CHAPTER III

THE MĀRGA THEORY OF DANDIN

Origin of the doctrine of mārga. Before discussing Dandin's conception and exposition of the poetic diction (mār ga), it would be proper to go into the question as to when and how the doctrine of mār ga came into being and what was the contribution of the earliest theorists towards its evolution.

Although Bharata mentions, and briefly discusses, poetic excellences which in later theory constituted the poetic diction, yet he is not at all acquainted with the theory of poetic diction as such. He, of course, refers to the concept of pravṛtti which bears a partial resemblance to the conception of mār ga or rīti, but it is certainly a long step from pravṛtti to rīti. Pravṛttis, according to Bharata, signify the various manners with regard to the costume, language and social usages and practices prevalent in different countries. Evidently, the circle of these pravṛttis is much wider than the restricted scope of the poetic diction. It may, however, be justly said that the older theorists probably drew inspiration from Bharata's pravṛtti in regard to their mār ga or rīti.

Much before Bharata's time, we notice Yāska (c. 7th century B.C.) discussing the varying manners of different localities with regard to the usage of certain words. He

1. Cp. Bh. NS. XIV. 36 ff; KM. ed. XIII.
refers, for instance, to the different uses of \( \text{Vdav} \); its verbal forms are used in Kāmbhoja country or the northern region, while the derivatives are employed among the Āryas or the Easterners. Thus he alludes here to the Northern and Eastern manners with reference to the employment of words. This is perhaps the oldest allusion to various trends prevalent in different regions with regard to diction in its general sense. After Yāska, we notice such references to various manners in Patañjali ( c. 150 B.C. ). His mention of the Southerners as fond of secondary derivatives ( taddhitas ), is important, for herein we find an old echo of Danḍin's observation, similar in spirit, regarding them that they love elaborate diction in poetry and prose. In Yāska and Patañjali, in fact, the theory of literary diction makes its sub-conscious appearance at least in its crude form. After Bharata, the earliest known reference to the literary manners we find in Bāna who casually mentions various literary manners prevalent in different localities, viz., abundance of aśeṣa or double entendre prevailing in the northern region, predominance of sense ( over the word ) in the western land, frequent play of fancy ( utprekṣā ) in the southern country and verbosity ( aksaraḍaṃbara ) in the Gauda ( eastern ) locality. From the recognition of the eastern diction as Gauda mārṣa, which is definitely proved by Bāna's reference, it appears that there was optional naming after the

localities also, side by side with the more general terms based on different quarters. In Dandin we notice the more comprehensive terms dākeṣṇātya and saurastya, besides the regional designations Vaidarbha and Gauḍa for them. The southern diction seems to be known as Vaidarbha mārga from the earliest time, while the northern and western dictions were perhaps called Pāṇcāli and Ávanti respectively, since these terms appear as early as Bharata, though in his work, they denote the different pravṛttis.

An examination of the literary tendencies of the different quarters as noticed by Bāṇa shows that the basic elements of the classification of mārgas had not yet been definitely established in his time, though it is possible that the poetic figures and excellences vaguely determined the basis for their division. Whether Bāṇa's stleṣa which he gives as a characteristic of the northern diction forms a poetic excellence or a figure cannot be said definitely. Probably Bāṇa meant to denote both the meanings, though his inclination must have been towards the figure, stleṣa, since he was evidently fond of its employment in kāvyā. Till the time of Dandin, the term stleṣa was used to signify both the senses, that of the paronomasia as well as that of the excellence of that name. It was only after him that it was dropped from the list of guṇas and its signification came to be restricted only to the

5. Op. (a) Kā. I. 60; 80; (b) I. 50; 83.
6. Also cp. Hoar., intro. v. 8; Kād., intro. v. 9; Vās.
figure of that nomination. The prominence of sense referred to by Bāṇa as a characteristic feature of the western diction probably represents the excellence udāratya of Bharata. The other two elements, namely, utprekṣā and aṅkaraṇādāmba mentioned by Bāṇa as earmarks of southern and eastern paths respectively belong definitely to the sphere of the poetic figures. It may be remarked that Bāṇa hardly meant or professed to give an exhaustive list of the constituent elements of the different poetic manners referred to by him. He was naturally satisfied with a casual reference to the predominating elements, one each of the four dictions or literary manners. It is also possible that the ascription of different characteristics to various mārgas, represented his purely individual thinking and viewpoint and was not derived or inspired from any literary tradition.

The terms 'mārga' and 'rīti'. It is uncertain whether or not the term 'mārga' or its equivalents 'vartma' or 'paddhati' existed in their technical application in Bāṇa's time, but half a century after him Dāndin frequently employs the terms in his Kāvyādāra. And it is remarkable

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7. Also op. Hoar., intro. v. 8; Kād. intro. v. 9; for Bharata's guna, see below.

8. Op. also KA. I. 50 ( arthālāmākaraṇādāmba ); also op. Hoar., intro. v. 8 ( vikatākaraṇabandha ); Bhoja ( Sā. I. 70 ) calls the latter by the term audāryagunā on the line of Vāmana's dictum ( III. 1. 22 ).

9. Bāṇa ( Hoar., intro. v. 8 ) casually refers to some other
that he nowhere defines the concept, which fact indicates that he received the term with clear denotation from well-known tradition, so that he did not realise the necessity of defining it. The definition of the concept was given for the first time by Vāmana who called it rāti and described it as a specified arrangement of padas or words. The term rāti is conspicuous by its absence in Daṇḍin, while it won wide popularity after him, following its elaborate and forceful exposition in the work of Vāmana who is called, on that count, the founder of the rāti school. After him, Ānandavardhana defined rāti as a well-formed sequence of words ( saṃghatanaū ) which is a concise form of Vāmana's definition. As he was a rasa-theorist, he regarded it as a means of adding charm to the poetic sentiment, while Vāmana's rāti was evidently independent of rasa. Mamanatā and Viśvanātha practically followed Ānandavardhana, while Rājaśekhara and Bhoja patronised the earlier view of Vāmana. Kuntaka, the well-known propounder of the Vakrokti theory, made an original contribution to the rāti school. He gave importance to the poet's svabhāva or personal disposition and described and classified it on the basis of elements also, viz., agrāmā jāti ( decent natural description ) and sphuṭa rasa ( fully manifest sentiment ).

10. Cp. mārga in KA. I. 9; 40; 67; 75; 101; II. 3 etc.; vartman in KA. I. 42; 92; ASK. p. 2; paddhati in KA. I. 50; 76.


Number and nomenclature of different mārgas. As we have noticed above, Bāna refers to four literary manners prevalent in his time. Dāndin recognizes only two dictions which he names Vaidarbha and Gauḍa, though he remarks that the literary path of words is manifold and their sub-divisions as established by individual poets are incalculable. It may be casually noted here that Bhāmaha does not admit the distinction even between the two mārgas of Dāndin. But, since his attitude in this respect was indifferent, we should not attach much importance to his view. Vāmana, whom we have noticed above as the real propounder of the rīti theory, adds Pāncālī to the two mārgas, perhaps drawing either directly upon Bharata or on some current literary tradition. Difference of opinion on the number of the mārgas continued even after Vāmana, to which a detailed reference would be made later.

The basis of the nomenclature of literary mārgas was apparently the locality which was considered to be patronizing it; and Vāmana clearly states in this regard that the rītis have been named after the localities on the basis of the characteristics noticed in the works of the poets of those regions. No doubt, every locality develops certain peculiar characteristics with regard to dress and social usages and, to

some extent, in respect of poetic diction also. It should not imply, however, as Vāmana himself clarifies, that the literary diction are inseparable concomitants of the regions. In fact, as he further indicates, the literary manners already existed in their original and unconscious form, and their nomenclature on the basis of different regions developed later on. In other words, the form of the literary manners on the basis of their constituent gunas was established first and their naming on the basis of the peculiarities generally noticed in the poets of the particular land came into being later. Subsequently, when these peculiarities crossed their regional limits, the ritis became generic names of particular dictions. The regional nomenclature of the literary diction remained for long a matter of controversy with the result that either the regional names were totally dropped or were redundantly retained with no relation whatsoever with the regions after which they were named.

Order of development of different mārgas: We cannot be certain with regard to the order of development of the different mārgas. According to Jacobi, the rīti of the


17. Cp. De: SFP. p. 64; HSP. II. p. 91 and fn. Acc. to Ratna, ( on KA. I. 40 ) the mārgas, like languages, are intimately related to particular regions, though they may be observed in other regions also, as, for instance, sandal, originally belonging to the Malayam, is noticed elsewhere, too. As sandal is called Malayaja even if it is born elsewhere, so the mārgas are named after particular regions, even if they are noticed elsewhere.
Gauḍās preceded the Vaidarbha diction which came into being in about the third century A.D. as a reaction to the older and more ornate Gauḍī. Dr. De, on the other hand, thinks that Vaidarbhī was established earlier as the proper representation of the simpler and less ornate diction of the earlier kāvyā literature, whereas Gauḍī followed it, along with the establishment of the more polished diction of the decadent poetry. It is more reasonable, however, to suggest that the various dictons with their peculiar characteristics existed side by side, and only a few of them bearing clearer distinction, were named, defined and discussed as is clearly hinted by Danḍin.

The mārga doctrine of Danḍin. Danḍin occupies a prominent place in the development of the mārga theory. He was perhaps the first to give it a definite basis, though he did not, of course, establish the diction as the essence or soul of poetry, as Vāmana after him did. There is no doubt, however, that the diction enjoys, in this system, a prominent position in poetry. His definition of kāvyā as a sequence of words distinguished by the agreeable sense inspired him to think on the question of appropriate expression of the appropriate sense. In other words, it drew his attention to the appropriate combination of word and sense, which has been technically termed the mārga or rīti. This exactly appears to

20. Cp. KA. i. 40; see below also.
be Daṇḍin's conception of mārga, though he has not formally defined it in his Kāvyādāra. The conception fully accords with the subsequent exposition of it in Vāmana and others who followed him.

Here a few words may be said with regard to the relation between the old conception of mārga or rīti and the modern idea of style. According to Dr. De, "the term rīti is hardly equivalent to the English word 'style', by which it is often rendered but in which there is always a distinct subjective valuation. Although artha (i.e., sense or idea) is admitted as an element by Sanskrit writers, the rīti consists essentially of the objective beauty of representation (of the intended idea), arising from a proper unification of certain clearly defined excellences, or from an adjustment of sound and sense. It is, no doubt, recognised that appropriate ideas, should find appropriate expression; or in other words, the outward expression should be suitable to the inward sense. ... But at the same time, the rīti is not, like the style, the expression of poetic individuality, as it is generally understood by Western criticism, but it is merely the outward presentation of its beauty called forth by a harmonious combination of more or less fixed literary 'excellences'. Of course, the excellences are supposed to be discernible in the sense or import, as in the verbal arrangement, but this subjective content is not equivalent to the indefinable element of individuality which constitutes the charm of a good style".

21 HSP. II, p. 92.
On the other hand, Dr. Raghavan tries to connect the two concepts by showing the subjective aspect of the rīti on one hand, and the objective side of the style on the other, with citations from Demetrius and Aristotle. As a matter of fact, the objective aspect of the two concepts is more or less identical. Although in the beginning, Sanskrit theorists generally dealt with its objective side only, yet there is no doubt that in the developed conception of rīti, the personal element is not altogether wanting. It must be admitted, however, that the personal factor or subjectivity does not enjoy in Indian rīti the prominence which it does in the western style. It is, therefore, the degree of the element of subjectivity in which the old rīti and the modern style differ.

In order to understand fully the conception of mārga in Dandin, the following points may be noted here:

(i) The path of speech is multifold, since every poet possesses a distinct way of expressing a thing. It is difficult to draw a clear line of distinction between the various paths or dictions which differ from poet to poet, the mutual difference among them being as subtle as between sugarcane and milk and treacle in point of sweetness.

(ii) The two mārgas, viz., the Vaidarbha and the vauḍa, are, however, clearly distinguishable, the points of difference

in them being considerably great and easily discernible. The two dictions rather possess divergently opposite characteristics. Dandin most probably knew the western and northern mārgas also which have been referred to by Bāna. He appears to have discarded them owing to their minor differences from the southern (Vaidarbha) and the eastern (Gauda) paths respectively. Thus he accepted only two extreme types and left out the intermediary forms.

(iii) The mārgas possess certain characteristics which are of two kinds, namely, the general and the particular. The general characteristics are the attributes which may be observed in all types of dictions or mārgas, or in other words, in a poetic composition in general. The particular characteristics are the elements or excellences which constitute a specific mārga and differentiate it from the other. The ten excellences referred to by Dandin are the elements which characterise the mārga named Śaṅk Vaidarbha by him, while the vinyāya thereof is generally noticed in the other mārga, termed Gauda.

(iv) The enumeration, as also the elaboration, to some extent, of these constituent elements or excellences was taken by Dandin from the tradition coming down from Bharata. But while Bharata treats them independently of the poetic diction and regards them as general excellences to be observed in a poetic composition, Dandin relates them, perhaps for the first time, to the poetic diction. In other words, Dandin converts Bharata’s excellences of a poetic composition in general into
particular characteristics of the Vaikdarbha diction. It implies that the Vaikdarbha marga, possessed of all the ten excellences as it is, forms, in his opinion, a good poetic composition (satkavya). If accepted to be an elliptical designation, the Vaikdarbha marga stands for a standard good diction. In Bhāmaha, we do not notice the peculiar relation of excellences with dictions. He treats only three excellences, and describes the Vaikdarbha diction as possessed of certain qualities like anatipustirthatva (absence of excess of ideal maturity), anativakrokti (absence of excess of vakrokti), prasāda (perspicuity), ārjava (plainness), komalatva (softness) and drutpeṣalatva (pleasantness to the ear) and refers to the Gauda as characterised by atyalaśkāra (over-ornamentation), grāmyatva (vulgarity), arthahīnatva (redundance), anyāyyatva (impropriety) and ākulaatva (perplexity). But Bhāmaha's treatment of guṇas is very brief and rather vague that no conclusion can be drawn from it as to whether he admitted or not their relationship with the mārgas. The relation inaugurally proposed by Daṇḍin was retained by Vāmana and some of the later theorists.

(v) The dictum that the viparyaya (transposition) of these guṇas exists generally in the Gauda marga implies that while some of the guṇas characterise the two mārgas in their

similar form, others do so in their changed position. The excellences which characterise both the mārgas in their identical position are mādhurya, arthavṛyakti, udāratva, ojas and samādhi. Whereas in Vaidarbha diction the possession of the ten guṇas is essential, in the other mārga, the aforesaid five excellences and the changed form of the remaining five are observed casually (prāyo dr̥yate).

(vi) The word viparyaya of Dāṇḍin may be taken to denote twofold meaning, viz., contrariety (vaiparītya) as Tarunavācaspati takes it or the transformed position (anya-thātva) which need not be opposite, as Śrīdayaṅgamā does. The first meaning is objected to by some on the plea that since the ten guṇas are expressive of aesthetic charm, their opposites must essentially refer to grotesqueness and hence be defects, and this being the case, the Sauḍa diction does not come within the purview of kāvyā. But the instances of the diction cited by Dāṇḍin are, indeed, specimens of good poetry. Answering the above objection, Dr. Nagendra remarks that in Dāṇḍin's opinion, the viparyayas of the guṇas do not constitute defects; the viparyayas like vyutpanna (derivative sense) and dipti (glaringness) are certainly not doṣas. Any form of verbal arrangement (padaracana), whether compounded or

27. Op. KA. I. 42; by connecting the word 'prāyaḥ' with viparyaya, the phrase has been taken to mean that some of the guṇas are common to both the mārgas (op. Taruna). In fact, the commonness of some of them is clear from the specific statement of the author himself to that effect (op. I. 75; 76; 80; 100). In fact prāyaḥ which is an adjective should be construed with the verb 'dr̥yate' and not with the noun viparyaya.
otherwise or compressed or expanded, does not by itself elevate or diminish the charm of a kāvyā; it may become an excellence or a fault, according to the subject-matter and idea. Thus the guṇaviparyayas or the opposites of the excellences are not at all synonymous with dosas, though they may not imply embellishment in the same degree as the excellences like śleṣa etc. do. In the viparyayas illustrated by Daṇḍin, the sense of contrariety appears as a rule, though in some examples it exists only partially as in vyutpanna, and in others it is complete as, for instance, in sālithīya. As a matter of fact, the interpretation anyathātvam (‘changed form’) of the Īrdyānīgamā conveys this very sense. The idea of contrariety, either partial or complete, comes within the precincts of the anyathātvam. As remarked above, the conception of anyathātvam or vaiparītya of the guṇas has been visualised by Daṇḍin within the scope of the kāvyā. Hence the opposites of prasāda, kānti and suκumāratā have not been spoken of as kliṣṭa (obscurity), asvabhāvikatva (unnaturalness) and śrutikaṭu (acoustic unpleasantness) respectively, for in that case, the opposites would have gone out of the sphere of kāvyā and entered the arena of faults. On the contrary, the elements of derivative sense, exaggeration and glaringness (vyutpanna, atyukti and dipti) have been recognised respectively as the opposites of these excellences and they do come

within the fold of poetry.

(vii) Although Dāṇḍin considers the Gauda mārga to be of a diction/second degree, yet he accords it due recognition as a literary path. His predilection for the Vaidarbha diction is more than evident; he regards this mārga as a standard diction which, according to him, favours the classical and the refined manner of expression, while the other diction prefers the fervid and the grandiose and shows a distinct liking for the bombast and elaboration. It is noteworthy that Bāna also mentions the trait of verbosity ( aksaraṇāmbara ) with reference to the Gauda mārga. On the other hand, Vaidarbha or the southern diction has been traditionally regarded as an abode of grace and beauty. While describing pravṛttis, Bharata refers to the southern pravṛtti as being possessed of the clever, sweet and charming gesticulated acting ( kalākārāṇāya and caturamaduralalitāṅgābhīnaya ). Bāna mentions poetic fancy ( utprekṣā ) as the dominating characteristic of southern diction. Probably this statement of his represents his personal, and/or traditional, observation. It cannot be held, therefore, that Bāna's conception of the southern diction had changed in Dāṇḍin's time and that the Vaidarbha had developed a graceful style, because the two writers were not separated from each other by a period of more than half a century. Otherwise, too, the poetic fancy must have occupied an important


place in the graceful style.

Followers of Dandin. After Dandin, Vamanana enjoys a prominent place in the history of the development of riti theory. He establishes the riti or diction as the soul of poetry and, in a way, gives the doctrine a definite form. He introduces a third riti as intermediary between the two margas of Dandin and names it Pãhcáli perhaps on the suggestion of the Pãhcáli pravrtti of Bharata. He describes the Gaudiyá as consisting of ojas and kánti, the Pãhcáli as possessing madhurya and saukumarya and the Vaidarbhí as endowed with all the excellences. He accords, on the line of Dandin, the most prominent place to the Vaidarbhí riti on account of its being characterised by all the gunas and, above all, being devoid of defects. Rudrata after him adds a fourth riti, Lãtiyá and determines the compounds as the basis of their division.

Thus according to him, absence of compounds forms a characteristic of Vaidarbhí riti, employment of short compounds that of Pãhcáli and the use of compounds of middle length that of the Lãtiyá diction, while Gaudiyá was characterised by the employment of long compounds. He also relates the ritis to the sentiments. The sentiments of love, compassion, fear and wonder were associated with Vaidarbhí and Pãhcáli ritis, while the other two ritis were connected with the sentiment of fury. Rudrata discards the geographical association of ritis, though

he does not abandon the regional nomenclature. In the later period, Śiṅśabhūpāla and Rājaśekhara recognised only three rītis of Vāmanā. The former, however, dropped the geographical names and adopted the terms komalā (soft), kāṭhina (harsh) and mīśrā (mixed) vṛttis for Vaidarbhī, Gaudī and Pāṇcāḷī rītis respectively. Rājaśekhara puts forth compounds (yogavr+tti) as the distinguishing features of different rītis. Bhoja, adding Āvantikā and Māgamā to the list of Rudrāṭa, makes the number six. His classification and description of the rītis is mechanical and arbitrary. Kuntaka substantially follows Vāmanā, though he gives up local names with the specific remark that the rītis cannot be equated with social usages of particular lands. He bases the diction on the natural disposition of poet (kavisvabhāva) and classifies it accordingly into sukumāra, vicitrā and madhyama ones. On the other hand, the rasadhvani theorists generally accept in substance the three rītis of Vāmanā in the form of three vṛttis, namely, upanāgarikā (refined), paruṣā (harsh) and komalā (soft), comparable respectively to the Vaidarbhī, Gaudī and Pāṇcāḷī dictions. Vṛttī and rīti have been differentiated by Udbhata, Rudrāṭa and Abhinavagupta. Vāmanā describes vṛttī or varṇāgumpha (the arrangement of syllables) as a part of rīti. Viśvaṇātha also gives an indirect hint to this effect. In fact, vṛttī is an external element or

34. Cp. VJ. I. 24 ff.

aspect of rīti, the other aspect being saṁghaṭanā, the arrange-
ment of words. Māmaṭa regards the two as almost identical. 36 Later, Jagannātha fully identifies the two.

The theorists of the post-dhvani period regard rīti as an external element in accordance with their new conception which distinguished the body from the soul which position in poetry they accorded to the suggestion of rasa. According to this doctrine, the rīti assists the realisation of sentiment, just as the structure of body assists the soul.