

Sanskrit Lesson

From the Vajra Prajna Paramita Sutra

continued from issue #209

तैन खल पुनः
समयेनायुष्मान्सुभूतिस्तस्यामेव
पर्षदि संनिपतितोऽभूत्संनिषण्णः।

TENA KHALU PUNAḤ SAMAVENĀYUṢMĀN-SUBHŪTIS-
TASYĀM-EVA PARṢADI SAṆNIPATITO' BHŪT-
SAṆNIṢAṆṆAḤ / "At that time the Elder
Subhūti was present in the assembly,
sitting down." (text before external
sandhi: TENA KHALU PUNAS SAMAVENA
ĀYUṢMĀN SUBHŪTIS TASYĀM EVA PARṢADI
SAṆNIPATITAS ABHŪT SAṆNIṢAṆṆAS)

saṅnipatito 'bhūt is the next word-group in the sentence, and is translated "was present." The subject is the Venerable Subhuti (*subhūtis*), and so the verb is in the 3rd person singular. The *sandhi* has already been discussed in detail. Refer to VBS issue #184 for that discussion. The form before *sandhi* takes place is *saṅnipatitas abhūt*. This is an example of what is known as a periphrastic construction. In this case the two elements involved are a perfect passive participle and an auxiliary ("helping") verb in the aorist tense. The fact that the auxiliary verb is in the aorist is somewhat unusual.

saṅnipatita is the stem form of the perfect passive participle. It is made up of two prefixes, *sa-* and *ni-*, which add the ideas of "together" and "down" respectively. The root is \sqrt{pat} - "fall," and the ending *-ita* is the perfect passive participle suffix. The perfect passive participle was discussed in detail in VBS issue #183. Root \sqrt{pat} - means "fall" and the perfect passive participle *patita* means "fallen." The two prefixes add additional shades of meaning. Added up literally they mean "fallen down together." The meaning by extension here is that of having "fallen" "down" and "together" with others, and so to be present in a group--to present one's self or to appear among or in a place. The place one appears or is present in is shown in the locative case. The word-group in the locative case, as was discussed in the previous lesson, is *tasyām-*

eva parṣadi "in that assembly," the assembly where the Sutra was about to be spoken.

The part of the phrase translated in the text as "present" is *saṅnipatito* and as a perfect passive participle it is declined like an adjective. Therefore it agrees in gender, number, and case with its subject, *subhūtis*. Thus it is nominative case, singular number, and masculine gender. The part of the phrase that is translated in the text as "was" is the auxiliary verb *abhūt*. *abhūt* comes from root $\sqrt{bhū}$ - "be/become" which is an important verb in Sanskrit as it is in English. However, there are two roots in Sanskrit which share the functions of English "be": \sqrt{as} - and $\sqrt{bhū}$ -. The auxiliary verb shows the verb group's tense, number, mood, and voice. Here *abhūt* is, as was mentioned above, 3rd person, singular in number, and in the aorist tense. It is active voice and indicative mood.

The aorist tense was discussed at length in VBS issues #193 and #194. The "root" aorist is one of the types of aorist, and $\sqrt{bhū}$ - in the aorist tense has the root aorist form. The chart given below gives the full conjugation of $\sqrt{bhū}$ - in the aorist. Note that the *-ū-* of $\sqrt{bhū}$ - remains unchanged throughout all the forms, and that a *-v-* is inserted after the *-ū-* before the endings *-am* and *-an* of the 1st singular and 3rd plural.

THE ROOT AORIST OF $\sqrt{BHŪ}$ -			
person	singular	dual	plural
first	<i>abhūvam</i>	<i>abhūva</i>	<i>abhūma</i>
second	<i>abhūs</i>	<i>abhūtām</i>	<i>abhūta</i>
third	<i>abhūt</i>	<i>abhūtām</i>	<i>abhūvan</i>

saṅniṣaṅṅaḥ "sitting down" is the next, and final, word in the sentence. It too depends upon *abhūt* as its auxiliary verb. It is made up of the prefixes *sa-* "together" and *ni-* "down" just as was *saṅnipatitas*, but its root is \sqrt{sad} - "sit." The root is one that takes *-na* as its perfect passive participial suffix, and by *sandhi* the *-d* of \sqrt{sad} - also becomes *-n-*. There is further internal *sandhi* involved. *saṅniṣaṅṅaḥ* is the form in final position, and the original form is *saṅniṣaṅṅas*, as was discussed in VBS issue #196. Thus the word illustrates both internal and external *sandhi*. Discussion of the verb will continue in the next Sanskrit lesson.

— to be continued