

Handout for Pedagogy and Paramparā
In the Alaṃkāraśāstra Tradition

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1. Bhāmaha on the cause of poetry:

gurūpadeśādadhyetuṃ śāstram jaḍadhiyo 'pyalam

kāvyaṃ tu jāyate jātu kasyacit pratibhāvataḥ (what's the meter here, Deven)

Even someone of limited intellect can learn a śāstra.

They would just need to study under the direction of a guru

But poetry arises only in those with creative genius

And even in these, only some of the time.

2. Vāmana's characterization of poetry:

1. kāvyaṃ grāhyam alaṃkāṛāt – poetry is recognized by way of figures of speech.
2. rītir ātmā kāvyasya – style is the soul of poetry.
3. loko vidyā prakīrṇaṃ ca kāvyāṅgāni - the limbs of poetry are worldly experience, the sciences and the miscellanies.
 1. Worldly observation includes personal experience with living and stationary things
 2. Science is in particular the science of poetics, but this in itself is preceded by the six other sciences:
 1. the sciences of language (grammar), lore, and lexicography
 2. the science of prosody (meter),
 3. the sciences of arts (kalā),
 4. the science of erotics (kāma)
 5. the science statecraft (daṇḍa).

3. The Miscellanies

1. Works: poetic compositions which one should study
2. Study and application: practice in writing one's own composition.
3. Studying with other masters – this would be the limb most closely aligned with the concept of lineage and paramparā)
4. Deliberation (avekṣaṇa). Perhaps we can call this editing.
5. Creative genius/poetic imagination (pratibhā). Interestingly, what Bhāmaha singled out to be the true source of poetry, Vāmana characterizes as a limb.
6. Single pointed concentration (cittaikāgryam avadhānam).

4. Jayadeva's veiled criticism of predecessors:

nāśaṅkanīyam eteṣāṃ matam etena dūṣyate /
kiṃ tu cakṣur mṛgākṣīṇāṃ kajjaleneva bhūṣyate //

Let's us not suspect that here we find fault

With the ideas of our predecessors.

It is just that here these are ornamented

Like a doe-eyed one's eye lash with collyrium

5. Jayadeva Pīyūṣavarṣa's veiled criticism of Mammaṭa

aṅgīkaroti yaḥ kāvyam śabdārthāv analaṃkṛtī /
asau na manyate kasmād anuṣṇam analaṃ kṛtī //

That one who thinks that poetry can be

Speech and meaning without ornamentation

Why shouldn't they also think that

There can be fire that lacks heat