

Our Tradition

Question:

Guru, what makes a teaching, any spiritual tradition authentic, genuine? What are its criteria?

Answer:

Good question. Not every sadhu will give you a detailed answer to this question in India.

Sometimes some scholars, researchers, or spiritual seekers try to speculate about the authenticity or non-authenticity of certain teachings, transmission lines. I don't really like this term, I would use the terms "authenticity" and "completeness". But not everyone understands what this really means, and not everyone understands that every deep tradition, lineage, dharma family has its own internal signs or standards of completeness, authenticity of the transmission line, that is, authenticity, passed on to subsequent generations from the teacher to the teacher. Moreover, they have quite deeply, and I would say, even sophisticatedly and subtly developed internal methods of their own assessment and verification of their students, but not all, namely those who are chosen to be teachers-successors, lineage bearers, holders of teachings (vidyadharas). The choice and preparation of disciples, vidyadhar, is generally a separate, interesting deep topic.

So, these methods are kept in secret, in every family of Guru, "pravar" or "kula", i.e. family of sadhus, for obvious reasons - so that they could not be revealed or copied.

Therefore, by and large, it is absolutely useless to talk about the authenticity or non-authenticity of other lines without belonging to them, without being among its initiates, because it is generally impossible to find out if you do not belong to this line and it is not open to you. After all, there are no uniform general criteria, except for the presence of a parampara. Therefore, I will not talk about other traditions, I will only talk about ours.

Eight things make it authentic. First of all, as is customary to have a guru-shishya parampara, an uninterrupted lineage of Moksha Dharma. The transmission line is like a channel through which divine knowledge is transmitted from the Absolute himself, the Creator God, the great gods and rishis, siddhas, saints.

We follow two main lines - the northern, Himalayan line of Shiva, Dattatreya, the order of Dattatreya, Juna Akhara, recreated by Sri Shankara, and the southern line of Siddha Paambati, guru Shivaprabhakara siddha - yoga of the Avadhuta Brahmananda from Kerala.

With both of these lines, their masters, gurus, devotees, myself and my disciples, we always maintain close ties. I have spoken about this in detail more than once. All this is the guru-shishya-parampara, the "channel" for the transmission of the teachings.

However, seekers have very vague ideas, which do not go beyond the concept of "diksha", "parampara". It is not enough to have the concept of a parampara as a

channel for transmitting knowledge; one must also understand what exactly should be transmitted through this channel. But usually this is not really explained to anyone other than the lineage teachers.

Seven Treasures

Seven treasures (sapta-ratna) are transmitted through this channel.

So what is being transmitted through the transmission line.

"Shabda", a sacred sound emanating from the Absolute itself or Brahma - the Creator or one of the great Deities, ie some important mantras are transmitted along this line, or at least one mantra, even one mantra is enough, for being a sacred sound coming from Brahma the Creator and Brahman, the Absolute has the ability to liberate.

Then shastra. The sacred texts of the tradition are also transmitted along this line, these are Upanishadas, Puranas and other texts.

Then "yukti", the true method of interpreting the Vedantic philosophy of the shastras, the method of reasoning, the actual teaching that eliminates ignorance.

Then "devata", a continuous connection with the gods, siddhas, rishis, or the chosen deity of the tradition (ishta-devata), his blessings, methods of worship (upasana) and invocation.

Then "upaya", specific methods of practicing different types of yoga to achieve Liberation, to achieve samadhi.

Kripa. Then what is called kripa, anugraha, or shaktipatha — the wave of divine grace present in every generation of enlightened lineage teachers ", which comes through communication: satsang, guru yoga, samaya, darshan, seva or whatever, awakening disciples.

"Anubhava", finally, the most elusive, but very important, something that necessarily manifests itself in a student leading the correct sadhana - a personal mystical experience of Enlightenment (anubhava), which is reproduced in every generation of students equally and confirmed by the masters.

Anubhava, of course, is not transmitted as transmission, kripa is transmitted, although it may arise, but the methods of evaluating and testing anubhava are transmitted.

So when all of these factors are present, the transmission line is completely authentic, complete. The completeness of the lineage is expressed by the special sacred objects symbolically adopted in the tradition, symbols which are ceremonially or informally passed on to the disciples - the lineage holders. I talked about this earlier. Personally, I am a supporter of ceremonies.

What is transmitted in our line

Through the line of the guru-shishya parampara, mantras are transmitted during diksha, for example, the guru-mantra and others, the shastra texts of the triple canon, the Upanishadas with the commentaries of Shri Shankaracharya and other texts, such as the upadesha texts of the lineage teachers.

"Yukti" - the method of true reasoning, conquering ignorance, is transmitted in the form of mahavakya-great sayings that are whispered in the ear of the lineage holder, as well as in the form of explanations from the Guru to the disciple. This is also passed down as an ancient tradition, I myself received it during the initiation of Mahamandaleshwar at Kumbhamela in 2010 in Haridwar.

In our lineage, we attach more importance to some mahavakyas, their understanding and practice, and less to others.

Devata means the methods of worshiping and invoking the blessings and powers of the chosen deity, in our case the adinatha avadhuta of Dattatreya.

"Upaya" means all the main methods of meditation, contemplation, which are necessary for educating the mind, entering samadhi, gaining the fruit of teaching, you receive them through transmission from me and my students.

"Kripa", "anugraha" is possible if in each generation of the lineage guru there is at least one awakened one who has the experience of samadhi. I hope every generation of my students in the future will have such teachers if seva and sadhana are good and this aspect never stops.

Especially important is the presence of anugraha in every generation of realized teachers, i.e. if the Guru has experiences of awakening, the experience of samadhi, he can pass it on to his disciples. It is his divine charisma that inspires, clears the karmic mistakes of others and restores the divine power of scriptures and methods. In general, the line is held by awakened teachers.

Finally, anubhava - here more everything depends not only on the lineage and the Guru, but also on the student, how he will practice, lead the sadhana. If he conducts the sadhana correctly and diligently, he receives all the necessary signs of realization, all the necessary spiritual experiences about which the teaching speaks, for example, the experience of non-dual samadhi, the experience of pure vision or contemplation, shambhavi mudra, kundalini yoga, nidra yoga, etc.

There are detailed methods for verifying these experiments, for different sections of the teaching, but by tradition they are not described openly, otherwise the students will have an involuntary desire to artificially create them.

So, according to our criteria, a line is genuine and complete if all seven precious things of the Moksha Dharma are presented in it.

From Satsang Shri Guru Swami Vishnudevananda Giri