अष्टाध्यायी

The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini

interpreted according to

The Kāśikāvṛtti of Jayāditya and Vāmana

and translated into English by

Śrīśa Chandra Vasu

Originally Published
1891-1898
Chandra Vasu's translation of the Aṣṭādhyāyī was originally scanned by Google Books and made available through their web site in eight separate parts. In the present edition these scans have been cleaned, straightened, repaired, and in some cases partially replaced, and the resulting files combined into a single volume of more than 1600 pages. This process made it impossible to preserve the original Google watermark, but Google's cover page has been retained for the reader's reference as part of the preliminary material.

By way of introduction, excerpts of two additional works from the same era have been added to this compilation: an article on Sanskrit Grammar from the 1888 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and an 1885 article on Sanskrit Grammarians from the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. In the interests of clarity and accessibility, both pieces have been edited to eliminate footnotes, remove obscure references, update spelling, simplify the writing style, and so forth—hopefully without significantly altering the authors' meaning. Those who wish to delve into these matters more deeply are encouraged to consult the originals, both of which are available for free download from Google Books.

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Corrections, comments, and inquiries should be directed to <jrbblack@wisc.edu>.
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The Āṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini

Introduction ....................................................................... 1

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Sanskrit Grammar

Grammar (vyākaraṇa) is enumerated as one of the six Vedāṅgas—"limbs of the Veda" or auxiliary sciences—the study of which was deemed necessary for a correct interpretation of the sacred mantras and the proper performance of Vedic rites. Linguistic inquiry, phonetic as well as grammatical, was indeed early resorted to both for the purpose of elucidating the meaning of the Veda and with the aim of settling its textual form. The particular work which came ultimately to be looked upon as the "vedāṅga" representative of grammatical science, and has ever since remained the standard authority for Sanskrit grammar in India, is Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī, so called from its consisting of eight (aṣṭa) books (adyāya), each of which has four chapters. For a comprehensive grasp of linguistic facts and a penetrating insight into the structure of the vernacular language, this work stands probably unrivalled in the literature of any nation—though few other languages, it is true, afford such facilities as the Sanskrit for a scientific analysis. Pāṇini's system of arrangement differs entirely from that usually adopted in our grammars, viz., according to the so-called parts of speech. As the work is composed in aphorisms intended to be learned by heart, economy of memory-matter was the author's paramount consideration. His object was chiefly attained by the grouping together of all cases exhibiting the same phonetic or formative feature, no matter whether or not they belonged to the same part of speech. For this purpose he also makes use of a highly artificial and ingenious system of algebraic symbols consisting of technical letters (anubandha), used chiefly with suffixes and indicative of the changes which the roots or stems have to undergo in word-formation.

It is self-evident that so complicated and complete a system of linguistic analysis and nomenclature could not have sprung up all at once and in the infancy of grammatical science, but that many generations of scholars must have helped to bring it to that degree of perfection which it exhibits in Pāṇini's work. Accordingly we find Pāṇini himself making reference in various places to ten different grammarians, besides two schools which he calls the "eastern" (prāṅchas) and "northern" (udāṅchas) grammarians. Perhaps the most important of his predecessors was Śākatāyana, also mentioned by Yāska—the author of the Nirukta, who is likewise supposed to have preceded Pāṇini—as the only grammarian (vaivyākaraṇa) who held with the etymologists (nairukta) that all nouns are derived from verbal roots. Unfortunately there is little hope of the recovery of Śākatāyana's grammar, which would probably have enabled us to determine more exactly to what extent Pāṇini was indebted to the labors of his predecessors. There exists indeed a grammar in South Indian manuscripts entitled Śabdānuśāsana, which is ascribed to one Śākatāyana; but this has been proved to be the production of a modern Jaina writer, although seemingly based partly on the original work and partly on Pāṇini and others.

Pāṇini is also called Dākṣiputra, after his mother Dākṣi. As his birthplace the village Śālātura is mentioned, which was situated some few miles north-west of the Indus, in the country of the Gandhāras, whence later writers also call him Śālātūrya, the formation of which name he himself explains in his grammar. Another name sometimes applied to him is Śālanki. In the Kathāsaritsāgara, a modern collection of popular tales, Pāṇini is
said to have been the pupil of Varsha, a teacher at Pātaliputra, under the reign of Nanda, the (alleged) father of Chandragupta Maurya (ca. 315-291 BC). The real date of the great grammarian is, however, still a matter of uncertainty. While some have attempted to put his date back to ante-Buddhist times (about the 7th century BC), others hold on the contrary that Pāṇini’s grammar cannot have been composed till some time after the invasion of Alexander the Great. This opinion is chiefly based on the occurrence in one of the Sutras of the word yavanānī in the sense of “the writing of the Yavanas (Ionians)”, thus implying, it would seem, an acquaintance with the Greek alphabet such as would be impossible prior to Alexander’s Indian campaign (326 BC). But as it is by no means certain that the term really applies to the Greek alphabet, it is scarcely expedient to make it the corner-stone of the argument regarding Pāṇini’s age. If Patañjali’s “Great Commentary” was written, as seems highly probable, about the middle of the 2nd century BC, it is hardly possible to assign to Pāṇini a later date than about 400 BC. Though this grammarian registers numerous words and formations as peculiar to the Vedic hymns, his chief concern is with the ordinary speech (bhāṣā) of his period and its literature; and it is noteworthy, in this respect, that the rules he lays down on some important points of syntax are in accord with the practice of the Brāhmanas rather than with that of the later classical literature.

Pāṇini’s Sutras continued for ages after to form the center of grammatical activity. But, as his own work had superseded those of his predecessors, so many of the scholars who devoted themselves to the task of perfecting his system have sunk into oblivion. The earliest of his successors whose work has come down to us (though perhaps not in a separate form) is Kātyāyana, the author of a large collection of concise critical notes called Vārttika, intended to supplement and correct the Sutras, or give them greater precision. The exact date of this writer is likewise unknown, but there can be little doubt that he lived at least a century after Pāṇini. During the interval a new body of literature seems to have sprung up—accompanied with considerable changes of language—and the geographical knowledge of India extended over large tracts towards the south. It is still doubted by some scholars whether this is the same Kātyāyana to whom the Vājasaneyiprātiśākhya is attributed (as well as the Sarvanukrama). Kātyāyana being properly a family or tribal name meaning "the descendant of Kātya", later works usually assign the second name of "Vararuchi" to the writers (for there are at least two) who bear it. The Kathāsaritsāgara makes the author of the Vārttikas a fellow-student of Pāṇini, and afterwards the minister of King Nanda; but, though this date might have fitted Kātyāyana well enough, it is impossible to place any reliance on the statements derived from such a source.

Kātyāyana was succeeded again, doubtless after a considerable interval, by Patañjali, the author of the (Vyākaraṇa-) Mahābhāṣya or Great Commentary. For the great variety of information it incidentally supplies regarding the literature and manners of the period, this is, from an historical and antiquarian point of view, one of the most important works of the classical Sanskrit literature. Fortunately the author’s date has been settled by synchronisms implied in two passages of his work. In one of them the use of the imperfect as the tense referring to an event known to people generally, not witnessed by the speaker and yet capable of being witnessed by him, is illustrated by the statement,
"The Yavana besieged Sāketa"; there is reason to believe that this can only refer to the Indo-Bactrian king Menander (ca. 144-124 BC) who, according to Strabo, extended his rule as far as the Yamunā. In the other passage the use of the present is illustrated by the sentence, "We are sacrificing for Puṣpamitra"; this prince (ca. 178-142 BC), the founder of the Sunga dynasty, is known to have fought against the Greeks. We thus get the years 144-142 BC as the probable time when Patañjali's work, or at least part of it, was composed. Although he probably gives not a few traditional grammatical examples mechanically repeated from his predecessors, those here mentioned are fortunately such as, from the very nature of the case, must have been made by himself.

The Mahābhāṣya is not a continuous commentary on Pāṇini's grammar, but deals only with those Sutras (some 1720 out of a total of nearly 4000) on which Kātyāyana had pronounced any Vārttikas, the critical discussion of which, in connection with the respective Sutras and with the views of other grammarians expressed thereon, is the sole object of Patañjali's commentarial remarks. Though doubts have been raised as to the textual condition of the work, it has been clearly shown that it is probably in as good a state of preservation as any other classical Sanskrit work. Patañjali is also called Goṇikāputra, or son of Goṇika, and Gonardiya, which has been taken to mean "a native of Gonarda", a place probably identical with Goṇḍa. (Whether there is any connection between this writer and the reputed author of the Yogaśāstra is doubtful.) The Mahābhāṣya has been commented upon by Kāyiṭa, in his Bhāṣyapradīpa, and the latter again by Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa, a distinguished grammarian of the earlier part of the last century, in his Bhāṣyapradīpoddyota.

Of running commentaries on Pāṇini's Sutras, the oldest extant and most important is the Kāśikā Vṛtti or "commentary of Kāśī (Benares)", the joint production of Jayāditya and Vāmana, two Jaina writers of probably the first half of the 7th century, each of whom composed one half (four adhyāyas) of the work. The chief commentaries on this work are Haradatta Miśra's Padamaṇjari, which also embodies the substance of the Mahābhāṣya, and Jinendrabuddhi's Nyāsa.

Educational requirements in course of time led to the appearance of grammars, chiefly of an elementary character, constructed on a more practical system of arrangement—the principal heads under which the grammatical matter was distributed usually being rules of euphony (sandhi); inflection of nouns (nāman), generally including composition and secondary derivatives; the verb (ākhyāya); and primary (kṛidanta) derivatives. In this way a number of grammatical schools sprang up at different times, each recognizing a special set of Sutras, round which gradually gathered a more or less numerous body of commentarial and subsidiary treatises. As regards the grammatical material itself, these later grammars supply comparatively little that is not already contained in the older works, the difference being mainly one of method and partly one of terminology.

Sanskrit and the Hindu Grammarians

Sanskrit is above all things an analyzable tongue of transparent structure, falling easily apart into roots and suffixes and endings. In its perfected form, as represented by Pāṇini, the native grammar is an established body of roots, with rules for their extension to stems and the inflection of the latter, and for the accompanying phonetic modifications, this last involving a phonetic science of very high character. (The syntax is much inferior, though perhaps only in proportion as the Sanskrit sentence is inferior to the classical.) But its form of presentation is strange, prizing brevity at the expense of every other quality, and hence it is very difficult of acquisition; one must master the whole system, in all its details, before he can be certain with regard to any one point that there does not lurk in some remote chapter a rule bearing upon it. Theoretically, all that is prescribed or allowed by Pāṇini's rules, taken together with the list of roots accepted by him and other like supplements, is Sanskrit, and nothing else is entitled to that name. The young pandit learns the system, and governs his Sanskrit speech and composition by it. The first European students did the same, to their great advantage; and one must, of course, still follow a like method if he is to communicate with pandits and gain their respect and aid. But the question is whether Western scholars in general are bound to this course—in short, whether we must study Pāṇini if we wish to learn Sanskrit.

In the first place, it is to be noticed that the native grammar can never have been the means, but only the regulator, of the tradition of the learned language. No one ever mastered a list of roots and a grammar, and then went to work to construct texts upon that basis. The learner, rather, has his models which he imitates; he makes his speech after that of his teacher, only under the constant check of having to quote the grammar in regard to any questioned point. All this is like the ordinary transmission of a cultivated language, merely with a difference of degree. That such was actually the case with Sanskrit is made plain enough by the facts. There is no absolute coincidence between Pāṇini and the classical language. The latter, indeed, includes little that Pāṇini forbids; but it also lacks a great deal that he allows. (The difference is so great that Benfey, who was deeply versed in the Hindu science, calls it a grammar without a corresponding language, as he calls the pre-classical dialects a language without a grammar.) What, then, is this grammarians' dialect, standing between the classical and the pre-classical, and unlike them both? And what claim has it to our study?

In the second place, we have an immense literature in that older pre-classical language, which was produced in entire independence of the grammarians, and is only very imperfectly treated by them. It is in two or three dialects, of different degrees of antiquity, standing in a perfectly natural order of succession to one another. And the classical language stands in a natural succession to them. This historical affiliation casts the most important light on the classical language, which only by its help is properly understood.

The main thing which makes of the grammarians' Sanskrit a special and peculiar tongue is its dhātupātha or list of roots. There are about two thousand such roots; but a full half of them have never been met with in actual use, earlier or later. Some small number of
these, doubtless, may yet turn up; others are assumed for the sake of explaining derivatives; others are the offspring of confusion and original false readings. But a very large number constitute an as yet unexplained and problematical remainder, and in no small measure are obviously artificial and false. It is well known what mischief this list of roots has wrought in the hands of the earlier incautious and credulous students of Sanskrit, and how many false and worthless etymologies were founded upon them. That work is even yet, perhaps, not entirely over; still, it has come to be generally understood that no alleged Sanskrit root can be accepted as real unless it is supported by some kind of use in the language that authenticates it (for, in late writings, verb-forms are now and then made artificially, on a root taken by a grammarian's license out of that list of roots). In short, a Hindu grammarian's statement as to the fundamental elements of his speech is without authority until tested by the actual facts of linguistic use, as represented by the Sanskrit literature. But the principle thus won is of universal application, for we have no reason to expect any greater trustworthiness in other departments of the grammar; hence there is nothing in Pāṇini and his successors which does not require to be tested by the language, in order to find out its real value.

Of course, much the greater part of what the Hindu grammarians teach is true and right; but no one can tell which part until after examination. Of course, also, there is more or less of genuine supplementary material in them; but what, is only to be determined by a thorough and cautious comparison of their whole system with the whole language. This has not been made, and is hardly being made, chiefly for the reason that the skilled students of the native grammar are looking at their work from the wrong point of view. They seem to think it their duty to learn out of Pāṇini, and set forth for others what the Sanskrit language really is, instead of explaining him out of the language, determining what in him is true and genuine, and accounting for and excusing the rest. In other words, they need to realize that in studying the native grammatical science, they are simply investigating a certain branch of Indian learning, like the Hindu astronomy or philosophy, one that is of high interest and importance, and has also had a marked influence in shaping the latest form of Sanskrit—not always to its advantage. Some scholars appear to feel as if a fact that they find in the language is to be credited as such only when they discover it set down in Pāṇini. It may be asked, on the other hand, of what consequence it is, except for its bearing on the grammatical science itself, that any given fact is so set down. A fact in the pre-classical language is entirely independent of Pāṇini; he has nothing to do with it. A fact that belongs to the classical language may, even against his omission or prohibition, have its genuineness shown by other supporting facts; or it may be genuine with his assent; or it may have an ungenerous and artificial existence on account of his seeming to authorize it. The statement in the native grammar that such a thing is so and so is of wholly uncertain value; if, on being tested, it proves correct, it scores one to the credit of the grammar—not of the language, which remains what it was before.

To maintain this is not to disparage Hindu grammatical science; it is only to refuse to bow to it as authority, to set it above, or even on a level with, our own grammatical science, which is characterized by objective collection and classification of facts, lucid order and method, sense of proportion, and observance of historical relations. The time is
not yet past when discussion of the subject is seasonable. For example, in general philological works we still occasionally read of the "fifth" or the "seventh" conjugation-class of verbs, and so on, as if the general student could fairly be expected to remember the senseless and unexplainable order in which the bodies of similarly conjugated roots are catalogued in the Hindu lists of roots. (They themselves never gave them names founded on this order; that is a European perversion, and now no better than pedantry.) And the very last published Sanskrit grammar in German (by a scholar long resident in India) begins with the sentence, "Sanskrit verbs have ten tenses and modes"—as if, because the Hindus failed to make the distinction of tense and mode, we ought to do the same. One might just as well say that "the Sanskrit has four parts of speech: name, predicate, preposition, and particle."

If the Hindu grammar is remanded to its own place, not only will beginners be relieved from learning forms that never occur and classifications which must later be abandoned, but the study of the grammar will be made more fruitful of results for the real history of the language itself.

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THE

ASHTÁDHYÁYÍ OF PÁÑINI.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

ŚRĪŚA CHANDRA VASU, B. A.,

Vakil, High Court, N.-W. P.

Allahabad:
INDIAN PRESS.
1891.
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TO

Hon'ble Sir John Dudge, Kt. Q. C.,

LATE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES

THIS WORK

IS,

WITH HIS LORDSHIP'S PERMISSION,
AND IN RESPECTFUL APPRECIATION OF HIS LORDSHIP'S
SERVICES TO THE CAUSE OF ADMINISTRATION OF
JUSTICE AND OF EDUCATION

IN

THESE PROVINCES,

DEDICATED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S HUMBLE SERVANT

THE TRANSLATOR.
7, Norham Gardens,
Oxford.
30th April 1899.

Dear Sir,

Allow me to congratulate you on your successful termination of Panini's Grammar. It was a great undertaking, and you have done your part of the work most admirably. I say once more, what should I have given for such an edition of Panini when I was young, and how much time would it have saved me and others. Whatever people may say, no one knows Sanskrit, who does not know Panini.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) F. Max Muller.
PREFACE.

Since the advent of the British rule and the peace and prosperity that has followed in its train, India has witnessed a glorious revival of her ancient literature, in which is embodied some of the highest philosophies and religions of the world. Among the various blessings which our benign Government has conferred upon us, none can be greater in value or usefulness than this revival of Sanskrit. Our schools and colleges are annually turning out hundreds, nay thousands of scholars, who have entered upon the study of Sanskrit literature, and have thus learnt to appreciate the beauties of this language. Very few of them, however, have the opportunity of studying the language, with that depth and fulness, as it was and is mastered by the Pandits of the old school. To properly understand Sanskrit language, and especially that portion of it in which is locked up the highest aspirations of the ancient Aryan hearts viz., the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Upanishads &c. it is absolutely necessary to have a complete knowledge of the Grammar elaborated by Pāṇini. The Grammar is reckoned as one of the Vedāṅgas, or the helps to the study of the Vedas; and it is unquestionably one of the most important of the Vedāṅgas. The four thousand sūtras of Pāṇini contain within themselves almost all that a student need know to enable him to understand the language of the Vedas.

Not only is this excellent treatise of Pāṇini necessary for those who are desirous of learning the ancient Sanskrit literature, but a knowledge of this is even necessary for understanding the modern Sanskrit, which is modelled on the rules laid down by that great Grammarian, whose aphorisms are being constantly quoted in all Vedic commentaries, and classical authors and law books.

Further, as a master-piece of close reasoning and artistic arrangement, it ought to be an object of study with every one who wants to cultivate his intellectual powers. In fact what the Geometry of Euclid has done towards the logical development of the western intellect, the Ashtādhyāyī of Pāṇini has fulfilled the same purpose in India. No one who has studied this book can refrain from praising it. It has evoked admiration even from the Sanskrit savants of the west. Professor Max Müller thus gives his opinion about the merits of this excellent Sanskrit Grammar:—“The Grammatical system elaborated by native Grammarians, is in itself most perfect, and those who have tested Pāṇini’s work will readily admit, that there is no Grammar in any language, that could vie with the wonderful mechanism of his eight books of Grammatical rules.”

The style of these sūtras is studiedly brief, but then this brevity is its greatest recommendation. That, which appears to many obscurity and ambiguity in the sūtras, vanishes before the clear and exhaustive explanations of
the commentators; and shows the extreme skill and wonderful ingenuity of
the author of these aphorisms. These sūtras, therefore, which though at first
sight may appear difficult and repulsive, if once mastered, will enable a
student to know and remember more of the Sanskrit Grammar, than he can
ever learn through other methods, with twice that labour. Unfortunately,
however, for our college and school students, and also for that vast majority
of our English reading countrymen, whose number is daily on the increase,
and who depend for their knowledge of what is contained in Sanskrit books,
on English translation of Sanskrit authors, no translation of this important
work exists in English. To supply this want, I have undertaken to translate
Pāṇini's aphorisms, as explained by the Commentators Jayāditya and Vāmana
in their well-known book, called Kāśikā vṛtti and issue one chapter every
month. Though, it is not a close translation of the whole of Kāśikā,
it may be regarded as a free rendering of the most important portions of that
book. I have closely followed on the foot-steps of those authors, translating their
commentary, explaining it where necessary; and in short, making my work
a help to the student, desirous of studying the Kāśikā in the original.

The translation of Sanskrit texts, especially those like Kāśikā, is
always beset with great difficulties, even for the masters of Sanskrit learning.
For a beginner, like the present translator, those difficulties were many
and great, and I am fully conscious that here and there, I may have
failed to grasp the full drift of the arguments of the authors of Kāśikā. But
on the whole, I have spared no pains to render this work as free from errors
as lay in my humble power. I shall feel much obliged to those gentlemen, who
will be good enough to point out any errors, or suggest any improvements, so
that I may be benefited by their advice.

I must here acknowledge the great assistance I have derived from the
well-known translation of Laghu Kaumudi by Dr. Ballantyne; Mr. Iengar's
Guide to Pāṇini; Professor Apte's Sanskrit Composition as well as from Dr.
Kielhorn's Paribhāshenduśekhara. I have freely quoted from these authors and
absorbed their rendering into my own, without distinguishing them by marks
of quotation.

When I first undertook the translation of Pāṇini, I had thought that
the work when completed, will not occupy more than 1200 pages. But from
the present sample it will be seen, that that estimate was far below the mark.
The complete translation, together with the Introduction, Glossary and the
Indices, which I intend to add, will take up nearly double as much space i.e.,
neary 2000 pages or more. I have, however, kept the price of the book the
same, namely, Rs. 14 (payable by two instalments), for subscribers, who have
already got their names registered, or who will do so within the 31st January
1892, and Rs. 20 for non-subscribers.

14th November, 1891.

ŚRĪṢA CHANDRA VASU.
THE

ASHTADHYAYI OF PANINI.

अष्टद्धाय मनानि नम:   
Salutation to the Supreme Spirit.

अष्ट घटानुग्रहाम् ॥

Now an explanation of words.

The term चयि “now” in the सुत्र means commencement, and points out that a dissertation is to be offered on the science of words, viz. Grammar and Philology. The term ऐतरितम् means explanation of any system. This is an बिबधार सुत्र, and introduces the subject.

An aphorism or सुत्र is of six kinds, संबत or ‘a definition,’ परनिपपा or the ‘key to interpretation,’ विस्ति or ‘the statement of a general rule,’ विजय or ‘a restrictive rule,’ भाषिक or ‘a head or governing rule,’ which exerts a directing or governing influence over other rules, and अनित्र or ‘extended application by analogy.’

The Pratyāhāra Sūtras.

अष्ट ग्राम चणक एँड़ा ऐचाँ एँड़ा हयरान एँड़ा अबदङ्ग एँड़ा

The above fourteen aphorisms contain the arrangement of Sanskrit alphabets for grammatical purposes. The anusvāra and the visarga, the ṇiya and the upadhi मāniya are not contained in the above list. The final थ in the consonants हस्तिः, न &c., is merely for the sake of articulation. The final pure consonants in the several aphorisms as ष, ष, हस्ति &c., are non-efficient or हस्ति. The प्रत्याहार is a grammatical symbol or abbreviation and is formed by taking any letter which is not a non-efficient letter and joining it with any non-efficient letter that follows it. This gives a name which stands for the former non-efficient letter and for all the other letters intervening between it and the non-efficient letter. Thus हस्ति means all the vowels, हस्ति means all the consonants, हस्ति means all soft unaspirate consonants, हस्ति means all hard unaspirate consonants. Though numerous pratyāhāras could be formed, practically however, there are only 42 pratyāhāras; as given below—

एक वषस्व, लक्ष्मी चणक एँड़ा एँड़ा एँड़ा एँड़ा एँड़ा एँड़ा एँड़ा एँड़ा एँड़ा

The same letter ष is made use of as अनुव्यय or an indicatory letter both in the sixth सुत्र लक्ष्मी and in the first एँड़ा. There arises consequently
the doubt, whether the pratyāhāras च and च when they are employed in Pāṇini’s Grammar are formed with the च of the former or with the च of the latter sūtra, and one might, on that account, consider it impossible to ascertain what Pāṇini intended to denote by च and च when he employed these terms. To remove this doubt there is the following paribhāṣā:—

“The precise meaning of an ambiguous term is ascertained from interpretation, for a rule, even though it contain an ambiguous term, must never leave anything definite.”

Accordingly we learn from interpretation that the term च except in Sutra I. 1. 69, is formed by means of the च of the first sūtra and that the term च is formed by means of the च of the subsequent sūtra.