

LATE SIDDHANTACHARYA PANDIT PHOOLCHANDRA SHASTRI

An Introduction

Panditji was born in the village of Silawan, District Lalitpur on April 11th, 1901. Panditji did not let financial hardships and sufferings/difficulties of life detour him from his path of self-knowledge. He attained the highest pinnacle of knowledge and it is difficult to find an equal to him in the serving of Jain literature. Pandit Phoolchandra Shastri and his two counterpoise/colleagues namely Pandit Kailash Chandra ji and Pandit Jaganmohan Lalji, were famously known as "Ratnatrayi". Pandit Kailash Chandraji Shastri wrote "I have acquired canonical knowledge only through reading the translations by Pandit Phool Chandra Shastri". Pandit Jaganmohan ji Shastri wrote for Pandit Phool Chandra Shastri that he is only four years older to me in age but hundreds of years older in knowledge.

Panditji has been a part of many social and political changes/reforms/agitations, some of which were initiated by him. He was an active member of the Indian National Congress prior to India independence. He served the Congress and the nation in the capacity of a district level office-bearer at Bina, Sagar, Solapur and Amrawati, congress committees. At Amrawati he held the post of joint secretary. He was also a part of the Congress conventions at Yavatmal, Poona and Natepute. He took an active part in the "Quit India" movement and also served in jail in 1941. Throughout his life Panditji wore Khadi and was a Swadeshi activist. After India got its independence, Panditji left politics and devoted his entire life to the worship of literarture.

Through many social movements he opposed the many evil practise and customs prevalent in Jain society. Among his many achievements, right of entry for Dassa Community (an outcast) into the temples is a landmark in itself. He opposed the unnecessary expenditure in the name of religion especially on "Gajraths". On January 26th, 1950 "The Harijan Temple Entry Act" was passed, which met with great resistance. Panditji through his writings supported the bill. He reminded the people that Jain society and culture does not believe in a cast system at all.

In his lifetime Panditji established many institutions and worked for their development. A list of these institutions and his various literary works is presented below. There are three main canonical texts (scriptures) of Jains; these are the detailed commentaries on Satkhandagam named as, Dhavala, Jaidhavala, and Maha-Dhavala. These manuscripts are written in Prakrit language, and were kept hidden in the temples of Karnataka for thousand of years. Due to the untiring efforts of Panditji and many other scholars, the knowledge of these manuscripts enriched the lives of millions of people. Panditji has been instrumental in making available/translating these manuscripts in Hindi. None could equal his mastery over these manuscripts.

Panditji was an epitome of simple living and high thinking. Humility was ingrained deeply in his nature. Proud did not touch him at all. Panditji was ever ready to extend a helping hand to one and all. He had a soft corner for students and taught many of them in a self-less manner and made them self reliant and independent. He stood unfazed in the face of stiff opposition and was a very self-respecting man.

1. **Father** Late Singhai Daryavlaji Jain
2. **Mother** Late Shrimati Janaki Bai
3. **Birth date** April 11th, 1901
4. **Birth Place** Silavan, Distt. Lalitpur (U.P.)
5. **Marriage** Year 1923
6. **Education** Visharad Shri Mahavir Digamber Jain Pathshala, Sadhumal, Distt.Lalitpur, (U.P.) in 1920 Siddhant Shastri, Shri Gopal Digamber Jain Vidyalaya, Muraina (1921-22)

7. Teaching and other works:

- (i) Lecturer, Jain Darshan, Kashi Hindu Vishvavidyalaya and Syadvad Digamaber Jain Mahavidyalaya, Varanasi. 1924-1928
- (ii) Principal in Bina Mahavidyalaya around 1930.
- (iii) Co-editor, Satkhandagam, Jain Sahityodharak Nidhi/Fund Vidisha, M.P. Place Amrawati – Maharashtra. 1937-1940
- (iv) Editor – Kashayapahud Shri Digamber Jain Sangh, Mathura, Place- Varanasi 1941-83. After that decided not to take up any service but continued to serve Jain Canonical Literature unabatedly as a free lance writer.

8. Political and social works:

- (i) Active member of Indian National Congress from 1926-42
- (ii) Office Bearer of District Congress of Bina and Sagar from 1928-1933.
- (iii) Office Bearer of Solapur District Congress from 1933-1938.

- (iv) Joint Secretary of Amrawati Congress from 1938-1940.
- (v) Imprisoned in 1941.
- (vi) Obtained the right to worship in the temples for Dassa (an out caste community) at the Kurawali convention of Parwar Jain Society.
- (vii) Opposed the extravaganza and unnecessary expenses in functions like "Gajrath" (Elephant driven chariots) and supported the use of this money to spread the jain canons and literature.

9. Important Honours and awards:

- (i) President, All India Digamber Jain (Vidvat Parishad) Scholistic Society, Dronagiri, 1955.
- (ii) Conferred the title of "Siddhantacharya" by Dr. Anantshayanam Ayangar, Governor of Bihar, at the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Jain Siddhant Bhawan, Aara (1962).
- (iii) Conferred the title of "Siddhant Ratna" by the Hon. Vice President of India, Dr. B.D. Jatti, on the occasion of 2500th Nirvana celebrations of Lord Mahavira.
- (iv) Felicitation volume presented to him in 1985 in the august presence of Acharya Shri Vidyanandji Muni.
- (v) A silve plaque was presented to him in 1987 by the All India Digambar Jain Mahasangha.
- (vi) Honoured with the "Prakrit Jnan Bharti" Award in the august presence of Swasthi Shri Charukeerti Bhattarak Maha Swamiji at the First National Prakrit Conference, Bangalor. 1990

- (vii) All India Mumukshu Samaj honoured him with a sum of Rs. 1 lac in 1990 at the Jaipur Panch Kalyanak Pratishtha.

10. Institutions Established:

- (i) Founding Member and first working joint-secretary of All India Digamber Jain Vidvat Parishad, 1944.
- (ii) Founding Member and Secretary, 1946, Shri Sanmati Jain Niketan, Naria, Varanasi.
- (iii) Founding Joint Secretary and Editor, 1944, Shri Ganesh Prasad Varni Jain Granthmala, Varanasi.
- (iv) Founding Member, 1946, Shri Ganesh Varni Inter College, Lalitpur, U.P.
- (v) Founder, 1971, Shri Ganesh Varni Digamber Jain (Research) Institute, Varanasi.

A SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT WORKS OF PANDITJI

Original Books:

1. Jain Dharma Aur Varna Vyavastha – Bharatvarshiya Digamber Jain Parishad, Delhi, 1945.
2. Vishvashanti Aur Aparigrahvaad – Shri Ganesh Varni Granthmala, Varanasi, 1946.
3. Jain Tatvamimansa – Ashok Prakashan Mandir, Varanasi, 1960.
4. Jain Tatva Mimansa (revised and extended edition) – Ashok Prakashan Mandir, Varanasi, 1978; (third revised edition), - Siddhantacharya Pandit Phoolchandra Shastri Foundation, Roorkee, 1996.
5. Varna, Jati Aur Dharma – Bhartiya Jnanpeeth. 1963; Reprinted many times since then.
6. Jain Tatva Samiksha ka Samadhan – Pandit Todarmal Smarak Trust, Jaipur, 1987.
7. Akinchitkar, Ek Anushilan – Ashok Prakashan Mandir, Varanasi, 1990.
8. Parvar Jain Samaj ka Itihaas – Bharatvarshiya Digamber Jain Parvar Sabha, Jabalpur, 1992.

Edited Journals:

1. Shanti-Sindhu – Acharya Shanti Sagar Saraswati Bhawan, Natepute (Solapur), 1935-37.
2. Jnanodaya – Bhartiya Jnanpeeth, Kashi, 1949-52.

Books Edited/Translated/Commentary:

1. Prameyratnamala – Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras, 1928.
2. Aalappaddhati – Shri Sakal Digamber Panchan, Natepute (Solapur), 1934.
3. Saptatikaprakarana (Edited with Hindi commentary) – Aatmanand Jain Pracharak Pustakalaya, Agra, 1948.
4. Tattvarth Sutra (Edited with Hindi commentary) – Ganesh Prasad Varni Jain Granthamala, Varanasi, 1950; Shri Ganesh Varni Sansthan, Varanasi, 1981.
5. Panchadhyayi (Hindi commentary) – Ganesh Prasad Varni Granthamala, Varanasi, 1950.
6. Jnanpeeth Pujanjali – Bhartiya Jnanpeeth Prakashan, Kashi, (second edition) 1957, 1977, 1982.
7. Sarvarthsiddhi – (edition and translation) – Bhartiya Jnanpeeth, New Delhi, 1960, 1985.
8. Samaysaarkalash (with meanings) – Shri Digambar Jain Swadhyay Madir Trust, Songarh, 1964.
9. Shri Kahanji Swami Abhinandan Granth (Editor) – Digamber Jain Mumukshu Mandal, Mumbai, 1964.
10. Khaniya Tatva-Charcha (Book One) – Acharya Kalp Pandit Todarmal Granthmala, Jaipur, 1967.
11. Khaniya Tatva-Charcha (Book Two) – Acharya Kalp Pandit Todarmal Granthmala, Jaipur, 1967.
12. Samyagyan-Dipika (Edited and translated) – Shri Digamber Jain Mumukshu Mandal, Bhavnagar, 1970.
13. Labdhisaar-Kshapanasaar – Shrimad Rajchandra Aashram, Agaas, 1980.

14. Aatmanushasan – Shri Ganeshvarni Digamber Jain Sansthan, Varanasi, 1983.
15. Satkhandagama (Dhavala) Volume 1 – 16, a treatise on Jain Philosophy, size 20x30 Cm., about 8000 pages, published for the first time on the basis of old palm leaf manuscripts, Edited with Dr. H.L. Jain and Pandit H.L. Jain Shastri, also translated Six Volumes, Publishers: S.S.L.C. Jain S. Fund, Vidisha, M.P. and J.S.S. Sangha, Solapur in the years 1939-1959 and 1973-1985.
16. Mahabandha, Volume 2-7, a treatise on Jain Philosophy, size 20x30 Cm., about 3000 pages, published for the first time on the basis of old palm leaf manuscripts, translated and edited from the original in Prakrit language, Publishers: Bhartiya Jnanapeeth, New Delhi. 1944-1970
17. Kasayapahuda (Jai-Dhavala), Volume 1-16, a treatise on Jain Philosophy, size 20x30 Cm., about 7500 pages, published for the first time from the original in Prakrit language, Publishers: Bharatvarshiya Digamber Jain Sangha, Mathura, U.P. 1941-1986