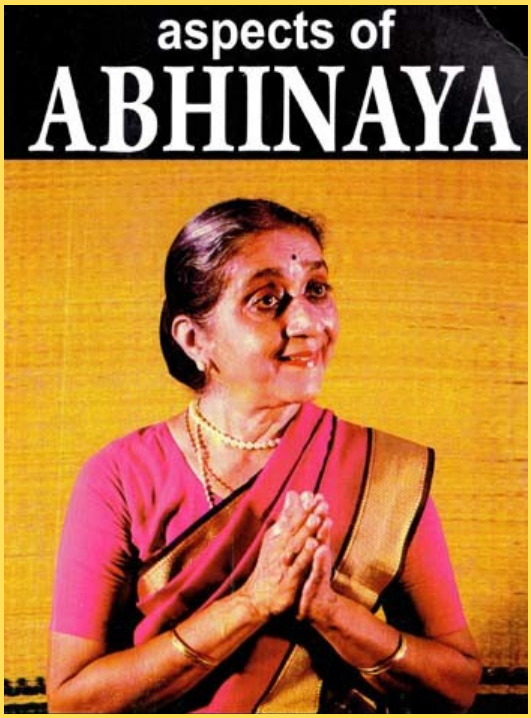

अंगिकं भुवनं यस्य वाचिकं सर्व वाङ्मयम्।
आहार्यं चन्द्र तारादि तम् नमः सात्विकं शिवम्॥

Angikam bhuvanam yasya Vachikam sarva vangmayam
Aharyam chandra taradi. Tam namah sattvikam shivam

This verse beautifully connects **dance and the universe** through the concept of **Abhinaya** described in the **Natyashastra**.

The Four Abhinayas in the Shloka

1. **Angika Abhinaya** – Body movements
- Angikam Bhuvanam Yasya- Shiva's body represents the whole universe.
2. **Vachika Abhinaya** – Speech, song, dialogue
- Vachikam Sarva Vangmayam- All sound and language are his voice.
3. **Aharya Abhinaya** – Costume and ornaments
- Aharyam Chandra Taradi - Moon and stars are his ornaments.
4. **Sattvika Abhinaya** –Tam Namah Sattvikam Shivam - Inner emotions and spiritual expression

Four Aspects of Abhinaya (Chaturvidha Abhinaya)

Abhinaya is the art of expressing **emotion, meaning, and story** in Indian classical dance. The word **Abhinaya** is derived from two Sanskrit words:

- **Abhi – towards**

- **Naya – to lead**

Thus, **Abhinaya means "to lead the audience towards the meaning or emotion of the performance."** According to the **Natya Shastra**, Abhinaya is divided into **four main types**, known as **Chaturvidha Abhinaya**. They are:

1. **Angika Abhinaya**
2. **Vachika Abhinaya**
3. **Aharya Abhinaya**
4. **Satvika Abhinaya**

1. Angika Abhinaya

(Physical Expression)

Angika Abhinaya refers to expression through body movements and gestures. It includes movements of the **major limbs, secondary limbs, and minor facial parts**.

Sub-types of Angika Abhinaya

a) Anga (Major Limbs) These are the six main parts of the body:

- Head (Shira)
- Hands (Hasta)
- Chest (Vaksha)
- Waist (Kati)
- Sides (Parshva)
- Feet (Pada)

b) Pratyanga (Secondary Limbs)

- Shoulders
- Arms
- Back
- Stomach
- Thighs
- Knees

c) Upanga (Minor Parts) These mainly include the **facial features**:

- Eyes
- Eyebrows
- Eyelids
- Cheeks
- Nose
- Lips
- Chin

Examples include hand gestures **(Hasta Mudras),** eye movements **(Drishti Bheda),** head movements **(Shiro Bheda),** and neck movements **(Griva Bheda).**

2. Vachika Abhinaya

(Verbal Expression)

Vachika Abhinaya refers to expression through **speech, dialogue, songs, and music**. It includes:

- Dialogue and conversation
- Recitation of poetry
- Singing
- Voice modulation
- Narration

In dance dramas and theatrical traditions such as **Yakshagana** and **Kathakali**, Vachika Abhinaya plays an important role. In Bharatanatyam, the dancer usually does not speak; however, the **lyrics, music, and nattuvangam** provide the Vachika element.

3. Aharya Abhinaya

(Costume and External Decoration)

Aharya Abhinaya refers to **costume, makeup, ornaments, and stage presentation** that help portray the character.

Elements of Aharya Abhinaya

- Costume
- Jewellery

- Makeup
- Hair style
- Props and stage decoration (Sajeev - Pust)

These elements enhance the **visual appeal and help the audience understand the character and mood of the performance**.

4. Satvika Abhinaya

(Inner Emotional Expression)

Satvika Abhinaya represents the **true inner feelings and emotions of the performer**.
It arises from the **mind and heart** and reflects the psychological state of the character.

Eight Satvika Bhavas : According to the Natya Shastra, there are **eight Satvika expressions**:

1. Stambha – Stillness or paralysis
2. Sveda – Perspiration
3. Romanch – Hair standing on end
4. Svarabheda – Change in voice
5. Vepathu – Trembling
6. Vaivarnya – Change in facial colour
7. Ashru – Tears
8. Pralaya – Fainting

These appear when emotions become **very intense**, such as love, sorrow, fear, or devotion.

The **four aspects of Abhinaya—Angika, Vachika, Aharya, and Satvika—work together to create a complete artistic expression in Indian classical dance.** Through these four elements, a dancer is able to communicate **story, emotion, and aesthetic experience (Rasa)** effectively to the audience.

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