

Thesis Title:

Dhyāna – A Jain View with Special Reference to Śubhacandrācārya's Jñānārṇava

Abstract

This thesis, *Dhyāna – A Jain View with Special Reference to Śubhacandrācārya's Jñānārṇava*, investigates the concept of meditation (*dhyāna*) in Jain philosophy through a detailed study of the *Jñānārṇava* of Ācārya Śubhacandra (11th-century CE), one of the most influential Jain treatises on contemplative practice. The study argues that *dhyāna* is not merely a technique of concentration but the central means of spiritual purification, self-realisation, and liberation (*mokṣa*). By examining the philosophical, ethical, psychological, and soteriological dimensions of meditation, it demonstrates the integral role of *dhyāna* within the Jain path.

The thesis is organised into seven chapters. The first chapter examines the etymology, meanings, and technical usages of the term *dhyāna*, and introduces the *Jñānārṇava*. The second and third chapters situate meditation within the scaffold of Jain spirituality by exploring its relationship with the *ratnatraya* (three virtues of Jainism) and the fourteen *guṇasthānas* (spiritual stages). The fourth and fifth chapters analyse *dhyāna* through the perspectives of Jain epistemology, *yoga*, and *upayoga*, thereby highlighting its cognitive and experiential dimensions. The sixth chapter investigates meditative practices, objects of contemplation, and contemporary interpretations of meditation, whereas the final chapter presents the principal findings and contributions of the study. Together, these chapters seek to demonstrate that *dhyāna* is not an isolated spiritual technique but a fundamental principle that permeates the entire structure of Jain philosophy and practice.

Keywords: Dhyāna, Jñānārṇava, Śubhacandra, Jain Meditation, Mokṣa