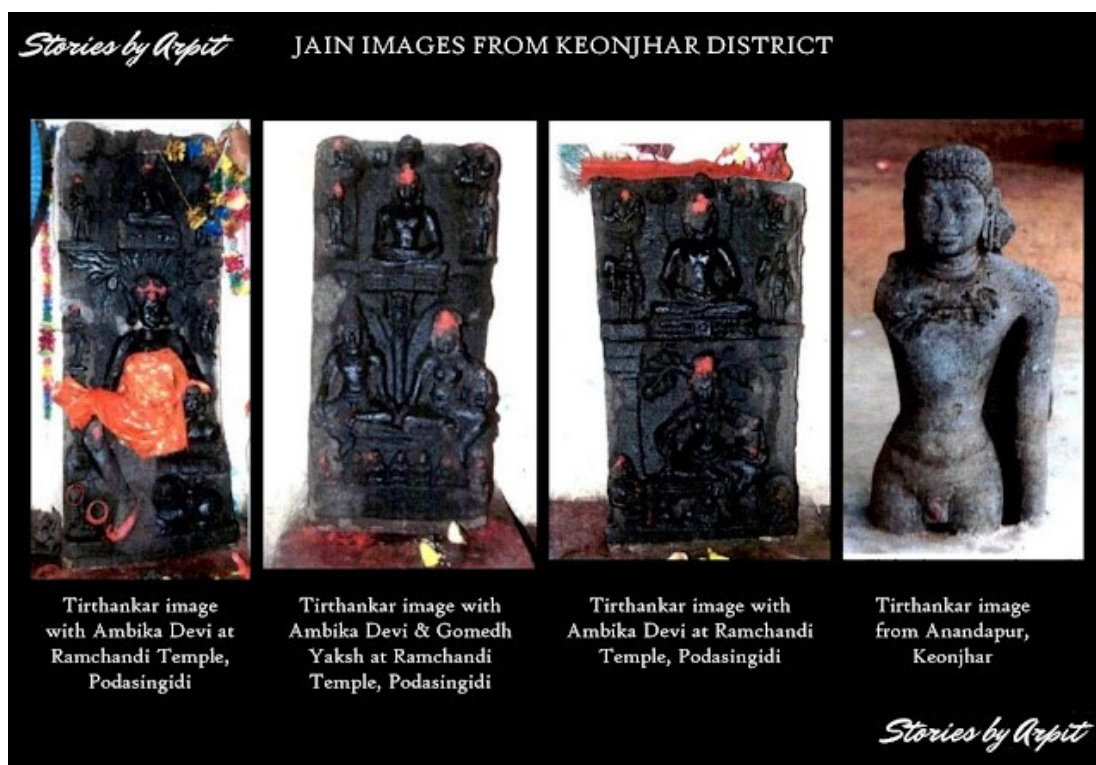
## Keonjhar District

The most notable site in this district is **Podasingidi** where many Tirthankar idols have been excavated. Most of the idols are preserved in the Jain Heritage Sculpture Shed maintained by the ASI and Odisha State museum in Bhubaneswar date back to 7th to 12th century AD. Rare images of **Ambika with Tirthankars** are worshipped by locals at Ramchandi Temple in Podasingidi. The Baula hill in the Anandapur subdivision has a Jain temple known as Yogichhata. The hill also has rock cut caves, which were used by Jain monks.





Jain idols from Podasingidi, Keonjhar District, Odisha



Jain idols from Keonjhar District.

## Balasore District

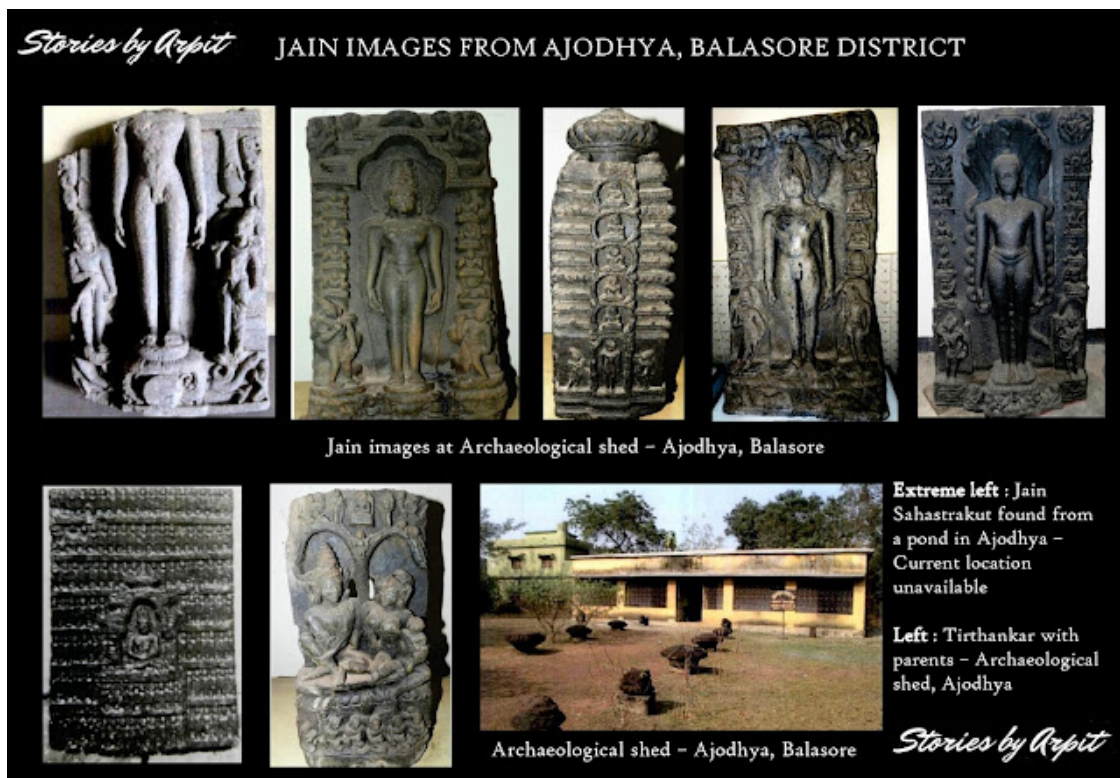
With the **third highest** number of Jain historical remains in the State of Odisha, **Balasore District** has **16 Jain sites**. The **Narayan Temple** at the village



of **Ada** and the Archaeological shed at **Ajodhya** preserve most of the images. Sadly, the images at the Narayan temple lie in ruins, neglected completely.



Jain idols from Narayana Temple, Ada, Balasore District



Jain idols from Ajodhya, Balasore District



Jain idols from Ajodhya, Balasore District

## Bhadrak District

Although only three Jain sites have been identified in this District, the site of **Charampa** is a very significant one as many medieval era Jain idols were found from here. A colossal 6 feet high idol of Lord Adinath dating to the 9th century AD was excavated from Charampa along with **unique idols of Shri Ajitnath and Shri Shantinath Bhagwan bearing cut marks** which are kept at Odisha State museum, Bhubaneswar. The double concave cut marks found on those idols indicate to votary of the faith of the extreme path followed by the Tirthankars to achieve salvation. These idols also have been assigned to the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. One idol of **Shri Parshwanath** is being worshipped as **Kharakia Thakurani** in the Charampa village by the locals.





Jain idols from Charampa, Bhadrak District

### Jajpur&Kendrapada Districts

The Jajpur District has the **second highest number of Jain sites** across Odisha (23 to be precise). Major sites include **Jajpur town, Baruadi, Narasinghpur, Kantabania, Bansabadi, Kuansa** among others. At **Narayana Chowk**, Shri Parshwanath Bhagwan is worshipped as **Anant Vasudev** whereas an unidentified Tirthankar image is worshipped as **Vishnu in Narasinghpur**. The **Hanseshvar temple** and **Sitaleshvar temple** have many Jain idols in their custody. A **Chaturmukhi shrine is used as a base for a garden pot in Narasinghpur** while multiple Chaturmukhi shrines lie scattered in the fields of **Nayagarh**.

*Stories by Arpit*

## JAIN IMAGES FROM JAJPUR DISTRICT - I



Hanseshvar Temple, Jajpur



Sitaleshvar Temple, Jajpur



Baruadi



Shri Parshwanath worshipped as  
Anant Vasudev, Narayana Chowk



Sana Bazar,  
Jajpur

*Stories by Arpit*

## Jain idols from Jajpur District

*Stories by Arpit*

## JAIN IMAGES FROM JAJPUR DISTRICT - II



Dashashvamedh  
Ghat



Narasinghpur



Tirthankar image  
converted to a Vishnu  
image, Narasinghpur



Chaturmukhi shrine  
used as a base for garden  
pot, Narasinghpur



Kartar



Chandigola



Hatadiha



Kantabania



Taranga Sagarpur

*Stories by Arpit*

## Jain idols from Jajpur District



*Stories by Arpit*

### JAIN IMAGES FROM JAJPUR DISTRICT - III



Bansabadi



Champeipal



Sripura



Tendulidiha



Votive tablet depicting Tirthankar,  
Gandhar and Purvadhar, Kuansa



Madhupur



Naguan



*Stories by Arpit*

Jain idols from Jajpur District

*Stories by Arpit*

### JAIN IMAGES FROM JAJPUR DISTRICT - IV



Ratnagiri, Jajpur



Kamudei Pitha



Chaturmukhi shrines lying ruined on the  
fields, Nayagarh

*Stories by Arpit*

Jain idols from Jajpur District

## Cuttack District

Scattered across 12 different cities/ towns, Jain sites across Cuttack District are very prominent. **Pratapnagari** near Cuttack preserves a maximum number of Jain idols and a small museum has been constructed on the site. While most of idols at **Choudwar** have been **badly painted and worshipped as Shiva, ParshwanathBhagwan** is worshipped as **Anantavasudeva** at **Bhanapur**. Cuttack has temples of both the Digambar and Shwetambar sect, but the **Digambar Jain temple** preserves very beautiful ancient idols dating back to 11th century AD. The walls and pillars of **Sobhaneshwar Temple, Niali** show images of Tirthankars in Kayotsarg mudra which suggest that this was a Jain temple in ancient times.

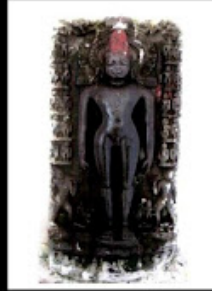


Jain idols from Cuttack District



*Stories by Arpit*

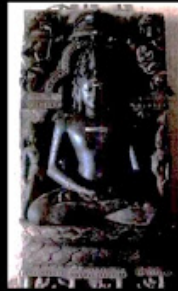
# JAIN IMAGES FROM CUTTACK DIST.



Adaspur, Cuttack Dist.



The walls and pillars of Sobhaneshwar Temple, Niali show images of Tirthankars in Kayotsarg mudra which suggest that this was a Jain temple in ancient times



Nibharan



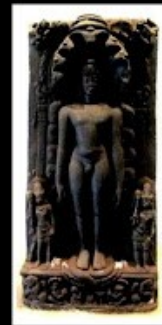
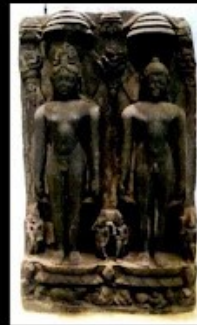
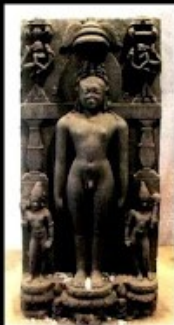
Dolamundai

*Stories by Arpit*

## Jain idols from Cuttack District

*Stories by Arpit*

# JAIN IMAGES FROM PRATAPNAGARI - CUTTACK DIST.



Jain Heritage Museum, Pratapnagari



*Stories by Arpit*

## Jain idols from Pratapnagari, Cuttack District





Jain idols from Choudwar, Cuttack District

## Jagatsinghpur District

Nuadhana, Sahada, Nasik are major sites in Jagatsinghpur district. A Jain idol in **Nuadhana** is worshipped as **Gramdevati** (village deity) and animal sacrifices are made in front of the idol.



Jain idols from Jagatsinghpur District

## Khordha District

Blessed with the most important Jain center in the entire state of Odisha, **KumariParvat, (now known as Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves)** the Khordha District has 12 Jain sites in its precincts. The town of **Sisupalgarh** near Bhubaneshwar was known as **Tosali** and was **visited by Shri Mahavir Swami** Bhagwan. Fragments of idols of Jain Tirthankars have been found from the walls of temples in Bhubaneshwar and the Odisha State Museum in the city preserves various Jain artefacts. A **clothed Tirthankar idol** can also be seen on the **outer walls of the Somnath Temple in Budhapada**. In **Panchagaon** a votive tablet depicting **Arhat, Gandhars&Purvadhars**, has been found.



Jain idols from Udaygiri - Khandagiri, Khordha District



*Stories by Arpit* JAIN IMAGES FROM BHUBANESHWAR, KHORDHA DISTRICT



Jain images from Bhubaneswar at Odisha State Museum



Tirthankar images on the pillars of Brahmeshwar Temple, Bhubaneswar

*Stories by Arpit*

Jain idols from Bhubaneswar, Khordha District

*Stories by Arpit* JAIN IMAGES FROM KHORDHA DISTRICT



Remains of a temple believed to house Kalinga Jina at some point of time at Tosali, Sisupalgarh



Panchagaon



Budhapada



Clothed Tirthankar idol at Budhapada, Somnath Temple



Votive tablet depicting Arhat, Gandhars & Purvadhars, Panchagaon



Kenduli



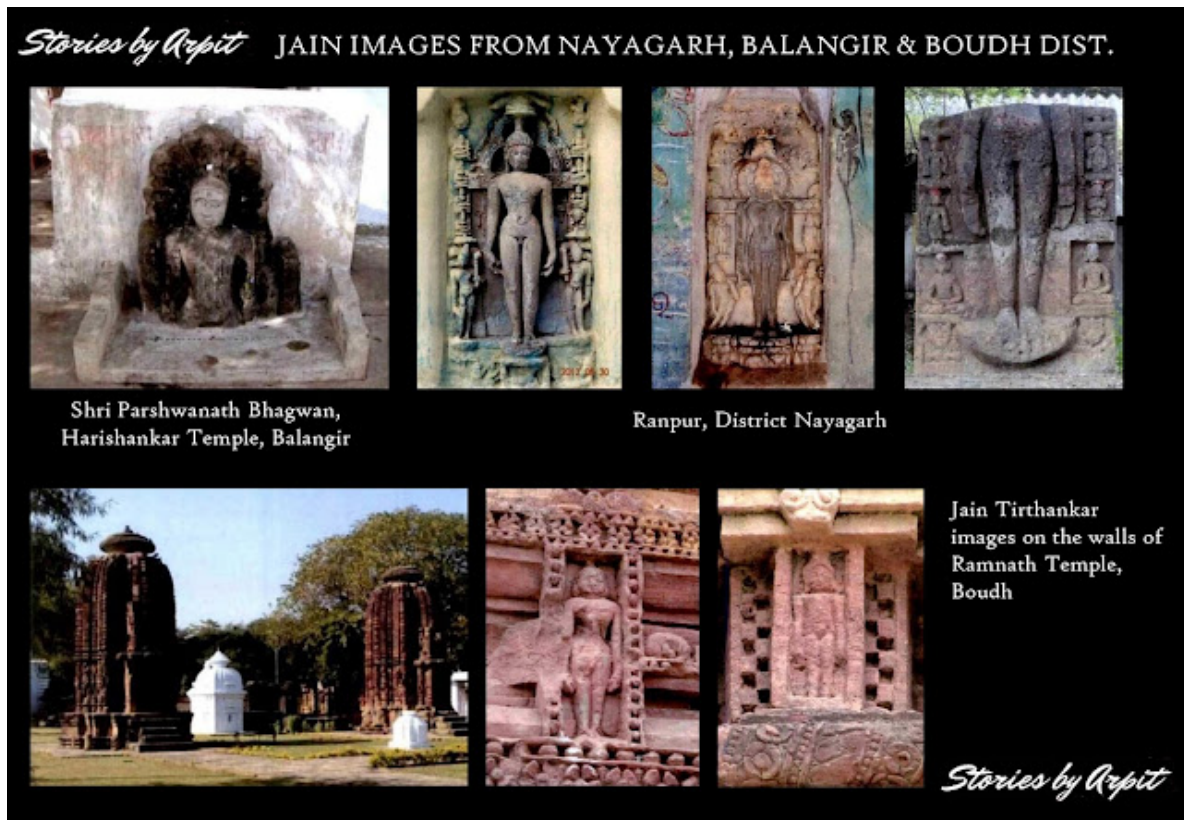
Banapur

*Stories by Arpit*

## Nayagarh, Bolangir and Boudh Districts

On the western parts of Odisha, sparse presence of Jainism can be seen. Only four

Jain sites have been identified in these three districts. A **broken idol of Shri Parshwanath Bhagwan** can be found lying in ruins at the famous **Harishankar Temple in Balangir**. While many Jain images can be found in **Ranpur** the walls of **Ramnath Temple, Boudh** have images of Jain Tirthankars which indicate that this was a Jain temple earlier.



Jain idols from Nayagarh, Balangir and Boudh Districts

## Puri District

Apart from the **Jagannath temple at Puri** where **2 Jain idols** can be found on the outer walls, Jain remains can be found in **Barala, Beguniapada, Pindola, Lataharan** among others. At **Jiolo Sasana**, an idol of Ambika with a Tirthankar is worshipped as Bhagvati.





## Koraput&Rayagada Districts

With the **highest number of Jain historical remains**, **Koraput** in the southern part of Odisha, which shares its borders with Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, **has 31 Jain sites** while Rayagada has one Jain historical site. **Subei** a village 16 Kms from Sunabeda and 34 Kms away from Koraput has the relics of a Jain temple, containing rare images of the Tirthankars. Other important sites include **Kachela**, **Jamunda**, **Jeypore** among others. Recent excavations in **Biripada** village in Rayagada has revealed various metal idols dating back to the 9th century AD. Further excavations are expected to reveal more such places in future.

*Stories by Arpit* JAIN IMAGES FROM SUBEI, KORAPUT DISTRICT



Jain images and temples at Subei, Koraput

*Stories by Arpit*

Jain idols and temples at Subei, Koraput

*Stories by Arpit* JAIN IMAGES FROM KORAPUT DISTRICT



Kachela, Koraput

B.Singhpur, Koraput



Boriguma

Jamunda, Koraput

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Jain idols from Koraput District



*Stories by Arpit* JAIN IMAGES FROM KORAPUT DISTRICT



Bhagvati Temple, Jeypore – Chakreshvari Devi worshipped as Bhagvati

Kamata



Jeypore District Museum

Charmula

Phupugaon

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Jain idols from Koraput District

*Stories by Arpit* JAIN IMAGES FROM KORAPUT DISTRICT



Phampuni



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Erenga, Jalalput



Deorli, Kotpad



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Deva Honjor



Chatua



Konga



Godh Bodra

*Stories by Arpit*

Jain idols from Koraput District





Jain idols from Koraput&Raygada Districts

The entire list of 123 cities/ towns/ villages in Odisha with Jain heritage sites is as below-

Sl.	City/ Village	District	Location of Jain historical remains
1	Baripada	Mayurbhanj	1. Jagannath Temple 2. Baripada District Museum
2	Khiching	Mayurbhanj	1. MaaKichakeswari Temple Khiching 2. Khiching Museum
3	Badasahi	Mayurbhanj	Ruins of Jain Chaturmukhi Shrine
4	Podasingidi	Keonjhar	1. Jain Heritage Sculpture Shed, ASI 2. Ramachandi Temple
5	Ghasipur/ Chasipur	Keonjhar	Jaina Sculpture Shed , ASI
6	Anandapur	Keonjhar	Baula hill ranges - Yogichhata Temple
7	Bancho	Keonjhar	Unknown
8	Ada	Balasore	Narayan Mandir, Ada
9	Ajodhya	Balasore	Archaeological shed - State Archaeology Dept
10	Puruna	Balasore	Baneshvar Temple, Puruna
11	Bhimpur	Balasore	Private collection of BaikunthNath Dey
12	Balighat	Balasore	Kali Mandir, Balighat
13	Kabara	Balasore	1. Bhramanidevi Shrine 2. Barakhanda Temple

14	Balasore	Balasore	1. Biswanatha Temple Complex 2. GadaChandi Temple
15	Kansa	Balasore	Gramdevti Shrine
16	Majhikia	Balasore	Viswesvaraya Temple, Majhikia
17	Nilagiri	Balasore	Mandalshri Shrine, Nilagiri
18	Jaleswar	Balasore	1. Martasol 2. Panchaghanta 3. Sasanbard
19	Basta	Balasore	Unknown
20	Bardhanpur	Balasore	Unknown
21	Pundal	Balasore	Unknown
22	Kupari	Balasore	Unknown
23	Gundel	Balasore	Unknown
24	Khadipada	Bhadrak	Kailashesvara Temple, near Khadipada
25	Charampa	Bhadrak	1. Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar 2. Image of Parshwanath converted into KharakhiaThakurani art Charampa
26	Kushan Nagar	Bhadrak	Worshipped as local deity
27	Jajpur	Jajpur	Hamsesvara Temple
28	Baruadi	Jajpur	1. Chandi Devi Temple 2. Hatkesvara Temple
29	Sitalesvara	Jajpur	1. BasuleiThakurani Temple 2. Jatesvara Temple 3. Sitalesvara Temple
30	Narayana Chowk	Jajpur	Parsvanatha worshipped as Ananta Vasudev
31	DasasvamedhGhat	Jajpur	Ganesh Temple
32	Sana Bazar	Jajpur	Dharmesvara Temple
33	Narasinghpur	Jajpur	Unknown
34	Kartar	Jajpur	Jagulei Shrine
35	Chandigola	Jajpur	Chandesvara Temple
36	Shoradiha	Jajpur	Phalesvara Temple
37	Hatadiha	Jajpur	Jaina Sculpture Shed
38	Kantabania	Jajpur	Barunei Temple
39	Bansabadi	Jajpur	JaguleiGramadevati Temple
40	Taranga Sagarpur	Jajpur	Unknown
41	Champeipal	Jajpur	BudhiJagulei Shrine
42	Sripura	Jajpur	Bhandesvara Temple
43	Kuansa	Jajpur	Mangala Temple
44	Tentulidiha	Jajpur	Unknown
45	Madhupur	Jajpur	Jagannath Temple
46	Naguan	Jajpur	1. Brahmanidevi Temple 2. Shiva Temple 3. Gramdevati Shrine
47	Ratnagiri	Jajpur	Unknown
48	KamudeiPitha	Jajpur	Unknown

49	Nayagarh	Jajpur	Multiple chaturmukhas scattered in fields
50	Kuanrapur	Kendrapara	Harishankareshwara Temple
51	Cuttack	Cuttack	Digambar Jain temple, Choudhury Bazar
52	Baidyesvara	Cuttack	Dhabalesvar Temple, Baidyesvara
53	Pratapnagari	Cuttack	Jain Heritage Museum
54	Bhanapur	Cuttack	ParshwanathBhagwan worshipped as Anantavasudeva, Anantavasudeva Temple, Bhanapur
55	Lendura-Bhagawanpura,	Cuttack	Chaturmukhi Shrine
56	Choudwar	Cuttack	1. Siva Temple, Servants of India Society. Rushabdevprabhu idol completely converted into Shiva idol 2. Ward No. 4 3. MathaSahi 4. Kapaleshwara Temple 5. Bharandi 6. Radhabhallava Temple 7. Chitresvara Temple
57	Athagarh	Cuttack	Tirthankar image carved out of natural laterite bed
58	Kantola	Cuttack	Adyashakti Temple
59	Adaspur	Cuttack	1. Swapnesvara Temple, 2. Nilkantheshwar Temple
60	Mahatabpari	Cuttack	RushiThakurani Shrine
61	Nibharan	Cuttack	Gramesvara Temple
62	Niali	Cuttack	Sobhanesvara Temple
63	Nuadhana	Jagatsinghpur	1. Kapilesvara Temple 2. Archaeological mound 3. Gramdevati Shrine
64	Sahada	Jagatsinghpur	Subamesvara Temple
65	Nasik	Jagatsinghpur	Khandeswara Temple
66	Manapur-Gadhama	Jagatsinghpur	Unknown
67	Kundeswar	Jagatsinghpur	Gatesvara Temple
68	Anla	Jagatsinghpur	Sola PuaMaa Temple
69	Udaygiri Hill	Khordha	Caves under ASI
70	Khandgiri Hill	Khordha	Caves under ASI Digambar Jain temple
71	Bhuvaneshwar	Khordha	1. Orissa State Museum 2. Brahmesvara Temple
72	Sisupalgarh	Khordha	Ruined Temple
73	Jaipurpatana	Khordha	Nistaruni Temple
74	Sunderpada	Khordha	Kalia-Sani Gramadevati Shrine
75	Jamukoli	Khordha	Baghei Devi Temple
76	Panchagaon	Khordha	Jaina Sculpture Shed
77	Banapur	Khordha	Daksha-Prajapati Temple

78	Budhapada	Khordha	Somanath Temple
79	Bagalpur	Khordha	Jaina Sculpture Shed
80	Kenduli	Khordha	1. BaruneiGramadevati Shrine 2. Jajnesvari Temple
81	Ranpur	Nayagarh	Svapnesvara Temple
82	Gobindpur	Nayagarh	Kaunri Devi Temple
83	Gandhamardhan hills	Bolangir	Harishankar Temple, Balangir
84	Boudh	Boudh	Ramnatha Temple Complex
85	Puri	Puri	1. Jagganath Temple 2. Puri District Museum
86	JioloSasana	Puri	Bhagavati Temple. Ambika with NeminathBhagwan worshipped as Bhagavati
87	Pindola	Puri	Bageswari Temple
88	Beguniapada	Puri	Amrutesvara Temple
89	Barala	Puri	Balunkesvara Temple
90	Lataharan	Puri	Unknown
91	Naiguan	Puri	Ambikei Shrine, PurunaOsian
92	Subei	Koraput	Jain Temples
93	Kachela	Koraput	Jain Temple ruins
94	B.Singhpur	Koraput	1. Sankulei Shrine 2. Sculpture Shed
95	Boriguma	Koraput	Bhairav Temple
96	Jamunda	Koraput	Jaina Sculpture Shed
97	Kamata	Koraput	Unknown
98	Charmula	Koraput	Unknown
99	Jeypore	Koraput	1. Bhagwati Temple 2. Gangadei Temple 3. Kali Temple 4. Jeypore District Museum
100	Phupugaon	Koraput	Phupugaon, Kundra
101	Phampuni	Koraput	Unknown
102	Kenduguda	Koraput	Unknown
103	Umbel	Koraput	Unknown
104	Konga	Koraput	Jain Temple
105	Paliva	Koraput	Jain Temple ruins
106	Chatua	Koraput	Chatua, Nandapur
107	Goriahandi	Koraput	Goriahandi, Kundra
108	Erenga	Koraput	Erenga, Jalaput
109	Kashipur	Koraput	Kashipur, Rayagada
110	Deorli	Koraput	Deorli, Kotpad
111	Deva Honjor	Koraput	Deva Honjor, Nandapur
112	Umerkote	Koraput	BhadrasilaPadara
113	Chikima Cave	Koraput	Chikima cave, Jeypore block
114	NarayanpalBastar	Koraput	Unknown

115	Banamaliput	Koraput	Banamaliput, Nandapur
116	GadhBodra	Koraput	GadhBodra, Bastar
117	Injanpur	Koraput	Unknown
118	Padua	Koraput	Unknown
119	Bhairabsinghpur	Koraput	Unknown
120	Kotpad	Koraput	Unknown
121	Charmula	Koraput	Unknown
122	JhodraPoraja Village	Koraput	JainaNisadhi
123	Biripada	Rayagada	Archaeological Mound

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# **Elements of Social Well Being in the Pluralism of Jain Logic**

Kshitij Jain and Shreyansh Jain

## **Introduction**

The present discourse on national development and prosperity has gone much beyond than simple socio-economic parameters and has been taking into account factors like harmony among various groups, stability in the society as well as inclusion of each and every one for betterment. In short, no country can provide prosperity and happiness to its people if there is a lack social well-being. The same applies to the global scenario where global peace and cooperation have become vital for the humankind.

The harsh reality which the world faces right now is the deterioration of social well-being and harmony at every level. Rapid changes in the social patterns of human civilization have caused several repercussions due to which, social well-being of people is diminishing- something everyone will agree to.

The Jain logic which is based upon the central philosophy of Anekanta and its subsets including Syadvada, Saptbhanginaya and Nayavada; provides us an alternative approach towards handling conflicts and difficult situations and maintaining our social well-being. The pluralistic approach of Jain logic due to its relative nature is the need of the hour in the present day world where thoughts, ideologies and institutions are at a constant clash.

Through its ideas of relative truth, co-existence of multiple worldviews and plural nature of realities; Jain logic is capable of providing us solutions for the modern day socio-civilizational problems and leading us to social well-being. Therefore, this paper will focus on five aspects of Jain logic that are relevant for modern social well-being namely- Conflict Resolution through a counter view to Ethnocentrism, Multiplicity of Worldviews, the Idea of Co-existence, Counter to One-Sided Viewpoints and Importance of Every Opinion. The paper will



attempt to analyse these five aspects by applying the central philosophy of Anekanta and its methodology of Syadvada and will ultimately present their relevance in the modern social system.

### **Resolving Conflicts: Counter View to Ethnocentrism**

The human society is an ever-evolving institution which has seen rapid as well as drastic changes in the last few decades as the result of several factors working together. The society today is becoming more complex, globalised as well as increasingly cosmopolitan in nature. The advancements in socio-political freedoms have also enhanced individual rights altering the dynamics of every country and society. At the same time, these developments bring their own challenges. Growths of factors like cosmopolitanism and individual rights have also led to rise in conflicts within the society. A major cause of conflicts is the clash of viewpoints and ideologies which are present in the same social landscape. Unfortunately, these differences in thoughts and opinions are becoming ever hostile with time.

One of the several problematic issues responsible for hostile clash of ideologies is Ethnocentrism. Indiana University identifies Ethnocentrism as-

*“One common mistake that people from all cultures are guilty of is Ethnocentrism- placing one’s own culture and corresponding beliefs, values and behaviors in the center. When we do this, we view our position as normal and right and evaluate all other cultural systems against our own.”*

In the core of Ethnocentrism lay the same issues of non-acceptance of other viewpoints and absolutist tendency regarding one’s own ideas. This phenomenon should also be seen at the individual level at which people are becoming adamant about their thought systems. The Jain logic through its principles of multi-faceted reality and presence of innumerable aspects of truth; provides an efficient refutation for the ethnocentric view. The doctrine of ‘Naya’ accepts the presence of relative truth in every viewpoint, leading us to notions of relativity and refuting absolutism.

The Jain logic provides solutions for ethnocentrism through the inherent receptiveness in its worldview resulted by the ideas of relative truth and pluralism. It advocates for constant engagement and exchange of thoughts against Ethnocentrism which believes only its cultural worldview to be right. Sutrakritanga says the following about those who do not engage in arguments and discourse-

*“Thus some (wrong philosophers) do not apply to others for arguments, but they continue to err because they believe that their own arguments are right”*

Hence, every culture and belief system must be open to positive engagement as propounded by the Jain logic which is the only effective way to counter Ethnocentrism. This spirit of engagement is further seen in the same text where ideological chauvinism is condemned by the following sutra-

*“Some say that they will be perfected and sound. On the head of Perfection some men are infatuated with their own doctrines.”*

The Jain doctrine of ‘Naya’ accepts the possibility of presence of reality in every statement. Hemchandra points out to this plurality of truth in his work ‘Anyayoga-Vyavachheda-Dvatrinshika’ and says that Reality is possessed of innumerable characters, it is not possible to explain it any other way.

Hence, one is expected to engage with other ideas with an open-mind and without prejudice or bias. Such an approach will in itself make us more tolerant and accepting of other cultures, beliefs and ideas. The history of Jain logic itself is a testimony to the spirit of engagement heralded by the Jain scholars throughout the journey of Jain discourse. The Jain logicians interacted with other school of thoughts with a pure academic spirit and even wrote commentaries on the texts of the rival schools. Ideas of the other schools were not discarded and derogated but were tolerated and respected by the Jains. Conflicts can be resolved with ease if we can give more importance to the dictum of logic rather than personal prejudices. The same is expressed by Manibhadra who says that-

*“I have no bias for Mahavira, and none against Kapila and others. Reasonable words alone are acceptable to me, whosoever they might be”*

Therefore, Ethnocentrism; which keeps one's own cultural viewpoint in the centre can be replaced by the Jain logic and its subsequent approach that believes in equal importance of every standpoint and every belief, culture and thought system. The Jain Logic opens up endless possibilities of exploring truth for an individual. It does not expect a person to follow its principles; rather it inspires them to readily accept different perspectives and treat every idea as a potential truth, providing an entirely different way of seeing the world and receiving ideas which clearly provides a counter for ethnocentric beliefs.

The application of Syadvada in our engagements can help us in understanding the opinions and views of others in respect with their perspective and not through our opinions. This will automatically give rise to plurality and receptiveness, proving to be an effective solution for conflicts of ideas and viewpoints.

### **Multiplicity of Worldviews**

Another problem faced by the twenty-first century human society is the extremity creeping into opinions and views. The tendency to see everything in the lens of 'black and white' is caused by extreme standpoints, sharpening ideological differences even more. While the general belief is to view things from the lens of positive and negative, thus; choosing two extremities, the Jain logic holds into view that there exist innumerable worldviews which are different and independent in their own respect. According to the philosophy of Syadvada, every judgment is made in a particular discourse and context and therefore, should be understood in that particular perspective.

The story of the seven blind men popular as 'andhagajanyaya' in Jain discourse should be mentioned here to reflect the present-day problem of extremity in worldview and the Jain idea of relative judgment. A group of blind men heard that a strange animal, called an elephant, had been brought to the town, but none of them were aware its shape and form. Out of curiosity, they said: "We must inspect and know it by touch of which we are capable." So, they sought it out, and when they found it they groped about it. In the case of the first one person, whose hand landed on the trunk, said "This being is like a drain pipe."



For another one whose hand reached its ear, it seemed like a kind of fan. As for another person, whose hand was upon its leg, said, "I perceive the shape of the elephant to be like a pillar." And in the case of the one who placed his hand upon its back said "Indeed, this elephant is like a throne"

Now, each of these presented a true aspect when he related what he had gained from experiencing the elephant. None of them had strayed from the true description of the elephant. Yet they fell short of fathoming the true appearance of the elephant. This example reflects the one-sidedness towards objects in our approach and the subsequent belief of absolutism in that particular viewpoint.

The Jain worldview is opposite to this tendency and believes in multi-faceted nature of reality. This multiplicity of worldviews is expressed in the epistemological structure of 'Saptbhanginaya', which is actually the seven different ways to state an object. These seven viewpoints of 'Saptbhanginaya' are-

1. **Syād-asti**—"in some ways it is"
2. **Syād-nāsti**—"in some ways it is not"
3. **Syād-asti-nāsti**—"in some ways it is and it is not"
4. **Syād-asti-avaktavyaḥ**—"in some ways it is and it is indescribable"
5. **Syād-nāsti-avaktavyaḥ**—"in some ways it is not and it is indescribable"
6. **Syād-asti-nāsti-avaktavyaḥ**—"in some ways it is, it is not and it is indescribable"
7. **Syād-avaktavyaḥ**—"in some ways it is indescribable"

Therefore, the dichotomy of 'affirmative' and 'negative' judgments believed by the modern logic is replaced by a seven-fold methodology of judgment that can occupy contrasting viewpoints at the same time. Even the views which depict the indescribable nature of the object, describe that indescribability from a particular point which means that from some other perspective, the same object can be of a well-defined nature. This also means that a truth which can't be fully perceived has to be accepted with the same affirmativeness, the alternative definitive modes of which are depicted by the last four viewpoints.

Another special feature of the doctrine of Saptbhanginaya is the synthetic approach acquired by it, through which all possible views of truth can be incorporated. This approach accommodates the multiplicity and diversity of viewpoints, enabling reconciliation among all of them. The dispute between Eternalism and Momentarism can also be reconciled through the relative methodology of Saptbhanginaya which can easily accommodate both the worldviews with similar acceptability. Through the epistemological structure of Saptabhanginaya , Jainism balances between idealism and realism and appears as a realist philosophy which is different from all other pragmatic philosophies. These aspects of relativity and co-existence shall be dealt with in a later section. In short, the general tendency to see everything in 'black and white' and to harbor two extreme points can be successfully solved by the idea of Saptbhanginaya and its accommodation of multiple worldviews which has become a need of the hour for developing a sense of plurality and diversity in the society. Through Saptabhanginaya, we can develop a relative viewpoint considering the different ideas as correct from their standpoints without rejecting their presence on the basis of their different locus. This seven-fold epistemological structure can easily accommodate every worldview and will encourage individuals to look beyond what they know or what they perceive, causing a better understanding and engagement in the society.

### **The Idea of Co-existence**

One of the most important requisites for maintaining a peaceful socio-cultural order is the acceptance of co-existence among diverse views and ideologies. The extremity of viewpoints has caused hostility and led to the growing belief that two divergent or polar opinions cannot exist in the same sphere, which becomes disruptive because of the presence of contrasting and divergent opinions in the same sphere.

The doctrine of Anekanta holds the key to solving the existing disruption in social order because of its inherent capability of ensuring co-existence among every sort of idea and ideology. The problem of accommodating contrasting opinions doesn't create an obstacle for the Jain logic for which contrasting

opinions aren't a problem in the first place. The same is expressed by Hemchandra who proudly heralds that the Jain order established by the Arihantas isn't dismantled by contradictions. Amritachandra, a prominent commentator on Kundkunda Samaysara even goes on to say in his commentary on Samaysara that Anekanta is in itself the depiction of two contrasting qualities (Shakti) of an object. The doctrine of Syadvada believes that every tatva is Anekantic by nature. The one which is 'that' is also 'not that', which is 'existent' is also 'non-existent' and which is permanent is also transient. Therefore as Amritachandra propounds, synthesis of contrasting qualities is the basic nature of Anekanta.

Ultimately, the Jain logic is successful in conciliating diametrically divergent dharmas through the doctrines of Naya and Saptabhangi which are integral to Anekanta which give us a relative, synthesizing and non-absolutist approach to look at worldviews. So accepting is Anekantavada of contrasting ideologies that it considers those standpoints as fallacious which do take into consideration their contrasting viewpoints. Hence in the Anekantic system, every thought system or idea is obliged to accept the presence of its contrasting idea along with it. The requirement of this kind of acceptance in the present day time will be automatically very clear to the reader.

The conflict between Eternalism and Momentarism serves as the perfect example of the reconciliation of two contrasting viewpoints. While the Nyaya School took the former position, the Buddhist philosophers championed the latter belief. These two standpoints are visibly polar in nature and are based on two drastically contrasting ideas of the world. Through the relative approach augmented by Nayavada and Saptbhanginaya, the Jain logic arrives a point of conciliation between the two standpoints by mentioning that an object is eternal in the aspect of the continuity of its existence (guna) and is momentary in the aspect of the continuous changes it undergoes in its modes (paryaya). The resultant concept of Utpada-Vyaya-Dhrauvya which is very well depicted through the example of milk and its conversion into curd and the presence of the 'being' of milk in all modes by Vidyanandi in his work 'Ashtasahastri'. This concept of Utpada-Vyaya-Dhrauvya depicts the presence of permanence and transience in the same dravya and was developed through the doctrine of



relativity of Nayavada comprising both the contrasting aspects in an accommodative manner. It is therefore, a remarkable instance of how the Jain logic ensures co-existence of different ideologies.

The Jain logic also developed a peculiar methodology of 'Vivaksha' (implication) for accommodating contrasting viewpoints. Umasvami in his Tattvarthasutra, provides us with the idea of 'Arpita' and 'Anarpita' which when applied on a set of contrasting viewpoints, makes one view as prominent and the other as auxiliary on the basis of the 'Vivaksha' or the implied perspective. Arpita is the prominent dharma and Anarpita is the dharma made secondary. Through this dichotomy, co-existence of two divergent dharmas is proven in the same tattva. This methodology is also based upon 'Nayavada' and operates through considering one perspective as central. Again taking the question of eternalism and momentarism into account, the methodology of 'Arpita-Anarpita' will hold the object eternal and permanent through the perspective of 'Dravyavarthikanayaa' and while making the analogy of 'Paryayarthikanaya' central, it will hold the same object as temporary and momentary. Hence, both the contrasting shaktis of 'Nitya' and 'Anitya' will be proven as co-existing in the same locus.

Another reason behind the ability of the Jain logic to ensure co-existence in the social order is the refutation of absolutism done in its doctrines. The dogmatic idea of absolutism not only disregards other views but is also violent towards them. There is no space for debate or engagement in an absolutist framework, causing the breakdown of harmony. Jain logic, through the doctrine of Syadvada discards absolutism and brings forth the idea of relativity which can uphold social order. Samantbhadra in his Aptamimamsa says-

“Syadvada is the assertion of an entity by some way or the other by discarding absolutism in every respect” (Aptamimamsa. 105)

The relative approach will not only discard absolutism but also encourage people to observe and understand other ideas in their special perspective and form their opinions on the basis of those observations. Such an approach will harbor mutual understanding and respect that will automatically strengthen the ideal of peaceful co-existence. The reconciliatory nature of Jain logic and its

opposition to intellectual dogma should be again mentioned here because of their direct relation with the possibilities of harmonious existence of different views and ideologies.

### **Counter to One-Sided Viewpoints**

Another major problem at the intellectual level which the present day civilization is gripped with is the tendency to remain one sided in viewpoints and ideas. Such tendency refuses to take up other thoughts into considerations and also leads to a bias in the favor of one's own thought system. The Samanvaya sutra mentions the existence of 363 different schools of thoughts being classified in 4 subgroups namely: Kriyavaadi, Akriyavaadi, Gyanvaadi and Agyanvaadi. Every one of these four subgroups based itself on one proposition of never giving a thought to others viewpoint. It is in such scenarios that growth of ideas stagnates and the acceptance of different worldviews stops. In such a scenario, a thought system would lose its relevance because it will no longer be able to include new thoughts and fresh ideas within its thought system. Considering the present time period, many of the problems that individuals face are a result of the one-sided approach they pursue which makes a holistic viewpoint of things impossible.

Jainism is very clear in its outlook regarding the dogma of being one sided. As mentioned earlier, Jain logic considers those standpoints as fallacious which do not consider their contradictions as true. A standpoint has to accept its opposite views as relative truths or else it shall convert into fallacy itself. This concept is very well explained by Hemchandra who explains Durnaya (fallacious Naya) as the one sided absolutist viewpoint-

“When a partial truth is put forward as in the proposition Sat without excluding its contradictory by putting an ‘एव’ is Naya, i.e. Partial Truth. But to say ‘Sadaiva’ (always) and thus exclude the element of Asat is Durnaya. Pramana is a synthesis of Sat and Asat.”

Hence, according to Jainism, fallacy does not lie in the opposing claims of the other views but in the absolutist one-sided claim that only their view is the true one. This is also reflected in the history of Jain logic which didn't have problems with differing views but with the absolutist claims of truth by the other schools

of philosophy. Every school quarrels because it considers its view to be the only truth and does not accept the many-sidedness of the true nature of an object. Hence, Jainism is critical of their one-sided worldview and gives a powerful opposition to this dogma. The idea of Durnaya implies this very fact that a Naya can be true only till it maintains its relativity; the moment it leaves its relativity, it gets converted into Durnaya. The same is with every viewpoint, it will get fallacious only if gets one-sided in its approach. Jain logic doesn't disregard partial knowledge or the knowledge of a particular aspect, it accepts the truth present in every opinion and in every Naya; the only thing it has a problem with is the adamancy that only one fragment or aspect is the entire truth. When a person doesn't accept the partial nature of their knowledge, they get stuck to only a single side of the truth which gets fallacious due to the lack of relativity. This adamancy and lack of acceptance is what Jain logic considers as wrong.

Another phenomenon which is attached with such a one-sided approach is that of being biased as mentioned earlier too. Non-acceptance caused due to an absolutist ideology makes a person partisan towards their belief and hostile towards the other. The same idea is expressed by Haribhadra in his Shaddarshansamucchaya where he says that a person suffering from bias towards his view will mend arguments and logic to suit his own position in any manner. This certainly causes harm to social well being as it obstructs development of new ideas and their enhancement. Hence, Hemchandra says that the Anekantic approach is without any bias because there is no partisanship in its viewpoint. A classical example of this can be seen in the seven Naigam Nayas mentioned in the Tattvarthasutra which present their own viewpoints in regard to their perspectives. The individuals studying them should take them in relative senses and not just limit themselves to one aspect.

Social well being is greatly dependent upon the willingness of the members of the society to listen to other viewpoints and treat them in a relative manner. If they will focus only on one aspect and discard other perspectives, conflicts and discontent will happen in any society or nation because there will be no space for the expression of multiple viewpoints. Therefore, multiplicity of worldviews will lead to positive engagement and holistic approach towards every issue of



the nation and the society. Jainism and its doctrine of Anekanta are fully capable in providing us with such kind of an approach

### **Importance of All Opinions**

The twenty first century can be said as an era of crisis in the realm of human civilization. The reason is that we give so much attention to short-range and local problems that long-range and global problems continue to be neglected. Secondly, life has become more intricately interdependent and complex and hence, simple solutions no longer suffice to the needs of the society. A world civilization is fast emerging and we cannot afford to solve our problems with a parochial temper and sectarian outlook and hence we need cooperation on a plenary scale able to deal with rapidly increasing complexities. The critical problems are so complex that we need a philosophy equally complex to grapple with them. Not only this is too late in history to convert all of mankind to Christianity or Islam or Jainism (or to Communism or Capitalism or any other isms), but also to some metaphysical principles which we have been cherishing since antiquity.

Jain logic is against all kinds of imperialism in ideologies and worldviews. For each community there is a special absolute but the absolutes themselves are alternatives so far as they are probables. One should also remember that this is present only at the level of thought. At the same time, when I have chosen one it is more than possible, it is existent or actual. So there is wonderful reconciliation between what is conditional and what is unconditional. Jain logic believes that everything is conditional on thought level, but on the level of existence there is no real contradiction.

To avoid the fallacy of infinite regress, the Jainas distinguish between valid non-absolutism (Samyak Anekanta) and invalid non-absolutism (Mithya Anekanta). Like an invalid absolute judgment, an invalid non-absolute judgment, too, is invalid. To be valid, Anekanta must not be absolute but relative. If we consider the above points, we cannot say that the “theory of relativity cannot be logically sustained without the hypothesis of an absolute.” Thought is not mere distinction but also relation. Everything is possible only in relation to and as distinct from others and the Law of Identity. Under these circumstances, it is not legitimate to hold that the hypothesis of an absolute cannot be sustained

without the hypothesis of a relative. Absolute to be absolute presupposes a relative somewhere and in some forms, even the relative of its non-existence.

Jaina logic of Anekanta is based not on abstract intellectualism but on experience and realism leading to a non-absolutistic attitude of mind. Multiplicity and unity, definability and non-definability etc. which apparently seem to be contradictory characteristics of reality are interpreted to co-exist in the same object from different points of view without any offence to logic. They seem to be contradictory of each other simply because one of them is mistaken to be the whole truth. In fact, integrity of truth consists in this very variety of its aspects, within the rational unity of an all comprehensive and ramifying principle. The charge of contradiction against the co-presence of being and non-being in the real is figment of a priori logic.

This non-absolutistic attitude of mind which is mentioned above harbors a genuine respect for everyone's opinions and views and accepts contradictions and diversities as truths from the lens of relativity. The present day democratic set up is not only suffering from absolutist egos but also from the anticipation that diverse standpoints cannot survive together. In such an environment, opinions are seen from a view of suspicion making us unable to appreciate every idea and thought. Jainism counters this lack of receptivity by balancing both the absolute and the relative, allowing individuals to be true to their own ideas while appreciating other ideas at the same time. The approach of relativity will also not allow the development of any kind of 'ideological imperialism', providing every worldview a stimulus of growth.

One should also not forget that the doctrines of Naya and Saptabhangi are based upon the possibility of truth in every statement and in every worldview. When these doctrines are implemented upon our interactions, we consider every opinion as a potent relative truth and hence develop sincerity in receiving those opinions. The same is applicable to a democratic system in which no opinion should be discounted or disrespected. When the idea of relative truth propounded by Nayavada shall be applied in democratic functioning, every institution shall be empowered by the amalgamation of every viewpoint and opinion because all of them shall be given their due importance.

## **Concluding Remarks**

The twenty first century has been witnessing the rise of conflicts and hostility which are in a stark contrast to the rapid modernization that has taken place. Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen argues that we are becoming increasingly divided along lines of religion and culture, ignoring the many other ways in which people see themselves, from class and profession to morals and politics. When we are put into narrow categories the importance of human life becomes lost. Through his lucid exploration of such subjects as multiculturalism, fundamentalism, terrorism and globalization, he brings out the need for a clear-headed understanding of human freedom and a constructive public voice in Global civil society. The questions of global peace, sustainable development and welfare of the people can be solved only if we adhere to the ideas of non-absolutism, co-existence and mutual respect. Jain logic which has an essentially pluralistic and relative outlook towards the world and believes in the co-existence of contrasting viewpoints appears as a ray of hope that can make our world order more tolerant, peaceful and devoid of dogmatism. It will be suitable to conclude with the affirmation that the hope of harmony in today's world lies in a clearer understanding of our sheer diversity which is possible only with the adoption of the principle of Anekanta in daily life.

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