LVI-10
UNADI SUTRAS - A SUCCESSFUL AID OF VEDIC INTERPRETATION - NEW POSSIBILITIES

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1. Prelude

Unadi-sutras are considered as one of the four accessories (KhilaPathe) of Panini's grammar, and subsequently all most all the later non-Panian systems also accepted it as such, following the Paninian acceptance. Panini (P) has not incorporated them as the intrinsic part of his grammar text, the Astadhyayi (As), though he has recognized them as necessary Krt or Primary affixes. Some 317 (or so) number of primary affixes, the first being Un (by the rule- kr-oa-pr-j-mi-smad-sadyuhiyu un Unadi 1.1), are seen in this Unadi text due to be ordained after verbal roots exactly in the same principle followed under Krt section of the As. P has kept them as an appendix because all these affixes follow ad hoc principles unlike strict rules of grammatical formulation of his grammar. Patanjali (Pj) in his Mahabhasya (M), by quoting two slokawarttikas (SV), evaluates the essence of the Unadi section. And the three verses including the two SVs appearing on P.3.3.1: unadayo bahulam speak out their characteristic nature in various operational occasions of the affixes including those of their anubandhas which are somehow relaxed and deviated in their operational mechanism unlike the Krt affixes enumerated by P. It is relevant to quote those three verses to have an idea of their functional nature.

Verse 1

bhaulakam prakṛtes tanuḍrīṣṭa prayo-samuccayanad api tame/karya-saṣeṣa-Vidhīḥ tadukaṃ naṣgama rudhibhayam hisusadhu/SV-7

The idea is that the Unadi affixes come only after a limited number of roots, and not after all roots, but it is to cover all the roots for which the word bahulam has been employed. Moreover, a few affixes have been covered, not all. Thus it discloses inexactiveness in the enumeration of roots as well as affixes. Vithala in his Prakṛtya-prasada also points out the same idea- alpah prakṛtya ukta alpe ca prayatayah. This inexactiveness in various operation of the affixes including anubandhas 'indicatory letters' is to show that there are many more affixes to be included in the Unadi list. However, the words derived with Unadi affixes are correct because they are found used in Vedas as well as in popular language of literature and conversation being conventionally used by the people or by the authors of non-Vedic literature.

Verse 2

nam ca dhatvayam dha nirukte vyakarane sakataya ca tokam/yan na padarthava-visesa-samuthram prayatvaya prakṛtes ca tadvayum/SV-2

The verse may be explained as the following: It is said in the Nirukta that all nouns are derived from simple roots, and among grammarians, Sakatayana (alone) too holds the same view. Those words which do not clearly show their derivation, the proper bases and affixes forming those words, must be inferred.

In conclusion Pj, the Bhasyakara says-

samajnasu dhaturupani prayatyaya ca tataḥ pare/ karyad vidyad anubandham etac chaitram unadisu // Thus in analyzing samajnas or naming words (where the respective roots and affixes are not distinct or there is no distinct etymology) the first part of such words should be inferred as bases and after them the final portion, as affixes. And from operational results effecting guna, vṛddhi, samprasarana etc. one can infer the anubandhas or indicatory letters the affixes under discussion bear.

From the above discussion it is evident that the words derived with Unadi affixes do not follow uniform and regular operational techniques which does hardly happen in P's Krt section. Moreover, the entire Unadi section behaves like the Nirukta, i.e., the paraphrasing of the derivational meaning is similar to the one followed in the Nirukta. Krt affixes constitute a subject of grammar, and the correct word-formation is the prerogative of the area called grammar, since correct derivation of the words or sādhasakarana is its only objective. It is sādhasakarana, therefore, sādha or word is the object of its analysis. On the other hand, Nirukta is a discipline meant for meaning analysis of the words used in the Vedas in all possible way. Here the word derivation bears a marginal importance. But Yaska recognizes Nirukta to be complementary to the Vyakaraṇa (vyakaranasaṃ kārttikya). As suggested earlier Sakatayana was the only grammarian who supported this principle of Nirukta, and therefore, he is believed to have authored this Unadi rules. The fact that these words form a considerable portion of Sanskrit vocabulary prompts P to accept them as Krt affixes under his Krt-adhikara and at the same time he formulates the rule unadayo bahulam P.3.3.1 to give his sanction but with a loose status as evident from the critical appreciation of Pj mentioned above. In fact, contextually this rule means that the Unadi affixes are ordained in the sense of vartaman or 'in the sense of present', which is understood from the following rule- bhute'pi dṛṣyaṁ P.3.3.2. But the discussion by Pj referred above drives us to the conclusion that we should believe in P's employing the word bahula in order to cover all other words which he has not enumerated and which may be split up into bases and affixes as suggested by Sakatayana, and that all the Vedic words, words having conventional significance and having without any apparent derivations, are thus covered by P through this sutra, i.e., they can be explained etymologically. The etymological stand hinted by Brahmana literature and the Nirukta of Yaska emphasizing the derivational or vāgika meaning of the words are the prime object of the Unadi words. The Kṛdanta-words other than the ones derived by the application of Unadi are not in this nature. They do not emphasize necessarily the derivational meaning of a certain word. This in detail is proposed to be dealt with in the following section of the paper. But before proceeding to discuss it, some acquaintance with the history of the Unadi rules is needed which is briefly attempted below.

2. Extant Unadi versions and their Commentaries

The ancient Unadi-patha is handed down in two versions, i.e., Pancapadi and Daisapadi having been classified into five
and ten padas ‘sections’ respectively. Scholars generally agree that Dasapadi is based on Panca padas and is of later origin. They are not unanimous as regards the authorship of the original Panca padas Unadi. Opinions alternate between Panini and Sakatayana being its possible author. There is also an opinion that Vararuci Katayana is the author of the same which is not usually accepted since Katayana identified as the author of the Varttikas, is posterior to Panini. Some post-Paninian systems have also edited their Unadi versions. The available Unadi texts right from Pancapad of P are as follow (See Y, Mimsamsaka 1974, p.13)-

1. Pancapadi of Panini or Sakatayana,
2. Dasapadi of the author not known,
3. Kathati of Vararuci,
4. Candrav of Candragomin or Candra carya,
5. Unadi authored by Ksapanaka,
6. Unadi of Devanandi,
7. Unadi of Palyakirti,
8. Bhojita of Bodhajara,
9. Unadi of Buddhigarasuri,
10. Haima of Hemacandra,
11. Unadi of Malayagiri,
12. Unadi of Jumara-vyakarana,
13. Sarasvata of Anubhutisvarupacarya,
14. Unadi authored by Ramashrama,
15. Supadma of Padmanabhadatta

Out of these available texts of Unadi, Pancapad and Dasapad are important ones. Some details about the Pancapad may be presented to refresh our acquaintance with it. In this text there are about 750 number of rules, and the Vritis ‘glosses’ or running commentaries available on them show profuse variation of reading. The gloss of Svetavanavasi is considered as the most authentic among them. In fact, the commentaries bring out the essence of these sutas. Otherwise, the sutas by themselves are hardly articulate about the meaning of the words derived by applying Unadi affixes. Other prominent Vrttikaras of Pancapad besides Svetavanavasi are Ujjvaladatta, Narayana, Bhoothoik Dukita, (It is to be mentioned here that Bhoothoik’s Vriti has further been commented on by his two learned commentators Jnanendra Sarvasati and Vasudeva Dukita), Dayananda Sarvasati, Mahadevedantin, Perusuri, Utkaladatta, Sivadasa Cakravarti. Some anonymous Vritis are also available. They are Unadivacarana and Unadi-vrtti. Besides these extant Vritis on Unadi, other Vritis are also found referred in different original and commentarial works such as Gowardhana-vrtti, Purosothamadeva-vrtti, Ksapanaka-vrtti and Suti-vrtti. Y, Mimsamsaka 1974, p140 mentions the name of 18 commentators of Pancapad and three commentators of Dasapadi Unadi.

3. Authorship Controversy of Pancapadi Unadi

Panini in his Asatkhayi refers to Unadi suffixes by his rule 3.3.1: unadayo bahulam, 3.3.2: bhute pī drsyante, 3.3.3: bhoṣyasī gany adayah and 3.4.25: tabhyam anyatnmadyatah. The plain logic is that Sakatayana, a predecessor grammarian, whom P also mentions in his grammar text, is traditionally believed to be the supporter of the philosophy that all names are derived from roots. And since Unadi affixes ad-

here to this very philosophy cent percent, he might have been the author of this famous Unadi section of rules. Goldstucker believes that though the Pratyayas given in these rules are pre-Paninian, the work in the present form is the production of a much later period. (Goldstucker,170-171; K.M.K. Sarma, 395, 405). K.M.K. Sarma rather slightly modifies Goldstucker’s view saying that though a good number of the Unadi Pratyayas can be pre-Paninian, all of them cannot be so. This conclusion can be derived from the quoted sutras unadayo bahulam and others. “Sakatayana as an etymologist who derived every word from a certain root with an affix; and in doing so, he would not necessarily confine all his affixes to the forces of the present and the past, as he too must have had in his language words used with the force of future; but Panini in his sutras 3.3.1-2 refers only to those unadi suffixes which are used in Vartaman and Bhuja. In 3.4.75 Panini says that the Unadi affixes denote ideas other than those dative and ablative. Nothing would therefore be more foolish than to believe that Panini restricted all the suffixes invented by etymologists to these senses.” (K.M.K. Sarma, 5). It would be tantamount to saying that the words known to Sakatayana and his followers were used only in these senses specified by Panini. This restriction is his own. Had it not been so he would have the reading of the sutra as unadayo sakatayano bahulam as a mark of his reverence to his predecessor Sakatayana.

We have no direct tradition regarding the authorship of the Unadi sutras. They were, no doubt, composed before the time of Panini since he has spelt out the name unadayo in his text as hinted above. Yaska mentions namamy akhyatapar ati sakatayana nairukstasamayas ca (All) nouns derive their origin from verbs; so says Sakatayana and so agree all commentators (of the Vedas). The Slokasvartikas earlier referred, occurring on P.33.3.1, also testifies this. For Panini, all nouns are not derived from roots, some are unanalyzable words as commentators distinctly opine. For example, Ptj, in his M on P. 7.1.2.5- comments: unadayo ’vyutpannani pratipadikani, and pratipadikaviyavat nav ca bhagvatāh paniner acaryasya siddham. unadayo ’vyutpanna-pratipadikani. Thus Ptj considers Sakatayana as the author of the Unadi sutras. Nagesa also attributes the Unadi section to be authored by Sakatayana. There is still another opinion which mentions Vararuci as the author of the Unadi sutras as is seen in Vimala’s Rupamala. But this assertion makes Vararuci older than Panini which does not claim any probability. The Unadi sutras have been handed down to us in their original form. It was not the intention of the author to give a complete list of all the Unadi words, but merely to collect the most important of them. The sentences bahulam anyatrapī ‘in various other words too’, and anyeyho’pi drsyante ‘the same affixes are found in other words too’, which frequently occur in Unadi-section, support this assumption.

4. New Possibilities of Interpretation of the Vedic Words

It has amply been discussed that the etymological stand found in the Brahmana literature and Yaska’s Nirukta to interpret the Vedic words has been adopted here. The multiple derivational sense of a certain word attributed to the same root is the style of meaning analysis of the Unadi-words. Dayananda Sarvasati, considered to be the most modern com-
mentator of the Vedas as well as the Pancapadi Unadi, believes that Unadi words are derived in two senses—yasvika ‘derivation’ and yogaruddha ‘derivation-conventional’, i.e., originally governed both by derivational structure and sense but later restricted or expanded to some fixed sense. For example the word karu derived from the root kr with the affix ur being paraphrased as ‘one who does’ by the very first sutra of Unadi-section: kr-ur-pa etc. Unadi-1.1. would definitely mean a ‘doer’ or an ‘agent’ but it is subsequently used in a restricted ruhisa sense ‘an agent of doing art’ or ‘artist’. But taking the derivational sense of the word, it may be extended to mean agent of other acts taking into account the contextual meaning. The word pasu is paraphrased as pasyati sarasa iti pasuh, pasyanti yena ca sah pasu agnih, pasyati jati sarvtham iti pasu garadih. This word is derived by the Unadi rule 1.27 aji-divi-kamy ami-pansi-vadha-nrjiji-pasi-tuk-dhuk-dirgha-hakaras ca. 1. All these meanings are suggested by Dayananda in his Unadi-kosa while commenting on this sutra. To justify such meanings, the available clues are also found in Vedic literature and its accessories as mentioned below. In Yajurveda(YV) 23.17- the mantra reads agnih pasu asit tenayajanta where the word pasu means both Vayu and Surya. An ignorant woman or human being is also spoken as pasu by extention. This is supported by the mantra devam vocam ajanajanta devas tam viscarumapu pasavo vadanti RV-8.10; vitsthartha matur asya upsthatah nanarupah pasavo jayamanah AV-14.2.25. The word pasu in the sense of a non-being object is seen as an indelincible (P.1.4.57). The Rc-lodham nayanti pasu manyamanah in RV-3.53.23 is explained by Varadhamana in Ganarathmahodadhi as darsaniyam jnanam pratipadyamah lobham pariyajjanti (quoted in Unadi-kosa, p. 15, n.1) where pasu means ‘one worthy to be seen’. Thus there are immense possibilities of extending the derivational sense contextually to generate various meanings. But, once the meaning of a certain word is limited by the conventional sense seen in our day-to-day usages or popular literature, no new meaning is possibly thought of. Therefore, presuming the saying ananta vai vedah as a true and valid statement we should rather attempt exploring more and many meanings from the same words of the mantra of the Vedas. This is possible provided we accept all the substantives and older naming words employed in the Vedic literature as having originated from some verbal root. And it is very famous a saying among the sadhikas that bahurthhi hi dhuh ‘Verbal roots have many meanings’. The Unadi section of the grammar operates with this conviction. We, instead of dwelling upon a particular meaning of the Vedic word in the light of the present conventional sense of the very word, should take the help of particularly the Brahmanas, Nirukta, and the Unadi sutras to trace out possible contemporary meaning taking into account the accompanying context. I feel to multiply instances of possible derivative meanings from the Unadi words. The word asura (Unadi-1.10) is explained as asum praman rati iti. It may mean ‘giver of life’, and the seer might have extensively understood it. All the agencies responsible in sustaining life may be alluded as such. The restricted conventional sense is megha ‘cloud’ since the water of the cloud sustains the life of the living beings. And cloud is the prime source of water. The same word derived from the root as ‘to throw’ with the suffix urubh by Unadi-1.42 can be paraphrased as asyati praksipati
dharmam subha-gunans ca sah asurah megho durjano va.(Unadikosa on the sutra). Here taking the act of throwing as the clue, both the meanings have been thought of. In fact, the cloud throws water and the bad man also throws down all the noble qualities. Why these two meanings only keeping the act of throwing in mind? Similar other analogical meanings can be imagined. The word kharu (Unadi-1.36) is paraphrased as khanati sarim iti kharu kamo danah samharta darpo’vo va. Thus the word means ‘desire’, ‘teeth’, ‘killer’, ‘pride’, and so on. All these meanings have been thought of on the strength of the sense of the verb khan. Explaining the word sithila, Dayananda derives it from the root saith ‘to divest’ and it is paraphrased as saiththi vimucantah purusartham iti sithilah purusah, sithila kanya, sithilān trumā mrdum iyyathā (see Dayananda’s commentary on Unadi-1.53 in Unadi-kosa) Thus the same word means diversely taking the verbal sense of root. Veda with its expansive scope of meaning needs its commentators to be very special in the sense of possessing not only the erudition in the accessory literature but also supersensory yogic intuition to see into the width and depth of the Vedas. Vedas are the mines of never ending knowledge. It being the unfathomable divine knowledge, whatever meanings the commentators have provided are definitely limited and partial, they do not represent the totality of it. No human agent can discover all that it contains But Vedas meant for the welfare of the whole universe must be known by the man. There is no need to mystify its mantras, time has come to explore the veiled truth latent in the Vedas. In this regard the ocean of the original derivational meaning of its substantives and the meanings of the verbal forms are to be dived deep. In the following section some of the pre-requisites of this derivational approach is discussed to convince the scholars about the need of the Unadi-pattern of derivation, and meaning paraphrasing in the line of the Brahmanas and Nirukta. Word, its meaning, and the relation between the both are considered eternal (cp. Vt. in M-Paspasahhika: siddha sabdartha-sambandha, also the Vakypadiya 1-33: niyath sabdartha-sambandha samamata maharshih suttaram sansthanam bhavastu ca pranetrhibh).
The difference between the Vedic word and a word of Loka ‘common usage’ is that the former has a definite word-order, which the latter does not have. Therefore, it is imperative on us to know the meaning conveyed by the specific word. Pj (in M on 2.2.29) says- abhidhaman ca punah svabhavikam, and (in M on 2.1.1) svabhavata etsam sabdanan etet arthah abhinivistam na nimittvatvanvako akhyanan kriyate. This implies that human agents have nothing to do with the natural sense which is latent in divinely created words, but not in corrupt words. One cannot imagine the various natural meanings inherent in the words by simply looking at it, similarly as one cannot know the sweetness of the fruit from its sight. It needs to be peeled out, cut, chewed etc. so as to relish it. Thus to have the perception of all the different natural meanings of a certain word, one should analyze it into its components bases or roots and affixes. Vedas also hint this analytical pattern such as cyavanam acyutanam (Rg-veda 96.4), asattav avisna (Rg-veda 8.5.31) and so on. Thus the yaugika or derivational pattern of analysis is the need wherein the roots and affixes are to be analysed. As mentioned earlier Unadi-section conforms to this principle of etymology and every word
derived with the help of Unadi affix must involve a root. And meaning of a certain root being numerous, there occurs the possibilities of innumerable meanings of a certain Vedic word due to be located in the Unadi-section. It is said – antas te his deses kah siddhah kveti ganyamati/ nigamadivas cacda dhutato’ritha prakalpa// (Mimamsa-darsana, Tantavartikam: 1.13.10 quoted by Prajnadevi, p.225). Saunaka (in Brhaddevata:1.27) also maintains that all the Vedic words are designated as yugika-karma- sarany etani namani karnatasteta saunakah. Thus all the activities are based on some verbal root, therefore Vedas are looked upon as the mine house of all the knowledge. Yaska (Nirukta:2.1.) emphasises this derivational process to be the backbone of meaning analysis of the Vedas- arthanyathya purikseta. kaccat virtisamanyena avidyaman samanve’py aksara-varna-samanayam nirbhrayat. na tevaam na nirbhrayat na smaksaram adriyeta. visayavatyo hi virtay havaanati. Perceiving meaning as the core component, every word should be etymologically analyzed, and accordingly constituent root and affixes are to be detected. If roots and suffixes of the same meaning cannot be located, one should proceed in giving etymology on the basis of phonetic similarity of the word constituents, or in the same manner of connecting them to one or more roots. This very principle is also said to be adopted in Unadi-chapter supporting the etymological stand. While commenting on the Unadisutras, Dayananda adopts this method. Out of numerous possible meanings reached at of a certain Unadi-word the exact desired meaning is to be deduced by context etc. as is laid down in Mimamsa. When commentators like Atmamanda lays down that nigma-niruka-vyakaranas-varena dhutato’ritha kalpataruyah and nigamadi-vasac caddty dhutato’rith prakalpaath, anekarthaha hi dhutatva and so on (See Brahmadatta Jinasu’s Introduction of the Yajurveda-bhasya of Svami Dayananda Sarasvati, p.87), then out of the multiple meanings of a certain word the exact desired meaning is to be ascertained by the context etc. as laid down in the Mimamsa 3.3.14 - sruti-linga-vyakya-prakarana-sthna-samakhyana samayave paraadaurgyam arthatprakarsat. So does lay down Bhartrhari in his Vakypadiya 2.3.16-17: vyaaty prakaranad arthat acliyad desakalatah// sabdarthah pravishyante na rupad eva ketulat// simasar vipragrigas ca satyanam vikrodhita// arthat prakaranam lingam sabhasam nayasam samih// Similarly, Brhaddevata(2.120) enjoins: arthat prakaranam lingam acliyad desakalatah// mantresw arthe vivekah syad itaresv iti sthitih//

Thus the original ancient tradition of multiplicity of meaning of the verbal roots and their derivatives is preserved by the Unadi-sutras though they constitute the portion of the grammar. The word agni, the most affectionate name of the Vedic pantheon, is interpreted to have multiple meanings besides its conventional meaning ‘fire’. This is an Unadi-word derived by the Unadi-sutra anger nalopasa ca (Unadikosa 4.51) from the root ag (agi) with the suffix ni. The root agi means ‘to go’, ‘to move’ or broadly it is a movement denoting root and all the movement denoting roots convey the sense of knowledge. Dayananda explains the meaning of the word as angati gachhati prapnoti janati va sa agnih vanih prasiddhah (Unadikosa on 4.51, p.124). From this explanation, it is understood that the object having its feature of gamana ‘going’, prapana ‘reaching’, and jnana ‘knowing’ would possibly denote the object called agni, not fire alone which is the rudha or conventional sense. Yaska in his Nirukta 7.14 has very elaborately given the etymology of this famous word, and has shown how the meaning of this vocable can be connected with the sense in relation to the various phonetic components of the word. Sayana has brought out the following meaning of the word also as 1. paramatma (in Ahasravada-bhasya on 2.14- esa paramatmam agnih), 2. brahma (on Satapatha-brahmana 1.4.2); 3. Durga in Nirukta-bhasya as viduty, vedah, sarvanah (in Sandhyabhasya, p.14,55,60 quoted by Jinasu); 4.Srikanta in Srisuksa-bhasya, p.3 quoted by Jinasu, p.84 as parmesvara; 6.visnu by Raghavendra Yati, p.8; Jinasu, 84; 7. sarvargh, sarwati, neta by Bharatavasvi, p.8 quoted by Jinasu, 84. Similarly in Brahmana text, about 46 meanings of the word Indra have been given.(See details in Prayadevi,1991, p.17) such as speech (vach), heart (hrityan), warrior tribe (ksatriya), thunder (tasra), lightning (vidyut), strength (virya), sperm (retah), indomitable (apratiratha), air (vayu), sun (aditya), highest soul (paramatma) and so on. The word indra is derived with the unadi-pratayana- ran by the sutra rjendragra-vajra-vipra-kubra-cuba-ksura-kirta-bhradagro-bhera-bhela-sukla-salka-gaura-vaanramalali (Unadikosa 2.29). The word derived from the root id in the sense of paramaivayar or great accomplishment denote all those objects which possess the rare capability or essence. Dayananda explains the word as indati paramaivarysvaran bhavati iti indra, samarthanataramati hito yogi va. (Unadikosa, p.57). He has mentioned its senses as ‘capable’, ‘inner self’, ‘sun’, ‘a yogin’ and the predominant sense is— one who is a paramaivarysvaran or possessor of great wealth. Thus in this verbal sense many objects may come to our notice as above collected in the list.

Thus a commentator of the Vedas should take into consideration this role of the Unadi-sutras and their products- the samajnas or ancient naming words used in the mantras. Many of the words found in the Vedas are taken up for derivation by these Unadi chapter. It is not definitely an easy task to reconstruct a connected and coherent sentential meaning of a mantra with a rarely popular general meaning though such a meaning can be crafted legitimately and imagined justly. In that case all the words including the verb should have matched syntactically. However, only the depth of erudition in the sastras cannot claim to be the guiding factor. The spiritual meanings of the mantras suggested by Sri Aurobindo and the three kinds of meanings suggested by Svami Dayananda of all the mantras definitely awaits a pure and clean super mind with a natural flash of intuitive cognition to do justice to the apaurusheya literature like the Vedas. However, there is no doubt that Unadi rules and their application in vedic exegesis has a convincing role to play in this direction.

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