The central and predominant concept of Indian Music is Raga. Although it is referred to as a concept, it is really defined as the categories, as concept, type, model, pattern etc. This may be due to the many levels and aspects of Music to which raga applies (Raga has an ideal and technical side). It is an abstract image, often represented in poetry (dhyanamantram) and painting on which one can concentrate and from which inspiration can be derived. This image should be related to the pervading spirit of the raga.

One should get knowledge of raga through various compositions and ragalapana of eminent Musicians. The proficiency in handling of ragas will be attained by devoted study of Vocal Music and Instrumental Music only.

The Musical characteristics defines a raga with its derivative Mela and Janya. The number of ragas is uncertain.

The technical side of a raga must be related to its ideational aspect. This forms an important subject and is a topic of disagreement among artists.

In Hindustani Music, the root may be recognised in the names of tribal or regional code eg. Multani, Kamaja, Todi, Kanada etc. In recent times many artists present mixed ragas. The most important aspect of a raga is its general melodic movement. A raga is brought out through certain phrases that are linked to each other and in which the notes have their proper relative duration.

There are many ragas with the following tone material S R G M P D N S. The differences and the proper structure of these ragas cannot possibly be described with just an aroha and avaroha. A single catch phrase (pakad) on a short outline of the melodic movement can give an insight into the atmosphere of each raga and its possibilities.
The raga Sindura in Hindustani Music which is also called Kafi, is sung in dhrupada style. The raga has a mellow and gentle mood.

Miyaki Malhara is a very solemn raga usually sung in slow tempo. It was invented by Tansen and is referred to as a raga of monsoon. It has a power and strength expressed in heavy gamakas, yet the depiction of the violence of lightning, thunder and downpour should not go out of hand in its depths. Miyanki Malhara is the expression of the peace and blissful soul of a sage in meditation, who has overcome worldly troubles.

Bahara is a spring Raga full of Joy and life. It is rich in Movement and comes out best in fast tempo in the upper half of the middle octave and in the high octave.

The subtle inner quality of raga certainly lies in the duration of each note in the context of the phraseology of the raga.

In North Indian Music, Ragas are mainly classified under Ten Thats.

In South Indian Music, the main or chief ragas are known as Melakartha ragas. There are 10 popular Thats in North Indian Music and 72 Melakartha ragas in South Indian Music. Let us see the Ten Thats of Hindustani sangeeth and their corresponding Melakartha ragas in Carnatic Music.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Hindustani Music That</th>
<th>Swaras used</th>
<th>Corresponding Karnatic ragas</th>
<th>Mela No. in the 72 Melakartha Scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kalyan or Yaman</td>
<td>SRGMPDN</td>
<td>Mechakalyani</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Bilaval</td>
<td>SRGMPDN</td>
<td>Dheera</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sankarabharanam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Khamaj</td>
<td>SRGMPDN</td>
<td>Harikamboji</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bhairav</td>
<td>SRGMPDN</td>
<td>Mayamalavagoula</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The swara sthanas of the classical ragas will be given in the following chapter in a detailed manner. There are many similarities in both versions.

In South Indian Music, there are a number of derivatives for the 72 melakarta ragas and it is impossible to quote such a wide list of ragas. Hence I am giving some Janya ragas, which are similar to Hindustani ragas in its structure, Aroha and Avaroha.

‘Ravichandrika’ a derivative of 28th Mela Hari Kamboji’ is similar to that of (Hari kamboji) of ‘Khamaj That’ in Hindustani music. This is one of the popular ragas. It is a Shadav-Shadav Raga.

\[ \text{SRGMDNS SNDMGRS} \]

Another raga ‘Samantha Sarang’ a derivative of khamaj resembles carnatic Surutiraga to a great extent (28). The raga ‘Sindu Bairavi’ and ‘Hamsanandi’ or ‘Sohini’ is popular in both Carnatic and Hindustani Music. The rag ‘Sindura kafi’ of South and ‘Hindustani kafi’ of North are the same. The Rag ‘Nalinakanthi’ is similar to Rag ‘Tilak Kamod’ - S G R M P N S - S N P M G R S. The Rag ‘Tilang’ of Hindustani Music resembles closely Rag ‘Gambeera Natta’ of South with the scale S G M P N S S N P M R S in the oudava oudava pattern.

Carnatic rag ‘Todi’, 8th melakartha raga is a major raga, which is commonly used for singing ragam, thanam and Pallavi. In this connection it will be interesting to note the Hindustani Raga Bhairavi which uses the same swaras as Karnataka raga ‘Todi’.
‘Chakravaka’, 16th melakartha raga is similarly to Rag ‘Ahir Bairav’ of Hindustani in almost all Sancharas and prayogas.

Venkatamakhi first introduced the That system in Indian Music. It is quite true that two different systems are in vogue in the country named the Southern and Northern Systems, which are known as Karnatic and Hindustani systems of Music. It is just true that the names of the Ragas and styles of singing of the two systems differ from each other, but it can’t be denied that the basic principles such as the ragas and their formation are common to both the systems. Venkatamakhi’s proposition, therefore, which is absolutely based on purely mathematical calculation, will apply to both the systems equally well. Venkitamakhi firmly believes that the number of Thats enumerated by him can neither be increased nor decreased even by Lord Shiva himself. That is unchallengeable.

A Degree of difference exists in the approach of raga formations in the Hindustani and Karnataka systems, in the technical aesthetic aspects. It is commonly found that Hindustani ragas have more than seven notes. Ragas like Lalith and Malhar are good examples for this. Such usages are discouraged in the karnatic music. North Indian ragas have more stress on Vadi Samvadi character. The phrases repeatedly gravitate towards this. The result is that a number of ragas can be created having the same notes by altering these centers of gravity. The Mixed ragas of Hindustani music has its own individuality, eg. Bhairav - (a mixture of ragas Bhairav and Bahar).

There are some ragas which does not give scope for alapana and those ragas are used only for singing krithis. eg: Swarabhooshini of Hindustani music, Narayani of South, Vasantha Bairavi of South and Vasantha Mukhari of Hindustan Music.

Sentiments are the Soul of music not only melodies but even each note is credited with a particular mood or rasa. Different moods are therefore attributed to various ragas. Thus Bhairavi is serene and meditative, Bhairav inspires sublime devotion. Hindol displays sweetness and joy. Melodies like Jogia, Lalith and Todi create pathos or karuna rasa. Sohini, Jai Jaivanti or Dwijawanthi, Bagesri are some romantic or Sringara ragas. Bhoop
and kalyan have a devotional appeal while purvi, Marwa, Bihag, Sree create an atmosphere of calm and quite renunciation. Malkhouns, Adana etc. have a dignified rasa revelation (veera).

In Hindustani music while singing a Bandish in the form of Khyal is given prominence to the purity of notes and ragaalapan.

The Vadi Swara or Jeeva swara plays a very important role in a raga. Based on the komal and tivra varieties of notes and the their association with Nature North Indian Ragas have been divided into three heads.

1. Sandhi prakash ragas. The ragas in which komal Rishabha and Komal Dhaivatha figure.
2. The ragas in which Sudha Rishabha and Sudha Daivata figure.
3. The ragas in which Komala Gandhara and Komala Nishada occur.

In Hindustani music, the saptaswaras are known as Shadj, Rishab, Gandhar, Madhyam, Daivath and Nishad. In Carnatic music the saptaswaras are represented by the syllables S R G M P D N. The 22 sruthis are distributed among the 12 Swarasthanas and seven swaras. The 12 Swarasthanas of Karnatic music and Hindustani Music are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swara name</th>
<th>Syllables</th>
<th>Hindustani</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shadja</td>
<td>Sa</td>
<td>Shadj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudha Rishaba</td>
<td>Ri</td>
<td>Komal Rishab R1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatusruthi Rishabha</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Sudha Rishab R2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadarana Ga</td>
<td>G1</td>
<td>Komal Ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antara Ga</td>
<td>G2</td>
<td>Sudha Ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudha Madyam</td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Sudha : Ma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bhairavi Raga and Neelambari Raga are the two Ragas that belong to the Bhairavi Mela, when, in the above Bhairavi Mela, Dhaivata is changed from sudha to komala, it becomes Mukhari Mela. In this scheme Ga, Dha, Ni are komala swaras. So it becomes similar to the Asaveri form of the later years. There is only one Raga named as Mukhari Raga under this mela. If in the above Mukhari Mela, instead of Sudha Rishabha komala rishaba is applied it becomes Todi-Mela. So in it Re, Ga, Da, Ni - become komal swaras, which is as good as Bhairavi That of later years.

In South Indian Music, Pt. Venkitamakhi opened a new era in the origin of classical music through his work, Chadurdandiprakasika. The scheme 72 Malakarthas came into vogue in the 18th century and the names of the ragas were suggested by Govindacharya, an eminent Musicologist of that century.

Comparing the 72 Melas of Venkita Makhi to the 10 Thats of Bathkande in Hindustani Music, we can see many similarities. The Bilaval That and the corresponding Raga Deera Shankarabharanam has the same swaras in the prayogas especially in singing of Vadi swaras. Lord Shiva, as the name of the raga suggests is common to both branch of music Abarana - the meaning is Naga or Sarpa.
One interesting factor in the name of the raga is that it is always connected with Nature. The names of Birds, Animals, reptiles like snake frequently occur in the Raga catalogue.

Another example is the Rag Bhouli, as the North Indian camel was known as Bhouli in olden days.

The Rag Hamsadhwani itself is the name derived from or denoted by the voice of swan.

Rag Bilahari, (Bilam means Garuda, the bird) represents the voice of the bird. Similarly Chakravakam represents the bird, living in separation in the Night time.

The Rag Ahir Bairav closely resembles Chakravaka.

Similarly Malayamarutham (Marutham means wind) is a pleasing raga and it lightens the mind.

Rag Vasantha Bhoopalam means the mild and fresh voice of birds in the early morning. It is the Janya of Retnangi 2nd Mela with the Arohana and Avarohana S R G P D N S - S N D P M D M G R S.

Varuna Priya denotes the Rain God Varuna. The God Varuna is the existence for all liking beings on earth. Without rain and water which it brings one cannot exist (24th mela raga).

Vasant or Basant in Bengal means the brilliant season of spring. It is considered as a mela raga. It is the Janya of the Poorvi, that and performed in slow tempo. Late night is usually used to sing this raga.

The Carnatic system during Venkitamakhi's days adopted and assimilated several Hindustani ragas and Venkitamakhi had composed Lakshana Grandhas on them during the half of the 18th century.
Muthuswamy Dikshithar was brought up in the tradition of Venkitamakhi and Hindustani Music strongly appealed to him. During his stay in Banarese (Kasi) he had excellent opportunity of listening to Hindustani Music in all its purity. He availed himself of this opportunity for learning it.

Though God is said to be omnipresent only in certain places where his presence is felt or when a devotee loses himself in a place surcharged with holy atmosphere or when a holy man visits a temple or a kshetra, he immortalizes his visit with slokas, stotras, kirtans etc.

Raga - names have been in existence even from pre Ratnakara period. It is impossible to say by whom and when these raga names were coined, though some of them can be traced to certain regions. The names of ragas found in Muthuswami Dikshithar's composition can be studied under several heads.

1. Names which themselves suggest the colour of the deities, body, the dress and ornaments worn by it and pooja samagris used while worshipping.

2. Names which are meaningful syllables prefixed, suffixed, dropped, suggestive of certain emotional aspects.

The name of first Mela Kanakangi as ‘Kanakambari’ in the Assampurna Mela padhathi shows that Parvathi, the Goddess has been addressed as one clad in Kanaka Vastra.

The portrayal of swaras promotes the character of Raga. Ragas needs conscious, expert listening, a carefully nurtured effort and attention. Since raga needs such a focus of facilities if cannot only please and entertain a listener but can enrich the feelings that he possesses with increasing knowledge and discrimination.

It is good to know the name of the raga that gives you a particular feeling or a memory so that you can anticipate that feeling or experience when you know that particular raga as part of a concert.