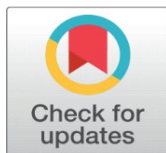
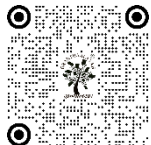


APPLICATION OF RAGANGA IN RAGA MEGH MALHAR AND MADHMAD SARANG: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Received 10 January 2026

Accepted 19 March 2026

Published 11 April 2026

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tapasighoshcu@gmail.com**DOI**[10.29121/shodhkosh.v7.i4s.2026.7242](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v7.i4s.2026.7242)**Funding:** This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.**Copyright:** © 2026 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

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ABSTRACT

Several Hindustani ragas share identical aroh and avroh but differ in chalan, creating distinct flavours, as seen in ragas Megh, Malhar and Madhmad Sarang. While the Malhar raganga impacts Megh Malhar, Madhmad Sarang is impacted by the Sarang raganga. This comparative study qualitatively analysed the placement of the Malhar and Sarang ragangas in Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang through recorded performances of the ragas, comparing prominent phrases within different sections of raga presentation, across five purposively selected Gharanas, resulting in a total sample size of ten. One raga presentation by an established artist from a specific Gharana in raga Megh Malhar was compared to another presentation in raga Madhmad Sarang by a different artist from the same lineage. The application of the Malhar and Sarang phrases was observed through these comparisons. Significant differences were observed in the application of 'mR', 'PnP', and 'PR' phrases for both ragas. Findings showed that the Kanada phrase 'mgmRS' was used to strengthen Malhar in Megh Malhar and to delineate it from Madhmad Sarang, and that Risabh was not always rendered as 'mR' in Megh Malhar; often it was rendered straight as 'R' to give the raga a more masculine character. Comparisons indicated that Megh Malhar had a more complex and heavier personality than Madhmad Sarang. Anga or phrasal analysis offered a new framework for comparing these ragas, illustrating their character and personality as reflected in the performances. Such comparisons provide fresh insights into the qualitative and quantitative studies of Hindustani music, especially for future machine-based and computational research on Hindustani ragas.

Keywords: Raganga, Raga-Personality, Comparative-Study, Expression

1. INTRODUCTION

In Hindustani classical music, a *raga* delivers a unique musical idea through a tonal framework [Tomer \(2013\)](#). In this branch of Indian classical music, several ragas can emerge from identical *aroh* and *avroh*, i.e., ascent and descent, yet have different *chalan* or characteristic movements, creating distinct flavours. Raga Megh Malhar and Raga Madhmad Sarang also share a common aroh and avroh, 'SRmPnŚ' and 'ŚnPmRS', and are classified under the same thata, Kafi. Nonetheless, these ragas have different chalans and exhibit unique personalities. Studies reveal that the chalan is often impacted by each raga's underlying *raganga* (identifying phrase), which influences the vadi-*samvadi* (most important

swaras of a raga), *purvang-uttarang* (lower and upper tetrachords), and *uccharan*, referring to the expression and pronunciation of melodic phrases in a raga [Jha \(2021\)](#), [Ginde \(2020\)](#). That is to say, the personalities of raga Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang become different not only because they have different chalans but also because their chalan is impacted by the Malhar and Sarang angas or raganga.

2. RESEARCH GAP

Previous musicological research on raga Megh Malhar and raga Madhmad Sarang has mainly focused on their historical backgrounds, relying on traditional compositions and expert knowledge [Jha \(2014\)](#), [Banerjee \(2014\)](#), [Nahar \(2002\)](#), [Shah \(1991\)](#). However, the study of how raganga is used in actual raga performances through a comparative analysis of recorded performances has not been explored. Conducting a detailed comparative-analytical study of Hindustani ragas using recordings can therefore enhance existing literature on Hindustani ragas. Specifically, a comparative analysis of Malhar and Sarang ragangas—as they appear in recorded performances of Raga Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang across different gharanas—would show how raganga or the key raga identifying phrase is used at various stages of the raga presentation, such as Alap, Bandish, Vistar, and Taan, thereby revealing their identities and shaping their personalities stage by stage. As Hindustani classical music continues to grow in global popularity, there is a rising need to share research findings with a wider audience. This study aims to broaden the discussion of raganga's role in Hindustani music beyond India and into the international academic community.

3. CONCEPT OF RAGANGA

The word raganga was first used by Matanga to classify ragas of his time. On the other hand, while classifying Desi ragas, Sarangadev, for the first time, elaborated that ragas with *chhaya* or influences of Gramragas were referred to as raganga ragas. Pandit Damodar and Kallinath had the same opinion [Tiwari \(2013\)](#). Bisht has highlighted in her paper that the classification of ragas according to common characteristic phrases was the raganga paddhati, and that this system of classification was officially begun not by ancient authors like Sarangadev or Matanga, but by Bhavabhata [Bisht \(1973\)](#). The word raganga can be broken into raga and anga, where anga refers to a particular melodic form of the raga [Taylor and Rani \(2021\)](#). Bhatkhande has defined anga in Volume IV of *Sangeet Shastra* as that which gets clearly visible, i.e., when a swara is regularly skipped, when the aroh or avroh is presented in a particular way, or when the swaras are curated in distinctive ways [Bhatkhande \(1956\)](#). He was the first to make use of important phrases to classify ragas [Bisht \(1973\)](#). Tiwari has thus derived it that when a special cluster of swaras from the main raga is present in other ragas, then that cluster would be referred to as the *raganga* of that raga. It can thus be concluded that raganga is a special combinational phrase through which a raga can be identified [Tiwari \(2013\)](#), [Patwardhan \(1981\)](#). It is a cluster of swaras that helps to identify a raga's subtleties [Chanchal \(2022\)](#). A raganga is thus referred to as a special, combinational phrase of swaras, which carries the core elements of a particular raga, including komal, tivra, ati-komal, and such swara-positions, ornamentations as kans, gamak, meend, and an intrinsic pace of the raga which is inherent in the phrasing [Bisht \(1973\)](#). All these elements are communicated through ucchar or utchara [Ratanjankar \(1960\)](#), also referred to as uccharan, i.e., expression and pronunciation in raga presentation, by musicologists [Ginde \(2020\)](#), [Jha \(2021a\)](#). The significance of raganga in Hindustani ragas is such that it is considered a classificatory rubric that can accommodate multiple ragas and their variants. A classification system of ragas based on raganga is known as the raganga raga classification system, which emphasises swarup samya, i.e., the distinction based on common characteristic phrases. However, the thata-raga classification of Bhatkhande is often misinterpreted as merely emphasising swara-samya or tonal familiarity of swaras. Bhatkhande, in his thata-raga classification, skilfully employed both concepts to understand and classify ragas. Pt. Bhatkhande's inclusion of most ragas from the Sarang, Malhar and Kanada groups under the Kafi thata in his elaborate descriptions of the ragas in his four-volume Hindustani Sangeet Shastra Series illustrates this.

3.1. CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE NOMENCLATURE OF MEGH MALHAR

The dilemma surrounding the name of raga Megh Malhar is inextricably linked to the ambiguity of its proper form. [Banerjee \(2014\)](#) has opined that Megh Malhar has ancient roots, but differentiated Megh from Megh Malhar, positing the latter as a composite of raga Megh and Suddha Malhar. [Banerjee \(2014\)](#) has stated that Risabh and Nishad are presented as oscillating swaras in the raga. According to her, the inclusion of 'R-P' sangati and a nyas, i.e., pause or rest on Madhyam in Megh Malhar, differentiates it from Megh, bringing it closer to raga Madhmad Sarang since 'R' is vadi and 'P' is samvadi

in Madhmad. [Laxmi \(2020\)](#) has held Risabh as the nyas swara in raga Megh Malhar. However, [Banerjee \(2014\)](#) has argued that although Risabh can be an extremely important swara in raga Megh Malhar, it cannot be used for nyas in the raga because it is almost always oscillated, and depends on Madhyam for assistance. Other musicologists, like [Nahar \(2002\)](#), have observed that the same raga, previously referred to as Megh in texts such as Brihaddesi, Bharatbharyam, Sangeet Ratnakar, or Sangeet Raj, is later referred to in texts such as Sangeet Parijat as Megh Malhar. Therefore, many musicians and musicologists have considered Megh and Megh Malhar to be the same raga. As this study analyses recorded performances primarily from the twentieth century and contemporary times, this comparison is grounded in the nomenclature Megh Malhar, not Megh, to contrast the personalities of the two ragas and observe their relative similarities and differences.

Madhmad Sarang has often been referred to as Madhyamadi, Madhyamad, or Madhumad Sarang, among other names. No matter how it is referred to, the form of the raga remains undisputed, unlike Megh Malhar.

3.2. CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF RAGAS MEGH MALHAR, AND MADHMAD SARANG

Raga Megh Malhar is a mishra variant of the Malhar group of ragas, i.e., it has confluences of two or more ragas and is categorised under Kafi thata. Nishad is komal, i.e., flat, in this raga. [Bhatkhande \(1956\)](#) further delineates the raga through its meend-laden 'm-R' and 'n-P' sangatis, a vibrant taar Shadaj, and the 'R-P' sangati. According to the Patwardhan school of thought, the 'mRP' swara-vinyas, or phrasal expression from the Malhar raga, is frequently used in this raga [Patwardhan \(1967\)](#), [Patwardhan \(2015\)](#). As Bhatkhande, Banerjee, Nahar, and others advanced, contemporary musicological perspectives have identified two predominant Prakars: Audav, which omits komal Gandhar and Dhaivat, and Shadav, which features komal Gandhar. Inter-gharana variations in performance practice and divergent opinions on vadi and samvadi exist. While some musicologists, such as [Laxmi \(2020\)](#), have considered Shadaj and Pancham as the vadi and samvadi swaras for this raga, [Banerjee \(2014\)](#) has considered Madhyam as the vadi and Shadaj as the samvadi. [Jha \(2014\)](#) has considered Shadaj, Madhyam, and Pancham as nyāsa swaras for the rāga Megh Malhar. Risabh is called the '*mukha*' swara or the face for raga Megh Malhar [Parrakar \(2000\)](#). Traditionally, Megh Malhar is performed during the monsoon or the second prahar, the second quarter of the night.

Conversely, raga Madhmad Sarang is a chhayalag variant of the Sarang group of ragas and is categorised under the Kafi thata. Madhmad Sarang is distinguished by its komal Nishad and Audav Jati structure, skipping Gandhar and Dhaivat entirely. Rishabh and Pancham function as vadi and samvadi, respectively. Individuated from Vrindavani Sarang due to the use of komal Nishad, Madhmad Sarang is typically performed during the second Prahar of the day, i.e., from 9 am-12 pm. Additionally, Madhyam is significant in Madhmad, and Shadaj, Risabh, and Pancham are nyas swaras in the raga [Jha \(2014\)](#). Madhmad Sarang was previously considered the raganga raga for the Sarang group in place of Vrindavani Sarang, which is now recognised as raganga raga Sarang. [Bhatkhande \(1956\)](#), has illustrated the character of Sarang with phrases 'ṅS, RmR, PR, S' (254) and as 'RmP, PmR' (264). [Ginde \(2020\)](#) lecture demonstration has highlighted the Sarang anga as

'P— mR, R mP— mR- S' , and posited a potential evolutionary link between Sarang and Malhar angas, differentiated primarily by swara pronunciation or 'uccharan - bhed' [Ginde \(2020\)](#), [Thakur \(2019\)](#). [Shah \(2000\)](#) has noted the face of Sarang anga as 'S', 'ṅSR', 'SR', and illustrated characteristic Sarang sangatis and phrases such as 'S', 'mR', 'PmR', 'nPmR', 'RmPmR', 'mPR', 'SRṅS', 'ṅP' to clarify Sarang anga. Sarang anga has been characterised by [Nahar \(2002\)](#) as, 'SR, mR, P Pm R, S'. [Nahar \(2002\)](#) has characterised Raga Madhmad or Madhyamadi Sarang as 'nP mR, RmPmR PmR S ṅSR, SR'. [Jha \(2021a\)](#) has demonstrated raganga in Madhmad Sarang as 'ṅSRmPmR' (0:51), 'ṅSRmR' in purvang, and 'mPnṅPnṅ' (2:27) in the uttarang. 'P-R' in the purvang and 'n-P' in the uttarang have been considered as identifying angas [Nahar \(2002\)](#), [S. Patwardhan \(2015\)](#).

By analysing the differentiating characteristics of ragas Megh Malhar, and Madhmad Sarang, the study aims to fulfil the following objectives:

- To identify qualitative similarities and differences through phrasal comparisons in the raga Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang.
- To examine the application or implementation of the Malhar and Sarang ragangas as they present themselves in the raga renditions.
- To identify, analyse, and elucidate the characteristic and supportive phrases employed by the artists for their raga presentations.

- To investigate and evaluate how phrasal relationships within each raga contribute to the steady building up of the overall character and personality of the ragas.
- To compare and identify relative points of contrast in the phrasal representation of the two ragas through the individual artists' presentational point of view.
- To bridge gaps between musicological studies and the performance practice in these two ragas through such a comparison.
- To find valuable insights into the relationship between technique and aesthetics involved in the phrasal expressions in the performance practice of these two ragas.

4. METHOD

To explore the application of raganga across vocal recordings of Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang, a substantial corpus of approximately 35 performances in both ragas was subjected to detailed auditory analysis. From this dataset, 10 samples were purposively selected and divided into five groups. Phrasal comparisons were made between one sample of raga Megh Malhar and one sample of raga Madhmad Sarang, five times across five different Gharana pairs. The goal was to keep the Gharana consistent in each pair so that the overall rules for rendering the two ragas remained within the aesthetic boundaries of those particular gharanas, as set for the study. The five Gharana pairs included Gwalior, Agra, Jaipur-Atrauli, Kirana, and Rampur-Sahaswan. Each sample features renditions by accomplished Hindustani classical musicians, recognised as leading practitioners within their respective musical lineages, ensuring expertise and authenticity in the raga interpretations.

Depending on the time and availability, either vilambit (slower tempo), madhya laya (medium tempo), or drut (fast tempo) presentations were selected for analysis. Based on the recordings, available theoretical references, audio lectures, and demonstrations on these two ragas, the researcher qualitatively analysed the samples.

4.1. COMPOSITIONAL FOCUS

Previous scholarly research by Nahar (2016) and Banerjee (2014) established the traditional Jhap tala bandish 'Garaje Ghata Ghana' by Sadarang as a canonical composition in raga Megh Malhar. Therefore, to maintain a focused, comparative analysis between Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang, this study exclusively examined recordings featuring this specific bandish for raga Megh Malhar, except for Mallikarjun Mansur's Jhap tala rendition of 'Bolan Lagi' bandish in raga Megh Malhar for Jaipur Gharana. Given the relative consensus regarding the formal structure of raga Madhmad Sarang, a less rigid selection process was employed for compositions in this raga.

Table 1

Table 1 Source Details of Selected Samples				
Pair I	Raga	Artist	Bandish	Source/URL
Gwalior	Megh Malhar	Gajananbuwa Joshi	Garaje Ghata Ghana	Pokri Poki, You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwFVRUBb8xA
	Madhmad Sarang	Veena Sahasrabuddhe	Ranga De Rangrejwa	Vibhuti Productions, YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EKTcxaNqMc
Pair II Agra	Megh Malhar	Lalith J. Rao	Garaje Ghata Ghana	Collected from the artist's husband, N. Jayavanth Rao, by Prof. Tapasi Ghosh
	Madhmad Sarang	V.R. Athavale	Ri Mahi Aj Badhao Raga	Pokri Poki, YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrfZTzL2WRk
Pair III Jaipur-Atrauli	Megh Malhar	Mallikarjun Mansur	Bolan Lagi	Pokri Poki, You Tube: Mallikarjun Mansur Raga Megh (youtube.com)
	Madhmad Sarang	Manjiri Asnare	Ranga De Rangrejwa	Komal Nishad Classical Music, You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpzrsPN2xBk
Pair IV Kirana	Megh Malhar	Bhimsen Joshi	Garaje Ghata Ghana	Raju Asokan, You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHn6a-_Dt5w

	Madhmad Sarang	Venkatesh Kumar	Aj Anjana Diye	Indian Classical Music Boulevard, YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glqTRXkbRbc
Pair V Rampur-Sahaswan	Megh Malhar	Ghulam Sadiq Khan	Garaje Ghata Ghana	AIR Archives, You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoceIHC_XAU
	Madhmad Sarang	Rashid Khan	Thake Sab Gaye Bajaye	Sigar Studio, You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITjEOs4jEK4

5. ANALYSIS

5.1. PAIR I: GWALIOR

Table 2

Table 2 Selected Artists for Comparison			
1	Gajananbuwa Joshi	Raga Megh Malhar	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwFVRUBb8xA
2	Veena Sahasrabuddhe	Raga Madhmad Sarang	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EKTcXaNqMc

Alap

This Nom Tom Alap is not phased in terms of slower-to-faster layas or rhythm sets, as done in the Agra gharana; however, in this elaborate Alap, Gajananbuwa Joshi has demonstrated the essential features of raga Megh Malhar. A brief excerpt of the Alap from the beginning is as follows:

$\dot{n}R-$ RR- RR RRRR- S--- \dot{n} S-- $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{P}^{\dot{n}}-\text{P}^{\dot{n}}-\text{P}^{\dot{n}}-R}$ —
 RiDe- Nene Nene RiReNene Nu-- Re --- ----- -De—
 $\text{P}^{\dot{n}}R$ -----R—R—, S R $\dot{n}S$ $\dot{n}R$ -, SR $\dot{n}S$ $\text{P}^{\dot{n}}$ $\text{P}^{\dot{n}}S$ $\dot{n}R$
 RiDe-- ne---ne--- Ri re Na- na- , Rirena- de—de- Rire-
 SR $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{mg}-\text{mg}-\text{mg}-\text{mg}-\text{m}R-S}$ ---, S S S S $\dot{n}\dot{n}S$ - $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{m}-S}$
 Rire Na- -- -- -- -- -- Nu-- Ne Re Ne Re Tana- Nu m'

Joshi (2019)

The depth and gravity in the uccharan of the 'PnP' phrase, appearing in the mandra saptak, is noteworthy. Here, ' $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{P}^{\dot{n}}-\text{P}^{\dot{n}}-\text{P}^{\dot{n}}}$ ' is pronounced more roundedly, with Nishad being pronounced from Pancham's position, gliding onto the Pancham on the other side. This Nishad sounds slightly lower due to the kan of Pancham than in phrases like 'SR $\dot{n}S$ ' used in this introductory excerpt. ' $\text{P}^{\dot{n}}\text{P}^{\dot{n}}$ ' and the oscillated Komal Gandhar in ' mgmRS ' are often associated with Kanada anga. However, the use of komal Gandhar with the kan of Madhyam suggests that this Kanada phrase in Megh Malhar is used with a lighter hand than the heavy, complex ragas of the Kanada group, such as Darbari.

Often, to lighten the effect of the Kanada phrase, the Sarang phrase 'PmR' is joined by 'S' as 'PmRS' and 'mR' is also converted into 'mRS' following the appearance of 'gmRS' in the Alap, balancing out the impact of the Kanada phrase for Megh Malhar:

$\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{mg} \text{mg} \text{m} R S}$, P m R S , $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{P}^{\dot{n}}-\text{P}^{\dot{n}} \text{m} R S}$, P m R S , mRS ,
 Re Na - Re Na, RiReReNa, Ri—ReNeNeNa, RiReReNa, ReNeNe'

Joshi (2019)

In the case of the Alap in Madhmad, all Malhar phrases like 'mR', 'RP' and 'nP' are found, yet their treatment varies. Double or even triple Komal Nishads, bracketed by one Pancham on each side in 'PnnP', emphasise a sharp pronunciation of Nishad, alongside a prominent Madhyam as part of Alap. 'RmR' is expressed as ' $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{Rm}---\text{mm}---R}$ '. Similarly, 'RP' has appeared as part of another Sarang phrase 'RPM' where 'm' is stressed more, as ' $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{mRPP}---\text{m}---}$ ', making Madhyam prominent again. Though it is noteworthy that 'R' is pronounced with a slight kan of Madhyam, which is outside the norm for this raga, the kan or grace note of Madhyam in this phrase can be considered as the artist's individual aesthetic. Meend is used in both cases, but the pauses and the uccharan differ for Madhmad:

‘SmRm---mm---R mRPP---m---mPnn—P, RmPnmP-- mRPmRm--- P mPmR mRm--
 R(S)n-n---PSnRSPm--R, nSmRm--nRS mRm—R, RPP--mRn RmPnnn--P-
 RmPnmPmmPnnn--P’

Sahasrabuddhe (2021)

The reason behind the sharpness of the Nishad can be that the ‘nn’ in ‘RmPnnP’ is pronounced in arohatmak or ascending way, and therefore it sounds higher, sharper and closer to Taar Shadaj. In a phrase like ‘RmPnmP’, the Komal Nishad gets avrohatmak or descending because of ‘m’ following it and thus sounds less sharp than the previous example. In contrast, Gajananbuwa’s repeated use of Risabh without using the kan of Madhyam, in this excerpt of Alap in Megh Malhar, can be considered as another instance of artistic choice:

‘nR--- R R- R R RRRR- S---
 RiDe- Nene Nene RiReNene Nu—’

‘PS’ ‘nR’, and ‘nS’, have acted as supporting phrases for the phrases of Megh Malhar in this excerpt.

Bandish

However, Gajananbuwa Joshi’s choice is not an exception. Because Bhimsen Joshi, too, refrained from using Madhyam as a kan every time Risabh was repeated in his Megh Malhar rendition. Both have struck at the Risabh without the kan of Madhyam, bringing out the raga’s masculine character. This can be because Megh raga was traditionally considered a Purush raga under the Raga-Ragini classification system. This is likely why Jha (2014) suggested that the raga is predominantly of the Veer rasa, as chivalry is generally associated with the masculine. Malhar anga has been represented in the rendered Bandish through the ‘n-P’ sangati:

X	2		0		3	
R	R	R	-	S	n	S P n P
Ga	ra	ja	-	Gha	ta	- Gha - na

Joshi (2019)

And, also here:

S	-	S	n	R	S	S	nP	n̄n̄	P
Pa	-	wa-	-	sa	Ri-	tu	Aa	-	yi
Pm	nP	Ṣ	-	Ṣ	n	P	Rn	S	-
Du-	li	ha-	-	na	Ma	na	Bha-	-	yi

Joshi (2019)

Gajananbuwa Joshi has rendered the Bandish in a way that the ‘mRP’ phrase of Malhar Jha (2014), Patwardhan 1968, Patwardhan (2015) does not find any place in it. In practice, the artists also appear to modify the renditions of the Bandishes, tailoring them according to their training and artistic preferences. These cases reveal gaps between theory and practice, as well as between traditional knowledge and modern guidelines established through the rendition of the Bandish. Therefore, despite ‘Garaje Ghata Ghana’ being a traditional bandish for Megh Malhar, the artist has chosen to interpret the Bandish in accordance with raga Megh, as distinguished by Bannerjee (2014). Notably, Veena Sahasrabuddhe, in a recorded performance from 1990, rendered the Bandish ‘Barkha Ritu Ayi’ with ‘mRP’; for example, the word ‘Bundariya’ sung at approximately 3:19 minutes is illustrated as ‘SRnS---mRmRP-P-P’ Sahasrabuddhe (2017).

Conversely, in Sahasrabuddhe’s rendition of the Madhmad Sarang Bandish, ‘Rang De Rangrejwa’, the Sam invariably falls on Madhyam through the phrase, ‘RmP’. ‘m’ as mukha swara for Madhmad Sarang, is added to ‘nnP’, as ‘nnPm’ – making the phrase characteristically appropriate for Madhmad Sarang. The ‘n-P’ phrase as part of Sarang anga is demonstrated in the Sthayi in this way

X	2	0	3
P nnPm Pm PnŚ n P m P mR (S)ṅ SR			
Pi ---- ya- --- Ki - Pa - ga- ri- ya-			

Sahasrabuddhe (2021)

In the Antara as:

0	3
nn Pm Pm -P Ś-	
Ran ga De -Mo ri-	

Sahasrabuddhe (2021)

Other than 'n-P' sangati, 'P mR(S)ṅSR' shown in the Sthayi excerpt includes two phrases of relevance 'PmR' and 'nSR'. 'm' in 'PmR' is used as a kan swara; the phrase is pronounced exactly how [Ginde \(2020\)](#) has demonstrated the uccharan of 'P mR' in his lecture demonstration, while differentiating between Malhar and Sarang angas.

Vistar

Next to the Alap and Bandish, Buwa has demonstrated the most essential raga-vachak, i.e. raga- abiding phrase, in the Bolbant section at 04:05 minutes:

'0
 - mR mR mR mR mR mR mR mR mR
 - Ga ra ja Gha ta Gha na Ga a'

Joshi (2019)

Through this layakari or tempo-variation, Gajananbuwa has demonstrated 'mR' sangati, expressed as 'mR', highlighting the mukha swara, Risabh, in its most characteristic way [Thakur \(2019\)](#), [Banerjee \(2014\)](#), hammering on the phrase repeatedly in a different laya than that of the Tabla accompaniment. The layakari unfolds the complete personality of the raga through the Malhar anga, revealed through 'mR'. Additionally, Buwa has used gamak, i.e. deep tonal vibrations and oscillations, generously to emphasise the uccharan of 'mR'.

At 4:18 minutes, Buwa has demonstrated Malhar through 'mR' alongside the Kanada phrase broken into 'mgm' and 'RS' vigorously accompanied by a playful layakari:

X
 'mR mR m RSṅS-- -- RR SS mm RS ṅS mgm RS SSṅ RRS
 Ga ra ja aa--- -- Gha- ta- Gha- Na- -- Kare- Kare Garaje Ghata'

Joshi (2019)

On the other hand, Sahasrabuddhe has illustrated Sarang anga in an elaborate Vistar, beginning at 5:35 minutes with Aakar and concluding with the bol or lyrics of the Bandish at 6:10 minutes. Sahasrabuddhe's treatment of the raga in this raga-vistar suitably brings out a Shringar-based character of Madhmad Sarang through blended phrases like 'RmPnmP', which has 'RmP' blended with 'nmP,' where the aesthetic stress lies on 'mPnn---P' in the following way:

'R m P n m P mPnn---P, mPn---P---m---R -'

Sahasrabuddhe (2021)

Two phrases, 'n-P' and 'm-R', blended as, 'n---P---m---R', have been sung in this excerpt of the Vistar. This phrasing is common to both Megh Malhar and Madhmad. However, Sahasrabuddhe has calmly and carefully handled the meends, stressing and highlighting 'n' and 'm' without pouring influences of subsidiary swaras on them.

Taan

Gajananbuwa has niftily focused on phrasings in Megh Malhar in each Sargam and Taan. Interestingly, in the following Taan, the dominance of Malhar phrases ‘mmR’ and ‘RPPmnn’ are such that Kanada phrase ‘gmRS’ is reduced to ‘gmm SRR nSS’ where komal Gandhar is not oscillated, and ‘nnP’ eventually becomes ‘nmmPP’ shedding much of its weight before approaching the Kanada phrase:

‘**mmRSnS mmRSnS mmRSnS nnPmRSnS, mmRSnS, mmRSnSRR, SRRnSS, PnSRRSmm, RPPmnnPnRnR,**
nSSPnmmPP, **gmmSRRnSS**’

Joshi (2019)

Though ‘RP’ is audible in the example cited above, its use in the Taans of Megh Malhar does not follow the usual Malhar pattern; however, this contradicts the observation that the artist has presented it as Megh, not Megh Malhar, based on earlier sections where ‘RP’ was not used. ‘nRR’, ‘SRR’ emphasize Risabh. At the same time, ‘nSS’, ‘PSS’, ‘mnnP’, ‘nmmPP’, along with the previously mentioned phrases, firmly hold the melodic structure of Megh Malhar.

In contrast, in this Aakar Taan at 10:03 minutes, Sahasrabuddhe fascinatingly used swaras ‘m’, ‘R’, ‘P’ side by side and yet saved it from sounding like the Malhar phrase ‘mRP’ through her artistic expertise and sense of proportion, so that the phrasing conveys ‘RmRmP’. Sahasrabuddhe also illustrates Sarang anga, ‘nnP’ followed by ‘m’ and ‘RmR’ through the following Taan:

‘nSRmmmRPPmPmnnnPmRmRSnS-’

Sahasrabuddhe (2021)

Regarding the use of the ‘RmR’ phrase in any Sarang raga, Ramshankar (2012) has noted that it is central to all types or Prakars of Sarang.

Thus, through phrasal comparison, the depth and lightness in the application of similar phrases in the two ragas with identical scales become practically observable, and their nuanced application can be used for advanced studies.

5.2. PAIR II: AGRA

Table 3

Table 3 Selected Artists for Comparison			
1	Lalith Rao	Raga Megh Malhar	Collected from the artist’s husband, N. Jayavanth Rao, by Prof. Tapasi Ghosh
2	V. R. Athavale	Raga Madhmad Sarang	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrfZTzL2WRk

Alap

At the very beginning of Lalith Rao’s Nom Tom Alap in raga Megh Malhar, she introduces ‘n-P’ sangati, where Komal Nishad oscillates in the mandra saptak with the kan of Pancham and Shadaj. In Rao’s Alap, ‘n-P’ is emphasized more compared to Athavale’s use of ‘n-P’ in the Alap of Madhmad. The komal Nishad in ‘n-P’, starting from mandra Pancham and from Shadaj, produces two distinct sounds recognisable through careful observation, as seen in this excerpt:

n̄ n̄ n̄ n̄ n̄ S----- —S, Pn̄--- S̄n̄ S̄n̄ S̄n̄ S̄n̄ S̄n̄ S̄n̄ n̄P̄-- , m- Pn̄- S̄n̄ S̄n̄ S̄n̄ S̄n̄ n̄P̄-- ,
Nu- - - - - , Na- - - - - , Re na- - - - - ,

Rao (1991)

This recalls Bannerjee’s (2014) proposition of two komal Nishads with two distinct shrutis audible within the raga (60).

At 8:49 minutes of her Alap, Rao introduces the Kanada phrase:

‘S R - m̄g m̄g m̄g **m—m̄R**, m̄R- m̄R- m̄R- R n̄ S - - -
Re Na - - - - Nu—u Re- Re- Re- Nu - - - -

Rao (1991)

Wherein, ‘gmRS’ is pronounced with gamak and oscillations, then blended with Malhar phrases, broken through ‘m-mR-’ and ‘R n̄ S’ phrases, with the recurring ‘mR’ emphasizing the character of Megh Malhar. The ‘R’ is pronounced with

the kan of 'm'. 'm' in 'm-mR-' is pronounced with gamak and meend. Additionally, 'mR' is repeated and merges into 'R n S', blending Malhar and Kanada phrases in Megh Malhar.

Conversely, V.R. Athavale's Alap of Madhmad Sarang emphasizes a mirror-like Sarang phrase, 'RmR', more than 'n-P' in the introductory part of his Alap, highlighting Madhyam:

'R---m---mmR, PmR Rn n S--, Rm-m-mR, P---m---P---mnP mRm---m(m)R'

Athavale (2020)

By staying on Madhyam with meend in, Athavale has explored the 'm-R' phrase differently in Madhmad Sarang. He has demonstrated the expanse of Madhyam, and additionally, in Athavale's Alap rendition, 'n-P' has been shown in the madhya saptak:

'RmPn---P---Pm--mPnP mRmm-R, mR(n)nS---

Athavale (2020)

On the other hand, Rao, while illustrating the prominence of Risabh in Megh Malhar, has frequently used gamak, as in the phrase 'm-R' Rao (1991). In fact, meend and gamak are common in Rao's Nom Tom. The 'P-R' sangati appears at 8:12 minutes with elongation of the mandra 'P' and a subtle push at 'R' in the madhya saptak.

Athavale's use of Sarang phrases in his Alap shows his dedication to accurately representing the raga, similar to how Rao has aimed to combine a traditional Nom Tom Alap with an ancient raga through a traditional Bandish. Preservation of tradition and adherence to raga rules are key goals for the artists of the Agra Gharana.

Bandish

In the renditions of 'Garaje Ghata Ghana', Rao has repeatedly and distinctly used the kan of Madhyam on Risabh unlike Bhimsen or Gajananbuwa:

X	2		0		3	
R	mR	mR	mRS	S	Rn	S P n P
Ga	ra	ja	--	Gha	ta	- Gha - na

Rao (1991)

Here, 'mR' has represented Malhar in Megh Malhar, 'PnP', Megh. 'Rn' has been identified as a common phrase in Megh Malhar Lakshmi (2018).

On the other hand, Athavale has demonstrated Sarang in the Sthayi section of his Bandish 'Ri Mahi Aj Badhao Raga Gawo' in the following way:

X	2		0		3	
RRSnS SR						
Ri--- Mahi						
m	R	-	RRmPmP	P	mn	P nmP PnS Pn Ppm nmP mR RmR RnS
A	aj	-	BadhaoRa	ga	Ga	wo Sa-- ba-- Mi- la-- Na-- ara a-- Piya

Athavale (2020)

Here, aside from the 'RmR' phrase, 'mnP' and 'nmP' phrases are heard consecutively. Madhyam is emphasized. 'nmP' appears twice with 'PnS' and 'mR' to bring weight to the structure of the Bandish, since previous studies have indicated that 'nmP' is a Malhar phrase Varshaneya (2018) and often a Kanada phrase Jha (2004). This is likely because the depths of a raga are truly explored in the vilambit Bandish.

In Megh Malhar's Antara, the Bandish lyric up to 'Ghana Ghora' is rendered with variations. 'Ora' is sung in one breath like a quick Taan burst, 'nnPmPnS-S'. 'nnP' is followed by 'm', though Madhyam is not sustained for long. Additionally, 'Ghana Ghora' is sung as 'nPmR-S', clearly demonstrating Malhar anga through 'n-P' and the distinct application of Risabh via kan of Madhyam as 'mR', bracketed by taar Shadaj and followed by Shadaj in the madhya saptak and weaving a melodic pattern through the Bandish that is both aesthetically pleasing and technically sound. The notation is provided below:

X		2		0		3			
m	P	nnPm	PnŚ	-Ś	n	P	mR	-	S
Cha	hu	0	-	ra	Gha	na	Gho	-	ra

Rao (1991)

On the other hand, Athavale has used phrases like 'nŚR', 'nP', 'ŚmRŚ', 'P-mR', and 'mRnS', highlighting taar saptak for Madhmad Sarang in the Antara. The phrases used by Athavale do not include ornamentations such as meend, gamak, or kans:

X		2		0		3							
								mm	PŚnŚP				
								Dhana Ma-ng					
nŚ	Ś	nŚR	R-Ś	nŚ	n	P	nŚR	ŚmRŚ	nŚ	nP	mPŚnP	P-mR	mRnS
ga	la	Di-	-na	Dhana	Bha-	ga	Ja-ge	Janamali	yo-	hai-	Raghu	kula-	Nandana

Athavale (2020)

Vistar

Similar phrasings in the ragas often produce different effects. This was particularly evident in the analysis of Rao and Athavale's Vistars. For instance, Lalith Rao has shown Malhar anga through 'mR', 'nP', and 'm-R' phrases in the following Vistar at 39:43 minutes:

'mR m P n P m R (n) SR
Gha ta - Ghana Kare - -

Rao (1991)

The 'm-R' phrase, as 'mR' and 'm-R', creates different effects, shifting weights and proportions according to the rules of raga Megh Malhar. Conversely, Athavale presents the Sarang anga 'm-R' through the 'P mRR' and 'PmR' phrases in the Vistar as follows:

'P mRR --- Rm- PmR nṅS- RṅS—S--
A- aja Ma-- E-- E---- Ma— E--- - -'

Athavale (2020)

Blended phrases were found in both ragas, but each artist's treatment of these phrases differed. For example, Lalith Rao broke away from the rhythm on Tabla and explored the taar saptak using 'mR' and 'nP' phrases, in the Vistar of Megh Malhar. The blended phrasing 'nPmR' was used in the following way:

'Rm PnŚ nPnŚR- nŚmR śnP mR R(S)nS-
Dula ha--- a---- a--- Mana Mana Bha-ye-'

Rao (1991)

Whereas, in the Vistar of Madhmad Sarang 'nPmR' was broken as 'nPR mR' and 'mnPmR' with the use of meends highlighting Madhyam through 'RmR', in Athavale's presentation:

'SRm m—S- (S)n—SR- nPR mR^snS, RmR, RmP mP-- mnPmR SṅS
E--- Ma--- - - ai-, Aa-- Mai---, Aa-- E--- Ma-- aa----- ai—'

Athavale (2020)

Here 'nPR mR' and 'mnPmR', along with 'RmR' without kan swaras, devoid of kans and meends, illustrate Sarang anga. 'RmP' has also been specifically identified as a raga-vachak phrase in Madhmad, by Omkarnath Thakur (2019)

In the Vistar section, as in her entire performance, Rao refrained from portraying 'mRP' or 'RP' as Malhar anga in Megh Malhar. Conversely, at 3:42 minutes, Athavale demonstrated 'RPmP' and 'RPmnP' in such a way that Madhyam appears prominently in these Madhmad phrasings. Although 'nP' is present in his Vistar, it is sung entirely in the madhya saptak, unlike in most cases in Megh Malhar, where the phrase is placed in the mandra saptak, and does not involve any meend or long pause on Pancham or Nishad:

‘**RPmP-** m **PnP** **RPmnP** nmP mRm-R- RmP mP-mRm-RSR- S_n S
A----- A -Mai E---- --- ---- E-- Ma----- ---- ---’

Athavale (2020)

Taan:

Lalit Rao incorporates Bolbant in her rendition of Megh Malhar. Elements like Bolbant help express ragas such as Megh Malhar, especially when sung by a performer from the Agra Gharana, which specialises in playing with laya. An example of this is seen in Rao’s demonstration at 43:25 minutes of her performance:

X
‘S_R- R-Ś **ŚnnP**, -mn- **n-P** **nPmR**, -nn- **nP-P** PmmR R_nS
-Gara- ja-Gha ta-Ghana, -Gara- ja-Gha ta-Ghana, -Gara- ja-gha ta-Ghana Ka-re’

Rao (1991)

Here, the phrases lack meend and ornamentation and are expressed with a roughness and captivating rhythm in the swaras, independent of the tala played in the Tabla accompaniment. The ‘n-P’ sangati is used in various forms such as ‘ŚnnP’, ‘n-P’, ‘nPmR’, ‘nn-nP-P’, etc., where ‘m-R’ and ‘n-P’ sangatis are common to both Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang. ‘PmR’, prominent in Madhmad, is used here as ‘PmmR’, with Pancham and Risabh bracketed by two Madhyams to suit the phrasing for Megh Malhar. This underscores both the closeness and the distinctiveness of phrases present in both ragas simultaneously.

Athavale’s phrasing of Boltaan attempted at 20:25 minutes of his vilambit rendition in Madhmad can be considered here for direct comparison:

2
‘**nnPm** PnŚnŚ-, Śn ŚP **nP nP** Śn RŚ **m̄m̄R̄Śn̄Ś** **nnPm** PmPnŚ **ŚnPmnnPmPmRS**nRS
Eri--- Ma---i-, A- ja- Ba- dha- va- Ray A—ja-Ba- dha-va- Ma----- Ma-----ee-----’

Athavale (2020)

Clearly, ‘ŚnnP’ or ‘nPmR’ phrases of Megh Malhar can be viewed as a direct contrast to ‘nnPm’, where ‘n-P’ is followed by the prominent ‘m’, which is a key note in Madhmad Sarang. ‘m-R’, primarily associated with Malhar anga, is used in this Boltaan as ‘m̄m̄R̄Ś’, emphasizing Madhyam through repetition. Phrasal expressions of ‘n-P’ such as ‘nnPm’ illustrate a trend indicating that Nishad moves swiftly and recurs more often than Pancham in Madhmad.

5.3. PAIR III: JAIPUR-ATRAULI GHARANA

Table 4

Table 4 Selected Artists for Comparison		
1	Mallikarjun Mansur	Raga Megh Malhar Mallikarjun Mansur Raga Megh (youtube.com)
2	Manjiri Asnare Kelkar	Raga Madhmad Sarang https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpzrsPN2xBk

Alap

In this section, while Mallikarjun Mansur has begun with the typical ‘mRP’ phrase, expressed as ‘mR mR mR P’, the ‘mg—mR-S’ phrase of Kanada is also used. The ‘P-R’ phrase is placed in two different saptaks, madhya and taar. Notably, in the Alap renditions of Megh Malhar by Gajananbuwa Joshi, Lalith Rao, Bhimsen Joshi, and Ghulam Sadiq Khan, the ‘PR’ phrase was sung using two different saptaks for ‘P’ and ‘R’, but in those cases, ‘P’ was placed in the mandra saptak and ‘R’ in the madhya:

‘P n S R- m̄R m̄R m̄R P- mg—m R- S-, m̄R m̄R-P-P-P-n m P- R̄-Ś--nŚ- P^Pn—P mP- mg—m R-
S-R n S P^Pn P- P n S R- R-’

Mansur (2019)

'n-P' is common to Sarang, Malhar, and Kanada angas. However, the kan of Pancham added to Nishad denotes Kanada [Jha \(2004\)](#), [Thakur \(2019\)](#). In Megh Malhar, 'n-P' is often found with the kan of Pancham or as Pancham fully pronounced before 'n-P'. 'ṅ S Ṗ Ṛṅ Ṗ' phrasing typically conveys the trepidations of the heart as the monsoon clouds call in. As 'Ṗ Ṛṅ Ṗ' indicates the presence of Kanada [Jha \(2004\)](#), 'ṅ S' added to 'Ṗ Ṛṅ Ṗ' acts as a balancer to the phrase during the rendition of the Alap, invoking seasonal characteristics unique to Megh Malhar. [Jha \(2004\)](#), in his analytical discussion of Suha Kanada, has identified 'PnP' as a phrase suggesting Megh. These observations reconfirm close connections between Malhar and Kanada phrases and illustrate how the same phrases are deployed in different ragas to achieve different effects.

Conversely, Manjiri Asnare Kelkar has demonstrated Sarang anga, dividing her Alap into several phases, beginning with Aakar as, 'ṅSRmPn—P mR, ṅṅ S' [Kelkar \(2022\)](#). The intrinsic pace of the Alap is faster here, compared to Mansur's; therefore, the phrases are automatically delivered with greater speed, which immediately establishes the buoyant and sprightly personality of Madhmad Sarang. This Alap displays smooth movement between arohatmak and avrohatmak swaras, bridged through the 'n-P' phrase. Here is an excerpt:

'mPnŚRŚnŚ PnPmR (in Aakar)
 ṅ S R m P n-- ṅP m R (in syllables)
 Re - Re - Re --- Re ----'

[Kelkar \(2022\)](#) The stress on Nishad is unaccompanied by any kan or influence from other swaras up to this point in the Alap. The last phase of the Alap proceeds as:

'ṅSRmPn, PmPŚ-nnŚ---nŚRŚ-- nŚRmRŚ nŚ Pn
 mPnŚR ŚnmPn- PmR, RmPnPmR,mRṅS-'

[Kelkar \(2022\)](#)

The Sarang phrases are demonstrated through expressions such as 'ṅSR', 'nŚRmR', 'nPmR', 'PmR', and 'mRṅS'. In this phase, Kelkar has used 'm-R' more as a helping phrase to the main phrases of Madhmad Sarang. In contrast, the Alap of Mansur has given greater importance to the 'm-R' sangati, emphasising Risabh through the kan of Madhyam as 'ṅR ṅR P', thereby strengthening the Malhar anga in Megh Malhar.

Bandish

From 0:45 minutes, the Malhar anga 'mRP' is expressed as 'mRRP', and 'mRmRP-P' through the Bandish lyrics, 'Dadura More Bana Bana Papiha Piyu Piyu Karata' in Mansur's rendition of 'Bolan Lagi'. Here, 'mgmRS' -the Kanada phrase is turned into a Malhar phrase by adding 'mRRP' to 'mg':

X		2		0		3	
				mg	mRR	P	- P
				Da	Dura	Mo	- re
mR	mR	P	-	P	nmP	-	Ṛ - Ś
Ba	na	Ba	na	Pa	Pi-	ha	Pi - yu

[Mansur \(2019\)](#)

In contrast, in Kelkar's treatment of Bandish, 'R-P' and 'm-R', sangatis merge as 'Rpm--R-mR' and represent Sarang anga through nyas on the focal swara of Madhmad, which is Madhyam, where the Sam (X) arrives:

X		2		0		3	
				m	R	ṅ	S R P
				Ran	ga	De	- Ran ga
m	-	-	-	R	-	m	R ṅ S
Re	-	-	-	-	e	ja	wa -

[Kelkar \(2022\)](#)

The Malhar phrase 'RP' thus has been made a Sarang phrase by the addition of 'm' as 'Rpm'. 'RmR' is identified exclusively as a Sarang phrase by [Ramshankar \(2011\)](#). Madhyam's prominence in the raga is evident from the fact that the Antara begins with repeated emphasis on Madhyam followed by 'n-P':

X	2	0	3
		m m m P - n P	
		Ran ga de Ai - si -	
n Š - Š Š Ğ Š -			
Su ra ng Chu na ri ya -			

Kelkar (2022)

Vistar

Much like Gajananbuwa Joshi and Ghulam Sadiq Khan, Mallikarjun Mansur has given prominence to the ‘P̣--ṅ--P̣’ phrase in every vital stage of his raga presentation. Though Mallikarjun Mansur has not sung ‘Garaje Ghata Ghana’, his repeated use of the ‘RP’ or ‘mRP’ phrases, as ^{‘mR----- mR RP---P’} in the example of the Vistar presented thereafter, for Megh Malhar, depicts that he was a follower of the same school of thought as Vinayak Patwardhan, particularly concerning the rules of singing raga Megh Malhar. An example of Mansur’s Vistar presentation for Megh Malhar depicting Malhar anga is as follows:

‘RnS-- P̣--ṅ--P̣ -ṅSR-- mR----- mR RP---P--- mḡ mḡmḡm R-- S— mR- -mR mR P---P-

La--- ----- -agi- Da----- du ra--- ---- Mo - re-- ---- Ba - -na Ba na----

nmP Ğ- Š n(P) mḡm-

aaa—Pi- yu Piyu ka ra-’

Mansur (2019)

On the contrary, Kelkar has demonstrated Sarang anga with ‘n---P’ and by breaking it as ‘mn--P’, ‘RmPn—P’, ‘PnPmR’ or by breaking ‘mR’ as ‘PmR’, ‘RmR’, ‘RmP’ and ‘nPmR’, presenting different knitting patterns with the same phrases to achieve new effects.

‘n---P-----mP mn----P, n P m R RmPn—PnPmR m--RmRSṅS’ (in Aakar)

Kelkar (2022)

The ‘PnP’ phrase has been present in the Vistars of both artists, Mansur and Kelkar, and yet, in Megh Malhar, it appears mainly in the mandra saptak. Additionally, Vistars show that the phrases adjacent to ‘PnP’ in Megh Malhar are often ‘nSR’ or ‘SRR’. In contrast, in Madhmad, ‘m-R’ is added as a suffix to ‘PnP’ whenever audible. This indicates that phrases with base or purvang swaras are preferred by artists like Mansur for depicting Megh Malhar, which has a heavier personality, compared to Madhmad Sarang, which has a more easygoing personality.

In the following example, the ‘mRP’ phrase of Malhar is transformed into the ‘mRPm’ phrase of Sarang through the addition of ‘m’ in Kelkar’s Vistar. Phrases like ‘nP’ and ‘nPmR’ show common features between Sarang and Malhar angas. However, inserting ‘mPm’ between ‘mRP’ and ‘n-P’ ensures Sarang’s dominance in Kelkar’s Vistar, as shown below:

‘mRPmPmnP- PnnnŠ---n P m R S-

Rang----- ga-re-ja-wa-’

Kelkar (2022)

Taan

Where Bhimsen Joshi, Ghulam Sadiq Khan, and Gajananbuwa Joshi have rarely used ‘mRP’, Mansur deliberately depicts Malhar anga even in a Boltaan through ‘mRP’, ‘nP’, and ‘PnP’ phrases, inserting komal Gandhar through Kanada phrase ‘gmRS’ towards the end. The recurrence of Risabh is also present in Mansur’s Taan in Megh Malhar:

‘SSS mmm RRR PPP nnnPPPŠ--- ĞĞĞŠŠŠ PnPmPP gmRSṅS

Bo-- la--- na--- La-- a-----gi--- Bo----- la-- na-- la- gi---’

Mansur (2019)

Conversely, Kelkar has demonstrated Vistar through the 'nP' and 'PmR' phrases, ending with Madhyam in the Aakar Taan at 3:43 minutes:

'n--PnPn--PmR, nPn-PmP-mRm-'

Kelkar (2022)

'n-P' has been expressed as 'n—PnPn--P' and 'nPn-P', placing swaras in a zigzag pattern. Wherever 'n' is stressed, it sounds sharper. This is perhaps because it is given more importance than 'P' within the 'n-P' phrase in Madhmad, as is also evident in previous samples. As seen in previous examples, the 'm-R' or 'R-P' phrases have been turned into Sarang phrases by adding 'm' in Madhmad Sarang; thus, here, 'm-R' has been turned into 'mRm'.

5.4. PAIR IV: KIRANA

Table 5

Table 5 Selected Artists for Comparison			
1	Bhimsen Joshi	Raga Megh Malhar	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Hn6a-Dt5w
2	Venkatesh Kumar	Raga Madhmad Sarang	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glqTRXkbRbc

Alap

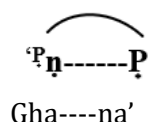
Venkatesh Kumar's Alap of Madhmad is a striking contrast to the composure in Bhimsen Joshi's Alap of Megh Malhar. The display of the spurts of Taans in the Alap of raga Madhmad appears to be Kumar's conscious choice in adopting an initiation technique appropriate to express the personality of raga Madhmad Sarang. An Excerpt:

'mRSnSRmPn—P
mPn--- n--- nPmR—
mRn---SRmP n-Pn---P
mPnŚR--- RŚnP---
Ř--nP--PŚnŚnP---n-- Ś----'

Kumar (2020)

In the Alap of Megh Malhar, phrases such as '(S)nR--, SR(S)nR-', are audible, where mandra komal Nishad, inserted between two adjacent swaras 'S' and 'R', create depth to the raga. The 'nP-R' phrase with meend follows, where 'nP' and 'P-R' sangatis merge. Both combinations are significant for both ragas.

Bhimsen Joshi's Alap emphasizes Risabh at the end of most phrases, likely because it is the mukha swara of raga Megh Malhar, and it is enough to suggest Megh Malhar's identity Parrikar (2000). As sequences like 'nS-nP--P n SR' appear, phrases such as 'nS nP' are responded to with 'P n SR,' resembling a palta. When Bhimsen Joshi sings the *mukhda* or melodic face of the Bandish, 'Garaje Ghata Ghana,' as a prelude to the main presentation, a long meend of the 'n-P' phrase in the mandra saptak evokes the calling of dark, heavy monsoon clouds.



Joshi (2016)

In contrast, in Kumar's Alap, 'n-P' sangati progresses from the mandra to the madhya saptak within a few seconds as: 'nP- Pn SR Pm nP', demonstrating a comparatively lighter character of Madhmad Sarang.

The prominence of 'P-R' sangati placed within the mandra and madhya saptak is notable in the Alap of Megh Malhar by Bhimsen Joshi, Ghulam Sadiq Khan, and Gajanan Rao Joshi.

Bandish:

Bhimsen Joshi begins with 'RRS' placed on 'Garaje', where Risabh is unaccompanied by the customary kan of Madhyam:

X			2			0		
R	R	S	-	R	ṅ	S		
Ga	ra	je	-	Gha	ta	-		

Joshi (2016)

‘RṅS’ appears as a common phrase in both Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang, but what sets them apart is the preceding and succeeding phrasal combinations. In the example given below, Joshi has used the ‘ṅP’ phrase with meend and a touch of gamak following ‘RṅS’, to emphasize Megh in Megh Malhar:

2			0			3		
S	-	-R	S	-	-	-RṅS	ṅP	
je	-	-Gha	ta	-	-	-Gha	na	

Joshi (2016)

The use of meend and gamak in the swaras of the mandra saptak has made Joshi’s bandish rendering in Megh Malhar weightier than Kumar’s in Madhmad. For example, in the rendition of ‘Aj Anjana Diye’, Kumar started as:

X			2			0			3		
n	-	P	nnPm	PnP	mR	RS	Rṅ	SR	mP		
A	a	ja	Aaa	an	ja	na	Di-	--	ye--		

Kumar (2020)

Though Kumar has begun the Bandish with the ‘n-P’ phrase, the traditionally accepted Sarang raganga, emphasising the ‘n’, the ‘PnP’ phrase used for ‘anjana’ does not carry the same weight as in raga Megh Malhar because it lacks the meend and gamak. Additionally, the prominence of Madhyam in the rendition of Madhmad is well known. The Sthayi reinforces this through phrases such as ‘nnPm’, ‘PnPmR’, and ‘SRmP’. These phrases are also delivered more quickly.

It is interesting to observe how both Bandishes have employed the ‘RRS’ phrase, applying each other’s rules interchangeably through the artists’ sense of proportion and choice. In Megh Malhar, the ‘RRS’ has been delivered in a staccato manner, i.e., straight, although it was intended to be pronounced as ‘mR mRS’. In Madhmad, Kumar uses the kan of Madhyam as ‘mR’ in the first ‘R’ of ‘RRS’, where it should have been sung directly in the raga. If ‘mR’ had been repeated in the next ‘R’ of the ‘RRS’ phrase in Madhmad, Megh Malhar could have emerged. Nevertheless, Sarang anga is vibrantly integrated into the Bandish through a skilled arrangement of the remaining phrases in the Madhmad Bandish, as it also is true for Megh Malhar.

Since both ragas share similar phrasings, using the Kanada phrase ‘mgmRS’ offers an easy way to distinguish between them. The second line, ‘Kare Kare,’ in the ‘Garaje Ghata Ghana’ Bandish in Megh Malhar, thus illustrates Kanada phrase, ‘mgmRS’, complemented by the phrase ‘ṅ SR’ of Sarang to balance the phrasal structure of raga Megh Malhar:

X			2			0			3		
R	-	mg	mg	m	R	-	(S)	ṅ	SR		
Ka	-	re	-	-	Ka	-	-	-	re		

Joshi (2016)

Though ‘R’ precedes the andolit or oscillated Komal Gandhar in the ‘mgmRS’ phrase, the kan of Madhyam to komal Gandhar takes it to a higher shruti.

The customary andolan or oscillation of Risabh through the kan of Madhyam in Megh Malhar is found in Joshi’s rendering of ‘Pawas Ritu Ayi’ where ‘mRP’ appears as ‘mR-mR-mRPP.’ This phrase dominantly establishes the Malhar anga:

X			2			0			3		
mR	-	mR	-	mR	P	-	P	ṅm	P		
Pa	-	wa	-	sa	Ri	-	tu	Aa	yi		

Joshi (2016)

Nevertheless, in Bhimsen’s rendition of the line, ‘Dulihana mana bhayi’, ‘nP’ is followed by ‘^mRṅ’, where ‘R’ has the customary kan of Madhyam. ‘Rṅ’ typically represents Megh Lakshmi (2018). The Kanada phrase loses some of its weight, mainly in these last words, where ‘gmRS’ is broken into ‘mgm R’ and ‘^sṅSR’. ‘mgm R’ and ‘^sṅ SR’ knit Kanada, to Sarang phrases in the Bandish preserving Megh Malhar’s identity from Madhmad Sarang:

	2	0		3		
-	nP	^m Rṅ	mgm	R	^s ṅ	SR
-	ha	na	Ma	na	Bha	- yi

Joshi (2016)

Kumar’s rendition of the Antara of Madhmad is full of ‘n-P’ sangati, illustrating Sarang in the uttarang at several points:

X	2	0		3			
n	- P	ṡ	ṡ	ṡ	- ṡṅ	Ṛṡ	nP
Mee	- na	Mri	ga	Hee	- na-	Ku-	la-
n	n P	n	ṡ	ṡ	- ṡ	nṚṡ	nP
La	ja ta	Kha	an	ja	na Na	re-	sha

Kumar (2020)

The ‘n-P’ sangatis have been pronounced without kan of other swaras, unlike most cases in the Megh Malhar bandish.

Vistar

Bhimsen Joshi has established Malhar anga in his Vistar primarily around the ‘^ṅPṅ---P’ phrase. He has emphasised the focal swara Risabh, highlighting combinational phrases such as ‘RRS’, ‘^ṅSR’, and ‘^ṅRR’, which resolve into Shadaj:

R R--S--- ṅS---S----- ^ṅSPṅ---P, R-----S(S)ṅS --ṅSRR—, R S ṅ--- SR ṅRR---
 Ga ra-je— Gha—ta--- -----, Gha---na---Ga—ra—je—, Gh a na Gara je-----
 ṅ-----SR R S--RSSṅ---ṅ ṅSS ṅSRR----RSṅṅS-
 Ga----- ra aa-----je-----’

Joshi (2016)

On the contrary, Kumar has established Sarang anga mainly through phrases such as ‘P^mR’, ‘^ṅSR’, ‘mnP’, and ‘RmR’, emphasising Madhyam, which carries the life force of the raga, as audible in the Vistar:

‘P- PP **mPmR--** R----- mPmnPmR **SṅSR**, mmm-- **RmRṅSRm—**
 An jana Di ye--- E----- Ra- -- Dhe- --- , Radhika Aa-----
 mmm--- Rṅ ṅ-mR ṅR mm Rṅ ṅRm-RSṅSR S-, m- **P- mR**
 Radhika---- aa--- Radhika---- Ra—dhi---ka Ra dhi ka-’

Kumar (2020)

On the contrary, Bhimsen Joshi has pronounced ‘P^mR’ with meend and demonstrated a nuanced Risabh with the kan of Madhyam in Megh Malhar. Here, notably, Risabh is pronounced softly from Madhyam:

‘^ṅSRm---mmP---m-----m P---**P^mR**, P---**P^mR**---ṅS--- ṅSRmP---**mR**-----
 E----- E-----Ga ra—je--- Re—Ga ra--jata---E-----Garaja----

Joshi (2016)

The Vistar demonstrates that when the kan of Madhyam accompanies Risabh, ‘P^mR’ appears as an overlapping phrase common to both ragas, but differs in terms of effect and uccharan.

Although Patwardhan (1967) has suggested the frequent use of ‘mRP’ in Megh Malhar (37), Bhimsen Joshi’s Vistar has relied more on ‘m-R’ and ‘n-P’ sangatis for representing the Malhar anga in the Vistar.

Taan

Although depicting the nuances of raga in Taans can be challenging, Bhimsen Joshi and Venkatesh Kumar have demonstrated otherwise with their Taan renditions of Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang. A comparison follows:

B. Joshi:

‘ $\dot{R}\dot{R}\dot{S} n\dot{S} \dot{R}\dot{R}\dot{S} nPmR S\dot{n}SS-$ ’

Joshi (2016)

Kumar:

‘ $\dot{S}\dot{R}-\dot{R}, n\dot{S}-\dot{S}, Pn-n, mP-P, R-mPn\dot{S}, R-mPn\dot{S}, R-mPn\dot{S}$ ’

Kumar (2020)

Bhimsen Joshi has demonstrated the Malhar anga in this Taan through recurring emphasis on Risabh and the phrase ‘nPmR’. Additionally, taar, madhya, and mandra saptaks have merged. Interestingly, ‘ $\dot{R}\dot{R}\dot{S}$ ’ in Megh Malhar is inverted as ‘ $\dot{S}\dot{R}-\dot{R}$ ’ in the Madhmad Taan by Kumar. The phrase ‘R-mPn \dot{S} ’ is used as a typical arohatmak ascent in Madhmad.

5.5. PAIR V: RAMPUR SAHASWAN

Table 6

Table 6 Selected Artists for Comparison			
1	Ghulam Sadiq Khan	Raga Megh Malhar	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoceIHC_XAU
2	Rashid Khan	Raga Madhmad Sarang	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITjEOs4jEK4

Alap

The Alap demonstrated by Ghulam Sadiq Khan has shown the ‘P-R’ sangati at the beginning, where Pancham is placed in the mandra saptak, and Risabh in the madhya saptak, in the same way as Bhimsen Joshi, Lalith Rao, or Gajananbuwa preferred to demonstrate the sangati in their Alaps. Risabh of ‘P-R’ is not laden with any kan. Here, it has been straight. Malhar phrase ‘m-R’ follows twice and is supported by ‘nS’:

‘ $\overbrace{P R} \text{---}, m R m R S-nS$ ’

Khan (2020)

Conversely, Rashid Khan’s Alap of Madhmad Sarang began with the phrase ‘RSSn’, emphasising Risabh as vadi, i.e., the most important swara. Other Sarang phrases follow. An excerpt illustrates this:

‘RSSn nS----(S)n S---n Pn SR S SR---RmPmRS-S---nSRmP mPm(R)- n---SR SR RSnSn--S---R Rm-----mR--
mRSn nSRmRm---, mRSn nSRmRmPmRS, RmmRmPmR, mRSn- S---nPnRS---RmnPmRS RSnP--nSRPm---
PmRmR(S)nP, PnRSnPS----’

Khan (2021)

Bandish

Ghulam Sadiq Khan emphasizes the Malhar anga at the start of the Bandish ‘Garaje Ghata Ghana’:

X	2			
s_n	R_S	mR	m	R
Ga-	ra-	je-	-	Gha

Khan (2020)

Here, ‘m-R’ sangati appears in two forms: ‘mR’ and ‘m-R’. In the first case, the kan of Madhyam accompanies Risabh. The next ‘m-R’ completes the Malhar anga in Megh Malhar.

‘Ghana’ is sung with a long meend in ‘Pn-P’, where ‘n’ is voiced through the kan of ‘P’, illustrating depth and evoking the call of the monsoon clouds:

3		
Pṅ	-	P
Gha-	-	na

Khan (2020)

And in these places:

Pṅ	P	ṅ	-	S	Rm	R	(S)	Pṅ	P
Pa	-	wa	-	sa	Ri	-	tu	A-	yi

Khan (2020)

Contrary to this, Rashid Khan has used Sarang phrases 'RmR', 'RmP', 'nSR', 'Pm R', and 'n-P', placed on the words 'Guniyana Na', and on the words 'Bicha Bisarayi' in the Bandish 'Thake Sab Gaye Bajaye' in Madhmad Sarang, in the following manner:

X	2	0	3
m - R m	R S ṅ S	R S ṅ P	
Ga - ye Ba	ja ye Gu ni	ya na Na -	

Khan (2021)

n P R m
Bi cha Bi sa
P n - - Pn Pm R SR ṅ SR R
ra - - - -- -- -- a -- yi

Khan (2021)

In Rashid Khan's demonstration of 'm-R' in Madhmad Sarang, a meend can be observed when the word 'Gaye' is sung at 4:13 minutes; however, this meend does not include any kan. The meend relates more to the roundedness of 'Sur' in the raga, without emphasising any specific microtone, as Ravi Shankar illustrates in an interview [Shankar \(2002\)](#).

The phrases 'm-R' and 'R-P' stand for Malhar anga, while angas like 'Rṅ' demonstrate a sangati of raga Megh. When these phrases are arranged differently, they produce a different effect within the Madhmad Sarang Bandish:

X	2	0	3
		R	ṅ S R P
		Tha	ke - Sa ba
m - R m	R S ṅ S	R S ṅ P	
Ga - ye Ba	ja ye Gu ni	ya na - -	

Khan (2021)

When examining the placement of the phrases in this specific example, it becomes evident that the phrasal fragment 'RṅSRPm-RmR' has been divided into 'RṅS', 'RPm', and 'RmR'. Sam (X) occurs on Madhyam as a vital aspect of Madhmad. In this way, the fragment uncovers a cluster of Sarang phrases.

In the Megh Malhar Bandish, the second 'Kare' in 'Kare hi Kare' has been sung through oscillated komal Gandhar, with the kan of Madhyam. The swara positions invite the Kanada phrasing, yet the Shadaj is skipped from the 'mgmRS' phrase, presenting it as 'mgm mR' – only reinforcing Megh Malhar, weakening the effects of Sarang phrases:

X	2	0	3
ṣṇ ṣṇ R - R mg mg m R -			
Ka -- re - Hi Ka - - re -			

Khan (2020)

Another notable contrast between the renditions of raga Megh Malhar and raga Madhmad Sarang is the use of the oscillated komal Nishad, which is audible in the Antara of the rendered Bandish by Ghulam Sadiq Khan.

X	2	0	3
m P ṣṇ ṣṇ n ṣ - ṣ - ṣ			
Bo - le - Da du ra Mo - ra			

Khan (2020)

The phrasal fragment ‘mPṣṇṣṇnṣ’ exhibits andolan, i.e., oscillation in komal Nishad, demonstrating a characteristic trait of raga Megh Malhar due to its emergence from raga Megh Patwardhan (2015), Lakshmi, 2018, Thakur (2019). Such nuances help keep *samprakrutik* or similar ragas, such as Madhmad Sarang, at bay.

Vistar

Heightening the relatively weighty character of Megh Malhar, Ghulam Sadiq Khan has elaborately emphasised the qualities of Malhar anga through the ‘n-P’ sangati, situated in the mandra position:

X

‘ṇ-- S-----ṇ-P---(S)ṣṇ S---(S)ṣṇ-----P ṣṇṇ-- PRS--ṇ P ṇ S---(S)ṣṇ-----ṣṇ-----P, SṃR ṣṇ
 ṣṇ-----P, ṣṇSS ṇ-----P, (S)ṇ-----P, RPṃṇ-----P, ṣṇṇ--ṇ-S---ṇ P ṣ ṇ S-- ṇ P ṇ S-, S ṇPṃR,
 PṃṇP S ṇ S---’

Khan (2020)

The Vistar has emphasised a meend-laden prominence of the ‘n-P’ sangati in Megh Malhar. The ‘n-P’ phrase approached through the mandra saptak is often accompanied by the kan of Pancham as, ‘ṣṇ-----ṣṇ’, and also, Shadaj, as ‘(S)ṣṇ-----ṇ-----ṣṇ’. At one point, ‘R-P’ sangati, absent in the earlier sections, has arrived in the mandra as ‘RPṃṇP’, but it has to be admitted that in Ghulam Sadiq’s interpretation of raga Megh Malhar, ‘RP’ has not acquired the depth and space that ‘n-P’ has received in demonstrating the Malhar anga in the raga Vistar section.

In the next elaboration cycle, starting at 4:55 minutes, komal Gandhar arrives, where the phrasal fragment ‘SRṃg-mg m R, R-S-’ is audible, breaking ‘mgmRS’ into ‘SRṃg-gmR’ and ‘R-S’ phrases, lightening the effect of Kanada phrase once again. The pace of expressing the phrase, i.e., the uccharan, of ‘m-R’ after ‘SRṃg-mg’ as ‘SRṃg-mg m R’ is longer and slower in Ghulam Sadiq’s rendition than the uccharan of ‘m-R’ in Madhmad by Rashid Khan in ‘mPPmR’, ‘RnnP mR’ and ‘mRSṇSRS’ phrases used in raga Madhmad Sarang as could be compared through the following Vistar presented by him:

2

‘RmPn mnPmR----- RnPnnPmR - ṣṇ SR S-
 Ga--- a---ye ----- Ga---a- a- -- ye- --’

Khan (2021)

Taan

In Taans, Ghulam Sadiq demonstrates extensive use of ‘R-P’, ‘m-R’, and ‘n-P’ sangatis. Instead of using komal Gandhar to distinguish Megh Malhar from Madhmad Sarang as before, the ‘R-P’ sangati, which was rarely used in Alap, Bandish, and Vistar, is now more commonly employed by Sadiq:

‘PmPP RmPP RmPP RmPRmRPmP, RmRP, RmRP, RmRPmP, RmPP, RmRS’

Khan (2020)

'RmPRmRS RP SRP, SRSPmP RmRS, RmPRmP, SRmSRPRmRS'

Khan (2020)

Sadiq's insertion of 'RP' in the Taans protects the Malhar anga from the rapid pace of Taans during raga presentations. However, Ghulam Sadiq's preferred speed for performing Taans in the Jhap tala was slower and more relaxed than Rashid Khan's preferred pace of Taans in Madhmad.

Contrary to Sadiq, Rashid's Taans in Madhmad Sarang exhibit a certain ease of movement and a joyful spirit, diving into and across the mandra, madhya, and taar saptak. In the Taan of Madhmad Sarang at 12:10 minutes, the phrasal fragment, 'RP-P-P-P-m-m-mRS', is audible where 'P' and 'm' are repeated multiple times, merging phrases 'RmP' with 'PmR' or 'PmRS' together, in one fragment:

'PmRSRnSnPnmPRP-P-P-P-m-m-mRS-'

Khan (2021)

Additionally, Rashid, in his Akar Taan starting around 16:56 minutes, has demonstrated 'nP' in various expressions such as 'nnPm' and 'nnnPnPm', where the phrases are consistently dissolved into 'm' swara of Madhmad. The Taan presents notable blended phrases, like 'PnPmR', which combine two phrases, 'PnP' and 'PmR', with 'P' serving as the common element between them:

'nnPm PnSRR SnPm PmPnnnPnPm RmRmPnnnPnPm PnPmRSnSS-'

Khan (2021)

Though 'PmR' has been identified as a typical Sarang phrase, and 'PnP' as a Malhar phrase, all scholars and musicologists have undeniably agreed on the evolutionary link between Malhar and Sarang angas. Therefore, the use of 'PmR' and 'PnP' interchangeably in both raga presentations becomes natural. However, the romanticism of the long and bold uccharan of 'PnP' in Megh Malhar can hardly be matched with the uccharan of 'PnP' approached through Madhmad. On the other hand, the feminine sensuousness in the sharp uccharan of 'n' in 'nP' is equally breathtaking and incomparable to the masculine expressions of the many phrases of Megh Malhar.

6. DISCUSSION

The study explored the close associations between the Malhar and Sarang phrases in the ragas Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang, focusing on phrasal similarities and differences that affected the chalans of the two ragas. They are being presented below:

It was found that although Megh Malhar's whole personality was revealed through phrases such as 'PnP' and 'PR', along with 'mR' and other expressions of 'nP', oscillations of komal Nishad with the kans of Shadaj and Pancham in appropriate places, along with the oscillation of Risabh with the kan of Madhyam. The proportion and utilisation of these phrases differed with respect to the artist's choice. When the artist sought a more masculine expression of 'Garaje Ghata Ghana', the Madhyam's kan on Risabh was skipped. When the seriousness of the raga had to be emphasised, the komal Gandhar and the influence of Kanada were introduced. When the seriousness had to be lightened, then a Sarang phrase like 'PmR' or 'nSR' was used.

The present study revealed that several samples demonstrated 'mRP' sparingly, or 'RP' was suddenly given prominence during Taans. Selected artists from Gwalior and Agra Gharanas did not use 'mRP' in their renditions in the usual way. Bhimsen Joshi, a representative of the Kirana Gharana, used it less frequently but demonstrated it skillfully in the Bandish. Moreover, Ghulam Sadiq, selected for Rampur-Sahaswan, used 'RP' only in the Taans of his Megh Malhar rendition. Their scattered use of 'mRP' suggests they considered Megh and Megh Malhar to be the same. The only artist who uniformly employed 'mRP' as Malhar raganga in Megh Malhar at each stage of the performance was Mallikarjun Mansur from the Jaipur Gharana. This conflict was surprising because 'Garaje Ghata Ghana' had previously been acknowledged as a traditional Bandish in the raga Megh Malhar [Banerjee \(2014\)](#), [Nahar \(2002\)](#).

The present study found that the prominence and heavy ucchar of 'RP' was lesser in Megh Malhar than in other Malhar types, like Gaud Malhar or Miya Malhar, and that in Madhmad it was reduced to a supporting phrase [Ramshankar \(2011\)](#). A characteristic such as this brought their personalities dangerously close.

The study also revealed that the phrasings in the Madhmad were mainly built around Madhyam, which, in turn, gave Madhmad Sarang the exclusivity it required over raga Megh Malhar. V.R. Athavale's presentation particularly illustrated this characteristic in the Vilambit setting:

'R---m---mmR, PmR R_n n n S--', Rm-m-mR, P---m—P---mnP mRm---m(m)R-'

Athaval (2020)

By staying on Madhyam with meend in 'R---m---mmR', Athavale explored the 'm-R' phrase in Madhmad Sarang. Other artists who have sung the raga have also emphasised Madhyam.

The difference in the uccharan for phrases like 'P-R' in Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang was also distinct. In Madhmad Sarang, no kan or meend of any swara affected the 'uccharan' of 'P-R' in the raga. In Megh Malhar, 'P' mainly sat in the mandra saptak or lower register, while 'R' was usually in the madhya saptak or middle register. Sometimes, 'P' moved to the madhya saptak, and 'R' to the taar saptak or upper register. Conversely, in Madhmad Sarang, the 'PR' phrase is occasionally used between madhya and taar saptaks but never between mandra and madhya saptak. Though 'PR' has been identified as a characteristic phrase of Sarang Bhatkhande (1956), a key finding of this study is the prominent role of the 'P-R' sangati placed between the mandra and the taar saptak by all artists in their Alaps to express raga Megh Malhar, which was not addressed in previous studies.

Though 'nP' and 'PR' (placed in the mandra and taar saptak) were found to be prominent phrases in all selected renditions of Megh Malhar, the study showed that 'PR' was not the only or most prominent of Sarang phrases in Madhmad Sarang, contrary to claims made by previous studies by S. Patwardhan (2015). In fact, Ramshankar (2011) observed that 'PR' should be treated as a varna or supporting phrase in Madhmad Sarang, not as an anga in the raga.

Moreover, 'PR' sangati is generally ascribed to Kalyan anga. Its presence in Megh Malhar should then suggest the presence of Kalyan anga in the raga. However, this is not true. In Kalyan anga, 'PR' is typically pronounced through Tivra Madhyam as 'P^{mR}' Tiwari (2013) or 'P^{mGR}' (69) or as P-P^R in the case of raga Chhayana (77). The 'uccharan' of Pancham is sometimes noted as '(P)', which has a phrasal cluster like 'PMDP' in the 'uccharan' of 'P' in 'P-R' of Kalyan anga. In contrast, in Megh Malhar, the 'uccharan' of 'P' is always straight and simple.

Often overlapping phrases such as 'P^{mR}' and blended phrases such as 'nPmR' appeared in Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang, but the artists' treatment of these phrases differed in both ragas.

All selected artists used the Kanada phrase 'mgmRS' in their recorded presentations of Megh Malhar, occasionally breaking it into 'mgmR' and 'RS' or 'S_nSR,' or similar phrases. Although the use of komal Gandhar is acknowledged for some cases, the use of the Kanada phrase is not explicitly mentioned for Megh Malhar in either Bhatkhande's *Sangeet Shastra* or V. Patwardhan's *Raga Vigyan*. Additionally, Bhatkhande warned against excessive dwelling on or oscillation between the komal Gandhar to safeguard the form of Megh Malhar Bhatkhande (1956). However, oscillations are common among artists from all gharanas.

Therefore, it was found that for vocal presentations used directly in the study, as well as others not used directly, gharana did not play an important role in the comparison between the ragas Megh Malhar and Madhmad Sarang. Since it was found that Jayteerth Mevundi, the representative of the same gharana as Bhimsen Joshi, rendered raga 'Megh' using 'mRP' Malhar phrase clearly and frequently. However, he did not use komal Gandhar anywhere, which makes his approach to the raga different from Joshi's. Ashwini Bhide, a representative of Jaipur Atrauli gharana, the same as Mansur's, has also used 'mRP' in her presentation of raga Megh Malhar but abstained from using komal Gandhar in her presentation of 'Garaje Ghata Ghana' Bhide (2021). This has been true for Sharafat Hussain Khan's (Agra gharana) rendition of Megh Malhar, too, where the use of komal Gandhar could not be found. In this context, the researcher was informed by her supervisor, also a disciple of renowned musicologist Pt. D.T. Joshi, that some of the artists consider Megh and Megh Malhar identical, and komal Gandhar is not used by them. They are thus sung with the same chalan by those artists. However, some treat Megh and Megh Malhar as distinct ragas, and though komal Gandhar is not employed in Megh, it is employed in Megh Malhar Tapasi Ghosh, *Direct Communication* (2024). In a recording, Yunus Khan has also backed this fact. Before beginning one of his demonstrative presentations, the celebrated Agra doyen and the son of Ustad Vilayat Hussain Khan clearly distinguished between the two types of rendering of Megh Malhar—one with komal Gandhar and another without it Khan (2020).

Like in an earlier paper by [Sarkar and Ghosh \(2023\)](#), this study also revealed that phrases assume different identities depending on the raga in which they are set. For example, 'n_mP' could represent both Malhar [Varshaneya \(2018\)](#), and Kanada [Jha \(2004\)](#) anga, and, as found in Athavale's use, it could also denote Sarang [Athavale \(2020\)](#). Similarly, the 'P_nP' phrase suggested Megh in a raga like Suha Kanada [Jha \(2004\)](#). Hence, it can also indicate Kanada in a raga like Megh Malhar. In fact, interestingly, [Varshaneya \(2018\)](#), in her article on rare Malhar types, analysed 'm_{gm}RS' as both a Malhar and a Kanada phrase in the context of Shwet Malhar, reaffirming the same finding. It can thus be said that phrases such as 'P_nP' or 'm_{gm}RS' have been used to strengthen the Malhar anga in Megh Malhar and keep it far away from Madhmad Sarang.

The study also found 'P_s' to be a supportive phrase for the raga Megh Malhar apart from 'n_s' and 'n_r'. Although 'n_sR' was identified as a Sarang phrase [Shah \(2000\)](#), it appeared in both ragas. Furthermore, it was more prominent in Megh Malhar than other Sarang phrases, such as 'P_mR', perhaps because of its more reflective personality.

7. CONCLUSION

To conclude, it was found that the Malhar raganga 'm_{RP}' appeared in parts, either as 'm_R' or 'R_P', but not consistently across all sections of the raga presentations in Megh Malhar. To address this inconsistency, 'm_{-R}', 'P_{-R}', 'P_nP', and 'm_{gm}RS' were used as prominent phrasal expressions by artists to represent Malhar anga, apart from a notable Risabh, for Megh Malhar. Conversely, different expressions of 'n_{-P}' were highly prominent in the raga illustrations of Madhmad, and given the ancient origin of Sarang, 'n_{-P}' could be regarded as the Sarang raganga. However, several Sarang phrases, such as 'P_mR', 'R_mR', 'R_mP', 'n_sR', and 'm_R', focusing on Madhyam, were collectively found useful for expressing the chalan and revealing the personality of Madhmad Sarang.

While both ragas shared connections to common Sarang and Malhar phrases, their unique characteristics — particularly in their phrasal expressions and uccharan (pronunciation) — set them apart. The n_{ya}s or pause positions, ornamentations such as gamaks and kans, proportionate swar-lagav, i.e., how the swaras were associated with each other within the phrases in the two ragas, contributed to the building of their personalities.

Megh Malhar, with its calm, heavy, monsoon-inspired personality, relied more on the mandra saptak for characterising the Malhar anga. In contrast, Madhmad Sarang, with its more delicate and romantic personality, emphasised the madhya and taar saptak for the phrasal expressions in Sarang anga. It was found that in several cases, musicological reference books on ragas ascertain certain traits, such as the use of 'm_R' in Megh Malhar, as necessary characteristics, but in practice, they are not as stringently followed.

This comparative and analytical research approach thus brought greater clarity to the phrasal movement of the ragas, thereby refining and extending the existing literature on raga musicology, ensuring its continued growth and sustainability.

8. LIMITATIONS

A key limitation of the current study was the limited choice of artists available on the online platform, which could have improved gharana-wise sample pairing and provided a more homogenised setting for comparison across the same time periods.

Another limitation was the small sample size and the qualitative nature, which meant the results could not be generalised across the entire performance practice arena for raga Megh Malhar and raga Madhmad Sarang.

Therefore, although the current study's findings revealed many aspects of raganga application and a comparative-analytical understanding of the phrases, it is worth noting that listening to and comparing vocal samples from available online sources alone cannot provide a complete picture or accurate knowledge of ragas. Therefore, it is equally important to include personal communications and interviews with established musicians in the field to ensure that such studies are accurate and well-founded.

9. FUTURE STUDIES

Future research on raga analysis using compare-and-contrast methods is strongly recommended to fill gaps between the current musicological literature and raga performance practice from a research perspective. Such studies

could also overcome the limitations of machine-based quantitative approaches by providing high-quality, annotated data obtained through qualitative research.

10. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I thank my supervisor, Prof. Tapasi Ghosh, for giving me the idea for this paper and guiding me wherever I stumbled. I am also sincerely grateful to Vidushi Lalith Rao and Jayavanth Rao for sharing one of her exclusive recordings in Megh Malhar with my Supervisor. I am also indebted to my parents and my gurus, Sumanta Sarkar and Mamata Sarkar, for their valuable guidance and support throughout my studies. I also acknowledge the constant moral support of all other family members and fellow scholars

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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