

CHARACTERIZING CLASSICAL *ANUṢṬUP*: A STUDY IN SANSKRIT PROSODY

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Synopsis

A study of relevant sections of the well-known works of prosody in Sanskrit, Piṅgala's Chandahśāstram and Kedārabhaṭṭa's Vṛttaratnākara, reveals that the identifying characteristics of the ubiquitous and most frequently occurring Sanskrit metre anuṣṭup are not properly brought out in these classics. After a brief discussion of the concerned sections of these two works and two other kārīkās, the author proposes a comprehensive definition for the classical anuṣṭup. This study was undertaken in course of developing a computer programme which identifies Sanskrit vṛtta metres.

Key words: Sanskrit prosody, vṛtta, chandas, chandaśśāstra, Piṅgala, anuṣṭup

1.0 Introduction

Among all the metres employed in Sanskrit classical literature, *anuṣṭup*, a form of verse with 8 *akṣaras* to a *pāda* and 4 *pādas* to a *śloka*, is the most frequently and widely employed. If we take into account that *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Purāṇas* and *Koṣas* mostly employ *anuṣṭup* it should indeed be the most widely employed metre among all metrical compositions of the world. It may be noted that this paper does not deal with Vedic *anuṣṭup*, although classical *anuṣṭup* is a descendant of vedic



anuṣṭup. In course of writing a computer programme,¹ which identifies the *ṛtta*, when a cycle of a *ṛtta* is input, the author noticed the strange situation that the well known classics on *chandas*, namely *Chandaḥśāstram* of Piṅgala and *Ṛttaratnākara* of Kedārabhaṭṭa, do not adequately define the classical *anuṣṭup*. This paper attempts to provide a precise definition, namely a set of necessary and sufficient characteristics that uniquely identifies the metre.

It needs to be clarified regarding terminology used in this paper, that what is meant by *anuṣṭup* is the metre that is employed in the vast body of Sanskrit *śloka*

literature and what is meant by '*anuṣṭup* category' is the general category of metres having 8 *akṣaras* to a *pāda*, as given in Piṅgala or Kedārabhaṭṭa.

2.0 *Gaṇa* system of prosody

For the benefit of those who may not be very familiar with Sanskrit prosody, a brief introduction to the *gaṇa* system of prosody is in order.

A *padya* (a stanza) consists of four *pādas* (quarters) each *pāda* having a fixed number of *akṣaras* (syllables) and/or a fixed number of *mātrās* (= a unit of syllabic duration). A single vowel or one or more consonants followed by a vowel constitute an *akṣara*. A short vowel has a duration of one *mātrā*, and is called *laghu*, and a long vowel has a duration of two *mātrās*, and is called *guru*. When a short vowel is followed by an *anusvāra*, a *visarga* or a *saṃyuktākṣara* (conjunct consonant), it is treated as a *guru* (two *mātrās*). In what is called the *gaṇa*- based system, each *pāda* of a *śloka* is divided into groups of three *akṣaras* each. An age-old cyclic mnemonic that helps in remembering and characterizing the *gaṇas* is as follows:

यमातराजभानस

yamātārājabhānasa

A sequence of 3 adjacent *akṣaras* in this mnemonic characterizes a *gaṇa* and the first *akṣara* of a sequence is the name of that *gaṇa*. For example, the first sequence of 3 *akṣaras* *yamātā*, whose 3 *akṣara*s are respectively *laghu*, *guru*, *guru* specifies that *ya gaṇa* consists of a sequence *laghu*, *guru*, *guru*. The eight possible sequences and their names are as follows:

Sequence	1 st akṣara	2 nd	3 rd	Name of gaṇa
<i>yamātā</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>ya</i>
<i>mātārā</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>ma</i>
<i>tārāja</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>ta</i>
<i>rājabhā</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>ra</i>
<i>jabhāna</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>ja</i>
<i>bhānasa</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>bha</i>
<i>nasaya</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>na</i>
<i>sayamā</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>laghu</i>	<i>guru</i>	<i>sa</i>

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Broadly there are 3 types of metres in classical Sanskrit.

1. Each *pāda* of a *śloka* consists of a specified number of *mātrās*, with some constraints.

2. Each *pāda* consists of a specified sequence of *gaṇas*, which may be followed by one or two *akṣaras*, each being either *guru* or *laghu*. The last *akṣara* of a *pāda* is generally considered a *guru*. Such stanzas are called *vṛttas* or *vṛtta-ślokas*.

3. Each *pāda* consists of a specified number of *akṣaras* with some constraints.

Among metres employed in classical Sanskrit literature, *anuṣṭup* (often called *śloka*) appears to be the only one which belongs to the third type. Whereas *mātrā*-based metres *āryā* and *vaitāliya* have only a defined number of *mātrās* in a *pāda* subject to a few other constraints of *akṣaras* in a *pāda* is specified as eight, with some constraints on the use of certain *gaṇas* at certain positions of the *pāda*.

3.0 *Anuṣṭup* category of Piṅgala

The characteristics of various metres belonging to *anuṣṭup* category, as given by Piṅgala in his *Chandaḥśāstram* are as follows:

- 3.1 *Vaktra* : 1. No 'sa' *gaṇa* and 'na' *gaṇa* after the first *akṣara* of a *pāda*.
2. No 'ra' *gaṇa* also after the first *akṣara* of an even *pāda*.
3. Only 'ya' *gaṇa* after the 4th *akṣara* of a *pāda*.

The third stipulation above renders *vaktra* a mere textbook metre of *anuṣṭup* in category, virtually not coming under what one typically comes across as *anuṣṭup* in classical literature.

3.2 *Pathyāvaktra* : All the three rules of *vaktra* are operative subject to the following:

Only *ja gaṇa* is permitted after the 4th *akṣara* of even *pādas*. *Pathyāvaktra* is quite clearly a recognizable form of *anuṣṭup*, but its definition is too restrictive (because of its insistence on the use of 'ja' *gaṇa* after the 4th *akṣara* of odd *pādas*) to cover other types of *anuṣṭup* seen in classical literature.

3.3 *Capalāvaktra* : All the three rules of *vaktra* are operative subject to the following:

In the odd *pādas* after the 4th *akṣara* 'na' *gaṇa* is used instead of 'ja' *gaṇa*. This yields a metre which is not recognizable as *anuṣṭup*.

3.4 *Vipulā* (*yugmavipulā*): All the three rules of *vaktra* are operative subject to the following:

Only a *laghu* is permitted as the 7th *akṣara* of even *pādas*. *Vipulā* is less restrictive than 'pathyāvaktra' and as such *pathyāvaktra* becomes a sub-category of 'vipulā'. Unfortunately there is some confusion here as the examples given under *vipulā* also meet the *pathyāvaktra* criterion of having a 'ja' *gaṇa* after 4th *akṣara* in the even *pādas*. *Vṛttikāra* fails to give a convincing explanation to this overlap of 'vipulā' and *pathyāvaktra*. *Vipulā* is again categorized into sub-categories, as per *vṛttikāra*, depending on the *gaṇa* used in the odd *pādas* after the 4th *akṣara*. Instead of *ja gaṇa* which is the general rule for *vaktra*, use of *bha*, *ra*, *na*, *ta* and *ma gaṇa* renders the *vṛtta bha*-, *ra*-, *na*-, *ta*-, and *ma*- *vipulā* respectively. After quoting examples from the classics, he wrongly comes to the conclusion, that on the whole, all *vipulā* can be characterized by the condition that the 4th *akṣara* of a *pāda* is a *guru*. What needs to be noted here is that *vipulā* does not stipulate *ja gaṇa* after the 4th *akṣara* of even *pādas* and only stipulates that the 7th *akṣara* of even *pāda* be a *laghu*. If one uses *ta bha* or *na gaṇa* in place of *ja gaṇa* after the 4th *akṣara*, *vipulā* condition is still met but the *padya* so formed is not recognizable as *anuṣṭup*.

3.5 The above discussion could be summarized in the form of tables as follows:

<i>Vaktra</i>		
	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa', 'na' & 'ra' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>
<i>Pathyāvakra</i>		
	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa', 'na' & 'ra' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only 'ja' <i>gaṇa</i>

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<i>Vipulā</i>		
	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa', 'na' & 'ra' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	'ya', 'bha' 'ra', 'na', 'ta' or 'ma' <i>gaṇa</i>	'ta', 'ja', 'bha' or 'na' <i>gaṇa</i>

4. *Anuṣṭup* category of Kedārabhaṭṭa

Vṛttaratnākara of Kedārabhaṭṭa deals with the *anuṣṭup* category in an even less satisfactory manner. His relevant definitions are given below in the form of tables. The corresponding demonstrative definition (*lakṣaṇa*) is given below each table.

<i>Vaktra</i>		
	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>

Vaktraṃ nādyānnasau syātām abdher yo'nuṣṭubhi khyātam

Pathyāvakra

	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa', & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only 'ja' <i>gaṇa</i>

युजोर्जेन सरिद्धर्तुः पथ्यावक्त्रं प्रकीर्तितम्

yujor jena saridbhartuḥ pathyāvakraṁ prakīrtitam

Vipāritapathyāvakra

	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Only 'ja' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>

अयुजोर्जेन वारिधेः तदेव विपरीतादि

ayujor jena vāridheḥ tad eva viparītādi

Capalāvakra

	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Only 'na' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>

चपलावक्रमयुजोर्नकारश्चेत् पयोरारोः

capalāvaktram ayujpr nakāraś cet prayorāśeḥ

Yugmavipulā

	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than 'sa' & 'na' <i>gaṇas</i>
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Only 'ya' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only 'ta', 'bha', 'na' or 'ja' <i>gaṇa</i>

यस्यां तः सप्तमो युग्मे सा युग्मविपुला मता

yasyām laḥ saptamo yugme sā yugmavipulā matā

(That the seventh *akṣara* should be a *laghu*, is equivalent to 'ta, bha, na & ja' *gaṇas* being allowed after the 4th *akṣara*).

What needs to be noted with regard to *Yugmavipulā* is, that the demonstrative rule quoted above, uses 'ja gaṇa' after the 4th akṣara of the second *pāda*, and not any of the other permitted namely, 'ta, bha or na' gaṇa.

Vṛttaratnākara proceeds to define *vipulā*, as per Saitava, as having a *laghu* for the seventh akṣara in all the *pādas*. Further he defines *bha vipulā*, *na vipulā* and *ta vipulā*. These are totally at variance with the corresponding definitions of Piṅgala discussed in para 3.0, above and as nowhere near classical *anuṣṭup*, they need not be discussed any further here. Possibly Kedārabhaṭṭa did not properly interpret the *sūtras* of Piṅgala and hence this discrepancy.

5.0 Two *kārikās*

The following *kārikā* is quoted in the commentary *Pañcikā* of Rāmacandrakavibhāratī on *Vṛttaratnākara* as a definition of *anuṣṭup*:

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पञ्चमं लघु सर्वत्र समं द्विचतुर्थयोः ।

pañcamam laghu sarvartra saptamam dvicaturthayoḥ

गुरु षष्ठं तु पादानां शेषास्त्वनियमाः स्मृताः ॥

guru ṣaṣṭham tu pādānām śeṣās tv aniyamāḥ smṛtāḥ

Another definition quoted elsewhere is as follows :

श्लोके षष्ठं गुरु ज्ञेयं सर्वत्र लघु पञ्चमम् ।

śloke ṣaṣṭham guru jñeyam sarvatra laghu pañcamam

द्विचतुष्पादयोन्हस्यं समं दीर्घमन्ययोः ॥

dvicatuṣpādayorhrasvam saptamam dīrghamanyayoḥ

Neither of these two *kārikas* fully and precisely defines *anuṣṭup*, although both imply that after the 4th 'ja' gaṇa is required in the even *pādas* and the second one also implies that in the odd *pāda* after the 4th akṣara 'ja' gaṇa is required. We need a definition that precisely characterizes *anuṣṭup* encountered in classical Sanskrit literature.

6.0 Characteristics of *anuṣṭup*

A close look at *anuṣṭup* verses in the classical literature of Sanskrit reveals that almost all of them exhibit the following major characteristics :

1. The first as well as the last *akṣara* of a *pāda* can either be *laghu* or *guru*. (The last *akṣara* of a *pāda* of a stanza can always be treated a *guru* even if it is a *laghu*).

2. After the 4th *akṣara* of an even *pāda* only '*ja*' *gaṇa* is employed.

3. After the first *akṣara* of an even *pāda* *gaṇas* '*na*, *sa* and *ra*' are not employed.

4. After the first *akṣara* of an odd *pāda* *gaṇas* '*na* and *sa*' are not employed.

5. After the fourth *akṣara* of an odd *pāda* *gaṇas* '*sa* and *ja*' are not employed.

The above characteristics can again be represented in the form of a table as below:

	<i>Pādas 1 & 3</i>	<i>Pādas 2 & 4</i>
After 1 st <i>akṣara</i>	Other than ' <i>sa</i> ' & ' <i>na</i> ' <i>gaṇas</i>	Other than ' <i>sa</i> ', ' <i>na</i> ' & ' <i>ra</i> ' <i>gaṇa</i> s
After 4 th <i>akṣara</i>	Other than ' <i>sa</i> ' & ' <i>ja</i> ' <i>gaṇa</i>	Only ' <i>ja</i> ' <i>gaṇa</i>

It needs to be emphasized, that the above table only gives the gross characteristics of classical *anuṣṭup*, and that a deeper study reveals a fine structure, which is discussed in the next paragraph. It is noted in passing, that the above characteristics form a sub-category in 'vipulā' as given by Piṅgala. As per the above table, in the odd *pāda* 'ya, ma, ta, ra, ja, bha' *gaṇas* could be employed after the first *akṣara* and after the 4th *akṣara* 'ya, ma, ta, ra, bha, na' *gaṇas* could be employed. When one tries to work out all possible combinations (a total of 36) between these two permissible sets, one notices that not all combinations lead to recognizable forms of the odd *pāda* of an *anuṣṭup*. As regards the even *pāda*, all possible combinations (a total of 5) of 'ya, ma, ta, ja, bha' *gaṇas* on the one hand and 'ja' *gaṇa* on the other yield recognizable even *pāda* of an *anuṣṭup*. In order to facilitate this examination a table is formed below. The first column of the table gives the name of the *gaṇa*. The second column gives a possible meaningful word or phrase, which comprises a *laghu* or *guru* as first *akṣara* followed by a *gaṇa* indicated in the first column of the row. This word or phrase could be used as a possible first half of a *pāda*. The third column gives again a meaningful word or phrase comprising 3 *akṣaras* belonging to the specific *gaṇa* followed by a *guru*, which could be used as the latter half of a *pāda*.

Name of <i>gaṇa</i>	<i>Guru/laghu + gaṇa</i>	<i>Gaṇa + gaṇa</i>
<i>Ya</i>	<i>śārngadhanvā</i>	<i>Ramānāthaḥ</i>
<i>Ma</i>	<i>Gadāpāṇiḥ</i>	<i>Rājivākṣaḥ</i>
<i>Ta</i>	<i>Sadā pātu</i>	<i>Lakṣmīpatiḥ</i>
<i>Ra</i>	<i>Janārdanaḥ</i>	<i>Mānivāsaḥ</i>
<i>Ja</i>	<i>Mām sa pātu</i>	<i>Kṛpānidhiḥ</i>
<i>Bha</i>	<i>Sa rakṣati</i>	<i>Mānilayaḥ</i>
<i>Na</i>	<i>Māmvatu</i>	<i>Madhuripuḥ</i>
<i>Sa</i>	<i>śrīnilayaḥ</i>	<i>Kamalākṣaḥ</i>

It could be easily verified from the above table that out of the 36 possible combinations for the odd *pāda* the following 16 combinations only yield recognizable odd *pāda* of *anusṭup* : *yaya, maya, taya, raya, jaya, bhaya, rama, yara, mara, rara, yabha, mabha, rabha, yana, mana, rana*.

Out of this, the first six are the same as the *pathyāvakra* of Piṅgala and the others subcategories of *vipulā*. (As already mentioned, *pathyāvakra* itself is a sub-

category of *vipulā*.) The 16 combinations are given below, indicating an example for each from AK selected in a random manner as well as from the above table. Symbol ^ stands for *laghu* / *guru* as the either *akṣara* of a *pāda*.

1. ^*ya_yā*^

आश्रयाशो बृहद्भानुः -

āśrayāśo bṛhadbhānuḥ - AK 108²

शार्ङ्गधन्वा रमानाथः

śārngadhanvā ramānāthaḥ

2. ^*ma_yā*^

प्राणोपानस्समानश्च -

prāṇopānas samānaś ca - AK 126

गदापाणी रमानाथः

gadāpāṇī ramānāthaḥ

3. ^*ta_yā*^

कृतान्तो यमुनाभ्राता -

kṛtānto yamunābhrātā - AK 116

सदा पातु रमानाथः

sadā pātu ramānāthaḥ

4. ^ra_ya^

स्त्रीपुल्लपुंसकं ज्ञेयम् -

strīpunnapumsakam jñeyam - AK 6

जनार्दनो रमानाथः

janārdano rāmanāthaḥ

5. ^ja_ya^

लुप्तवर्णपदं ग्रस्तम् -

luptavarṇapadam grastam - AK 350

मां स पातु रमानाथः

mām sa pātu ramānāthaḥ

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6. ^bha_ya^

ललाटमलिकं गोधिः -

lalāṭam alikam godhiḥ - AK 1257

स रक्षति रमानाथः

sa rakṣati ramānāthaḥ

7. ^ra_ma^

मोक्षोपवर्गोयाज्ञानम् -

mokṣopavargothājñānam - AK 290

जनार्दनो राजीवाक्षः

janārdano rājivākṣaḥ

8. ^ya_ra^

कपटोस्त्री व्याजदम्भो -

kapaṭo strī vyājadambho - AK 421

शार्ङ्गधन्वा मानिवासः

śārṅgadhanvā mānivāsaḥ

9. [^]ma_ṛā[^]

बर्हिश्शुष्मा कृष्णवर्त्मा -

barhiśśuṣmā kṛṣṇavartmā - AK 207

गदापाणिर्मानिवासः

gadāpāṇir mānivāsaḥ

10. [^]ra_ṛā[^]

ऐरावतः पुण्डरीको -

airāvataḥ puṇḍarīko - AK 151

जनार्दनो मानिवासः

janārdano mānivāsaḥ

11. [^]ya_bha[^]

पृषदश्वो गन्धवहो -

pṛṣadaśvo gandhavaho - AK 123

शार्ङ्गधन्वा मानिलयः

śārngadhanvā mānilayaḥ

12. [^]ma_bha[^]

मिथ्यादृष्टिर्नास्तिकता -

mithyādr̥ṣṭir nāstikatā - AK 284

गदापाणिर्मनिलयः

gadāpāṇir mānilayaḥ

13. [^]ra_bha[^]

क्षेत्रज्ञ आत्मा पुरुषः -

kṣetrajña ātmā puruṣaḥ - AK 272

जनार्दनो मानिलयः

janārdano mānilayaḥ

14. [^]ya_nā[^]

धर्मराजः पितृपतिः -

dharmarājaḥ pitṛpatiḥ - AK 115

शार्ङ्गधन्वा मधुरिपुः

śārngadhanvā madhuripuḥ

15. [^]ma_nā[^]

नभस्वद्वातपवन -

nabhasvad vātapavana - AK 125

गदापाणिर्मधुरिपुः ।

gadāpāṇir madhuripuḥ

16. [^]ra_nā[^]

समीरमारुतमरुत् -

samīramārutamarut - AK 124

जनार्दनो मधुरिपुः

janārdano madhuripuḥ

In similar manner the five possible combinations for the even *pāda* can be demonstrated from the above table and examples can be easily obtained from any *anuṣṭup* work in Sanskrit.

It needs to be emphasized, that the above characterization will cover a very large percentage of *śloka* literature. It would be possible to identify *ślokas* in the vast body of Sanskrit literature, which are not covered by the above characterization. But they will be in a negligibly small percentage and it is the contention of the author that they are best treated as lapses (*vṛttibhaṅga*). Any attempt to broaden the definition further, in order to accommodate a miniscule percentage of the *śloka* population, would render the exercise meaningless.

The comprehensive characterization offered above for classical *anuṣṭup* could be composed into a pair of *kārikās*, not elegant though, as follows:

चतुर्थी तु ज एव स्यात् आद्यान् नसरा युजि ।

chaturthā tu ja eva syāt ādyān na nasarā yuji

अयुज्यब्ध्युत्तरम् यश्चेत् नसौ नाद्यादनुष्टुभि ॥

ayujyabdhuyuttaram yaścet nasau nādyādanuṣṭubhi

अन्धेर्मश्चेत् र एवाद्यात् रो भो नोऽब्ध्युत्तरं यदि ।

abdhermaścet ra evādyāt ro bho no bdhuyuttaram yadi

अयुज्याद्यादन्यतमो यमरेषु भवेत् सदा ॥

ayujyādyādanyatamo yamareṣu bhavet sadā

अनुष्टुभियुजि द्वितीयचतुर्थपादे आद्याद् अक्षरात् ऊर्ध्वं नसरा न गण स गण र गणाः न स्युः चतुर्थात् अक्षरात् ऊर्ध्वं ज गण एव स्यात् । अयुजि प्रथमतृतीयपादे अब्ध्युत्तरं चतुर्थात् अक्षरात् ऊर्ध्वं य गणश्चेत् आद्यात् अक्षरादूर्ध्वं नसौ नगणसगणौ न स्याताम् । अयुजि प्रथमतृतीयपादे अन्धेः चतुर्थात् अक्षरात् ऊर्ध्वं म गणश्चेत् आद्यात् अक्षरादूर्ध्वं र गण एव स्यात् अब्ध्युत्तरं चतुर्थात् अक्षरात् ऊर्ध्वं रगणो भगणो नगणश्चेत् आद्यात् अक्षरादूर्ध्वं य गण म गण र गणेष्वन्यतमः सदा भवेत् ।

anuṣṭubhiyuji (dvitīyācaturthapāde) ādyād (akṣarāt ūrdhvam) nasarā (na gaṇa sa gaṇa ra gaṇāḥ) na (syuḥ) chaturthāt (akṣarāt ūrdhvam) ja (gaṇa) eva syāt. ayuji (prathamatrīyapāde) abdhuyuttaram (caturthāt akṣarāt ūrdhvam) ya gaṇaścet ādyāt (akṣarādūrdhvam) nasau nagaṇasagaṇau na (syātām) ayuji (prathamatrīyapāde) abdheḥ (caturthāt akṣarāt ūrdhvam) ma gaṇaścet ādyāt (akṣarādūrdhvam) ra (gaṇa) eva syāt abdhuyuttaram (caturthāt akṣarāt ūrdhvam) ragaṇo bhagaṇo nagaṇaścet ādyāt (akṣarādūrdhvam) ya gaṇa ma gaṇa ra gaṇeṣvanyatamaḥ sadā bhavet ।

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In *anuṣṭup* in the even *pādas* after the first *akṣara* 'na, sa, ra' *gaṇas* are forbidden, after the 4th *akṣara* only *ja gaṇa* is allowed. In the odd *pādas* after the 4th *akṣara* if 'ya' *gaṇa* is used, after the first *akṣara* 'na and sa' *gaṇas* are not allowed (6 combinations); if after the 4th *akṣara* 'ma' *gaṇa* is used after the first *akṣara* only 'ra' *gaṇa* is permissible (1 combination); if after the 4th *akṣara* ra, bha or na *gaṇa* is used, after the first *akṣara* 'ya, ma or ra' *gaṇa* has to be used (9 combinations).

7.0 Observed lapses

The author has come across a few exceptions to the above definition, even in AK:

मतल्लिका मचर्चिका प्रकाण्डमुद्धतलज्जौ । २६८

matallikā macarcikā prakāṇḍamuddhatalajjau 268

प्रशस्तवाचकान्यमून्यः शुभावहो विधिः ॥ २६९

praśastavācakānyamūnyaḥ śubhāvaho vidhiḥ 269

प्रमापणं निबर्हणं निकारणं विचारणम् । १६९२

pramāpaṇam nibarhaṇam nikāraṇam vicāraṇam 1692

प्रवासनं परासनं निषूदनं निहिंसनम् ॥ १६९३

pravāsanam parāsanam niṣūdanam nihimsanam 1693

The above two verses are not really *anuṣṭup* although they have 8 *akṣaras* to a *pāda*. They follow a *gaṇa* - based metre *pramāṇikā* defined by

प्रमाणिका जरी लगौ

pramāṇikā jarau lagau

given in *Vṛttaratnākara* Chapter 3.

The following are glaring exceptions, which do not follow even the basic condition that 'na and sa' *gaṇas* are disallowed after the first *akṣara* ! The first occurs as the first half of the last *śloka* of a *kāṇḍa* in AK.

इत्यमरसिंहकृतौ नामलिङ्गानुशासने ।

^na_bha^

ity amarasimhakarṭau nāmaliṅgānuśāsane

खनति तेन तद्वोदा

^sa_ya^

khanati tena tadvoḍhā - AK 1835

The following instances of lapses are taken from the *vṛtti* on Piṅgala's *Chandaḥśāstram*. They are in fact quoted by the learned *vṛttikāra* as examples of use of various *gaṇas* in *anuṣṭup*.

[^]ma_ ta[^]

वन्दे देवं सोमेश्वरं जटामुकुटमण्डितम् ।

vande devaṁ someśvaraṁ jaṭāmukuṭamaṇḍitam

[^]bha_ ta[^]

खट्वाङ्गधरं चन्द्रमःशिखामणिविभूषितम् ॥

khaṭvāṅgadharaṁ candramaḥśikhāmaṇivibhūṣitam

[^]ra_ ta[^]

वन्दे कविं श्रीभारविं लोकसन्तमसच्छिदम् ।

vande kaviṁ śrībhāraṁ viṁ lokasantaṁ masacchidam

[^]bha_ ta[^]

लोकव्यवहारं प्रति सदृशौ बालपण्डितौ ॥

lokavyavahāraṁ prati sadṛśau bālapaṇḍitau

[^]ya_ sa[^]

क्षणविध्वंसिनि काये का चिन्ता मरणे रणे ॥

kṣaṇavidhvāṁsini kāye kā cintā maraṇe raṇe

While reciting the lines given above, one can easily sense the lapse of internal rhythm in the first *pāda*, which is characteristic of an *anuṣṭup*.

It is to be conceded that what exactly constitutes the internal rhythm of *anuṣṭup* or for that matter of any other *vṛtta* is something, which is as yet unexplored. It may be that it is a matter of simply getting accustomed to a particular sequence of *gaṇas* over a period of time, as a result of frequently encountering it in the literature or it is something deeper.

8.0 Conclusion

It is indeed surprising that *anuṣṭup* has remained ill-defined for so long. It has been shown in this paper, that leaving the first and the last *akṣara* of an *anuṣṭup*, which could be either *laghu* or *guru*, the remaining six *akṣaras* in an odd *pāda* have to be one of the specified sixteen combinations of two permitted *gaṇas*. In an even

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pāda after the first *akṣara* 'ya, ma, ta, ja, bha' *gaṇa* is to be used followed by 'ja' *gaṇa*.

There are very many treatises on *chandas* other than Piṅgala's and Kedārabhaṭṭa's, although they are not as well-known and popular. There are works on *chandas* in other Indian languages, too, where Sanskrit *vṛttas* and *ślokas* are commonly used. It is not known, if somewhere a detailed study of *anuṣṭup*, on the lines given here is available. Given the predisposition for later scholars to follow the trodden path, it is not likely though. If *anuṣṭup* is being used for thousands of years in Sanskrit literature without a precise definition having been spelt out till date, it must be simply because of the fact, that the internal rhythm of *anuṣṭup* becomes ingrained in the mind of a student of Sanskrit at an early age, due to constant and continuous encounter with *anuṣṭup* and, when one wants to compose a verse in *anuṣṭup*, one is guided by that rhythm intuitively. This paper has attempted to characterize *anuṣṭup* in such a way, that most of *śloka* literature of Sanskrit falls within its ambit. What exactly is the internal rhythm of a Sanskrit *vṛtta*, is a matter yet to be explored.

References :

1. *Chandaḥśāstram* of Piṅgala: Kāvyaṁālā series of Nirnayasagar Press
2. *Vṛttaratnākaraḥ* of Kedārabhaṭṭa: Nirnayasagar Press
3. *Amarakośaḥ* of Amarasimha: Nirnayasagar Press

Notes:

1. Those interested in this program may get in touch with the author by email: gssmurthy@vsnl.com

2. AK108 means line number 108 of Amarakośa edited by W.L.S. Pansikar and published by Nirnayasagar 1934.