Lesson 14

14.1   Tracing a Word to its Dhātu

Since the dictionary is essentially etymologically arranged, it is quite straightforward to trace a word to its **dhātu**. This is best illustrated by example: find the word **Vy-añjana** in the third column of page 1029.

> **Vy-añjana**, mfn. manifesting, indicating ... m. a consonant ...
> n. decoration, ornament; manifestation, indication ... specification; a
> mark, badge, sign, token; ... a consonant.

Since this entry is not in **devanāgarī**, follow the entry words backwards (towards अ) until an entry given in **devanāgarī** (the outermost level of alphabetical order). In the middle of the second column is:

> व्यञ्ज् *vy-√añj* ... to anoint thoroughly; to decorate, adorn, beautify; to
> cause to appear, manifest, display;

This is the **kriyā** from which the **nāman vyañjana** derives. The next step in analysing this word is to look up the two component parts of this verb, namely **vy-** and **dhātu añj**. In the second column of page 1028 is found:

> व्य् *vy*, in comp. before vowels for 3.*vi*

Here is an example of vowel **sandhi** used in forming a word. In the third column of page 949 is the entry:

> वि 3.*vi*, ind. ... used as a prefix to verbs and nouns ... to express
> 'division', 'distinction', 'distribution', 'arrangement' ...

Compare this with the sense of the **upasarga vi-** given in 7.B.1. The **dhātu** of **vyañjana** is given in the first column of page 11:

> अञ्ज् *añj*, ... to decorate ... to celebrate ... to cause to appear, make
> clear ...

Compare all this information with the description of **vyañjana** given at the start of the first lesson. Now that may appear to be a very flowery description of what

is simply a consonant, but in this complicated hi-tech age the profundity of simple
things is often overlooked: the ability to form a range of consonants is what separates
man from animal. A dog may be able to howl a perfect prolonged **ū₃** , but can it
embellish that to say 'Who could fool you?'. Without adorning the vowel sounds
with consonants there would be no language: without language there would be no
mathematics or science, no history or philosophy, no culture or civilisation — all this
rich diversity is founded on the simplicity of vowels and consonants. Indeed, many
scriptures speak of the creative power of speech, and that creation itself is spoken
into existence.

14.2   Dhātu Entry Information

Turn again to the **dhātu budh** at the bottom of the first column of page 733.

That the **dhātu** is printed in large **devanāgarī** means that it is a major **dhātu**;
this is followed by the numeral '1', which indicates that there is another entry
budh, which may or may not be another **dhātu** (in fact it is a **viśeṣaṇa** listed
in the first column on the next page). Next, 'cl.ɪ. P.Ā.' indicates that the **dhātu**
conjugates according to class-1 rules in both **parasmai-pada** and **ātmane-pada**;
this is followed by the **Dhātu-Pāṭha** reference '(Dhātup.xxi,11)'. The following
two words, which are printed in feint italic, '*bodhati, °te*', show the **laṭ** (present
indicative) **prathama puruṣa eka-vacana** forms, i.e. **bodhati** and **bodhate** for
parasmai-pada and **ātmane-pada** respectively.

Next there is 'cl.4. Ā.' which means that it may also be found as a class 4 **ātmane-
pada** verb; '(xxvi,63)' is a **Dhātu-Pāṭha** reference; next '*budhyate*' shows the **laṭ**
conjugation as a class-4 verb. The 'ep. also P. °*ti*' means that in the epics it
may also be found conjugated in (class-4) **parasmai-pada**, where the form will be
buddhyati. (Observe, just as a matter of interest, that the **dhātu** vowel remains
unchanged when conjugated as a class-4 verb, but in the class-1 conjugation the
vowel has the **guṇa** form; some other classes use the **vṛddhi** form.)

The next eight lines show conjugations of this **dhātu** for other **lakāra** (tenses and
moods) etc., before starting the English translations 'to wake' etc. (Again, simply
note that some of the forms have the first syllable 're-duplicated' (e.g. **bubodha**)
or prefixed with 'a' (e.g. **abudhram**).)

Within the English translation section, passive forms of the verb are given, as also
derivative verb forms. The last four lines show associated verbs in several other
Indo-European languages.

Some **dhātu** entries give much less information, such as बीम् near the top of the first column, whilst others give more information, such as √कृ 1. **kṛ** at the end of page 300, but the overall format is similar.

14.3   Numbered Entries

Words having the same spelling may have quite different etymologies; having different derivations, their meanings will be quite different: in such cases, where entries have the same spelling, Monier-Williams numbers these 1,2,3, and so on. For example, turning to the second column on page 32, find the two consecutive entries for अनुचित—

> अनुचित 1. *anu-cita*, mfn. (√1. *ci*), set or placed along or . . .
> अनुचित 2. *an-ucita*, mfn. improper, wrong, unusual strange . . .

Note the numerals and the different derivations indicated in the transliterated forms. The first is derived from √1. **ci**, which in turn indicates that there is more than one **dhātu ci** (in fact there are three); the second is derived from √**uc**, which is found by looking up **ucita** on page 172c.

Further down the column are two entries for **anucchindat** which have different derivations from the same **dhātu**. Note that the numerals appear before the transliterated form, both here and in अनुचित above. Also note that these words do not have consecutive entries: indeed they may be separated by several pages, as we shall see shortly.

In the next column, observe that there are two entries for अनुज्ञा, which both have the same etymological derivation, but the first is a verb and the second a noun.

Turning to page 662, find the entry for **pratipāṇa** in the middle of the second column, where it is given as −**1. -pāṇa** m. (for 2. see s.v.) —now find the meaning of 's.v.' in the list of abbreviations on page xxxv (two pages before page 1). The entry for **pratipāṇa** that we are now examining is at the third level of alphabetical order, and we now need to find it at the outermost (**devanāgarī**) alphabetical order: this is at the bottom of the second column on page 667. Here Monier-Williams gives a clear reference to where we have just come from: where the numbered entries are widely spaced (five pages in this case), he usually, but not always, gives pointers to where the other entry may be found.

Be aware that the numbered entries inform you that there are at least two entries with the same spelling: for example, there are five entries for **cit** on pages 394–5,

and a sixth on page 398. It would be a useful exercise to find them.

Be warned that this numbering system is not perfect: for example, प्रज्ञा is indicated as a verb in the first column of page 659, and as a noun in the second column, but these are not numbered. Again, in the third column of page 401 are two entries for चेत्, but neither of refer to **cet** in 397c, which in turn does not refer to the other two. Although there are these inconsistencies, there are fortunately very few of them.

14.4   Misleading Words

Because of the etymological foundation of the dictionary and its four levels of alphabetical order, some words may not be straightforward to find. We shall examine three such words here.

Aṣṭāṅga — Turn to page 116: according to the heading words we should find **aṣṭāṅga** here. If we look down the second column there are three entries for **aṣṭa**, and in the next column **aṣṭā**, but there is no **aṣṭāṅga**, not even at the third level of **samāsa**. However, for reasons best known to himself, Monier-Williams has here decided to have a separate entry word for **samāsa** where the adjoining word starts with 'a': **aṣṭāṅga** is on the third line of the first column of page 117.

Vicāra — Turn to page 950: again, according to the heading words we should find **vicāra** in the middle of the second column. All the **samāsa** listed on this page are derived from वि on the previous page. The trick here is to escape out of the current level of alphabetical order to the next higher level: searching backward for the entry word under which these **samāsa** are listed, we come to वि on the previous page. This is the outermost (**devanāgarī**) level — now remain at that level and search for **vicāra**. The next **devanāgarī** entry is विंश on 953b, and the page ends with विकल: continue forward at the **devanāgarī** level, looking for विचार. This will be found near the bottom of 958c where it simply refers to **vi-√car**, and thus the entry word is found near the bottom of 958b.

Sattva — This will be found listed as सत्त्व in 1138b, where it gives a cross-reference to page 1135 column 2: and indeed there it is listed as **Sat-tva**. However, if the word had not been found on page 1138, you would not have found it on this page, not according to the heading words which indicate that it is on the previous page. It is in fact listed at the third level in 1134c where it simply gives 'see below' — this means scan forward over entry words (at level-1 or -2) for the entry.

These examples illustrate that the page heading words are a useful guide to get within ten pages or so of the target word, but that they can also mislead. This

confusion arises because the page heading words may refer to any of the first three
levels of alphabetical order: if the word sought is not quickly found on the expected
page, then examine the heading words a few pages before and after. If the word is
still not found, then examine entries at the next level of alphabetical order, until
finally at the outermost **devanāgarī** level.

14.5   Difficult Words

Some words, because of their etymological development, are just plain difficult to
find. When you have exhausted all the tricks that you know with the dictionary
(see sections 12.5, 13.7, and 14.4), then consider the following:

(a) If it is a short word (one or two syllables) then it may not be listed in the
dictionary at all: the declension of pronouns, for example, is irregular
and the only recourse is to lists of paradigms.

(b) If it has three or more syllables, treat it as a **samāsa** and use the **sandhi**
rules to split it into parts at every syllable — this process may seem rather
laborious, but it does get there if the word is listed in the dictionary. This
detective work is illustrated with two words:

Yatātman —   The word is not found as a **samāsa** under य or यत्, and there
is no entry word **Yatā**. So let's split the word at ā: we could have **yatā-atman**,
yatā-ātman, **yata-atman**, or **yatā-ātman**. The first two don't help because we
have already found that there is no entry word **Yatā** — but there is an entry word
यत. Don't get excited: it is a guess and could be wrong. Nevertheless, following
this clue to page 845 we find **Yatâtman** in the third column — who would have
guessed that it came from **dhātu yam**?

Svādhyāya —   Having worked our way to the **devanāgarī** level of alphabetical
order, we find the closest entry is स्वाधीन, but reading the text for that entry we
find 'sv**â**dhyāya, see p 1277, col. 2.' And indeed there we find two entries: the first
as a noun and the second as a verb.

Alternatively we could have tried splitting the word ourselves, working from the left
again, to produce **su-ādhyāya**, **sū-ādhyāya**, **svā-dhyāya**, **svā-adhyāya**, **svā-
ādhyāya**, **sva-adhyāya**, or **sva-ādhyāya**. Having found nothing useful under सु
(five entries) or सू (four entries) or स्वा, we would have arrived at स्व and thus find
the entries in 1277b.

However, this is not the end of the story: we want to find the **dhātu** from which

this word derives, but cannot find **adhyāya** on page 23 where we would expect it. So we do the same trick again, starting from the left, giving **a-dhyāya**: but nothing suitable is found under अ (six entries), nor is the entry word **dhyāya** found. So we proceed to the next syllable: **adhi-āya**, **adhī-āya**, **adhya-aya**, **adhya-āya**, **adhyā-aya**, and **adhyā-āya**. Again we find nothing helpful under अधि (two entries), but under अधी we find the entry word **Adhy-āya**! Having found the word, we return to the **devanāgarī** level (अधी), and there the **dhātu** is given as $\sqrt{\overline{\imath}}$.

14.6   Dictionary Practice

Look up the following words in the dictionary and trace their etymology as shown in 14.1 (as an aid, the English equivalent is also given):

1. अभय (fearlessness)

2. पूर्ण (abundance)

3. प्रत्याहार (withdrawal)

4. अचापल्य (steadiness)

5. चित्रकर्मविद् (skilled in painting)

6. नातिमानिता (not too much pride)