

CHAPTER 2

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SUMMARY

2. LITERARY RESEARCH ON *CHANDAS*

2.1 REVIEW OF ANCIENT LITERATURE

2.1.1 *Chandas* according to Ancient Sanskrit texts

Since ancient times in India, our sadhus and poets have been consciously using language with words, sounds and rhythms in a way that it can express the higher truth making Sanskrit such a profound language that it is. One of the most crucial tools for perfection in language and poetry is *chandas* or metre, derived from the word ‘*chad*’ which literally means delight. There is no poetry without *chandas* in Sanskrit language. Hence, thorough knowledge of *chandas* is necessary to understand and appreciate any poetic composition in Sanskrit.

The study of *Chandas* (metres) has a long tradition as an important branch of *Vedic* learning. Pingala, believed to have lived in the 2nd century BC, is credited with the authorship of *Chandaśāstra*– a treatise on the systematic study of the metre in Sanskrit language, and this is probably the first work written on prosody. The *Chandaśāstra* is considered as one of the six *Vedāṅga*’s or limbs of the *Vedās*. In the later centuries came the commentaries of his work by scholars such as Kedārbhatta (8th century) and Halayudha (13th century). Acharya Hemacandra in the 12th century contributed to the study of metres as well, though his classification criteria differed from that of Pingala’s work. Some of the other major Sanskrit texts dealing with prosody or metrics passed down over the centuries ṛgveda’s - *pratiśakhyā*, Kātyayanā’s – *anukramāni* (which are related to the Sāmavedā.), Bharatā’s - *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Kālidāsa’s - *Srutabodha* (2nd

century), Kśemendra's – *Suvrttilaka* (11th century), *Chandomanjari* of Gangādāsa (12th century) (Mishra, 2011).

Acharya Durga writes in his commentary on Nirukta (7.2) of yakśacaryā: “*nā chāndosi vagucariti*”, meaning No speech takes place without *Chanda*. The same point is further elaborated by Acharya Bharata who says in his Nāṭyaśāstra (14.15): “*chandohino nā śabdosti nā Chandah śabdo varjitam*”, which means No speech is possible without *Chanda* and a *Chanda* without speech is also equally impossible. Thus, we understand that *Chanda* is as important as speech. But what exactly is *Chanda*? Rigveda (1.164.24) says- “*akśarena mimate saptavanih*”, meaning, all the seven *Chandas* are measured by syllables. Kātyayanā defines *Chanda* in his Rksarvānukramāni as- “*yad akśara parimānām tat Chandah*” which means, *Chandas* are measurement of syllables. Sri Aurobindo adds more clarity to the above statement of Kātyayanā by saying that *Chandas* are “a fixed and balanced system of measures of sound, mantra...” it is the “ordered measures of the poetic spirit” and it is the “right physical basis for the poetic movement”.

Poet Dandi, in his kāvyādarśa says that “the lore of *chandas* is the boat for those who desire to cross the deep ocean of poetry”

सा विद्या नौस्तित्तीर्षुणां गम्भीरं काव्यसागरम् ।

sā vidyā naustitīrṣuṇām gambhīraṁ kāvyasāgaram |

- *Agnipurāna, Ch 337, verse 23*

To express any emotion, feeling, desire or event, a *chandah* must be chosen very carefully as each metre has its own mood and rhythm.

Kśemendra, in his *suvrattatilaka*, says that, while choosing a metre, one has to carefully observe the *rasa*, the mood, the nature of description and the content.

काव्ये रसानुसारेण वर्णनानुगुणेन च ।

कुर्वीत सर्ववृत्तानां विनियोगं विभागवित् ॥

kāvye rasānusāreṇa varṇanānuguṇeṇa ca

kurvīta sarvavṛtānām viniyogaṃ vibhāgavit ॥

- *Suvrattatilaka* by Khemendra

In all Indian languages, especially in Sanskrit, the metre is determined by arrangement of long and short syllables. Thus, a large number of possible combinations have given rise to huge variety of *chandah*. Quite often the name of a *chandah* describes its nature or movement like ‘mandakrānta’ which means ‘slow moving’. Most of its syllables are long and heavy and is hence used to express sadness. Kālidāsa has used this *chandah* very beautifully in his composition ‘meghadūtam’ where the lovelorn yaksha asks the cloud to be his messenger to his beloved.

श्यामास्वाङ्गं चकितहरिणीप्रेक्षणे दृष्टिपात

वक्रच्छायां शशिनि शिखिनां बर्हभारेषु केशान् ।

उत्पश्यामि प्रतनुषु नदीवीचिषु भ्रुविलासान

॒हन्तैकस्मिन् क्वचिदपि न ते चण्डि सादृश्यमस्ति ॥

śyāmāsvāṅgam cakitahariṇīprekṣaṇe dṛṣṭipātām

vaktracchāyām śasini śikhinām barhabhāreṣu keśān|

utpaśyāmi pratanuṣu nadīvīciṣu

bhruvilāsān hantaikasmin kvacidapi na te caṇḍi sādṛśyamasti ||

- Meghadutam, verse 105

I fancy to see your body in the priyangū creepers, your glances in the eyes of the bewildered female deer, the beauty of your face in the moon, your hair in the plumages of the peacocks and the sportive movements of your eyebrows in the river. But, O misfortune! Nowhere is a single thing. O passionate one, does your likeness exist.

Similarly, ‘tvaritagatī’ means ‘fast gait’ and contains many short syllables. Here is a description of gopi’s meeting with Krishna. This verse is from gangādāsa’s Chandomanjari.

त्वरित्वातिर्व्रजयुवतिस्तरणिसुता विपिनगता ।

मुररिपुणा रतिगुरुणा सहमिलिता प्रमदमिता ॥

tvaritgatirorajayuvatistarāṇisutā vipinagatā|

muraripuṇā ratiguruṇā sahamilitā pramadamitā||

- Chandomanjari, Ch. 2, verse 32

The maiden of vajrapurā, while wandering in the forest near the fast-flowing river Yamuna, become happy meeting Krishna, the master of the art of love.

Druta vilambita means 'fast and slow'. This metre begins with short syllables at a fast pace and then adopts a slow and tardy rhythm involving long syllables. Bhartihari has used this metre in the following verse of his 'Nītiśatakam'.

विपदि धैर्यमतभ्युदये क्षमा

सदसि वाक्पटुता युधि विक्रमः ।

यशसि चाभिरुचिर्व्यसनं श्रुतौ

प्रक्रितिसिद्धमिदं हि महात्मनाम् ॥

vipadi dhāiryamatabhyudaye kṣamā

sadasi vākpaṭutā yudhi vikramaḥ |

yaśasi cābhirucirovyasanam śrutau

prakritisidhdamidam hi mahātmanām | |

- Nitishatakam, verse 63

Eloquence in the assembly, in the field

The puissant arm, the lion's heart the proud look

Unshaken in defeat; but modest-kind

Mercy when victory crowns; passionate for books

High love of learning; thoughts of fame inclined: -

These things are natural to the noble mind.

At times the names of the *chandas* are derived from the nature. For example- 'bhujangaprayatā' is named after the serpent which has a zig-zag movement.

Shankaracharya has written his Bhavanyaśatakam in this metre.

न तातो न माता न बन्धुर्न दाता

न पुत्रो न पुत्री न भृत्यो न भर्ता ।

न जाया न विद्या न वृतिर्ममैव

गतिस्त्वम् गतिस्त्वम् त्वमेका भवानि ॥

na tāto na mātā na bandhurna dātā

na putro na putrī na bhṛtyoo na bhartā|

na jāyā na vidyā na vṛtirmamaiiva

gativvam gativvam tvamekā bhavāni||

- *Bhavanyashtakam, verse 1*

Neither father, nor mother, nor friend nor giver, nor son, nor daughter, nor servant nor master, nor wife, nor learning nor occupation have I. You alone, O Bhavāni, are my refuge.

Śardulavriditā means ‘the play of the tiger’ and is a typical representation of the leap of a tiger. There is first a long leap followed by a break, provided by the caesura after the 12th syllable and then a short leap.

रे रे चातक सावधानमनसा मित्र क्षणं श्रूयताम्

अम्भोदा बहवो हि सन्ति गगने सर्वे तु नैतादृशाः ।

केचिद् वृष्टिभिरार्द्रयन्ति वसुधाम् गर्जन्ति केचिद् वृथा

यं यं पश्यसि तस्य तस्य पुरतो मा ब्रूहि दीनं वचः ॥

re re cātaka sāvadhānamanasā mitra kṣaṇam śrūyatām

ambhodā bahavo hi santi gagane sarve tu naitādṛśāḥ।

kecid vṛṣṭibhirārdrayanti vasudhām garjanti kecid vṛthā

yam yam paśyasi tasya tasya puratoo mā brūhi dīnam vacaḥ।।

- Nitishatakam, verse 51

O rain lark, rain lark, flitting near the cloud,

Attentive hear, winged friend, a friendly word

All vapours are not like, the heavens that surround darkening;

Some drench the earth for noble fruits,

Some are vain thunderers, wandering by with bruit:

Sue not to each thou seest then; O bird;

If humbly entreat thou must, let few have heard.

Though these are some interesting insights into Sanskrit metres, there is no hard and fast rule. The same *chandaḥ* is often used to depict different moods and different *chandas* can express the same mood. It all depends on the inspiration and the mastery of the poet.

Here are some more Grantha on Chandaśāstra from the Vedicperiod

Chandasūtram – Acārya Pingalā

Chandonukramaṇi – Venkat Mādhavā

Chandonuśāsanam– Hemacandrā

Chandaḥ kośa – Ratna Śekhara

Chandaśekharaḥ – Rājaśekharacārya

Chandomanjarī – Śrī Gangādāsa

Chandaḥ kaustubham – Rādhā Dāmodara

Chandahassandohah – Dineścandra Dutt

A metre is generally regulated by several elements such as, the number of metrical lines, number of syllables and their arrangement or the number of syllabic instants, the arrangement of pauses etc. In the case of Sanskrit *chandas* or metres, it is seen that the main principle governing the metres of the Vedas is instrument by number of syllables. This was also extended to the classical Sanskrit metres. However, they differ in many cases from those of Vedic metres where it is the number of syllables that matters. But in classical Sanskrit metres, the arrangement of syllables by short and long, plays an important role. In Vedic Sanskrit it is not necessary that all gayatri

chandas should have the same arrangement of syllables, but the number of syllables should be same in all quarters.

2.1.2. Classification of *Chandas* according to various ancient texts:

In classical Sanskrit the metres regulated by number of syllables (*akṣaravratas*) are divided into three categories such as *samavratas* or meters having same number of syllables in each line with same arrangement; *ardhasamavratas* or meters where each alternative line has same arrangement of sounds; *visamavratas* or metres having uneven stanzas with different arrangements. Based on arrangement of syllables, one particular metre differs from another. Thus, we have a large variety of metres. In case of the above metres, if any quarter of a metre has one or two syllables less or more than the prescribed number then the metre is considered to be defective. This is called *chandobhangā* (break the rule of the metre) which is not permitted by prosodians. But in the case of Vedic metres, absence or excess of one or two syllables in a quarter of any *chanda* is neither considered to be a defect nor by that, does a *chandas* change into another. So, the *Aitareyabrāhmaṇa* (1.6) says *nā vā ekākṣarena chandāmsi viyanti nā dvabhyam* *kausitakibrāhmaṇa* (27.1) adds, *nā hyekakṣarena anyacahhanda bhavati na dvabhyām*. But to recognise the place where more or less, *chandas* occur, the Vedic prosodians used some terms before the name of the *chanda*. For example: in *gayatri* metre, if one syllable is less in a quarter then it is called *nicrd gāyatri* metre, if two syllables are less, then it is called *virāt gāyatri*; if one syllable is more, then it is called *bhurikgayatri*, if two syllables are more, then it is called *syāratgayatri*. So is the case with other metres aswell. The

Vedic prosodions have also prescribed how to fill the metres by means of vyūha (which ordinarily means breaking sandhi in case of yā and vā). For example: the first line of famous gayatri mantra – ‘tat savitur varenyam’ has one syllable less. So, to fill it, one can break ya in varenyam into *I* and *a* or *I* and *ya* and instead of varenyam, one can chant vareni-amor vareni-yam. These are some cases where Vedic metres are more flexible than those of classical ones.

Apart from the akśaravratā, the classical Sanskrit has also another metre called jātivratā or matravratā which is absent in Vedic literature. Here the metre is regulated not by the number of syllables but by the syllabic instants or mantra. Arya and vaitaliyā are considered to be the two main varieties of matravratā. This in short is a brief outline of the Sanskrit metres, both Vedic and classical.

Now one might have questions like – why do we need metres? Are they natural or artificial? Other than physical composition, do they have a great significance? What do different *chandas* stand for? Sri Aurobindo has provided deep insights into the significance of *chandas*, covering all the above questions.

2.1.3 Texts on *chandas*

The system of metrics has a long tradition as an important branch of Vedic learning. The text that deals with the rules of metrics is called *Chandaśāstra* and is one of the six Vedāngas or limbs of the Vedās. Pāninī, an eminent grammarian and rishi, mentioned *Chanda* as the two legs of the Vedas.

The *Chandaśāstra* is said to be the first systematic treatise on *Chandas*. It was written in about 150 B.C. by Pingalācārya. According to the ‘History of Indian Literature’

the *sāṅkhyayana śrautasutra* contains several chapters on prosody, Other Sanskrit texts dealing with prosody or metrics are ṛgveda's - pratiśakhyā, Kātyayanā's - *anukramāni* and *Nidānasutrā* related to Sāmavedā. Apart from these, chapter 14,15 and 32 of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* and chapters 328-335 of Agnipurāna also deal with the metrics. Some later works on metrics are quite prominent are- *Srutabodha* of Kālidasa (2nd cent. A.D.), *Suṃrttilaka* of Kśemendra (11th cent. A.D.), *Chandomanjari* of Gangādāsa (12th cent, A.D.) and *Vṛttaratnakāra* of Kedārabhattā (15th cent. A.D.).

Some minor work on metric system or *Chandas* are as follows: *Chandakaustuba* of Rādhādāmodara and Baladeva vidyābhūśana (19th cent. A.D.), *Chandonuśana* of Jayākritī (10th cent. A.D.), *Chandaśekhara* of Rājaśekhara (11th cent. B.C.), *Chandonuśasana* of Hemacandra (12th Cent. A.D.), *Chandovicati* of Janāśrayī (9th cent. A.D.), *Svayambhucandah* of Svayambhu (9th cent. A.D.), *Vānibhūśana* of Dāmodara Miśra (15th cent. A.D.), *Vṛttaratnāvali* of Venkateśa (16th cent. A.D.), *Vṛttajātisucaya* of Virahanka (10th cent. A.D.), *Vṛttamauktika* of Candraśekhara (17th cent. A.D.).

2.1.4 Use of *Chandas* in our ancient texts:

Gāyatriuśniganuśtubruhatipankhtitriśtubjagatyāi atharvaveda (19.21.1)

Rigveda says that there are seven major *Chandas* used in Vedas by the Rishis. They are: *Gayatri* (24 syllables), *Uśnik* (28 syllables), *Anuśthup* (32 syllables), *Bruhati* (36 syllables), *Pankhti* (40 syllables), *Triśthup* (44 syllables), *Jagati* (48 syllables)

Apart from these we have seven more *Chandas* used in the Vedas. They are: *Atijagati* (52 syllables), *Sakvāri*(56 syllables), *Atisakvāri*(60 syllables), *Astih* (64 syllables), *Atyastih*(68 syllables), *Dhritih*(72 syllables), *Atidhritih* (76 syllables).

Maharshi Valmiki has used 16 different *Chandas* in the Ramayana. They are: *Anuśthup*, *Indravajra*, *Upendravajra*, *Vamśastāh*, *Indravamsa*, *Vaiśvadevi*, *Praharśini*, *Rucira*, *Vasantatilakam*, *Puśpitagra*, *Apāravaktram*, *Sundari*, *Aupacandasikam*, *Bhujangaprayatam*, *Upajāti* and *Mālini*.

Maharshi Vyasa in his Mahabharata has used 18 types of *Chandas*. They are: *Anuśthup*, *Indravajra*, *Upendravajra*, *ratoddhāta*, *Shalini*, *Vamśastah*, *Indravamsa*, *Dhruvilambitam*, *Praharśini*, *Rucira*, *Vasantatilakam*, *Mālini*, *pancacāmaram*, *Śārdulavikriditam*, *Puśpitagra*, *Apāravaktram*, *Pramāṇika*.

2.1.5 Popular Sanskrit *Chandas*

Chandah with 8 syllables-

Anuśthup: Also called the shloka, this is the most widely used metre in Sanskrit language. The greater part of the Mahabharata, Ramayana and Puranas are written in this metre. It allows great freedom in the use of long and short syllables. However, in its usual form, the fifth syllable of each pada should be short, the sixth long and the alternatively long and short.

Definition:

पञ्चमं लघु सर्वत्र सप्तं द्विचतुर्थयोः ।

गुरु षष्ठं च जानियात् शेषेष्वनियमोमतः ॥

Pancamañ laghu sarvatra saptam dvicaturthayoḥ|

guru ṣaṣṭham ca jāniyāt śeṣeṣvaniyamomataḥ||

Chandomanjari, Ch 4, verse 258

Example:

1. लोकानां त्वं परो धर्मः पुरुषः पुरुषोत्तमः ।

शरण्यम् शरणम् च त्वाम् आहुर्दिव्या महर्षयः ॥

Lokānām tvam paro dharmah puruṣaḥ puruṣottamaḥ|

śaraṇyam śaraṇam ca tvām āhurdivyā maharṣayah||

- Ramayana of Valmiki, V, CXIC,14

2. यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णः यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।

तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिः ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम् ॥

yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇaḥ yatra pārtho dhanurdharaḥ|

tatra śrīrviṇjayo bhūtiḥ dhruvā nītirmatirmam||

- Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Ch 18, verse 78

Chandas with 11 syllables-

(Indravajra, Upendravajra, upajātiḥ śālinī ratoddhatā)

Indravajra: Each pada of this metre contains eleven syllables. Here the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 8th, 10th and 11th syllables of each pada are long and the others short. There should be a pause after the 5th and last syllable of each pada.

Definition:

स्यादिन्द्रवज्रा यदि तौ जगौ गः

syādinḍravajrā yadi tau jagau gaḥ

- *Chandomanjari, Ch 2, verse 41.*

Example:

1. लिलाकरग्रे ध्रुतपवतेन्द्रमिन्म् इन्द्रं महावृष्टमदं जयन्तम् ।

गोपीभुजैर्लालितपादपदं बालम् मुकुन्दम् मनसा स्मरामि ॥

Lilākaragre dhrutaparvatendraminm indraṁ mahāvṛṣṭmadam jayantam |

gopībhujaīrlālitapādapadam bālam mukundam manasā smarāmi ||

- *Bālamukundāṣṭakam, 8*

2. त्वम् वैष्णवी शक्तिरनतवीर्या विश्वस्य वीजं परमाऽसि माया ।

सम्मोहितं देवि समस्तमेतत् त्वम् वै प्रसन्ना भुवि मुक्तिहेतुः ॥

Tvam vaiṣṇavī śaktiranataavīryā viśvasya vījaṁ paramā'si māyā |

sammohitaṁ devi samastametat tvam vai prasannā bhuvi muktihetuḥ ||

- *Devimahātmyam, Ch 11, verse 4*

Chandas with 12 syllables:

(*Totakam, Vamsathavilam, Bhujangaprayatam*)

Totakam: This metre contains 12 syllables in each pada. The 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 10th and 11th syllables of each pada of this metre are short and the others long. There should be a pause after the 4th, 8th and last syllable of each pada.

Definition:

वद तोतकम्बिधसकारयुतम्

vada totakambdhisakārayutam

- *Chandomanjari, Ch 2, verse 79*

Example:

1. अधरं मधुरं वदनं मधुरंनयनं मधुरं हसितं मधुरं ।

हृदयम् मधुरं मधुराधिपतेरखिलं मधुर ॥

adharaṁ madhuraṁ vadaṇaṁ madhuraṁ

nayanāṁ madhuraṁhasitaṁ madhuraṁ |

hradayam madhuraṁ gamanaṁ madhuraṁ

madhuradhipaterakhilaṁ madhuram ||

-*Madhurāṣṭakam of Vallabhācārya, 1*

2. प्रणमामि नमामि भवम्भवजन्मकृतिप्रणिषूदनकम् ।

गुनुहीनमनन्तमितं शरणंजनतारण तारय तापितकम् ॥

praṇamāmi namāmi bhavambhavajanmakṛtipraṇiṣūdanakam |

gunuhīnamanantamitarī śaraṇaṁjanatāraṇa tāraya tāpitakam||

-Parameśvara-stuti, Stotraratanavali. P.20

Chandah with 13 syllables

Praharśini: There are thirteen syllables in each pada of this metre. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 8th, 10th, 12th and 13th syllables of each pada of this metre are long and others short. There should be a pause after the 3rd and last syllables of each pada.

Definition:

त्र्याशाभिर्मनजरगा प्रहर्षिणीयम्

Tryāśābhirmanajaragā praharṣiṇīyam

- *Chandomanjari, Ch 2, verse 95*

Example:

1. अश्रान्तस्मितमरुणारुणाधरोष्ठहर्षार्द्रिर्द्विगुणमनोज्ञवेणुगीतम् ।

विभ्राम्यद्विपुलविलोचनार्धमुग्धंवीक्षिष्ये तव वदनाम्बुजं कदा नु ॥

*Aśrāntasmitamaruṇāruṇādharoṣṭhamharṣārdrardvigūṇamanojñaveṇu
gītam |*

vibhrāmyadvipulavilocanārdhamugdham

vīkṣiṣye tava vadanāmbujam kadā nu||

-Kṛśnakarnamṛtam of Lilāsuka, Ch 1, verse 44

2. स्वच्छन्दं दलदरविन्द ते मरम्दंविन्दतो विदधतु गुञ्जितं मिलिन्दाः ।

आमोदानथ हरिदन्तराणि नेतुनैवान्यो जगति समीर्णात्प्रवीणः ॥

*Svachandam daladaravinda te maramdamvindato vidadhatu guñajitam
milindāḥ|*

āmodānatha haridantarāṇi netunnaivānyo jagati samīrṇāṭpravīṇaḥ||

- *Bhāminivilāsā of Jagannātha, Ch 1, verse 14*

Chandah with fourteen syllables

Vasantatilakam: This metre contains fourteen syllables in each pada. Here the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 8th, 11th, 13th and 14th syllables are long and others are short. There should be a pause after the 8th and last syllable of each pada.

Definition:

ज्ञेयं वसन्ततिलकं तभजा जगौ गः

jñeyam vasantatilakam tabhajā jagau gaḥ

- *Chandomanjari, Ch 2, verse 112*

1. योऽन्तः प्रविश्य मम वाचमिमां प्रसुप्तांसजजीवयत्यखिलशक्तिधरः स्वधान्मा ।

अन्यांश्च हस्तचरणश्रवणत्वगादिन्प्राणान्नमो भगवते पुरुषाय तुभ्यम् ॥

*yo'ntaḥ praviśya mama vācamimāṃ prasuptāṃsañajīvayatyakhilāśaktidharaḥ
svadhānmā|*

anyāmsca hastacaraṇaśravaṇatvagādin

prāṇānnamo bhagavate puruṣāya tubhyam ॥

- Śrīmadbhāgavatam, skanda4, adhyaya9, shloka6

2. गङ्गातरगरमणीयजटाकलापंगौरिनिरन्तरविभूषितवामभागं

नारायणप्रियमनङ्गमदापारं वाराणसीपुरपतिं भज विक्ष्वनाथं ॥

gaṅgātaragaramaṇīyajaṭākalaṅgaaurinirantaravibhūṣitavāmabhāgam

nārāyaṇapriyamanaṅgamadāpāraṁ

vārāṇasīpurapatim bhaja vikṣvanātham

-Viśvanathaśatakam of Vyāsadeva, 1

Chandah with 15 Syllables

(Mālini & Tunakam)

Malini: This metre has fifteen syllables in each pada. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 10th and 13th syllables of each pada of this metre are short and the others long. There should be a pause after the 8th and last syllables of each pada.

Definition:

ननमयययुतेयं मलिनी भोगिलोकैः

nanamayayayuteyam malinī bhogilokaiḥ

- Chandomanjari, Ch2, Verse 134

Example:

1. वटविटपिसमीपे भूमिभागे निषण्णंसकलमुनिजनानां ज्ञानदातारमारात्

त्रिभुवनमुरुमीशं दक्षिनामूर्तिदेवजननमरणदुःखचेददक्षं नमामि ॥

vaṭaviṭapisamīpe bhūmibhāge niṣaṇṇaṃ

sakalamunijanānāṃ jñānadātāramārāt

tribhuvanamurumīśaṃ dakṣiṇāmūrtidevaṃ

jananamaraṇadukhacedadakṣaṃ namāmi

-*Dakṣiṇamurtistotram of Śankarācārya, 2*

2. जयतु जयतु देवो देवकिनन्दनोयंजयतु जयतु कृष्ण त्रिष्णवंशप्रदिपं

जयतु जयतु मेघश्यामलः कोमलान्गोजयतुजयतु पृथ्वीभारनाशो मुकुन्दः ॥

jayatu jayatu devo devakinandanoyaṃ

jayatu jayatu kṛṣṇa trīṣṇivaṃśapradipaṃ

jayatu jayatu meghaśyāmalah komalāngo

jayatujayatu pṛthvībhāranāśo mukundaḥ

- *Rāmcaritmānasa of Tulsīdāsa, 5th Canto*

Chandah with 16 syllables

Pancacāmaram: Two padas of pramaṇika metre put together would form one pada of this metre. So, this metre contains sixteen syllables in each pada and the arrangement of syllabic groups in each pada and the arrangement of syllabic groups in each pada of this metre is: *jara la ga jara la ga*. Here the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th and 15th syllables of each pada are short and the others long. There should be a pause after the 4th, 8th, 12th and the last syllables of each pada.

Definition:

प्रमाणिकापदद्वयं वदन्ति पञ्चामरम्

pramāṇikāpadadvayaṁ vadanti pañcāmaram

- *Chandomanjari, Ch 2, Verse 151*

Examples:

1. नमामि भक्तवत्सलम् कृपालुशीलकोमलं भजामि ते पदाम्बुजम् ह्यकामिनाम् स्वधामदं

तदेकमद्भुतम् प्रभुम् निर्हम्वरम् विभुंजगद्गुरुं च शश्वतं तुरीयमेककेवलं

Namāmi bhaktavatsalam krpāluśīlakomalam

bhajāmi te padāmbujam hyakāminām svadhāmadam

tadekamadbhutam prabhum nirhamvaram vibhum

jagadguruṁ ca śaśvatam turīyamekakevalam

-*Rāmcaritmānasa of Tulsīdāsa, Ch 3, Verse 1*

2. कदा निलिम्पनिर्झर्निकुञ्जकोटरे वसनविमुक्तदुर्मतिः सदा स्थिरःस्थमञ्जलिं वहन

विलोललोललोचनो ललामभाललग्नकःशीवेति मन्त्रमुच्चरन् कदा सुखी भवाम्यहं ॥

kadā nilimpanirjharnikunjakoṭare vasana

vimuktadurmatih sadā sthiraḥsthamañjalim vahana

vilolalolocano lalāmbhālalagnakaḥ

śīveti mantramuccaran kadā sukhī bhavāmyaham

-Śivatāndavastotram of Rāvana, verse13

Chandah with seventeen syllables

(Śikharini, Pruthvi ,Mandakrānta)

Śikharini: This metre contains seventeen syllables in each pada. The 1st, 7th, 8th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 14th, 15th and 16th syllables of each pada of this metre are short and the others long. There should be a pause after the 6th and last syllables of each pada.

Definition:

रसै रुद्रैक्षिञ्चना यमनसभला गः शिखरिणी

rasai rudraikṣcinnā yamanasabhalā gaḥ śikharinī

- Chandomanjari, Ch 2, Verse 161

Example

1. हर त्वं संसारं द्रुततरमसरं सुरपतेहर त्वं पापानां विततिमपरं यादवपते

अहो दीनेनाथे निहितमचलं निक्षिचतपदंजगद्ग्रथस्विम नयनपथगिम भवतु मे ॥

hara tvaṁ saṁsāraṁ drutataramasaraṁ surapate

hara tvaṁ pāpānāṁ vitatimaparaṁ yādavapate

aho dīnenāthe nihitamacalaṁ nikṣcitapadaṁ

jagannthasvami nayanapathagmi bhavatu me

- *Jagannathāṣṭakam of śaṅkarācārya, 8*

2. कदा वा कालिन्दीकुवलयदलश्यामलतराः

कताक्षा लक्ष्यन्ते किमपि करुणावीचिनिचितः

कदा वा कन्दर्पप्रतिभटजटाचन्द्रशिशिराः

कमप्यन्तस्तोषं ददति मुरलीकेलिनिनदाः

kadā vā kālindīkuvalayadalaśyāmalatarāḥ

katākṣā lakṣyante kimapi karuṇāvīcinicitaḥ

kadā vā kandarpapratibhaṭajataçācandraśīśirāḥ

kamapyantastoṣaṁ dadati muralīkelininadāḥ

- *Krśṇakaranāmrutam of lilāsukā, Ch 1, Verse 26*

Chandah with nineteen syllables

Śārdulvikrīditam: This metre contains 19 syllables in each pada. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 8th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 16th, 17th and 19th syllables of each pada of this metre are long and the others short. There should be a pause after the 12th and last syllable of each pada.

Definition:

सूर्याश्वैर्मसजस्तताः सगुरवः शार्दूलविक्रीडितम्

sūryāśvairmasajastatāḥ saguravaḥ śārdūlavikrīḍitam

- Chandomanjari, Ch 2, Verse 196

Example:

1. हे गोपालक हे कृपाजलनिधे हे सिन्धुकन्यापते

हे कंसान्तक हे गजेन्द्रकरुणापारीण हे माधव

हे रामानुज हे जगत्त्रयगुरो हे पुन्दर्काक्षा मां

हे गोपीजननाथ पालय परं जानामि न त्वं विना

He gopālaka he krpājalanidhe he sindhukanyāpate

he kamsāntaka he gajendrakaruṇāpārīṇa he mādhave

he rāmānuja he jagattrayaguro he pundarkākṣā māṁ

he gopījananātha pālaya paraṁ jānāmi na tvam vinā

- Mukundamālā of Kulaśekhara, 22

2. कस्तूरीतिलकं ललाटपटले वक्षःस्थले कौस्तुभम्

नासाग्रे वरमौक्तिकं करतले वेणुं करे कङ्कणं

सर्वाङ्गो हरिचन्दनं च कलयन् कण्ठे च मुक्तावली

गोपस्त्रीपरिवेष्टितो विजयते गोपालचूडामणिः

*kastūrītilakam lalāṭapaṭale vakṣaḥsthale kaustubham
nāsāgre varamauktikam karatale veṇum kare kaṅkaṇam
sarvāṅge haricandanam ca kalayan kaṅṭhe ca muktāvalī
gopastripariveṣṭito vijayate gopālacūdāmaṇiḥ*

- *Krśnakaranamrutam of Lilāsukā, Ch 2, Verse 108*

Chandah with twenty-one syllables

Śragdhārā: This metre contains twenty-one syllables in each pada. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 14th, 15th, 17th, 18th, 20th and 21st syllables of each pada of this metre are long and others short. There should be a pause after the 7th, 14th and 21st syllables of each pada.

Definition:

म्रभ्रैर्यानां त्रयेण त्रिमुनियतियुता स्त्रग्धरा कीतितेयम्

Mrabhairyānām trayeṇa trimuniyatiyutā stragdhara kītiteyam

- *Chandomanjari, Ch 2, Verse 210*

Examples

1. रामं कामारिसेव्य भवभयहरणं कालमत्तेभसिंह

योगिन्द्रं ज्ञानगम्यं गुणनिधिमजितं निर्गुणं निर्विकारम्

मायातीतं सुरेशं खलवधनिरतं ब्रह्मब्रन्दैकदेवं

वन्दे कन्दावदातं सरसिजनयनं देवमुर्वीशरूपं

*rāmam kāmārisevya bhavabhayaharaṇam kālamattebhasinḥa
yogindram jñānagamyaṁ guṇanidhimajitaṁ nirguṇam nirvikāram
māyātītaṁ sureśam khalavadhanirataṁ brahmavrndaikadevaṁ
vande kandāvadātaṁ sarasijanayanaṁ devamurvīśarūpaṁ*

- Rāmcaritamānasa of Tulsidāsa, Ch 6, Verse 1

2. सानन्दं नन्दिहस्तहतमुरजरवहुतकौमरबर्हि

त्रासान्नसग्ररन्ध्रं विशति फणिपतौ भोगसङ्कोचभजि गण्डोड्डीनालिमालामुखरितककुभस्तण्डवे

शूलपाणे

रुवैनयक्यक्षिचरं वो वदनविधुतयः पान्तु चीत्कारवत्यः

*Sānandaṁ nandihastahatamurajaravahutakaumarabarhi
trāsānnasagraraṅdhraṁ viśati phaṇipatau bhogasaṅkocabhaji
gaṅḍoḍḍīnālīmālāmukharitakakubhastāṅḍave śūlapāṇe
rovainayakyakṣciraṁ vo vadanaividhutayaḥ pāntu cītkāravatyah*

- Mālatimādhavam of Bhāvabhūti, Ch 1, Verse 1

Chandah considered for intervention

Totakam:

The totakam metre has four saganā (//S, //S, //S, //S) in each of its four quarters. It occupies 1756th place in the list of 4096 metres.

Example:

| | S | | S | | S | | S | | S

tya ja to ta ka ma rth ni yo ga ka ram

- Pingalācārya, Ch 6, Verse 6

2.2 Summary

Sri Aurobindo on Chandas and its significance

Sri Aurobindo observes that there is “a greater natural power” and “intenser value of sound” inherent within the metrical forms. He says: Metres are the most natural mould of expression for certain states of creative emotions and vision, it is much more natural and spontaneous than a non-metrical form. Emotions expresses itself best and most powerfully in a balanced rather than in a loose and shapeless rhythm. This is why ancient Indians expressed everything including science, philosophy, law etc., in metric forms.

Another quality of metric forms is that they are quite helpful for the memory because of the easy durability inherent in them. Thus, people were able to memorise huge passages and prose from Brahmana texts as accurately as the metrical hymns in the Vedas and Upanishads. Sri Aurobindo makes it very clear when he says: “the tradition of metre is not a vain and foolish convention followed by the great poets of the past in primitive

ignorance unconscious of their own bondage, it is in spite of its appearance of human convention a law of Nature, an innermost mind-nature, a highest speech-nature.

Sri Aurobindo further explains that the quantitative and accentual arrangement forms the body of a metre. Within this body lies the sensational element which deals with the arrangement of pauses and sound, such as assonance, alliteration, composition of related and varying letters etc. With this there is the pure emotional movement of the verse. Within these three elements (the body, the sensational element and the emotional movement of the verse), there is the intellectual element which brings the element of restraint, management and subordination of the law of harmony. This element is the driver of the chariot of sound. Without this the harmony is not possible in a verse. Again, there is the poetic delight and within this delight there is the spirit. This spirit is an unanalysable reality behind metre, style and diction, and this is the element which distinguishes one poet from another.

Sri Aurobindo also observes that different arrangements of sounds have different spiritual values. He says that these arrangements “tend to produce by virtue of the fixed succession of sound a fixed spiritual atmosphere. The mere creative power of sound is very great on the material but ascending in force through the moral and intellectual, it culminates on the emotional plane. It is a factor of first importance in music and poetry. Hence, he says that when we speak of a particular metre “we are speaking of a particular spiritual force working through emotion into the material shape of a fixed mould of rhythmical sound which obeys both in his limiting sameness and in its variations the law of the spirit within”.

According to Sri Aurobindo, for a poet, “management of metre is the gate of his inspiration and law of his success”. If a poet doesn’t have a right metrical mood, the ideas and feeling “will not run into the right form, the words will not take their right places, the

syllables will not fall into a natural harmony”. It is only when a poet finds a right metre suitable to the spirit and emotion of the poetry he is creating, that everything fits in place. Sri Aurobindo add by saying “Ideas and words come rapidly and almost as rapidly take their places, as in a well -ordered assembly where everyone knows its seat”. There shouldn’t be any sort of effort to create the metre and it should be a spontaneous movement. He further says that “when the metre has to be created with effort, everything else has to be done with effort, and the result has to be worked on over and over again before it satisfies”.

According to the author of Chandovallari, Dr. Sampadananda Mishra, Sri Aurobindo’s understanding of *chandas* not only provides new guidelines to the study but also reveals the secret truth of *chandas* and throws a new light, a new vision on the world of poets and poetry.