Basic Structure of Hindi Poetry
Part 3a – GeetGatiroop software for *Mukt-Kavita*

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Preface

This is an addendum to Part 3 of the series of articles on the basic structure of Hindi poetry. That part dealt with the role and importance of rhythm in *Mukt-Kavita*. Also, Part 2a illustrated the use of GeetGatiroop, a powerful software tool, for analyzing and visualizing the rhythm of a Hindi poem. This tool, developed by Vani Murarka, is available at http://manaskriti.com/geet-gatiroop/. Subsequent to the publication of Part 3, some features have been added to GeetGatiroop that should be especially useful for analyzing rhythm in *Mukt-Kavita*. This addendum illustrates the use of the new version of GeetGatiroop by applying it to the same examples of *Mukt-Kavita* that were discussed in Part 3. Such an analysis should help a reader in understanding the inherent rhythm in *Mukt-Kavita*. This should be of particular interest to poets as well as scholars and enthusiasts of poetry. Finally, GeetGatiroop should prove to be a valuable tool for modern musicians interested in setting *Mukt-Kavita* to tune.

The whole article series is in 4 parts

Part 1: Structural units of a poem.

Part 2: *Maatraa* (मात्रा) or Meter of a Poem for *Chhanddobaddh* (छन्दोबद्ध) Poetry - i.e. poems that follow a clear rhyme and rhythm. These are perhaps the most important ingredients of the craft of poetry.

Part 2a: Software "GeetGatiroop" to help in Maatraa counting.

Part 3: Rhythm in *Mukt-Kavita* (free verse) based on *Maatraa* and other structures.

Part 3a: (This part) Updates to software GeetGatiroop to support *Mukt-Kavita*

Part 4: Correspondence with Urdu poetry (yet to be published)

1. Introduction

In this part (addendum) we will give an overview of how the software GeetGatiroop can be used to perform the analysis of rhythm in *Mukt-Kavita* as explained in Part 3.

As we have emphasized repeatedly in this article series, rhythm, periodicity, or *laya* (लय) is a core characteristic of poetry that distinguishes it from prose. With the advent of new poetry, *mukt-kavita*, or free verse, it has become essential to ensure that a poem retains a certain basic rhythm, otherwise a poem will be just a piece of prose with breaks at arbitrary places of a sentence. The software "GeetGatiroop" should specifically serve this purpose and fulfill this important need for characterizing the base rhythm in free verse.

For the purposes of precision and clarity, we are introducing a new term in this article and in the Geet Gatiroop software. The term is "मूल बहर". *Mool-bahar* is defined to be the measure of the basic periodicity and meter as per maatraa counting that is inherent in a free verse poem. *Mool-bahar* is not an established term in Hindi *Kaavya-shaastra.* There seems to be no specific word in Hindi that

exactly specifies this characteristic of a poem possibly because in the classical craft of poetry most poems were metered verses adhering to the measures of laya, maatraa and meter. Comparatively, free verse is a more recent development in Hindi literature.

In a *mukt-kavita* that has an inherent rhythm, we had seen that the maatra structure of the poem adheres to a basic periodicity (or the *mool-bahar* as defined above) either completely or at least loosely. However, unlike conventional or chhandobaddh poems, the periodicity may be apparent only when a certain number of lines of the poem are considered together. Thus, the GeetGatiroop software has been updated so that you may see the maatraa count of the lines in combination. Additionally, the user can specify the *mool-bahar* or basic periodicity in maatraa-count terms that the poem should follow. On specifying the *mool-bahar*, the software shows the extent to which lines are digressing from the base count. The poet can then use this information to modify the poem if required. This information is also useful for a musician in setting up the rhythm of the poem. The facility to adjust the maatraa allocation of long vowels (*deergh swar*) and half-letters based on pronunciation as described in the earlier articles of this series can be used for *mukt-kavita* too.

## 2. Activating and using this Free-verse feature in GeetGatiroop

Let us now see the specific steps to be carried out to use this free-verse feature of GeetGatiroop.

For demonstration we are using these three lines from Dharmveer Bharati's poem Kanupriya in the screen shots below.

तुम्हारे माथे में मोर पंखों
से बेबस विदा माँगने लगीं -
मैं नहीं आयी

This portion of Kanupriya has been discussed in greater detail in the earlier part 3 and is also revisited in section 3 below.

When you enter your poem in the GeetGatiroop box and press the "Visualize" button, some options show up below the visualization generated. To activate the Free-verse feature, click on the "Free-verse" checkbox (or मुक्त-कविता checkbox in the Hindi interface)
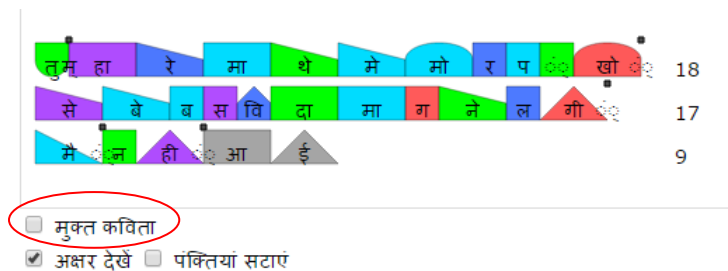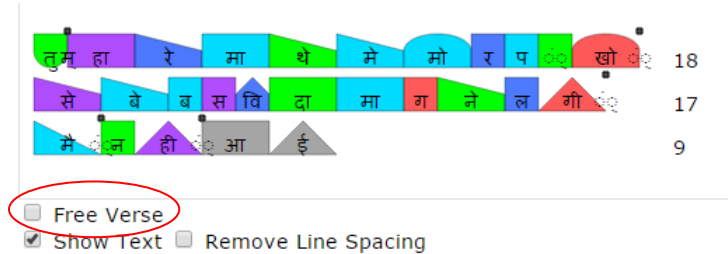
Clicking this checkbox will do two things:

1. The software will show short thick black lines beside the maatraa count of every line of the poem.
2. The software will show a "Base Count" (or मूल बहर for Hindi interface) box.

☑ Free Verse | Base Count: 1
☑ Show Text ☐ Remove Line Spacing

☑ मुक्त कविता | मूल बहर: 1
☑ अक्षर देखें ☐ पंक्तियां सटाएं

Clicking on the short dash beside the maatraa count of a line connects the line to the next one and we can see the composite maatraa count for the combined lines. For example, clicking the black line beside 18 and clicking the black line beside 17 gave this result, 18+17+9: 44.

☑ मुक्त कविता | मूल बहर: 1
☑ अक्षर देखें ☐ पंक्तियां सटाएं

As discussed in Part 3, this portion of Dharmveer Bharti's Kanupriya has a base meter of 15 maatraas. Giving 15 in the Base Count / मूल बहर tells us if the composite lines are in accordance with the basic periodicity of the poem or not. If there is a digression, the software gives the exact digression, whether the count is extra or lesser. Some digression is allowed in mukt-kavita as long as the overall sense of rhythm remains.

In the example below, the lines are 1 short of 45 which would be a perfect multiple of 15. When we enter 15 in the Base Count / मूल बहर box the software shows this digression (-1), meaning that these lines are 1 maatraa short of the base meter.

☑ Free Verse | Base Count 15
☑ Show Text ☐ Remove Line Spacing

If the lines had been totally in accordance with the base-count / mool-bahar, the software would show the total of the composite lines in the normal black color. A digression is shown in red.

To separate lines marked as composite, click on the vertical black line.

☑ Free Verse | Base Count: 15
☑ Show Text ☐ Remove Line Spacing

This is the basic use of the GeetGatiroop software for *mukt-kavita*. The facility to adjust the maatraa allocation of long vowels (*deerghswar*) and half-letters as per pronunciation can be used for *mukt-kavita* too.

As per this overview, let us see how the poems discussed in Part 3 will look in GeetGatiroop.

3. Examples of Part 3, Re-seen via GeetGatiroop

Lines from Gulzar's Meraa Kuchh Saamaan

मेरा कुछ सा(आ)मान
तुम्हारे पास पड़ा है
वह लौटा दो

एक अकेली छतरी में जब
आधे आधे भीग रहे थे
आधे सूखे आधे गीले
सूखा तो मैं ले आयी थी
गीला मन शायद
बिस्तर के पास पड़ा है
वह भिजवा दो

मेरा वह सामान लौटा दो
मेरा वह सामान लौटा दो

☑ Free Verse | Base Count: 32
☑ Show Text ☐ Remove Line Spacing

Vinod Tewary's poem Jeevan Deep

मेरा एक दीप जलता है।
अंधियारों में प्रखर प्रज्ज्वलित,
तूफानों में अचल, अविचलित,
यह दीपक अविजित, अपराजित।
मेरे मन का ज्योतिपुंज
जो जग को ज्योतिर्मय करता है।
मेरा एक दीप जलता है।

सूर्य किरण जल की बून्दों से
छनकर इन्द्रधनुष बन जाती,
वही किरण धरती पर कितने
रंग बिरंगे फूल खिलाती।
ये कितनी विभिन्न घटनायें,
पर दोनों में निहित
प्रकृति का नियम एक है,
जो अटूट है।
इसपर अडिग आस्था मुझको
जो विज्ञान मुझे जीवन में
पगपग पर प्रेरित करता है।
मेरा एक दीप जलता है।

यह विशाल ब्रह्मांड
यहाँ मैं लघु हूँ
लेकिन हीन नहीं हूँ।
मैं पदार्थ हूँ
ऊर्जा का भौतिकी करण हूँ।
नश्वर हूँ,
पर क्षीण नहीं हूँ।
मैं हूँ अपना अहम
शक्ति का अमिट स्रोत, जो
न्यूटन के सिद्धान्त सरीखा
परम सत्य है,
सुन्दर है, शिव है शाश्वत है।
मेरा यह विश्वास निरन्तर
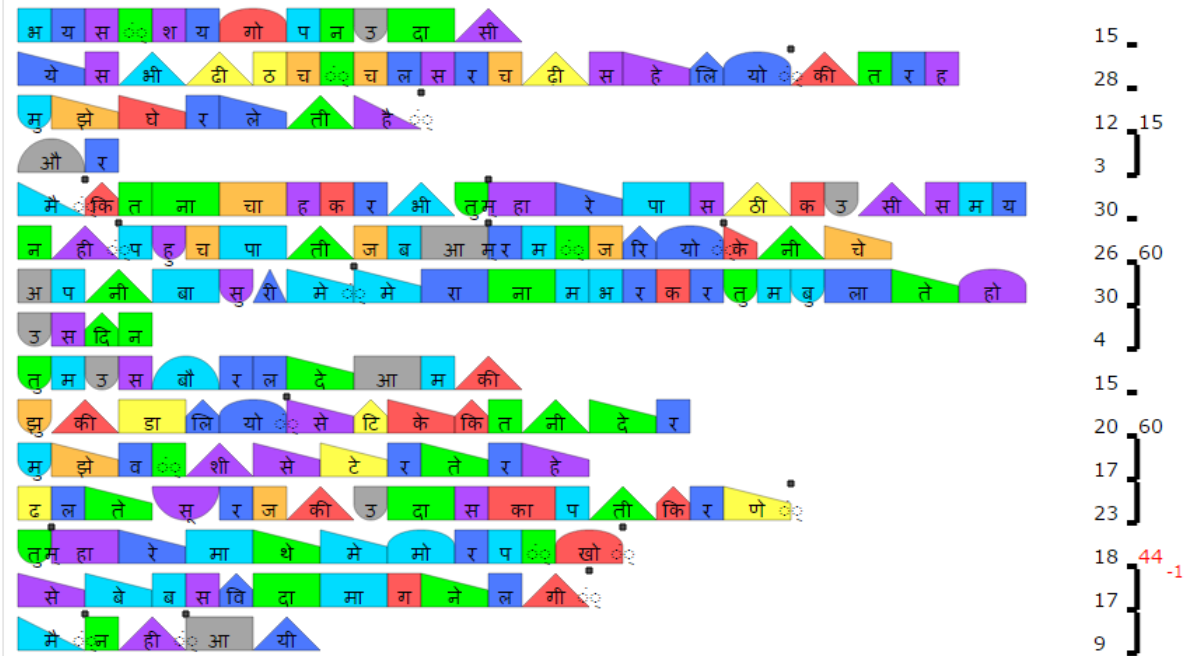मेरे मानस में पलता है।
मेरा एक दीप जलता है।

☑ Free Verse | Base Count: 16
☑ Show Text ☐ Remove Line Spacing

Lines from Dharmveer Bharti's Kanupriya

भय, संशय, गोपन, उदासी
ये सभी ढीठ, चंचल, सरचढ़ी सहेलियों की तरह
मुझे घेर लेती हैं,
और
मैं कितना चाह कर भी तुम्हारे पास ठीक उसी समय
नहीं पहुँच पाती जब आम्र मंजरियों के नीचे
अपनी बाँसुरी में मेरा नाम भर कर तुम बुलाते हो!

उसदिन

तुम उस बौर लदे आम की

झुकी डालियों से टिके कितनी देर

मुझे वंशी से टेरते रहे

ढलते सूरज की उदास काँपती किरणें

तुम्हारे माथे मे मोर पंखों

से बेबस विदा माँगने लगीं -

मैं नहीं आयी

☑ Free Verse | Base Count: 15
☑ Show Text ☐ Remove Line Spacing

We invite you to copy-paste your favorite *mukt-kavita* into GeetGatiroop and see it from a new perspective of rhythm. Explore whether you can identify how the lines are to be considered together so that a picture of basic periodicity emerges.

In Part 4, we will talk about the structure of Urdu poetry.

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