KARṆĀTIK MUSIC: SVARA, GAMAKA, PHRASEOLOGY AND RĀGA
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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last century in Karnāṭik music, the method of understanding rāga has been to break it down into its various components, svara, scale, gamaka, and phrases. In this paper, an attempt is made to define the abstract concept of rāga in its entirety within the aesthetics of Karnāṭik music considering the various components and their symbiotic relationship. This paper also attempts to prove that the identity of a rāga exists as a whole. Section 2 explains the concept of a fundamental musical note or svara. Section 3 illustrates the concept of gamaka or inflections. Section 4 delves into the concept of rāga in detail and then flows into Section 5 which enunciates the identity of a rāga in terms of svara, gamaka, and phraseology. The paper concludes in Section 6, and Section 7 gives the references.

2. SVARA

Usually, in common parlance, a musical note within the context of Indian classical music is called a svara. A svara is considered a definite pitch which relates to and gets its identity from the fixed tonic. There are seven svaras within an octave, Saḍja, Rṣabha, Gāndhāra, Madhyama, Paṇcama, Dhaivata, and Niṣāda, rendered as Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni. The Sa (Saḍja) (Table 1) is the tonic svara. The Pa (Paṇcama), its fifth, is also fixed with respect to the Sa. The svaras Ri Ga Ma Dha Ni have defined variability, meaning they could take two or three pitch positions while Sa and Pa do not. These pitch positions are collectively defined as svarasthānas.

2.1 Variability with respect to svarasthāna and Nomenclature

Every svara has a fixed number of manifestations which are definite pitch positions. For example, as shown in the Table 1, the svara Ri1 has three manifestations viz. Śuddha Rṣabha (Ri1), Catusṛuti Rṣabha (Ri2), and Saṭṛuti Rṣabha (Ri3). These pitch positions are increasing semitones within an octave. Therefore as the Table 1 shows, there are 12 possible manifestations within an octave with Sa and Pa being fixed positions. There also occur overlaps with the same pitch position being shared by two svarasthānas. For example, the Saṭṛuti Rṣabha (Ri3) shares the same pitch position as Śuddhāraṇa Gāndhāra (Ga2). Therefore this pitch position can be interpreted only as one of these two, within a context.

Table 1. Svarasthānas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Nomenclature</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sa</td>
<td>Saḍja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ri1</td>
<td>Śuddha Rṣabha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ri2/Ga1</td>
<td>Catusṛuti Rṣabha/Śuddha Gāndhāra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ga2/Ri3</td>
<td>Śuddhāraṇa Gāndhāra/Śaṭṛuti Rṣabha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ga3</td>
<td>Antara Gāndhāra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma1</td>
<td>Śuddha Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma2</td>
<td>Prati Madhyama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa</td>
<td>Paṇcama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dha1</td>
<td>Śuddha Dhaivata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dha2/Ni1</td>
<td>Catusṛuti Dhaivata/Śuddha Niṣāda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N12/Dha3</td>
<td>Kaiśiki Niṣāda/Śaṭṛuti Dhaivata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ni3</td>
<td>Kākali Niṣāda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Shared svarasthānas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Nomenclature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ri2/Ga1</td>
<td>Catusṛuti Rṣabha/Śuddha Gāndhāra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ga2/Ri3</td>
<td>Śuddhāraṇa Gāndhāra/Śaṭṛuti Rṣabha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dha2/Ni1</td>
<td>Catusṛuti Dhaivata/Śuddha Niṣāda</td>
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<td>N12/Dha3</td>
<td>Kaiśiki Niṣāda/Śaṭṛuti Dhaivata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The occurrence of Ni1 must be preceded by the occurrence of Dha1.

The occurrence of Dha3 must be followed by the occurrence of Ni3.

Therefore, when the following successive pitch positions Sa Ri3/Ga2 Ma1 come together, the shared position can be only understood as Ga2, since Ga3 does not occur after it. Whereas, if the following pitch positions Sa Ri3/Ga2 Ga3 Ma1 occur together, then the shared position is understood Ri3. Thus, as seen in Table 1, we have 16 names given to the 12 definite pitch positions representing 12 svarasthānas.

### 2.2 Variability with respect to movement of a single svara

Even though a svara is referred to as a definite pitch position, it does not manifest itself as a contributing factor to the music unless the svara is a range rather than a point. Thus, the said svara is not perceived as a single point but as a small range of pitch values. In fact, it is in this variability that the identity of the svara lies. This does not imply that the same svara can be rendered at the different absolute pitch values comprising that range but means that the svara perceived is actually its movement within this range. This range is cognitively defined based on the melodic identity and the way in which it is rendered, and it is not governed by any specific rule. The Figure 1 is a histogram of the seven svaras in the melodic source Kalyāṇī. The svarasthānas corresponding to Kalyāṇī are in red. It can be seen that all the svaras are a range of pitch values.

![Illustration of svaras as a range](image)

**Figure 1. Illustration of svaras as a range**

The permissible limit of the movement of the svara is defined in the context of other svaras and at the macrolevel, on the melodic identity that they represent in phraseology and the melody. Any movement of a svara within the permissible limit in a given context and melodic identity, cognitively refers only to one specific svarasthāna. For example, when the svarasthāna Sādhārana Gāndhāra is constantly moving within a range, touching upon even other svarasthānas, it is still cognitively recognized as Ga due to its identity within the context of the phrase and melodic identity. This concept where a svara is used to create a variability of movement in relation to the phraseology and melodic identity, creating a cognitive understanding of the svarasthāna, is defined as a gamaka.

### 3. GAMAKA

Historically, the idea of gamaka is found in treatises right from the Saṅgīta Ratnākara by Śāṅgadeva [1] [2] (12th century) where 15 gamakas are described. One cannot be very sure - for obvious reasons - as to how these gamakas were rendered, since this relates to ancient music. There are many other treatises which discuss gamakas including Rāga Vibodha of Somanātha- 1609 and a much later treatise called Mahābhārata Cidāmnā- 18th-19th c. AD [3]. The Mahābhārata Cidāmnā mentions the concept of the Daśavidha gamakas (10 types of gamakas) [4]. Though this is often quoted by many musicians/musicologists, one does not see a direct connection between many of the types of gamakas described above and the gamakas in use over the last century. Many of the gamakas described in this treatise appear to be phrase movements rather than articulation on a single svara, for example, ārohana (upward melodic movement) and avanohana (downward melodic movement). The closest detailed descriptions of the gamakas, as rendered today, are given in the Saṅgīta Sampradāya Pradarsini (SSP), a treatise by Subbarāma Diṅgaṭa published in 1904. [5] The gamakas described in the SSP [6] are described with respect to their rendition on the instrument Viṇā. The gamakas given in the SSP are listed in the Table 3.

Though, most of the gamakas sung today are similar to the ones described in the SSP, they have evolved in form and context. Gamaka nomenclatures have also undergone a change. The Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the pitch contours for some of the gamakas in vogue today. The most important gamaka, the Kampita gamaka, is dealt with in isolation in this paper. Some of the gamakas in vogue today are described below.

- **Janṭai:** When the same svara is rendered in succession, with a stress on the second. This leads to the touching upon of the immediately lower svara inbetween the two svaras. See Figure 2 subplot 1 (Janṭai).

- **Jāru:** A sliding movement between two svaras is called Jāru. This is of two types, ascending and descending. See Figure 2 subplot 2 (Jāru).
Gamaka Variations

Kampita Liña
Andolita
Plāvita
Sphurita
Pratyāghāta
Nokku
Āhata Ravai
Khan. d. ippu
Vali
Ullasita Ėţra Žaru
Irakka Žaru
Humpita
Karula Odakkal
Orikai
Tribhinna
Mudrita
Nāmita
Miśrita

Table 3. Gamakas in the SSP

Figure 2. Illustration of Janţai, Žaru and Odakkal

• Odakkal: In vocal music, this gamaka is similar to a Žaru. The gamaka indicates a shift from one svara to the next higher svara and back. The difference between Odakkal and Žaru is in the technique of playing it on the instrument Vṁa. In the Vṁa, if the string is pulled over a single fret indicating a shift, it is Odakkal. For playing a Žaru, multiple frets are traversed upon. See Figure 2 subplot 3 (Odakkal)

• Orikai: This gamaka is a movement from a svara to the next higher svara, and then descending below the svara with which this movement began. See Figure 3 subplot 1 (Orikai).

• Khan. d. ippu: This gamaka is a descent from a svara, briefly touching upon the next lower svara and landing on the subsequent svara. This movement is expressed as one svara which is the final svara on which this movement ends. See Figure 3 subplot 2 (Khan. d. ippu).

• Sphuritam: Starting on a svara higher than its own position and quickly descending to its position which is repeated. See Figure 3 subplot 3 (Sphuritam).

All the above movements, though traversing multiple svaras, are musically expressed as only one svara.

3.1 Kampita - The Sound of the Karnāṭīk Music Aesthetics

The gamaka which defines the sound of the Karnāṭīk music aesthetics is the Kampita gamaka.

This gamaka is the meandering of a svara between the adjacent svaras, before and after the svara with which this gamaka is expressed. The peculiarity of this gamaka is that the pitch value or frequency of the svarasthāna is not specifically sounded, but the svara is sung as an oscillation between the notes adjacent to it, before and after the svara [7] (See Figure 4). For example, the musician, sometimes,
when rendering the svara Śuddha Madhyama (Ma1)\footnote{The mention of svarasthānas (eg.;Ni3, Ga2), are only to indicate the reference to the svarasthāna, but does not indicate the form of the svara as explained in section 3.1} within a melodic context with Kampita gamaka does not emphasize the absolute frequency of the svarasthāna Ma1 but is uttering the syllable Ma while at the same time singing Ga3 Pa Ga3. This does not mean that the svara, in itself, does not have any identity when sung with the Kampita gamaka because the identity of the svara itself lies in this movement, within this context. The absolute pitch position of Śuddha Madhyama (Ma1) is one of the frequencies that is sounded during the movement within the gamaka. Another facet of this gamaka that makes it so important for the sound of the aesthetics of Karnāṭik music is that the beginning or end of this gamaka need not be on an absolute pitch position (svarasthāna). Yet, to the cognitive ear, it is still the svara. During many ascending melodic phrases with the Kampita gamaka, the next svara is touched upon before the gamaka of this svara ends on a svarasthāna. It is also found that the svarasthānas Śādārāṇa Gāndhāra or Kāśiki Niṣāda are almost always rendered with Kampita gamaka. Similarly, the svarasthānas Kākali Niṣāda and Prati Madhyama, are rendered with Kampita gamaka very close to the Sadja or Paticcama respectively. This would not be seen in melodic identities which do not have Paticcama or in phrases that lack Sa or Pa. When the permissible range of the Kampita gamaka of a svara within a phrase in a melodic identity is exceeded, it either begins to reflect another melodic identity or sounds out of tune. The Kampita gamaka today includes many varieties of oscillations within its spectrum. This is what makes Karnāṭik music difficult for the untrained ear.

As you can see from above, the understanding of svara as only pitch positions, within the context of Karnāṭik music, does not have any relevance. In fact, when asked to render the Antara Gāndhāra (Ga3) of the rāga Kalyāṇī, any student of Karnāṭik music would naturally sing it with Kampita gamaka. Similarly, if asked to render Kākali Niṣāda (Ni3) of the rāga Kalyāṇī, they would render it very close to the position of Sa with another manifestation of Kampita gamaka. We need to differentiate between svarasthānas, which are technical semitonal positions within an octave and svara, which represents a melodic atom within Karnāṭik music. Therefore, the initial definition given in this paper for svara is redefined. Even svaras that are not articulated are not necessarily sung at the exact frequency of the svarasthāna. Yet, to the cognitive ear, it still sounds as that svara. Though the svaras Sa and Pa are referred to in general as svaras with no gamaka variability, in reality, within the context of many melodic identities Sa and Pa are also articulated within a range.

Another very important point to note with respect to gamakas is that the articulated svaras are generally followed by a svara which is less articulated or not articulated at all. These svaras emphasize and highlight the articulated svaras. Thus, the interrelation between these two forms the basis for a melodic phrase.

4. RĀGA

A rāga is a collective melodic expression that consists of phraseology which is part of the identifiable macro-melodic movement. These phrases are collections of expressive svaras. Therefore, it would be impossible to break down the rāga into its various components. While various phrases within a rāga can be studied and understood independently for theoretical analysis, the rāga exists as a whole. A rāga is not static. Every composition and every performance of the rāga is part of its evolution.

4.1 Cognitively Inherited/Phrase-Based Rāgas

The concept of a rāga is not formulated by choosing the svaras, placing them in the required order, retrofitting the gamakas, formulating the phraseology, and defining it. A rāga has multiple identifiers. It can be identified by a single svara, a single phrase or motif, or a collection of motifs, as every movement within a rāga is an expression of the whole. Most of the older rāgas existed even before the analysis of their components was attempted. This is analogous with literature wherein it is said that the language came first, and the grammar came after. "Cognition of phraseology" is what defines the older rāgas, and this is passed on to us through the compositions in these rāgas. These rāgas are based on the cognition of the phraseologies and the recognition of the aesthetics that their forms and structures give them through compositions and renditions. These rāgas expand with newer phrases and interpretations as long as their defining aesthetics is within the realm of their identities. The aesthetics of these rāgas are largely defined by the usage of the gamakas. In general parlance, most Karnāṭik musicians refer to certain rāgas as heavy rāgas and certain rāgas as light rāgas. A study of rāgas that are commonly classified into these two categories reveals that all rāgas referred to as heavy have a high usage of the Kampita gamaka whereas the lighter rāgas have lesser usage of the Kampita gamaka. It is also found that most of the rāgas referred to as heavy are traditional phrase based rāgas.
4.2 Classification of Rāgas: The Mela system and its influence on perception of Rāga as we see it today

The efforts to classify rāgas in the Mela Era (16th to 19th century) play a very important role in the perception of rāgas as seen today. The idea of mela can be traced to the Svaramejakalānidi of Rāmāmāyana-1550 though Sangītā Sudhā by Govinda Dīkṣita refers to a treatise called Sangītā Sārá by Vidyāranya having been the first treatise to refer to the idea of a mela. Mela refers to a collection of seven svarasthānas. Rāgas that contain a specific set of svaras are grouped in the mela that comprises that set of svarasthānas. The mela was named after the most popular rāga from the group. Even though the name of the mela was that of the most popular rāga, it did not imply that the other rāgas in that mela were a janya (derivative) of the rāga that held the title of the mela. All the rāgas in a mela, including the rāga after which the mela was named, were janyas of the seven svarasthānas that the mela comprised of. At this stage the rāga that held the title for the mela did not need to possess all the seven svaras. The intention of the mela system was to organise existing rāgas that were in practice.

During the later stages of the Mela Era, scholars began computing the maximum number of permutations and combinations possible with the svarasthānas. This is called mela prastāra (mela expansion). Each scholar/author computed his own number of melas depending on the number of svarasthānas they had theorized. One such mela system was first formulated by Venkaṭamakhin in his Caturdanḍi Prakāśika-1620 [8] in which he calculated the possibility of 72 melas from 12 svarasthānas with 16 svara names. At this stage, only 19 melas were in existence out of which 18 already had rāgas. However, one rāga, Simhārava, was the brainchild of Venkaṭamakhin himself. Therefore, this seems the first time that a mela was converted artificially into a rāga. Venkaṭamakhin left open the rest of the 53 melas since there were no rāgas in that period that possessed those collections of svarasthānas. The Rāgalaṅkanā (early 18th century) [9] attributed to Muddu Venkaṭamakhin lists artificially created janya rāgas using the svarasthānas available in each of the remaining 53 melas. It is here that the concept of arohana and avarohana was used as a defining aspect of a rāga. A mela was called a rāṅga [6] rāga, and it was a rule that the rāga which held the title for the mela must contain the seven svarasthānas of the mela, irrespective of whether it appears completely in the arohana, avarohana, or both combined. The first treatise that hints at this condition is Sangītā Sudhā by Govinda Dīkṣita-1614. Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita followed the rāṅga rāga classification in his compositions. The later system of melas which is in vogue today was described in the Sangraha Cādāmaṇi [10] attributed to Govinda. No historical detail of this author is available. In this school, 72 melas were formulated with twelve svarasthānas and 16 names. Out of 72 melas, 6 melas were already functional since there existed old janya rāgas in them. 66 melas were made functional by synthetically creating rāgas that contained those svarasthānas. This mela system uses the term melādhikara (equivalent of rāṅga rāga) and states that the melādhikara, the rāga after which the mela is named, must have all seven svaras in the arohana and avarohana in linear order. Tyāgarāja is said to have given form to many of the rāgas in the mela system formulated by Govinda. 4

4.3 Scale-Based Rāgas

The mela system opens up avenues to an entirely different type of rāgas which are defined solely by the scale which was used to formulate them. Until about the 15th century, the rāgas were mostly born out of phraseology. However, the obvious existence of defined number of svarasthānas and a defined number of names (these varied from treatise to treatise based on how they were described) and the possibility of creating structures within an octave with the permutations and combinations of the above started being explored. This automatically led to each author formulating many rāgas purely on the basis of svarasthānas and their combinations. Such rāgas are referred to as scale-based rāgas. The phraseology of these rāgas is also synthetically formulated. As a result, many phrases among these rāgas are the same, and therefore, no clear rāga cognition occurs because of phraseology. The rāga cognition occurs because of the svaras that appear in the phraseology. In contrast, in the phrase-based rāgas, the rāga cognition is a result of the identity of the phrase. Even if two rāgas share the same svaras, the distinctive phraseology is a distinguishing factor between the two rāgas. Another ramification of the later mela system and the evolution of synthetic rāgas is that the already existing phrase-based rāgas were retrofitted into this scalar structure, thus redefining their identity. This led to artificial changes in the existing rāgas of organic phraseology in the sense that some of the phrases which were inherited were removed since they did not fit in the new scale-based definition of the old rāga. An example is that of the rāga Begada. This rāga was retrofitted to the following scale:

Ārohana: Sa Ga3 Ri2 Ga3 Ma1 Pa Dha2 Pa Sa
Avarohana: Sa Ni3 Dha2 Pa Ma1 Ga3 Ri2 Sa

According to the rule stated above, the ārohana does not allow for a Niṣada. But there are inherited ascending phrases of this rāga which contain the Niṣada. They are today considered wrong, as they do not fit into the ārohana and avarohana of Begada.

An example of phrase containing Ni2 in the ārohana: Ni2 Sa Ri2 Ga3 Ri2 Sa Ni3 Dha2 Pa.

Another example is that occurs in the Begada varna Inta Calamu by Vīnā Kappuyyar in which the phrase Dha2 Ni2 Sa Ri3 occurs even though it does not follow the ārohana rule imposed on the rāga.

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3 There is a difference in nomenclature between the ones used in the Caturdaṇḍi and ones used today

4 Tyāgarāja, Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita and Śvāmī Śāstrī were the musical trinity who lived between the 18th and 19th century.
5. RĀGA IDENTIFICATION: TONIC, SVĀRA, GAMAKA, PHRASEOLOGY

5.1 Tonic and Rāga

It is important to note that a rāga cannot be identified without the tonic. Therefore, the fixed tonic SaJa defines, at a basic level, the rāga that is rendered. Many times, when a line of music is sung without a referred tonic, two individuals would perceive it as two different rāgas based on the svara in the melody which they consider the tonic. This is completely cognitive. For example, in the phrase Ga2 Ri2 Ni2 in the rāga Śaṅkukhapriya, if one identifies the Sa (SaJa/tonic) at Ni2 in that phrase, one will hear Ma1 Ga3 Sa instead of Ga2 Ri2 Ni2, and Ma1 Ga2 Sa in this context is the rāga Nātakurāṇi.

5.2 Identification of a Rāga by a Svara

A svara which immediately gives away the identity of that particular rāga and occurs a maximum number of times in its exposition is called a jīva svara of that rāga (svara that gives life to the rāga). In some rāgas, this jīva svara, even when rendered without a gamaka, can bring out the identity of a rāga in its entirety. An example of a rāga being absolutely discernable by the rendition of a svara alone is Śaṅkaraśāharaṇam. The rāga Śaṅkaraśāharaṇam can be immediately identified by the elongated usage of its Antara Gāndhāra (Ga3). The Figure 5 below shows the emphasis on and the usage of its Antara Gāndhāra (Ga3). This information is completely cognitive. Phraseology which encompasses such a usage of the Gāndhāra has developed over time through different compositions and performances of Śaṅkaraśāharaṇam, emphasizing it.

5.3 Identification of a Rāga with a gamaka

A gamaka expression on a svara in different ways can be used as a cue for identifying rāgas. This concept underlines the fact that the expression of the gamaka in the context of the rāga gives the rāga an identity. An example is the Kampita gamaka which, when expressed in different ways with the Niśāda, differentiates the rāgas Todi and Dhanyāsi. Figure 6 shows the difference in the Kampita gamakas of these rāgas. The Kampita gamaka also gives multiple identities to the same svara in the context of the rāga in which it is sung. This depends on what comes before or after the phrase under consideration. The phrase Pa Ni2 Sa in Madhyamāvati and Pa Dha2 Sa in Kāmbhoji sound exactly the same, but the Niśāda in Madhyamāvati gets its identity as a Niśāda based on what comes before it, in the context of the rāga. The Dhaivata in Kāmbhoji, gets its identity in a similar way. Thus, in that context while rendering the phrase Pa Dha2 Sa or Pa Ni2 Sa as svaras, the utterance of the Dha or Ni gives away the identity of the rāga Kāmbhoji or Madhyamāvati even though Dha2 and Ni2 are rendered exactly the same way.

This shows that identification of a rāga calls for some amount of habituated listening or learning because of the nature of the music. Thus, cognition is an unavoidable requirement for recognition of rāgas.

5.4 Identification of a Rāga with phraseology

A phrase is an interrelation between articulated and unarticulated svaras in a rāga. For organically inherited rāgas, the phraseology has already existed as an intrinsic part and has been passed on in the form of compositions. Many

Figure 5. Illustration of the usage of Ga3 in Śaṅkaraśāharaṇam

Figure 6. Illustration of the Kampita Gamaka in rāgas Todi and Dhanyāsi
compositions in a single rāga by different composers contain common phrases which are characteristic of that particular rāga. These characteristic phrases are those which have existed through the times. The identification of a rāga using these phrases requires listening to the rāga at least one time in a performance, either in the form of an improvisational piece or within a composition. It is very difficult to break phrases, and the beginning and ending of phrases, even the common ones, are based on the context of the rāga they are sung in and the context of their usage within the rāga. Every phrase is therefore closely knit with the phrases that appear before and after it, creating a seamless melodic movement.

There are many phrases which could be common between two rāgas. However, the extension before and after these phrases would define the rāga. Therefore, extrapolating only the common part of these phrases to identify the rāga would be erroneous. Also, a small change in the gamakas of these phrases can reflect a different rāga. For example, the phrase Pa Dha1 Ni2 Dha1 Pa Ma1 with an elongated Niśāda is common to rāgas Todī and Bhauravī, but a gamaka on the svara Ma changes the aesthetic of the phrase, making it sound like Bhauravī. The same Ma when sung without gamaka makes the phrase sound like that of Todī. These associations are entirely cognitive. Similarly, when two rāgas share a common gamaka for the same svara, the position of that svara and its importance within the context of the phrase and rāga determines the identity of the rāga. For example, if a musician begins with the phrase Ni2 Ni2 Ni2 (Kaiśiki Niśāda) with a minimal Kampita gamaka, all cognitively aware listeners would associate it with the rāga Saratī, though the same phrase with exactly the same gamaka can appear in the rāga Rūtigālī. Therefore the relative importance and context of the same phrase in the two rāgas determines the cognitive association between the svara, phrase and the rāga.

It is also important to note that the same phrase may be sung at a slower pace at one point in a performance and at a faster pace at another point. However, some phrases cannot be sung at all speeds. If the phrase is sung at a speed beyond a certain cognitive range defined for the phrase, the identity of the rāga is lost. The primary reason for this is that an increase in speed constricts the identification of the svaras. For example, certain phrases of the rāga Nīlāmbarī cannot be rendered at speeds faster than permitted by the aesthetic of the rāga because the phrase, thus rendered, will sound like that of an entirely different rāga.

6. CONCLUSION

It is very clear that the traditional concept of rāga did not include a logical hierarchical sequence of its various components, rather that rāgas evolved more organically. The rāga form is dependent on svara, gamaka, and phraseology collectively. None of these components can exist in isolation within Karnāṭīk music. Therefore, the usage of any of these terms refers automatically to the collective sound that they create. This is why a rāga is identifiable from as little as a single svara, to the largest collection of phrases. A very important component of the rāga identity is also the role of cognition. This cognition is a result of serious listening or training. For a musician, the rāga form is in its entirety, and the phrases, gamakas, and svaras are not understood in isolation. The later entry of the synthetic rāga influenced the relationship between svara, gamaka, and phraseology. Nevertheless, as seen above, the symbiotic relationship between these variables and the cultivated cognition of rāga is what gives rāga in Karnāṭīk music its form and establishes its uniqueness.

7. REFERENCES

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