

Basic Kacapi Keyings for Kawih Accompaniment



(Pola Dasar Kacapi Pamirig Kawih)
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1 Terms

- **Kawih** = Sundanese term for 'song'
- **Kacapi siter** is used for our purpose. It has 20 strings.
 - farthest- and longest string (lowest frequency) is tuned to 3
 - nearest- and shortest string (highest frequency) is tuned to 4. (see 'Tuning')
- **Suling Sunda** is a 60 cm and 6 holed bamboo flute.
- **Pangkat** is 'the opening' or start of kawih. It is selected based on the goong key (number in circle).
- **Panutup** is 'the ending'. (or 'suwuk' in Javanese)
Pancer is intermediate tone between two keys, e.g. between goong key and kenong key.

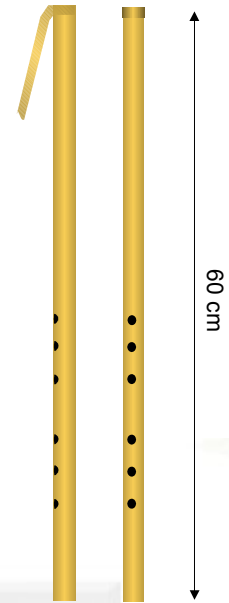


Figure 1: 60 cm with 6 hole Sundanese Suling



2 Tuning and Notation

Kacapi uses degung notation. It is a subset of pelog 7 tone system (see Table 1).

Table 1: Sundanese Degung versus Javanese Pelog 7 Notation

Sundanese Degung	Javanese Pelog 7
1 (da)	6
2 (mi)	5
3 (na)	3
4 (ti)	2
5 (la)	1

Note range, from lowest frequency to highest frequency is:

3̣2̣1̣ 5̣4̣3̣2̣1̣ 54321 5̣4̣3̣2̣1̣ 5̣4̣

Kacapi is tuned to match the 60 cm length suling tones. With this length, approximation for the tuning compared to western scale is:

54321 ≈ A# B c# f f#

Figure 2 shows positions of each kacapi's string and its note number.

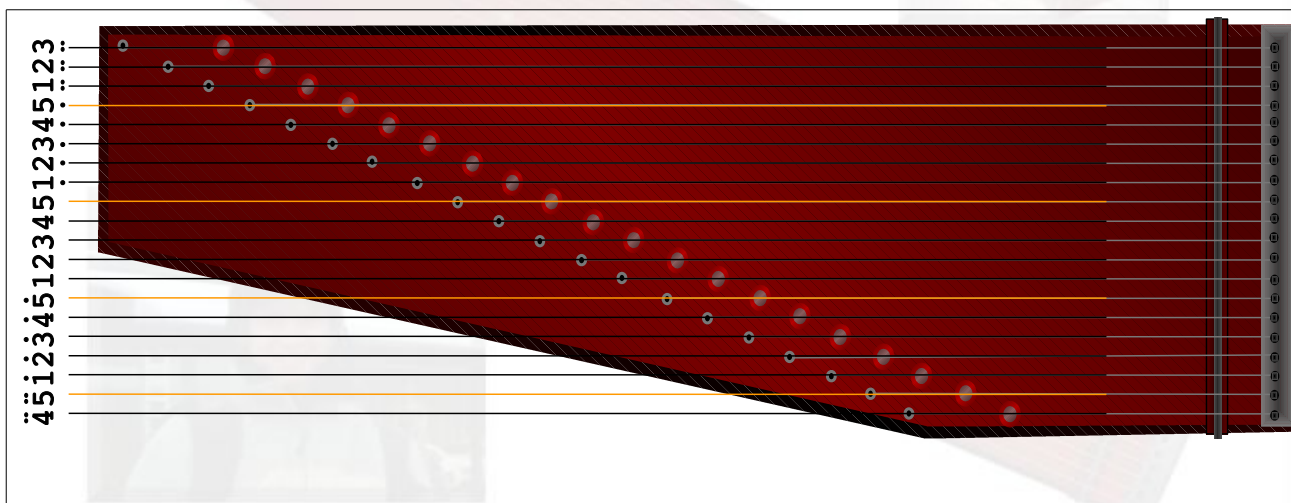


Figure 2: Tuning of Kacapi's Strings

3 Key Positions

Legend:

- left pointer
- left thumb
- right pointer
- right thumb

3.1 Position for key 5 (la)

Click to hear: [kacapi5.mp3](#)

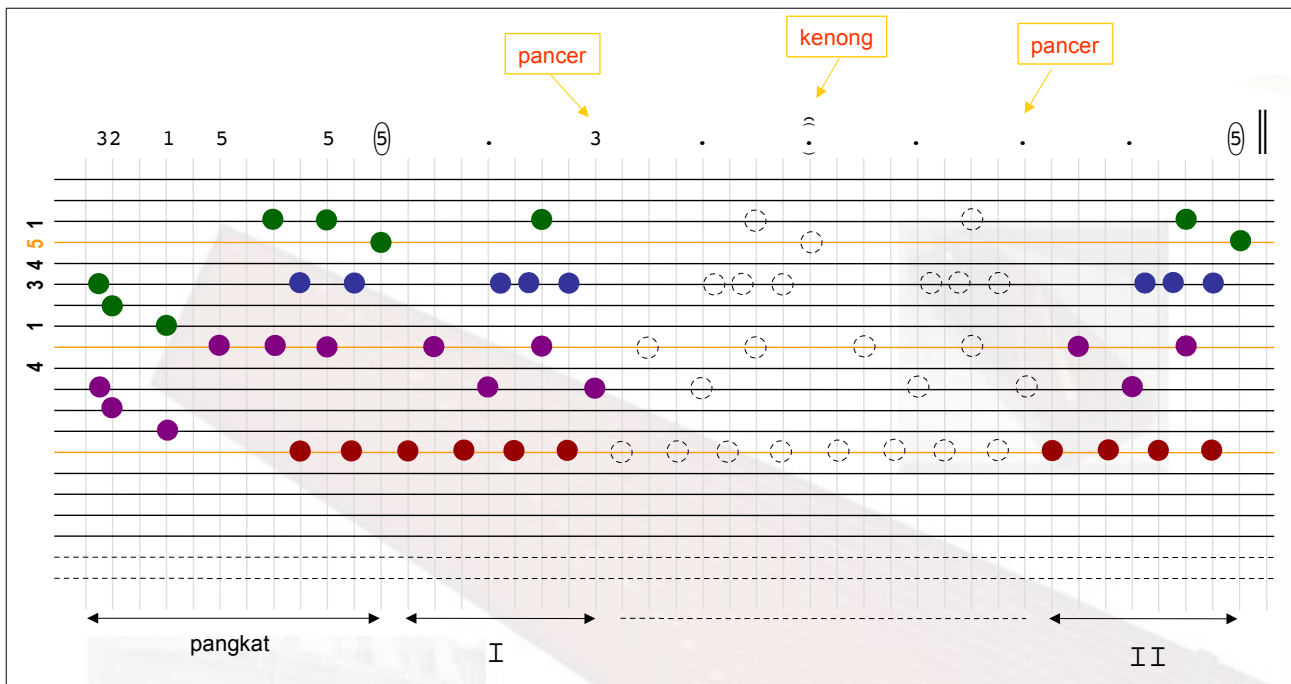


Figure 3: Position for key 5 (la)

Pangkat for key-5 is: 3 2 1 5 5 (5)

I and II are repeatable parts. 2nd pancer is not yet unknown due to unknown kenong key. The sample music plays pangkat continued directly with I and then after slight silent, II is played.

3.2 Position for key 4 (ti)

Click to hear: [kacapi4.mp3](#)

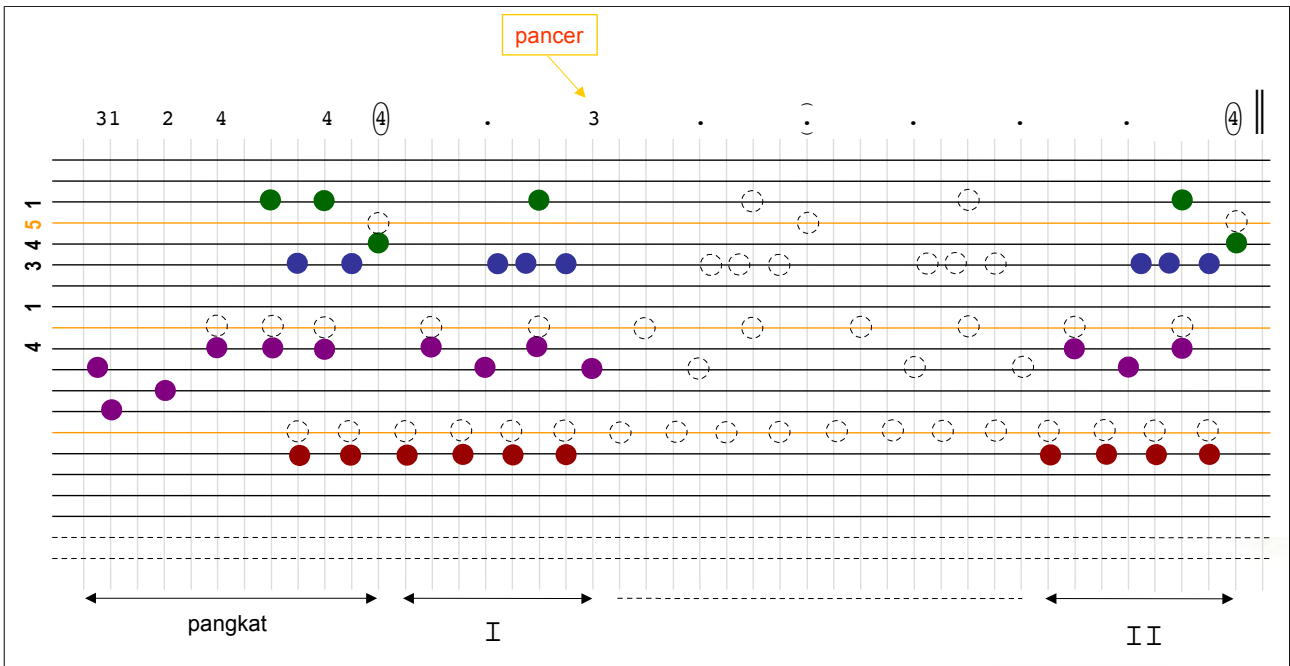


Figure 4: Position for key 4 (ti)

Pangkat for key-4 is . 3 1 2 4 4 (4)

Dashed circles are Position for key-5.
 Similar to key-5, I and II are repeatable parts.

3.3 Position for key 3 (ti)

Click to hear: [kacapi3.mp3](#)

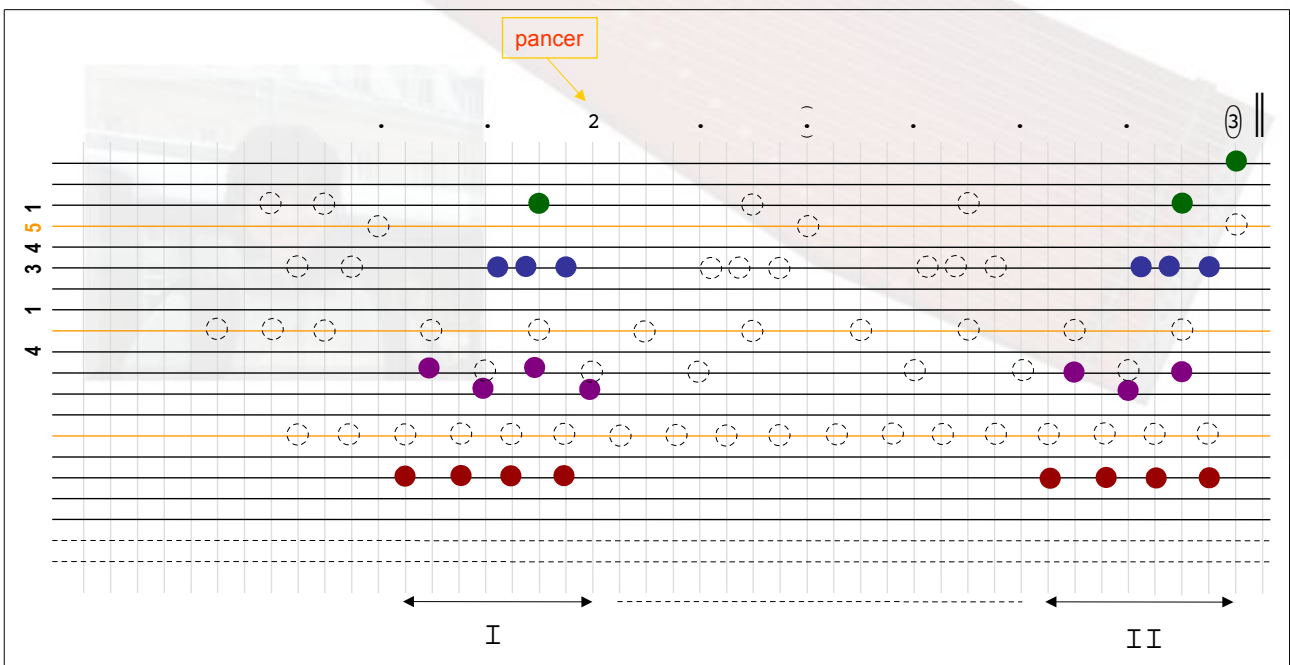


Figure 5: Position for key 3 (na)

Due to rarely be used as goong key, the key-3 might have no pangkat at all.
 The pancer is 2.

3.4 Position for key 2 (mi)

Click to hear: [kacapi2.mp3](#)

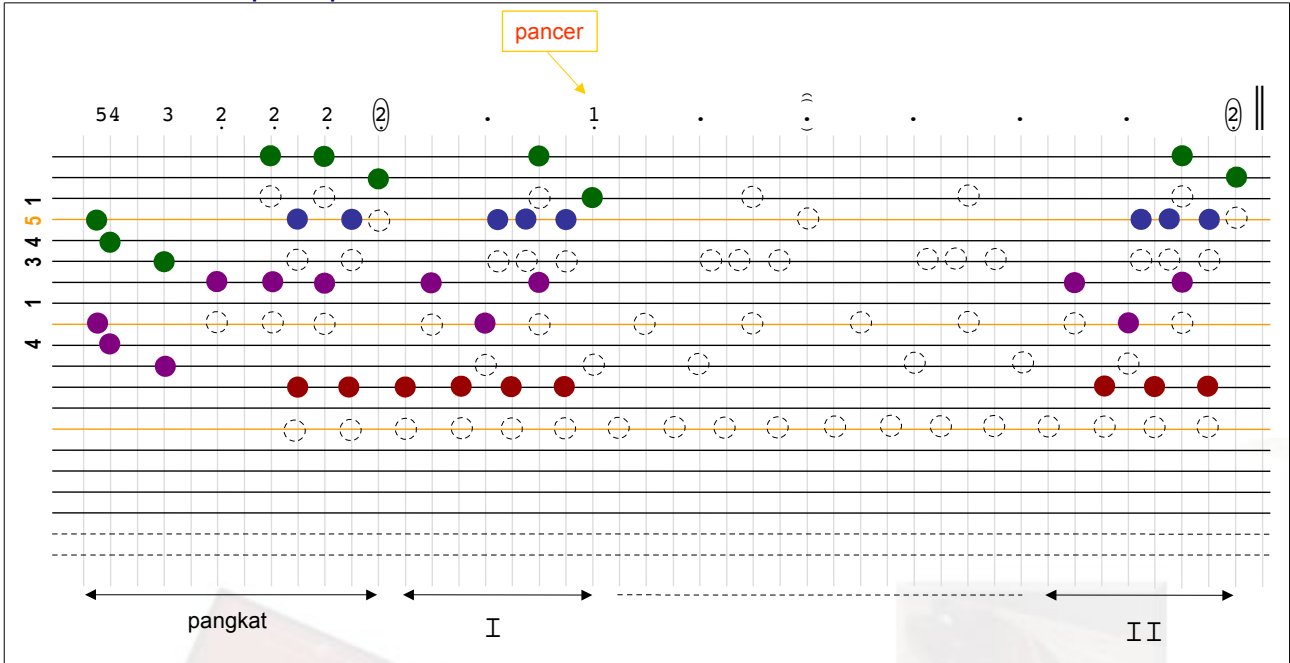


Figure 6: Position for key 2 (ti)

3.5 Position for key 1 (da)

Click to hear: [kacapi1.mp3](#)

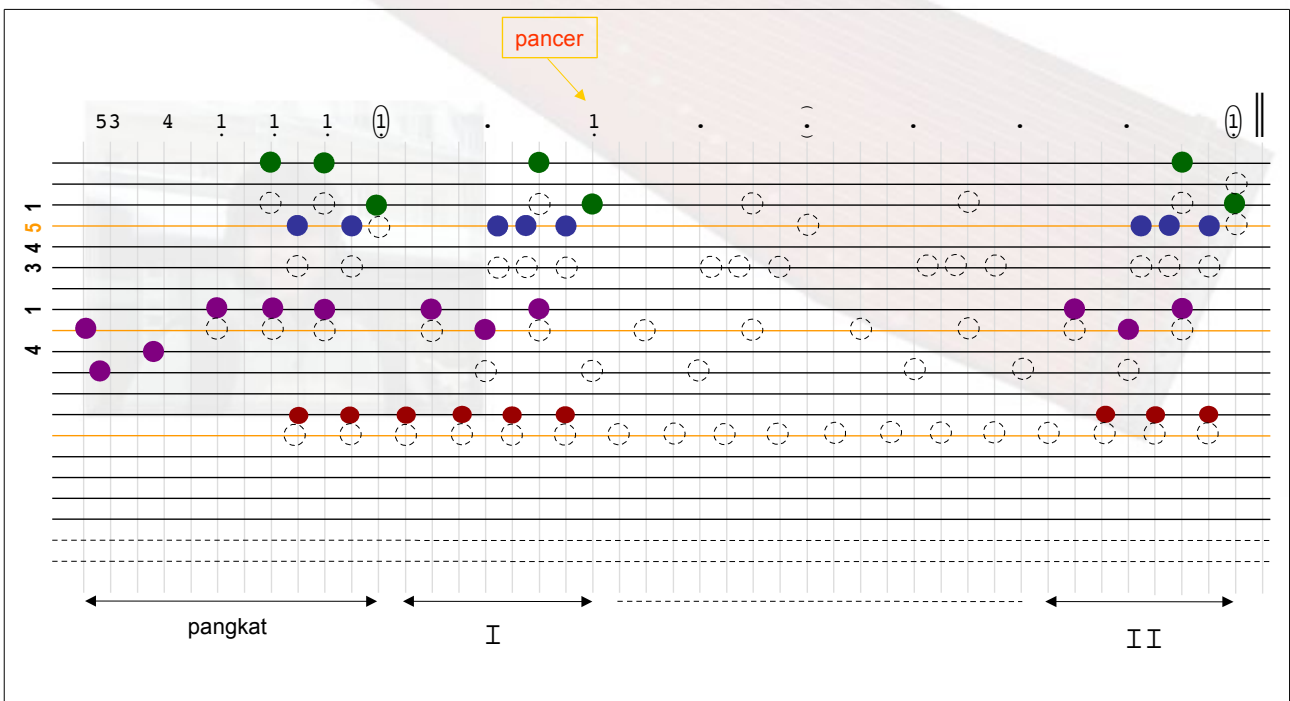


Figure 7: Position for key 1 (da)

4 Sekar Alit

Sekar Alit is a small accompaniment set for typical Sundanese songs (kawih). It contains several key sequences, and played repeatedly. It might have specific name, e.g. Catrik, Kulu-kulu, etc.

There are two types of Sekar Alit: **two-keys** and **four-keys**.

The two-keys:

Table 2: Sekar Alit accompaniments with two keys.

Name	Keys	Kawih Example(s)
Catrik	2 (5)	Dareuda, Kalangkang
Kulu-kulu	5 (2)	Angin Priangan, Satia
Lalayaran	3 (5)	

The four-keys:

Table 3: Sekar Alit accompaniments with four keys.

Name	Keys	Kawih Example(s)
Cirebonan	4 (5) 1 (5)	Jeruk Manis
Balenderan	4 (5) 4 (2)	
n.n	1 (3) 1 (4)	Nimang
n.n	2 (4) 2 (5)	Cinta
n.n	3 (4) 3 (1)	Élékésékéng

4.1 Example: 'Catrik' 2 (5)

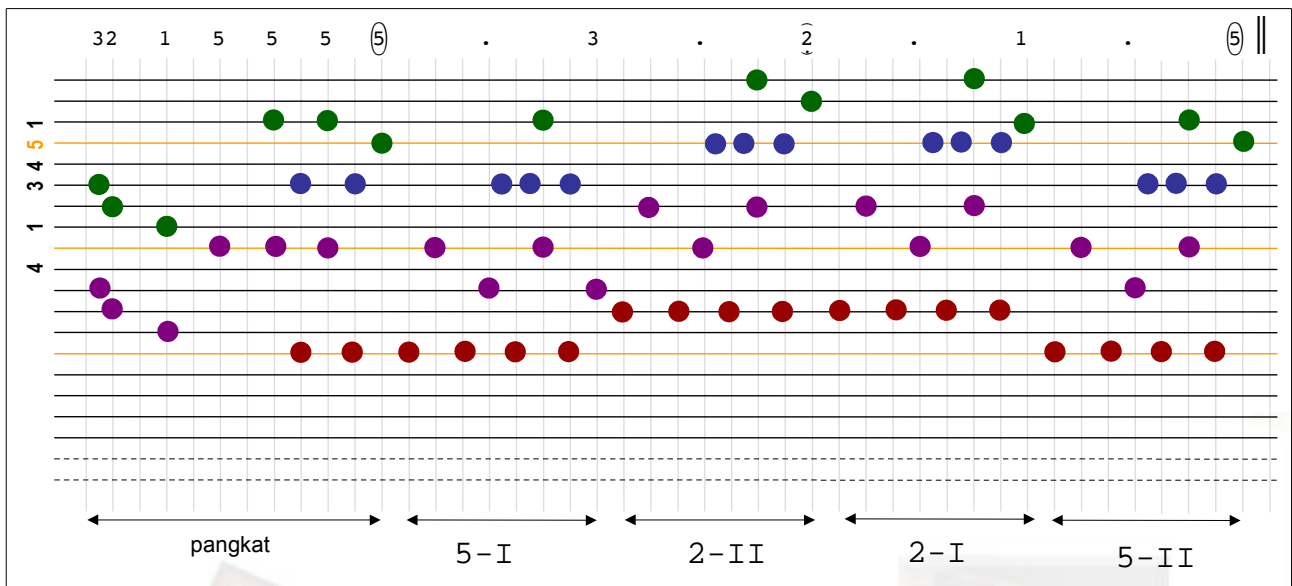


Figure 8: 'Catrik': 2 (5)

Click to hear: [kacapiCatrik25.mp3](#).

Catrik is the simplest form and the most widely used pattern when one starts learning degung.

The goong key is 5, thus we use pangkat for 5 and ending for 5 too. The kenong key is 2.

5-I and 5-II are part I and II of key 5. See: [Position for key 5 \(la\)](#)

2-I and 2-II are part I and II of key 2. See: [Position for key 2 \(mi\)](#)



5 Pangkat Variations

Sometimes, we use different pangkat to give variations between different kawih.

For example:

Pangkat variations for key 5 (la): [Variant 1](#), [Variant 2](#) (click to hear)

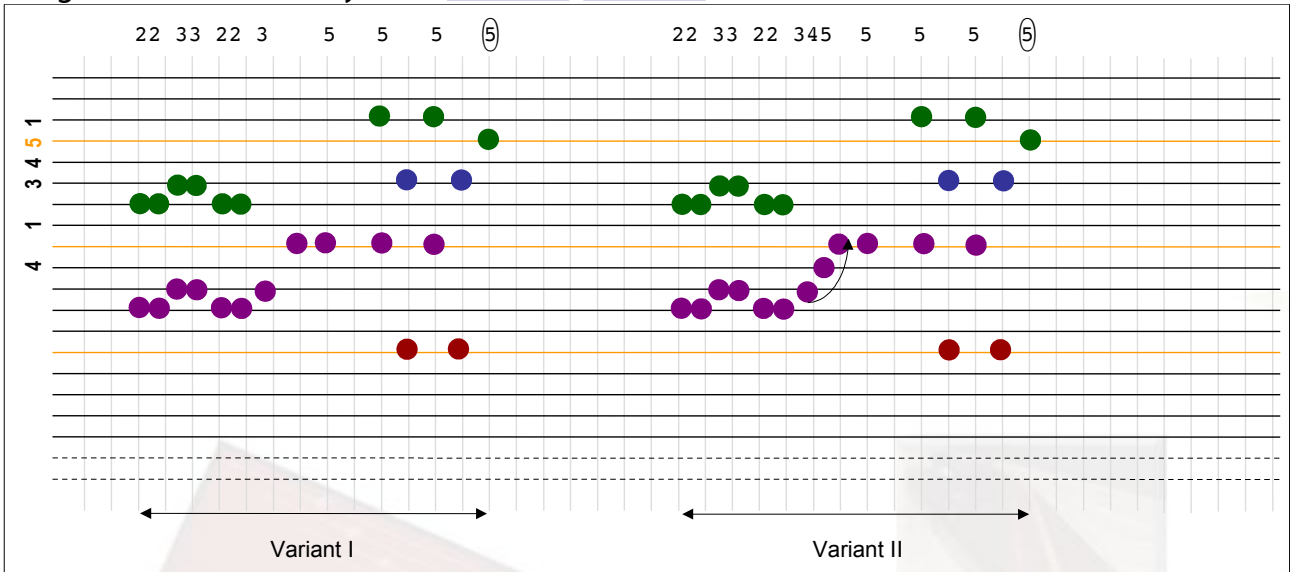


Figure 9: Pangkat variations for key 5 (la)

Pangkat variations for key 2 (mi): [Variant 1](#), [Variant 2](#) (click to hear)

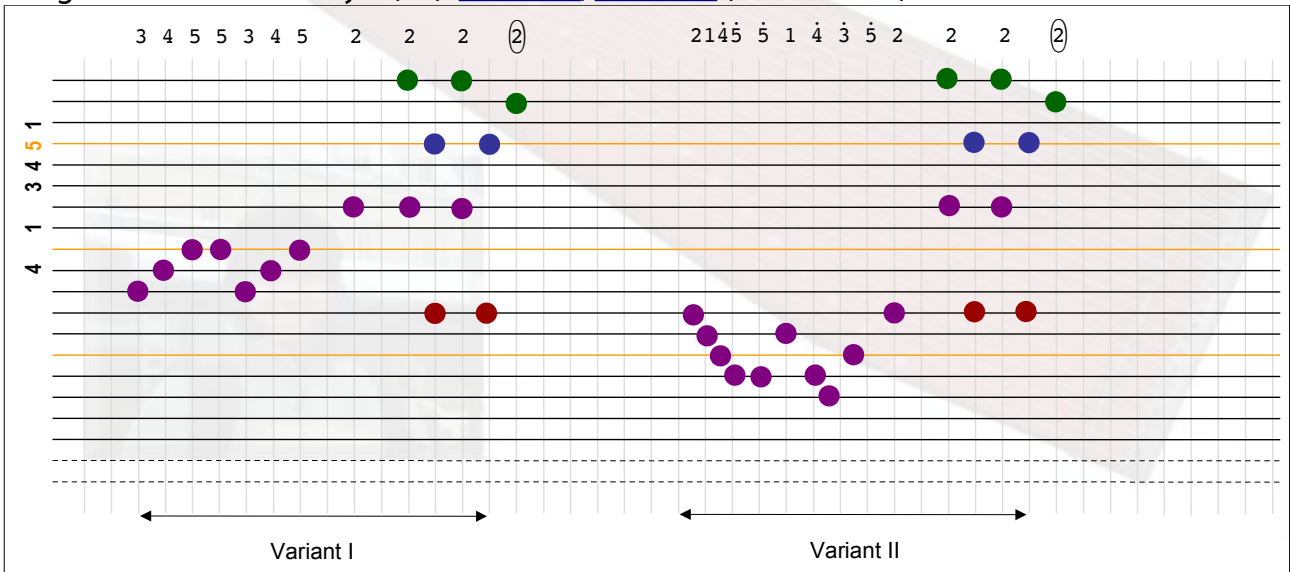


Figure 10: Pangkat variations for key 2(mi)

6 Contact

Any questions and feedbacks can be addressed to: dian.nugraha@gmail.com

Have fun!

