



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GAYAKĪ AṅG AND TANTRAKĀRĪ AṅG IN HINDUSTANI CLASSICAL VIOLIN

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Abstract: The Hindustani classical violin has developed through sustained interaction with both vocal and instrumental traditions. Among the approaches that have shaped its performance practice, Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg represent two distinctive yet interconnected orientations. The present study comparatively examines these approaches in terms of their aesthetic foundations, technical characteristics, performance practices, and contributions to the evolving identity of the Hindustani classical violin. The study adopts a qualitative and comparative approach, drawing upon relevant scholarly literature and examining the stylistic principles associated with vocal-oriented and instrumental-oriented violin performance. Particular attention is given to melodic treatment, bowing and fingering techniques, ornamentation, rhythmic organization, repertoire, and performance structure. The analysis demonstrates that Gayakī Aṅg emphasizes vocal-like melodic continuity, expressive intonation, swar-lagāṇ, ornamentation, and the communication of rāga-bhāva, whereas Tantrakārī Aṅg foregrounds instrumental articulation, rhythmic development, technical dexterity, layakārī, and instrumental autonomy. The study further finds that these approaches are not rigidly separate or mutually exclusive; rather, they function as complementary orientations within a continuum of musical expression. Their interaction has enabled violinists to negotiate between vocal expressiveness and instrumental independence, contributing to a distinctive Hindustani violin tradition. The study therefore argues that the evolving identity of the Hindustani classical violin is best understood through the dynamic synthesis of Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg, in which expressive depth, technical versatility, and individual artistic identity coexist.

Index Terms - Hindustani Classical Violin, Gayaki Ang, Tantrakari Ang, Violin Performance, Performance Style, Instrumental Music, Hindustani Classical Music.

I. Introduction

The violin occupies a distinctive position in Hindustani classical music and has emerged as one of the most expressive bowed instruments within the tradition. Although the instrument originated in the West, its fretless fingerboard, sustained tone, and flexibility of pitch enabled Indian musicians to adapt it successfully to the aesthetic and technical requirements of Hindustani music. Through the efforts of pioneering violinists, the instrument gradually acquired an independent identity and became capable of presenting the subtle melodic nuances, ornamentations, and expressive characteristics associated with rāga performance (Munshi, 2025).

Hindustani classical music encompasses both vocal and instrumental traditions, each contributing significantly to the development of performance practices. While vocal music has historically occupied a central position in the tradition, instrumental music has evolved through the adaptation and reinterpretation of vocal principles as well as the exploration of techniques unique to individual instruments. Consequently, the relationship between vocal and instrumental aesthetics has remained an important aspect of Hindustani musical thought and practice (Rao, 2014).

Within this artistic framework, Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg represent two essential approaches to Hindustani instrumental performance. Gayakī Aṅg is based on the singing style of Hindustani classical music and aims to replicate the emotive elements of vocal delivery on an instrument. Tantrakārī Aṅg, on the other hand, is an instrumental approach that arose from the technical and aesthetic potential of string instruments, stressing instrumental music-specific performing techniques. Rather than serving as antagonistic conceptions, these two methods have evolved into complementary artistic principles that add to the complexity and diversity of Hindustani instrumental performance (Satyasheil, 2013).

The violin stands out among Hindustani instruments for its amazing flexibility in accommodating both approaches. The bow's sound continuity makes it easier to adapt vocal expressions associated with Gayakī Aṅg, and the instrument's technical agility makes it suitable for Tantrakārī-oriented passages. The growth of Hindustani violin performance demonstrates a dynamic interaction between these two stylistic approaches, allowing artists to strike a balance between melodic expressiveness and instrumental virtuosity based on their creative goals (More, 2021).

Although Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg have garnered scholarly attention in relation to Hindustani instrumental music, comparative debates focused explicitly on their significance in the context of Hindustani classical violin remain relatively restricted. Existing research typically focuses on either the historical evolution of violin performance or the contributions of individual players, but a focused conceptual comparison of these two approaches within violin performance practice is uncommon.

In light of this, the current study seeks to examine the notions of Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg, as well as to compare their stylistic qualities in the context of Hindustani classical violin. It then investigates how these approaches contribute to the instrument's artistic character and performance practice. The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the complementary roles of Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg in shaping the Hindustani classical violin tradition by giving a comparative analysis based on relevant scholarly literature.

II. Conceptual Framework of Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg

The stylistic development of Hindustani classical instrumental music has been influenced by two important aesthetic approaches: Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg. These concepts represent distinct yet complementary modes of musical expression and have played a significant role in shaping the performance practices of various instruments. While Gayakī Aṅg is derived from the singing style of Hindustani classical music and seeks to reproduce vocal aesthetics through instrumental performance, Tantrakārī Aṅg is rooted in instrumental traditions and emphasizes the technical and artistic possibilities of the instrument itself. The understanding of these two approaches is essential for examining the stylistic dimensions of Hindustani classical violin performance.

2.1 Gayakī Aṅg in Hindustani Classical Violin

Gayakī bāj, literally meaning “the style of singing,” refers to an instrumental approach that recreates the expressive nuances of Hindustani vocal music, particularly khayāl. It emphasizes lyrical phrasing, continuous melodic flow, subtle ornamentation, and emotional expression through techniques such as mīnd, gamak, bol-bānt, ākār, and sargam. The evolution of Gayakī bāj is closely associated with the rise of khayāl as the dominant vocal genre during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when instrumentalists increasingly adapted vocal aesthetics into instrumental performance (Khuntia, 2018) (Neuman, 2004).

The violin emerged as one of the most suitable instruments for the realization of Gayakī Aṅg because of its capacity to sustain sound, produce seamless pitch transitions, and closely imitate the human voice. Innovations in tuning, particularly the Sa–Pa–Sa–Pa configuration at a comparatively lower pitch, facilitated extended mīnd, smoother melodic movement, and an effective three-octave range.

Consequently, the violin became capable of presenting rāga aesthetics with remarkable vocal fidelity while preserving the expressive essence of Hindustani classical music (More, 2021).

The development of Gayakī Aṅg on the violin was significantly shaped by eminent musicians such as Dr. N. Rajam, who defined Gayakī Aṅg as the faithful reproduction of vocal music on the violin. According to her approach, the instrument should emulate the expressive qualities of vocal genres such as Dhrupad and Khayāl through refined bowing, nuanced ornamentation, and vocal phrasing. In contrast, artists such as Gagan Babu represented the Gatkārī tradition, while Pt. V. G. Jog successfully integrated both Gayakī and Gatkārī approaches, selecting the style according to the musical context. As noted by his senior disciple Shri Pratap Pawar, Pt. Jog preferred Gayakī while accompanying vocalists and adopted a greater emphasis on Gatkārī during solo recitals. He also encouraged violinists to receive vocal training in order to internalize the subtleties of khayāl performance (Satyasheil, 2013).

The defining characteristics of Gayakī Aṅg in violin performance include the vocal-style presentation of rāga through expressive swar-lagāṇ, sustained bowing, continuous melodic phrasing, and the faithful rendering of vocal ornamentations such as mīnd, gamak, murkī, khaṭkā, and kan-swar. The style further incorporates the performance of bandish, diverse tān patterns, gradual rhythmic development (layakārī), and effective utilization of the violin's three-octave range while maintaining vocal continuity and rāga-bhāva throughout the performance (More, 2021).

In performance practice, a Gayakī-style violin recital generally follows the structural framework of a vocal khayāl presentation. The recital begins with an unmetered ālāp, followed by a vilambit khayāl in tālas such as Ektāl, Jhumrā, Tīntāl, or Tīlwādā. The rāga is then systematically elaborated through bol-ālāp, bol-tān, and ornamented tān passages before progressing to a madhya or drut khayāl and often concluding with a tarānā. Performances frequently end with lighter classical forms such as thumrī, bhajan, kajrī, or chaitī. Throughout the recital, bowing techniques are carefully adjusted to reproduce the natural flow, accents, pauses, and expressive contours of the original vocal compositions, thereby reinforcing the central aesthetic of Gayakī Aṅg (Khuntia, 2018).

2.2 Tantrakārī Aṅg in Hindustani Classical Violin

Tantrakārī bāj, derived from the words tantra (instrument or string) and kārī (technique), denotes an instrumental style that emphasizes the inherent capabilities of the instrument rather than the imitation of vocal music. Unlike Gayakī Aṅg, Tantrakārī focuses on idiomatic instrumental techniques, technical virtuosity, rhythmic sophistication, and the independent development of melodic ideas. Characteristic features of this approach include the extensive use of gat-based improvisation, intricate fingering, rapid bowing, krintan, murkī, gamak, mīnd, and complex layakārī, all of which highlight the expressive and technical potential of the instrument itself. The emergence of Tantrakārī bāj between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries coincided with the growing prominence of instruments such as the Rudra Vīṇā, rabāb, sitar, and sarod. Strongly influenced by the aesthetic principles of the Dhrupad tradition, this style emphasized meditative ālāp, systematic rāga development, precision of intonation, and instrumental virtuosity rather than vocal imitation (Jairazbhoy, 1995) (Satyasheil, 2013).

The adaptation of Tantrakārī Aṅg to the violin marked an important stage in the evolution of Hindustani classical violin performance. While the violin had already been established in South India primarily as a vocal accompaniment following the Gayakī tradition, its acceptance in North India encouraged the development of a distinct instrumental identity. Violinists adopted the performance practices of sitar and sarod, enabling the instrument to render gat, tān, and jhālā with remarkable technical precision. Consequently, the violin evolved from an accompanying instrument into an independent medium for instrumental concert performance, capable of presenting the full expressive range of Hindustani instrumental music (More, 2021).

The defining characteristics of Tantrakārī Aṅg include an emphasis on instrumental articulation, independent bowing, and highly developed fingering techniques. In contrast to Gayakī Aṅg, greater importance is given to rhythmic clarity, rapid melodic passages, and the execution of gat-based compositions. Performances typically feature vilambit and drut gat, intricate layakārī, fast-paced tāns, tihāīs, and an elaborate jhālā, which collectively demonstrate the artist's technical command and creative improvisation. Bowing patterns are designed to produce rhythmic precision and tonal clarity, while fingering techniques facilitate rapid note groupings that closely resemble the plectrum articulations (dā, dir, dārā) employed on the sitar and sarod. The extensive use of these techniques establishes Tantrakārī as

a distinctly instrumental aesthetic that differs fundamentally from vocal-oriented performance (More, 2021).

Historically, the earliest Hindustani violinists adopted the tuning system Pa–Sa–Pa–Sa and closely modelled their playing after established string instruments such as the Vīṇā, Sursingār, Sitar, and Sarod. The repertoire consisted largely of Masītkhānī Gat in vilambit laya and Razākhānī Gat in madhya and drut laya, followed by virtuosic jhālā passages. Ustad Allaaddin Khan is recognised as one of the earliest musicians to popularise this instrumental approach, and it was subsequently developed by distinguished violinists including Pt. V. G. Jog, Rabin Ghosh, Shri Gagan Babu, Pt. Sridhar Parsekar, Pt. Bhubaneswar Mishra, Pt. Vighneswar Shastri, and Smt. Shishir Kanadhar Choudhury, each contributing to the establishment of a distinct Tantrakārī violin tradition (Khuntia, 2018) (Satyasheil, 2013).

In performance practice, a Tantrakārī-style violin recital generally begins with an unmetred ālāp, followed by jor and jhālā, during which rhythmic momentum is created solely through the violinist's articulation and bow control. The entry of the tabla marks the presentation of a vilambit or madhya-laya gat, which forms the basis for melodic expansion, nibaddha ālāp, layakārī, and progressively complex tāns. The recital usually culminates in a drut gat and an elaborate jhālā, often concluding with a chakradhār tihāī. Although Tantrakārī Āṅg primarily celebrates instrumental aesthetics, contemporary performers frequently integrate selected expressive elements from Dhrupad, Khayāl, and Thumrī, reflecting the continuing interaction between vocal and instrumental traditions within Hindustani classical music (Kumar, 2024).

III. Comparative Analysis of Gayakī Āṅg and Tantrakārī Āṅg in Hindustani Classical Violin

The distinction between Gayakī Āṅg and Tantrakārī Āṅg is not absolute; rather, they represent different ways of organizing melody, technique, rhythm, and musical expression on the same instrument. Their interaction has been particularly significant in establishing the violin as both a vehicle for vocal aesthetics and an autonomous concert instrument (More, 2021) (Satyasheil, 2013).

3.1 Aesthetic and Philosophical Foundations

The central aesthetic distinction between the two approaches concerns the source of musical expression. Gayakī Āṅg is founded on the principle of translating the expressive language of Hindustani vocal music into instrumental performance. Its development was closely associated with the increasing influence of khayāl, as instrumentalists sought to reproduce vocal phrasing, melodic continuity, and subtle expressive inflections. In this approach, the violin is treated as an instrument capable of approximating the human voice, with the aesthetic success of a performance depending substantially on its ability to communicate rāga-bhāva and lyrical expression (Khuntia, 2018).

Tantrakārī Āṅg, in contrast, derives its aesthetic identity from the independent capabilities of the instrument. Its historical development was influenced by established instrumental traditions involving the Rudra Vīṇā, rabāb, sitar, and sarod, as well as by the structural discipline associated with the Dhrupad tradition. Rather than treating vocal imitation as its primary objective, the approach values instrumental articulation, rhythmic organization, resonance, and technical command (Jairazbhoy, 1995) (Satyasheil, 2013).

The distinction can therefore be understood as a contrast between vocal reference and instrumental autonomy. However, this does not imply that the two approaches function as rigidly separated categories. The history of Hindustani violin demonstrates considerable interaction between them. Artists have frequently adapted their stylistic choices according to whether they are accompanying a vocalist, presenting a solo recital, interpreting a particular composition, or responding to the aesthetic requirements of a rāga. The practice of Pt. V. G. Jog, for example, illustrates such contextual flexibility, as he reportedly emphasized Gayakī while accompanying vocalists and made greater use of Gatkārī elements in solo performance (Satyasheil, 2013).

3.2 Technical and Musical Characteristics

The philosophical distinction between the two styles becomes concrete through their treatment of pitch, articulation, bowing, fingering, and ornamentation. In Gayakī Āṅg, technical resources are primarily employed to achieve vocal-like continuity. Sustained bowing permits extended mīnd and smooth transitions between notes, while coordinated left- and right-hand techniques facilitate the adaptation of gamak, murkī, khaṭkā, and kan-swar. Particular attention is given to swar-lagāṇ, whereby the placement, intonation, duration, and relationship of individual notes contribute to the expressive identity of the rāga (More, 2021).

The violin's physical characteristics strongly support this approach. Its capacity for sustained tone, continuous pitch modulation. These qualities are particularly valuable in the exposition of ālāp and lyrical compositions, where continuity is more important than sharply articulated note production (More, 2021).

Tantrakārī Āṅg employs these same physical resources differently. Here, fingering and bow articulation are organized to achieve clarity, speed, and rhythmic definition. Shorter melodic units and rapid note sequences create an instrumental vocabulary comparable in certain respects to the articulatory practices of the sitar and sarod. A single bow stroke may accommodate different numbers of notes, allowing the performer to execute rapid tāns and other technically demanding passages. Consequently, bowing functions not merely as a means of sustaining sound but as an active component of rhythmic and melodic articulation (More, 2021) (Satyasheil, 2013).

The distinction is therefore not simply between “long bow” and “short bow,” but between two different uses of instrumental technique. Gayakī-oriented technique tends to dissolve the mechanical boundaries of the instrument in favour of continuity, whereas Tantrakārī technique makes articulation and instrumental dexterity more perceptible. The same violin can consequently produce contrasting musical effects depending on how bow pressure, stroke length, fingering, articulation, and rhythmic grouping are coordinated.

3.3 Tuning Systems and Their Technical Implications

A further technical distinction between the two approaches lies in the relationship between tuning configuration and melodic execution. In Gayakī Āṅg, the violin is most commonly tuned to Śa–Pā–Sa–Pā (mandra Śa, mandra Pā, madhya Śa, madhya Pā), often at a comparatively lower pitch than standard Western tuning. This lower tuning reduces string tension, producing a softer string response that facilitates wider, smoother, and more sustained mīnd. Because the highest string terminates on madhya Pā rather than tāra Śa, melodic movement into the upper register frequently requires continuous gliding on a single string. Consequently, phrases extending beyond madhya Pā into the tāra saptak are predominantly executed through long mīnd, enabling uninterrupted melodic continuity that closely resembles Hindustani vocal performance. The present study therefore observes that this tuning system naturally encourages intensive practice of extended mīnd and vocal-derived ornamentation, making it particularly suitable for the expressive requirements of Gayakī Āṅg.

By contrast, Tantrakārī Āṅg generally employs tuning systems such as Pā–Śa–Pā–Śā, Mā–Śa–Pā–Rē, or Mā–Śa–Pā–Śā, all of which provide direct fingering access to the upper register. Since tāra Śa (and, depending on the tuning, subsequent notes of the upper register) are available on a separate string, many melodic passages that would require extended glides in Gayakī Āṅg can instead be executed through conventional fingering. This configuration facilitates rapid note patterns, intricate fingering sequences, articulate bowing, and rhythmically precise execution, thereby supporting the characteristic gat, tān, layakārī, and jhālā of instrumental performance. Although mīnd and gamak remain important expressive devices in Tantrakārī Āṅg, they are generally employed more selectively, whereas greater emphasis is placed on fingering agility and instrumental articulation.

Thus, the distinction between Gayakī Āṅg and Tantrakārī Āṅg extends beyond stylistic preference to the physical organization of the instrument itself. Their respective tuning systems influence string tension, left-hand movement, bowing strategy, and the balance between sustained glides and articulated fingering. The present study argues that these technical adaptations play a crucial role in shaping the contrasting musical identities of the two performance traditions.

3.4 Performance Practice

The clearest structural difference between the two approaches appears in the organization of a complete performance. A Gayakī Aṅg recital is broadly modelled on the architecture of Hindustani vocal khayāl. Following the initial ālāp, the performer may introduce a vilambit khayāl in tālas such as Ektāl, Jhumrā, Tīntāl, or Tilwādā. Melodic elaboration develops through bol-ālāp, bol-tān, and different varieties of tān, followed by a madhya or drut khayāl and, where appropriate, tarānā. Lighter genres such as thumrī, bhajan, kajrī, or chaitī may also form part of the concluding repertoire (Khuntia, 2018).

The distinctive feature here is the treatment of composition. Since the violin cannot reproduce the semantic content of sung words, the performer translates the expressive implications of the bandish into instrumental parameters. Changes in bow direction, pressure, articulation, pauses, and phrasing can suggest the accents and contours of the text. Thus, the composition remains perceptible not through its verbal content but through its melodic and expressive structure (Khuntia, 2018).

Tantrakārī Aṅg follows a different performance trajectory. The recital generally proceeds from ālāp to jor and jhālā, establishing increasing rhythmic activity before the introduction of tabla accompaniment. A vilambit or madhya-laya gat then provides the framework for further development through nibaddha ālāp, tān, and layakārī. The tempo may subsequently accelerate through a drut gat, leading to increasingly rapid passages and a concluding jhālā, often ending with a chakradhār tihāi (Kumar, 2024).

Thus, the principal structural distinction lies in the organizing centre of the performance. Gayakī is compositionally and expressively oriented towards the vocal khayāl model, whereas Tantrakārī is organized around the instrumental sequence of ālāp-jor-jhālā-gat and its progressive rhythmic intensification. This difference gives each style a recognizable performance identity without preventing individual artists from combining elements of both.

3.5 Comparative Evaluation

The relative strengths of the two approaches emerge most clearly when their artistic objectives are considered. Gayakī Aṅg is particularly effective when the desired outcome is sustained melodic expression and close engagement with the emotional character of a rāga. Its vocal orientation enables the violin to reproduce subtle pitch movement and expressive phrasing that might otherwise be difficult to communicate through a strongly articulated instrumental style. This makes it especially suitable for rendering compositions and melodic passages in which lyrical continuity is central (More, 2021).

The limitation of this orientation is not an inherent weakness of the technique but a potential consequence of excessive vocal dependence. If instrumental performance is judged primarily by its resemblance to singing, the violin's independent sonic and technical resources may become comparatively less prominent. The challenge for the performer is therefore to achieve vocal expressiveness without eliminating the distinctive identity of the instrument.

Tantrakārī Aṅg offers the opposite advantage. Its instrumental orientation creates extensive possibilities for rhythmic development, technical display, and independent interpretation. Gat, tān, layakārī, and jhālā provide a structured environment in which the violinist can demonstrate precision, speed, coordination, and improvisational ability. This has been particularly important in establishing the violin within the tradition of Hindustani solo instrumental performance (More, 2021).

Its corresponding challenge lies in maintaining musical proportion. Technical density and rhythmic excitement can be highly effective, but they must remain connected to the melodic logic of the rāga. When virtuosity becomes detached from melodic development, the performance may lose the depth and coherence expected of Hindustani classical music. Thus, the artistic effectiveness of Tantrakārī depends not simply on technical speed but on the controlled integration of technique with rāga structure.

The comparison consequently points towards complementarity rather than hierarchy. Gayakī offers a particularly strong framework for lyrical and vocal-oriented expression, while Tantrakārī expands the possibilities of instrumental articulation and virtuosity. The most flexible performers can draw upon either vocabulary without allowing one to compromise the musical requirements of the other.

3.6 Contemporary Relevance and Significance

The coexistence of these approaches has been central to the historical transformation of the violin within Hindustani classical music. The instrument entered a musical environment in which both vocal and instrumental traditions already possessed established performance conventions. Its subsequent development therefore involved a process of adaptation rather than the adoption of a single fixed identity.

The Tantrakārī tradition enabled North Indian violinists to engage with the established instrumental repertoire of the sitar and sarod. Early performers adopted gat-based structures, including Masītkhānī and Razākhānī gats, as well as jor and jhālā, thereby giving the violin a recognizable instrumental vocabulary. Ustad Allauddin Khan is identified as an important early figure in the adoption of this approach, which was subsequently taken forward by violinists including Pt. V. G. Jog, Pt. Sridhar Parsekar, Shri Gagan Babu, Pt. Bhubaneswar Mishra, and others (Khuntia, 2018).

At the same time, the development of Gayakī Āṅg demonstrated that the violin could accommodate the nuanced requirements of Hindustani vocal aesthetics. The work associated with Dr. N. Rajam is particularly significant in this context, as her approach emphasized the capacity of the violin to sustain melodic lines, reproduce vocal ornamentation, and communicate rāga-bhāva through highly controlled bowing and intonation (More, 2021).

The significance of these developments extends beyond the distinction between two playing techniques. Together, they transformed the functional identity of the violin. Gayakī Āṅg established its potential as a highly expressive melodic instrument, while Tantrakārī Āṅg strengthened its position as an autonomous vehicle for instrumental repertoire and virtuosity. Their interaction has consequently allowed the violin to participate in both vocal-oriented and instrumental performance contexts.

In contemporary practice, the boundary between the two approaches is increasingly understood as flexible rather than absolute. The ability to move between vocal sensitivity and instrumental articulation allows performers to respond to differences in rāga, repertoire, accompaniment, and concert setting. This flexibility is particularly important for the continued development of the Hindustani violin, because it enables tradition to be preserved while permitting individual artists to develop distinctive approaches.

The comparison demonstrates that Gayakī Āṅg and Tantrakārī Āṅg are best understood as complementary modes of violin expression within Hindustani classical music. Their distinction lies principally in the source of their aesthetic orientation, the organization of instrumental technique, and the structure through which musical ideas are developed. Gayakī draws the violin towards the expressive world of the voice, while Tantrakārī emphasizes the instrument's own technical and rhythmic language. Their historical interaction has enabled the violin to transcend a single functional identity and develop into a versatile Hindustani classical instrument. The continuing coexistence of these approaches therefore represents not a conflict between vocal and instrumental traditions, but an important source of stylistic diversity and creative development in contemporary Hindustani violin performance.

IV. Discussion

The comparative analysis demonstrates that Gayakī Āṅg and Tantrakārī Āṅg represent two complementary aesthetic orientations that have jointly shaped the evolution of the Hindustani classical violin. Rather than existing as mutually exclusive styles, they embody different artistic priorities: Gayakī Āṅg emphasizes vocal expressiveness, melodic continuity, and rāga-bhāva, whereas Tantrakārī Āṅg focuses on instrumental articulation, rhythmic development, and technical virtuosity. Their interaction has enabled the violin to develop a distinctive musical identity that balances vocal aesthetics with instrumental autonomy.

This interpretation is consistent with earlier studies that acknowledge the coexistence of vocal- and instrumental-oriented approaches in Hindustani violin performance (Khuntia, 2018). Building on these studies, the present research comparatively demonstrates that the distinction between the two approaches lies not only in their technical features but also in their aesthetic objectives and performance practices. The analysis further suggests that identical technical resources may assume different musical functions depending on the stylistic context.

An important contribution of the present study is the identification of tuning, bowing, fingering, and melodic execution as practical factors that reinforce the stylistic identity of each approach. Gayakī-orientated techniques primarily support sustained melodic expression, whereas Tantrakārī-orientated techniques facilitate instrumental fluency and rhythmic precision. These technical adaptations illustrate how performance practice and aesthetic intention remain closely interconnected.

Overall, the study argues that the evolution of the Hindustani classical violin is best understood through the complementary relationship between Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg. Their synthesis has enabled the instrument to preserve the expressive richness of Hindustani vocal music while simultaneously establishing a distinct and dynamic instrumental tradition.

V. Conclusion

The present study has comparatively examined Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg as two significant aesthetic orientations in the development and performance practice of Hindustani classical violin. The analysis demonstrates that these approaches differ not only in their technical vocabulary and performance structures but also in their underlying conceptions of musical expression. Gayakī Aṅg draws primarily upon the expressive principles of Hindustani vocal music, emphasizing melodic continuity, nuanced intonation, swar-lagāṇ, ornamentation, and the communication of rāga-bhāva. In contrast, Tantrakārī Aṅg emphasizes the idiomatic potential of the violin through articulation, rhythmic organization, technical dexterity, layakārī, and the development of an autonomous instrumental language.

The study further reveals that the development of Hindustani classical violin cannot be adequately understood by treating these approaches as isolated or competing traditions. The instrument's musical identity has evolved through a continuous interaction between vocal aesthetics and instrumental possibilities. While Gayakī Aṅg enabled violinists to assimilate the subtle expressive dimensions of Hindustani vocal music, Tantrakārī Aṅg expanded the instrument's capacity for independent melodic, rhythmic, and technical exploration. The practices of prominent violinists demonstrate that these orientations can coexist within individual performance practices and may be adapted according to repertoire, rāga, performance context, and artistic intention.

A central finding of this study is therefore that Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg are more appropriately understood as complementary points within a continuum of musical expression rather than as rigidly separated categories. The same instrumental resources may serve different aesthetic purposes depending on whether the performer prioritizes vocal-like continuity and expressive nuance or instrumental articulation and technical independence. This perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of stylistic diversity in Hindustani violin performance and avoids reducing the development of the instrument to a simple opposition between vocal imitation and instrumental virtuosity.

The study consequently identifies the distinctive character of Hindustani classical violin as a product of adaptation, interaction, and synthesis. Its development has involved not merely the transplantation of vocal or instrumental techniques onto the violin, but the gradual formation of an expressive language in which vocal sensitivity and instrumental autonomy can function together. The continuing interaction of Gayakī Aṅg and Tantrakārī Aṅg has thus enabled the violin to negotiate between tradition and innovation while maintaining the aesthetic principles of Hindustani classical music. Their coexistence remains an important source of the instrument's stylistic richness and provides a continuing basis for its artistic evolution.

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