

Lesson 12

From here forward the lessons will no longer be divided into parts ‘A’ and ‘B’, there will, however, be exercises related to the dictionary or **Dhātu-Pāṭha** at the end of each lesson.

12.1 Monier-Williams Dictionary

In the dictionary, words are listed in their **prātipadika** (stem) form, i.e. without the **vibhakti** endings that they gather in actual use; therefore in seeking the meaning of words found in Sanskrit writings, the first part of the word will be found in the dictionary, and the last syllable or two forming the **vibhakti** ending needs to be omitted. There will be an element of guesswork in this because only the six most common noun declensions have been given: forty declensions are necessary to cover all possibilities, and as many again for exceptions.

The dictionary often marks the accents of vowels in transliteration: the **udātta** is marked with the acute accent (´) and the **svarita** with the grave accent (`)—this is illustrated in section 9.A.1. There is an interesting section on the subject of accents on page xviii of the dictionary introduction, beginning with the fourth paragraph “Then a third improvement . . .”. The rest of the lengthy Preface and Introduction need not be read; however, do note that the dictionary was completed at the end of the Nineteenth Century, and thus there is some Victorian coyness in translating sexual terms, which are sometimes given in Latin rather than English.

This dictionary is either very simple to use, or very difficult: the difference lies in understanding the founding principles of the dictionary, and appreciating the devices that Monier-Williams has employed in order to make it simple to use.

In this lesson the broad structure of the dictionary is explained, and subsequent lessons will cover the details.

12.2 Alphabet and Transliteration

Some of the **devanāgarī** characters used in the dictionary differ from the standard followed in these lessons, and some transliterations differ from the generally accepted standard. The alphabet used in the dictionary, in both **devanāgarī** and transliterated Roman characters, is presented below in the standard format, from which one may deduce the standard alphabetical order (which of course, the dictionary does use).

अ आ इ ई उ ऊ ऋ ॠ लृ लृ ए ऐ ओ औ अं अः
 a ā i ī u ū ṛi ṛī lṛi lṛī e o ai au aṁ/an aḥ

क ka	च ca	ट ṭa	त ta	प pa
ख kha	छ cha	ठ ṭha	थ tha	फ pha
ग ga	ज ja	ड ḍa	द da	ब ba
घ gha	झ jha	ढ ḍha	ध dha	भ bha
ङ ṅa	ञ ña	ण ṇa	न na	म ma
	य ya	र ra	ल la	व va
	श śa	ष sha	स sa	
ह ha				

Observe the **devanāgarī** characters used for अ and its derivatives in the sixteen **śakti**, and the consonants झ and ण; observe also the transliteration for ṛ ṛī ḷ ḷī, the **anusvāra**, ś and ṣ. These are also shown on page xxxvi (facing page 1) of the dictionary.

Monier-Williams distinguishes between a ‘true’ **anusvāra** (**n**) which is inherent in the word from its **dhātu** and is found in such words as अंस (**ansa**) and हिंस (**hinsa**), and the ‘substitute’ **anusvāra** (**m**) which arises through the operation of the rules of grammar, as for example सम्+सार ⇒ संसार (**saṁsāra**). This distinction is peculiar to Monier-Williams (the standard is to use **m** throughout), and may be ignored: simply treat **m** and **n** as synonymous with the **anusvāra**.

12.3 Fundamental Structure

The dictionary is arranged on etymological principles, and it is this that makes it such a powerful tool. The two main advantages of this arrangement are, firstly, that cognate words derived from the same **dhātu** are gathered together, and this facilitates a broad understanding of the word, together with its applications and uses; secondly, it becomes a trivial matter to trace the word back to its **dhātu**, thus allowing a penetrating insight into the very essence of the word. This combination, giving both breadth and depth to the understanding of a word, is immensely valuable in the penetrating study of the scriptures.

Besides the etymological arrangement, the dictionary is also ordered alphabetically, as one would expect of a dictionary. The seeming conflict between these two is resolved quite simply: the main etymological structure is ordered alphabetically in **devanāgarī** script, and the sub-structure of derived words is listed under the **devanāgarī** entry in transliterated Roman script; the derived words are themselves listed alphabetically, but their order is independent of the outer structure using **devanāgarī** script. For example, the entries could be listed as follows:

बिराल
बिल्
Bila
Bilasa
Bilma
Bilmin
Billa
Bilva
Bilvaka
Bilvakīyā
Bilvala
बिलाल
बिलिन्ध
बिलिश
बिल्हण

Comments on the list:

The entries in **devanāgarī** script are listed in alphabetical order and ignore any intervening words in transliterated Roman script.

Similarly, the words in Roman script are themselves listed alphabetically, and are all derived from the previous word in **devanāgarī** script (बिल् in this case).

The list also demonstrates the two levels of alphabetical order: without these levels, the words बिलाल बिलिन्ध बिलिश in **devanāgarī** script should be between **Bilasa** and **Bilma**.

Do not proceed any further with this lesson until this principle of the independence of the two levels of alphabetical order is clear.

The reason for this instruction is that the dictionary uses four levels of alphabetical order, and not just two.

Now open your dictionary at page 732.

A word of caution: the dictionary contains a wealth of information — do be alert to attention being captured by some interesting item. At this stage the purpose is not to find word meanings, but to understand how to use this tool called a dictionary.

Look down the first column, and observe that each entry begins with an indented word in **devanāgarī** or bold Roman script, and that each entry comprises just one paragraph.

The entries in this column should be the same as the list given above: confirm this.

Now look at the next page: at the bottom of the first column is the entry बुध् in large **devanāgarī** type. Such an entry indicates a major **dhātu**.

The words derived from this **dhātu** include **Buddha** (middle of second column), and **Buddhaka** and **Buddhi** (middle of third column). Continuing through these

derived words on the next page, observe the change of the first vowel from **Bu-** to **Bo-** (e.g. **Bodha**), and on the following page to **Bau-** (e.g. **Bauddha**), before the next word in **devanāgarī** script (बुद्ध). There are two points to appreciate here: firstly, remembering the two levels of alphabetical order, note that there can be several pages between **devanāgarī** entry words; and secondly, note the strengthening of the **dhātu** vowel of the entry words from **Bu-** through **Bo-** to **Bau-**—at this stage just note that they are the **guṇa** and **vṛddhi** forms—the significance of this will be explained later.

Now return to page 733, to the entry **Buddha** in the middle of column two. Three inches (75 mm) below this is **-kapālinī** in bold type: find this. This means that **-kapālinī** is appended to the entry word **Buddha** so as to form the **samāsa** **Buddhakaṭpālinī**. Similarly, following **-kapālinī**, the next word in bold type is **-kalpa**, forming the **samāsa** **Buddhakalpa**.

The rest of the column has several more such words in bold type and each beginning with a hyphen (and the hyphen is not irrelevant, but more of that later): observe that these words or listed in alphabetical order. This is the third level of alphabetical order: **samāsa** beginning with the entry word (which may be in Roman type or **devanāgarī**) are listed within the body of the paragraph for that entry in alphabetical order.

This third level may be viewed as an extension of the second level, where the leading hyphen is mentally replaced by the entry word. Continuing at this level, note that in the third column (about three inches (80 mm) down) is **Buddhāgama**: the caret (^) above the vowel indicates that it is long (**dīrgha**)—it conveys more information in fact, as will be explained later.

Buddhāgama and subsequent **samāsa** are spelled out in full because, due to the rules of vowel **sandhi**, the final **a** of **buddha** is changed: thus, in strict alphabetical order, **Buddhāgama** (with **dīrgha ā**) follows after the previous **samāsa -sena**, i.e. **Buddhasena** (with **hrasva a**). Work through these **samāsa** until satisfied that they are in fact in alphabetical order.

The next entry word is **Buddhaka**, which returns to the second level of alphabetical order: the point to note here, is that a **samāsa** like **Buddhāgama** is before it, and thus out of sequence as far as the second level in concerned. Thus these **samāsa** sub-entries are truly a third level of alphabetical order.

Return to the second column, and find the fourth **samāsa** entry **-kshetra** (about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches (60 mm) from the bottom). The next line contains the word (in feint italic type) *-pariśodhaka*, and similarly in the line below that, is *-vara-locana*. These form

further **samāsa** when appended to **-kṣetra**, i.e. **Buddhikṣetrapariśodhaka** and **Buddhikṣetravaralocana**. Note that these two sub-sub-entries listed under the sub-entry **-kṣetra**, are also in alphabetical order: this is the fourth (and last!) level of alphabetical ordering.

12.4 Page Heading Words

The words in the top margin of each page, given in both **devanāgarī** and Roman transliterated forms, indicate respectively the first and last entry words to be found on that page. Do make use of these rather than the body of the text as you scan through the pages looking up a word: but don't rely on them totally, for they can sometimes be misleading in that they do not indicate at which of the four levels of alphabetical order they occur.

Examine the words at the top of page 732 for example, and note that the first (**birāla**) is in **devanāgarī** script in the text, and the last (**bijin**) is in transliterated Roman: these words are at different levels in the hierarchy of alphabetical orders. Again, on the next page the heading words are at the second and third levels; and turning over the page, the words at the top of page 735 are both at the second level but are in reverse alphabetical order, being derive from different words in the **devanāgarī** script: had one been looking for बुम्मी (the first entry in the second column), the heading words would have been quite misleading. When you suspect that you have been misled by the page heading words, turn a few pages backwards (towards अ) and follow the **devanāgarī** entries in the body of the dictionary.

This situation does not happen often and so one forgets about it, but be aware that it CAN happen.

At this stage you could start to make use of the dictionary if there are words that you particularly want to look up, but for the moment leave aside words beginning with स (sa).

12.5 Dictionary Practice

Look up the words in the following list in the dictionary. The words in the list will all be found at the start of an entry (like **buddhi**) and not buried in the text; the words may be in **devanāgarī** or transliterated in the dictionary.

The exercise is to find the word in the dictionary and not to examine the meaning of the word, so simply find the word and note the page and column in the form: **buddhi 733b** (i.e. page 733, second (=b) column).

When you are more familiar with the dictionary, it should take no longer to find a word in the Sanskrit dictionary than it does in the English dictionary, say fifteen seconds.

Common errors of first-time users are:

- (1) Confusing the English and Sanskrit alphabetical orders,
- (2) Forgetting that ‘**a**’ and ‘**ā**’ for example, are two separate letters,
- (3) Not seeing what is actually there, both in the list of words and in the dictionary: watch those diacritics!
- (4) Failing to use the page heading words,
- (5) Misunderstanding the structure of the **devanāgarī** and transliterated entries,
- (6) Wasting time by reading interesting but irrelevant entries.

You have been warned: but go ahead and fall flat on your face anyway!

But then do observe what tripped you up.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. ātman | 8. brahman | 15. puruṣa |
| 2. hetu | 9. guru | 16. manas |
| 3. yoga | 10. rajas | 17. śarīra |
| 4. prakṛti | 11. citta | 18. bhakti |
| 5. jñāna | 12. ṛṣi | 19. ananta |
| 6. ānanda | 13. viṣṇu | 20. kṛṣṇa |
| 7. vyākaraṇa | 14. hṛdaya | |