CONTENTS

Front cover:

St. John the Evangelist and his disciple Prochorus, "The Four Gospels", manuscript B 45
in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Shosh (Isfahan), 1623,
scribe Steppanos, artist Mesrop Hizantsi, paper, fol. 210b, 11.0×15.0 cm.

Back cover:

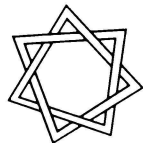St. Matthew the Evangelist, the same manuscript, fol. 19b, 12.0×17.0 cm.

Manuscripta Orientalia

International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research

E. N. Tyomkin

PATAÑJALI'S COMMENTARY ON A *SŪTRA* BY PĀṆINI V, 3.99

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the world's leading Sanskritologists were engaged in an animated discussion about Patañjali, the author of the *Mahābhāṣya* [1], trying to date his life and activities. And since Patañjali's commentary on P. V, 3.99 mentions the Mauryas, representatives of the famous imperial dynasty, naturally enough, no one participant in the discussion could not pass over this commentary in silence. Later authors, outstanding philologists and historians of the twentieth century, also made their contribution to the question [2]. Heatedly debated was virtually every word in Patañjali's commentary, and the scholars who took part in the controversy disagreed profoundly on both the translation and interpretation of the text. Moreover, each was entirely convinced he was right. The only scholar who evinced any doubt in the correctness of his own understanding of Patañjali's commentary was Theodor Goldstücker. He was also the first to espy irony in it and its possible significance for historians, though he was not brave enough to provide interpretation of his own [3].

The translation Th. Goldstücker proposed was not adequate, generally speaking, as were also unsatisfactory the translations of the other eminent scholars who took part in the discussion. The participants' extensive grammatical background, their thorough knowledge of texts by Pāṇini, Patañjali, as well as later grammarian-commentators, is worthy of great respect. Nevertheless, their failure to form a consensus on a reasonable interpretation is, unfortunately, evident. Almost all of them were philologists or linguists, and were generally unable to examine the text from the viewpoint of the historian, as Goldstücker suggested to. For this reason, they all failed to notice the irony in Patañjali's commentary and to grasp its historical significance.

I consciously do not go into the details of the discussion itself, which is fascinating and instructive; such an analysis would require a book, not an article. The reader can find the participants' works in the bibliography appended to this article.

Let us turn now to Patañjali's commentary on P. V, 3.99 which reads as follows: *apaṇya ity-ucyate tatredaṃ na sidhyati. śivaḥ skandaḥ viśākha iti. kiṃ kāraṇam. mauryair hiraṇya-arthabhir arcāḥ prakalpitāḥ. bhavet tāsu na syāt. yās-tv-etāḥ samprati-pūjā-arthās tāsu bhaviṣyati* [4]. It seems that Patañjali's phrase — *mauryair hiraṇya-arthabhir arcāḥ prakalpitāḥ* — and the remaining text of Patañjali's commentary can be understood adequately. The Pāṇini *Sūtra* V, 3.99 is: *jīvikārthe ca apaṇye* (i.e. "[When forming nouns which designate depictions of those objects]

which can serve as a means of subsistence, but cannot be bought or sold, [the affix *kan* is omitted]" [5]. It contains, as we see, an exception to the rule for using the secondary (*taddhita*) nominal word-forming affix *kan* (=*ka*), which has a wide range of meanings [6].

Patañjali comments only on the word *apaṇya*. He writes: "'Cannot be bought or sold', it is said there. [However], this is not confirmed [in practice]. For [Pāṇini] means [such nouns as] Śiva, Skandaḥ, Viśākha [etc.]. But why? [After all], the Mauryas, who thirsted for gold, *arcāḥ prakalpitāḥ* ...". We stop here before going on a translation of Patañjali's remark to summarize the information which provides the context of Pāṇini — Patañjali. From this context we learn that: (i) the objects which Pāṇini defined as *jīvikārtha* and *apaṇya* have the names of the gods; (ii) these objects are some sort of depictions of the gods; (iii) in forming the nouns which designate the depictions of the gods, the affix *kan* was not used in Pāṇini's time, and the depiction of Śiva, for example, was called Śiva, not Śivaka; (iv) depictions of the gods can serve as a means of subsistence; (v) yet in Pāṇini's time (5th century B.C.), they could not be and were not bought or sold; (vi) in Patañjali's time (2nd century B.C.), depictions of the gods were already an object of commerce: *apaṇya ... idam na sidhyati*, writes Patañjali, referring to certain deeds of the Mauryas, who "thirst for gold"; (vii) these deeds were undoubtedly related to selling depictions of the gods.

If we take into account that in specialized texts on graphic art — *śilpaśāstra* texts — *arcā*=*pratimā* denotes graven image, statue, sculpture, and the root *praklṛp* appears in the same synonymic group as *klṛp* and *kṛ* with the meanings "do, produce, create, form, construct", etc. [7], then the phrase of Patañjali under discussion can be read as follows: "[After all,] the Mauryas, who thirsted for gold, manufactured graven images [of the gods to be sold]". Nāgojībhaṭṭa, an authoritative commentator on Patañjali and Kaiyaṭa, convincingly confirms this: *mauryā vikretuṃ pratimā-śilpavantas tair arcāḥ kalpitāḥ vikretum iti śeṣo ...* (that is, "In order to conduct commerce, the Mauryas maintained craftsmen. These [craftsmen] made graven images [of the gods] for sale. This is the meaning [of the passage in Patañjali])" [8].

The sarcasm that permeates the concluding phrases of Patañjali's commentary, so telling for the historian, now becomes evident and intelligible: *bhavet tāsu na syāt, yās-tv-etāḥ samprati-pūjā-arthās tāsu bhaviṣyati* ("Well now, [as it stands, when forming nouns for] those [graven

images of the gods that are traded, the affix *kan*] cannot be used, [but when forming nouns for] those [graven images of the gods] that are [not] objects [of commerce], but great veneration [and at the same time are a means of subsistence, apparently] one can") [9].

Patañjali distinguishes here between two types of graven images of the gods: (i) graven images which, in violation of the traditions, were blasphemously traded by the Mauryas; (ii) graven images which served as an object of great veneration for the truly pious and were at the same time a means of subsistence (*sampratipūjārthā* [*arcāḥ*]), as Patañjali terms them. Further, Kaiyata explains how and for whom these *sampratipūjārthā* [*arcāḥ*] served as a means of subsistence: *yās-tv-etā iti, yāḥ parigṛhya gṛhād atanti tāsv-ity-arthaḥ* ("And those which" [we find in Patañjali] are those [graven images of the gods] with which [impoverished *brahmana*s] go from house to house [asking for alms]") [10].

We can now quote in translation the entire text of Patañjali's commentary: "'Cannot be bought and sold' is what is said there. [However,] this is not confirmed [by the facts. After all, Pāṇini] means [those nouns such as] Śiva, Skandaḥ, Viśākha [and the like]. But why? [After all,] the Mauryas, thirsting for gold, produced graven images [of the gods for sale]. Well now, [as it stands, when forming nouns for] those [graven images of the gods that are traded, the affix *kan*] cannot be used, [but when forming nouns for] those [graven images of the gods] that are [not] objects [of commerce], but great veneration [and at the same time are a means of subsistence, apparently] one can".

We summarize in conclusion the important and viable information one can extract from the preceding:

1. the Mauryas maintained craftsmen and delivered their goods — statues of the gods — to market;

2. the Mauryas sold statues of the gods in violation of the traditions attested by Pāṇini, and this trade was still viewed by the *brahmana*s of Patañjali's time as sacrilege;

3. this trade was undoubtedly important for the financial policy of the Mauryas.

In closing, we note that in medieval texts of the *śilpaśāstra*, such noun formations as *śivaka*, *vāsudevaka*, etc. are used as fully acceptable designations for depictions (including statues) of the corresponding divinities [11]. Clearly, the trade in statues of the gods under the Mauryas and subsequent social practice had an effect that was reflected in the language. But this necessarily means that the means of forming nouns that designate depictions of the gods can serve as a useful means for the relative dating of Sanskrit texts.

Patañjali's commentary undoubtedly looks like a sarcastic remark by a contemporary of the Mauryas. And, in this fashion, can itself serve as an argument in the question of dating Patañjali. Regrettably, the venerable scholars who debated the dates of Patañjali's life and his activities failed to notice this in the heat of their dispute.

The production of statues of the gods for temples and domestic altars took place before the "avaricious Mauryas" and was, undoubtedly, a pious deed. Both temples and priests found ways to remunerate craftsmen without resorting to the blasphemous practice of buying and selling. This is the tradition — so natural for a devout person who did not distinguish in his consciousness between a depiction and an original — that was broken by the rapacious Mauryas. We can be sure that only a pressing need for funds compelled them to embark on such a sacrilegious practice.

Notes

1. R. G. Bhandarkar, "On the interpretation of Patañjali", *Collected Works* (Poona, 1933), i, pp. 125—9; *idem*, "The Maurya-passage in the Mahābhāṣya", *ibid.*, pp. 148—53; *idem*, "A supplementary note on the Maurya-passage in the Mahābhāṣya", *ibid.*, pp. 154—6; *idem*, "The date of Patañjali, No. 1: being the first reply to Professor Peterson", *ibid.*, pp. 157—85; Th. Goldstücker, *Pāṇini: His Place in Sanskrit Literature* (Allahabad, 1914), pp. 175—6; F. Kielhorn, "The Maurya-passage in the Mahābhāṣya (P. V, 3.99)", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, I (1887), pp. 8—12; P. Peterson, "Note on the date of Patañjali", *The Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XVI (1883—1885), pp. 181—9; A. Weber, "On the date of Patañjali", *Indian Antiquary*, II (1873), p. 61.

2. A. B. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 428—9; *Patanjali's Mahabhashya* (*Paspasahnika*), ed. and trans. by K. Ch. Chatterji (Calcutta, 1957), p. 2; S. D. Joshi, "R. G. Bhandarkar and Sanskrit grammar", *Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Essays in Honor of Daniel H. H. Ingalls* (Dordrecht, 1980), pp. 33—60; G. M. Bongard-Levin, G. F. Il'in, *India v drevnosti* (India in Antiquity) (Moscow, 1985), p. 237; R. Sh. Sharma, *Drevneindiĭskoe obshchestvo* (Ancient Indian Society) (Moscow, 1985), p. 237.

3. Goldstücker, *op. cit.*, pp. 175—6.

4. *Patañjali's Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya*, ed. F. Kielhorn (Bombay, 1883), ii, p. 429.

5. Pāṇini, *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, ed. Sh. Ch. Vasu (Benares, 1897), p. 975 (V, 3.99).

6. Thus, *aśva* (horse) · *kan* (*ka*) = *aśvaka* 1) nag; 2) jade; 3) depiction (graven image) of a horse, etc. For more detail on the semantics of the affix kan, see Pāṇini, *op. cit.*, pp. 974—5 (V, 3. 95—100).

7. See *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa*, III, 2, GOS, CXXX (Baroda, 1958); *Agnipurāṇa*, XLIV—LV (Calcutta, 1873); Varāhamihira, *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, 58 (Calcutta, 1865); *Amarakośa*, II, 10, 36 (Bombay, 1907); P. N. Bose, *Principles of Indian Śilpaśāstra* (Lahore, 1926).

8. Nāgojībhaṭṭa, *Mahābhāṣya-pradīpa-uddyota*, as cited by Goldstücker, *op. cit.*, p. 176, n. 266.

9. Cf. Goldstücker, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

10. Kaiyata, *Mahābhāṣyapradīpa*, as cited by Goldstücker, *op. cit.*, p. 176, n. 266; see additional explanations by Nāgojībhaṭṭa.

11. See, for example, *Agnipurāṇa*, 42, 45 (Calcutta, 1873). Bibliotheca Indica, 66.