



## Ujjayinī: A *Tīrtha*

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### Abstract:

Indian Subcontinent is famous worldwide for its cultural diversity. Ujjayinī is the district of Madhyapradesh state in India. It lies on the bank of holy river Śiprā. 'Śiprā' means 'Purity of body, heart and soul'. Avantī was one of the sixteen Mahājanapadas which was situated in western India but this Avantī was divided into two parts e.g. northern and southern Avantī. Ujjayinī was the capital of northern Avantī and later days it was included in Mālwā plateau.

Many great dynasties like Haihaya, Vitihotra, Pradyota, Maurya, Śuṅga, Sātavāhana, Śaka, Gupta, Kalachurī, Pratihāra and Paramāras ruled at Ujjayinī. 'Periplus of the Erythrean Sea' and the 'Geographia' of Ptolemy identify this place as 'Ozene'. It was connected with many parts of India and also outsides of India. Also it was located in the famous 'Dakṣiṇāpatha' route and linked with 'Śrāvastī', 'Kausambī', 'Vidiśā', 'Vārāṇasī', 'Mathurā', 'Nasik', 'Pratiṣṭhān' and with another places. 'Ozene' was especially connected with 'Barygaza' which was one of the most famous ports of ancient India. 'Ozene' indirectly linked with Rome, Arabia and Epiphī. These political and economic prosperity led Ujjayinī to flourish as a religious centre.

From the time of Gautama Buddha Ujjayinī became a great Buddhist *tīrtha*. A famous 'Vaiśya Tekri' stūpa is discovered from here which was built by Mauryan emperor Aśoka for his beloved queen 'Devī'. It is one of the ancient Buddhist stūpas in India which is very sacred for the Buddhist pilgrims. According to Pāli literatures many Buddhist monks resided at Ujjayinī especially Mahākaccāyana. He born here and spread Theravāda Buddhism. Sāñchī votive inscriptions clearly tell that that the maximum donations for this stūpa came from the kings, traders, guilds, monks, nuns, and women of Ujjayinī. Ujjayinī was also famous as Jaina *tīrtha* which is corroborated by the Jaina literatures and Śravaṇabelgolā inscription of Prabhachandra.

In early-medieval times it was transformed to a Brāhmaṇical *tīrtha* which is proved by many *Purāṇas* and inscriptions. 'Vāyu', 'Skanda', 'Matsya', 'Padma' and 'Brahmāṇḍa' *Purāṇas* describe many mythical stories about this holy place. Especially Kālidāsa indicates the sanctity of Ujjayinī. Nāsik praśasti of Uṣavadatta, Pratābgarh inscription of Mahendrapāla, Sindā inscriptions of Beṇachamatti and Mahākāleśvara praśasti describe the sanctity of Ujjayinī. It is famous as 'City of Temples' because it has many Brāhmaṇical architectures. Now-a-days Ujjayinī is famous as 'Śaiva' and 'Śākta' *tīrtha*. Ujjayinī means 'A place of Victory'. Buddhism, Jainism and Brāhmaṇism make this place not only a *tīrtha* of India but also a cultural

center of this Subcontinent.

**Keywords:**

**Mahājanapadas:** The sixteen Mahājanapadas were the great kingdoms which flourished in 600 BCE and extended up to 400 BCE. They are 'Aṅga', 'Assaka', 'Avantī', 'Chedi', 'Gāndhāra', 'Kamboja', 'Kāśī', 'Kosala', 'Kurū', 'Magadha', 'Malla', 'Matsya', 'Pāṅchāl', 'Śūrasena', 'Vajji' and 'Vatsa'. Maximum of them belonged to monarchial but some of them were republican. Buddhist and Jaina texts mention about these territories.

**Haihaya:** The history of Haihaya dynasty is known from *Mahābhārata*. They ruled in central and western India. Their capital was Māhiṣmatī. Their powerful ruler was Kārtyavirja Arjuna. In later times they divided into many branches.

**Theravāda Buddhism:** Theravāda branch of Buddhism derived from Sthavirvādin School. They believed the original teachings of Gautama Buddha which is conserved in Pāli canons. According to them self-control and meditation are the two ways of salvation. It is spread to Śrīlaṅkā and South-east Asia.

**Group Patronage:** In ancient India the concept of patronage was evolved. Sometimes we find one kinds of patronage where some groups of traders, guilds, monks, nuns etc made donation jointly. This is called 'Group Patronage'.

**Narrative Art:** Narrative Art describes a story or a moment of ongoing events in art pieces. In ancient times stories were described by Narrative Art.

**Tīrthaṅkara:** There are 24 tīrthaṅkaras in Jainism. Tīrthaṅkaras were the savior and spiritual teacher of Jainism. Literally it means 'Ford Maker'.

**Gaṇadhara:** In Jainism there are many chief disciples of the Tīrthaṅkaras. They are called Gaṇadharas. Ṛṣavanāth, Pārśvanāth and Mahāvīra had many great disciples.

**Sallekhānā:** Sallekhānā is the code of conduct in Jainism. It is the religious practice of voluntarily fasting to death for salvation. Many literary and archaeological sources tell about this process. Many kings and also common people of Jainism did Sallekhānā.

**Kulaparvata:** Early-medieval *Purāṇas* describe about the presence of seven Kulaparvatas which are auspicious for Hindu pilgrims. They are 'Mahendra', 'Malaya', 'Sahya', 'Śūktimatī', 'Rikṣavāna', 'Vindhya' and 'Pārijātra'.

**Jyotirlinga:** Jyoti and Liṅga mean accordingly 'radiance' and 'the sign'. So, Jyotirlinga represents a sign of almighty Śiva. According to mythology, in India there are twelve Jyotirlingas. They are 'Somanāth' in Gujarāṭa, 'Mallikārjuna' in Andhrapradesh, 'Mahākaleśvara' in Ujjayinī, 'Omākāreśvara' in Madhyapradesh, 'Kedāranāth' in Uttarākhaṇḍa, 'Bhīmsankara' in Mahārāṣṭra, 'Viśvanāth' temple at Vārāṇasī, 'Tryambakeśvara' in Nāsik, 'Vaidyonāth' in Deogarh, 'Nāgeśvara' in Dvārakā, 'Rāmeśvar' in Rāmeśvarama and 'Gṛsneśvara' temple at Ellora.

*Nagara Style*: *Nagara* is the architectural form of temple which is prevalent in northern and central India. The main feature of this style is 'Śikhara' which is different from another form of temples like 'Drāviḍa' and 'Vesara' styles. But Śikhara has also many regional varieties.

**Introduction**: Ujjayinī is one of the historic districts of Madhyapradesh and it is the cultural heartthrob of Indian Subcontinent. It is situated besides the holy river Śiprā in Mālwā plateau. In 600 BCE sixteen Mahājanapadas were started to flourish. Avantī was one of them which were divided into two parts. Ujjayinī was the capital of northern Avantī. According to the Virāṭaparva of 'Mahābhārata', Avantī was situated besides the Surāṣṭra and Kuntī regions.<sup>1</sup> So it was located in western India. Mrs. Rhys Davids tells its present location which is north-eastern part of Bombay.<sup>2</sup> In later times, Avantī became the part of Mālwā plateau which is surrounded by middle portion of western Madhyapradesh and south-eastern Rājasthān. Geographically, today Ujjayinī is situated in a very well position and it helps it to shine as a cultural centre of India.

Ujjayinī was an important political, economic, religious and cultural centre of ancient and early-medieval India. Many chalcolithic and iron culture are found from here. We find 'Kāyatha', 'Mālava', 'BRW' (Black and Red Ware) and 'NBPW' (Northern Black Polished Ware) potteries from this place. Ujjayinī is the place where many political dynasties like 'Haihaya', 'Vitihotra', 'Pradyota', 'Maurya', 'Śuṅga', 'Sātavāhana', 'Śaka', 'Gupta', 'Kalachurī', 'Pratihāra' and 'Paramāras' ruled. 'Periplus of the Erythrean Sea' calls this place as 'Ozene'.<sup>3</sup> It tells that 'Ozene' distributed many precious items to Barygaza. They are Agate, Cāneliān, Indian Muslins, Mallow and ordinary clothes. Ptolemy also refers the prosperity of 'Ozene'. It was connected with many places of India and also indirectly linked with 'Epiphi' (Egypt), 'Arabia', 'Rome' and 'Bārbaricum'. These kinds of political and economic versatility made this place also auspicious.

In ancient times, Ujjayinī became famous Buddhist and Jaina *tīrtha*. From the time of Gautama Buddha and Mahāvīra it was started to flourish. The concept of rituals was abandoned in the time of second urbanization. Buddhism and Jainism gave people a new kind of way for salvation. The lower varṇas of society earned their respect. But in early-medieval times people started to make donations to the brāhmaṇas and also the religious centres. They went for *tīrthayātrā* for making puṇya. Especially for these purposes in early-medieval times Ujjayinī became a Brāhmaṇical *tīrtha*. Today it is also famous as 'Śaiva' and 'Śākta' *tīrtha*.

**Buddhist *tīrtha***: Ujjayinī was famous from Gautama Buddha's times as a *tīrtha*. From Pāli literatures we come to know that many Buddhist monks like 'Isidāsi', 'Isidatta', 'Dhammapāla', 'Soṇakūṭikaṇṇa' either born or resides here.<sup>4</sup> Especially Mahākaccāyana, the profounder of 'Theravāda Buddhism' was born at Ujjayinī. He influenced not only Prasenjita, the king of Avantī but also the common people of there. By his propagation of Buddhism many people transformed their religion. Theravāda branch of Buddhism believed that Buddha has a capability to become a world teacher and also he has magical powers. For salvation they obeyed two rules

e.g. meditation and self-control. In Mahākāccāyana's times, Avantī or Ujjayinī became prosperous by its religious identity.

In this context the Sāñchī stūpa votive inscriptions are good sources to understand the popularity of Buddhism at Ujjayinī.<sup>5</sup> Mauryan emperor Aśoka built this around 250 BCE and up to 100 AD it was reconstructed by many people in various times. The railings, pillars, toroṇas, small rooms etc were donated by the people of many cities but the maximum donations came from 'Ujjayinī' and 'Kurāghara'. The kings, traders, monks, nuns, common people, women etc donated here. A group named 'Vākiliya' made donation here which is corroborated by the inscription no. 27.<sup>6</sup> Inscription no. 73 tells the donation of 'Mitā' who was daughter-in-law of 'Tāpasiyas'.<sup>7</sup> So from votive inscriptions of Sāñchī we come to know about many groups of Ujjayinī who tried to free from their kinship and wanted to make their own identity. The groups are 'Tāpasiya', 'Māgalakāṭiya', 'Sāfineyaka', 'Dhamaka' and 'Vākiliyas'.

Many women donated here but not independently because they are addressed as anybody's wife, daughter-in-law or mother. Inscription no. 95 tells about a donation made by 'Mulā' who was the wife of 'Viśvadeva'.<sup>8</sup> 'Viśvadeva' was the resident of Ujjayinī. We know about 'Revā' from the Inscription no. 121 who made donation at Sāñchī stūpa.<sup>9</sup> A nun called 'Dhamayasāra' also made donation here. But one thing is most important that sometimes 'mother of Daughter' this kind of phrase is highlighted in Sāñchī stūpa. Actually Buddhism gave a special attention to the nuns who renounced the world and became mothers of all ladies. In Pāli literatures we find the term 'Pajāvatī' which means 'Mother of Children'. So the women of Ujjayinī had a unique identity. A monk named 'Agisīmā' (Agnisimā) also donated here.<sup>10</sup>

Ujjayinī is reflected by many names in these inscriptions like 'Ujenā', 'Ujānā' and 'Ujenī'. Maximum donations came from villages and which are basically a part of 'Group Patronage'. The donors did not mention their caste identity. According to Upinder Singh, those times the concept of caste was not properly preformed.<sup>11</sup> In Sāñchī there is also presence of 'Narrative Arts'. A small frieze depicts that Prasenjita a king of Avantī went to Sāñchī.<sup>12</sup> This depicts the king, palaces, chariots, horses, elephants, courtiers, fort, and story of *Jātakas*. So, Sāñchī inscriptions strongly proof the love for Buddhism by the people of Ujjayinī.

At Ujjayinī we find three Buddhist stūpas. The most important among them is 'Vaiśya Tekri' stūpa.<sup>13</sup> It is situated at Kānipura village at Ujjayinī. Probably Aśoka, for his queen Devī built this stūpa who became nun. Later times it reconstructed by Devī. In 1936 it was discovered by Gwālior state archaeological department. But for safety reasons the work of excavation was stopped in 1951. The diameter and height of this stūpa are accordingly 350 and approx 100 ft. it belongs between the 'Pipārwā' and 'Sāñchī' stūpas. Every year in Buddha Pūrṇimā many Buddhists gather here for meritorious purposes. Two small stūpas are found in south-west and western part of this one of the earliest Buddhist stūpas at Ujjayinī. Also some of the Buddhist sculptures are discovered from Ujjayinī.

But Hiuen-Tsang, a Chinese traveller came in India at 700 AD. He identified this place as 'U-She-Yen-Na' which was spread by 6000 li.<sup>14</sup> We come to know by his description that those times Buddhism was declined there. There were only ten monasteries and a small stūpa. 'Hīnayāna' and 'Mahāyāna' branches of Buddhism were presented there but not in a strong manner. It is clear that Buddhism was strong at Ujjayinī from the time of Buddha to the timeframe of ca. 300 AD which is corroborated by many literary (*Aṅguttaranikāya*, *Saṃyuktanikāya* and *Majjhimnikāya*) and archaeological sources.

**Jaina Tīrtha:** Ujjayinī besides the Buddhist centre became a Jaina *tīrtha*. According to a tradition, Mahāvīra the 24 Th tīrthakara did some penances here. Also the 'Śravaṇabelgolā' inscription of Prabhachandra refers the popularity of Jainism at Ujjayinī.<sup>15</sup> This inscription is found from Chandragiri Mountain at Mysore district in Karṇāṭaka. This undated inscription is taken palaeographically of 700 AD or before it. According to Leumann, this Prabhachandra is actually Prabhāchandra, a writer of Digambara sect who famous for his works e.g. '*Pramāyākamalamārtaṇḍa*' and '*Nyāyakumudachandrāchay*'. His time was the first half of 800 AD. So, it is debatable to decide the exact time of this inscription. But it is proved by this inscription that in early-medieval times the theory of Mahāvīra was famous at Ujjayinī. Also, this tells about Bhadravāhusvāmin, one of the Daśapūrvadhāras who led the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta Maurya and other people from 'Nindīā' to 'Kāṭavapra' or 'Upalabhya Kathite' Mountain which is identified with 'Chandragiri' Mountain. According to '*Pariśiṣṭapārvaṇa*', they left Magadha for a long disaster which was held there for 12 years. But sometimes these Bhadravāhu and Chandragupta Maurya are identified accordingly with II Bhadravāhu and Guptigupta. Line no. 5 of this inscription mentions the term 'Ujyānyām'.<sup>16</sup> But it is proved that from the Mahāvīra's times to the 700 AD Jainism became very important at Ujjayinī. Many Jain pilgrims went there but after this time it was started to decline.

**Brāhmaṇya Tīrtha:** After a long times in early-medieval period we look the popularity of Brāhmaṇya religion at Ujjayinī. According to the description of Hiuen-Tsang who came in India in 700 AD tells that 'U-She-Yen-Na' (Ujjayinī) was the Brāhmaṇya centre where 300 brāhmaṇas were lived at that time.<sup>17</sup> The king of this place also represented Brāhmaṇya cult. Also in this times the popularity of Buddhism and Jainism were declined. The new kind of 'client-patron' relationship was made where people started to make donations to the brāhmaṇas and went for tīrthayātrā for making puṇya. The codification of Purāṇas also helped this process to be successful. '*Vāyu Purāṇa*', '*Ābantiyakhaṇḍa* of *Skanda Purāṇa*', '*Matsya Purāṇa*', '*Padma Purāṇa*', '*Mārkeṇḍeya Purāṇa*' and '*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*' describe its sanctity. Mahākālavana, Sundara Kuṇḍa, Śiprā River and many other places of Avantī or Ujjayinī are very much holy for the pilgrims and many mythical stories are attached with them. Śiprā is called a 'River of People' (Lokapārvaṇī) because according to a legend after bathing this river people earn benefits.<sup>18</sup> It is also famous as 'Demon Destroyed Tīrtha' (Paiśāchmochan *Tīrtha*) because an evil brāhmaṇa who became a demon for his sins transformed in a Śivaliṅga.<sup>19</sup> Actually his one tooth had fallen in the Sundara Kuṇḍa and by the holy water the demon was relieved. '*Skanda Purāṇa*'



also tells a story of blue Gaṅgā who after coming at Mahākālavana transformed to white Gaṅgā by destroying all her sins.<sup>20</sup> Śīprā River is famous as ‘Sin destroying River’ because according to a myth a devil king ‘Damana’ for his sins became a demon. But in the time of distribution of his dead body a part of his body was fallen into Śīprā River. After this incident it transformed in a Śivaliṅga.<sup>21</sup> Śīprā is famous as ‘Amrita River’ because the water of this river helped to come back Amrita in ‘Nāgaloka’ who lost their ‘Amrita Kuṇḍas’.<sup>22</sup> These all myths belong to the ‘*Skanda Purāṇa*’ and these descriptions make this place more holistic. It is also called as ‘Kūśasthali’ and ‘Padmāvati’ Purī.

‘*Matsya Purāṇa*’ describes Avantī as ‘Ancestor *Tīrtha*’.<sup>23</sup> By giving piṇḍa at the bank of Śīprā River pilgrims make benefits which are same as the benefits which earn by giving piṇḍa at Gayā *tīrtha*. Other *purāṇas* like ‘*Vāyu*’, ‘*Padma*’<sup>24</sup> and ‘*Mārkeṇḍeya*’<sup>25</sup> describe about the seven ‘Kulaparvatas’. One of them is the ‘Pārijātra’ mountain. Śīprā is come from this mountain and Avantī is also called as ‘Janapada’. But only in ‘*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*’ Avantī is referred as a river.<sup>26</sup> But all these *purāṇas* always describe many mythical stories which make this place holistic.

Many inscriptions also tell about this *tīrtha*. Nasik inscription of Uṣavadatta tells that Uṣavadatta (Son-in-law of Śakakhtrapa Nahapāna) donated cows and lands to the brāhmaṇas of ‘Checigga’, ‘Dahanūkā’, ‘Kekāpura’, ‘Anugāmī’, ‘Śākhā’ and ‘Ujenī’.<sup>27</sup> So it is clear that ca. 200 AD Brāhmaṇya religion started to spread. Pratābgarh inscription of Pratihāra king of Kanauj belongs to 1003 Saṁvat or 946 AD.<sup>28</sup> This tells about Mādhav, a provincial governor of Ujjayinī who came this place and after bathing at Śīprā and made offers to Mahādeva he took charge of this place. On the request of Cāhamāna feudal lord Indrarāja he donated ‘Dhārpadraka’ (Present days Dhāryavāda which is situated on the boundary of Pratābgarh state) village which was situated in Ghaṇṭavarṣikā (Ghoṭorṣo is situated 7 miles east from Pratābgarh and 8 miles north-east from Khorōṭa). This was donated for the temple of Indrādityadeva (Sun god) for its reconstruction and daily purpose mentanences. So it is clear that there was a presence of feudalism at Ujjayinī in those times.

Two Sindā inscriptions of Beṇachamatti tell about the sanctity of Ujjayinī.<sup>29</sup> These inscriptions belong to the Śaka Saṁvat 1088 and 1109 which are accordingly 1167 and 1187 AD. They were the local rulers of Karnāṭaka and their one of the greatest rulers was Chāvunḍā. His capital ‘Erāmbārage’ is compared with the four major *tīrthas* on those times. These *tīrthas* were ‘Amarāvati’, ‘Mathurā’, ‘Ayodhyā’ and ‘Ujjayinī’.<sup>30</sup> A famous Mahākāleśvara praśasti which was issued by the Paramāra king Udayāditya or Naravarmana also glorifies the importance of the Mahākāleśvara temple and Śaiva cult at Ujjayinī.<sup>31</sup>

Literary and inscriptional sources clearly mention that Ujjayinī was developed as a Brāhmaṇya *tīrtha*. But in early-medieval times it was transformed to be a ‘City of Temples’. One of the most famous temples at Ujjayinī is ‘Mahākāleśvara’ temple. One of the twelve Jyotirliṅgas is situated here which is ‘Dakṣiṇāmukhī’ and ‘Syambhū’ liṅga. It has a five storey temple. ‘Omākāreśvara’ and ‘Nāgchandreśvara’ liṅgas are also in there. Sculptures of Gaṇeśa, Kārtikeya, Pārvatī, Nandī, Rāma and

Avantikā are discovered from this temple. Many Śiva praśastis are inscribed on the temple's walls. There is a holy kuṇḍa named 'Kaṭītīrtha'. This 'Nagara' styled temple is the glory of Ujjayinī and it was reconstructed by several times. Kālidāsa mentions it in his works 'Meghdutam' and 'Raghuvamśam'. In 'Raghuvamśam' it is called as 'Niketana' which means big structure. Besides this temple Ujjayinī has also many another Śaiva temples. They are 'Maṅgaleśvara', 'Kālabhairava', 'Vikrāntbhairava' temples.

Ujjayinī is also a Śākta tīrtha because according to the *purāṇas* the upper lip of the 'Satī devī' was fallen here. The famous 'Harasiddhi' temple is situated at the banks of Śīprā where devī Annapūrṇā is situated between devī Mahālakṣmī and Mahāsarvasvatī. This was probably built by Vikramāditya the king of Ujjayinī. A mythical ancient 'Kūpa' and 'Śrījantra' are also in there. The Paramāra rulers also built '24 Khāmbās' at Ujjayinī which is the doorway to enter the Mahākālavana. Two female tāntric deities like Mahāmāyā and Mahālayā are in there. This structure reminds us the greater wall of Mahākālavana which is destroyed now-a-days. In Ujjayinī we have other Śākta temples like 'Gādkālikā', 'Bhaktimātā', 'Khokohmātā', 'Nagarakoṭa-ki-rānī'. Ujjayinī is especially a Śaiva and Śākta pilgrim centre which proved by the presence of many temples there.

We have 'Chintāmaṇa Gaṇeśa' temple at Ujjayinī where Gaṇeśa and Viṣṇu are jointly worshipped. This temple also has a holistic kuṇḍa which was established by Lakṣhmaṇa. 'Sīdhavaṭa khetra' is another ritualistic place of Ujjayinī. 'Bhartṛhari Cave' is the place where king Bhartṛhari meditated for 12 years. In this natural cave there is another cave which belongs to his nephew Gopichandra's. Every year the Nāga sect of Śaivism are gathered here for worshipping. It is believed that there is a way in this cave which leads to the 'Four Dhāmas'. But sometimes Bhartṛhari is identified with a poet of 700 AD who is famous for his works like 'Śrīngaraśataka', 'Vairāgyośataka' and 'Nītiśataka. 'Sandipaṇi Āśrama', 'Dattātreya Ākhārā', 'Kaliādaha Palace', 'Matsyendranath's tomb', many ghāṭas are also helped to spread the religious sanctity of Ujjayinī.

We find many Brāhmaṇya images, sculptures and terracottas from this place. In Mauryan-Śuṅga period we find the sculptures of Viṣṇu, Śiva, Mahiṣāsurmardīnī and Lajjāgaurī. Also terracotta's votive tank and a plaque are discovered from here which are connected with Śaktism. Many images and sculptures of these Brāhmaṇya deities are also found from early-medieval times. Also a Naṭarāja bronze image is discovered from Ujjayinī which belongs to Paramāra period.<sup>32</sup> This Naṭarāja has ten hands and its height is approx. 5 ft. A Bhṛṅgī figure is seen between the legs of Naṭarāja. Sculpture of Kapila muni is also discovered. So these strongly depict the strong presence of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Śākta cults in Ujjayinī. We find many punch marked coins from there which clearly indicate the popularity of Śaivism. In the obverse of the maximum coins we see the presence of Mahādeva in standing form or dancing form or in variety modes. Beside this the majority of punch marked coins clearly depict brāhmaṇya deities like 'Lakṣhmī', 'Annapūrṇā', 'Manasā', 'Ṣaṣṭhī', 'Valarāma', 'Kriṣṇa', 'Rāma-Lakṣhmaṇa-Sitā', 'Viṣṇu' and 'Mātrikās'. From the second half of

the 200 BCE these coins were started to minting which proof the popularity of Brāhmaṇya religion there in those times.

**Conclusion:** From this above discussion we must tell that Ujjayinī in ancient and early-medieval times became a *tīrtha*. In the time of 16 Mahājanapadas and second urbanization the Buddhism and Jainism were flourished and Avantī was influenced by this trends. But from the post-Gupta period the concept of making *puṇya* was changed. People started donation and *tīrthayātrā* for merits. So, Ujjayinī became more famous than earlier times. The popularity of Buddhism and Jainism were slower in this time. The codification of the *Puraṇas* and also a new kind of ‘Client-Patron’ relation were the causes for the rise of Brāhmaṇya religion. Slowly Ujjayinī evolved as a Śaiva and Śākta *tīrtha*.

Ujjayinī is referred in many sources. They are Buddhist and Jain literatures, ‘*Periplus of the Erytheran Sea*’, Ptolemy’s ‘*Geographiā*’, epics, Kālidāsa’s ‘*Meghdutam*’ and ‘*Raghuvamśam*’, ‘*Si-Yu-Ki*’, descriptions of Bhāsa and Daṇḍī, inscriptions, coins, architectural monuments etc. Also in modern days Rabindranāth Tagore tells in his ‘*Mānasī*’ Kabya about the glory of Ujjayinī. He also writes about the glory of ‘Mahākāleśvara temple’.

Ujjayinī is one of the ‘Saptapurīs’ according to the *Purāṇas*. ‘Saptasāgara’ are also situated here. According to a myth, there are 84 Śivaliṅgas which spread in various parts of Ujjayinī. Ābantyaḥaṇḍa of ‘*Skandapurāṇa*’ tells that Mahādeva after killing a demon named Tripurāsura came in Avantī and from this time this place was renamed as ‘Ujjayinī’. Ujjayinī means ‘A Place of Victory’. Many Śaiva sects like ‘Pāsupata’, ‘Kāpālīka’, ‘Kālāmukh’, ‘Bhairava’ and ‘Nāth’ obey this place as sacred place. This historical city is also famous for Śāktism. The ‘City of Temples’ (Ujjayinī) has countless temples and sculptures. Also from here many Buddhist stūpas are discovered. Today it is a ‘*Puṇyakhetra*’ where a ‘Kumbhamelā’ is held in gap of 12 years. So, Ujjayinī in ancient times famous as a Buddhist and Jaina *tīrtha* but from early-medieval to present days it is popularized as a Brāhmaṇya *tīrtha*. The historicity and versatilities of Ujjayinī made it a cultural centre of Indian Subcontinent which is beyond doubt.

**Reference:**

1. B.C. Law, *Geography of Ancient India*, p. 305.
2. Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalms of the Brethren*, p. 107.
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