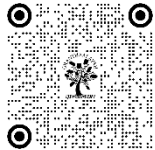


# APPLICATION OF WESTERN HARMONY IN CONTEMPORARY AND ERSTWHILE MUSIC OF INDIA

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## ABSTRACT

This research paper explores into the kinship between Indian music and the western music system through the application of western chords in the Hindustani classical and Indian music. This paper gives us the understanding as how to present a Hindustani classical composition with the help of western instruments like Guitar and Piano. The paper determines the relationship between the two music systems through western theory and how it is applied to the Hindustani Classical and Indian music.

**Keywords:** Chords, Triads, Hindustani Classical, Indian music, Western Music Theory, Harmony

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A chord, in music, is any harmonic set of three or more notes that is heard as if sounding simultaneously.<sup>1</sup> Some musicologists define two or more notes sounding simultaneously are known as a chord.<sup>2</sup> The usual chords are known as Triads. The triads are known as chords comprising of three notes. The notes of a scale are aligned vertically, producing a chord thus creating Harmony. Harmony is the kinship of notes played simultaneously. Distinctive pitches are combined to form harmony. The triad chord is a category of chords made by combining of three notes through a formula of 1-3-5 notes of a scale. The basic four types of triad chords are major triad, minor triad, augmented triad and diminished triad.

	Root	3rd	5th
<b>Major</b>	1	3	5
<b>Minor</b>	1	$\flat$ 3	5
<b>Augmented</b>	1	3	$\sharp$ 5
<b>Diminished</b>	1	$\flat$ 3	$\flat$ 5
$\flat$ =flat/lowered; $\sharp$ =sharp/raised			

Indian music has many different genres. Some famous genres are Ghazal, Bhajan, Thumri, Film music, Qawwali, Indian Pop and Folk music. All these genres are directly associated with western music system. Renowned Ghazal singer Jagjit Singh used to perform Ghazals with western instruments such as Guitar, Piano and Violin. The basic idea of presenting music to the audiences was never limited to Indian music. Western music system uses harmony to make music more exquisite. All the ghazals by Jagjit Singh are played with the arrangement of chords associated to the particular harmony needed for the Ghazal. Every piece of music that is composed has a particular chord combination attached to it to create a harmony. Therefore, Indian Ghazals composed in a Raga is also performed with a set of particular chords associated to it. Hence, we can say that western music system has a direct kinship with Indian music as it involves chords to create harmony. Since the film industry of India has evolved all the music that has been composed are recorded on western instruments such as Guitar and Piano. Many of the music directors like R.D. Burman were greatly influenced by western music artists and western music system which further impacted their music direction to be based on western music and instruments. Indian music was primarily vocal centric and never used harmony. It was always accompanied by monophonic instruments such as Sarangi, Flute and Tanpura. Western music system has been the backbone for recording music in the world. Music would never have been so comprehensive without western system of chords for creating harmony.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand application of western harmony in contemporary and erstwhile music of India we will have to apply the chords in the regarding segment. We would select a song from erstwhile period in Indian music and will apply the concepts of harmonising a melody.

Let's apply western theory on a popular song from erstwhile period 'Ajeeb Dastaan Hai Ye'. ('Dha 'Pa) denotes lower octave.

The notes or swara used in the Sthayi of the song are written respectively:

Ajeeb Dastaan Hai Yeh	Dha Pa/ Dha Pa/ Ga Re/ Sa Ga
Kahan Shuru Kahan Khatam	Dha Pa/ Dha Pa/ Ga Re/ Sa Re
Yeh Manzilein Hain Kaun Si	Ga Re/ Ga Re/ Sa/ 'Ni'Dha/ 'Ni'Dha
Na Woh Samajh Sake Na Hum	Pa Pa/ Dha Pa/ Ga Re/ 'Dha Sa/ 'Pa

The notes or swara used in the Antara of the song are written respectively:

Yeh Roshni Ke Saath Kyun	Sa Re/ Ga Ma/Ga Ma/Re Ma
Dhuan Utha Chiraag Se	Dha Pa/Dha Pa/Ma Ma/ Dha Pa-
Yeh Roshni Ke Saath Kyun	Sa Re/ Ga Ma/Ga Ma/Re Ma
Dhuan Utha Chiraag Se	Dha Pa/Dha Pa/Ma Ma/ Dha Pa
Yeh Khwaab Dekhti Hoon Main	Ni Ni/Dha/Ni Dha/ Ni Dha/Pa Ma
Ke Jag Padi Hoon Khwaab Se	Dha Pa/ Dha Pa/Ga Re /Sa Sa/ 'Pa

Now let us apply western harmony to the song. First, we need to see the notes or swara of the song. Are the songs in Major scale or the Minor scale. The notes or swara are in Major scale. As in this case, there are no Komal or Teevra swaras, only Shudh swaras are used. Now let's choose key C for this song. As the song is in Major scale, we would be applying C Major chord for the beginning of the song. Now let us see the harmony of C Major scale.

**Table 1**

Table 1 Chords in the Scale of C Major		
Degree 1 2 3 4 5	Chord Name	1-3-5 Triad
C D E F G	C Major	C E G
D E F G A	D Minor	D F A
E F G A B	E Minor	E G B
F G A B C	F Major	F A C
G A B C D	G Major	G B D
A B C D E	A Minor	A C E
B C D E F	B Diminished	B D F

Now the notes in the song corresponds to the western counterparts are

C – D- E - F- G- A- B  
Sa-Re-Ga-Ma-Pa-Dha-Ni

Before applying chords to harmonise we should understand that applying chords by music theory is objective though it becomes subjective when different artists harmonize a particular melody.

Dha Pa/ Dha Pa/ Ga Re/ Sa Ga

For the above phrase C Major chord will be applied as it is the root chord and has all the major notes in it and the last stress on the note where it sits for a while where a chord will be applied is Ga which is E note and also used in C Major chord.

Dha Pa/ Dha Pa/ Ga Re/ Sa Re

For the above phrase after C Major chord, D Minor chord will be applied in the end as the last stress on the note where it sits for a while where a chord can be applied is Re which is D note in C Major chord harmony. So, from the above chart we can clearly see that the D note in C Major harmonises when D Minor chord is applied and D note is also used in G Major and B Diminished. Therefore, it is subjective on which chord is used to harmonise the melody.

Ga Re/ Ga Re/ Sa/ 'Ni'Dha/ 'Ni 'Dha

For the above phrase D Minor and F Major chord will be applied as it has the stress on the note Re and Dha where it sits for a while where a chord can be

applied. Re which is D note and Dha which is A note in C Major chord harmony, the above chart we can clearly see that the D note in C Major harmonises when D Minor, G Major and B Diminished chord is applied and the A note in C major harmonises with three chords that is D Minor, F Major and A Minor. Therefore we can harmonise the phrase with all these chords. Though applying chords are subjective.

Pa Pa/ Dha Pa/ Ga Re/ 'Dha Sa/ 'Pa

For the above phrase the stress and where it sits for a while is Pa, Re and Sa (G, D, C) respectively. So, the chords that can be applied are C Major G Major and D Minor. It should be noted that a chord can be applied only where a note or a swara rests in a time cycle.

Sa Re/ Ga Ma/Ga Ma/Re Ma

For the above phrase the song only rests on the last note that is Ma or note F in C Major. Therefore, the chords that can be applied from the chart are F Major, B Diminished and D Minor. In this case F Major would be applied though it is subjective.

Dha Pa/Dha Pa/Ma Ma/ Dha Pa-

For the above phrase the song only rests on note Ma and in the end on Pa. Therefore, the note is F and G in the C Major harmony. So, the chords that can be applied on F note are F Major, B Diminished and D Minor. On the last note that is G the chords can be applied are C Major and G Major.

Ni Ni/Dha/Ni Dha/ Ni Dha/Pa Ma

For the above phrase the song only rests on last note Ma that is F in the C Major harmony. So, the chords that can be applied are F Major, B Diminished and D Minor.

Dha Pa/ Dha Pa/Ga Re /Sa Sa/ 'Pa

For the above phrase the song rests on the note Sa and on the end note 'Pa. The notes are C and G in C Major harmony. Therefore, the chords that can be applied are C Major on C note as the song comes back to the root note and G Major on Pa note.

This is how western concept of harmony can be applied to a song. Though the theory part is objective but the application of harmonising chords is always subjective.

Let us see the notes or swara of popular Raga Bandish Lagey Re Nain Tumse from Raga Bhupali. 'Pa' Dha denotes Lower Octave, Sa' Re'Ga' denotes Higher Octave.

Sthayi

Lagey Re Nain Tumse      Sa Re Ga/ Re Ga Re/ Sa 'Pa/ Ga Re/

Piya More      Re/ 'Dha Re Sa

Ghadi Pal Chin Nahi      Pa Pa Pa Pa/Dha Dha/Pa Ga

Chain Padat Hai      Ga Pa/ Re Ga/ Sa Re/ 'Dha Sa

Antara

Jab Se Piya Pardes Gayo Re

Ga Ga/Pa Pa/Dha/Pa Ga/Sa'Sa'Sa'/Re'Dha Sa'

Dekhi Suratiyan Der Bhayo Re

Re'Re'/Re' Re'Re'/Ga' Re' Ga' Re'Sa'/Sa' Re'/Ga'Re'/Ga'Re'/Sa'.

Binati Karat Hoon Main Paiyaan Padat Hoon

Pa Dha Sa'/Ga'Re'Sa'/Dha Pa/Re Ga/Pa/ Re Re 'Dha Sa.

Now this Bandish is in Shudh Swaras and according to western concepts is in Major scale. Let us apply the western harmony so as to establish chords. Let us choose key C from the following chart:

**Table 2**

Table 2 Chords in the Scale of C Major		
Degree 1 2 3 4 5	Chord Name	1-3-5 Triad
C D E F G	C Major	C E G
D E F G A	D Minor	D F A
E F G A B	E Minor	E G B
F G A B C	F Major	F A C
G A B C D	G Major	G B D
A B C D E	A Minor	A C E
B C D E F	B Diminished	B D F

The notes that correspond to the Bandish in key C:

C-D-E-G-A-C

Now let's apply western harmony for all the phrases.

Lagey Re Nain Tumse Piya More

Sa Re Ga/ Re Ga Re/ Sa 'Pa/ Ga Re/ Re/ 'Dha Re Sa

For the above phrase all the notes are in Major scale. Therefore, the root chord will be C Major as it is the key C. For the above phrase after C Major chord, D Minor chord will be applied in the middle as the last stress on the note where it sits for a while where a chord can be applied is Re which is D note in C Major chord harmony. So, from the above chart we can clearly see that the D note in C Major harmonises when D Minor chord is applied and D note is also used in G Major and B Diminished. Therefore, it is subjective on which chord is used to harmonise the melody. In the end the last note is Sa hence C Major chord will be applied.

Ghadi Pal Chin Nahi Chain Padat Hai

Pa Pa Pa Pa/Dha Dha/Pa Ga/ Ga Pa/ Re Ga/ Sa Re/ 'Dha Sa

For the above phrase Pa note is where it sits for a while which is G note in key C. Therefore from the above chart G note is in C Major chord and G Major chord. So, both can be used but as the song demands the root note C major will be played. In the middle it rests on the note Dha which is not A in key C. Therefore note A from the above chart is in A Minor, F Major and D Minor chords. So, the harmony that the song demands are the harmony of chord A Minor though D Minor and F Major also harmonises with note A. But only A Minor chord is appropriate. In the end the phrase also rests on note Re and Sa. Therefore, note Re is note D in key C. Hence according to the chart D Minor chord will be applied though G major and B Diminished also harmonises. Application of harmony is objective according to the theory but becomes subjective when it is applied from one artist to another.

Jab Se Piya Pardes Gayo Re

Ga Ga/Pa Pa/Dha/Pa Ga/Sa'Sa'Sa'/Re'Dha Sa'

For the above phrase the note where the Bandish rests in on Ga, Pa and Dha. The notes are E, G and A respectively. The notes E and G are both used in C Major chord. Therefore, C Major chord will be applied and after that on note A according to the chart A Minor chord will be applied though F Major and D Minor also harmonises.

Dekhi Suratiyan Der Bhayo Re

Re'Re'/Re' Re'Re'/Ga' Re' Ga' Re'Sa'

/Sa' Re'/Ga'Re'/Ga'Re'/Sa'

For the above phrase the note Re that is note D in the key C is where the Bandish rests a while. Therefore, according to the chart D Minor chord will be applied though G major and B Diminished also harmonises.

In the end the phrase rests on note Sa which is root note C hence C major chord will be applied.

Binati Karat Hoon Main Paiyaan Padat Hoon

Pa Dha Sa'/Ga'Re'Sa'/Dha Pa/Re Ga/Pa/ Re Re/ 'Dha Sa.

For the above phrase the Bandish rests on Sa which is the root note Therefore C Major chord will be applied. In the middle of the phrase, it rests on note C. Now from the C harmonising chart note C is also in A Minor and F Major chord.

Hence both can be applied but according to the Bandish A minor chord is appropriate. In the end note the Bandish rests on note Re and Sa which is note D and Therefore according to the chart G Major chord will be applied as D note is in G major and for the note Sa that is root note, C Major chord will be applied.

Now by applying the western concepts we have harmonised Indian music and also proven that there is a kinship among them otherwise it would not have been possible to apply western theory to the Indian music. One can perform Hindustani classical music and other genres of Indian music by applying concepts of western harmony in music.

Now if we would apply the same concepts of western harmony to the Bandish in the key D major. Now let us see the chart of D Major and apply the same concept of harmonising the above Bandish in key D.

Let us see the harmony in key D Major:

**Table 3**

Table 3 Chords in the Scale of D Major		
Degree 1 2 3 4 5	Chord Name	1-3-5 Triad
D- E- F#- G - A	D Major	D F# A
E- F#- G- A - B	E Minor	E G B
F#- G- A- B - C#	F# Minor	F# A C#
G- A- B- C# - D	G Major	G B D
A- B- C#- D - E	A Major	A C# E
B- C#- D- E - F#	B Minor	B D F#
C#- D- E- F# - G	C# Diminished	C# E G

Following chords will be applied according to the chart.

Lagey Re Nain Tumse      D Major -E Minor

Piya More      E Minor -D Major

Ghadi Pal Chin Nahi      D Major- B Minor-D Major

Chain Padat Hai      D Major-E Minor-D Major

Jab Se Piya Pardes Gayo Re      D Major-B Minor-D Major

Dekhi Suratiyan Der Bhayo Re      E Minor-D Major

Binati Karat Hoon Main

D Major-B Minor

Paiyaan Padat Hoon

D Major-E Minor-D Major.

### 3. CONCLUSION

In this research paper the prime objective was to establish a relationship between western chords and Indian music. In this paper the kinship between the two forms have been discussed. The fundamental or root logics of music are the same everywhere in the world. As in science projects the outcome of a particular experiment would be the same in the world, same as are the laws regarding music in the world which does not change in the different parts of the world.

Therefore, the fundamental laws of music are the same everywhere in the world.

The relationship between Indian music and western music system have been classified. The outcome result of the research paper for application of western harmony in contemporary and erstwhile music of Indian Music have been comprehended.

### CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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