

Concept of Murchana in Hindustani Classical Music (*Graha Bhedam* in Carnatic Music)

Dr. Ashok Da. Ranade, in his book, "MUSIC CONTEXTS- A concise Dictionary of Hindustani Music" defines Murchana thus: "It is a sequential arrangement of seven notes, in ascent or descent, but beginning every time on a different note. The Western concept of key-modulation may come nearest to Murchana. Application of Murchana principle obviously enables generation of new basic frameworks for further patterning of melodic material."

In simple words, the application of Murchana concept consists of the following steps:

- i) Shifting Shadja Sa (the key note) to position of second note of the given Raga; and
- ii) To Find altered notes in the new sequence of notes considering the second note as Shadja; and
- iii) To check if the new sequence matches with the notes of any other Raga;
- iv) To repeat the process by shifting Shadja to other notes in the Raga.

An Auduva (pentatonic) Raga will generate 4 Murchana(s); A Shadava (hexatonic) Raga will generate 5 Murchana(s); and a Sampurna (Heptatonic) Raga will generate 6 Murchana(s).

An example of Murchana(s) of Raga Malkouns will illustrate the process.

Scale	S	r	R	g	G	M	m	P	d	D	n	N	S	r	R	g	G	M	m	P	d	D	n	N	Main Raga	Ragas found by using Murchana Process *	
Malkouns	S			g		M			d		n		S			g		M			d						
Murchana1				S		R			M		P		D													Durga	Durga
Murchana2						S			g		M		P			n										Dhani	Dhani
Murchana3									S		R		G			P		D								Bhupali	Bhupali
Murchana4											S		R			M		P								Madhmad Sarang	Madhmad Sarang

(*In practice, the list of Ragas found by using Murchana Process may include scale-congruent Ragas of the Main Raga and alternative names of those Ragas)

It is likely that any one or more of the resulting Murchana(s) may not correspond to the scale of a known Raga. In that case, a Musician may explore further if the combination can be developed into a new melodious Raga Structure.

Working out Murchana(s) for a Raga manually is a laborious and time-consuming process. To overcome this difficulty, a suitable software programme is designed such that Murchana(s) for any Raga can be worked out at the flick of a button. (oceanofragas.com)