

जूता — shoe

मेरा जूता है जापानी, ये पतलून इंग्लिस्तानी
सर पे लाल टोपी रूसी, फिर भी दिल है हिंदुस्तानी
मेरा जूता है जापानी ...

This song from Raj Kapoor's 1955 film श्री ४२० must have graced almost as many Hindi classrooms as it has cinemas. It addresses *cultural authenticity*, contrasting imported items on the one hand with an abiding Indianness of spirit on the other. Ironically, while Kapoor's filmic persona seeks to promote Indianness, it actually derives from the 'tramp' character developed forty years earlier, in Hollywood, by the British actor Charlie Chaplin.



Linguistically speaking, the interesting question about the Hindi (or rather, Urdu) usage in this song is: why मेरा जूता rather than मेरे जूते? The answer lies in the fact that जूता derives from Sanskrit युक्तक, a pair, and thence from युक्त yoked, joined. Raj Kapoor has a pair of Japanese shoes!

Sanskrit युक्त is a participial adjective of type that is common in formal Hindi: examples include लिखित written, संपादित edited, प्रकाशित published, and पठित read (from the root पठ्, source of पढ़ना). These -त / -इत endings are cognate with the endings -ed, -en etc, in the English participles that translate them.

युक्त itself derives from the Sanskrit root युज् (from PIE *yeug-) that also yields such words as योग and, in turn, its many derivatives and manifestations (such as yoga in English). The sense of yoking, joining, connecting, pairing is typically involved. Another cognate is the Latinate English word 'jugular', referring to the neck (which, as you may have noticed, joins the head to the body!) Here is CDIAL:

yuktá 10479 yuktá 'joined, yoked' RV., 'engaged in' MBh., 'fit, suitable' Mn., n. 'team' ŚBr., yuktaka -- n. 'pair' Pat. [~ *yukna -- . -- √yuj]

Pa. *yutta* -- 'yoked, coupled, furnished, suitable', °aka -- 'proper'; Aś. *yuta* -- m. 'subordinate official'; Pk. *jutta* -- 'joined'; S. *juto* pp. of *jumbaṇu* 'to be engaged in' s.v. *yunákti*; L. *juttā* pp. of *jovaṇ* 'to yoke' s.v. *yōjáyati*, awāṇ. *jut* 'yoked', *juttuṇ* 'to be yoked'; P. *juttṇā* 'to be joined, be yoked' (caus. *jutāunā*), *jutṇā* 'to be engaged in'; G. *jut* n. 'a carriage to which bullocks are yoked', *jūtōū* 'to be yoked'; Si. *yut* 'engaged on, endowed with', *yuta* 'joined', *yutu* 'suitable, clever'; <-> Gy. rum. *žuto* 'yoke, pair'; Sh. (Lor.) *yuto* 'pair (of anything)'; S. *jūtī* f. 'pair of shoes'; L. *juttī* f. 'pair of shoes', (Shahpur) 'a shoe'; P. *jutt*, *juttā* m. 'large shoe' (*jūt*, *jūtā* m. ← H.), *juttī* f. 'shoe', *jūtī* f. 'wretched little shoe'; WPah.bhad. *jūtō* 'pair of shoes'; Ku. *juto*, pl. *jwātā* 'shoe', N. *juto*; A. *zotā* 'shoe, boat'; B. *jūt*, *jūtā*, *jūtī* 'shoe', Or. *jūtā*, Bi. *jūtā*, *juttā*, *jūtī*, Aw.lakh. *jūtā*, H. *jūt*, *jūtā* m., *jūtī* f., G. *jūtū* n., *jūtī* f.; M. *jūtē* n. 'pair of sandals', *jūtī* f. 'shoe'. -- For formation of new pres. stems in MIA. see *yunákti*.

Returning to our featured word जूता, we find that feet and shoes have particular significance in terms of cultural values, rituals, and psychological associations. Feet ‘mean’ different things in different traditions; but their *defilement by contact with public outside space* often yields associations of impurity, and the soles of the feet should not be exposed to another person’s sight while sitting. To show respect to a person by touching their feet (चरण-स्पर्श, पायलागी) is to acknowledge a hierarchy of respect: even the *feet* of the revered person are worthy of reverence. Shoes, too, are considered impure (especially if made of leather), and are removed on entering honoured spaces; a shoe-beating brings a very particular kind of disgrace. Such implications underlie many of the idioms listed in OHED for जूता and its feminine diminutive जूती —

जूता jūtā [yuktaka-], m. 1. a pair of shoes, shoes; slippers; sandals. 2. a shoe, &c. 3. fig. blow or beating with a shoe; disgrace; a grievous blow. — ~ उछलना, = ~ चलना. ~ उछालना (पर), = ~ मारना. ~ उठाना, to pick up a shoe (to beat one); to perform degrading tasks (for, का). ~ काटना, a shoe to pinch. ~ खाना, to suffer a shoe-beating; to be treated insultingly. ~ गौंठना, to mend a shoe; to do unclean or debasing work. ~ चलना, shoes to be in play: a fracas, or vindictive quarrel, to occur (among, (आपस में). ~ चलाना (पर), = ~ मारना. ~ चाटना (का), to lick the shoes (of): to fawn, to abase oneself. ~ देना (को), = ~ मारना. ~ पड़ना (पर), shoes to fall (upon); = ~ खाना; to receive a humiliating rebuff. ~ बरसना (पर), id., 1. ~ मारना (को), to give (one) a shoe-beating; to treat contemptuously; to give a humiliating rebuff. ~ लगना (को), = ~ पड़ना; ~ लगना (पाँव में), a shoe to pinch. ~ लगाना (को), = ~ मारना, 1. जुते का आदमी, or जूते का यार, m. one only fit to be beaten. जूते सिर पर रखना भागना, fig. to take off (one's) shoes and run ignominiously: to take to one's heels. जूते सीधे करना (के), iron. to set (another's) shoes straight: to fawn (upon). जूते (जूतों) से खंबर लेना, to let one's shoe(s) do the listening: = ~ मारना, 1. जुते (जूतों) से बात करना, to let one's shoe(s) do the talking: = ~ मारना, 1. चाँदी का ~, m. silver shoe: a bribe. मारो ~ इसे! colloq. to the devil with it! forget about it! हवादार ~, m. an open sandal. - जूताखोर [P. -*khōr*], adj. & m. pej. beaten with shoes; mean, base; one who has suffered a shoe-beating, &c. °ई, f. जूता-जूती पर आना, to come to blows.

जूती jūti [cf. H. *jūtā*], f. a small shoe; specif. a woman's shoe, slipper, or sandal. — ~ की नोक पर मास्रा, = जूतियाँ मारना. ~ की नोक से, adv. = ~ से. ~ के बराबर, adj. base, contemptible; of no worth. ~ पर ~ चढ़ना, one shoe to (be found) lying on top of another (regarded as the sign of an impending journey). ~ पर रखकर रोटी देना (को), to support (one) while treating (him or her) with contempt, &c. मेरी ~ से, adv. pej. it concerns (only) my shoes: as far as I am concerned, for all I care. जूतियाँ उठाना (की), to pick up the shoes (of): to perform menial or degrading tasks (for). जूतियाँ खाना, to suffer a shoe-beating; to be treated insultingly; to remain in an abject state of submission. जूतियाँ चटकाते फिरना, to walk about making the shoes creak: to walk about idly, or not knowing what to do. जूतियाँ चलना (में, or आपस में), shoes to be in play: a fracas to occur (among). जूतियाँ पड़ना (पर), shoes to fall (upon): to receive a shoe-beating. जूतियाँ मारना (को), to give (one) a shoe-beating; to treat contemptuously; to speak harshly to, to give a humiliating rebuff. जूतियाँ लगना (को), shoes to fall (upon): = जूतियाँ पड़ना. जूतियाँ सिर पर रखना (की), to place (another's) shoes on one's head: to abase oneself, to grovel. जूतियाँ सीधी करना (की), iron. to set (another's) shoes straight: to fawn (upon). - जूतीखोर [P. -*khōr*], adj. & m. beaten with slippers, &c. (= जूतीखोर). जूती-छिपाई, f. the hiding of a bridegroom's shoes by the bride's sisters and friends; money which he gives to recover them. जूती-पैजार [P. *paizār*], f. a fight with shoes; fracas.

The world has changed in sixty years. Nowadays, मेरी गाड़ी है जापानी....but my जूता, like so many of my manufactured possessions, is from China.