L. Ellingham, *Poet Be Like God: Jack Spicer and the San Francisco Renaissance* (1998).

<div align="right">R. Greene, A. Slessarev</div>

SANSKRIT POETICS

  I. Early History
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Sanskrit poetics is an intellectual discipline that accompanied literary production in the highly prestigious medium of Sanskrit for nearly two millennia. The discipline had its roots in the early centuries of the first millennium CE and continued uninterrupted into the early mod. era. It formed an important component of the education of Sanskrit literati and of writers, scholars, and artists in other langs. and media.

Indeed, while Sanskrit poetics tended to ignore local langs. in the vast area stretching from present-day Afghanistan in the west to the Indonesian archipelago in the east, it had a profound impact on lit. and culture in these regions. Works on Sanskrit poetics traveled throughout this world and were translated into many of its langs. A prominent example is Daṇḍin's *Kāvyādarśa* (Mirror of Poetry, ca. 700 CE), a work that was transmitted to southeast Asia, if not to China, and translated into Tamil and Kannada in the south of the Indian peninsula, Pali and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, and Tibetan (see TIBET, TRADITIONAL POETRY AND POETICS OF) far to the north. Poets, intellectuals, and artists in the Indian subcontinent proper constantly kept up to date with Sanskrit poetics. A case in point is Bhānudatta (fl. ca. 1500), whose treatises on aesthetics inspired early mod. literati in Telugu and Hindi, as well as miniature painters in various Indian locations in the 17th and 18th cs.

The achievements of this long-standing and sophisticated discipline include an unparalleled analysis of figurative lang., as in the investigation of the formal, logical, semantic, and pragmatic aspects of *simile and its numerous sister *tropes; a complex and overarching theory of readers' emotional response to lit. (see AFFECT, EMOTION); and a highly complex semantic-cognitive analysis of denotation (see CONNOTATION AND DENOTATION), *metaphor, and suggestion, ling. capacities identified as enabling the readers' emotional and aesthetic responses.

We can divide the hist. of Sanskrit poetics into three phases: first, an early stage, from the discipline's mostly lost origins in the first centuries of the Common Era to about the 8th c., during which it was primarily concerned with imparting the prescriptions of poetry. A second stage, from the 9th c. to the 15th c., was marked by repeated attempts to turn the early discussion into a respectable, coherent theory, on a par with Sanskrit's other branches of thought, and by an increasing focus on reading rather than writing poetry. During a third phase, which lasted until the early colonial era, Sanskrit poetics reinvented itself as a prestigious theory that attracted thinkers from other disciplines and provided space and tools for philosophical and theological issues

outside poetics proper. While this tripartite division is crude and while earlier disciplinary strands continued to thrive concurrently with the new ones, it may help to frame the important voices, topics, and tensions in the long hist. of Sanskrit poetics.

I. Early History. Sanskrit poetics must have evolved late relative to the poetry itself. The first extant works of this discipline are Bhāmaha's *Kāvyālaṃkāra* (Ornamenting Poetry), written in the 6th or 7th c. CE, and Daṇḍin's *Kāvyādarśa*. These works lag behind Sanskrit's first surviving narrative poems and plays by Aśvaghoṣa (fl. 2d c. CE) and Kālidāsa (fl. 4th c.), even though the poetry assumes some codified knowledge about it. It is also clear that Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin follow predecessors whom they occasionally name, and fragments of this earlier discussion are traceable. But it is telling that later authors hardly ever refer to ancient sources: in the eyes of posterity, Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin are the discipline's founding fathers.

Indeed, Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin were deeply influenced by ideas and analytical tools that were first formulated in separate, more established knowledge systems. These include the authoritative Veda-related trads. of grammar, which devised a highly complex descriptive tool kit and a metalinguistic idiom for the analysis of vast ling. phenomena; *Mīmāṃsā* (Vedic hermeneutics), which developed a sophisticated philosophy of lang. for the purpose of clarifying Vedic statements and countering the Buddhist critique of the Veda; and *Nyāya* (logic), which produced, among other things, a comprehensive theory of inference, oral testimony, and verbal debate with the aim of examining the validity of Vedic utterances. Another corollary of Vedic scripture worth mentioning here is the separate science of *prosody, which Daṇḍin dubs a "raft for those who sail the sea of poetry." Common to all these disciplines was their focus on lang., a trajectory shared by the nascent poetics. A major question of Sanskrit poetics was what distinguishes the lang. of poetry from other "things made of language," as Daṇḍin put it. In a way, Bhāmaha's and Daṇḍin's works are generative grammars for poetic lang.; Bhāmaha's even has a chapter dedicated to grammatical issues per se.

In addition to the Veda-related knowledge systems, Sanskrit poetics was also influenced by practical and artistic discourses that had a ling. dimension to them. Particularly important in this connection is dramaturgy (*Nāṭyaśāstra*), where aspects of stage plays, incl. plot construction, character types, and various poetic qualities of the script have already been theorized. Although Sanskrit did not develop an independent discipline of rhet., practical knowledge regarding eloquent and persuasive speech, accumulated in South Asian courts and chanceries and preserved in inscriptional *panegyrics, also influenced Sanskrit poetics. The latter strand of knowledge, like the poetry it accompanied, was closely associated with the royal court.

These varied influences are apparent in the discipline's early phase, when theoreticians were busy documenting the charming elements of poetry, whether

euphonic, syntactic, or semantic, in an approach reminiscent of grammar's description of all elements of the lang. from the level of phonemes on. The key category in this investigation was the *alaṃkāra or *ornament (to the body of a poem), a highly flexible concept allowing for a wide variety of aesthetic effects and analyses. Under this heading, the quintessential literary devices of simile (*upamā) and metaphor (rūpaka) were defined and analyzed according to their propositional structure (A is like B; A is B) and the logical relationship they entail (semblance, identity). The method and lang. for analyzing such figures were borrowed originally from grammar, where both figures were described as occurring in normal nominal compounds (as in snow-white or moon-face). A second group of alaṃkāras allowed for the intimation of similarity through propositions of "doubt" (saṃśaya: "is this a lotus, or is it your face?") and its "resolution" (nirṇaya: "The luster of the lotus simply cannot shame the moon. / For, after all, the moon has it soundly defeated. / This therefore must be nothing but your face."). These were modeled after steps in the logicians' syllogism. A third group of ornaments, defined by their emotional content (e.g., rasavat, "flavorful"), reflected the insights of theorists of drama, who analyzed a play's ability to evoke certain emotional "flavors" or rasas. Other ornaments mimicked courtly speech behaviors, such as the elegant pretext (paryāyokta), veiled critique (aprastutapraśaṃsā), and artful praise (vyājastuti); and still others involved auditory effects, such as *alliteration (anuprāsa) and twinning (yamaka).

In addition to ornaments, two other early categories need mention here: Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin defined a set of literary qualities (guṇas) such as lucidity (prasāda) and intensity (ojas), and explained how these combine in regional poetic dialects (although these were ideal-type dialects that poets could adopt regardless of their region), and flaws (doṣas) that hinder the success of poetry (anything from nongrammaticality and loose construction to obscenity). The early works also include a cursory mapping of literary genres (both in verse and prose) and of literary langs. of the cosmopolitan variety (which, in addition to Sanskrit, included a few Middle Indic langs. collectively known as Prakrits). But there is no attempt to present anything like a rigorous conceptual framework that incorporates all the different elements of analysis. The early trad. was not invested in developing a universal theory of poetics or aesthetics, but rather in cataloging, defining, and illustrating the various figurative and ornamental devices, typically exemplified on the level of single verses created ad hoc for the purpose of discussion and primarily under the catchall category of alaṃkāra.

Nonetheless, the discussion was not entirely particularistic or atheoretical. General aesthetic (and socioaesthetic) criteria were occasionally invoked in debating the value of certain devices. E.g., Bhāmaha did not endorse factuality (svabhāvokti) in the description of (typically natural) entities, whereas Daṇḍin believed that such portrayals, although more typical of scientific idiom, are welcome in poetry as well, if the entities

in question are pretty in and of themselves. Still, both agreed that a certain type of "crookedness" or indirection (vakrokti) is the defining characteristic of poetic expressivity. Precious little is said about this crookedness. Bhāmaha mentions it in the context of poetic intensification or *hyperbole (atiśayokti). His example concerns the dita tree: so white is its blossom that it becomes entirely invisible in moonlight, when its presence can only be inferred by the humming of bees. This is not the most straightforward way of describing the tree, but it is precisely the circuitous highlighting of its ties with moonlight, which replicates the hue of its flowers, and with the melodious bees, which call to mind its fragrance, that, according to Bhāmaha, allows the poet to capture its unworldly beauty. For Daṇḍin, a key to poetic crookedness is the poet's exploitation of *polysemy and other ling. accidents to create additional layers of signification. This "embrace" (*śleṣa) of extra signification into the text, a phenomenon far wider in scope than *paronomasia and *allegory combined, emerged as a serious theoretical problem in Sanskrit poetics, partly because of its capacity to inhabit and replicate the entire spectrum of tropes. Bhāmaha was at pains to contain śleṣa and present it as an encapsulated form of *figuration, but for Daṇḍin, it is coterminous with crooked expressivity.

Indeed, Daṇḍin's work offers a subtle but holistic framework, wherein a self-reflexive interplay exists between a host of ornamental devices that liken, intentionally confuse, or blatantly identify entities from the poem's here and now (say, a woman's face) and those of a figurative realm (the moon), and those that playfully question or sever the ties between the two realms: from "distinction" (vyatireka), where the face is said to excel the moon; to "dissimilarity" (viṣama), where the two are said to be worlds apart; and "incongruity" (ananvaya), where the very notion that the beloved's face can have a parallel is effectively denied by comparing it to itself. Daṇḍin's inventory of ornamental devices hints at the relations between such unions and separations and indicates how ling. doubling can heighten the coexistence of these contradictory trajectories every step of the way.

II. Middle Period: Sanskrit Poetics in Kashmir and Beyond. Starting in the last decades of the 8th c., the Himalayan kingdom of Kashmir strove to turn itself into the center of Sanskrit learning and arts. Here, thinkers first ventured to make Sanskrit poetics an independent and respectable science (śāstra). Several tendencies typify the long-standing and highly influential discussion on poetics in Kashmir. First was the push for systematization: This trend is first illustrated by Vāmana, who worked at the court of Kashmir's King Jayāpīḍa (r. 779–813) and whose treatise on poetics deliberately mimics Pāṇini's aphorisms on grammar. Among his theoretical innovations, Vāmana demonstrated that the highly heterogeneous alaṃkāras are analyzable within a single and coherent paradigm, as variations on the basic formula of the simile. But while many later thinkers agreed that simile was the core of Sanskrit's figuration, the subjecting of all tropes to a

single analysis acquired little following. This failure indicates the danger in oversystematization, when the discipline's multifaceted conceptual insights are put in a formal straitjacket.

A second dominant trend was the large-scale incorporation of semantic theories. An early example is in the work of Udbhaṭa, Vāmana's colleague at the same court. Udbhaṭa sought to move from a formal/logical analysis of tropes to grounding them in specific semantic capacities and cognitive scenarios. Consider Udbhaṭa's own illustration of metaphor: "Pouring moonlight-spray / from their lunar jars, / the night-maidens watered the heavens, / that garden whose blossoms are stars." Earlier writers dubbed the metaphorical identification at play here "forming" (rūpaka), since of the two entities, one—namely, gardeners—lends its form (rūpa) to the other—namely, moonrise. Udbhaṭa, however, explained this process not by the proposition of identification or the notion of form lending but by a secondary ling. capacity (guṇavṛtti) it necessitates: the primary denotative function of a word such as "spray," as soon as it is equated with "moonlight," is blocked and gets replaced by qualities that are only metaphorically associated with "spray," such as purity and coolness. Rudraṭa, who followed Udbhaṭa by several decades, showed similar tendencies in his innovative analysis of "embrace" or manufactured *polysemy (*śleṣa). Whereas earlier writers dealt with the tendency of polysemy to inhabit the propositional structures of simile, metaphor, and other tropes, Rudraṭa was interested in exploring the cognitive interplays between the two sets of meaning (supplanting, supplementing, etc.) in a śleṣa and their charms.

A third important tendency was the gradual assimilation of a separate discussion, much of which was also taking place in Kashmir, concerning theatrical performance and the spectators' response to it. Unlike Aristotle's notions of *mimesis and *catharsis, this debate highlighted a fixed set of eight or nine emotional states on the part of the depicted character and/or actor and the dramatic conditions that allowed the spectator to experience, or "taste," them in a special aesthetic form. Kashmiri theorists were increasingly drawn to discussing such emotional "flavors" (rasas) in poetry as well. Thus, in addition to writing on tropology, Udbhaṭa composed a (now lost) commentary on the ancient treatise on dramaturgy, and Rudraṭa divided his work on poetics proper between alaṃkāras and rasas, although still without a theoretical framework combining the two types of concepts.

All these trends are combined masterfully in the *Dhvanyāloka* (Light on Suggestion) of Ānandavardhana, one of the trad.'s seminal figures, who worked at the court of Kashmir's King Avantivarman (r. 855–83). Ānandavardhana merged the aesthetic theory of drama, which highlights the evocation of rasas, with a teleological hermeneutic model derived from the discipline of scriptural analysis (*Mīmāṃsā*), according to which all the elements of a text are seen as subordinate to the production of a single overriding import (a dictum, in the case of the Veda). For him, the overriding telos of poetry is inducing rasa. This goal cannot, of course, in lit., be achieved by means of artistic performance, as on stage. It comes about instead through suggestion, a semantic capacity beyond denotation and metaphor that, as he points out, none of his predecessors had recognized. This newly discovered ling. power is potentially informative (*vastu-dhvani*) when facts are intimated, or figurative (*alaṃkāra-dhvani*), when tropes are implied; but, in poetry, these analytically separable types of insinuation ultimately culminate in the suggestion of an emotional flavor (*rasa-dhvani*). Indeed, Ānandavardhana subordinated all the other elements his predecessors had identified—and in particular the poetic ornaments—to emotive suggestion, which he identified as poetry's "soul." Ānandavardhana, thus, cleverly inverted his discipline's old root metaphor to support his new theory: literary ornaments, he said, just like bracelets and necklaces, can embellish an already beautiful body, but they cannot explain its intrinsic charm.

Consider a verse by Kālidāsa (fl. 4th c.) describing the god Śiva when awakened from deep meditation by the beautiful Umā: "Śiva, his calm somewhat disturbed, / like the ocean when the moon begins to rise, / cast his eyes on Umā's face / with its balsam pear of a lip" (trans. adapted from McCrea). Umā's lip is identified here with the red balsam pear, and Śiva's disturbed composure is likened to the ocean's turbulence during moonrise, implying that Umā's face *is* the moon. Earlier theorists would have analyzed this verse using the categories of metaphor and simile. But for Ānandavardhana, its poetic effect rests on its emotional content, namely, Śiva's budding love for Umā, which these literary ornaments serve only to enhance. Śiva's falling in love, argues Ānandavardhana, is neither denoted nor brought about through metaphorical usage. Rather, it is *suggested* by the poet's depiction of Śiva's loss of composure and gazing at Umā's beautiful face. Actors on stage evoke emotional states through bodily gestures, and sensitive spectators can "taste" the flavor of the depicted love. But Ānandavardhana argued that responsive readers too can enjoy the same flavor, thanks to Kālidāsa's skilful use of suggestion. Indeed, he demonstrated that his new semantic-aesthetic theory empowered Sanskrit literati to engage, perhaps for the first time, in serious lit. crit.: he identified the chief emotional components in the great epics, judged some classics by their success in producing a good balance among the different "flavors," and maintained that it is only *dhvani* that explains both the genius of masters such as Kālidāsa and the possibility of meaningful innovation in poetry.

Initially stirring a heated debate, Ānandavardhana's thesis was adopted by all Kashmiri thinkers after 1100 CE. With dhvani as its centerpiece, the Kashmiri strand of Sanskrit poetics emerged as a unified, hierarchical, and powerful theory. The highly influential *Kāvyaprakāśa* (Light on Poetry, ca. 1100) by Mammaṭa, yet another illustrious Kashmiri thinker, provided a definitive synthesis of Kashmiri poetics following Ānandavardhana's intellectual revolution.

Mammaṭa used the different capacities of lang. as described by Ānandavardhana—denotation, metaphorical usage, and suggestion—to explain the existence of different grades of poetry. It is at its best when dominated by suggestion that leads to the tasting of emotions (dhvani); ranking second is "ancillary suggestion" (*guṇībhūtavyaṅgya*), poetry whose suggested content is subordinate, aesthetically or otherwise, to what is directly or metaphorically expressed; finally, "flashy" (*citra*) poetry is devoid of suggestion and based only on other ling. capacities. Within this gradation, the discipline's different analytical categories were put to use: suggestive processes and emotional flavors were crucial for the analysis of dhvani, while the charm of "flashy" poetry was analyzed using the alaṃkāra tool kit, which Mammaṭa revisited at length. If Ānandavardhana led a "paradigm shift" in Sanskrit poetics, Mammaṭa signaled the resumption of "normal science." The overall framework he provided invited new studies on alaṃkāras, rasa-related matters (in poetry or dramaturgy), semantics, and cognition, either in independent treatises or commentaries on older works (Mammaṭa's own work in particular). "Normal science" also meant that the new theory was now used in the analyses of poems by leading literati and commentators such as Arjunavarmadeva (fl. 13th c.) and Mallinātha (fl. 14th c.), both of whom lived outside Kashmir.

And yet the discipline's paradigm shift was never complete, as the new paradigm was ridden by several irresolvable tensions. The subsequent discussion was, thus, never entirely "normal" and was primarily driven by these frictions. One important friction was between the new theoretical framework with dhvani at its center and the earlier conceptual apparatus, in particular the alaṃkāras. Note that, despite the rather marginal role Ānandavardhana assigned these devices, he was unwilling to dispose of them altogether. At the same time, his theory, for all its universality, did not really explain the aesthetic effects of individual alaṃkāras, esp. in poetry that was not oriented toward the suggestion of emotional flavors, and this problem found no real solution in Mammaṭa's synthesis. After Mammaṭa, the discipline increasingly regravitated toward the analysis of the expressivity, structure of, and interrelations among the many "ornaments" of poetry. This analysis was carried out outside the dhvani framework and often resisted any overriding scheme. A clear indication of this tension is that Sanskrit poetics, now claiming dhvani as its greatest theoretical achievement, nonetheless came to be called the Science of Literary Ornaments (alaṃkāras), or *Alaṃkāraśāstra*.

Another problem was the location of rasa and how readers accessed it. Ānandavardhana left out of his discussion the mysterious process by which readers "savor" the emotions of depicted characters while avoiding the complications of sharing the love of others or the potential unsavoriness of emotions such as grief or fear. Another pair of seminal Kashmiri thinkers, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka (fl. ca. 900) and Abhinavagupta (fl. ca. 1000), tried to fill this lacuna by producing yet another semantic theory of literary lang. modeled after Mīmāṃsā, one that came with a groundbreaking aesthetic psychology. Both argued that, just as a Vedic passage that describes a sacrificial act has the *pragmatic* effect of producing a desire to take similar action in the faithful, so lit. has a special kind of "illocutionary" power (*bhāvanā*) to produce an aesthetic experience in readers. This experience, they argued, is necessarily pleasurable because lit. abstracts characters of their individuality, precisely by identifying Umā's face with the moon and similar "alienating" features of literary lang.; it thus enables readers to "taste" love for no one in particular or to experience fear that is stripped of any frightening cause. Rasa is, thus, the experience of emotions in the pure state, outside the boundaries of subject and object, self and other, an experience that leads to a rapturous state that both Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and Abhinavagupta compared to the religious ecstasy of self-transcendence. In the case of Abhinavagupta, this comparison was further colored by his nondualist metaphysics, according to which the rasa experience resulted from the temporary removal of a veil covering the ultimate self (*ātman*). But whereas Ānandavardhana's theory became a consensus, those of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and Abhinavagupta were not: the location and experience of rasa remained an unresolved question. There were even those who postulated that rasa was overrated. As early as the late 10th c., a Kashmiri thinker named Kuntaka cataloged a large variety of aesthetically pleasing elements. These included both "ornaments" and "flavors" but also many other aspects of poetry—from the name of a work to its strategies of *intertextuality—all of which he viewed as part of an expanded but very loosely defined catalog of poetry's "crooked" nature. Many of the items on Kuntaka's vast catalog could not find a place in a rasa-dominated theory.

This rasa-centered tension is related to another friction, between Kashmir and the rest of the subcontinent. The centuries-long intellectual hegemony of the small northern vale notwithstanding, work of literary thinkers elsewhere was not suspended. These thinkers paid close attention to the discussion in Kashmir but often had their own ideas about where the discipline should go. Particularly worthy of mention here are King Bhoja of Dhār (r. 1011–55) and the Jain mendicant Hemacandra (fl. 11th c., Gujarat). Both these highly prolific writers composed encyclopedic texts on poetics, and both attempted their own syntheses of the field. Like Kuntaka, both combined the theories coming from Kashmir with a vast variety of other materials, incl., in the case of Hemacandra, ideas about how poets should work and lead their lives. While the syntheses of Bhoja and Hemacandra never proved as influential as Mammaṭa's, they did produce innovative arguments and followers, esp. with respect to the question of rasa. Bhoja saw the Kashmiri discussion as obsessed with the reader, where in fact, he believed, rasa was located in the depicted character. This character-centered model of rasa is crucial to the socially normative function of lit. as understood by Bhoja, for whom the emotional

experience of characters such as Rāma functions *didactically* as a model for emulation. As for Hemacandra, two of his direct students, Rāmacandra and Guṇacandra, boldly challenged the Kashmiri theory that the experience of rasa is necessarily pleasant, even when the underlying emotions are not. Rather, they believed, the aesthetic flavor of the emotion is not very different from the emotion itself (i.e., grief is the "flavor" of grief), even if the spectator/reader can intellectually appreciate, and thus enjoy, the skill involved in evoking it. These views reflect an undying resentment against the powerful rasa theory of Abhinavagupta and also, in the case of these Jain thinkers, to its specific theological inflection.

Another noteworthy tension pertains to Sanskrit poetics' constant borrowing from older and prestigious knowledge systems while attempting to establish itself as an independent discipline. A clear manifestation of this tension is in Ānandavardhana's crowning of the hierarchical semantic model, which he borrowed wholesale from Mīmāṃsā, with a ling. capacity not recognized in the discipline of Mīmāṃsā or, for that matter, in any South Asian philosophical school. Indeed, most of Ānandavardhana's immediate critics attacked his postulating the ling. capacity of suggestion for the evocation of rasa. Even after this argument subsided, the need for respectability for Sanskrit poetics and independence as a branch of thought continued to be felt in the subsequent discussion.

III. New Poetics in Early Modernity. The clearest indication that something fresh was happening in Sanskrit poetics starting around the 1500s is that the literary theorists themselves began to label in profusion particular views and viewers as new. Researchers have only started to explore this trend, found across Sanskrit knowledge systems around this time, and identify what, in fact, was novel in the last active period of Sanskrit poetics. Here we will mention several areas of innovation, using two of the discipline's last towering figures as our primary reference point: Appayya Dīkṣita (1520–93), who was associated with several minor courts in South India, and Jagannātha Paṇḍitarāja, so-called King of Pundits at the Mughal court of Shāh Jahān (r. 1628–58) in the north.

Newness in this era consists, first, of a new engagement with the old topics. Early mod. writers approached the received categories with an acute historical awareness of a sort the discipline had never before seen. They tended to write in a pioneering essay style, where the product, in the form of refined answers to older, unresolved questions, was often subjugated to the process: an exercise in the hist. of ideas. An example is Appayya Dīkṣita's essay on *simile in his incomplete magnum opus *Citramīmāṃsā* (Investigation of Figuration). While the essay does provide a new definition for one of the discipline's quintessential tropes, it focuses more on previous formulations and the difficulties facing any attempt to capture simile accurately.

Historical awareness is tied to a new methodology,

partly related to the procedures and jargon of Sanskrit's Navyanyāya (New School of Logic), of applying unprecedentedly demanding standards of intellectual rigor, consistency, parsimony, and clarity in dealing with the disciplinary issues. This methodology emboldened explorations about which earlier generations had seemed hesitant. Appayya Dīkṣita, e.g., described *suggestion* as a process involving attention to subtle clues and the systematic elimination of alternative conclusions that is not unlike *deduction*. This rather subversive view of dhvani forced Sanskrit literati to revisit a position that had been emphatically rejected many centuries before, namely, Mahimabhaṭṭa's (ca. 1050) critique of Ānandavardhana's "suggestion" as another name for *inference*.

Jagannātha, who wholeheartedly opposed Appayya's views on dhvani, was nonetheless receptive to other bold suggestions inspired by the same rigorous method. Consider, e.g., his breathtaking survey of the views on rasa in his encyclopedic *Rasagaṅgādhara* (Ocean of Rasa), another example of the discipline's new historicity. Here Jagannātha reports not unfavorably that the new view on the rasa experience is that it is based on a temporary identification with a fictive character, made possible by the reader's sensitivity, which is theoretically analyzed as a form of a cognitive defect. It is this "defect" that allows the reader to feel, while the illusion lasts, the character's emotion, such as Rāma's love for Sītā. This novel view, as presented by Jagannātha, audaciously inverts Abhinvagupta's cl. metaphor. For Abhinavagupta, the rasa experience results from the temporary removal of a veil covering the self, but, for Jagannātha's contemporaries, it results from the imposition of a veil. Thus, in this case, the new position moves away from mysticism and metaphysics to a logical stance and a mundanely oriented psychology. The same is true with respect to the joyousness of the experience. For Abhinavagupta, the question receives an automatic and extreme answer in the mystical doctrine of the inherently blissful nature of the self, which needs only to be unveiled to shine forth. But the new position allows for the possibility that the identification with a suffering character may produce a mixture of pleasure and pain, even if pleasure is more dominant.

Another novelty is in the status of Sanskrit poetics, which finally comes to enjoy considerable cross-disciplinary prestige and asserts its autonomy from other branches of learning. Several trends are indicative of this change. First, poetics suddenly began to attract scholars in the authoritative fields of grammar, logic, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta, who composed in profusion treatises or commentaries in poetics (Appayya himself is a writer on Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta who took to poetics). Second, reversing the pattern characterizing the previous millennium, concepts and terminology from Sanskrit poetics were now widely applied to other philosophical, theological, and sectarian discussions. The most famous example of this is in the works of Rūpa Goswamin and his followers, who made a new

"devotional" (*Bhakti*) rasa the centerpiece of a soteriology, wherein acting in Kṛṣṇa's cosmic play led to tasting his essence. Both Appayya and Jagannātha reject the "devotional rasa," but Appayya himself applies the poetical toolkit to a sectarian debate concerning the theological message of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Arguing against attempts by followers of Viṣṇu to appropriate this epic poem (and also against Ānandavardhana's claim that its main suggested content is the flavor of compassion), Appayya used his subversive notion of dhvani to assert that the *Rāmāyaṇa* is scattered with subtle clues about the power of the god Śiva and is, therefore, carefully designed to suggest his supremacy. Third, late thinkers such as Jagannātha constantly maintain that the stances of poetics are independent of those of all other knowledge systems. Indeed, at the heart of this "new poetics" is an appeal to the taste and sensibilities of the expert reader as the only authority in a discipline that had a rather turbulent hist. and never possessed a core (*sūtra*) treatise of unchallenged command. This stance is both the source of a new confidence in early mod. poetics and a cause of anxiety when, as in the case of Jagannātha's critique of Appayya, the reader's judgment is thoroughly contested.

Anxiety may also be understood in the context of new external challenges. For centuries, Sanskrit literary culture maintained a largely stable set of conventions, characters, and scenarios; and the basic tool kit of Sanskrit poetics did not significantly change since the introduction of dhvani. But in the second half of the second millennium CE, this long-standing trad. found itself in a radically new political context and facing increasing competition from a series of fully formed and confident literary cultures: regional lits. in Telugu, Hindi, and a host of other South Asian literary langs.; Persian, the prestige lang. of India's Muslim courts, incl. the mighty Mughals; and finally Eng., the lang. of colonial power. The extent to which Sanskrit literary culture reacted to these new challenges is still open to debate. In poetics, to be sure, one can detect the presence of new realities. Appayya Dīkṣita invents a pair of poetic ornaments for the reworking of *proverbs, and one of his examples is explicitly presented as translating a popular Telugu saying. Then, there is the "new" position famously reported by Jagannātha, namely, that out of Mammaṭa's three "conditions" for composing poetry—talent, learning, and training—only the first was essential. It has been argued that this stance reflects the new ideal of spontaneity claimed by Hindi's devotional poets. It has also been suggested that Jagannātha's ideas and poetry bear traces of Persian lit., in which he was well versed. These traces, however, are peripheral to the main current of Sanskrit poetics in early modernity. Despite the fact that every writer on alaṃkāra and rasa was fluent in at least one regional lang. and although the regional literary cultures constantly engaged with Sanskrit's cosmopolitan model, Sanskrit poetics remained largely oblivious to devels. in the vernaculars. The discipline likewise ignored Persian, even as many literati received patronage from Muslim rulers and even though some Sanskrit poets undertook daring experiments of incorporation and trans. In the 19th c., when Eng. gradually became the lang. of power, education, and lit. in South Asia, the discipline of Sanskrit poetics, not unlike other Sanskrit knowledge systems, dwindled and came to be studied more as an object of mod. intellectual and cultural hist. than practiced as the living and ever-innovative trad. that it once was.

See HINDI POETRY; INDIA, POETRY OF; KANNADA POETRY; PERSIAN POETRY; RĀMĀYAṆA POETRY; SANSKRIT POETRY; SEMANTICS AND POETRY; TAMIL POETRY AND POETICS; TELUGU POETRY; UTPREKṢĀ.

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Y. Bronner

SANSKRIT POETRY

I. The Origins of Kāvya
II. Elements of Sanskrit Poetry
III. The Production and Appreciation of Sanskrit Poetry
IV. A Summary History of Sanskrit Poems and Poets

I. The Origins of Kāvya. Lit. in India—and in particular poetry in an early form of the Sanskrit (*Saṃskṛtam*) lang.—has a hist. of least 3,500 years, from roughly the second millennium BCE to the present. An IE (Indo-Aryan) lang. spoken and used primarily by social and cultural elites in early and med. India, Sanskrit continues to serve as a medium of creative expression in mod. India as well. At some point in the early centuries of the Common Era, the descriptive designation *Sanskrit* becomes synonymous with what was previously conceived of as only a sophisticated register of lang. (*bhāṣa*) itself. The word *Sanskrit* connotes sophistication, a lang. that has been "processed," "crafted," and "refined." While ordinarily it is the notion of lang. processed by grammar that is intended in the appellation *Sanskrit*, poetry in Sanskrit—esp. "classical" belles lettres—also bears the qualities of refinement, sophistication, and high levels of craftsmanship.

In the interest of precision and concision, the focus of this entry is on Sanskrit poetry understood as belles lettres *(kāvya, vāṅmaya, sāhitya)*, whose origins may be fixed around the several centuries prior to the beginning of the Common Era and whose cl. period culminates around the 12th c. CE; Sanskrit poetry more or less in the cl. style, however, continues to be written and received to the present day. The existing corpus from these centuries alone is, at a conservative estimate, at least 1,000 times larger than what has survived in cl. Gr. While certainly relevant to a broader discussion of Sanskrit lit., this entry excludes any elaboration on the multiple genres of Sanskrit poetic lit. that precede, prefigure, and inform what ultimately comes to be called kāvya—lit. (largely in verse and written, though with a strong emphasis on recitation and oral transmission) consciously crafted as an art form that is predominantly secular and humanist in scope. While kāvya can be written in numerous langs.—at least 40, incl. the various regional langs. of premod. South Asia (Prakrit) and the several Jain langs. called the *Apabhraṃśa*—the preponderance of extant poems are in Sanskrit. Kāvya subsumes most poetic forms (*lyric, *narrative, *dramatic, *panegyric, etc.), but its significance as "imaginative literature" excludes (for the Sanskrit intellectual trad.) sacred scripture (*āgama*), such as the versified collection of ancient hymns to Vedic gods and poems of Vedic life (*Rig Veda*), e.g., or the flashes of poetry in the early Buddhist Pali *canon known as the *Tripiṭaka* (Three Baskets). While often regarded as the "longest poem in the world" (seven times the length of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* together) and replete with elements of kāvya, the great *epic *Māhabhārata* (The Great Story of Bharata's Descendants) technically falls out of the purview of kāvya since it is regarded as a work of received "history" or "tradition" (*itihāsa*) and also a discourse on ethics and morality (*dharmaśāstra*), likewise the store of versified myths and legends known as *purāṇa*.

Since the *Mahābhārata* sometimes refers to itself as a kāvya, however, and contains within it the widely translated *Bhagavad-Gītā* (The Song of the Lord)—a lyrically charged philosophical poem regarded both as lit. and scripture—many plausibly consider it as among the earliest Sanskrit poems. The other "historical" epic of the ancient period that complements the *Mahābhārata* certainly fits the category of kāvya by all emic estimations: in fact, the *Rāmāyaṇa* (Rāma's Journey) is considered to be the first poem (*ādi-kāvya*) in Sanskrit and its author Vālmīki the first poet (*ādi-kavi*). Both epics (assuming some semblance of a final form sometime around the beginning of the Common Era) take in a wide scope, subsuming Vedic India's social, political, moral, spiritual, and aesthetic imagination. The *Mahābhārata* creatively details the dynastic struggles and ultimate destruction of early Indian royalty (the self-styled lunar dynasty) centered on Yamuna river settlements north of mod. Delhi. A dramatically tragic and gloomy work—punctuated with moments of romance, comedy, *riddles, and *hymns, prosaic moralizing, and the epiphanic grandeur of divine revelation (Kṛṣṇa as God)—the *Mahābhārata* has been the single greatest source for later Sanskrit poetry's narrative themes. The poetry of the *Mahābhārata* is often described as a rough diamond, with frequent irregularities in terms of standard grammatical practice (magnificently described and codified sometime in the 4th or 5th c. BCE by the grammarian Pāṇini) and loaded with oral formulas of stock *epithets and *similes; in contrast are the later *mahākāvyas* (great courtly epic poems) and *muktaka*s (loose *stanzas and *epigrams), written in pristine cl. Sanskrit and fancied as chiseled diamonds with favored angles and cuts. Unlike the confused status of the *Mahābhārata* as kāvya, the *Rāmāyaṇa* prefigures the major elements (through a narrative of poetry's origins embedded in the story itself) that will come to define Sanskrit kāvya for at least two millennia: a self-conscious literariness that contains complex *tropes (of sound and sense) and is composed in the most popular Sanskrit meter (that can be sung, recited, with or without musical instrumentation); a consistent narrative trajectory with choice interludes; and the devel. of the all-important aesthetic concept of *rasa*, or taste (treated below). The structure of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is akin to a classic fairy tale with important culture-specific twists and turns (prince meets princess, evil demon abducts princess, prince defeats demon and saves princess, prince and princess live happily ever after) or of a picaresque novel (hero-prince is initiated into manhood through a series of adventures and misfortunes while exiled from his kingdom). The *Rāmāyaṇa*, reflecting a seminal moment in the dynas-