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Pāṇini and the Kāthas¹(published in: *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 20 (Festschrift Paul Thieme), 1996, 59-65)

Several scholars have commented upon the close link that exists between the language described by Pāṇini and that of the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā*. The *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* appears to be one of the few Vedic texts that do not sin against Pāṇini's Vedic rules (Bronkhorst, 1991). Paul Thieme (1935: 16-17, 67) has further pointed out that even the Bhāṣā as taught in Pāṇini's grammar has some peculiar forms in common with that text. And Pierre-Sylvain Filliozat (1992: 20) goes to the extent of suggesting, be it with much care, that Pāṇini may have had to memorize "peut-être précisément le Yajurveda de l'école Kātha". A closer study of the one and only sūtra of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* that refers to the text of the Kāthas seems, in view of the above, fully justified.

This sūtra is P. 7.4.38 *devasumnayor yajuṣi kāthake*. The *Kāśikā* explains this sūtra in the following words: *deva sumna ity etayoḥ kyaci parataḥ ākārādeśo bhavati kāthake yajuṣi* "When *KyaC* follows there is substitution of long *ā* for [the final vowel of] *deva* and *sumna* in a sacrificial formula in prose of the Kāthas." The *Kāśikā* illustrates this rule with two quotations from the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā*: *devāyate yajamānāya* (KS 2.9; 3.5; 25.6) and *sumnāyanto havāmahe* (KS 8.17).

At first sight there is no difficulty. The suffix *KyaC* is prescribed by P. 3.1.8-10 to produce denominative verbs such as *putrīyati* "he wishes a son for himself" or "he treats like a son". P. 7.4.38 supposedly justifies *devāya-* and *sumnāya-* for sacrificial formulas in prose of the Kāthas. But a closer inspection reveals a number of problems. To begin with, the rule [60] cannot be said to be fully supported by the manuscripts of the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā*. The second illustration given in the *Kāśikā* - *sumnāyanto havāmahe* - does not occur in a *yajus*, i.e., in a sacrificial formula in prose; it occurs in a *ṛc*, a sacrificial formula in verse, one which also occurs in the *Ṛgveda* (8.7.11) and elsewhere. The first illustration does occur in a sacrificial formula in prose (*yajus*), thrice over, but not always with the desired long *ā*. KS 3.5 and 25.6 have *devayate*, in the only Ms at the disposal of its editor Leopold von Schroeder. The only other relevant example in the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* seems to be *sumnāyavas sumnyāya sumnyam dhatta* at 3.9; here long *ā* occurs in the only available Ms.

Modern scholars (Schroeder, 1900: 25; Raghu Vira, 1932: xxiv; Thieme, 1935: 70; Tsuji, 1952: 144, 237; 1970: 45, 140; Mittwede, 1989: 45) have not hesitated to propose a correction of *devayate* into *devāyate*. One of the reasons offered is precisely the above-

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cited rule of Pāṇini (Thieme, Tsuji, Mittwede). Another one is the presence of *devāyate* in the parallel *Kaṭha-Saṃhitā*.

Given our frequent uncertainty regarding phonetic details of Vedic texts, the evidence of Pāṇini is of considerable importance in this context. How certain is it? More to the point: is the interpretation of P. 7.4.38 offered by the *Kāśikā* correct? In order to arrive at this interpretation, the *Kāśikā* draws in *āt* by *anuvṛtti* from the preceding sūtra 37. But here there is a problem. P. 7.4.37 reads *aśvāghasyāt* (*kyaci* 33, *chandasi* 35). The first part is *aśvāghasya*, so that the second part can be either *at* or *āt*. According to the *Kāśikā* it is *āt*, which would justify the denominative roots *aśvāy-* and *aghāy-*. If, on the other hand, *at* were intended, the prescribed roots would be *aśvay-* and *aghay-*. On this second interpretation, moreover, sūtra 38 would have to be understood as prescribing *devayate* for sacrificial formulas in prose of the Kaṭhas, which, as we have seen, is indeed attested in the manuscripts concerned.

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How do the two possible interpretations of sūtra 37 relate to the Vedic evidence? Note that this rule is not restricted to any particular Veda. We learn from Vishva Bandhu's *Vedic Word-Concordance* that both *aśvay-* and *aśvāy-* are represented in a number of Vedic texts; the root *aghay-*, on the other hand, does not seem to occur in Vedic or related literature, whereas *aghāy-* does. The traditional interpretation of P. 7.4.37 is therefore slightly favoured by the available evidence.

Consider now the reasons given to justify the traditional interpretation of sūtras 7.4.37-38. We find them in a passage of Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* on P. 7.4.35 *na cchandasya aputrasya*. This sūtra means 'not in ritual literature, with the exception of [the word] *putra*', and obviously constitutes an exception to P. 7.4.33 *kyaci ca* (*ī* 31, *asya* 32) "*ī* is substituted for long or short *a*, also before the suffix *KyaC*". (The intervening sūtra 7.4.34 is a *nipātana* rule which does not interfere with the way 33 and 35 interact.) The suffix *KyaC* is used to make a denominative verb (by P. 3.1.8 f.), so that P. 7.4.33 is illustrated by such forms as *ghaṭīyati* "he treats like a pitcher", from *ghaṭa* 'pitcher'. Rule 35 prohibits substitution of *ī* in ritual literature, except for the word *putra* 'son'. Only *putrīyati* 'he wishes for / treats like a son' is therefore acceptable in ritual literature, not *ghaṭīyati* and the like. The question is what form other words in *-a*, such as *ghaṭa*, then take in ritual literature when followed by *KyaC*.

In these cases P. 7.4.25 is applicable, which reads: *akṛtsārvadhātukayor dīrghaḥ* (*yi kiiti* 22) "A long vowel is substituted for a vowel final in an *aṅga*, if followed by a suffix beginning with *y* and having the marker *k* or *ṅ*, provided it is not a *kṛt* or *sārvadhātuka* suffix". One would therefore expect that "he treats like a pitcher", in ritual literature, would be expressed as *ghaṭāyati*.

Patañjali disagrees. The following passage explains why:

(Vā. 1:) **In the context of the prohibition in ritual literature, prohibition of lengthening.**

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In the context of the prohibition in ritual literature, a prohibition of lengthening must be stated. [For example:] *samsvedayuḥ*, *mitrayuḥ*.²

According to Kātyāyana and Patañjali, the correct form in ritual literature would be *ghaṭayati*, with short *a* instead of long *ā*. The examples chosen by Patañjali are *samsvedayuḥ*, from *samsveda* with the suffixes *KyaC* and *u* (by P. 3.2.170), and *mitrayuḥ*, with the same two suffixes.

Kātyāyana and Patañjali go on to claim that this prohibition of lengthening is indicated by Pāṇini himself:

(Vā. 2:) **Or not; the mention of *aśvāghasyāt* is meant [to make this] restriction.**

Alternatively this must not be stated. Why? *aśvāghasyāt* will be mentioned in order [to make] the restriction: only of *aśva* and *agha* there is lengthening in ritual literature, not of other [words].³

This passage refers to the one but next sūtra, P. 7.4.37 *aśvāghasyāt*. The words of this sūtra, as we know, can be separated in two ways: *aśvāghasya at* or *aśvāghasya āt*. The above remarks by Kātyāyana and Patañjali make clear that they prefer the second of these two interpretations. According to them, no long *ā* should occur in denominatives of the above type in ritual literature, with the exception of *aśvāya-* and *aghāya-*. The *Kāśīkā* under P. 7.4.37 interprets the position of Kātyāyana and Patañjali in the following manner:

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The mention of long *ā* [in P. 7.4.37] indicates (*jñāpaka*) that P. 7.4.35 prohibits lengthening [by P. 7.4.25].⁴

²Mbh vol. III p. 350 l. 1-2 (on P. 7.4.35): *chandasi pratiṣedhe dīrghapraṭiṣedhaḥ //1// chandasi pratiṣedhe dīrghatvasya pratiṣedho vaktavyah/samsvedayuḥ mitrayuḥ//*

³Mbh vol. III p. 350 l. 3-5, on P. 7.4.35: *na vāśvāghasyādvacanam avadhāraṇārtham //2// na vā vaktavyam/kiṃ kāraṇam/aśvāghasyādvacanam avadhāraṇārtham bhaviṣyati aśvāghayor eva cchandasi dīrgho bhaviṣyati nānyasyeti//*

⁴*etad eva ātvavacanam jñāpakam 'na cchandasy aputrasya' (P. 7.4.35) iti dīrghapraṭiṣedho bhavati iti.*

It is clear from these passages that neither Kātyāyana and Patañjali, nor the author of the *Kāśīkā* found it obvious that P. 7.4.35 is an exception to lengthening by P. 7.4.25-26. Indeed, a special *jñāpaka* is required to convince them of this. But are they right?

One might argue, with Joshi and Bhate (1984: 128 f.), that the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* contains what they call 'package negations'. This negation of a set of rules rather than of just one rule occurs "[w]hen a particular context is a structured whole in which rules are mutually connected". Joshi and Bhate give two examples: P. 8.1.24 negates, under certain conditions, the whole set of rules P. 8.1.20-23, which prescribes various substitutes of *yuṣmad* and *asmad*. P. 6.3.37, similarly, negates, for a certain situation, the rules P. 6.3.34-36, which enumerate cases where feminine words are treated like masculines.

However, the set P. 7.4.25-34 cannot be looked upon as a set that is negated as a whole by P. 7.4.35, for this set contains several sūtras that are needed to arrive at correct Vedic forms. Take P. 7.4.28 (*riñ śayagliñkṣu*), which accounts for such forms as the passive *dhriyate*, instead of **dhryate*, of the verbal root *dhṛ*. No one could seriously doubt the validity of this rule in ritual literature.

There is a further difficulty connected with the position of the traditional commentators. The word *aputrasya* in P. 7.4.35 accounts for forms like *putrīyati*. If P. 7.4.35 is an exception to P. 7.4.25, we may have to assume that it also accounts for unattested **putrāyati*. Was this really Pāṇini's intention?

Note, however, that Kātyāyana and Patañjali are correct in stating that 7.4.37 (with *āt*) is superfluous if 7.4.35 does not prohibit lengthening by 7.4.25. But we can turn this argument round: assuming that 7.4.35 does **not** prohibit lengthening by 7.4.25, and that 7.4.37 is **not** superfluous, we come to the inevitable conclusion that this sūtra must be analyzed as *aśvāghasya at*, with short *a*.

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We see, then, that it is hard to exclude the possibility that Pāṇini's intended meaning for the sūtras under consideration was the exact opposite of what his interpreters made of them. For his interpreters short *a* is the rule in this type of denominatives, whereas *aśvāya-* and *aghāya-*, as well as *devāya-* and *sumnāya-* in sacrificial formulas in prose of the Kāthas, are the exceptions; for Pāṇini, on the other hand, long *ā* may have been the rule, the exceptions being *aśvaya-*, *aghaya-*, *devaya-* and *sumnaya-*.

The Vedic evidence which we possess is ambiguous. Denominatives from stems in *a* exist in *-aya-*, *-āya-*, and *-īya-* (Whitney, 1888: 388 f.). We must however recall that the surviving Vedic texts do not necessarily always present a correct picture of the texts as they existed in Pāṇini's days, especially where such details are concerned. Mittwede (1989: 29-30), draws attention to the fact that the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* may have been partly "normalised" under the influence of Pāṇini's grammar. (This could of course mean: under the influence of Pāṇini's grammar as it was understood by Kātyāyana and Patañjali.)

Moreover, Pāṇini's grammar may to at least some extent present information as to what the Vedic texts should be like in his opinion, rather than information about their actual form.

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