

THE CHARYAPADA AS A MUSICAL FORM: A STUDY

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Abstract

In ancient times, the influence of the religious traditions of the Bengal region had crossed the modern political boundaries of West and East Bengal. The religion and the arts of Bengal have a historical background of Charyagiti which were composed by the Buddhist Siddhacharyas with a great spiritual significance. The main object was to preserve certain doctrines of Charyapadas and deliver it through songs to the disciples of a certain religious order. Accordingly, the subject matter of Charyapadas became more important for Buddhist Siddhacharyas as has been mentioned by some medieval authors in their works. The composition of Charyapadas were similar to the 'Prabandha' which is an ancient musical form mentioned by some renowned authors. Subsequently, the description of musical forms of Charya became less popular and stressed mainly on melas and ragas. Charya, as we have surveyed, was meant to be sung as a full-fledged composition in ragas and talas. The historical background of the Charya herein contains some extra musical elements, such as a brief history of the Pala Kingdom, Tantric Buddhism and religious background, etc. Reference to the medieval works in the context of the Charya is rather far- fetched.

Keywords: Charya, Buddhism, Pada, Prabandha, Bengal

The Charyapada as a musical form

'Charyagiti', the song of Buddhist Siddhacharyas is one of the earliest musical forms of Bengal. During the rule of the Palas, the Charyapadas were composed between 950 A.D. and 1200 A.D. The political history of the Pala period enables us to establish the fact that religion

was part and parcel of Bengali society during that time. Although the Pala rulers were Buddhists, their generosity towards Brahmanical religion is quite evident. Bengal during that period was the abode of not only Buddhists Bhikshus but also Brahman Pundits; there were temples as well as Viharas. But the fact that Bengal was a stronghold of Buddhism cannot be denied.(Sir Charles, 1962). The Sahajiya cult of Mahayana school who composed the Charyapadas were known as Buddhist Sidhyacharyas. The history of the religious traditions of Bengal has a notable feature which saw the emergence of different sects and cults. Buddhism has also its own characteristics. The tradition of Buddhism speaks about 84 Siddhacharyas and many of the composers of the Charyapadas were among them (R.C., 1971). Each ‘Pada’ is complete in itself and does not show any episodic sequence. The apparent meaning of the songs is understandable. There is an esoteric meaning too, as the songs were intended for those initiated into the religious order. The purpose was to preach esoteric doctrines, rites and practices in an obscure and symbolic language.

The texts of Charyagiti

The texts of the Charyagiti were discovered by Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri in the Nepal Durbar Library in 1907 A.D.(M.M. Haraprasad, 1959). These songs were subsequently published in a volume entitled *Hajar Bachorer Purano Bangla Bhashaye Buddhagana o Doha* in 1916 A.D. by the ‘Bangiya Sahitya Parishad’, Calcutta. It contains forty-six and a half songs. The above volume contains four separate books viz. -

- (i) Charyacharyavinishchaya with Sanskrit commentary;
- (ii) Dohakosha of Sarojavajra with Sanskrit commentary;
- (iii) Dohakosha of Krishnacharyapada; and,
- (iv) Dakarnava. (Suniti, 1970.).

Language of Charyapadas

Dr Ram Chandra Shukla maintains that the language of the Charyapadas is old Hindi.(Ramchandra, 2015).Dr. D.C. Sen observes that the language of the Charya songs does not represent any recognized school of old Bengali and it should be regarded as ‘Prakrit’ or ‘Apabhramsha’ by which names they were known at the time of their composition. (Dinesh, 1954). Dr. Sukumar Sen says in this regard, “The language of the songs naturally shows some features that are distinctly Laukika, and some that are common to the eastern and western New Indo- Aryan speeches at their earlier stage, but there is no doubt regarding the essential Bengali stamp on its grammar, idiom and syntax. Besides, the contents of the songs indicate that the poets were thoroughly acquainted with Bengali life and environs” (Sukumar, 1960).

The renowned philologist, Dr. Sunil Kumar Chatterjee comments that the language of the Charyas has the genuine vernacular of Bengal at its basis (Suniti, 1970). Further, he suggests, “.... the language of the Charyas seems to be based on West Bengal dialect. Some of its forms belong rather to West Bengal than to East Bengal.”(Suniti,1970).

Later on, a Tibetan translation (by Kritichandra) of Munidatta’s Sanskrit commentary was discovered by Dr. P.C. Bagchi. From this translation many new facts have emerged. With the help of this commentary three padas have been reconstructed and now fifty Charyagitis are available.

Charya as a musical form

The most striking point about the Siddhacharyas is that they knew music. We do not have any evidence of it in their biographical data available to us. But there are circumstantial evidences to prove it. First, for each Giti, a particular raga has been mentioned.

The Charya has its own literary and spiritual significance. If we think musically, it is no less important. Another most interesting point is that undoubtedly Charya was sung based on

some special Ragas. It is clear that Charya was a complete musical form which finds place among the Prabandhas (compositions) in ancient time. To assess its musical value, we shall first discuss the Charya as Prabandha in the shastras chronologically.

The Prabandha as a composition

‘Prabandha’ as a circumscribed form of music is to be found as early as the 8th century A.D. in *Matanga’s Brihaddeshi*. However, the elucidation of ‘Prabandha’ as found in Sharangdeva’s *Sangita Ratnakara* is par excellence. In the fourth chapter, while discussing the ‘Ganabheda’, Sharangdeva says: Gana is two-fold, Nibadha and Anibadha. Nibaddha comprises dhatu and anga. ‘Prabandha’, ‘Vastu’ and ‘Rupaka’ are the three synonyms for Nibadha Gana. (Maharana, 1963).

‘Prabandhas’ are broadly divided into two groups, like ‘Aniryukta’ and ‘Niryukta’. ‘Niryukta Prabandhas’ were governed by strict rules of tala, chhanda, etc. which could not be altered where as Aniryukta had no such rules. Sharangdeva deals with classified Prabandhas under three heads-Suda, Alisamshraya and Viprakirna. They are eight, twenty-four and thirty-six in number respectively.

There is, however, another class of ‘Suda Prabandhas’ known as ‘Salagsuda’. The ‘Salagsudas’ are seven in number. Maharana Kumbha (author of the *Sangit Raj*) adds ‘Mishra Suda’ as yet another class of ‘Suda Prabandhas’.

Sharangdeva describes the Charya under ‘Viprakirna’ class. But we ought to take note of a pre Ratnakara work of great importance *Manasollasa*. It is an encyclopedic Sanskrit work by Someshwara III, a Chalukya king of Kalyana. The work was written in 1129 A.D. Someshwara has been frequently quoted by Sharangdeva as an authority on Indian music. Comparison of some of the verses of *Manasollasa* with those of *Sangita Ratnakara* clearly brings out the fact that the latter conforms to descriptions given by Someshwara in several points of melodies and

compositions, which he at times even reproduces in slightly modified verses. Therefore, *Manosollasa* is a landmark in the history of Indian Music. The work is divided into five parts of twenty chapters.

The chapters on music (vocal and instrumental music) and dance, from part of the fourth Vimshati, namely Vinoda, Prabandha, both in Sanskrit and Prakrit languages, have been described in the *Gita-Vinoda*, the chapter on vocal music. Charya finds a prominent place among the compositions mentioned therein. The author takes special care to define every aspect of this particular form. That Someshwara had knowledge of the practical aspect of Charya is clear from the examples of Charya he cites, which are not to be found in *Sangit Ratnakara*. His description is detailed in the sense that the essential aspects of a form, such as its classification, occasion for singing, subject matter, metre, percussion for accompaniment and examples have been given. Unfortunately, Someshwara gives no notations for the songs he cites.

Charya as a Prabandha

In the history of Indian Music, the first Sanskrit work on Deshi music is Matanga's *Brihaddeshi* (800 A.D.) where forty-eight 'Prabandhas' were described. From the reference of Prof. Krishna Bisht it may be clear that "The Charya is conspicuous by its absence. If we are to accept the date of the Charya between the 9th and the 12th centuries, then the omission is understandable. However, in the *Brihaddeshi*, Gauda Ela – composed in the language of Gauda i.e. Bengal- is found. It was full of Prasa or rhyme and devoid of Gamaka. Charya had Prasa like Gauda Ela. It should be particularly noted here that later on the Gauda Ela had undergone some changes, e.g. in Sharangdava's description of it, there is neither prasa nor Gamaka in it. The Charya had some resemblance with the ancient Gauda Ela. With the passage of time Gauda Ela had undergone certain changes but in the Charya some of them were still extant". (Krishna, 1986).

However, the credit for mentioning the Charya as a full-fledged 'Prabandha' for the first time goes to Someshwara. It is interesting that the next Sanskrit musical work mentioning the Charya is by Someshwara's son Jagadekamalla. His name occurs in *Sangit Ratnakara* with those of his father and grand-father. The name of the treatise attributed to Jagadekamalla is *Sangita Chintamani*. The date of composition of this work has been fixed between 1138-1150 A.D. It is a small work and as such does not describe every topic in detail. In the 'Prabandhakaranam' he mentions the Charya. (Jagadekamalla, 1958).

Following the line of Someshwara, Sharangdeva gives further details of the Charya. Before we proceed to discuss the Charya in *Sangita Ratnakara* by Sharangdeva, a passing reference to *Sangita Samayasara* of Parshvadeva may be made. *Sangit Samaysara* was a well-known musical text on Indian Music which contains nine chapters named 'Adhikarana' based on vocal music, instrumental music and dance. The fourth Adhikarana contains description of Prabandhas and the Charya is one of the Prabandhas named therein.

In contrast to his predecessors Sharangdeva's approach to every topic is detailed. *Sangita Ratnakara* is an outstanding work in the world of Indian Music. The topics dealt with therein, are remarkable for clarity and scholarship of the author. Unlike Someshwara's *Manosollasa*, its entire subject matter is on the threefold art of Indian Music. It contains 07 chapters like Swaragatadhyaya, Taladhyaya, Vadyadhyaya, and Nartanadhyaya. Mention of the Charya has been made in the chapters on 'Prabandha' and 'Vadya'. Like his illustrious predecessor Someshwara, Sharangdeva, too, defines the Charya under the 'Viprakirna' type of Prabandhas. It appears that there were many 'Viprakirna Prabandhas' out of which, the author discussed only the famous ones. Sharangdeva chose 36 'Viprakirna Prabandhas' and one of them is the Charya. This clearly establishes the fact that the Charya was one of the important and well known 'Prabandhas'.

In the 14th century we come across an interesting work, *Sangita Upanishat Saroddhara*. It is an abridged version of a bigger and possibly more comprehensive work called *Sangitopanisat* (Sudhakalasha, 1961) written in the year 1350 A.D. by Vachana Charya Sudha Kalasha of the Shvetambara Jain Community. Neither Parshvadeva nor Sharangdeva has been quoted by the author. The work is mainly on tala and dance, therefore reference to musical forms is just in passing. ‘Nibaddhagita’ has been classified under three heads, like Prabandha, Rupaka and Vastu.

The most voluminous Sanskrit work on music is *Sangita Raja* or *Sangita Mimamsa* which was written in the 15th century by Rana Kumbha. The book has been divided by five chapters called ‘Ratnakoshas’ dealing with Pathya, Gita, Vadya, Nritya and Rasa respectively. Each of the above chapters has four divisions or Ullasa are called ‘Parikshanas’. In the present context, the “Gita Ratnakosha” is to be taken into account, which contains four ‘Ullasas’, one of them being ‘Prabandhollasa’. The fourth Prakirna of the ‘Prabandhollasa’ is on ‘Prakirna Prabandhas’, the other three being on Gitaka, Suda and Alikrama respectively. Kumbha enumerates forty-five ‘Prakirna Prabandhas’ as against thirty-six by Sharangdeva and Charya in the thirty-eight serially. Kumbha’s description of the Charya also incorporates the explanations of Sama Dhruva and Vishama Dhruva on the basis of the two commentaries on *Sangita Ratnakar* referred to earlier.

Another South Indian work that is relevant in the present context, is the *Chaturdandiprakashika* of Venkatmukhi.(1620 A.D.) The material for the chapter on ‘Prabandha’ has been drawn from his predecessors.

Mention of Charya in the above quoted 17th century South Indian work led Dr Niharkana Mukhopadhyay to conclude that the Charya did not fall into desuetude even in the 17th century. The gist of the relevant passage from her book in Bengali is given below:

“Charya was widely sung not only in northern India but also in the south. Commentaries of Simhabhupala and Kallinatha bear testimony to its prevalence. Even after the *Ratnakara* the Charya has been mentioned in Venkatamakhin’s *Chaturdandiprakashika*. It appears that the Charya had not dwindled till the first half of the 17th century.” (Niharkana, 1369).??????

From merely a commentary we may not infer that the text commented upon was current, because the commentator has to write on a topic irrespective of its being obsolete or otherwise. An interesting evidence in the present context may be cited. Chatura Damodara wrote his *Sangita Darpan* nearly fifty years before the composition of *Chaturdandiprakashika*. From the explanations given by Damodara it seems that the Charya and similar other ‘Prabandhas’ became obsolete by the author’s time. Just after enumerating the Prabandhas, Damodara says:

“SharangadevenKathitahmilitahPanchasaptatih |

KechideshuPrasidhayeTallkhanamihochyate ||”(Chatura, 1952)

From the above shloka it may be inferred that so far, the author has enumerated seventy-five Prabandhas, described by Sharangdeva, and then he proceeds to describe those that were in vogue in his time. For obvious reasons, the Charya has been left out. Some of the ‘Prabandhas’ described by him viz. Suryaprakash, Chandraprakash, Panchataleshwar are also found in *Ain-I Akbari* as compositional forms of the time.

In fact, with the influx of the Mohammedan invaders into India, Arabo-Persian impact on Indian culture was considerable specially in the North, and purity of art-forms could not be retained any longer. In the domain of music, Amir Khusrau’s (1253, 54- 1325 A.D.) innovations had deep-rooted influence on the contemporary music. Thus, in the early 14th century, ‘Prabandhas’ had already begun to give way to other forms born of the intermixture of Indo-Persian music. In support of this fact, a shloka from an early 14th century work, named *Sangita Upanishad Saroddhara* may be cited:

“PrabandhabandhakartaroBiralaVutalehdhuna |

TadgayanaschanaPrayohatoNobotasteSabistarah ||”(Sudhakalasha, 1961).

It means, Composers of Prabandha have become a rarity in this world and the singers of Prabandhas are almost nil, so Prabandhas have not been described in detail.

Again, in a 17th century Persian work *Raga Darpan* by Faqirullah, dealing with Indian Music, ‘Prabandha’ has been mentioned as a mere musical form, like Dhrupad, etc. as against its varieties and classes described in Sanskrit musical treatises. To quote Faqirullah: “Prabandha was composed in two movements; it is a musical form in praise of God (Gita). In it, there were some traces of Dhrupad; but Dhrupad did not originate from it only.”(Rajeshwar, 1371). On the basis of the above discussion the statement that the Charya had not dwindled till the first half of the 17th century, is untenable. To resume our survey of the medieval works, we shall now take up Ahobalas *Sangita Parijata*. The first khanda of *Sangita Parijata* named ‘Raga-gita-vicharah’ contain Suda, Alikrama and Viprakirna Prabandhas and the Charya comes in the list of thirty-six ‘Viprakirna Prabandha’. At the end of the same chapter the author furnishes information on some compositional forms, which seem to have been prevalent during his time. One of them is ‘Dhruvapada’. He mentions it under the unclassified forms as it cannot be categorized under any of the three forms mentioned above. Moreover, the author does not indicate any of the forms as obsolete or current. A peculiar feature of our writers was to record almost whatever had been written by their predecessors. But at the same time many of them took pains to interpret certain musical terms which, in the practical field, had undergone changes; some musical forms, melas and ragas current in their times have also been added. For instance, ‘murchana’, an ancient musical term, has been interpreted afresh by Ahobala; melas have been described by almost all the medieval authors; Dhruvapada as a full-fledged musical form by Ahobala and Bhavabhata. But confusion is bound to arise when most of the authors do not specifically mention anything as

current or obsolete. Ahobala was almost a contemporary of Venkatamakhin, if not a predecessor. So, on the basis of Ahobala's *Sangitaparijata*, one might jump to the conclusion that the Charya was prevalent at that time in the north and ample evidence has already been given to refute such conclusions. We may cite yet another evidence. The Persian works on Indian music have described contemporary forms. Charya has not been mentioned anywhere. It may be argued that the Charya had been left out by Persian authors on Indian music in view of the fact that it was meant for men of religion. This point is not tenable in view of Abul Fazl's description of vishnupada- a musical form sung in honour of Vishnu and the Kirtanias who sang the praises of Krishna. (Abul, 1972).

To conclude, it may be pointed out that the Charya has been found classified under 'Viprakirna Prabandha', right from the early 12th century down to the 17th century. Matanga has not mentioned the Charya. So far as the structural form of the Charya is concerned, the authors belonging to different periods have the same opinion.

Charyapada and Raga

The most vital point that establishes the fact that Charyapadas were sung and not recited is the mention in the text, of specific classical raga for each pada. In fact, this factor is the starting point of all research in respect of the musical value of the Charya. Some Prabandha' have specified ragas, e.g. chachchari in hindola raga. Omission of names of ragas in respect of the charya in musical treatise further confirms the fact that each pada had a different raga for its rendition.

In the present collection of 'Charyagitis', 17 ragas are found which are - Patamanjari, Gavada or Gauda, Aru, Gunjari or Gujjari, Devakri, Deshakha, Bhairavi, Kamoda, Dhanashi, Ramakri, Baradi or Balladi, Shavari or Shivari, Mallari, Malasi, Malasigabuda, Kanhagunjari, and Bangala. Most of these names of ragas are familiar to the present-day musicians. Many of

the above ragas are found in the ancient Shastras. However due to the impact of local usage some of the ragas have slightly changed names in the *Charyagitikoshā*.

The list of the 17 ragas has been drawn in the *Sangit Ratnakara* (13th century). Here also the name of the ragas are mentioned in brackets from the text ‘Charyagitis’:-Devakri, Deshakhya (Deshakha), Dhannasi (Dhaanasi, Dhanasi), Bangala, Bhairavi, Malhari, Malavashri (Malasi), Gurjari (Gunjari, Gujjari), Gauda (Gavada), Kamoda, Ramakri, Barati (Baradi, Balladi). The next list of ragas of Sangita Raja are – Madhyamadi, Lalita, Vasanta, Gurjari, Dhannasika, Bhairava, Gaudakriti, Deshakhya, Malavashri, Kedara, Malava, Gauda, Shriraga, Malhara, Megha, Natta, Saptadasha, Bangala, Marutkriti etc. For various reasons, the Ragas mentioned in *Sangit Ratnakara* and *Sangit Raja* have not been deciphered by modern scholars.

Sharangdeva mentioned Gurjari, whereas Matanga clearly mentions Gunjari, as one of the right bhasas of Malavakaisha. It seems that the name Baradi or Balladi was the shadow of Barati. The name Shivari or Saviri has resemblance with the name of Sauviri which is known as Shastrika raga. Two names resembling Shivari or Shavari have been traced in *Sangita Raja* (1449 A.D.), for i.e. Savari and Shambari. In the text *Sangitsarasangraha*, the name Saviri mentioned as a shadava raga. It is very interesting to say that Faqirullah mentioned the name Shivari in his work *Raga Darpan* (17th century) as a ragini of Malkaus. (Hariharnivas, 2010).

Though Patamanjari is a well-known raga, but no author has mentioned it in their works (From Matanga to Maharana Kumbha). Whereas, it stands out to be the most popular raga in the compositions of Charyagiti and has prescribed for 11 gitis. However, a name of a Ragapatamanjari occurs in two works of doubtful date, like *Sangita Makaranda* and *Aumapata*. Pt. Bhatkhande traces the origin of the name Patamanjari to Prathamamanjari. *Sangit Narayan*, a work belonging to the 16th century A.D., written by one Narayanadeva, mentions some regional synonyms of Ragas.

With regard to Patamanjari it clearly indicates that Patamanjari is synonymous with a Prathamamanjari. It also has been described by Sharangdeva and PundarikaVitthala (16th century). Pathamanjari has been described by later authors like Ahobala, Shrinivasa, Lochana etc. Incidentally mention may be made of the fact that Patamanjari is known among the non-Bengali traditional Hindustani musicians as Bangal Bilawal. This Patamanjari of Bilawalathata is lesser known in the North while the other version of Kafithata is widely known.

Musical Instrument used in Charypada

Certain musical instruments have been used for accompaniment. In musical treatises the percussion to be played with Charya-Prabandha has been mentioned as Mandidakka'. In Mandidhakka, the Patakshara is composed as in Hudukka. The centre of the circle and the rope should be struck with the left hand. The mouth of the instrument at the right hand should be played with the right hand. On the occasion of worship of the Goddess Shakti and in the process of singing the Charya, Mandidakka should be played with special efforts by the experienced and well versed.

Sharangdeva also prescribes the same percussion instrument to be played with Charya songs. In the 'Vadyadhyaya' of his *Sangit Ratnakar* the structure and techniques of playing the Mandidakka have been described.

The 'Mandidakka' is similar to 'Dakka'. However (the difference is that) its length is sixteen angulas; the two heads should be eight angulas each in circumference. At the centre the circumference should be sixteen angulas. Mandidakka does not have Argala (bolts for fastening) or Kachchha (hemming or lacings). On the upper head, there should be two circular rings. Mandidaka is to be played in the singing of Charya and the worship of Shakti.

The portion of the head covering the two rings should be held between the left-hand thumb and three fingers. The central portion of the head should be struck with the forefinger. The

right head lying on the right knee should be struck with the right hand. It should be played either with hand or with Kudupa.

Tala of Charya

Charya was a 'Taravali' type of Prabandha having two angas, pada and tala. In musical treatises 'Dvitiya tala' has been prescribed for it. Description of 'Dvitiyatala' is found in the fifth chapter titled 'Taladhyaya' of *Sangita Ratnakara*. Like gitas, talas are also of two kinds, 'Marga' and 'Deshi' tala. 'Dvitiya tala' was one of the 120 Deshi talas. In the words of Sharangdeva, "Dvitiya tala has two drutas and one laghu. The tala is expressed as: 00 (i.e. two drutas) (one Laghu)"(Sharangdeva, 1959).

Dhruta, according to Sharangdeva, means half of a matra. Laghu denoted one matra, Laghu was of vital importance as measurement of all the other matras viz. Dhruta, Guru, Pluta, etc. depended on it. In Deshi Talas the duration of Laghu was of elastic nature, having sometimes five laghuaksharas, sometimes four and sometimes even six.

The Charya was a Nirryukta Prabandha having specific metre and tala. But in the present collection of Charyagitis no mention of tala is found. The reason for not maintaining the name or names of tala makes us conjecture that some common and well-known talas were used for all the Charya songs. However, in the Tibetan translation of Charyagitis, two talas named 'Indratata' and 'Ekatala' are found. The former has been mentioned as a raga (Indrataraga) in giti no, 24. The original (kishnacharyapa) is missing. The Charyagiti set to Ekatala and in Mallari raga, composed by Bhusukupa is to be found in the original also, but without mention of any tala. Thus, no name of tala is found in the original text.

The Charya has metres like Padhadi etc; at the end of each foot there is rhyme, the theme is of spiritual import and the talas used are Dvitiya, etc. The tala is dvitiya, there is prasa at the

end of each foot, and the import of spiritualist jati is taravali, having two angas, like pada and tala; it has three dhatus, like udgraha, dhruva and abhoga.

If we turn to the present collection of Charyagitis with regard to the use of Padhadi metre in them, its occasional use disappoints us. Padhadi Chanda has 16 matras in each foot; it is devoid of jagana (ISI) and the last syllable is always a guru. In the following lines (of giti no. 22) of Sarahapa we find its use just occasionally:

Apnerachirachibhabanirvana |

| | S | | | | | | S SS 16

Here the rules of Padhadi Chhanda have not been followed strictly. But this applies to recitation only. If we consider the above padas from the point of view of singing, which they were primarily intended for, then some laxity may be allowed, e.g. in singing, rules of Laghu, Guru etc. are not so rigidly observed as in recitation. Not even in the padas given by Somesha (mentioned earlier) do we come across Padhadi Chanda. In this connection, it would not be out of context to refer to the remarks made on Swami Haridasa's padas by the eminent Hindi scholar, Pt. Ram Chandra Shukla in his *Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas*. According to him, Haridasa's expression is somewhat rigged. He made this remark, of course, from the literary point of view. In the world of music, Haridasa's padas are very popular for they are very well suited to musical rendition.

While dealing with the GanaElas, Sharangdeva speaks of some options with regard to the use of Laghu (short and Guru (long) as and when occasion arises. Some of them may be explained with the help of Simhabhupala's commentary, such as Vapadante, even a 'hrasva' letter at the end of a pada may be regarded as a Guru by option. In modern Ragadari music, we do not bother about the metre of the verse that is being sung; rather we take liberties with it to meet the exigencies of metre of the tala or the phrases of the raga in which it is being sung. As we know,

each of the Charyapadas had specific raga for its rendition. As such they were of classical form and certainly allowed some kind of license for breaking the rules of metre. Therefore, absence of Padhadi metre in some of the songs is nothing unusual. It may also be noted that Charya songs had further varieties, depending on the completion of metre. To quote Sharangdeva, if the chanda is complete it is called Purna and if not, then Apurna. They have, again, two sub-divisions, viz. 'Sama Dhruva' and 'Vishama Dhruva'. According to Kallinatha, 'Sama Dhruva' is that in which Udgraha and Dhruva are of equal measurement and when they are of unequal measurement, i.e. if the Dhruva is longer or shorter than the Udgraha or vice versa, then it is called Vishamadhruva. Simhabhupala's explanation is altogether different from that of Kallinatha. When all the padas are repeated then it is called 'Sama Dhruva' and when only the Dhruva is repeated it is called Vishama Dhruva. It is rather strange that the two commentators have nothing in common to say on this point.

These divisions and subdivisions indicate the possible absence of a uniform metre in the Charya and the *Sangita Ratnakara* itself confirms this fact when it mentions two varieties of Charya, like Purna and Apurna of which the latter did not consist of complete metre; but it was an accepted form of the Charya. Moreover, Kallinatha's explanation for 'VishamaDhruva' shows that there was ample scope for lengthening or shortening of dhatus (perhaps depending on the nature of tune) since the Udgraha could be longer or shorter than the Dhruva or vice versa.

Table of Charyagitis

Name of Composer	Serial no of songs	Name of Raga	Total no of Padas
Luipa	1,29	Patamanjari	2
Kukkuripa	2,20,48	Gabada, Patamanjari	3
Biruba or Biruapa	3	Gabada	1
Gundaripa	4	Aru	1
Chattilya or Chatilapa	5	Gurjari	1
Bhushukupa	6,21,23,27,30,41,4 3,49	Patamanjari, Baradi, Kamoda, Mallari,Kanhugunjari, Bangal	8
Kanhapa or Krishnachary apa or Krishnapa or Krishna- vajrapa	7,9,10,11,12,13, 18,19,24*,36,40, 42,45	Patamanjari,Deshakha, Bhairavi, Kamoda, Gauda, Malasigabuda, Mallari	13
Kambalamba rapa	8	Devakri	1
Dombopa	14	Dhanasi	1
Shantipa	15,26	Ramakri, Savari or Shibari	2
Mahidharapa	16	Bhairavi	1
Vinapa	17	Patamanjai	1
Sarahapa	22, 32, 38, 39	Gunjari, Deshakha, Bhairavi, Malasi	4
Tantripa	25*	Raga not mentioned	1
Dhamapa	47	Gurjari	1
Jayanandi	46	Sabari	1
Kaunkanapa	44	Mallari	1

Aryadeva	31	Patamanjari	1
Shavarapa	28,50	Balladi,Ramakri	2
Darikapa	34	Baradi	1
Bhadepa	35	Mallari	1
Tadakapa	37	Kamoda	1
Dhendanapa	33	Patamanjari	1

It is extremely difficult, in most cases, to fix the date or personal facts of these Siddhacharyas for want of ample corroboration. Scholars have attempted to build up some sort of biographical sketch but, again, there is too much of controversy among them.

In the forgoing study an attempt has been made to trace the elements of the forms of the regional music ‘Charya’ in ancient musical treatises. After a survey of these treatises, it has been found that the ‘Charya’ was a ‘Viprakirna Prabandha’ of Taravali jati having two angas like ‘Pada’ and ‘Tala’. It had three dhatus - Udgraha, Dhruva and Abhoga, and the metre was ‘Paddhadi’. So far scholars have referred to only three works “*Manasollasa*”, “*Sangita Ratnakara*” and “*Chaturdandi Prakashika*”, with regard to the ‘Charya’. In the present work the ‘Charya’ as a ‘Prabandha’(musical form) has been searched not only in the above three works but also in *Sangita Chaudamani*, *Sangita Samayasara*, *Sangitapanishad Sarodhara*, *Sangita Raja*, *Sangita Darpan* and *Sangita Parijata*. Survey of these works has proved to be very fruitful; many facts have emerged to establish certain theories, such as the question of the prevalence of the ‘Charya’ till as late as the 17th century.

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