

The Rhythm of Hindi Poetry and When Short *a* Stopped Being Pronounced

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Abstract

This paper investigates three aspects of the metrical rhythm of Hindi, focusing on the differences from Sanskrit and Prākṛit-Apabhraṃśa meters. Firstly, we discuss how the 3-3-2 vs. 4-4 mora groups, which are often attributed to folk music, became the basic rhythmic units of Hindi meter. We point out that the linguistic rhythm of Hindi has changed with time just as the metrical rhythm of Hindi diverged from those of Prākṛit and Apabhraṃśa. The second aspect is that the syllabic metre of Hindi is considered to involve stress, as in the ictus-based meter of English or German poetry. Even in syllabic meter, Hindi poetry still shows units of 3-3-2 vs. 4-4 syllables, suggesting that the same rhythm as that of the moraic meter is persistent. The third aspect is the phonological change. The loss of the short *a* [ə] in weak position in pre-modern Hindi brought about extensive change in the metrical as well as linguistic rhythms, and the traditional metrical scansion became no longer applicable to modern Hindi poems. This paper investigates the development of Hindi metrical rhythm from the 16th century to the modern period, and its relationship with the diachronic development of Hindi phonology.

1. Introduction

India has a long tradition of composing literary text in verses since the Vedic period to the present day. Just as the language changed gradually from Old Indo-Aryan to Middle and New Indo-Aryan, the metrical rhythm also changed. Hindi¹, a New Indo-Aryan language most widely used in North India, is considered to have evolved from a dialect close to Śaurasenī, and early Hindi literature is influenced from Prakrit in its literary convention. However, Hindi meter shows multilayered aspects which can be traced back to several different origins. Sanskrit syllabic meter and Prakrit-Apabhraṃśa moraic meter form the basis of Hindi meter. In this paper, I will investigate how

¹ Hindi is a New Indo-Aryan language. While its focal area is the lower Doab plains, Hindi is spoken all over India and serves as lingua franca in present-day India.

Hindi meter evolved from Middle Indo-Aryan meter and how the historical change of Hindi phonetics is reflected in the works on Hindi metrics.

2. Elements of Hindi metrics

Most works of Hindi metrics have the word *Piṅgala* in their titles. The original Piṅgala is a Sanskrit metrician, but the word came to mean metrics in general by metonymical extension. Works on Hindi metrics follow Piṅgala's *Chandaḥsūtra* (2nd B.C.) in terminology, syllabic structure, foot (called *gaṇa*), and calculation formula of the number of metrical units (*patākā*), among others. The *Prākṛta Paiṅgalaṃ* is the primary source of Hindi metrics. Following the description of the *Prākṛta Paiṅgalaṃ*, works on Hindi metrics group meters under two major categories, i.e. *vārṇik chand* (or *varṇavyṛtta*) and *mātrik chand* (or *mātravyṛtta*)². As mentioned above, *vārṇik chand*, or syllabic meter, is derived from Sanskrit directly or indirectly, and *mātrik chand*, or moraic meter, originates from Prākṛit-Apabhraṃśa. Although both types of meter are ultimately based on the syllable, the former defines a verse by the number of syllables while the mora is the unit of counting in the latter. With respect to quantity, Hindi distinguishes two types of syllables, a light syllable of the shape (C)V, and a heavy syllable, which is (C)VV, (C)VC, or heavier. In Hindi, there are four short vowels (*a, i, u, ṛ*) and seven long vowels (*ā, ī, ū, e, ai, o, au*).³ Aspiration (written ^h such as *t^h, d^h*, etc.; IPA [t^h], [d^h], etc.) does not have a mora value. The following are the principles of counting moras in Hindi meter:

1. Light syllable (C)V, called light (*laghu*) or short (*hrasva*), has one mora.
Ex. *kamala* (*ka-ma-la*; CV-CV-CV ˘˘˘)
2. All other syllables, called heavy (*guru*) or long (*dīrgha*), have two moras:
(C)VV, (C)VV(C) or (C)VC
Ex. *rāma* (*rā-ma*: CVV-CV – ˘), *nirmala* (*nir-ma-la*; CVC-CV-CV – ˘˘), *gosvāmī* (*gos-vā-mī*; CVVC-CVV-CVV – – –)

In metrical scansion, weak or 'inherent' *a*, which is not pronounced in Modern Standard Hindi, has its own mora and needs to be treated as a real vowel, especially in the works of early Hindi poets.⁴ The Hindi metrician Bhānu (1859-1945) mentions four additional rules (1894: 2). 1) The syllable which ends in a short vowel with nasalization (represented by a *chandrabindu*) is light. 2) An unaccented syllable with a short vowel followed by a consonant cluster ending in *h* is scanned as

² Bikhārīdās did not distinguish *vārṇik chand* and *mātrik chand*. His way of description was not followed by later metricians, and it is a rare case as far as the texts I have checked are concerned.

³ *ai* and *au*, and *e* and *o*, are diphthongs and are treated as long. However, *e* and *o* can also be treated as short vowels depending on meter. In the eastern dialect Avadhī, the *e* and *o* in the pronouns such as *tehi* and *tohi* are usually treated as short.

⁴ In Modern Standard Hindi, short *a* is not pronounced in unstressed positions. In Devanagari script, *a* is not written except in onsetless syllables and the value of this vowel is taken to be inherent in the writing system of Hindi. Note that an initial *a* never undergoes aphesis. The general rules of *a* deletion are the following; 1) Final *a* of multisyllabic words; *taba*>*tabā*. 2) If the original word consists only of light syllables with *a*, every other *a* from the final is syncopated except in the initial syllable; *matalaba*> *matalabā* (rule 1) >*matālabā*. 3) When the final syllable is heavy or contains a vowel other than *a*, the *a* in the penultimate light syllable is syncopated, unless it follows a consonant cluster; *kamarā* > *kamārā* but *aspatāl*.

light, e.g. *kanhaiyā* CVCCVVCVV ◡ – .⁵ 3) A light syllable at the end of a line can be scanned as heavy. 4) Special scansion might reflect actual pronunciation.

An initial consonant cluster does not affect the weight of the final syllable of the previous word. Even if a syllable has an initial consonant cluster, such as *strī*, and is phonetically longer than a syllable without one (*rī* or *ī* in this case), it is metrically treated as a heavy syllable and counts as containing two moras.

Syllabic and moraic meters of Hindi are each divided into three categories, equal (*sama*), half-equal (*ardhasama*) and unequal (*viṣama* or *asama*) according to the arrangement of the *pādas*, a term originally meaning a quarter line of a verse. Metrical patterns are based on the number and weight of syllables in syllabic meter and by the number of moras in moraic meter, respectively. The following are examples of syllabic and moraic meters written in Hindi, both of which have the same number of moras in each *pāda* (a and c are odd *pādas*, and b and d are even *pādas*).

Example 1. *ci-tra-kū-ṭa ta-ba rā-ma jū ta-jyo*⁶. *Jā-i yaj-ñā-ī^ha-la a-tri ko b^ha-jyo.*
*rā-ma lak-ṣma-ṇa sa-me-ta de-k^hi-yo. ā-pu-no sa-p^ha-la jan-ma le-k^hi-yo.*⁷
 a|b| ◡ – , ◡ ◡ ◡ , ◡ – , ◡ , – | ◡ – , ◡ ◡ ◡ , ◡ – , ◡ , – | (rhymed; *ajyo*)
 c|d| ◡ – , ◡ ◡ ◡ , ◡ – , ◡ , – | ◡ – , ◡ ◡ ◡ , ◡ – , ◡ , – | (rhymed; *ek^hīyo*)

Example 2. *ja-ba teṃ rā-ma byā-hi g^ha-ra ā-e. ni-ta na-va maṅ-gala mo-da ba-ī^hā-e.*
*b^hu-va-na cā-ri da-sa b^hū-d^ha-ra b^hā-rī. su-kṛ-ta me-g^ha ba-ra-ṣa-him su-k^ha bā-rī.*⁸
 a|b| 16m.|16m. (rhymed; *āe*)
 c|d| 16m.|16m. (rhymed; *ārī*)

Example 1 is a Hindi quatrain namely *rathodhatā*, a syllabic meter defined by the total number of syllables, in this case 11 syllables, as well as by the foot (◡ – , ◡ ◡ ◡ , ◡ – , ◡ , –). While syllabic meter had fixed order of syllables only in certain parts of a *pāda* in the Vedic period, the weight of every syllable of a *pāda* was fixed in the course of development, and meter came to be defined in terms of feet (*gaṇa*). Furthermore, end rhyme (*tajyo*–*b^hajyo*, *dek^hīyo*–*lek^hīyo*) was introduced in Hindi. In contrast, example 2 is a quatrain in the *mātrik chand caupāī*, which has 16 moras in each *pāda* and there is no strict restriction on foot except for the end rhyme – –. In this way, the syllabic meter is defined more rigidly than the moraic meter.

⁵ For this rule, Bhānu gives three examples; *kanhaiyā*, *junhaiyā* and *tumhārī*. According to him, *ka-*, *ju-* and *tu-* are unaccented light syllables followed by consonant clusters and are scanned as light.

⁶ In this example, the end rhymes *citra*, *tajyo* and *b^hajyo* are scanned ◡ –. The rule of the consonant cluster (a light syllable becomes heavy when it is followed by a consonant cluster) does not apply to *tr* and *jy*, because a semi-vowel at the end of a stem-final consonant cluster, in this case *-taj-* and *-b^haj-* followed by the perfect form *-yo*, is an exception to this rule.

⁷ “When Rāma abandoned Citrakut, he went to the place of sacrifice and worshiped Atri. With Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma saw [him] and thought of [their] own fruitful birth.” (*Rāmācandrikā* XI.1)

⁸ “From the time when Rama returned home wedded, there were ever fresh rejoicings and jubilant music.” (tr. by R.C. Prasad) [*Rāmācaritamānas* 2.1]

3. Hindi meter and *dohā*

Of the two types of meters in Hindi, the moraic meter is much more common, probably because poets considered the syllabic meter to belong primarily to Sanskrit. In addition, Hindi moraic meter developed more new varieties than syllabic meter did, which suggests that Hindi meter is mainly based on the mora. There are various types of moraic meters and rhythms underlying them, and our next question is which type and what kind of metrical rhythm were preferred by Hindi poets. To solve that question, we will take the *dohā* as an example in the next section. *Dohā* derives from Prākṛit-Apabhraṃśa and is one of the most favorite meters since Prākṛit-Apabhraṃśa up to Hindi.

4. Origin of *dohā*

Since the *dohā* is such a popular meter, it might look typically Indo-Aryan, but Hermann Jacobi (1850-1937) claimed it is of a foreign origin. According to his theory, it originates from Greek hexameter brought by the Ābhīras who invaded Northwest India around the beginning of the common era (Jacobi 1884: 599).

The following are the similarities between the Greek dactylic hexameter and the *dohā*, which Jacobi pointed out. Firstly, the *dohā* is a couplet in which each line has 13 + 11 moras and ends in $- \cup$. On the other hand, the dactylic hexameter consists of 6 feet, and ends in either a dactyl ($- \cup \cup$) or a spondee ($--$).

Table 1. *Dohā*

<u>13m.</u> $- \cup$	<u>11m.</u> ($- \cup$)	=24m.
<u>13m.</u> $- \cup$	<u>11m.</u> ($- \cup$)	=24m.

Table 2. Dactylic hexameter :

$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	=24m.
$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup$	
$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \cup \cup$	$- \times$	

The total numbers of the moras are the same, but the inner pauses in the line are different. Jacobi's theory presupposes a foreign origin of the *dohā* and its long journey from Greece to India. However, dactylic rhythms are found outside Greece as well, and it is difficult to locate the original place of the *dohā* just based on the total numbers of the moras.

The origin of the *dohā* is debated, and some connect it with Sanskrit *āryā*⁹, while others identify it with the Sanskrit *dodhaka*¹⁰. In addition to these, there is yet another widely accepted claim advocated by Hazārīprasād Dvivedī, one of the most prominent Hindi scholars of the 20th century, that the *dohā* is related with the Ābhīras or the *ahīra* meter. According to him, the *abhīra* or *ahīra* meter, which is defined in the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam* as having 11 moras in each *pāda*, has the same

⁹ Śāstrī (1952: intro. 9) believes that the *dohā* is derived from a variation of the *āryā* (*gāthā/gāhā*). There are two types of *āryā* historically (new *āryā* (*gāthā/gāhā*); ab 12m. + 18m. cd 12m. + 15m., Old *āryā*; ab=cd=30m./31m.) and especially the new *āryā*, composed of unequal *pādas* (ac, b≠d, ab≠cd), is rather different from the *dohā* (ac, bd, ab=cd).

¹⁰ *Dodhaka*; abcd $- \cup \cup - \cup \cup - \cup \cup --$. *Dodhaka* does not resemble *dohā* in metrical form, but some scholars believe that the name *dohā* derives from *dodhaka*.

number of moras as the odd pādas of a dohā. The *soraṭhā*, with pādas arranged converse to dohā (11+13, 11+13), owes its name to Saurāṣṭra area which is associated with the Ābhīra tribe (Dvivedī 1994: 135-137).

Śivanandan Prasād, author of a comparative study of Hindi moraic meters, denied the connection between the dohā and the Abhīra or ahīra meter, because the latter is not mentioned in any work preceding the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam* while the former was used by poets before the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam* was composed in the 14th century (Prasād, 1964: 397f.). The oldest example of the dohā in Indian literature is believed to be a couplet in the *Vikramorvaśīya* by Kālidāsa¹¹, but the language of this couplet is not Sanskrit but Apabhraṃśa, and no work on Sanskrit meter refers to the dohā. An Apabhraṃśa metrician Virahāṅka (6th c.) described a *dvipathaka* meter of two-pādas (14+12, 14+12), and Svayambhū defined a *duvahaa* meter of four-pādas (14, 12, 14, 12) and mentioned its variations *upaduvahaa* (13, 12, 13, 12) and *avaduvahaa* (12, 14, 12, 14). These facts suggest that the *duvahaa* meter is the precursor of the dohā and the *avaduvahaa* is that of the *soraṭhā*. The number of the moras in each pāda of a dohā is 13, 11, 13, 11 and the line ends in –. If one mora of each pāda in the *duvahaa* is dropped, the number of the moras agrees with that of the dohā, and Śivanandan Prasād claimed that a pāda-final heavy syllable of the *duvahaa* was replaced by a light one, whence the end rhyme of the dohā is –. Along with the disyllabic end rhyme (–), the arrangement of the syllables (6+4+3 in odd pādas and 6+4+1 in even pādas) defined in the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam* became the norm in Hindi metrics. Hindi metricians also note 23 variations¹² of dohā with different syllable arrangements, which are only theoretically possible and not found in actual poetry.

Table 3. Duvahaa and Dohā (Soraṭhā)

Duvahaa	14m., 12m., 14m., 12m.	Avaduvahaa	12m., 14m., 12m., 14m.
Dohā	13m.+11m., 13m.+11m.	Soraṭhā	11m.+13m., 11m.+13m.

Table 4. Change from Duvahaa to Dohā

number of mora of ac; 14m.	end rhyme of bd; --.	number of mora of bd; 12m.
↓	↓	↓
13m.	–.	11m.

¹¹ *mai jāṇia mialoaṇi, ṇisiaru koi harei. jāva ṇu ṇavataḍisāmali, d^hārāharu barisei.*

⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯, ⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯, – ⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯, – – ⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯ – ⋯.
[*Vikramorvaśīya* 4/8]

12m. + 11m. = 23 m. End rhyme; –.

“I know some evil spirit carried away the fawn-eyed woman (Urvaśī), when the new black cloud of lightning brought the rain.”

This couplet is very much like a dohā, even though it is hypometric. However, it is considered that Kālidāsa did not introduce a new meter deliberately, but these lines happened to have the same number of moras as the dohā.

¹² The names of the 23 dohās are *Bhrāmara*, *Bhrāmaru*, *Śarabha*, *Śyena*, *Maṇḍūka*, *Markaṭa*, *Karabha*, *Nara*, *Marāla*, *Madakala*, *Payodhara*, *Cala*, *Vānara*, *Trikala*, *Kacchapa*, *Matsya*, *Śāradūla*, *Ahivara*, *Vyāgra*, *Viḍāla*, *Śunaka*, *Undura* and *Sarpa*. Each line of the dohā is composed of 13+11 = 24 moras and the total number of the moras in the two lines is 48 moras. The 23 combinations of 2 moras (heavy syllable) and 1 mora (light syllable) are just theoretical constructs.

5. Dohā in Hindi metrics

In Hindi metrics, Sukhdev Miśra (17th c.) followed the tradition of the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam* in his *Piṅgal* and defined the dohā as a couplet with 13 moras in the odd pādas, and 11 moras in the even pādas. The arrangement of the moras is 6+4+3 and 6+4+1. After this definition, he gave 23 types of dohā following the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam*, starting from the *bhramara dohā* which has 22 heavy syllables and 4 light syllables in two lines. He shows 23 examples of dohā, in which the number of heavy syllables shifts from 22 to 0. The following is an example of the *bhramara dohā* given by Sukhdev Miśra in his *Piṅgal* which has 22 heavy syllables and 4 short syllables in two lines:

tū rā-jā rā-jā-ni ko, tū-hī so-b^hā mū-ra.
 ----- ◡, ----- ◡.
*tū-hī jam-bū-dī-pa meṃ, dā-tā jñā-tā sūra.*¹³
 ----- ◡, ----- ◡.

The *sarpa dohā* which has 48 short syllables in two lines as follows;

ta-ru-ni va-da-na pa-ra a-ti sa-ra-sa, du-ti pa-ra-sa-ta mṛ-du ha-sa-ti.
*vi-ma-la śa-ra-da śa-śi pa-ra ma-na-hu vi-śa-da g^ha-na la-sa-ti.*¹⁴

On the other hand, Bhānu gives a definition finer than what was traditionally taught. It differs from the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam* in the following respects:

- 1) There are two syllabic arrangements in the odd pādas of a dohā;
 13m. = 3(◡_ or _◡ or ◡◡◡) + 3+2+3+2
 13m. = 4(◡◡◡ or _◡◡ or ◡◡◡◡) + 4+3+2
- 2) The last foot of the even pādas should be (◡_◡) or (---◡).
- 3) The arrangement of moras in a line is 8+3+2, 8+3.

Bhānu added the second rule about the end rhyme, but it amounts to the same as ◡_ defined in the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam*. Probably the most interesting finding obtained from rules 1 and 3 is the principle that three moras should be followed by three moras and four moras by four moras. This observation of Bhānu does not agree with the syllabic arrangement of 6+4+3 and 6+4+1 taught in the *Prākṛta-Paiṅgalam*, so Bhānu gives a unique syllabic arrangement of 8+3+2 and 8+3 in rule 3 instead.

This definition of Bhānu incurs a further question, i.e. whether the syllabic arrangement of the dohā has changed in Hindi prosody or not. The following is a dohā composed by Abdur Rahīm ‘*Khān-i-khānā*’ (1556-1627).

¹³ “You are the king of kings, you are the origin of splendor, you are giver, scholar and sun in the Jambu island.”

¹⁴ “The face of young woman is very charming. She touches beautifully and smiles gently as if the beautiful autumn cloud shines on the pure autumn moon.”

6. Modern Hindi prosody and the change in the phonetic value

The examples of Hindi meter mentioned above show the scansion based on the pronunciation of Old Hindi. Now let us take a look at the prosody of Modern Standard Hindi. The most prominent change from Old Hindi to Modern Standard Hindi is in the phonetic value of short *a* [ə]. This vowel is not pronounced in weak position in Modern Standard Hindi, although we do not know when the reduction took place. According to the mora rule of traditional Hindi metrics, the word *kamala* “lotus” is scanned *ka-ma-la* CVCVCV ◡◡◡ 3m. On the other hand, the final vowel *a* is not pronounced in Modern Standard Hindi and hence is not scanned, but the total number of the moras remains the same: *ka-mal* CV-CVC ◡– 3m. The change in pronunciation made the syllabic division of the word different, but the total number of the moras in a word is unaffected.

Take the following modern Hindi poem by Kunwar Narain (1927-) for example. If we try to analyze this poem by the metrical scansion of Old Hindi, which treats the inherent vowel *a* as having a mora value, this scansion does not show any regularity or special feature in the rhythm of recitation:

- 1.1 *ca-ma-ka-dā-ra, thaṇ-dā, ba-ra-fa sā sa-ve-rā*
 ◡◡◡◡◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –
- 1.2 *la-gā, i-sa ta-ra-ha chū ga-yā gar-ma ta-na se,*
 ◡ – ◡◡◡◡◡◡◡ – ◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –
- 1.3 *ki jai-se ki-sī sar-da ṭhi-ṭhu-rī ja-ga-ha mē*
 ◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –
- 1.4 *la-ge ā-i-ne pa-ra ki-ra-ṇa e-ka c^ha-na se...*
 ◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –
- 2.1 *ki-ra-ṇa e-ka*
 ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡
- 2.2 *jo ā-ga sī bu-jha na jā-ye,*
 – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –
- 2.3 *la-pa-ka ka-ra ja-me dṛś-ya pa-ra p^hai-la jā-ye,*
 ◡◡◡◡ ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –
- 2.4 *ka-hīm prā-ṇa ba-na-ka-ra, ka-hīm prā-ṇa-dā*
 ◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –
- 2.5 *i-sa qa-da-ra zin-da-gī ho sa-ma-j^ha mē na ā-ye!*¹⁸
 ◡◡◡◡◡ – ◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ – ◡ – ◡ – ◡◡◡◡ –

If we follow the traditional scansion, we cannot see the impressive slow rhythm of this poem. But if we count the two open syllables with short *a* as one heavy syllable, its metrical rhythm emerges as the sequence of syllables contains repetition of a bacchius (◡—). Note that in Modern Standard Hindi, (C)VCC and (C)VVC are scanned –◡, because a coda consonant following a heavy syllable

¹⁸ “A glistening cold ice-like morning, it felt,
 touched the hot body in such a way,
 as if in a winter-shivered place, suddenly
 a mirror got struck by a ray
 a ray
 that, like fire, does not snuff out
 but flares on the frozen view and spreads out,
 somewhere as life, somewhere as life-giver,
 so becomes life that one cannot fathom out!” (*Cakācaundh* by Kuṃvar Nārāyaṇ, tr. by Apurva Narain)

nucleus (VV or VC) is treated as having a mora value of the ‘inherent’ *a*. In this poem, they are *garm*, *sard*, *ek*, *āg*, *phail*, *prāṇ*.

1.1 *ca-mak-dā-r; thaṇ-dā, ba-raf sā sa-ve-rā*

∨---∨, --, ∨--- ∨---

1.2 *la-gā, is ta-rah chū ga-yā gar-m tan se,*

∨-, - ∨--- ∨--- ∨---

1.3 *ki jai-se ki-sī sar-d ṭhi-ṭhu-rī ja-gah mẽ*

∨-- ∨--- ∨∨∨ ∨---

1.4 *la-ge ā-i-ne par ki-raṇ e-k c^han se*

∨---∨--- ∨---∨---

2.1-2.2 *ki-raṇ e-k jo ā-g sī buj^h na jā-ye,*

∨---∨--- ∨--- ∨---

2.3 *la-pak kar ja-me dṛś-ya par phai-l jā-ye*

∨--- ∨---∨--- ∨--- ∨---

2.4 *ka-hiṃ prā-ṇ ban-kar, ka-hiṃ prā-ṇ-dā,*

∨-- ∨---, ∨---∨---

2.5 *is qa-dar zin-da-gī ho sa-majh mẽ na ā-ye*

- ∨---∨--- ∨--- ∨---

Now it is obvious that the number of the syllables based on the scansion of Old Hindi is different from that of Modern Standard Hindi, which clearly shows repetition of bacchius (∨---).

One stanza is composed of 16 times of ∨---, so this is a quatrain rhyming at the end (*tan se – c^han se, jāye – āye*). The metrical pattern of a trisyllabic foot repeated eight times reminds us of the *savaiyā*, which has been one of the most popular Hindi meters. However, there is a difference between them, i.e., the foot of a *savaiyā* is composed of three syllables having four moras (–∨∨ or ∨∨–)¹⁹, while that of this Hindi poem is composed of three syllables having five moras (∨---).

Here, we should also consider the possibility that the loss of inherent *a* in the pronunciation of Modern Standard Hindi dates back to Old Hindi. Apocope of unstressed [ə] is a common sound change which could have taken place at any period. The above-mentioned rule of the syllabic unit (3-3-2 /4-4) that Bhānu pointed out was about the *dohā* in early Hindi literature²⁰, but this rule can be interpreted that early Hindi poets were already aware of the syllabic unit in which the ‘inherent’ *a* had ceased to be pronounced. In order to test this hypothesis, let us take an example of an early Hindi poem. The following is a *dohā* in the 16th century composed by Tulsīdās.

¹⁹ The *savaiyā* is a quatrain, of which some variations exist. The following two are the most common types:

abcd –∨∨|–∨∨|–∨∨|–∨∨|–∨∨|–∨∨|–∨∨|–∨∨| ~~~ ~~~ |
abcd ∨∨|∨∨|∨∨|∨∨|∨∨|∨∨|∨∨|∨∨| ~~~ ~~~ |

²⁰ ‘Early Hindi literature’ refers to that of the *Bhakti* period (14-17 c.).

ha-ro ca-ra-hī tā-pa-hī ba-ra-ta p^ha-re pa-sā-ra-hī hā-t^ha.
 √- √√√ -√√ √√√ √- √-√√ -√
tu-la-sī svā-ra-t^ha mī-ta sa-ba pa-ra-mā-ra-t^ha ra-g^hu-nā-t^ha.²¹
 √- -√√ -√ √√√√√-√√ √√√√

In this example, the first line starts with 3-3-2 moras (√- √√√ -), while the second line with 4-4 (√-√-√-√-). But in this scansion, the unit of 3-3-2 in the first line is not clear, because (√- √√√ -) can be parsed either 3-3-2 (√-|√√√|-) or 4-4 (√-√-|√√-). However, if we scan the same poem by the rule of Modern Standard Hindi as follows, the syllabic unit becomes more obvious:

haro carāḥī tāpāḥī baratā p^hare pasārāḥī hāt^hā.
 √- -√ -√√ √- √- √-√- -√
tulāsī svārat^hā mīta sabā parāmārat^hā rag^hunāt^hā.
 - - - - -√ - - - - √√ -√

According to this scansion which counts CVCV (√√) as CVC√(-), the first line starts with 3-3 (√-|√-√) and the second line with 4-4 (-√-|√-√-). It might provide evidence that Tulsīdās was aware of these units. In other words, poets of the Prākṛit-Apabhraṃśa periods might have been aware of syllabic units where the inherent vowel *a* was already deleted, just like in Modern Standard Hindi.

If it was the case, we also need to consider whether two light syllables were already equivalent to one heavy syllable in early Hindi literature or not. The following is a *savaiyā* composed by Raskhān (17th c).

kañ-ca-na man-dī-ra ũ-cē ba-nā-i kai mā-ni-ka lā-i sa-dā j^ha-la-kai-ya-ta.
 -√√ -√√ -√ -√√√√ -√√ -√√√ -√√√√
prā-ta hī tē sa-ga-rī na-ga-rī na-ga mo-ti-na hī kī tu-lā-ni tu-lai-ya-ta.
jad-ya-pi dī-na pra-jā-na pra-jā-pa-ti kī pra-bhu-tā ma-g^ha-vā la-la-cai-ya-ta.
e-sē b^ha-e tāu ka-hā ra-sa-k^hā-ni jāu sã-va-rē gvā-ra sō ne-ha na lai-ya-ta.²²

This quatrain is a *savaiyā*, which rhymes at the end (-*aiyata*), each line having eight dactyls (-√√√). The *savaiyā* exceptionally allows heavy syllables to be scanned as light, as is marked by the symbol √ in this example, and there are indeed many such long syllables which should be counted as light. On the other hand, we should note that the heavy syllables in the dactyls of this *savaiyā* do not deviate from the moraic rule; only two types of heavy syllables are used, i.e., one containing a long vowel, e.g., *mo-ti-na* CVV-CV-CV -√√√, and one containing a short vowel followed by a conjunct

²¹ “When leaves are green, [animals] graze, when they become dry, men burn them, and when they bear fruits, men reach out and take them. Tulsi says, selfishness is a friend of everybody. Highest knowledge is a friend of Rama.” (*Dohāvalī* 52)

²² “Having erected a high golden palace, you mounted the jewels on it and made them glitter forever. From early morning all citizens weigh the pearls on scale. Even though your people are poor, Indra longs for your excellency as the lord of the people. What is the use of becoming such [a king], Raskhan says, if you do not have love for Krishna?” (*Sujāna Rasakhāni* 6)

consonant, e.g., *kañ-ca-na* CVC-CV-CV – ˘ ˘ ˘. As mentioned above, a CVCV ˘ ˘ whose last vowel is a short *a* can be counted as a CVC – according to the pronunciation of Modern Standard Hindi, but in this *savaiyā* such a syllable is scanned CVCV, by the rule that the ‘inherent’ *a* has a mora value. If one heavy syllable is equivalent to two light syllables, they should be interchangeable: in Hindi, such cases can occur if a medial syllable contains an ‘inherent’ *a*, e.g., *tu-la-sī* CV-CV-CVV ˘ ˘ – = *tulāśī* CVC-CVV —. But that option is not available in this case. In other words, the inherent vowel *a* was still present at the time when this *savaiyā* was composed in the 17th century. So *rasak^hāni*, the name of the poet, should be scanned *ra-sa-k^hā-ni* CV-CV-CVV-CV, and not *rasā-k^hā-ni* CVC-CVV-CV as in modern pronunciation.

7. Conclusion

Now let us go back to the “4-4 / 3-3-2” rule of Bhānu discussed in section 5. If the ‘inherent’ *a* of early Hindi literature was pronounced as [ə] and had a mora value, why does Bhānu’s rule work? It is obvious that Bhānu found this rhythmic pattern to be different from that of the *dohā* of the previous stage (i.e.,

Prākṛit-Apabhraṃśa period) and to be unique to Hindi. One possibility is that as the short vowel *a* in weak position started to be syncopated, the poets started treating the sequence of two light syllables (CVCV) as one heavy syllable (CVC). The maximal quantity of a Hindi syllable is two moras, but we can introduce a larger syllabic unit called *colon*, e.g., a unit of three or four moras. The phonological rhythm of Hindi might consist of moraic feet as is provided by Hayes’s Metrical Stress Theory (Hayes 1995:162), but repetition of a larger unit, i.e., colon, seems to constitute what could be called the poetic rhythm of Hindi. This rhythm is peculiar to Hindi prosody and is shared by Hindi speakers, and Bhānu might have been aware of it when he mentioned the “4-4 / 3-3-2” rule.

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ヒンディー語の詩のリズムと潜在母音 *a* の脱落

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キーワード：ヒンディー語、ヒンディー韻律、韻文、音韻変化、ドーハー

要旨

ヒンディー韻律には、サンスクリットに遡る音節韻律とプラークリット・アパブランシヤに由来するモーラ韻律があるが、主としてモーラ韻律が用いられ独自の発展を遂げた。本稿は16世紀から近代に至るヒンディー韻律の変化を分析し、ヒンディー語音韻の変化との関連において通時的に考察するものである。まず、モーラ韻律において、3/3/4 vs. 4/4のモーラ単位がヒンディー語に特有の現象である事実を **Bhānu** (1894)の詩論書の記述と **Bryant** (1992)の主張をふまえて明らかにする。次に、音節韻律に保持されていると推定されるリズムを明らかにし、そこに、3/3/4 vs. 4/4の音節単位があることを考察する。これらが分析結果をもとに、現代ヒンディー語では発音されない潜在母音 *a* が脱落する現象がいつ起こったのかをヒンディー韻律の変化を通して考察し、その予兆といえる現象が16世紀の韻文に見られる点を指摘する。

(ながさき・ひろこ)