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Pātañjala Yoga in the Light of Caturvyuha

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ABSTRACT

The subject matter of Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra, in the light of caturvyuha, has been dealt comprehensively with the purpose of perceiving its utility for an objective pursuit of Yoga not only in tackling the Psycho-physiological problems of man but also to change the entire outlook of mankind for healthy life and living.

Key words: Caturvyuha, heya, heyahetu, hāna, hānopāya, duḥkha, draṣa, dṛṣya, avidyā, vivekakhyāti.

Introduction

Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra (about 200 B.C.) is a practical, methodical and systematic Sūtra Treatise in ancient Indian history that deals with the deeper understanding of life phenomenon in tune with all essential knowledge of Yoga practices. Within its Sūtras we find a methodical fourfold strategy technically known as "caturvyuha" as Heya, Heyahetu, Hāna and Hānopāya through which not only Patañjali but all the Indian philosophers have expressed their thinking and experiences for understanding the life and the phenomenon associated with it. However, the present study restricts to Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra only.

The term Heya stands for duḥkha i.e. Pain, Heyahetu – cause of duḥkha, Hāna – freedom from duḥkha wherein feeling of well being prevails and Hānopāya – means to achieve that Hāna state. This fourfold strategy can also be seen in the form of Four Noble Truths of Lord Buddha.

Although *Patañjali*, the author of *Yoga Sūtra*, has not used the term *caturvyuha* in his text, yet the four supporting pillars of this

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strategy are clearly discernible. $Vy\bar{a}sa$, the first commentator of Yoga $S\bar{u}tra$, has clearly equated this fourfold strategy (caturvyuha - PYS II/15) with that of $\bar{A}yurveda -$ the ancient Indian medical science which consists of four steps - disease, cause of disease, health and treatment. According to him Yoga $S\bar{u}tra$ is also strategically consists four steps as $sams\bar{a}ra$ (here $sams\bar{a}ra$ stands for duhka), cause of duhka, liberation and means to attain that liberation. Thus getting the guide lines set forth by $Vy\bar{a}sa$ the attempt has been made to understand Patanjali Yoga $S\bar{u}tra$ in the light of this fourfold strategy with the help of Sanskrit Commentaries thereof so that the subject matter of Yoga $S\bar{u}tra$ may become easily understandable to Yoga lovers and thereby its utility not only in tackling their psycho-physiological problems but also to change their entire outlook towards the life phenomenon.

Understanding Caturvyuha

Let us understand the Four Parts of this caturvyuha one by one.

Heya: Heya generally means that which is to be avoided. In this world no one wants duḥkha (pain) therefore duḥkha falls under this category. Patañjali has thrown light on the nature of duḥkha in Sūtra "heyam duḥkhamanagatam" (PYS II/16). The terms "duḥkha" and "anāgata" (not yet come i.e. future suffering) are note-worthy. The general meaning of duḥkha is undesirable i.e. painful experience. There could be many types of undesirability. Hence, they can be designated by many names depending on their type. Commentators of Yoga Sūtras have delineated threefold suffering viz. ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika and ādhidaivika in the context of vikṣepās (PYS I/31).

A man harassed by threefold suffering thinks his aim is to get rid of these through worldly means but the 'happiness' achieved through these means itself becomes the cause of his future suffering. Patañjali has presented very wisely the causes of the same so as to prove that the worldly things of happiness, in the final analysis, are painful 'pariṇāmatāpasaṇṣkāraduḥkhaiḥ guṇa-vṛtti-virodha' etc. (P.Y.S. II/16). It is natural to have attachment towards that object through which happiness is experienced. This attachment may be towards living beings (wife, son etc.) or inanimate objects (house etc.) and to maintain these he struggles and at times becomes inhuman to

not loose them.' In this pursuit, man even forgets the real nature of worldly objects which are working like a ceaselessly revolving wheel because of 'guṇavṇttivirodha' i.e. mutual changing mode of the Guṇāssattva, rajas and tamas. However, man wants to maintain his possessions and tries to remove all obstructions by adopting any means 'foul or fair.' In doing so either he obliges or harasses others. By obliging or harassing others the karmāśaya in the form of dharma (prescribed duty) or adharma (proscribed duty) is accumulated and that becomes the cause of attachment and hatred again which in turn gives rise to future suffering.

Therefore, *Patañjali* has considered these worldly pleasures in the category of *heya*. According to him sufferings related to the past and present do not fall under the category of *heya* as it is always appropriate to think antipathically only about those which can be avoided. Because it is useless to think about those suffering which are experienced in the past and that which are being experienced in the present as the *saṃskāras* which are accumulated in *karmāśaya* are necessarily to be experienced in the form of pleasure or pain. However, if the *karmāṣaya*, in the form of *dharma* and *adharma* (right and wrong), which are likely to become the cause of pleasure or pain in future, is destroyed then only it is possible to remain free from misery in future. In this way, *Patañjali* has clearly brought out the avoidable type of misery by combining the term *anāgata* with *duḥkha*.

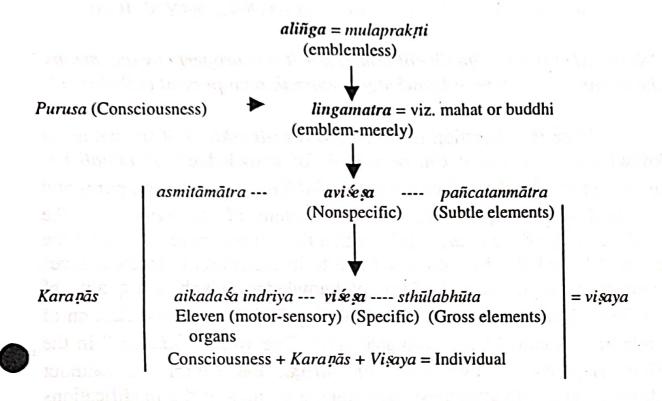
Heyahetu: As fever cannot be overcome unless we know its ause similarly the duḥkha cannot be avoided permanently unless one knows the hayahetu (i.e. the cause of duḥkha). In Indian philosophy avidyā, aviveka or mithyājñāna etc. (indiscrimination or erroneous understanding) are said to be the main causes of all these miseries. Philosophers have tried to understand these as avidyā etc. in their own ways, but Buddha has tried to understand the cause of misery on the basis of "Pratityasamutpāda." However, Patañjali (PYS II/17) has considered the union of drasta and drsya (Seer and Seen) as the cause of miseries. Draṣṭā is the name of cetanaśakti which is also known as puruṣa, citiśakti etc. The term dṛśya (seen) stands for all the manifested animate and inanimate objects of the material phenomenon (prakṛti). When puruṣa considers itself to be related to or involved with this dṛśya,

then only the purusa is called drastā. Therefore, the apparent union in the two different elements is the main cause of heya i.e. duḥkha. Let us review the terms dṛaṣtā, dṛśya and saṃyoga (union) so that the cause of heya (duḥkha) can be clarified.

Here the term drastā, appearing first in the Sūtra should have been discussed first but Patañjali has discussed the term dṛśya first may be because of the fact that unless one understands the concept of drsya the real significance of the term $d_i a s_i \bar{a}$ can not be clearly understood. According to the Sūtra (PYS II/18) the dṛśya (seen) is that which is of the nature of illumination, activity and stability, which consists of living and non-living objects of this material phenomenon (prakni) and it has a purpose of providing experience and liberation to the dṛaṣṭā. In this world the drastā (seer) seems to be united with these objects. In technical language this is called the union of purusa and prakni, but Patañjali has made it clear by using the terms (union of) dṛaṣṭā (Seer) and dṛśya (Seen) i.e. the manifested world. The union of the puruṣa with un-manifested prakni cannot produce any fruition activity. Therefore, the meaning of drsya should be understood as manifested objects of the prakni (Nature) from mahābhūtas (gross elements) to mahat only. The terms illumination, activity and stability appearing in the Sūtra are the attributes of sattva, rajas and tamas guņas respectively. Though these three gunas are alien to each other yet they are interdependent. Sattvaguna gets itself illuminated with the help of rajoguņa and due to the presence of tamoguņa it illuminates only the definite object. It does not illuminate all the objects in the universe simultaneously. Similarly rajoguna gets activated due to sattvaguno and due to the influence of tamoguna its activity is restricted. In this way these guṇas are producing various worldly things right from mahat to mahābhūtas (gross elements). As the man and woman are producers of progeny, similarly these guṇās are producers of animate and inanimate worldly objects. These three guṇās only serve the purpose of purusa in the form of collecting experience and finally liberation for it. As the magnet serves its owner by attracting a piece of iron similarly these three guṇās serve their owner, draṣṭā (seer), by presenting to it the worldly objects. These are called gunas because they are the means of bhoga (experience) and apavarga (liberation) of drastā (seer). When

the puruṣa considers itself to be indistinct from it, then it gets pain or pleasure. That is called bhoga (experience) of the draṣṭā. When it remains in its own natural form, different from the dṛṣṣa (seen), that state is called liberation.

In the universe basically three fundamental actions – illumination, activity and stability are seen. The equilibrium of these three guṇas is known as alinga or the mūla-prakṛti. It has no cause of its origin therefore, it is considered eternal. All its activities (modalities) are expressed in the form of objects for accomplishing the purpose of puruṣa. The state of apparent union is incidental; therefore, it is temporary (anitya). Based on this manifested state of guṇas these stages are named as parva (PYS II/19), which can be understood with the help of the following table:



With the help of these four parvās (distinct sections or stages of developments) the whole dṛśya (seen) i.e. manifested world can be understood. However, Patañjali has described the world in reverse order i.e. viśeṣa is mentioned first and aliñga at the last. This may be due to the fact that the individual first comes in contact with the gross elements. The journey from gross to subtle is always easy. The seer remains entangled with the seen world and therefore considered it as happy or unhappy.

While discussing the nature of draṣṭā (seer) (PYS II/20) Patañjali calls it drśimātra (mere potentiality of seeing) and śuddha (pure). At the same time, he considers it to be seer as it witnesses the modification of citta. According to Vyāsa the meaning of drśimātra is one who is without any attributes (Vyāsabhāṣya II/20). According to Vācaspati Miśra the meaning of attribute (guṇa) is dharma (fundamental properties) (Tattva Vaiśāradi (Ta.Vai.) II/20). According to Vijñānabhikṣu (Y.V. II/20) all the qualities fall under the three guṇas "sattva, rajas and tamas". Hence, drśimātratva is that which is without any of the guṇas. He considers dṛśi as draṣṭā's original nature and not its guṇa. He has supported the statement with the following verse:

jñānam nevātmanodharmo na guņa vā kathañcanal jñānasvarupa evātmā nityaḥ sarvagataḥ ŵvaḥ||(Y.V. II/20)

"Knowledge is not a quality of ātman nor it is a property by any means, the atman is of nature of knowledge – eternal, omnipresent called siva."

Here the objection is: if the purusa (drastā) is of the nature of knowledge then how it can be a basis of knowledge? Patañjali has answered this by the use of the term "śuddhopi" (i.e. though pure) and pratyayānupaśyah (he witnesses the content of the citta (i.e., the modifications of the citta). He says that though it is pure as it is not the basis of knowledge by nature, yet due to its reflection in intellect gives impressions of it being the basis of knowledge, which is a quality of intellect. Hence as the purusa is imitating buddhivrtti (modification of buddhi) it is called "pratyayānupaśyaḥ." The word "śuddhopi" in the Sūtra suggests the two forms of puruṣa, the natural i.e. without attributes and with attributes. Becoming a witness of the modifications of citta is its form with attributes. To remain free from the modifications of citta is its natural form. As far as the seer (drastā) remains attached with the world it sees according to modifications of citta and considers pain and pleasure - which are the qualities of the intellect - as its own. This very union of seer and seen is really the cause of human suffering. Hence it is necessary to think on this union.

The general meaning of the word "saṃyoga" is – "saṃyujyate tādarthyena bodhyate aneneti saṃyoga" i.e. linking of two different

things. Seer (draṣṭā) and seen (dṛṣya) both are two different entities but due to aha mbhāva (I consciousness) are seen as united, because some part of self or ego (aham) is experienced in the form of seer (drastā) and some is experienced in the form of seen (drsya). consciousness and the enlargement of it are the factors that do not allow an individual to experience his own natural form. Patañjali has thrown light on the nature of "samyoga" in Sūtra "sva- swāmi śaktyoh svarupopalabdhi-hetuḥ saṃyogaḥ" (II/25). Here the term "sva" represents dṛśya and term "swāmi" represents cetana or draṣṭā. The gaining of sva-sakti i.e. the form of drsya by the drasta (seer) is experience (bhoga) and gaining of swāmi-sakti i.e one's own original natural form is liberation. This union is the cause of gaining experience and liberation. This state of sva (dṛṣya) and swāmi (draṣṭā) is called svaswāmibhāva saṃbandha (relationship between dṛṣya and draṣṭā) or relation between experienced and experiencer. How the purusa attains this state? Patañjali has said, "tasyaheturavidyā" (PYS II/24) the avidyā is the cause of this state. From this it is understood that the union of drastā and drsya is with cause. Therefore, whatever is with cause that is definitely destroyable? The meaning of avidyā is "the experience or understanding self as non-self etc. (II/15). There are two types of negatives in the word avidyā - "prasajyapratisedha" and "paryudāsa." Among these the meaning of the first term "prasajyapratisedha" is the spurning even prior to occurrence or gain of a thing. In this respect the meaning of avidyā would be absence of vidyā. But this meaning is not suitable because the absence of object can never become the cause of karmāśaya (accumulation of karma). Kleśa in the form of avidyā is the cause of karmāśaya. Patañjali says "kleśamūlaḥ karmāśayo dṛṣṭādṛṣṭa-janma-vedaniyaḥ (PYS II/12). The meaning of paryudāsa is discrimination. At some places this discrimination is also taken as opposite viz. the meaning of adharma is opposite of dharma that which destroys dharma. In the context of paryudāsa the meaning of avidyā will be opposite of vidyā. Avidyā is also called adarsana. The absence of this avidyā or adarsana results in the absence of bondage. Vyāsa and other commentators have presented eight options of "adar sana" wherein the fourth option seems acceptable to the theory of Patañjali. According to which "adarsana," is the total collection of subliminal impressions, that remains absorbed in the prakni along with citta at the time of pralayakāla (dissolution of creation). The above-mentioned subliminal impressions of $avidy\tilde{a}$ or "adarśana" are the cause of "saṃyoga (union) of buddhi with puruṣa. On the basis of this the variations in experiences of each individual puruṣa can easily be understood.

In this way subliminal impressions arise out of avidyā proves to be the cause of that "saṃyoga." Now the question arises, what is the cause of this avidyā? In reply to this question, Patañjali has accepted avidyā as anādi (i.e. beginningless) "tasāmanāditvam cāsiso nityātvāt" (PYS IV/10). If it is so then the samyoga arising out of avidyā should also be considered as beginning less, which can't be removed. But problem through this solved has Patañjali "hetuphalās yālambanai h sa mgrh itatvāde samabhāve tad abhava h' (PYS IV/11). He means that the impressions are beginningless but they are not endless because the cause of impressions is the existence of kleśas like avidyā, rāga (attachment), dveṣa (aversion) etc. and also the black (evil) and white (good) karmas. Their results are birth, life and experiences. Citta is the reservoir of those impressions.

The objects of sense organs such as sabda (sound) etc. are their ālambana (support). Those beginningless impressions are based on these above mentioned cause, result and reservoir. Therefore, they are beginningless in the sense of continuous flow. They are manifested due to these four causes. In absence of those causes they may also disappear and hence destroyable. Here abhāva does not mean atyantabhāva (total absence), but dissolution of resultant in its cause (PYS IV/12).

Hāna: On arising of real knowledge or vivekjñāna (knowledge of discrimination) avidyā disappears and thereby the connection between buddhi (intellect) and puruṣa is disrupted. Citta gets dissolved in its cause i.e. aliñga and puruṣa gets established in its own natural form. This itself is known as Kaivalya.

Patañjali has indicated the Hānavyuha by the Sūtra "tadabhāvāt saṃyogābhāvo Hānaṃ tad-dréeḥ kaivalyam (PYS II/25). He means that due to vidyā (the real knowledge), there is disappearance of subliminal impressions of avidyā and consequently there is disappearance of union of draṣṭā and dṛśya, which is the cause of human suffering. In this stage the guṇas - sattva etc. have no purpose to serve- get dissolved in their

cause and citisatti gets established in its own original form. As there remains no connection in any way between purusa and citta. Therefore, this stage is called Kaivalya (PYS IV/34).

Hānopāya: In discussing Hānavyuha, the nature of Hāna has been discussed. How this state is achieved? What are its means? order to answer these questions, there is propounding of the fourth part of the caturvyuha in the form of Hānopāya. Patanjali has shown "aviplava vivekakhyāti" i.e. uninterrupted discriminating knowledge as practical remedy for destroying avidyā through Sūtra - "vivekakhyātir aviplava Hānopāyah' (PYS II/26). According to him for abolishing avidyā the uninterrupted discriminating knowledge of draṣṭā and dṛśya is the most excellent remedy. The meaning of term "viveka" appearing in vivekakhyāti is the discriminating knowledge of citta and puruṣa. Although knowledge of drastā and drsya being of different nature is also gained through agama, anumana and pramana but therein the external disturbing experiences and impressions, arising out of it, are not destroyed. There is a possibility that they may arise again. Therefore, vivekakhyāti obtained through yogic methods is the only remedy for Hāna. What will be the nature of prajñā of the sādhaka who has obtained this aviplava vivekaklıyāti. Patañjali says "tasya saptadhā prānta bhūmi h prajñā (PYS II/27). According to him, the best knowledge among all is that knowledge which expands and flourishes in a pure ekāgracitta, wherein sattva guņa predominates. When this knowledge is about to bear fruit (result) at that time seven types of prajna arise. These prajnas are the ladder to the completeness of that vivekajñāna and are defined as prānta bhūmayah. Vācaspati Miśra word prantabhumih analysed the as "prakṛṣṭo'nto yasām bhūminamavasthānam tastathoktah," (T.Vai. II.27). He means that the knowledge is one but the seven types of prajñā are based on types of objects, "viśaya bhedāt prajñā bhedaḥ" i.e. due to the difference in object there is difference in knowledge e.g., knowledge of vision is different than that of touch and therefore the difference. Maharshi Vvāsa (Vva.Bha.II/27) has divided these seven types of prajnā into two groups - "kāryavimukti" (liberation from action) and "cittavimukti" (liberation from citta). Kāryavimukti are those prajñās, which are obtained through effort and cittavimuktis are those which are attained automatically without any efforts after attaining kāryavimukti prajñā. (For detail please see Vyāsa bhāsya II/27).

In Patañjala Yoga Sūtra we find various means to attain the said vivekakhyāti, such as abhyāsa (practice), vairāgya (detachment) (PYS I/12), Kriyā Yoga (Yoga of action — PYS II/1) and Aṣṭāñga Yoga (PYS II/29) etc. Due to the mention of various means in this way it seems that there might be the idea of the difference of eligibility and adaptability of Sādhakas although Patañjali himself has not mentioned this fact clearly anywhere in his text.

The commentator Vyāsa (Vyāsa bhāsya II/1), Vācaspati Miśra (Ta.Vai II/1) and other commentators have classified the said means on the basis of categories of sādhakas. Abhyāsa and Vairāgya means for the sādhakās having samāhita (integrated) citta; whereas those having vyutthita (dispersed) citta (though desirous of taking up the path of Yoga) Kriyā Yoga and Aṣṭāñga Yoga can be recommended. Yoga Vārtikakāra Vijnānabhikṣu has considered three types of They are best, medium and slow, which are named as sādhakās. "Yogārudha" (adept of Yoga), Yogayuñjāna (interested in Yoga) and Yogāruruksu (desirous of Yoga) (Yogasarasamgrah, p.37). According to him for the best category of sādhakās who have mastered Bahiranga Yoga (external Yoga) i.e, yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma and pratyāhāra in their previous lives, means such as abhyaāa (practice) and vairāgya (detachment) are mentioned. In support of his statement he has cited the example of Śiśupāla (Y.V. II/1) who attained liberation just through abhyāsa of smaraṇa (memory)

Similarly, for the **medium category** of *sāhdakās*, whose citta has become *ekāgra* (concentrated) to some extent due to the practice of previous birth, the practice of *Kriyā Yoga* is mentioned. In *Kriyā Yoga* 'tapa, swādhyāya and Īśvaraprāṇidhāna' are mentioned.

Tapas i.e. austerity which encompasses wholesome food, wholesome activities etc. are desirable to exhaust the body and senses but only to that extent so that there is no disharmony in dhatus (body components), because due to disharmony in dhatus the body may become incapable for the practice of *Yoga*.

Swādhyāya i.e., study of holy scripture and recitation of mantras e.g. recitation of OM will ultimately lead one to analyze one's own life and it helps to take away the citta from the various



temptations of worldly pleasures and too divert the flow of one's citta towards other side.

Īśvaraprāṇidhāna.i.e. surrender to God in the form of detachment towards the fruits of one's actions leading towards minimizing one's *karttābhāva* (feeling of doer) which is the root cause of all sufferings.

For slow category (house-holders etc.) of sādhakās, the easy and well known path of Astānga Yoga is prescribed wherein Vācaspati states that all means mentioned by Patañjali in the form of abhyāsa, vairāgya, kriyā yoga etc. are very well incorporated in Aṣṭāṇga Yoga (Ta.Vai. II./29). While explaining this fact Vijñānabhikṣu writes that vairāgya is included in santosha and sraddhā etc. are in tapas etc. and citta parikarmās (purifying activities of citta) are under dhāranā, dhyāna and samādhi and Kriyā Yoga is included in niyamās under Aṣṭāṇga Yoga (YV. II/24). According to them Patañjali himself accepts Aṣṭāṇga Yoga as sure mean to destroy aśuddhi in the form of avidyā and attaining vivekakhyāti. Yogānganusthānadaśuddhikṣaye jñāna diptirāvivekakhyāte h P.Y.S. II/28) i.e. through the practice of eight-fold Yoga as there is diminution of impurities (i.e. negative thoughts, feelings emotions, attitude etc.) there arises an enlightenment culminating into vivekakhyāti (i.e discriminative insight) which contributes towards the cultivation of positive view towards phenomenon. The sādhaka practising that vivekakhyāti incessantly does not even desire the supernatural powers acquired as a result of attaining that vivekakhyati. On the contrary, he considers them as harmful and remains unattached to them. Then and then only there is constant flow of viveka wherein the distinction between citta and purușa is maintained. The incessantness of that jñāna is "aviplavā vivekakhyāti", which roots out the avidyā may be present even in subtle form like the burnt seeds. At last through the dissolution of the citta – the reservoir of samskāras, vāsanās etc. - the liberation is attained.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is clear that *Patañjali* has clearly accepted the fourfold strategy of thought popularly known as *caturvyuha* in Indian philosophy and also can be said that *Patañjali* has

systematized the precious thoughts and experiences, which are scattered in the scriptures related to *Yogavidyā*, based on this four-fold strategy of caturvyuha, for the sake of practitioners of *Yoga*.

Study recommends that if we re-arrange the Sūtras of Patañjali in the light of this Fourfold Strategy i.e. caturvyuha the subject matter of Patañjala Yoga Sūtra may become easily understandable to Yoga lovers and thereby it's utility in various aspects of their lives.

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