CHAPTER V

THE DOŚA DOCTRINE OF DANDIN

Conception of dośas or the literary faults. The treatment of dośas or the literary faults forms an important part of Sanskrit Poetics and especially of the mārga doctrine; and it has succeeded in drawing the attention of Dandin more than once. According to him, a literary aspirant should not overlook even the slightest flaw in poetry, because, as he remarks, it annihilates the beauty of otherwise a good piece of poetry, just as a spot of white leprosy mars the charm of even a lovely form. Abhinavagupta emphasises this fact by remarking that a kāvyā even if it is devoid of excellences and figures of speech, is acceptable if it is just free from defects. The first element of the definition of poetry in Bhoja and Hāmamata is the condition of its being free from flaws on the avoidance of which, evidently puts special emphasis by discussing the dośas first of all in his work. Thus, according to Dandin as well as the later theorists, the avoidance of fault in poetry is as essential as the employment of the guṇas.

Dandin, like Bharata, does not define a dośa, perhaps due to its being too clear a concept to explain. However,

1. Op. KA. I. 8; 20; II. 51; 56; III. 186; 187 etc.; the III. 125-35 is exclusively devoted to the topic.
2. KA. I. 7; also op. above references.
3. Op. AS. or Bh. NS. GOS. ed. XVI. 95.
4. SKA. I. 2; KPr. I. 4.
according to him, anything that is employed improperly or indecently and, for the reason, perturbs the mind of a man of taste (sahādaya) constitutes a śalā fault. Since he takes, like other earlier writers, an objective view of poetry and its aesthetic value, his doṣas chiefly refer to the body and do not contain the subjective element which was attributed to the concept by the theorists who came after the establishment of the dhvani theory. The beauty of poetry in these later writers assumed a subjective form and the position of doṣas also changed accordingly. They were related primarily to the soul and through its relation were, just secondarily, connected with the body of poetry, the word and sense. Thus when doṣa came to be linked with rasa, the soul, it began to be defined as that which hindered the enjoyment thereof. The doctrine developed along with the doctrine of gura, of which it formed the counterpart, and was considered from the standpoint of rasa. In fact, the difference among the various theorists in the conception of doṣa was the result of different viewpoints of the theorists with regard to the conception of poetry. The basic position of doṣa in relation to poetry remained unchanged as in earlier writers; it continued to be viewed as an offensive to the charm of poetry.

Danḍin is silent on the question whether the doṣas are

5. Cp. KA. I, 87; II. 51; also cp. I. 20.
Danḍin considers the literary faults to be of transient nature, for, according to him, they may turn into excellences under certain different circumstances. He demonstrates that the ten doṣas either become guṇas or at least cease to be doṣas in changed conditions. If the view made its appearance in Danḍin for the first time, as the case seems to be, it must be regarded as his important original contribution to the doctrine of doṣa. Following him, Bhāmaha and others also hold that with the change of conditions, doṣas become guṇas. On the basis of this principle, Bhoja has given a new set of doṣas called vaiḍēśikas which are in fact temporary faults. He has, in this respect, developed the basic principle of Danḍin whom he has also profusely cited in this connection.

The ten doṣas of Danḍin. Following Bharata with regard to the number, Danḍin enumerates ten doṣas which, though inspired by Bharata's line of thought, do not fully agree with his list as also with his conceptions. Only three doṣas of Danḍin in name and substance and other five in substance only correspond to Bharata's doṣas. Bharata's first doṣa, guḍhārtha is absent in Danḍin, though it can be observed in his negation of prasāda. Likewise, the first variety of Bharata's bhīmārtha (ṇārṣya) may be traced in the opposite of his ideal mādhurya. On the other hand, he introduces two new doṣas, namely, anakrama and yatībhṛasta, the latter of which can very well be included

11. Op. Bh.KA1. I. 54-5; also AB. on Bh.AS., GOS ed. XVI. 95; KPr. VII. k. 59 ff; 3D. VII. 16-32.
in the scope of bhinnavṛttta.

We give below a comparative study of the ten doṣas dealt with by Dāṇḍin.

(1) Apārtha is the absence of complete sense resulting from non-satisfaction of the natural expectancy of words (ākāṅkeśā) in a sentence. The defect ceases to be as such in the utterances of insane people, drunken and children. The doṣa can be traced back to Bharata's abhiputārtha, the example of which given by Abhinavagupta is comparable to one in the Kāvyādārs. It also corresponds, to some extent, to the later sentential defect, abhavanmatasambandha or the want of harmony between the ideas to be expressed and the words expressing them.

(2) Vyārtha is incongruity with the context either in a sentence or in a composition, permissible only in the mental state of deep engrossment. The doṣa bears a resemblance to Bharata's arthaḥtha. In Mammata and Viśvanātha, it is a defect of sense, named vyāhatatva.

(3) Śkārtha is tautology either in words or in sense. It becomes an excellence in the expression of emotions like excessive pity and fear etc. The doṣa evidently comes from Bharata

15. KPr. VII. k. 54 f; SD. VII. 7.
17. KPr. VII. k. 55 f; SD. VII. 3.
18. KA. III. 137; also cp. Bh. Kaṭa. IV. 14.
who gives it an identical name, while in later theorists, it has been recognised as punarukta which term makes it unconscious appearance in Dāṇḍin.

(4) Sāsaṃsāyajais ambiguity when certainty of meaning is warranted. It, however, becomes an embellishment when ambiguity is purposeful. The doṣa finds a place in Bharata in the form of sāṃśādha, a variety of bhīṁśārtha. It was recognised by later theorists as a defect both of the word and sense.

(5) Apakrama is the violation of syntactical order; it occurs when the order of a number/described is not observed in the following sequence. It ceases to be a doṣa when the sequence is broken for the indication of some peculiar connection of certain things. The doṣa is absent in Bharata. In later writers, it appears as duṣkrama, a defect of sense and akrama, a sentential fault.

(6) Sābdāhīna is the grammatical error, which is allowed, to some extent, to occur in the works of poets who are generally slow at observing the fine rules of the science of words. The doṣa comes from Bharata who terms it also sābdacyuta. In later writers, it assumes the names asādhu, aprayuktatva and cyutasaṃskārātā etc.

19. Gs. Bh.BS., Gos. ed. XVI. 92; Kṛ. VII. 55; SD. VII. 6 (vākyadoṣa) and 12 (artha-); for the term punarukta, cp. KA. III. 137; also Bh.KAL. IV. 12.
21. Kṛ. VII. k. 51; 56 ff.; SD. VII. 2; 10.
(7) Yatibhrasta is the breach of rules of metrical pause, permissible in case it is not unpleasant to the ear. The fault may well be included in the scope of visama visama of Bharata or in Daradin's own bhinnavṛṭta. Mamata calls it yatibhaṅgaśāravatvā, a variety of hatavṛttta.

(8) Bhinnavṛttta is deviation from the metrical rules, that is, the use of syllables more or less than the required number and of long or short syllables in the wrong place in a metre. Bharata called it visama, while in later theorists, it appeared as hatavṛttta, a sentential defect.

(9) Visāṅdhika is the absence of euphonic combination when it is necessary. Bharata has a doṣa named visāṅdhika and has defined it as arupaśliṣṭaśabda which Abhinavagupta seems to regard as want of compactness. Mamata has a sentential defect of this name and Viśvanātha adopts it as saṁbhīvidlesa.

(10) Desakalalakalālokanyāyāramavirodhi is the inconsistency with regard to (a) place, (b) time, (c) the fine arts, (d) worldly usage, (e) logic and (f) scriptures (the śrutis along with śṛptis). The fault turns into an excellence by the skill

22. KPr. VII. k. 55; SD. VII. 7; 9.
23. GOS. ed. XVI. 83; 94.
24. C. Vāmanā II. 1. 5; KPr. VII. k. 50; SD. VII. 2; 4; etc.
25. KPr. VII. k. 53 1; also cp. SD. VII. 5 vṛtti.
26. Bh. AS., GOS. ed. XVI. 93; KPr. VII. k. 53; SD. VII. 5.
27. Bh. AS., GOS. ed. XVI. 94 and AS. thereon.
28. KPr. VII. k. 53; SD. VII. 6.
of a poet, as has been illustrated by the author in detail.

Bharata has a doṣa named nyāyād apeta which is comparable to Daṇḍin's nyāyavirodhi. The later doṣas like prasiddhi-viruddhatā, vidyā- and doṣa- are inspired by the different aspects of this fault of Daṇḍin.

Besides these ten doṣas, Daṇḍin refers to an eleventh doṣa, namely, oratijāhāhetudrṣṭāntahāni, faulty logical proposition, middle term and logical illustration. Whether or not it is a doṣa was a matter of controversy, and, considering the discussion of the question to be unprofitable, Daṇḍin discards it. Since the doṣa can well be incorporated in the nyāyavirodhi, a part of the last doṣa, its separate mention is not at all warranted, and Daṇḍin is right in rejecting it as a doṣa.

From Daṇḍin’s treatment of doṣas, it is evident that he was greatly influenced by the tradition of Bharata, but in his elaborate discussion, he is certainly far more advanced than his predecessor. He does not classify the doṣas on the basis of word and sense, though he has divided ekārtha into two forms on the above basis. In later theorists, the word and sense formed the main basis of classification of the doṣas, hinted at for the first time in Daṇḍin. His faults apārtha, vyarthā, sasāndaya, āpakrama and viruddhi are related to the meaning of

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29. Bhāmaha (Kal. IV. 47) explains it as dharmasāstras and the worldly limits set therein.


31. FPr. VII. k. 56-7; SD. VII. 10; SKA. I. ex. 66; etc.
a sentence, while the defects śabdahīna, yatibhraṣṭa, bhinnavr̥tta and visamāhikā refer to sentence or series of words.

Ekarthā may be linked both with word and sense. But the writer pays little attention to this principle which we find elaborated for the first time in the work of Vāmana who, along with other later writers, develops the doṣas into two broad categories, those of word and sense.

The doṣas of Daṇḍin were adopted in the same form by Bhāmaha, though there is a slight difference in the exposition of some of them. The main ground of controversy is the eleventh doṣa rejected by Daṇḍin, but emphatically asserted as a doṣa and treated in detail in a separate chapter by Bhāmaha. Vāmana divides the doṣas into four classes of words, the meaning of words, sentence and the meaning of a sentence. Some of the faults of Vāmana, who has tried to adjust almost all the doṣas of Daṇḍin in his elaborate scheme, bear a clear stamp of his influence. Āuddātra also follows the same principle of classification and many of his doṣas come directly from Daṇḍin’s

32. Op. Kāli. IV. 1–2 (the enumeration of the doṣas) which are identical with Kāli. III. 125–6, except the fourth line which in Bhāmaha puts forth the eleventh doṣa, pratijñāhetudr̥taṁtāhīna; the definition of apārtha is alike in both (cf. Kāli. III. 125 with Kāli. IV. 3), while vyartha, ekārtha and bhinnavr̥tta etc. also are similar in many points; cf. Kāli. III. 131; 136 and 156 with Kāli. IV. 9; 16 and 25 respectively.

33. Kāli. V; the topic was interesting to Bhāmaha, a logician, from the viewpoint of the logic in poetry.


35. Op. his asādhu (śabdahīna), bhinnavr̥tta, yatibhraṣṭa,
tradition. Bhoja treats the ten doṣas of Dāṇḍin, along with a host of others, in the form of the defects of sentence and those of its meaning. For his treatment of these ten doṣas, he is mainly indebted to Dāṇḍin. In the post-dīvanī period when the suggestion of rasa was established as the soul of poetry, a new set of doṣas, called rasa-doṣas, appeared on the scene. The essence of the treatment of doṣas in the later period we notice in Mammatā who deals with seventy defects in all, thirty-seven doṣas being related to word, twenty-three to sense and ten to rasa.

Doṣas conceived as negations of the guṇas. Besides the traditional doṣas which may be termed the external ones, Dāṇḍin has indirectly referred to some doṣas in the first chapter of Kavyādārśa as negative forms of his guṇas excepting udāratva, ojas and samādhī the opposites of which have not been alluded to by him. The doṣas thus referred to are as follows:

(1) Śithila (looseness), the opposite of ślea, consists in the exclusive employment of small-breath letters; e.g. mā- laṭīmālā lolālikalīlā.

(2) Vyaptipanna, the opposite of prasāda, consists in the

visaṃdhī, vyarthā, ekārtha, saṃdīgṛha, apakrama, loka-viruddha and vidyāt with corresponding doṣas in Dāṇḍin.

36. Cp. esp. his visaṃdhī, apahetu, nirūgama, asambaddha etc.

37. Cp. SKA. I. 3-58; he deals with 57 doṣas in all; his arūtimat doṣas have been obviously inspired by Dāṇḍin; see below.

38. Cp. DHA. pp. 144ff; KPr. VII. k. 60 ff; SD. VII. 12-5; also cp. Mahimabhāṭṭa, Kesandara etc.
use of words in their derivative meaning which is not conventionalised and hence which makes the expression difficult of comprehension.

(3) Viṣama (unevenness), the opposite of sama, is the want of evenness in the employment of different bandhas, that is, the mixture of soft, harsh and middling diction.

(4) Grāmya (indecency), the opposite of ideal mādhurya, is contained either in the sense or in word; e.g. (in sense): kanye kāmasyānām mām na tvaṁ kāmasyase katham (‘girl, why do you not love me who covet you?’); (in word): the use of yā ṣaḥṣe (‘to have sexual intercourse’) or nīvāṭhīv (‘to spit’). Indecency also arises from a particular word-combination or is suggested in a particular sentence; e.g. (word-combination): yā bhavataḥ priyā (‘one who is your love’) which tends to suggest ‘yābhavataḥ priyā’ (beloved of one having sexual intercourse’); (sentence): kharām prahṛtya visṛṣṭaḥ puruo vīryavān (‘the strong man (Rāma) was tired after killing Khara’) suggests the sense that the lusty fellow is tired after playing hard in coition. Bharata recognises this doṣa as a variety of bhinnārtha.

(5) Dipta or niṣṭhura, the opposite of sukumāratā, occurs due to the exclusive employment of harsh sounds which are difficult to pronounce. In later theory, the fault appears as drutikatu or dusārava.

40. Cp. KPr. VII. K. 50; SD. VII. 2.
(6) Neyatva (implicitness), the opposite of arthavayakti, consists in the non-explicitness of sense; e.g., mahāpahāraḥ lohitād vādhrītadāhena (the earth was lifted up by Viṣṇu in his Boar incarnation from the ocean which was red—) where 'urāmāyarjā' (---with the blood of the serpents crushed under his feet) is implied and has to be brought in to make the sense complete.

(7) Atyukti is the opposite of kāti, the exaggeration herein being beyond the scope of worldly usage.

The followers of the Vaidarbhā path consider these elements to be defects in poetry. In the Gaṇḍī path also they are faults (save dipti and atyukti), though the Gaṇḍīs would allow them in poetry, if there is dignity of diction or pomp of the sense and poetic embellishment. The opinion of Dr. De, therefore, that Danḍin takes the essential faults as negations of some of the guṇas of the Vaidarbhā mārga and consequently as positive characteristics of the Gaṇḍī mārga is only partially correct.

On the inspiration of these negative doṣas, Bhāmaha prepares his second list of defects which includes the above doṣas of Danḍin with a few alterations and additions. Thus, among his six general doṣas, neyārtha (far-fetchedness) takes its inspiration from Danḍin's neyatva, though it has been somewhat differently conceived. The faults, kliṣṭa (obscure sense), anyārtha (disappearance of sense) and avācaka (inexpressiveness) have been developed probably from the vyutpanna of Danḍin. The ayuktimati (illogical) is another form of nyāyavirodhi and the gūḍhāsabdābhīdhāna (use of
obscure expressions) resembles Bharata’s guḍhārtha. Of his four defects of speech, śrutiduṣṭa (explicitly indecent), arthaduṣṭa (implicitly indecent) and kalpa-zaduṣṭa (indecent in the alliance of two words) are evidently the different forms of Dāṇḍin’s grāmya, while the last śrutikāṣṭa (harsh in sound) corresponds to Dāṇḍin’s dīpta or κ्रοχοροδύα. Vāmana also derives inspiration from Dāṇḍin in his treatment of the doṣas, and appropriates some of his negative faults. His verbal defects kaṣṭa, grāmya and apratiṣṭha are closely comparable to Dāṇḍin’s dīpta, grāmya and vyutpaṇna respectively. In later Poetics, these doṣas were adopted in different forms by the theorists, of whom it was Bhoja who owes to Dāṇḍin the most. He gives the opposites of all the gunas of Dāṇḍin except samādhi, under what he calls the aritimat doṣa. These negative forms closely follow Dāṇḍin’s terms and conceptions.
He has, however, kaṭhaṇa for dipta and aprasanna for vyūtpanna; he takes grūmya to be the opposite of kānti and not of mādhurya which has anirvāha for its opposite; he drops the atyukti of Dāṇḍin and has asāṣīasta and anālaikāra as opposites of ojas and udārātva respectively, not hinted at by Dāṇḍin.

The upamāṇḍosā or the defects of simile. Besides the positive and negative dōgas discussed above, Dāṇḍin refers to the faults of simile which he regards as defects only if they perturb the mind of a reader. In case, however, they do not wound the cultivated sensibility, they cease to be dōgas. The defects that may occur in the employment of simile are as follows: (1) Disparity in gender of the object and standard of comparison; e.g. haṁśīva dhavaḷaś candraḥ, 'the moon is white like a female goose'. (2) Disparity in number; e.g. sarāṁśīvāmalaḥ nabhah, 'the sky is clear like the lakes'. (3) Inferior similitude; e.g. bhartrbhakto bhātṛ dveva, 'like a soldier is loyal to his master'. (4) Superior similitude; e.g. khadyoto bhāti bhāmuvat, 'the glow-worm shines like the sun'.

According to Bhāmaha, Mādhāvin dealt with seven defects

( SD. VII. 2-12 ) which are traceable to Dāṇḍin's negative forms of -dūgas.

50. Sanskrit poets have generally tried to achieve the formal correspondence in gender ( op. Sādh. I. 56 where gātpadāli ( 'swarm of bees') , and not 'gātpadākā', has been given
of simile which, besides the aforesaid four, included (1) asāṃbhava (impossibility), (2) viparyaya (contrariety) and (3) upamānasadgatas (non-similitude). Probably both Daṇḍin and Medhāvin adopted the defects from tradition; some doṣas might have been originally inspired from the varieties of simile in Bharata. The defects of superior and inferior similitude and those of impossibility and non-similitude, for instance, appear to have developed as extreme forms of the varieties, pradaṁṣa, nindā, kalpitā and kīṃcita diréi respectively in Bharata. After Bhāṣāha, Vāmana reduces the number to six by conceiving viparyaya in the scope of superior and inferior similitude, while Śraddha mentions only four, vaiśāmya, asāṃbhava, aprasiddhi and sāmānyasababdhabeda, the last including all cases of change of the word indicating common property due to difference of gender, number, time, case-notion (kāraka) and case. Bhoja admits only the four defects of Daṇḍin. He, however, adjusts them in his general treatment of the defects and not in the context of the figure

as the standard of comparison for a maiden), though there are occasional lapses, as in Rām. Kiṣāk. I. 10; 23; 58, as pointed out by V. Narahari; Sīkṣā., pp. 70-1.

52. Bh. NS. XVII. 50-5.
53. Cp. IV. 2. 8-11 and vṛtti.
itself. While discussing his doṣa-guṇas (defects becoming excellences in changed conditions), he also refers to the cases of defective simile where the cultivated sensibility is not hurt, evidently on the suggestion of Daṇḍin to that effect. Later writers also recognize these faults of similitude.

55. SKA. I. 25-6.
56. SKA. I. 147-50; also I. 120.
57. Cp. KPr. X. k. 142 ff; 3D. VIII. 15; these writers, however, do not admit their separate entity.