



Representation of *Deśī lāsyaṅga* in *Nṛtyādhyāya*: A Critical Study

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Introduction:

Within the classical tradition, dance is understood through two parallel frameworks: one distinguishing *Nāṭya*, *Nṛtya*, and *Nṛtta*, and the other differentiating between *Tāṇḍava* and *Lāsya*. While *Tāṇḍava* is characterised by vigour, dynamism, and powerful kinetic energy, *Lāsya* embodies grace, softness, and expressive subtlety. This dual classification not only reflects contrasting aesthetic dimensions but also represents the balanced interplay of masculine and feminine principles within the classical dance tradition. Both are integral to the narrative and emotional depth of classical dance forms. They allow dancers to express a wide range of sentiments, from love and beauty to strength and power, thus enriching the overall experience of the performance (Sarabhai 79).

The origins of *tāṇḍava* and *lāsya* are grounded in the early theoretical framework of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, where they appear as two fundamental modes of movement that together shape the expressive and kinetic vocabulary of Indian dance. The text attributes *tāṇḍava* to Śiva's vigorous, dynamic, and rhythmically forceful dance, while *lāsya* is described as a gentler, more graceful movement quality often associated with feminine expressivity. Although mythological narratives attribute *tāṇḍava* to Śiva and *lāsya* to Pārvatī, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* presents a more integrated understanding, noting that Śiva himself performed graceful movements imbued with subtle expression (N.S.1.V.45). *Lāsya* holds a central place in the technical and aesthetic framework of Indian classical dance, particularly for its emphasis on refined expressivity and nuanced movement quality. This paper presents a critical examination of the representation of *lāsya* in the *Nṛtyādhyāya*, analysing its structural components, stylistic features, and codified techniques as articulated in the text. Through a detailed study of the relevant sections, the research highlights the technical specifications and performative characteristics that define *lāsya* within this classical tradition.

The word *Lāsya* itself originates from the Sanskrit verbal root 'Las,' which carries multiple meanings, including "to embrace," "to play," and "to shine."

Regarding the attribute of 'Lāsya', Bharata states,

“लसनाल्लासमित्युक्तं स्त्रीपुंभावसमाश्रयम्” (*Nāṭyaśāstra*, 31.V.332)

The verse suggests that *lāsya* is said to be that which arises from *lasana*, which means playful movement or amorous game/play, and is associated with emotions (*bhāvas*) of both men and women (primarily reflecting the mood of *śṛṅgāra rasa*).

Bharata refers to ten types of *lāsyaṅgas*, although some later texts attribute twelve to him. Broadly, the elements described by Bharata are understood as belonging to the *mārga* tradition, while the subsequent developments

found in later treatises fall under the *deśī* category. *Lāśya* receives significant elaboration in medieval Sanskrit treatises, where its technical and regional dimensions begin to take clear shape. From the twelfth century onward, works like the *Mānasollāsa*, *Saṅgītaratnākara*, *Nṛttaratnāvalī*, *Saṅgītasamayāsāra*, *Nartananirṇaya*, *Saṅgītdarpaṇa*, *Nṛtyādhyāya* and *Saṅgītamakaranda* provide detailed discussions of the *deśī* tradition, highlighting how these *Deśī-Lāśyāṅgas* emerged as stylised movement categories shaped by local performance cultures. The *Abhinaya Darpaṇa* (13th century CE) attributes the origin of *lāśya* to Pārvatī and outlines its transmission through a lineage of women, suggesting its descent as a distinctly feminine mode of expression (Abinayadarpaṇa, V. 2-6). By tracing *lāśya* through female figures across regions and linking its preservation through women dancers such as *devadāsīs*, *gaṇikās*, and *nartakīs*, the text implicitly establishes *lāśya* as a gendered aesthetic.

Among the medieval treatises on dance, the *Nṛtyādhyāya* holds a distinct place of importance. Its author, Aśoka Malla believed to be a king from the Kṣatriya lineage remains a somewhat obscure historical figure, as concrete details regarding his reign or geographical domain are unavailable. However, internal references within the text suggest that he lived around the 14th–15th century CE. He identifies himself with royal epithets such as *Bhūbhuj*, *Nṛpa*, and *Prthvīndra*, and names his father as *Vīrasinha*.

A scholar well-versed in *nāṭya* and *saṅgīta*, Aśoka Malla appears to have composed the *Nṛtyādhyāya* as a standalone chapter of a larger, now-lost treatise on the performing arts. Despite the presence of scribal inconsistencies in the surviving manuscript, the text offers a systematic and detailed exposition of dance techniques, hand gestures, expressive principles, and *lāśyāṅgas*. Drawing on earlier authorities such as Bharata, Kohala, and Abhinavagupta, Aśoka Malla positions himself within an enduring lineage of dramaturgical scholarship. His synthesis of inherited theory with practical understanding makes the *Nṛtyādhyāya* a significant contribution to the medieval corpus on classical Indian dance.

Deśī Lāśyāṅga in *Nṛtyādhyāya*:

Within the evolving tradition of *Deśī Lāśyāṅga* classification, Aśokamalla's treatment of the *Deśī Lāśyāṅgas* in the *Nṛtyādhyāya* may now be examined.

चालिश्रालिवटस्तुकं मनो लेदिरुरोङ्गणम् । 1619
 ढिल्लाई त्रिकलिः किन्तु देशीकारं निजापनम् ॥१५१३॥
 उल्लासस्थसको भावः सुकलासं लयस्तथा । 1620
 ढालश्छेवाङ्गहारश्च लङ्घितं विहसी तथा ॥ १५१४॥
 नीकी नमनिका शङ्का वितडं गीतवाद्यता । 1621
 विवर्तनं रथ (? थर) हरं स्थापना सौष्ठवं ततः ॥ १५१५॥
 सुवा मसृणतोपारस्तथाङ्गानङ्गमित्यपि । 1622
 कोमलिका चाभिनयस्ततो मुखरसस्तथा ॥१५१६॥
 एवं सप्ताधिकास्त्रिशल्लास्याङ्गानां समासतः । 1623

Aśokamalla enumerates a total of thirty-seven *Deśī Lāśyāṅgas*, which include: *Chāli*, *Chālivata*, *Tūka*, *Manas*, *Leḍi*, *Uroḍakaṇa*, *Dhillāi*, *Trikali*, *Kintu*, *Deśīkāra*, *Nijāpana*, *Ullāsa*, *Yasaka*, *Bhāva*, *Sukalāha*, *Laya*, *Dāla*, *Chevā*, *Aṅgahāra*, *Laṅghita*, *Vihāsī*, *Nīkī*, *Namanikā*, *Śāṅkā*, *Bisaṅga*, *Gītavādyatā*, *Vivartana*, *Barahara*, *Sthāpanā*, *Sauṣṭhava*, *Sruvā*, *Masṛṇatā*, *Upāra*, *Aṅninga*, *Abhinaya*, *Komalikā*, and *Mukharasa*. These thirty-seven forms represent the *Deśī* or regional variations of *Lāśyāṅgas*, illustrating the diversity, stylistic richness, and performative nuances that developed outside the classical *Mārga* framework.

अथैतेषां लक्ष्यलक्षणवेदिना ।
 लक्ष्माण्यशोकमल्लेन कथ्यन्ते साधुनाधुना ॥ १५१७॥ 1624

Aśokamalla, proficient in understanding both the definitions(theory) and the observable features (practical) of these forms, now explains their characteristics with clarity.

1. *Cāli*

बाहुकट्यूरुपादानामेकदा चालनं यदा ।
 तालतौल्ययुतं नातिमन्दं नातिद्रुतं तथा ॥ १५१८ ॥ 1625
 मधुरं सविलासं च कोमलं त्र्यस्तभावभाक् ।
 तदा चालि समाचष्टाशोकमल्लो नृपाग्रणीः ॥१५१६॥ 1626
 (*Bāhukatyurupādānām ekadā cālanam yadā |*
Tāla-taulyayutam nātimandaṃ nātidrutam tathā ||
Madhuraṃ savilāsaṃ ca komalaṃ tryastra-bhāvabhāk |
Tadā cāli samācaṣṭāśokamallo nṛpāgraṇīh ||)

When the arms, waist, thighs, and feet move together in accordance with the rhythm, neither too slowly nor too quickly, and the movement is sweet, graceful, soft, and marked by *tryastragati/tryastragati*, Aśokamalla calls this *Lāsyāṅga Chāli*.

2. *Cālivaṭ*

शैत्र्यसांमुख्यबहुला चालिवटो मतः ॥ १५२० ॥
 (*Śaithrya-sāṃmukhya-bahulā cālivaṭo mataḥ*)

When the *chāli lāsyāṅga* is marked by a predominance of quickness and frontal orientation, it is then called *Chālivaṭa Lāsyāṅga*.

3. *Tuka*

द्रुतमन्दादिभावेन चालनं हावपूर्वकम् । 1627
 लीलावतंसयुतयोः कर्णयोस्तुकमीरितम् ॥१५२१॥
 (*Druta-mandādibhāvena cālanam hāva-pūrvakam |*
Līlāvataṃsayutayoh kaṛṇayostukamīritam)

When both ears, adorned with ornaments worn for *līlā*, are moved expressively with gestures in quick as well as gentle tempos, it is called *Trka Lāsyāṅga*.

4. *Mana*

शृङ्गारससम्पन्नः कोऽप्यपूर्वो गुणो यदा । 1628
 लक्ष्यते शिक्षिताद् योऽतिसूक्ष्मोऽभिनय भावभाक् ॥१५२२॥
 अन्य एव तु नाट्याङ्गक्रियायोगाद्यदा लयैः । 1629
 तदा मनो मनोहारि सुमनोभिरिदं मतम् ॥१५२३॥
 (*Śṛṅgāra-rasa-sampannaḥ ko 'py apūrho guṇo yadā |*
Lakṣyate śikṣitād yo 'tisūkṣmo 'bhinaya-bhāvabhāk ||
Anyā eva tu nāṭyāṅga-kriyā-yogād yadā layaiḥ |
Tadā mano manohāri sumanobhir idaṃ matam ||)

When a delicate and uncommon quality filled with *Śṛṅgāra rasa* is expressed through subtle *abhinaya* and combined with *nāṭyāṅga* movements, appearing rhythmically to a trained viewer, the wise call this *Mana Lāsyāṅga*.

5. *Leḍhi*

कोमलं मधुरं तिर्यक् सविलासं च यद् भवेत् ॥1630
 एकदा चालनं बाहुकटीनां सा लेढिमता ॥ १५२४ ॥

सौन्दर्यभर संपन्नः संगीतप्राप्तिसम्भवः । 1631
 श्रानन्दातिशयः कोऽपि लेढिरित्यपरे जगुः ॥१५२५॥
 (Komalaṃ madhuraṃ tiryak savilāsaṃ ca yad bhavet |
 Ekadā cālanam bāhukaṭīnām sā leḍhir matā ||
 Saundarya-bhara-sampannaḥ saṅgīta-prāpti-sambhavaḥ |
 Śrānandātiśayaḥ ko 'pi leḍhir ityapare jaguḥ ||)

When the arms and waist move together in a manner that is gentle, graceful, slightly oblique, and expressive, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Leḍhi*. According to other ācāryas, *Leḍhi* is that *Lāsyāṅga* which is enriched with beauty, arises from the union with music, and is filled with profound delight.

6. Uroṅkaṇa

अंसयोः स्तनयोस्तालसम्मितं चालनं भवेत् । 1632
 पर्यायादेकदा वा यद् द्रुतं यद् वा विलम्बितम् ॥१५२६॥
 क्रमादधः पुनः पश्चादूर्ध्वमेतदुरोङ्कणम् । 1633
 इदमेव नटाः प्राहुस्तद्गणशब्देन कोविदाः ॥ १५२७॥
 मनाक् सुललितं तिर्यक् चालनं यत् कुचांसयोः । 1634
 विलम्बेनाविलम्बेन तद्वचुः केप्युरोङ्कणम् ॥१५२८॥
 यत्र पात्रं द्रुतं गात्रं कम्पयेत् तालकालतः । 1635
 मनाड मनोहरं केचिद्वचुरे तदुरोङ्कणम् ।
 इदमेव रचे नाम्नाचक्षन्ते साम्प्रदायिकाः ॥ १५२६॥ 1636
 (Aṃsayoḥ stanayostāla-sammitam cālanam bhavet |
 Paryāyād ekadā vā yad drutaṃ yad vā vilambitam ||
 Kramād adhaḥ punaḥ paścād ūrdhvam etad uroṅkaṇam |
 Idam eva naṭāḥ prāhus traṅga-śabdena kovidāḥ ||
 Manāk sulalitaṃ tiryak cālanam yat kučāmsayoḥ |
 Vilambenāvilambena tad vacuḥ kepy uroṅkaṇam ||
 Yatra pātram drutaṃ gātram kampayet tāla-kālataḥ |
 Manān manoharam kecid ūcure tad uroṅkaṇam |
 Idam eva race nāmnā cākṣante sāmpradāyikāḥ ||)

When the shoulders and breasts are moved downward and upward, either alternately or together, in quick or slow tempo according to *tāla* and *mātrā*, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Urokkāṇa*. Learned dancers also refer to this by the term *Taraṅga*. Some ācāryas state that when the breasts and shoulders are moved gracefully in an oblique manner, either slowly or swiftly, it is called *Urokkāṇa*. Other scholars explain that when the performer causes the body to vibrate gracefully and swiftly in accordance with *tāla* and *mātrā*, that is *Urokkāṇa* *Lāsyāṅga*. The teachers of the *Nāṭya* tradition also call this *Raca*.

7. Dhillā

नर्तकी तनुते नृते यदा स्तोकसौष्ठवम् ।
 भावार्द्र हृदयोपेता विलासमधुरान्वितम् । 1637
 हेलाभावालसं यत्र सा ढिल्लायै तदा मता ॥ १५३०॥
 (Nartakī tanute nrte yadā stoka-sauṣṭhavam |
 Bhāvārdra hṛdayopetā vilāsa-madhurānvitam |
 Helā-bhāvālasaṃ yatra sā dhillāyāi tadā matā ||)

When, in dance, a dancer whose heart is enriched by emotions gently stretches her softly extended limbs with a touch of grace, accompanied by the sweetness of *vilāsa* and expressive gestures suggestive of *śṛṅgāra*, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Dhillā*.

8. *Trikali*

चार्या स्थानेऽथवा ताललयानुगतिभिर्यदा । 1638
 विधुताकम्पिताधृतपरिवाहित कम्पितैः ॥१५३१॥
 पञ्चभिर्मूर्धभिर्यत्र पात्रं चित्तानि पश्यताम् । 1639
 श्रानन्दयत्यसौ सद्भिस्तदा त्रिकलिरीरितः ॥ १५३२ ॥
 (Cāryāṃ sthāne 'thavā tāla-layānugatibhir yadā |
 Vidhutā-kampitā-dhūta-parivāhita-kampitaiḥ || |
 Pañcabhir mūrdhabhir yatra pātram cittāni paśyatām |
 Śrānandayaty asau sadbhis tadā trikalir īritah ||)

When, in *cārī* or *sthānaka*, the performer delights the minds of the spectators by employing the five head-mudrās—*Vidyut*, *Ākampita*, *Āghūta*, *Parivāhita*, and *Kampita* in accordance with *tāla* and *laya*, the learned call it the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Trikali*.

9. *Kintu*

यत्राङ्गना गीततालतुलितं चालनं यदा । 1640
 भ्रुवयोः स्तनयोः कट्याः कुर्यात् किन्तु तदा त्विदम् ॥१५३३॥
 (Yatrāṅganā gīta-tāla-tulitaṃ cālanam yadā |
 Bhruvayoḥ stanayoḥ katyāḥ kuryāt kintu tadā tv idam ||)

When a woman performer moves her eyebrows, breasts, and waist in accordance with the rhythm (*tāla*) of the song, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Kintu*.

10. *Deśikāra*

मनोहरं यदग्राम्यं तत्तद्देशानुसारतः । 1641
 नानारीत्यन्वितं नृत्तं देशीकारमिदं जगुः ॥१५३४॥
 (Manoharam yad agrāmyam tattad-deśānusārataḥ |
 Nānā-rīty-anvitaṃ nṛtṭam deśikāram idaṃ jaguḥ ||)

Dance that is graceful, distinct from the *grāmya* (folk) style, and characterized by various modes according to different regions is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Deśikāra*.

11. *Nijāpanam*

पात्रे यत्राप्रत्नेन सौष्ठवं रेखयान्वितम् । 1642
 नृत्तति प्रेष्यते दृष्टिः करे सुगतिसुन्दरी ।
 सभ्यातिमोहनी भावसम्पन्ना तन्निजापनम् ॥ १५३५ ॥ 1643
 (Pātre yatrāpratnena sauṣṭhavam rekhayānvitam |
 Nṛttati presyate drṣṭiḥ kare sugati-sundarī |
 Sabyātimohanī bhāva-sampannā tan-nijāpanam ||)

When the performer dances with ease and grace, harmonized with the melodic line (*rāga*), attracting the gaze of the character, and when the hands display beautiful movements that enchant the audience, there it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Nijāpana*.

12. *Ullāsa*

क्षिप्रं निरूपितांस्तालान् दर्शयेद् भावसूचकैः ।
 द्विगुणैस्त्रिगुणैर्यद्वा पात्रं गात्रसमुद्भवैः ॥१५३६॥ 1644

सूक्ष्मै र सकृदुल्लासैर्मनो हरति पश्यताम् । ॥
 तदोल्लासं समाचष्टं वीरसिंहसुनन्दनः ॥ १५३७ ॥ 1645
 (Kṣipraṃ nirūpitāms tālān darśayed bhāva-sūcakaiḥ |
 Dviguṇais trigunair yad vā pātraṃ gātra-samudbhavaiḥ ||
 Sūkṣmair rasa-kṛd ullāsair mano harati paśyatām |
 Tad ollāsaṃ samācaṣṭaṃ Vīrasimha-sunandanah ||)

When a character quickly demonstrates the prescribed *tālas*, or repeatedly captivates the spectators through subtle delights arising from expressive gestures and multiplied limb movements that convey emotion, the son of Vīrasimha has called this the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Ullāsa*.

13. Thasaka

ललितं स्यात्कुचाधस्तान्नयनं यसको मतः ॥ १५३८ ॥
 (Lalitaṃ syāt kucādhas-tān nayanam yasya mataḥ ||)

When the graceful hand is taken below the breasts, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Thasaka*.

14. Bhāva

गीतं नृत्यानुगं यत्र नाट्यं च विलासल्लयम् । 1646
 समासाद्य मुदं यत्र पात्रं पुष्यन् कलाङ्कुरान् ।
 नृत्येद् विलासमधुरं तदासौ भाव उच्यते ॥ १५३ ॥ 1647
 (Gītaṃ nṛtyānugaṃ yatra nāṭyaṃ ca vilasallayam |
 Samāsādya mudaṃ yatra pātraṃ puṣyan kalāṅkurān |
 Nṛtyed vilāsa-madhuraṃ tadāsau bhāva ucyate ||)

When the song follows the dance, the dance is adorned with rhythm (*laya*), and the character, attaining joy, performs with expressive gestures and sweetness while nurturing delicate aesthetic nuances, there is the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Bhāva*.

15. Sukalāsa

लास्याङ्गानि सचारीणि पादादेरपि चालनम् ।
 कृत्वान्तराद्वक्तुर्यान्मेलनं गीतवाद्ययोः ॥ १५४० ॥ 1648
 यदा कलाकलापज्ञैः सुकलासं तदोदितम् ।
 स्थानचारीकराणां यन्मेलनं यौगपद्यतः । 1649
 गीतवाद्यलयेष्वेतन् मेनिरेऽन्ये मनीषिणः ॥ १५४१ ॥
 (Lāsyāṅgāni sa-cārīṇi pādāder api cālanam |
 Kṛtvāntarād vaktur yān melanaṃ gīta-vādyayoh ||
 Yadā kalā-kalāpa-jñaiḥ sukalāsaṃ tadoditam |
 Sthāna-cārī-karāṇāṃ yan melanaṃ yaugapadyataḥ |
 Gīta-vādyalayeṣv etan menire 'nye manīṣiṇah ||)

When a *Lāsyāṅga* is combined with *cārī*, the feet and other limbs are also moved, and by making appropriate pauses, harmony is established between song and instrumental music, the experts in art call it the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Sukalāsa*.

Other scholars consider *Sukalāsa Lāsyāṅga* to be the simultaneous coordination of song, instrumental music, and rhythm with *sthāna* (stance), *cārī*, and hand movements.

16. *Laya*

श्रितं कञ्चिल्लयं वेगाद् योजयेदितरौ लयौ । 1650
 पात्रं सविस्मयं यत्र नृत्येऽसौ सम्मतो लयः ॥ १५४२ ॥
 (Śritam kañcillayam vegād yojayed itarau layau |
 Pātram savismayaṃ yatra nṛtye 'sau sammato layaḥ ||)
 /

When, in dance, other rhythms are rapidly combined with a prevailing rhythm, and the character appears astonished, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Laya*.

17. *Dhāla*

यदा [व] मन्दमुल्लोलकमलोपरि बिन्दुवत् । 1651
 नृत्ये यत्रासञ्चारः तदासौ ढाल उच्यते ।
 इममेव बुधाः केचित्ताननाम्ना प्रचक्षते ॥ १५४३ ॥ 1652
 (Yadā [va] mandam ullolakam alopari binduvat |
 Nṛtye yatrāsañcāraḥ tadāsau ḍhāla ucyate |
 Imam eva budhāḥ kecit tāna-nāmnā pracakṣate ||)

When, in dance, the limbs are moved in an extremely quick and delicate manner, like a drop of water on a lotus leaf, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Dhāla*. Some scholars also refer to this by the name *Tāna*.

18. *Chevā*

सुभ्रुवो यत्र नेत्रान्तौ भावगर्भो स्वभावतः ।
 तरलौ नर्तने स्यातामसौ छेवा मता बुधैः ॥ १५४४ ॥ 1653
 (Subhruvo yatra netrāntau bhāva-garbho svabhāvataḥ |
 Taralau nartane syātām asau chevā matā budhaiḥ ||)

When, in dance, the corners of the dancer's eyes are naturally expressive and lively, the learned consider it to be the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Chevā*.

19. *Āṅgāhāra*

ललिता यत्र गात्रस्य नतिः पूर्वोत्तरार्धयोः ।
 चापवत् तालसहिता सोऽङ्गहारोऽभिधीयते ॥ १५४५ ॥ 1654
 (Lalitā yatra gātrasya natih pūrvottarārdhayoḥ |
 Cāpavat tāla-sahitā so 'ṅgahāro 'bhidhīyate ||)

When, in dance, the bending (curving) of the limbs in the first half and the latter half of the body appears graceful and rhythmic, like a bow, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Āṅgāhāra*.

20. *Laṅghita*

मुहुर्मुहुः समुल्लङ्घ्य वाद्यस्यावादनं यदा ।
 पात्रं विश्रम्य विश्रम्य नृत्येत् स्याल्लङ्घितं तदा ॥ १५४६ ॥ 1655
 (Muhur muhuḥ samullāṅghya vādyaśyāvādanam yadā |
 Pātram viśramya viśramya nṛtyet syāl laṅghitam tadā ||)

When the performer repeatedly breaks or interrupts the sound of the instrument and dances with pauses in between, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Laṅghita*.

21. *Vihāsī*

विहसी तु तदा ज्ञेया यदा स्यात् सुन्दरस्मितम् ॥१५४७॥
जब सुन्दर मुसकराहट के साथ नृत्य किया जाय, तब उसे विहसी लास्यांग कहते हैं ।
(*Vihāsī tu tadā jñeyā yadā syāt sundara-smitam* ||)

When dance is performed with a beautiful smile, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Vihāsī*.

22. *Nīkī*

नर्तकी नर्तने गीतवाद्यताल [ल] येष्वपि ।
अस्खलन्ती यदा नीकी तदा जनमनोहरा ॥ १५४८ ॥ 1656
(*Nartakī nartane gīta-vādya-tāla-layeṣv api* |
Askhalantī yadā nīkī tadā jana-manoharā ||)

When, in dance, the dancer attracts the minds of the people by committing no error in song, instrumental music, rhythm (*tāla*), or tempo (*laya*), it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Nīkī*.

23. *Namanikā*

अङ्गानां यत्र पात्रस्य प्रयासव्यतिरेकतः ।
नमनं स्यात् प्रयोगेषु दुष्करेष्वपि सा तदा । 1657
मता नमनिका धीरैः सभ्यानन्दविवर्धनी ॥ १५४६ ॥ 1658
(*Āṅgānām yatra pātrasya prayāsa-vyatikrekataḥ* |
Namanam syāt prayogeṣu duṣkareṣv api sā tadā |
Matā namanikā dhīraiḥ sabhyānanda-vivardhanī ||)

When, even in extremely difficult movements, the character's limbs bend effortlessly and naturally, the wise call this *Lāsyāṅga* which enhances the delight of the audience *Namanikā*.

24. *Śaṅkā*

श्रङ्गानि तावदौद्धत्याच्चालयित्वा सविभ्रमम् ।
पुनराहार्यं तान्यग्रे पार्श्वयोरपि नर्तकी ।
वञ्जयन्तीव चेल्लोकं नृत्येच्छङ्का तदोदिता ॥ १५५० ॥ 1659
(*Śṛṅgāni tāvad auddhatyāc cālayitvā savibhramam* |
Punar āhārya tāny agre pārśvayor api nartakī |
Vañcayantīva cel lokam nṛtyec chaṅkā tadoditā ||)

When the dancer moves her limbs playfully with a sense of boldness, and then again moves them forward and sideways in a manner that seems to captivate or deceive the onlookers, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Śaṅkā*.

25. *Viṭāṇḍa*

स्वभावाल्ललितं चारीकरणादिबलाद् यदा । 1660
कुरुते कठिनं यत्र तदेदं वितडं मतम् ॥१५५१॥
(*vabhāvāl lalitam cārī-karaṇādi-balād yadā* |
Kurute kaṭhinam yatra tadedam viṭaḍam matam ||)

When, through the strength of *cārī*, *karaṇa*, and similar movements, even difficult dance sequences are presented naturally and beautifully, it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Viṭāṇḍa*.

26. *Gītāvadātya*

नृत्येदनुगुणं यत्र नर्तकी गीतवाद्ययोः ॥1661
 अक्षराणां लयस्यापि समता गीतवाद्यता ॥ १५५२ ॥
 (*Nṛtyed anuguṇam yatra nartakī gīta-vādyayoh |*
Akṣarānām layasyāpi samatā gīta-vādyatā ||)

When the dancer performs in accordance with the song and instrumental music, and there is proper coordination with the syllables and tempo (*laya*), it is called the *Lāsyāṅga* known as *Gītāvadātya*.

27. *Vivartana*

वाद्यप्रबन्धवर्णानां यत्र साम्येन नर्तनम् । 1662
 रचयेद् हस्तकैः पात्रं चारीभिः करणैरपि ।
 भ्रमरीभिश्च सम्प्रोक्तं विवर्तनमिदं बुधैः ॥ १५५३ ॥ 1663
 (*Vādyā-prabandha-varṇānām yatra sām्यena nartanam |*
Racayad hastakaiḥ pātram cārībhiḥ karaṇair api |
Bhramarībhiś ca samproktaṁ vivartanam idaṁ budhaiḥ ||)

When a performer presents dance through hand gestures, movements of the feet (*chārīs*), *karaṇas*, and spins (*bhramarīs*) in harmony with the syllables of the musical instruments and the words of the song, learned people call that *lāsyāṅga* '*Vivartana*'.

28. *Tharahara*

नर्तने तनुयात् क्षीघ्रं कम्पनं कुचयोन्ती ।
 भुजावधि विलासेन यदा थरहरं तदा ॥ १५५४ ॥ 1664
 (*Nartane tanuyāt kṣīghraṁ kampanam kucayonṛtī |*
Bhujāvadhī vilāseṇa yadā tharaharam tadā ||)

When, during the dance, the female dancer quickly spreads the trembling of her breasts up to the arms with expressive gestures, that *lāsyāṅga* is called *Tharahara*.

29. *Sthāpanā*

या स्थितिर्ललिता भूमौ सरेखमुखरागभाक् ।
 समार्थं नर्तनेऽङ्गानां प्राहुस्तां स्थापनां बुधाः ॥ १५५५ ॥ 1665
 (*Yā sthitir lalitā bhūmau sa-rekha-mukha-rāgabhāk |*
Samārthe nartane 'ṅgānām prāhus tāṁ sthāpanām budhāḥ ||)

When, for half the duration of the dance, the limbs are beautifully placed on the ground in such a way that the facial expression and its lines are clearly visible, learned people call this *lāsyāṅga* *Sthāpanā*.

30. *Sauṣṭhava*

सौष्ठवस्य पुरोक्तस्य चतुर्भिर्बाष्टभिर्मिता ।
 यद् वा द्वादशभिर्त्राङ्गुलैर्वा खर्वता त्रिधा ॥ १५५६ ॥ 1666
 तत्तद्देशानुसारेण कटिकण्ठोरुजानुषु ।
 वाञ्छया वा महीपस्य सन्दिस्तत् सौष्ठवं मतम् ॥ १५५७ ॥ 1667

(*Sauṣṭhavasya puroktasya caturbhir bāṣṭabhir mitā |*
Yad vā dvādaśabhir yatrāṅgulair vā kharvatā tridhā ||)

*Tattad-deśānusāreṇa kaṭi-kaṅṭhoru-jānuṣu |
Vāñchayā vā mahīpasya sadbhis tat sauṣṭhavaṃ matam ||)*

If the previously described symmetry (*sauṣṭhava*) is reduced three times in the waist, neck, thighs, and knees by measurements of four, eight, or twelve aṅgulas, according to regional custom or royal command, then virtuous people have called it the *lāsyāṅga* named *Sauṣṭhava*.

31. *Sruvā*

यथा मन्दानिलाघाताच्चलेद्दीपशिखा तथा ।
चलेयुर्यत्र गात्राणि सा स्रुवा परिकीर्तिता ॥ १५५८ ॥ 1668
(*Yathā mandānila-āghātāc caled dīpaśikhā tathā |
Caleyur yatra gātrāṇi sā sruvā parikīrtitā ||*)

Just as the flame of a lamp flickers with a gentle breeze, in the same way, where the limbs move delicately, that *lāsyāṅga* is called *Sruvā*.

32. *Masanatā*

मुग्धां स्निग्धां यदा दृष्टिं तनुते रसनिर्भराम् ।
नृत्यहस्तानुगां नृत्ये तदा मसृणता भवेत् ॥ १५५६ ॥ 1669
(*Mugdhāṃ snigdhāṃ yadā dr̥ṣṭim tanute rasa-nirbharām |
Nṛtya-hastānugāṃ nṛtye tadā masṛṇatā bhavet ||*)

When, during a dance, the dancer extends a gentle, affectionate, and *rasa*-laden glance that follows the movements of the *nṛtta-hasta*, it is termed the *lāsyāṅga* known as *Masanatā*.

33. *Upāra*

पूर्व पूर्वमुपक्रान्ता नृत्यस्यावयवा यदा ।
भूषावलितसर्वाङ्गा वर्तेरनुत्तरोत्तरम् ।
तालप्रयोगनैपुण्यात् तदोपारो मतो बुधैः ॥ १५६० ॥ 1670
(*Pūrva-pūrvam upakrāntā nṛtyasyāvayavā yadā |
Bhūṣāvalita-sarvāṅgā varterann uttarottaram |
Tāla-prayoga-naipuṇyāt tadopāro mato budhaiḥ ||*)

When the elements of the dance initially commenced proceed further with expert use of *tāla*, and the whole body is ornamented with decorative adornments, scholars designate this *lāsyāṅga* as *Upāra*.

34. *Aṅgānaṅga*

अगं लास्याङ्गमादिष्टमनङ्गं ताण्डवं मतम् ।
यत्र नृत्येऽनयोर्योगस्तदङ्गानमीरितम् ॥ १५६१ ॥ 1671
(*Agam lāsyāṅgam ādiṣṭam anaṅgam tāṅḍavaṃ matam |
Yatra nṛtye 'naylor yogas tad aṅgānam īritam ||*)

Aṅga (the body) is termed *lāsyāṅga*, and 'Anaṅga' (Kāma, the bodiless deity of love) is termed *tāṅḍava*. When both are combined in dance, that form is known as the *lāsyāṅga* called *Aṅgānaṅga*.

35. *Abhinaya*

भावप्रकाशकैरङ्गैर्यथावत् करणादिकम् । 1672
 विदध्याद् यत्र पात्रं चेदसावभिनयस्तदा ॥ १५६२ ॥
 (Bhāva-prakāśakair aṅgair yathāvat karaṇādikam |
 Vidadhyād yatra pātram ced asāv abhinayas tadā ||)

When a performer composes karaṇas and related movements effectively by means of limbs that convey emotion, it is termed the lāsyaṅga known as *Abhinaya*.

36. *Komalikā*

यदा नृत्येङ्गनाङ्गानां क्रियाभिर्वलनादिभिः ।
 आर्द्रता प्रेक्ष्यते चित्तात् परा कोमलिका तदा ॥ १५६३ ॥ 1673
 (Yadā nṛtyeṅganāṅgānāṃ kriyābhir valanādibhiḥ |
 Ārdratā prekṣyate cittāt parā komalikā tadā ||)

When, in a dance performance, aesthetic delight is apprehended in the mind through movements like the flexing and graceful turning of the limbs of female dancers, it is designated as the lāsyaṅga known as *Komalikā*.

37. *Mukharasa*

यत्र पात्रं मुखे कुर्याद् वर्णानां तु विवर्तनम् ।
 तत्तद्र सानुगुण्येन भवेन्मुख रसस्त्वसौ ॥ १५६४ ॥ 1674
 (Yatra pātram mukhe kuryād varṇānāṃ tu vivartanam |
 Tattad-rasānugūnyena bhaven mukha-rasas tv asau ||)

When a performer varies or alters the uttered syllables in harmony with the specific emotional flavours (*rasas*), it is termed the lāsyaṅga known as *Mukharasa*.

अन्य भेद

अन्येऽपि सन्ति ये भेदा देशीलास्याङ्गसश्रयाः ।
 ग्रन्थविस्तर संत्रासान्न तेऽस्माभिरूपिताः ॥ १५६५ ॥ 1675

(*Anya bheda*

*Anye'pi santi ye bheda deśī-lāsyaṅga-saśrayāḥ |
 Grantha-vistara-samtrāsān na te'smābhir rūpitāḥ ||)*

The author brings the exposition of the *deśī lāsyaṅgas* to a close by noting that their other types have been omitted for fear of enlarging the work beyond proper limits.

Conclusion:

The analysis of Deśī Lāsyaṅgas in the Nṛtyādhyāya indicates a transition in dance theory from generalized classical standards to a deliberate focus on regional and performative particularity. Instead of just building on Bharata's ideas, Aśokamalla changes lāsya to focus on the lived body, where movement, rhythm, and feeling work together as ways to express oneself. His definitions do not separate technique from meaning; rather, they conceptualize bodily action as an aesthetic process wherein physical expression and emotional implication collaboratively produce rasa. By doing this, the Nṛtyādhyāya changes lāsya from a minor type of dramatic movement into a separate area of dance knowledge.

The listing and description of thirty-seven Deśī Lāsyaṅgas shows a desire to classify things without coming to a conclusion. By acknowledging additional unrecorded varieties, Aśokamalla implicitly recognizes the instability of dance practice and the impossibility of fully containing it within textual boundaries. This action places the Nṛtyādhyāya in a transitional intellectual period that values systematization while also being open to the changing nature of embodied traditions. As a result, Deśī Lāsyaṅgas do not appear as rigid stylistic entities but as conceptual instruments for comprehending variation, refinement, and regional aesthetic reasoning.

This viewpoint encourages additional academic involvement beyond mere textual analysis. A comparative analysis of other medieval treatises may elucidate how various authors navigated the tension between normativity and diversity, while choreographic reconstruction and performance-based research can evaluate the practical applicability of these categories within contemporary dance forms. Furthermore, as Deśī Lāsyaṅgas emphasize stylized feminine movement, they provide a valuable context for analyzing the historical development of gendered aesthetics in Indian dance. The Nṛtyādhyāya, therefore, does not merely preserve a list of movements; it opens a theoretical space in which dance can be understood as a dynamic, regionally inflected, and aesthetically self-conscious practice.

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