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“Alankara” in Classical Indian Art Theories

“Alankara” originally means “ornament, embellishment, decoration and beautification” in Sanskrit. The theory of Alankara was firstly put forward in the encyclopedic treatise *Natyasastra*, then it existed as a regular and independent subject as rhetoric or figures of speech in Sanskrit poetics beyond dramatology. Besides, the theory of “Alankara” in Indian arts was evolved from *Natyasastra*. To be more specific, there are musical Alankara represented by the decorative tone system, the theory of Alankara in dance represented by the makeup and pure dance performance, and the theory of Alankara in fine arts characterized by its highly decorative lines, colors, compositions, etc. In all, there are both similarities and differences based on the analysis of “Alankara” in various art theories.