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New light on Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis: Based on the traditional Sanskrit commentaries of Yoga Sūtras

Jayaraman Mahadevan

Research Department, Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

Context: Patañjali Yoga Sūtras classify Citta Vṛttis into the Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa (Desikachar, 2014, p.16). After this initial mention, there are no further discussions on this 2-fold classification of the Vṛttis in the text. Though Kleśas are discussed in the second chapter of text, the terms Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa themselves do not appear as part of discussion in the entire text after this initial mention. This gives rise to quite a few questions: What is the purpose of classifying the Vṛttis into Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa? What is meant by Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis? What is the nature of association of Kleśas with Vṛttis? Should both Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis be restrained or will it be enough if one focuses on restraining the Kliṣṭa Vṛttis? and so on.

Aim: Though the Sūtras themselves do not reveal any further information on this, many Sanskrit commentaries of Yoga Sūtra, beginning from the one ascribed to Vyāsa, address these questions. The aim is to study these commentaries to find answers to the questions raised above.

Method: A descriptive method of analyzing arguments is used because of the philosophico-literary nature of the study.

Result: The commentaries along with presenting various possible answers to the questions on the Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis of the Yoga sūtras also reveal more relevant insights.

Conclusion: On scrutiny of the commentaries, it becomes evident that all the techniques of Patañjali in the Yoga Sūtras, be it Abhyāsa vairagya, Kriyā Yoga, or Aṣṭāṅga Yoga, operate on the principles discussed under the Sūtra on Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa classification establishing Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis as the foundational principles of Yoga Sūtras. The diverse yogic methods and techniques that are prescribed centered on the body, breath, emotions, intellect, etc., seem to be aimed only at the generation of progressively varying levels of Akliṣṭa Vṛttis and ultimately to overcome even these Akliṣṭa Vṛttis to attain absolute Citta-vṛitti-nirodha.

Key Words: Akliṣṭa, Citta, Kliṣṭa, Nirodha, Sanskrit commentaries, Vṛttis, Vyāsa

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Jayaraman Mahadevan, Research Department, Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai - 600 028, Tamil Nadu, India.
E-mail: jramanm@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is defined in Patañjali Yoga Sūtra (Desikachar, 2014, p. 15) as Citta-vṛitti-nirodha. These Vṛttis that are to be restrained are classified into five types and are further divided into - Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa (Desikachar, 2014, p. 15). After this

Sūtra, each of the five types of Vṛttis is (Pramāna, Viparyaya, Vikalpa, Nidrā, and Smṛiti) is defined and discussed. Even in later portions of the text, one finds discussion on Vṛttis such as Viparyaya, Nidrā, and Smṛiti. However, one does not find any mention to the pair of the terms Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa,

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introduced by this Sūtra, in the entire Yoga Sūtra after this initial mention. Though Kleśas are discussed in the second chapter of the text, the terms Klišṭa and Aklišṭa themselves do not appear as part of discussion in the entire text after this initial mention. This gives rise to quite a few questions: What is the purpose of classifying the five Vṛttis into Klišṭa and Aklišṭa? What is meant by Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis? What is the nature of association of Kleśas with Vṛttis? Should both Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis be restrained or will it be enough if one focuses on restraining the Klišṭa Vṛttis? and so on.

AIM

Though the Sūtras themselves do not reveal any further information on this, many Sanskrit commentaries of Yoga Sūtra on this Sūtra, beginning from the one ascribed to Vyāsa, address these questions. The Aim of this paper is to analytically bring to light the views in the commentaries written across many centuries on the 2-fold classification of Vṛttis.

METHOD

A descriptive method of analyzing arguments is used because of the philosophico-literary nature of the study. Vyāsa's commentary is the principal source. Four sub-commentaries to vyāsa's commentary are referred to in this article towards finding answers to the questions raised above. They are vācaspati miśra's tattvavaiśārādī (9th century), śāṅkara's Vivaraṇa (8th or 13th century), vijñānabhikṣu's yogavārttika (15th century) and hariharānanda āraṇya's bhāsvatī (20th century) views from other independent Sanskrit commentaries have also been mentioned in relevant places. The views of the commentaries are logically and wherever applicable, chronologically arranged under various head that are relevant to the study.

RESULT

The commentaries along with presenting various possible answers to the questions on the Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis of the Yoga sūtras also reveal more relevant insights.

DISCUSSION

Purpose of the classification

It would be appropriate to consider discussions in the commentaries regarding the rationale behind this 2-fold classification.

- Among the numerous commentaries, it is in the work of Vācaspati Miśra that we find, for the first time, the purpose of this classification (Klišṭa and Aklišṭa) being mentioned. In his commentary to PYS 1.5, he says that *"a classification (Klišṭa Aklišṭa) that is useful to (the) practice (of yoga) is presented (by Patañjali) (anuṣṭhānopayoginam avāntaraviśeṣam darśayati)"* (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25). Vācaspati Miśra also proposes the way in which this classification

of Vṛttis can be utilized in the practice. He says, *"Klišṭa Vṛttis are to be restrained by Aklišṭa Vṛttis and they in turn should be restrained by supreme dispassion"* (klišṭānām aklišṭābhīḥ nirodhaḥ tāsām ca pareṇa vairāgyeṇa iti) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).

- Chronologically after Vācaspati Miśra, Vijñānabhikṣu, another celebrated commentator, states *"to clarify that Aklišṭa Vṛttis should also be restrained like the Klišṭa Vṛttis, this classification is presented"* (Klišṭavadaaklišṭāyāḥ api heyatvapratipādanāya klišṭāKlišṭāvibhāgapradarśanam) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25). Taking recourse to a reference from Bhāgavata Purāṇā (śāstrī, 1999, p.689), he further emphasizes that regardless of the nature of the Vṛttis, they have to be restrained (*aklišṭā upādāya klišṭā niroddhavyāḥ tā api pareṇa vairāgyeṇa iti | tathā ca darśitam "sattvenānyatame hanyāt sattvaṃ satvena caiva hi"*) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).
- Rāmānanda, the author of a commentary on Yoga Sūtras called Maṇiprabhā, states that this classification helps to understand what kind of Vṛtti has to be rejected and what is to be accepted (*hānopādāna-siddhaye*) (Śāstrī, 2009, p. 8).

The common thread that runs through the above three views is that this classification is intended to lead one from theoretical understanding (of Vṛttis) to action (to restrain the Vṛttis) by providing clarity. Further, the method of utilizing the Aklišṭa Vṛttis against the Klišṭa and so on stated in this context presents a hint to understand the orientation of all practices (such as Kriyā Yoga and Aṣṭāṅga Yoga) prescribed later in the Yoga Sūtras.

Interestingly, the purpose of 5-fold classification (pramāṇa-viparyaya-vikalpa...) presented in the same Sūtra shall be noted in this context. Most commentators are unanimous regarding the need of the 5-fold classification. The following sentences from Śāṅkara's Vivaraṇa convey the general sense conveyed by all the commentators regarding the need of the 5-fold classification - *"Objection - Vṛttis are innumerable and hence all of them may not be restrained at all (to this it has to be stated that) - though the... Vṛttis are innumerable still they are of just five types... and then it is proper that (just) the five types of modifications be restricted by practice... no useful purpose is achieved in restriction of each one of the... modifications"* (nanu ca bahutve sati na śakyā niroddhumityata āha - pañcatayya iti, yadyapi klišṭāklišṭā vṛttayo'nantāḥ tathāpi pañcatayyah tataśca pañcaprakāraḥ vṛttipratipakṣabhūtabhyāsa-vairāgyaprayogā devanirodhāpatteh, pratyavayanirodhasādhanāprayojakato'ād vṛttinām tadbahutve na nirodhāśakyatvaprasaṅgaḥ) (Sastri & Sastri, 1952, p. 32).

The comparison reveals that the 5-fold classification helps in organizing the Vṛttis to manageable limits whereas the 2-fold classification lays down the mechanism to ultimately attain Citta-vṛttis-nirodha.

RELATION BETWEEN 2-FOLD CLASSIFICATION AND 5-FOLD CLASSIFICATION OF VṚTTIS

As mentioned above, the Sūtra that mentions Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis also mentions a 5-fold classification of the Vṛttis. It would be useful to understand from the commentators, regarding the purpose behind suggesting two types (5-fold and 2-fold) of classifications of the Vṛttis and their mutual relation, if any, from the commentaries.

- i. Going by the word order in the Yoga Sūtra, it could be stated that each of the five types of Vṛttis is further subdivided into Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa. Vācaspati Miśra confirms this when he says Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa as subordinate variations (avāntara-viśeṣaḥ) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 24) of the five Vṛttis. Most commentators follow this view.
- ii. However, interestingly, Vyāsa, the principal commentator reverses the order and states that “*these Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are of five types*” (*tāḥ kliṣṭākliṣṭāśca pañcadhā vṛttayah*) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 26). Vijñānabhikṣu also seems to toe the line of Vyāsa when he says, “*be it Kliṣṭa or Akliṣṭa, Vṛttis are of five types*” (*kliṣṭā akliṣṭā vā bhavantu, vṛttayah pañcatayyah...eva*) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 24).

Thus, regarding the relationship between the two classifications of Vṛttis in the same Sūtra, we have two views from the commentaries. Though the change of sequence does not seem to have any major conceptual implication, Vyāsa might have reversed the sequence given in the Sūtra to subtly imply that more than the predominantly epistemological 5-fold classification, yoga considers Vṛttis as the carriers of influence of Kleśas or otherwise and hence that is the fundamental characteristic of Vṛttis according to yoga.

DEFINITIONS OF KLIṢṬA AND AKLIṢṬA VṚTTIS

The initial discussion has dealt upon the purpose of the 2-fold classification of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis and its relationship with 5-fold classification in achieving Citta-vṛtti-nirodha. The definitions of the terms Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are as follows.

Kliṣṭa Vṛtti

View in Vyāsa’s commentary and its subcommentaries

Vyāsa, the principal commentator, defines Kliṣṭa Vṛttis with two compound terms – “*kleśahetukāḥ karmāśayapracaya-kṣetribhūtāḥ*” (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25). The general meaning of this reads as follows “*Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are those that are caused by afflictions (Kleśas) and are the fields of accumulation of the deposit of Karma.*” This translation gives a general sense of the term Kliṣṭa Vṛtti. However, it is the analysis of these two compound terms in subcommentaries to Vyāsa’s work that bring to light the various aspects of Kliṣṭa Vṛttis (the views of subcommentaries even necessitate the revisiting of the above translation).

- i. Vācaspati Miśra provides two interpretations (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25) to the term *Kleśahetuka* (appearing in Vyāsa’s commentary):
 - a. Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are those that are caused (hetu) by Kleśas such as avidyā and asmitā (*kleśāḥ asmitādayaḥ, hetavaḥ pravṛttikāraṇam yāsām vṛttinām tāstathoktāḥ*).
 - b. “*Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are the Rājasika and Tāmasika Vṛttis, of a person who desires to attain (material?) goals of the Puruṣa (soul), that cause (hetu) Kleśas (yad vā puruṣārthapradhānasya rajastamomayīnām hi vṛttinām kleśakāritvena kleśāyaiva pravṛttih).*” It is to be noted here that Vācaspati Miśra, in his first interpretation, considers Kleśas as the cause and in the second interpretation Kleśas as the effect (it is such interpretations that necessitate revisiting of translations of Vyāsa’s comment).

Vācaspati Miśra explains the second compound term (*karmāśayapracaya-kṣetribhūtāḥ*) depending on the second interpretation on the first compound term presented above, thus – “*By valid knowledge etc., a person grasps an object and being attached to it or having hatred toward it he acts and accumulates deposits of karma. Thus, by this, Kliṣṭa Vṛttis become the field for the emergence (experience) of merit (Puṇya) and demerit (Pāpa)*” (*pramāṇādīnā khalvayaṃ pratipattā arthamavasāya tatra saktaḥ dviṣṭaḥ vā karmāśayamācinoṭī, bhavanti dharmādharmaprasavabhūmayāḥ vṛttayah kliṣṭāḥ iti*) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).

- ii. Vijñānabhikṣu presents a contrasting interpretation to Vyāsa’s commentary. Regarding the first term (*Kleśahetuka*), he says that “*Being made up of three Guṇas, all the Vṛttis possess Kleśa, so it would not be appropriate dividing the Vṛttis as Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa at all... Hence, kleśa here should be taken to mean duḥkha (pain or misery) thus kleśahetuka would (simply) mean those (Vṛttis) that take on the form of objects (of sense pleasure) and result in pain.*” (*triguṇātmakatayā sarvāsāmeva vṛttinām kleśavattvena kliṣṭākliṣṭavibhāgo nopapadyate... kleśāścātra mukhya eva grāhyo duḥkhākhyāḥ... kleśahetukā duḥkhaphalīkā viśyākāravṛttayah*) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25). Vijñānabhikṣu’s interpretation of the Vyāsa’s second compound term is in line with Vācaspati Miśra’s view.
- iii. Śāṅkara, unlike Vācaspati Miśra, is not ambivalent in interpreting Vyāsa’s first compound term on “*Kleśahetuka.*” He states that Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are those that are “*caused by five Kleśas such as avidyā. The mind connected with five Kleśas informs the atman through the Vṛttis again and again*” (*kleśahetukāḥ - avidyādīpañcacleśaprayuktam hi cittam vṛttibhiḥ ātmānam punaḥ punaḥ āvedayati*) (Sastri & Sastri, 1952, p. 17). In the case of the second compound term, Śāṅkara has a different view. He does not consider it as a single compound term. In the reading of Vyāsa’s commentary that is published with Śāṅkara’s subcommentary, the term is split into two as *karmāśayapracaya kṣetribhūtāḥ* (Sastri & Sastri,

1952, p. 17). It is explained by Śāṅkara thus – “When the accumulation of the karma deposit is the cause, then the Vṛttis will become dependent on (associated with) Kleśas. Only when they (Vṛttis dependent on Kleśas) are present, the deposit of karma works towards yielding its fruits” (...karmāśayapracaye nimitte, avidyādikṣetribhūtāḥ kliṣṭāśrayāḥ ityarthah| satīṣu hi tāsū karmāśayo vipākābhīmukhibhavati) (Sastri & Sastri, 1952, p. 17).

Śāṅkara’s interpretation brings out the twin role of Kleśas (through the Kliṣṭa Vṛttis), i.e., causing (deposits of) karmāśaya and also being the catalyst in fructification of the karmāśaya (vipaka) (Hariharānanda Āraṇya’s commentary, a relatively recent work on Vyāsa Bhāṣya, follows the views of Vācaspati Miśra and Śāṅkara in interpreting the two compound terms found in the commentary of Vyāsa).

Thus, from the above three interpretations, it could be perceived that Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are described so as they are either the activators or are associated with/resulting in Kleśas.

Views in independent Sanskrit commentaries

Most independent commentators take Kliṣṭa Vṛttis as either to be influenced (not caused) by Kleśas (avidyā, asmitā etc.) or inducers of Kleśas (avidyā, asmitā etc.) Bhoja and Sadāśiva (Śāstrī, 2009, p. 8, 9) advocate the former idea where most others like Nāgojibhaṭṭa and Rāmānanda (Śāstrī, 2009, p. 8) and Nārāyaṇatīrtha subscribe to the latter view. A couple of commentators discuss Kliṣṭa Vṛttis in relation to Guṇas also (this point is elaborated in the next section) [Figure 1].

Vṛttis and the Guṇas

There is a great deal of divergence among the commentators regarding the relationship between the Guṇas and Kliṣṭa/Akliṣṭa Vṛttis. At the outset, it has to be stated that neither Patañjali nor Vyāsa has related the Kliṣṭa/Akliṣṭa Vṛttis with the three Guṇas.

- i. The association of Guṇas and Kliṣṭa/Akliṣṭa Vṛttis is first brought out by Vācaspati Miśra (his views

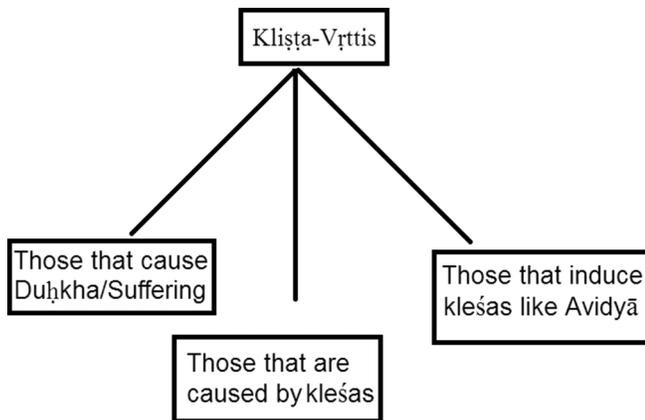


Figure 1: Three different interpretations of Kliṣṭa-Vṛttis in the commentaries

have been mentioned earlier). He states that Rājasika and Tāmasika Vṛttis cause Kleśas and hence they are Kliṣṭa Vṛttis. In his view, Akliṣṭa Vṛttis appear in non-Tāmasika and non-Rājasika (Sāttvika) mind (vidhūtarajastamasah...) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).

- ii. Vijñānabhikṣu presents a different viewpoint. He states that Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are Tāmasika. Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are Sāttvika in nature. In his view, Rājasika Vṛttis are a mixture of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa (tāmasinām sātvikīnām ca dviividhānāmeva vṛttīnām niroddhavyatvamuktam... rājasinām kliṣṭākliṣṭamīśravṛttīnām) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).
- iii. Bhāvagaṇeśa mentions a slightly different view from that of Vijñānabhikṣu. He states that Kliṣṭa vṛttis are Tāmasika in nature. Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are both Sāttvika and Rājasika in nature (kliṣṭāḥ tāmasyaḥ akliṣṭāḥ sātvikyō rājasyaśca) (Śāstrī, 2009, p. 8) (it is to be noted that Bhāvagaṇeśa is a disciple of Vijñānabhikṣu. Vijñānabhikṣu considers Rājasika Vṛtti as a mix of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis. Taking recourse to this, probably Bhāvagaṇeśa might have considered a portion of Rājasika Vṛtti to be Akliṣṭa).

It can be observed that all commentators accept Kliṣṭa Vṛttis as Tāmasika and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis as Sāttvika. Variation is observed only regarding the classification of Rājasika Vṛttis. There seems to be an indication of internal contradiction in Vijñānabhikṣu’s commentary regarding Guṇas and the Kliṣṭa Vṛttis. It stems from the Bhāgavata reference (mentioned above) that he quotes in the commentary to the Sūtra regarding the idea that Kliṣṭa has to be overcome by Akliṣṭa. The reference instructs to use Sattva to destroy the other two (Guṇas). It is equated by Vijñānabhikṣu to authenticate his view that using Akliṣṭa Vṛttis, Kliṣṭa Vṛttis have to be destroyed (akliṣṭā upādāya kliṣṭā niroddhavyāḥ tatastā apī pareṇa vairāgyeṇa iti “sattvenānyatame hanyāt sattvaṃ satvena caiva hi” iti smaraṇāt) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25). This would then clearly amount to equating/associating Sattva to Akliṣṭa and Rajas and Tamas to Kliṣṭa. But in the next paragraph, Vijñānabhikṣu states that Tāmasika Vṛttis are Kliṣṭas and Rājasika Vṛttis are a mix of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis. To substantiate this supposition, Vijñānabhikṣu does not quote any authority. Thus, probably Vācaspati Miśra’s statement of classifying Rājasika and Tamasic Vṛttis as Kliṣṭa and Sāttvika as Akliṣṭa seems more tenable [Figure 2].

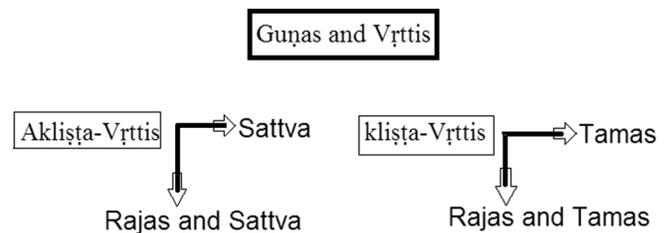


Figure 2: Relationship between Guṇas and Vṛttis variously presented in the commentaries

Akliṣṭa Vṛttis

Akliṣṭa Vṛttis too are defined by Vyāsa with two compound terms, namely “khyātivaiṣayāḥ guṇādhikāravirodhinyah” (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25). The general sense of these two would be: Aklišṭa Vṛttis are those that have khyāti (knowledge of the difference between Puruṣa and Prakṛiti) as their content and they oppose the sway of the Guṇas.

Vācaspati Mīśra succinctly describes these two terms. He states “when the mind is free from the effect of Rajas and Tamas and is peaceful, the knowledge of difference between the Prakṛiti and Puruṣa is experienced. This is khyāti. When such knowledge of discrimination exists in the mind, any further commencement of worldly activities is suspended. The very nature of Guṇas is to commence some activity or the other... (as the dawning of the above said knowledge opposes the commencement of any new activity) thus the sway of the Guṇas is blocked and hence they are called as Aklišṭa Vṛttis” (vidhūtarajastamaso buddhisattoṣya praśāntavāhinaḥ prajñāprasādaḥ khyātiḥ, tayā viṣayīnyā tadviṣayam sattoṣyapuruṣavivekamupalakṣayati, tena sattoṣyapuruṣavivekā yataḥ ata eva guṇādhikāravirodhinyah, karyārambhaṇam hi guṇānāmadhikārah... guṇānāmadhikāram nirundhantīti atah tāh aklišṭāh) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).

As these two terms are unambiguous, all other commentators are either in agreement to what Vācaspati Mīśra says or do not comment much on this. As has been mentioned earlier, all commentators are unanimous in declaring Aklišṭa Vṛttis as Sāttvika. It is only Rāmānanda who states that a portion of Rājasika Vṛttis (which is a combination of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis) is also Aklišṭa.

Relationship between Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis

So far, the purpose and definitions of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis presented by Vyāsa and the views on those definitions found in the subcommentaries and other independent commentaries were discussed. After defining the two types of Vṛttis, Vyāsa sets out to describe the nature of relation between the two kinds of Vṛttis. He says “Aklišṭa Vṛttis... occur in the stream of Klišṭa Vṛttis. Even in the midst of Klišṭa Vṛttis, Aklišṭa Vṛttis exist. Similarly in the midst of Aklišṭa Vṛttis, Klišṭa Vṛttis exist” (Klišṭapravāhapatitā apyaklišṭāḥ, Klišṭachidreṣvapyaklišṭā bhavanti, Aklišṭacchidreṣu klišṭā iti) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25). Just looking at Vyāsa’s statement, one cannot make out much. It is the subcommentaries that bring out the various possible implications of such a proposition made by Vyāsa on the relation between Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis.

i. Vācaspati Mīśra explains the need of such a statement as follows. He states – “It is rare to see people free from passion (Rāga) and hence (in them) only the Klišṭa Vṛttis will be operative. Further, in the stream of Klišṭa Vṛttis, Aklišṭa Vṛttis cannot exist. Even if they are present, they will not be able to result in any (Aklišṭa) action... and hence it would be wishful thinking, to overcome Klišṭa Vṛttis with Aklišṭa and further overcome the Aklišṭa Vṛtti with higher state of discrimination. To (dispel) this (doubt), Vyāsa

has made the (above) statement” (vitarāgajanmādarśanāt kiṣṭavṛttaya eva sarve prānabhṛtaḥ, na hi Klišṭavṛttipravāhe bhavitumarhantyaklišṭāvṛttayah, na ca amūṣām bhāve’pi kāryakāritāḥ | tasmāt klišṭānāmaklišṭābhīḥ nirodhaḥ, tāsām ca vairāgyeṇa pareṇeti manorathamātramityata āha) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).

Thus, in essence, Vācaspati Mīśra seems to interpret the statement of Vyāsa to mean that Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis will retain their respective identity in each other’s stream. This he, probably, does to establish, the method proposed by him to overcome Klišṭa by Aklišṭa and overcome Aklišṭa by higher discrimination, in a firm footing. He makes this very explicit when he states that “the dent (chidra) in the stream of Klišṭa Vṛttis is created by practice (Abhyāsa) and dispassion (Vairāgya) that arise from the study and reflection and inferences based on the scriptures and following the teachings of teacher... these Aklišṭa Vṛttis (retaining their identity) following the process of fruition of the impressions (saṃskāras) created by them progressively overcome the Klišṭa Vṛttis.” (āgamānumānācāryopadeśapariśīlanalabdhaḥjanmānī abhyāsavairāgye Klišṭacchidram-klišṭāntarvartitayā ca klišṭābhiranabhibhūtā aklišṭāḥ svasaṃskāraparipākakrameṇa klišṭā eva tāvadabhibhavanti) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 26).

ii. Vijñānabhikṣu sees the statement of Vyāsa in a different light. He states that “(an Objection may be raised) - The author of the Sūtras has stated that only the Tāmasika and Sāttvika Vṛttis are to be restrained. He has left out the Rājasika Vṛttis which are combinations. Hence, there is a lacuna. And hence Vyāsa states that the Rājasika Vṛttis which are combination of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis are to be subsumed (or should have taken to be mentioned) under those (Klišṭa and Aklišṭa) that have already been mentioned” (nanu Sūtrakāreṇa tāmasinām Sāttvikainām ca dvividhānāmeva vṛttinām niroddhavyatvamuktaḥ na tu rājasinām klišṭāKlišṭarūpamiśravṛttināmiti, nyūnatetyāsaṅkya āha) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 25).

When Vyāsa says that Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis exist in the stream of Vṛttis of opposing nature (without losing their nature), Vijñānabhikṣu takes it as a description of Rājasika Vṛttis which is a mixture of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis. To the question regarding the nonmention of Rājasika Vṛtti, Vijñānabhikṣu reasons out that the Rājasika Vṛtti (Klišṭa and Aklišṭa) should have to be taken as included (by the very statement by that mentions “Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis are to be overcome”), as they are a mixture of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis (rājasyaḥ miśravṛtteḥ aṃśābhyām aṃśīnyoḥ praveśa iti...) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 26).

iii. Śāṅkara, in his subcommentary, presents yet another insight regarding the relation between Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis stated by Vyāsa. He foresees a violation of the well-established ideas regarding the link between Vṛttis, Saṃskāra, memory, and activity. It is well known that Vṛttis cause Saṃskāra. Saṃskāras at a later point of time give rise to memory, and based on the memory, one acts. Śāṅkara states that “if an Aklišṭa Vṛtti which is in a stream

of Klišṭa Vṛttis becomes Klišṭa, (there would be difficulty in) memory (*smṛiti*) confirming to the subliminal impressions of the Vṛtti and activity to that (memory) will not happen, when there is change in one's nature" (*yadi Klišṭapravāhapatitā aklišṭāḥ klišṭāḥ syuh, tadā Vṛttisaṃskārānuvidhāyini smṛtiḥ, tadanurūpa eva vyavahārah | sa cāpi na siddhyati, svarūpavyabhicāre*). Hence, he concludes that Vyāsa had to state that Klišṭa or Aklišṭa Vṛtti, wherever they may be, will not transform into one another (*tasmādāha-Klišṭa cchidreṣvapyaklišṭāḥ aklišṭā eva bhavanti, Aklišṭacchidreṣvapi klišṭāḥ klišṭā eva bhavanti*) (Sastri & Sastri, 1952, p. 18).

Vācaspati Mīśra's interpretation of this postulate of Vyāsa seems to be consistent with his initial statement regarding the very purpose of classification of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis. It can be remembered that according to him, this classification facilitates/helps practice. His interpretation of this Vyāsa's statement helps the practitioner to be reassured about the positive outcome of his practice. With the above explanation on Aklišṭa Vṛttis holding on to their identity even amidst a stream of Klišṭa Vṛttis, he seems to reassure the practitioner regarding the firmness of the Aklišṭa Vṛttis that were cultivated by him by weakening (Klišṭa chidra) the Klišṭa Vṛttis through study and reflection of the teachings of the teacher and scriptures.

With regard to the description of Vijñānabhikṣu about Rājasika Vṛttis as a combination of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa, it needs to be reviewed for its tenability. Because in Vyāsa's commentary upon which Vijñānabhikṣu has written a subcommentary, we find a clear division of outcomes of the Guṇas as – pleasure (*Sattva*), pain (*Rajas*), and delusion (*Tamas*) (commentary to the Sūtra 2.15) (Śāstrī, 2007, p. 182, 183). Going by his own definition of Kleśa (suffering/pain), Rājasika Vṛttis should have been the Klišṭa Vṛttis and not a combination of Klišṭa and Aklišṭa, *Rajas* being described as the chief cause of suffering/pain and not *Tamas*.

Śāṅkara's viewpoint on the relation between Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis, on the other hand, helps in ruling out one possible wrong assumption of mechanism of working of "Klišṭa replacing the Aklišṭa Vṛtti or the vice versa." To explain: by the practice of yoga, if a practitioner is able to achieve a stream of Aklišṭa Vṛttis, Klišṭa Vṛttis cease to exist after a period of time. It cannot be due to the transformation of Klišṭa Vṛttis into Aklišṭa Vṛttis because the impressions created by Klišṭa and also the subsequent effects will always be Klišṭa and not otherwise, but probably due to some other cause. One probable cause may be the weakening of Klišṭa Vṛttis and gradual nongeneration of Klišṭa Vṛttis.

SUMMARY

In the introduction, four questions regarding Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis were raised. As evident from the above discussion, the commentaries to the Yoga Sūtras have

addressed all the questions and discuss many more aspects which include the nature of the association of Guṇas with the Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis, relationship between the 5-fold classification and the 2-fold classification of Vṛttis, and the relationship between the Klišṭa division of the Vṛttis with that of the Aklišṭa Vṛttis. Attempt has been made in this article to collect and arrange all the views available in the commentaries regarding the Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis. Appropriateness of certain views has also been suggested. However, the discussion has been left open ended, as the very objective of this article is limited only to bringing out all the available valid views on the topic.

CONCLUSION

The study of the commentary literature across centuries reveals that in comparison to the 5-fold classification, the commentators have focused more on the purpose, the causes, consequences, and also the method of utilization of the 2-fold Klišṭa-Aklišṭa classification of the Vṛttis to achieve the goals of yoga. This establishes the centrality of Klišṭa-Aklišṭa classification toward Citta-vṛtti-nirodha. On close scrutiny, it will become evident that all the techniques of Patañjali in the Yoga Sūtras, be it *Abhyāsa-vairāgya*, *Kriyā Yoga*, or *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*, operate on the principles discussed under the Sūtra on Klišṭa and Aklišṭa classification. The diverse yogic methods and techniques that are prescribed centered on the body, breath, emotions, intellect etc., seem to be aimed only at the generation of progressively varying levels of Aklišṭa Vṛttis. Moreover, to subdue even these Aklišṭa Vṛttis, as has been suggested by Vācaspati Mīśra, intensifying *Vairāgya* is the way.

Finally, in the current scenario, it can be observed that research on yoga seems to be preoccupied with evaluating the empirical outcomes of yoga, which of course, is essential. True efficacy of yoga might be evaluated if parameters of measurement are correct and innate to the system. Based on the discussion in this write-up, it can be concluded that Patañjali seems to have indicated the "impact of various practices on Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis (in the Citta)" as the measure of efficacy of yogic techniques. As there are scales of measurement of the three Guṇas, efforts are to be directed to define and develop scales to identify and evaluate Klišṭa and Aklišṭa Vṛttis of the Citta arising out of various practices of yoga. This write-up is an attempt to bring to light the importance of this seldom-noticed classification in the practice and research of yoga.

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