

“UNVEILING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE LASYAS IN DASHAROOPAKA AND THE ASTANAYIKAS IN NATYASHASTRA”

PROJECT CODE: BH6BP02B18

*Project Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Award Of
Degree of **Bachelor of Arts in BHARTHANATYAM** of **Mahatma Gandhi University**.*

Done By

AISHWARYA PILLAI

REG NO: SB21BHA003

Guided By

MISS ARUNIMA J.R



MARCH 2024

Department of Bharathanatyam

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam, Pin-682011

Affiliated to MG University, Kottayam

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I want to start by giving **God the Almighty** my sincere gratitude for all blessings I have received throughout my life and for helping mw get to where I am now.*

*I want to express my sincere gratitude to **Dr. Beena D**, Head of the Department, St Teresa's College, for providing all the assistance necessary to the accomplishment of the project.*

*I want to express **Miss Arunima J.R**, my sincere gratitude, **Assistant Professor of Bharatanathyam**, for her tremendous assistance and insightful advice during the project planning.*

*I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to **Sir Suresh Kumar C.K** Assistant Professor, **Miss Ria V.R** Assistant Professor (Class in Charge), **Miss Drishya P P** Assistant Professor, **Sir Chandrakumar P.L** Assistant Professor (Dept of Bharatanathyam) for their valuable assistance in the project preparation.*

*Much Thankful to my **classmates, family and friends** for their invaluable support and assistance.*

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the Project Report titled *“Unveiling the connection between the Lasyas in Dasharoopaka and the Astanayikas in Natyashastra”* submitted to the *Department of Bharathanatyam*, St Teresa’s college (Autonomous), Ernakulam Affiliated to MG University, Kottayam is a record of original work done by me under the guidance of Miss Arunima J.R.

The information and data given in the project is a representation of a connection which can be brought out between the two titles and is authentic to the best of my knowledge.

The Project report is not submitted to any other University or institution for the award of any degree, diploma or fellowship.

INDEX

SL.NO	TOPIC	PAGE NO
1	INTRODUCTION	2
2	Brief overview of Dasharoopakam	4
	2.1 The Lasya – evolution and Significance of Lasya	5
	2.2 The 12 types of Lasya	6
3	Overview of Astanayika	8
	3.1 Eight types of Astanayika	9
4	Comparative analysis of Lasyas with Astanayikas	12
	4.1 Geyapada	12
	4.2 Stitapathya	12
	4.3 Asina	13
	4.4 Puspagandhika	13
	4.5 Pracchedaka	14
	4.6 Trimudhaka	15
	4.7 Saindhavaka	15
	4.8 Dvimudhaka	16
	4.9 Uttamottamaka	16
	4.10 Vicitrapada	17
	4.11 Ukta Pratyukta	17
	4.12 Bhavita	18
5	Finding to conclude	19
6	Bibliography	21

INTRODUCTION

In the context of Natyashastra, “**Lasya**” refers to the gentle, graceful, and expressive aspects of dance and dramatic performance, often associated with the feminine. These are mainly of two primary modes of dance, one being Tandava, which is more vigorous and masculine in nature and the other is Lasya which is characterized by delicate movements, emotional expression and a sense of beauty and aesthetics.

The concept of “**Lasyangya**” refers to a single act play which is also called **Bhana** that predominantly features Lasya elements. These plays are usually centered around the themes of love, beauty and emotions and they showcase the gracefulness of lasya. Lasyanga plays are known for their melodious music, emotive story telling making them a captivating form of artistic expression within the realm of classical Indian performing arts.

By incorporating Lasya elements into modern theatrical forms, artists can create performances that are not only visually appealing but also emotionally resonant. The Natyashastra emphasizes the importance of lasya in conveying the essence of a character evoking rasas in the audience, and creating a harmonious pleasing performance.

Overall lasya plays a crucial role in Indian classical dance and drama, serving as a vehicle for the artistic expression Emotional communication and spiritual elevation.

The connection between Lasya and the Ashtanayikas (the eight types of heroines) in the Natyashastra can be explored in several ways, especially in the context of modern theatrical forms or contemporary interpretations of classical dance and drama.

1. **Characterization:** Each of the Ashtanayikas represents a different aspect of a woman's emotions and experiences, such as the Vasakasajja (woman dressing to meet her lover) or the Abhisarika (woman going to meet her lover). These character types can be portrayed using Lasya elements to convey their emotions, desires, and conflicts with greater depth and authenticity.

2. **Emotional Expression:** Lasya can be used to express the range of emotions experienced by the Ashtanayikas, such as love, longing, anger, and sorrow, adding richness and complexity to their characters and enhancing the storytelling.

3. **Narrative Structure:** The Ashtanayikas are often used in traditional dance and drama to structure the narrative around the various stages of a woman's life or her emotional journey. Lasya can be used to highlight these stages and transitions, creating a cohesive and engaging narrative arc.

4. **Choreography:** Lasya movements and gestures can be incorporated into the choreography to differentiate between the different Ashtanayikas and to emphasize their unique personalities and traits.

5. **Symbolism:** Lasya and the Ashtanayikas can be used symbolically to represent broader themes and ideas, such as the nature of love, the role of women in society, or the human experience as a whole.

Overview of Dasharoopaka

Chapter 20 of the Natyashastra, known as Dasharoopaka, is a significant section that deals with the composition of dramatic plays. Dasharoopaka is a form of drama that combines various elements of the other types of plays discussed earlier in the text. It is a complex form that requires careful attention to detail and a deep understanding of dramatic structure.

One of the key features of Dasharoopaka is its use of multiple roles, or roopakas, which are played by a single actor. These roles are distinct from each other and often represent different characters or aspects of a character. The text provides detailed guidelines on how these roles should be portrayed and how they should interact with each other on stage.

Another important aspect of Dasharoopaka is its use of different styles, or prabandhas, which are used to convey different moods and emotions. These styles are used in conjunction with the roles to create a rich and dynamic theatrical experience. The text provides detailed descriptions of these styles and how they should be used in the context of a Dasharoopaka.

Overall, Chapter 20 of the Natyashastra provides a comprehensive overview of Dasharoopaka and serves as a valuable resource for anyone interested in understanding this unique form of drama.

2.1 EVOLUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF LASYA

Dance in Natyashastra was an ancillary part and one of the ingredients that lent elegance and grace to the theatrical performance. Bharata had discussed dance mainly in terms of Nrta, pure, abstract and beautiful dance performed in tune with the rhythm and tempo with instrumental music. It was during the later times the term Nrtya gained an independent recognition as an expressive, eloquent representation with grace. It was during this period the element of lasya came into prominence. This lasya then came into usage in Nrtya and it comprises those delicate and graceful movements of the body, which arouse a pleasant euphoric feeling and erotic desire.

Then Jaya Sena enumerates Twelve forms of *Lasyanga* (Lasyangani) :

Geyapasam, Stitapathyam, Asinam Puspagandika/Prachedakam Trimudham ca
Saidhavakhyam Dvimudhakam //Uttamottamakam caivam Uktapratyuktam eva ca//

The lasyangas according to Jaya Sena, are the elements of the traditional forms of dance (marga). In the first part jaya sena presents Lasyangas as per Bharata and in the second half jaya sena deals with the Desi Lasya the regional variation of the Lasya.

The Nrttaratnavali is one of the early manuals on dancing to describe Lasya in detail. It makes Lasyanga the very heart of the Uparupakas, a minor type of dance drama narrating an incident usually related to Krishna. These rasaka types of dances depict the graceful, delicate and love laden playful dance movements associated with *Srngara rasa*.

2.2 THE LASYA – 12 TYPES OF LASYA

- **Geyapada** : Here the heroine is seated in midst of her musical instruments but the singers go on singing the song without playing on the instruments. The women sing in praise of their beloved, in the sitting posture and with the various gestures of limbs.
- **Sthitapathya**: This woman is separated from her lover and she recites a composition in Prakrta while seated on her seat, then it is the sthitapathya.
- **Asina**: The lover sits with anxiety and sorrow without caring for any makeup and in disarray. This is the example of Asina.
- **Puspagandika** : If a woman is dressed like a man, recites As simple poem in Sanskrit for amusing her female friends, then this is pushpagandika.
- **Pracchedaka**: Where the moon-struck woman prepares to hasten to the side of her lover even if he has committed infidelity and done her wrong, the lasyanga is known as Pracchedaka.

- ***Trimūdhā***: A play composed of sama-vritta, neither harsh nor large in number, is called Trimudhaka.
- ***Saindhavākhya*** (Salt-like): The meaning of "salt" here is unclear. It could indicate a playful or flirtatious Lasya style, or perhaps one with quick and intricate footwork.
- ***Dvimūdhaka*** (Two-faced): Similar to Trimūdhā, this Lasya might involve portraying two contrasting emotions or characters within the dance.
- ***Uttamottamaka*** (Highest of the High): This name suggests a Lasya considered particularly challenging or expressive, showcasing the dancer's mastery.
- ***Vicitrapada*** (Strange-footed): This Lasya could involve unusual or innovative footwork patterns, pushing the boundaries of Lasya technique.
- ***Uktapratyukta*** (Said and Answered): This name sparks curiosity. It might be a Lasya involving a call-and-response element, perhaps between the dancer and musicians.
- ***Bhāvita*** (Bhāva): This translates to "expressed" and likely refers to a Lasya that emphasizes facial expressions and body language to convey.

The beauty of Lasya lies in its grace, storytelling, and emotional expression.

Overview of Astanayika

The Ashtanayikas, or the eight types of heroines, described by Bharata in the Chapter 24 of Natyashastra named the Samanyabinaya, Samanyabinaya focuses on the universal aspects of expression that can be understood and appreciated by all audiences, regardless of their cultural or social background. It emphasizes the use of natural and realistic gestures, facial expressions, and vocal modulation to convey emotions and convey meaning to the audience which are central to Indian classical dance and theater. These archetypal female characters embody different emotional and situational states that form the core of dramatic narratives. Each Ashtanayika represents a specific relationship or emotional state that a woman experiences in relation to her beloved, often Lord Krishna or another divine figure in traditional contexts.

Each of the Ashtanayikas represents a different facet of the female experience in love and devotion. They serve as archetypes that are deeply ingrained in Indian classical dance and theater, providing a rich tapestry of emotions and relationships for performers to explore and portray.

3.1 THE EIGHT TYPES OF ASTANAYIKA

- ***Vasakasajja*** (The Heroine Adorned for Union): This Nayika is depicted as preparing herself to meet her lover, adorning herself with ornaments and flowers, eagerly awaiting his arrival. Her mood is one of joyful anticipation and longing.

"uchite vaasake yaa tu rati sambhoga lalasaa

mandanam kurute hrishta saa vai vasakasajjitaa"

- ***Virahotkanthita*** (The Heroine Distressed by Separation): This Nayika is consumed by the pain of separation from her beloved. Her mood is one of deep sorrow and longing, often expressed through gestures of despair and lamentation.

"aneka kaarya vyaasangaad yasyaa naagachhati priyah

tadanaagata dukhaartaa virahotkanthitaa tu saa"

- ***Svadinabhartruka*** (The Heroine Who has Her Husband in Subjection): This Nayika is portrayed as a woman who has her husband under her control, often depicted as confident and assertive. Her mood is one of pride and satisfaction in her ability to captivate her husband.

"surataatirasair baddho yasyaa parshve tu nayakah

saandraa moda guna prapta bhavet swadheena bhartrikaa''

- ***Kalahaantarita*** (The Heroine Reproaching Her Lover): This Nayika is depicted as being angry with her lover for some perceived wrong. Her mood is one of indignation and reproach, often expressed through gestures of anger and frustration.

"irshya kalaha nishkraanto yasyaa naagachhati priyah

saamarshavasha sampraaptaa kalahantaarita bhavet''

- ***Khandita*** (The Heroine Who has been Deceived): This Nayika is portrayed as a woman who has been betrayed or deceived by her lover. Her mood is one of hurt and betrayal, often expressed through gestures of sadness and disappointment.

"vyaasangaaduchite yasyaa vaasake naagatah priyah

tadanaagama dukhaartaa khanditaa saa prakeertitaah''

- ***Vipralabdha*** (The Heroine Deceived in Love): This Nayika is depicted as a woman who has been deceived or abandoned by her lover. Her mood is one of shock and disbelief, often expressed through gestures of disbelief and despair.

"yasyaa doorim priyah preshya dattaa sanketameva vaa

naagata kaaraneneha vipralabdhaha tu saa bhavet''

- ***Proshitabhartruka*** (The Heroine Abandoned by Her Lover): This Nayika is portrayed as a woman who has been abandoned or neglected by her lover. Her mood is one of loneliness and longing, often expressed through gestures of abandonment and sorrow.

*"gurukaaryaantara vashaad yasyaa vai proshita priyah
praroodhaalakakeshaantaa bhavet proshita bhartrika"*

- ***Abhisarika*** (The Heroine Going to Meet Her Lover): This Nayika is depicted as a woman who is boldly going to meet her lover, often defying social norms and conventions. Her mood is one of excitement and anticipation, often expressed through gestures of determination and resolve.

*"hitvaa lajjaantu yaa shlishtthaa madena madanena vaa
abhisaarayate kaantam saa bhavedabhisarika"*

Chapter 4

Comparative Analysis of Lasya with Astanayikas

4.1 Geyapada:

/asane copavistayam tantribhandopanbrmhitam/gayanair suskam tad geyapadamucyate//

Here the heroine is seated in midst of her musical instruments but the singers go on singing the song without playing on the instruments. The women sing in praise of their beloved, in the sitting posture and with the various gestures of limbs

In this we can relate the heroine to be in Vipralamba Srigaram that is love in separation. In today's art forms such as in Bharathanatyam Padams and Keerthanam can be done using Geyapada lasya.

This Lasya can also be represented in a Virahotkhandita Nayika, when the nayika loses interest in everything due to the pain in separation, she who sings well but the loses interest for music and playing instruments even though she is sitting amidst it.

4.2 Sthitapathya:

/prakrtam ya viyukta tu pathedasananasamstitta/madananalataptangi stitapathyam taducyate//

If a separated woman burning with the fire of love recites anything in Prakrta while resting on her seat, it is the Sthitapathya.

One who fights with her lover and gets hurt is Kalahandarita, also can be shown by Sthitapathya lasya ,as a woman burning with fire of love reciting anything. Same can be connected and applied in the representation of a dance when a nayika is a state of deep grief that is Prosidabhadrika in Srigara padams by the use of Sthitapathya ,the second form of Lasya.

4.3 Asina :

/Asinamasyate yatra cintasokasamanvitam/aprasadhitagatram ca jihmadrstiniriksitam//

One who sits without making any daily needs and overcome with anxiety and sorrow, and looks with oblique glances it is the Asina.

Prosidabhadrika nayika can be shown through Asina lasya , as the nayika is the one abandoned by her husband and is in a state of loneliness and the lasya shows the exact situation that she no able to overcome her sorrow and anxiety ,sits without making her daily needs happen and gives oblique looks.

4.4 Puspagandhika :

*/yatra stri naravesena lalitam samskrtam pathet/sakhinam tu vinodaya sa jineya
puspagandika//*

When a women in disguise of a man recites something sweetly in sankrit for the pleasure of her female friend it is Puspagandhika.

The sakhi, the female character who acts as a friend of the Heroine plays an essential role in storytelling, supporting the nayika, advising and sometimes the one who acts as a mediator between the heroine and other character. This lasya form Puspagandhika can be connected with the Sakhi.

The Sanjari bhavas can be shown through dance using Puspagandhika Lasya form which is a fleeting emotional state that arises due to specific circumstances or events in the narration.

4.5 Pracchedaka:

*/pracchedakah sa vijneyo yatra candratapahatah/natyam purusabhavadhyam
trimrdhakamudahrtam//*

When a woman pained by the moonlight prepares to go to her beloved, even if he has done her wrong it is Pracchedaka.

This Lasya form connects with the eighth astanayika that is the Abhisarika in which the heroine who consumed by love secretly leaves her home at night to meet her beloved. This can be depicted in Astapadis.

Radha's love is often depicted as intense and passionate driving her to leave her home and seek Krishna in the forest or by the banks of Yamuna, especially during moonlight lights . This can be the representation of pracchedaka lasya as well as Abhisarika nayika.

4.6 Trimudhaka :

*/anisthurasvalpapadam samavrttairralankrtam/natyam purusabhavadhyam
trimrdhakamudahrtam//*

A play adorned with even meters and abounding in mainly feeling and composed of words which are neither harsh nor huge is called Trimudhaka.

Khandita nayika can be clearly shown using Trimudhaka lasya as where the women is in a state where she comes to know that her husband or the lover is in relation with another girl other than her but does nothing that ruins her relationship and diplomatically cursing her husband or lover ,never lets the relation gets ruined playing with even meters. Hence in our modern dance items when we show Khandita nayika it can also be given a name of trimudhaka lasya , as the characters of this lasya form is evenly shown the nayika.

4.7 Saindhavaka:

*/Patram vismrtasanketam suvyaktakarananvitam/prakrtairvacanairyuktam viduh
saindhavakam budhah//*

When a lover who has failed to keep his trust and is using Prakrta through well performed karanas it is Saindhavaka.

Karanas are not used mainly, but in this the male character has been depicted where the Dheera Shanta character has been shown. An example can be given, as lord Krishna how sometimes does not keep to the expectation of Radha and fails to keep her trust but uses his sweet words to

mold radha. Many Astapadis can be done in this format and the lasya form shown can be mentioned as Saindhavaka.

4.8 Dvimudhaka:

*/Subharthagitabhinjayam caturasrapadakramam/ spastabhavarasopetam vyajacestam
dvimudhakam//*

Delineating a song of the catura type which has an auspicious meaning and which treats clear psychological states and sentiments with the pretension of the efforts is called the Dvimudhaka.

Dvimudhaka lasya form has an interpretation of the sloka that is the devotional piece in the praise of god of Hindu religion and mythology. It can also be connected to stuti, which is a hymn which throws light on good, faith, karma and also sung on auspicious days.

4.9 Uttamottamaka:

/uttamottamakam vidyadanekarasamsrayam/vicitraih slokabandhaisca helabhavavibhusitam//

The uttamottamaka is composed in various kinds of slokas, it includes various sentiments and is adorned with the condition of passion.

The stuti and slokas in bharatanatyam can be connected also in Uttamottamaka. But this lasya form cannot be represented as any of the nayika and its an exceptional lasya , as lasyas are the

form where emotions are mainly shown, but this lasyas characters does not have any relation with that.

4.10 Vicitrapada:

/Yadi pratikrtim drstva vinodayati manasam/madananalataptam tu vicitrapadamucyate//

If any woman burning with the fire of love soothes her mind by seeing the portrait it is vicitrapada.

Padams in bharatanathyam which focuses mainly on abinaya and shows almost different situations in which a nayika goes through a certain emotions enacts many nayikya character which includes the Astanayika. In such a kind there are nayikas whose love is much intense but her lover or the hero, either has cheated her or they are in separation where it is portrayed that when the nayikas sees the portrait of the lover she either recollects the happy times they spend together or misses his presence with her. So this state can be called as the representation of Vicitrapada.

4.11 Uktapratyukta:

/Kopaprasadajanitam sadhiksepapadasrayam/uktapratyuktameva syaccitragitarthayojitam//

The Uktapratyukta is a duet expressing anger or pleasure and it contains words of censure. it should contain interesting things in a song.

Except Khandita nayika and Kalahandarita all other nayika can be shown using this form of lasya.

As the rest of the nayikas all express many kind of emotions which is usually anger or of pleasure, but maintains a relation with the hero and tries to keep a constant bond. The nayikas dress up and wait for the hero, if also the hero cheats the nayika still controls her and anger and acts normally, some shows anger in a way that won't hurt the nayaka etc these can be categorised under the Uktapratyukta lasya form.

4.12 Bhavita:

*/Drstva swapne priyam yatra madananalatapita/karoti vividhan bhavan tadvai
bhavitamucyate//*

If a woman who is burning with the fire of love after seeing her beloved in a dream expresses different psychological states it is bhavita.

Swadina patika nayika, who is much swayed towards her husband/lover and very confident about the relationship can be conveyed or expressed by bhavita lasya. This can be shown as if this nayika sees her beloved in dream always feels proud of him and the way he keeps her and the always confident of the relation which get never harmed. Her psychological states represent to be the same.

Chapter 5

Findings To Conclude

Incorporating a connection between the 12 Types of Lasyas as mentioned in Dasharupaka and the Eight types of Astanayikas as mentioned by Bharata into today's theatrical performances, artists can create more engaging and meaningful experience for the audience, highlighting the Beauty and depth of classical Indian art forms.

GEYAPADA the first of the 12 types of lasya forms can be given a connection with the Vipralambha Srigaram aspect as explained above. Can be used in padams and keerthanam.

STITAPATHYA the second of the lasya type can be induced to Srigara padams where mainly the female character shows the state of Kalahandarita or even Proshitabhadraka

ASINA the third of the lasya type can be given an connection with the prsidabhaturka nayika as the characters portrayed by both the lasya and astanayika are almost the same and gives equal effect if both are induced in a form.

PUSPAGANDHIKA the fourth lasya type can be shown in the character sketch of Sakhi, as the character is a supporter of the main heroine and when in disguise helps her to with the advises as this lasya mentions the same and the character itself acts the same, so this lasya can be involved in named to be done for mentioning Sakhi.

PRACCEDAKA the fifth lasya type can be enacted when the character Radha is shown as the lasyas character when in intense love she is pained and she leaves home to meet her beloved. Abhisarika nayika is also shown through this lasya.

TRIMUDHAKA is the sixth form of lasya when it can be related with the character of the Khandita nayika and while portraying Varnams and the character is shown this lasya.

SAINDHAVAKA is the seventh of the lasya type which portrays male character, where Krishna can be shown as he who failed to keep the trust uses simple words to make her realise that he is guilty.

DVIMUDHAKA is the eighth of the lasya type which is the interpretation of the slokas or the devotional pieces which are sung in the praise of god and kings, which represents both in this character of lasya and those of slokas and stutis we practise in our performing arts.

UTTMOTTAMAKA is the ninth lasya type which stands as an exception which cannot be connected to any of the Astanayikas , as according to the character .

VICHITRAPADA is the tenth of the twelveth lasya types which is very much similar to nayikas when shown in padams where the hero is either in separation or the heroine is eagerly waiting for his arrival when the portrait when shown she soothes her mind out of love.

UKTA PRATYUKYTA is the eleventh lasya types which shows the character of all the nayikas except Khandita and Kalahandarita. Hence when the nayikas are shown we can symbolise it as Ukta pratyukyta lasya and can be use.

BHAVITA is the last one or the twelveth one of the lasya form and it is the interpretation of the woman who sees her lover in dreams has a different psychological states like that of the Swadina patthika nayika.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- NATYASHASTRA (VOLUME 1) BY BHARATA MUNI (Translated by Manomohan Ghosh)
- <https://www.wisdomlib.org/definition/lasya>
- <https://sreenivasaraos.com/tag/bhana/>
- <https://natyarambha.wordpress.com/2022/12/06/ashta-nayika/>
- <https://kalyanikalamandir.com/forms-of-lasya/>