CHARACTERIZING CLASSICAL ANUŚTUP:
A STUDY IN SANSKRIT PROSODY

By

G. S. S. Murthy

Synopsis

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

Key words: Sanskrit prosody, vṛtta, chandas, chandaḥśāstra, Pingala, anuśṭup

1.0 Introduction

Among all the metres employed in Sanskrit classical literature, anuśṭup, a form of verse with 8 aksaras to a pāda and 4 pādas to a sloka, is the most frequently and widely employed. If we take into account that Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Puraṇas and Kōsas mostly employ anuśṭup 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 anuśṭup, although classical anuśṭup is a descendant of vedic...
**anuṣṭup.** In course of writing a computer programme,¹ which identifies the vṛtta, when a cycle of a vṛtta is input, the author noticed the strange situation that the well known classics on chandas, namely Chandahśāstram of Pingala and Vṛttaratnākara 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 aksaras to a pāda, as given in Pingala 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 aksaras (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 aksara. 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 samyuktāksara (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 aksara each. An age-old cyclic mnemonic that helps in remembering and characterizing the gaṇas is as follows:

यमातराजभानस

**yamāṭārājabhānasa**

A sequence of 3 adjacent aksaras in this mnemonic characterizes a gaṇa and the first aksara of a sequence is the name of that gaṇa. For example, the first sequence of 3 aksaras yamāṭā, whose 3 aksaraaś 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:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence</th>
<th>1st akṣara</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>Name of gana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yamātā</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mātārā</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tārāja</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rājabhā</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>ra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jabhāna</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhānasa</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>bha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasaya</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sayamā</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>laghu</td>
<td>guru</td>
<td>sa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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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 aksaras, each being either guru or laghu. The last aksara of a pāda is generally considered a guru. Such stanzas are called vṛttas or vṛttas-ślokas.

3. Each pāda consists of a specified number of aksaras 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 ārya and vaivaliya have only a defined number of mātrās in a pāda subject to a few other constraints of aksaras 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 aksara of a pāda.
   2. No ‘ra’ gaṇa also after the first aksara of an even pāda.
   3. Only ‘ya’ gaṇa after the 4th aksara 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 gana is permitted after the 4th akṣara of even padās. Pathyāvaktra is quite clearly a recognizable form of anuṣṭup, but its definition is too restrictive (because of its insistence on the use of ‘ya’ gana after the 4th akṣara of odd padās) 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’ gana is used instead of ‘ya’ gana. This yields a metre which is not recognizable as anuṣṭup.

3.4 Vipulā (yugnavipulā): 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’ gana 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 gana used in the odd pādas after the 4th akṣara. Instead of ya gana which is the general rule for vaktra, use of bha, ra, na, ta and ma gana readers 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 gana 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 gana in place of ja gana 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vāktra</th>
<th>Pādas 1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gaṇas</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’, ‘na’ &amp; ‘ra’ gaṇas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gaṇa</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gaṇa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathyāvaktra</th>
<th>Pādas 1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gaṇas</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’, ‘na’ &amp; ‘ra’ gaṇas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gaṇa</td>
<td>Only ‘ja’ gaṇa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vipulā</th>
<th>Pādas 1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Anuṣṭup category of Kēdāraṃbhāṭṭa

Vṛttaratnākara of Kēdāraṃbhāṭṭa 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 (lakṣāna) is given below each table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vāktra</th>
<th>Pādas 1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gaṇas</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gaṇas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gaṇa</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gaṇa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vaktram nādyāṇnasau syātām abdher yo’nuṣṭubhi khyātām
Pathyāvaktra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pādas 1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1st akṣara</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gaṇas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4th akṣara</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gaṇa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

युजोजन सरिद्रुत्त? पथ्यावक्रं प्रकृतितम्

yujor jena saridbhartiḥ pathyāvaktraṁ prakīrtitam

Vipāritapathyāvaktra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pādas 1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1st akṣara</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gaṇas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4th akṣara</td>
<td>Only ‘ja’ gaṇa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

अयुजोजन वार्षि: तदेव विपरितादि

ayujor jena vāridheḥ tad eva viparitādi
### Capalāvaktra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pādas</th>
<th>1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gānas</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gānas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Only ‘na’ gāna</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gāna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

चतुर्थकसम्पूर्णगत्विचेत पदोऽहः
capalāvaktram ayujpr nakāraś cet prayorāšeḥ

### Yugmavipulā

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pādas</th>
<th>1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gānas</td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ gānas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; akṣara</td>
<td>Only ‘ya’ gāna</td>
<td>Only ‘ta’, ‘bha’, ‘na’ or ‘ja’ gāna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

यस्याः ल: सासमो दूष्यमे सा युगमविपुला मताः
yasyāṁ laḥ saptamō yugmac sā yugmavipulā mātā
that the seventh akṣara should be a laghu, is equivalent to ‘ta, bha, na & ja’ gānas being allowed after the 4<sup>th</sup> akṣara}. 
What needs to be noted with regard to *Yugmavipulā* is, that the demonstrative rule quoted above, uses *'ja' gana'* after the 4th *akṣara* of the second *pāda*, and not any of the other permitted namely, *'ta, bha or na' gana*.

*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 *Paścikā* of Rāmacandrakavibhāratī on *Vṛttaratnākara* as a definition of *anuṣṭup*.

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पक्षम तत् सर्वत्र समम द्विचुर्धिः: ||
*pañcamam* *laghu* *sarvartra* *saptamam* *dvicaturdhayoh*

गुरु सप्तः तू पादानां रोषारत्वनियमः स्मृताः: ||
*guru sastham* tu *pādānāṁ* seṣās tv *aniyamāṁ* *smṛtāḥ*

Another definition quoted elsewhere is as follows:

श्लोके वषं कुरु तेषं सर्वत्र तत्प वकः: ||
*slokē sastham* guru *jñeyam* *sarvatra* *laghu* *pañcamam*

द्विचुर्धिः व पादानां तर्स तस्मां तीर्थामन्योऽऽः: ||
*dvicaturdha* *pādayorharsvam* *saptamam* *dirghamanyayoh*

Neither of these two *kārikas* fully and precisely defines *anuṣṭup*, although both imply that after the 4th *'ja' gana* is required in the even *pādas* and the second one also implies that in the odd *pāda* after the 4th *akṣara* *'ya' gana* 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 *aṅkāra* of a *pāda* can either be *laghu* or *guru*. (The last *aṅkāra* of a *pāda* of a stanza can always be treated a *guru* even if it is a *laghu*).

2. After the 4<sup>th</sup> *aṅkāra* of an even *pāda* only ‘ja’ *gāṇa* is employed.

3. After the first *aṅkāra* of an even *pāda* *gāṇas* ‘na, sa and ra’ are not employed.

4. After the first *aṅkāra* of an odd *pāda* *gāṇas* ‘na and sa’ are not employed.

5. After the fourth *aṅkāra* of an odd *pāda* *gāṇas* ‘sa and ja’ are not employed.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pādas 1 &amp; 3</th>
<th>Pādas 2 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; <em>aṅkāra</em></td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘na’ <em>gāṇas</em></td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’, ‘na’ &amp; ‘ra’ <em>gāṇaḥ</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; <em>aṅkāra</em></td>
<td>Other than ‘sa’ &amp; ‘ja’ <em>gāṇa</em></td>
<td>Only ‘ja’ <em>gāṇa</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It needs to be emphasized, that the above table only gives the gross characteristics of classical anustup, 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 ‘vipula’ as given by Pingala. As per the above table, in the odd pada ‘ya, ma, ta, ra, ja, bha’ ganas could be employed after the first aksara and after the 4th aksara ‘ya, ma, ta, ra, bha, na’ ganas 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 pada of an anustup. As regards the even pada, all possible combinations (a total of 5) of ‘ya, ma, ta, ja, bha’ ganas on the one hand and ‘ja’ gana on the other yield recognizable even pada of an anustup. In order to facilitate this examination a table is formed below. The first column of the table gives the name of the gana. The second column gives a possible meaningful word or phrase, which comprises a laghu or guru as first aksara followed by a gana indicated in the first column of the row. This word or phrase could be used as a possible first half of a pada. The third column gives again a meaningful word or phrase comprising 3 aksaras belonging to the specific gana followed by a guru, which could be used as the latter half of a pada.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of gaṇa</th>
<th>Guru/laghu + gaṇa</th>
<th>Gaṇa + gaṇa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ya</td>
<td>śāṅgadhanvā</td>
<td>Ramānāthaḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma</td>
<td>Gāḍāpāṇṭḥ</td>
<td>Raśīvākṣaḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ta</td>
<td>Sādā pātu</td>
<td>Lākṣmīpatiḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ra</td>
<td>Janaṛdanaḥ</td>
<td>Māṇivāsaḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jā</td>
<td>Māṁ sa pātu</td>
<td>Kṛpāṇidhiḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bha</td>
<td>Sa rakṣati</td>
<td>Māṇilayaḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Māmavatu</td>
<td>Madhuripuḥ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa</td>
<td>śṛṅgilayaḥ</td>
<td>Kamalākṣaḥ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 anuṣṭup: 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 pathyāvaktra of Piṅgala and the others subcategories of vipulā. (As already mentioned, pathyāvaktra 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 īguru as the either aksara of a pāda.

1. ^ya_ya^
   आश्रयायो शृङ्खलाम् -
   āśrayāśo brhadbhānuḥ - AK 108
   श्राध्यं यथातः
   śāṅgadhanvā ramāṇāthah

2. ^ma_ya^
   प्राणोपानसमानाच -
   prānopānas samānaś ca - AK 126
   गदापाणी स्तानायः
   gadāpāṇī ramāṇāthah

3. ^ta_ya^
   कुर्वातो यमुनाभ्राता -
   kṛtānto yamunābhrātā - AK 116
   सदा पातु स्तानायः
   sadā pātu ramāṇāthah
4. \(^{ra}\_ya^\)

\(\text{स्त्रिपुन्यपूर्वाय ले्यम्} -
\(s\text{tr}i\text{p\text{u}n\text{a}p\text{u\text{m}a}p\text{a\text{m}}a\text{m} j\text{n\text{e}ya\text{m}} - \text{AK 6}
\)

\(\text{जनार्दनो य\\\text{्मायः}} -
\(j\text{a}n\text{a}r\text{d}a\text{n}a\text{o} r\text{a}m\text{a}n\text{\text{a}t\text{h}a}h
\)

5. \(^{ja}\_ya^\)

\(\text{लुप्तवर्षयपं प्रस्तम्} -
\(l\text{u}t\text{a}t\text{a}v\text{a}r\text{n}a\text{p\text{a}da\text{m} gr\text{a}st\text{a}m - \text{AK 350}
\)

\(\text{माय स पातु य\\\text{्मायः}} -
\(m\text{ām} s\text{a} p\text{ā}t\text{u} r\text{a}m\text{a}n\text{a}t\text{h}a\text{h}
\)

6. \(^{bha}\_ya^\)

\(\text{लतांमकं गोंधि:} -
\(l\text{a}l\text{ā}t\text{a}m a\text{l}\text{i}k\text{a}\text{m} g\text{o}d\text{h}i\text{h} - \text{AK 1257}
\)

\(\text{स रक्षति य\\\text{्मायः}} -
\(s\text{a} r\text{a}k\text{ś}a\text{t}i r\text{a}m\text{a}n\text{a}t\text{h}a\text{h}
\)

7. \(^{ra}\_ma^\)

\(\text{मोक्षोपवार्गघर्षणम्} -
\(m\text{o}k\text{s}o\text{pav\text{a}varg\text{a}v\text{a}gh\text{a}r\text{a}n\text{a}m - \text{AK 290}
\)

\(\text{जनार्दनो राजीवकः} -
\(j\text{a}n\text{a}r\text{d}a\text{n}a\text{o} r\text{a}j\text{i}v\text{ā}k\text{a}h
\)

8. \(^{ya}\_ra^\)

\(\text{कपातो व्याजदम्मो} -
\(k\text{a}p\text{a}t\text{a} o s\text{t}\text{r}i v\text{y}a\text{j}a\text{d}a\text{m}b\text{h}o - \text{AK 421}
\)

\(\text{शाल्पध्न्या मानिवः} -
\(s\text{ā}l\text{̣}p\text{a}d\text{h\text{v}a m\text{ā}n\text{iv}a\text{ḥ}
\)
9. ^ma_ra^  
बहिष्कृष्णा कृष्णवर्त्माः -  
brahiśṣūsimā kṛṣṇavartma - AK 207  
गदापानिर मनिवासः  
gadāpānir mānivāsaḥ  

10. ^ra_ra^  
ऐरवतः पुंडरीकः -  
aṅravatāḥ puṇḍariṇī - AK 151  
जनार्दनो मनिवासः  
janārḍano mānivāsaḥ  

11. ^ya_bha^  
प्रशस्वो गंधवहो -  
pṛṣadaśvo gandhavaho - AK 123
शार्िधन्ना मानितमः
śāṅgadhanvā mānilayaḥ

12. ^ma_bha^

मध्यावहिंस्तिपति -
mithyādṛśtrī nāstikatā - AK 284

गदापानिर मानिलयाḥ:

13. ^ra_bha^

क्षेत्रः आत्मसः पुनः -
ksetrajña ātmā puruṣā - AK 272

ज्ञानदो मानितमः:
janārdano mānilayaḥ

14. ^ya_na^

धर्मराजः पितृपति -
dharmarājhaḥ pitṛpatih - AK 115

शार्िधन्ना मधुरिपुः
śāṅgadhanvā madhuripuḥ

15. ^ma_na^

नब्धस्वद वातपवन -
nabhasvad vātapavana - AK 125

गदापानिर मधुरिपुः
gadāpānir madhuripuḥ

16. ^ra_na^

समीण्यासतमसः -
samīramārutasamur - AK 124

ज्ञानदो 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 (vrūbhāṅga). 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:

चतुर्थतः तं एव स्वतः आश्रयन्नतरा युजी
chaturthāt tu ja eva syāt ādyān na nasarā yuji
अवज्ञस्वत्ततमस्वरचेत्य नसी नामादनुष्ठिभि
ayujyadhyuttaram yaścet nasau nādyādanuṣṭubhi
अपयोरिषेति एवाधान्ते तो नोन्यस्वयंति वदि
abdhermaścet ra cvādyāt ro bho no bhṛyuttaram yadi
अवज्ञार्थाद्यतामो यमेव भवेत् सदा
ayujyādyādanyatamo yamareṣu bhavet sadā
anúṣṭubhiyujī (dvitiyacaturthapāde) ādyād (aṅkarāt ārdhvam) nasarā (na gaṇa 
sa gaṇa ra gaṇāḥ) na (syuh) chaturthāt (aṅkarāt ārdhvam) ja (gaṇa) eko svat. 
ayujī (prathamatṛtiyāpāde) abdhyuttaram (caturthāt aṅkarāt ārdhvam) ya gaṇaścet ādyāt 
(aṅkarādārdhvam) nasau nagaṇasagaṇau na (syatām) ayujī (prathamatṛtiyāpāde) 
abdoḥ (caturthāt aṅkarāt ārdhvam) ma gaṇaścet ādyāt (aṅkarādārdhvam) ra (gaṇa) 
eko svat abdhyuttaram (caturthāt aṅkarāt ārdhvam) ragano bhagano nagaṇaścet 
ādyāt (aṅkarādārdhvam) ya gaṇa ma gaṇa ra gaṇeśvanyatamah sadā bhavet.

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In anúṣṭup in the even pādas after the first aṅka ‘na, sa, ra’ ganaś are 
forbidden, after the 4th aṅka only ja gaṇa is allowed. In the odd pādas after the 4th 
aṅka if ‘ya’ gana is used, after the first aṅka ‘na and sa’ ganaś are not allowed (6 
combinations); if after the 4th aṅka ‘ma’ gaṇa is used after the first aṅka only 
‘ra’ gana is permissible (1 combination); if after the 4th aṅka ra, bha or na gana is 
used, after the first aṅka ‘ya, ma or ra’ gana 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:

matallikā macaricā prakāndamuddhatalajau 268
praṣastavacakānyamunyah śubhavaho vidhī 269
pramāpanām nibarhanām nikāranām vicāranam 1692
pravāsanām parāsanām niśūdanām niḥīmsanam 1693
The above two verses are not really anuṣṭup although they have 8 ākṣaras to a pāda. They follow a gaṇa-based metre pramāṇikā defined by

pramāṇikā jarau laugau

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 ākṣara! The first occurs as the first half of the last śloka of a kāṇḍa in AK.

इत्यारसिंहकृती नामलिङ्गानुसारे।
^na_bha^

iiy amarasimhakṛtau nāmaṃśānuśāsane

खनति तेन राश्र्वः.
^sa_ya^

khanati tene tadvadhā · AK 1835
The following instances of lapses are taken from the *vṛtti* on Pīṇgalā's *Chadāḥśāstra*. They are in fact quoted by the learned *vṛttikāra* as examples of use of various *gaṇas* in *anuśūp*.

^*ma_ta*
κन्दे देवं सोमेश्वरं जटामुकुटमण्डितम् ।
*vande devam someśvaram jaṭāmukūṭamaṇḍitam*
^*bha_ta*
खट्राप्पर चन्द्रमःशिखरमणिविभुषितम् ॥
*khaṭvāṅгадहराम candraḥṣikhāmanivibhūṣitam*
^*ra_ta*
κन्दे कविः श्रीमहावि लोकसत्तमचिद्रम् ।
*vande kavim śrībhāravim lokasantamasaṃcchidam*
^*bha_ta*
लोकव्यवहारं प्रति सर्वो चलपरिवः ॥
*lokaṃvyahāram prati sadṛṣau bālapaṇḍitau*
^*va_sa*
सशिष्यांसिनि कामे का चिन्ता मरणे रगे ॥
*kṣaṇavidhvarmsini kāye kā cintā maraṇe raṅe*
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 vr̥tta is something, which is as yet unexplored. It may be that it is a matter of simply getting accustomed to a particular sequence of ganas 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 aksara of an anuṣṭup, which could be either laghu or guru, the remaining six aksaras in an odd pāda have to be one of the specified sixteen combinations of two permitted ganas. In an even pāda after the first aksara ‘ya, ma, ta, ja, bha’ gana is to be used followed by ‘ja’ gana.

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There are very many treatises on chandas other than Pingala’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 vr̥ttas 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 vr̥tta, is a matter yet to be explored.
References:

1. *Chandahśāstram* of Piṅgala: Kāvyamālā series of Niranayasagar Press

Notes:

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