

ROLE OF KRIYĀYOGA IN PĒTAØJALA YOGA SĪ TRA (P.Y.S).

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ABSTRACT

Different commentators of P.Y.S. interpret the components of Kriyāyoga merely in terms of āññi ġyoga. In this article, an attempt has been made to highlight the key role of Kriyāyoga with its definite purpose and tried to establish that a s;dhaka's very success and rate of advancement depends upon a large extent on his mastery of Kriyāyoga that makes him eligible to take up the higher practice of Yoga.

Key words: kriya yoga, success in yoga, āññi ġyoga.

Introduction

Self-Realization is the ultimate aim of yoga. Self-realization is that state in which the *puruÅa* (the Seer) gets established in its own original form which can be attained only through '*cittav=tti-nirodha*' i. e., the cessation of all the mental processes¹. Maxmuller has so aptly observed that "the aim and end of yoga is not to unite, as is generally believed, but to disunite, to separate, to isolate the *puruÅa* from *prak=ti*, giving back to him his essential and original purity. It is only in the forms of mysticism, which make use of *yoga*, that the latter has union as its end"² *Gġti* seems to convey the same message '*taÆ vidy;t duÅkhasaÆyogaviyoga yogasaÆjuitam*' - that state is known as the *yoga* where there is *viyoga* i.e disunion from any contact of pain⁵. By these statements it becomes clear that why *Patañjali* gives so much emphasis on the restraint of the mental processes. If the mental processes are not restrained, the *puruÅa* gets carried away along with the mental processes and thereby identifies itself with them that is known as '*v=ttis;rupya*' according to *Patañjali*.⁴ *Patañjali* suggests various ways and means to achieve the state of '*v=ttinirodha*'. If we make a careful analysis of these paths, we can find that each and every path is intended to effect a re-orientation or perfection in some part of our being, such as '*abhy;sa-vair;gya*'⁵, '*āññi ġyoga*'⁶ and '*kriyāyoga*'.⁷ According to Patanjali '*kriyāyoga*' consists of three components : '*tapas*' i. e., austerity or purification, '*sv;dhy;yā*' i. e. self-study or study of the scriptures and '*Ī;vara-pra idh;na*' i.e., devotion to God here it means resignation of all actions to the God. However, these very components of kriyayoga get again included among the components of 'niyama' under āññi ġyoga. Naturally, the question arises as to why *Patañjali* has included these three components in two different contexts at all. Either this is a needless repetition on the part of *Patañjali* or it is intended to serve a definite purpose. The fact becomes clear when we see that Patanjali prescribes *kriyayoga* for the attenuation of *klesas* as well as for the cultivation of *samadhi*⁹ whereas, in the context of *astanqayoga*, he says, -"through the *anusthana* of *yogasanas* consisting of eight components, the light of knowledge culminating in '*vivekakhyat*' gets developed along with the systematic destruction of impurities".¹⁰

All the traditional commentators are unanimous while commenting on the *Sutra* II.1, that of *kriyayoga* is essential for those who have not attained a balanced state of body and mind complex. But later on, while commenting on the sutras related to the eight components of yoga, they seem to interpret these components of *kriyayoga* merely in terms of *astanqayoga*¹¹.

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They say that all the practices described in the *yoqasutras* are all well-integrated in *astangayoga* itself¹² Thus, they do not seem to give much weightage or any unique role to *kriyayoga* as such in the *yoqasadhana* of *patanjali*. As a result, there is a prevalent underestimation regarding the need for *kriyayoga* among the *Sadhakas*. In this article, therefore, an attempt has been made to highlight the key and significant role assigned by Patanjali to *kriyayoga* so that its practical utility for the students and *yoqasadhakas* for making better progress in yoga may become clear.

Patanjali has presented *kriyayoga* in the first Sutra itself of *Sadhana-pada*, indicating that the *Sadhana* or actual practice of yoga begins verily with *kriyayoga*. The *sadhaka* should undergo the *kriyayoga* discipline to acquire the necessary knowledge and for the weakening of the powerful grip of the *klesas*¹³ like *avidya*, *asmita*, *raga*, *dvesa* and *abhinivesa* upon his being. These *klesas* are at the root cause of his sufferings and bondages. Unless and until he cultivates the essential knowledge and insights and make the *klesas* comparatively powerless, his going directly into higher yogic realms like *astangayoga*¹⁴ may set violent reactions and inner-resistances and get blocked once for all with pitfalls like *vitarkas*, *viksepas* etc. For, he may get totally discouraged and disillusioned about *yoqasadhana* itself; on the contrary, with a firm footing in *kriyayoga-sadhana*, he is enabled greatly to reduce the onset as well as recurrence of such pitfalls, whereby he could adopt necessary remedial measures to overcome any difficulties experienced in his *Sadhana*.

To get an insight into the role of these three elements of *kriyayoga*, viz., *tapas*, *Svadhya* and *isvarapranidhana*, we only need to examine the religious routines among the ancient Indians, particularly the orthodox Hindus. Here we see that *tapas*, *Svadhya* and *isvarapranidhana*, in one form or another, had been the part and parcel of the religious life of our ancient seers and savants.¹⁵ It should be noted here that it is these very elements of the ancient Hindu religious practices that are directed with the singular objective of attaining *samadhi-bhavana* through reduction/weakening of *klesas*, it becomes Patanjali's *kriyayoga-sadhana*.¹⁶

Even from the modern educational psychology point of view, we come across these three components of *kriya-yoga* in the form of three domains of human behavior, namely, the cognitive domain, the affective domain and psychomotor domain.¹⁷ In other words, it is obvious that both ancient religious life of Indians and the modern educational psychology tackle man through his three basic capabilities: (1) To know; (2) To feel; and (3) To act.

Within the context of classical yoga itself, we get the three schools of yoga, viz., *Karmayoga*, *Jnanayoga*, and *Bhaktiyoga*.¹⁸ In fact, every school of yoga presents an integral approach to avoid imbalance development of the three basic aspects of human beings and therefore, one cannot make water-tight compartments of these schools of yoga. Thus, it cannot be said that the follower of one particular school of yoga negates or excludes the practices that belongs to the other two schools. The selections of a particular school of yoga for one's own practice mainly depend on one's inclinations and specific qualities. And the essential elements of the other two schools remain solidly in the background. Tilak, the author of '*Gita-Rahasya*' says : "The aim of *Gita* is to set forth *Karmayoga* which is rooted in *Jnana* in which *Bhakti* is dominant and which ultimately leads to *moksa* - '*jnanamulakabhakti-pradhanakarmayogaha*'.¹⁹ It means that any action becomes *karmayoga* only when it is performed with *bhakti* as a form of worship and such *bhakti* is available only to the one who has the *Jnana*, i. e., knowledge. This is obvious even in the cases of *bhaktiyoga* and *Jnanayoga*.

Thus, Patanjali has taken an integrated view of all these three systems in his *kriyayoga*. The school of *karmayoga* can be counted under '*tapas*'; *Jnanayoga* under *svadhya*; and *bhaktiyoga* under *isvarapranidhana*. According to *Patanjali* the three components of *kriyayoga* have got equal importance

emphasizing that these three have to be mutually supportive and well-integrated to get the desired end. Patanjali makes this fact clear by using the term '*kriyayoga*' in its singular form.

Similarly, within the context of the three domains of human behaviour we can have an integrated view of *kriyayoga* of Patanjali. Accordingly, the '*tapas*' aspect of *kriyayoga* can be counted under the psycho-motor domain, *Svadhya* under the cognitive domain and *isvarapranidhana* under the affective domain of human beings. *Kriyayoga*, therefore, tackles the fundamental nature of human beings and thereby contributes to the all-round and balanced growth and development of a *sadhaka* which is essential for his advancement towards the higher realms of yoga like *astangayoga*.

CLASSICAL YOGA	PATANJALI'S KRIYAYOGA	THREE DOMAINS OF HUMAN BEINGS
KARMAYOGA -----	TAPAS -----	PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAIN. (to act, to do).
JNANAYOGA-----	SVADHYAYA -----	COGNITIVE DOMAIN (to know, to think)
BHAKTIYOGA ----	ISVARA PRANIDHANA -----	AFFECTIVE DOMAIN (to feel; to will)

A *sadhaka* can easily get dominated and carried away by any one of these three domains of his being. Let us take an example of Will. Without the Will an individual cannot involve himself in any action. Will, therefore, is absolutely essential for the practice of yoga. One is expected to attain the desired goal oneself with the help of one's own force of will. *Krishna* says in *Gita* : "one should liberate oneself," etc. (*uddharedatmanatmanam*).³⁰ Even the Lord cannot give or take away anything against the individual's Will. But un-trained will (unsupported with knowledge and action) is not enough. It must be properly directed. Will manifests itself through the medium of action. Therefore, well-directed will is thus co-eval with well-directed action and even the knowledge which essentially required will then be there. This is what the practice of *kriyayoga* proceeds to do by which the *sadhaka* develops his spiritual inclination or *sraddha* which sets forth the momentum needed for his progress in yoga *Sadhana*.

Here, with reference to the '*astanqayoga*' we need to note one important factor : Patanjali uses the technical term '*anusthana*' with reference to *astanqayoga* instead of the *abhyasa* thereof.³¹ But, it must also be noted that the commentators have chosen to interpret the term *anusthana* merely as a synonym for *abhyasa*.³³ This seems to be the one reason for the prevalent confusion regarding the intention of Patanjali. For, Patanjali has clearly avoided the usage of the term *abhyasa* in the context of *yoqanqas* (*astanqayoga*) for the development of *vivekakhyati*²³

The word '*kriya*' is more akin to *abhyasa*, i. e., the 'process of becoming' whereas the term *anusthana* implies 'the process of remaining established in a particular state or being'.²⁴ 'Yatna' or effort is inherent and implied in *abhyasa* whereas '*prayatna-saithilya*' seem to be the characteristic of the *anusthana* related to *yoqanqas* (i. e. *astanqayoga*).³⁵ *Anusthana* of *yoqanqas*, therefore, seems to be a subtler form of yoga-*sadhana* which becomes possible only when the *klesas* have been attenuated and the *samadhi-bhavana* has been adequately developed. For a *sadhaka*, who is still under the powerful sway of the *klesas*, the various components of *astanqayoga* like *ahimsa*, *satya* etc. remains totally unintelligible and therefore as of little practical significance to him.

From the above considerations, we may come to the conclusion that *kriyayoga* has its own definite purpose as originally intended by *Patanjali*. *Sadhana* of *kriyayoga* leads a *sadhaka* towards the successful *anusthana* of *astanqayoga Sadhana*. His very success and rate of advancement depends to a large extent on his mastery of *kriyayoga*. Therefore, we should neither underestimate nor ignore the key role played by *kriyayoga-sadhana* in Patanjalyoga as such.

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