

## Sanskrit Lesson

### From the Vajra Prajñā Paramita Sutra

अथ खड्गायुष्मात्सुभूतिस्तथायासनाद्  
एकंसमुत्तरासङ्गं कृत्वा दक्षिणं जानु-  
मण्डलं पृथिव्यां प्रतिष्ठाप्य येन  
भगवांस्तैनाञ्जलिं प्रणम्य भगवन्तम्  
एतदवौचत्

**Atha khalu Āyusmān Subhūtir  
utthāyāsanād ekāṃsam  
uttarāsaṅgaṃ kṛtvā dakṣiṇaṃ  
jānu-maṇḍalaṃ prthivyāṃ  
pratiṣṭhāpya yena Bhagavaṃs  
tenāñjaliṃ pranamyā  
Bhagavantam etad avocat.**

Then the Elder Subhuti, having arisen from his seat, having bared one shoulder of his upper garment, having placed his right knee on the ground, and having placed his palms together before the Honored One, said this to the Honored One:

The next subordinate phrase in the text is *dakṣiṇaṃ jānumaṇḍalaṃ prthivyāṃ pratiṣṭhāpya* "having placed his right knee on the ground." The gerund *pratiṣṭhāpya* "having placed" was discussed in detail in

the issue #223 of Vajra Bodhi Sea (December, 1989). The subject of the gerund is the sentence as whole: *āyusmān subhūtir* "the Elder Subhuti." *jānumaṇḍalaṃ*\* "knee" (literally "knee-circle") is the direct object of the gerund, and so is in the accusative case. The word is composed of the two nouns which in their stem forms are: *jānu* "knee" and *maṇḍala* "circle." The compound belongs to the *tat-puruṣa* or Dependent Determinative category of compounds. It is analyzed as "circle of the knee," the dependant relationship between the elements being that of possession. Compounds as a whole have the gender of their final member, in this case *maṇḍalam*\*, which is neuter. *jānu* also happens to be neuter.

*maṇḍala* belongs to the short -a declension discussed previously in VBS #178 (March, 1985). The adjective *dakṣiṇa* (stem form) "right" also belongs to the short -a declension. *dakṣiṇaṃ*\* in the text is accusative singular neuter, agreeing with *jānumaṇḍalaṃ*\*, the noun it describes. *dakṣiṇa* also means "southern," since directions in Sanskrit are calculated from the point of view of a person looking east. Since the direction in front is the east, the direction to the right is the south. Here the gesture referred to is that of kneeling with one knee (the right knee) on the ground to show the utmost respect when requesting the Dharma. *prthivyāṃ*\* "on the ground" is in the locative case, which indicates location in time or space. The stem form of this feminine noun which means "earth" or "ground" is *prthivī*. It belongs to the category of stems known as "derivative stems in -ā, -ī, -ū."

\* Note that the -m in the word in text is due to external sandhi. The form before sandhi is -m.

#### Names of the Directions in Sanskrit

<i>pūrva</i>	"before," "in front," "east," "eastern."
<i>apara</i>	"behind," "in back," "west," "western."
<i>dakṣiṇa</i>	"right," "to the right," "south," "southern."
<i>uttara</i>	"upper," "higher," "north," "northern," "left."
<i>madhya</i>	"middle," "central."

Declension of Stems in -a, -i, -u			
case	singular	dual	plural
Nominative	<i>pr̥thivī́</i>	<i>pr̥thivyau</i>	<i>pr̥thivyas</i>
Accusative	<i>pr̥thivīm</i>	<i>pr̥thivyau</i>	<i>pr̥thivyīs</i>
Instrumental	<i>pr̥thivyā</i>	<i>pr̥thivībhyām</i>	<i>pr̥thivībhis</i>
Dative	<i>pr̥thivyai</i>	<i>pr̥thivībhyām</i>	<i>pr̥thivībhyas</i>
Ablative	<i>pr̥thivyās</i>	<i>pr̥thivībhyām</i>	<i>pr̥thivībhyas</i>
Genitive	<i>pr̥thivyās</i>	<i>pr̥thivyos</i>	<i>pr̥thivīnām</i>
Locative	<i>pr̥thivyām</i>	<i>pr̥thivyos</i>	<i>pr̥thivīstu</i>
Vocative	<i>pr̥thivyi</i>	<i>pr̥thivyau</i>	<i>pr̥thivyas</i>