YOGA-MĪMĀṂSA
A journal of scientific and philosophico-literary research in Yoga
Published since 1924
New light on Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis: Based on the traditional Sanskrit commentaries of Yoga Sūtras

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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 Āsāṇga 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-vṛtti-nirodha.

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

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is defined in Patañjali Yoga Sūtra (Desikachar, 2014, p. 15) as Citta-vṛtti-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 (Pramāṇa, 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,
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 Kliṣṭa and Akiṣṭa 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 Kliṣṭa and Akiṣṭa? What is meant by Kliṣṭa and Akiṣṭa Vṛttis? What is the nature of association of Kleśas with Vṛttis? Should both Kliṣṭa and Akiṣṭa 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 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 tattvavaiśāradī (9th century), śaṅkara’s Vivaraṇa (8th or 13th century), vijñānabhiṣku’s yogavārttika (15th century) and hariharānanda āraṇya’s bhāṣvatī (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 Kliṣṭa and Akiṣṭa 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.

a. Among the numerous commentaries, it is in the work of Vācaspati Miśra that we find, for the first time, the purpose of this classification (Kliṣṭa and Akiṣṭa) being mentioned. In his commentary to PYS 1.5, he says that “a classification (Kliṣṭa Akiṣṭa) that is useful to (the practice of yoga) is presented (by Patañjali) (anirghānopayoginam acāñtaracīsēsam darśṇyati)” (Śaṣṭri, 2007, p. 25). Vācaspati Miśra also proposes the way in which this classification of Vṛttis can be utilized in the practice. He says, “Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are to be restrained by Akiṣṭa Vṛttis and they in turn should be restrained by supreme dispassion” (kliṣṭāṅnām akiṣṭabhāvikāḥ nirodhāḥ tāsām ca pāreṇa vairāgyena iti) (Śaṣṭri, 2007, p. 25).

b. Chronologically after Vācaspati Miśra, Vijñānabhiṣku, another celebrated commentator, states “to clarify that Akiṣṭa Vṛttis should also be restrained like the Kliṣṭa Vṛttis, this classification is presented” (Kliṣṭavādākiṣṭabhiṣyāḥ api heyatvapratipādanāya kliṣṭa-aksiṣṭavābhāgpradātāsanam) (Śaṣṭri, 2007, p. 25). Taking recourse to a reference from Bhāgavata Purāṇa (śaṣṭri, 1999, p.689), he further emphasizes that regardless of the nature of the Vṛttis, they have to be restrained (aksiṣṭa upādāya kliṣṭā nirodhāvāya tā api pāreṇa vairāgyena iti) and so on stated in this context presents a hint to understand the orientation of all practices (such as Kriyā Yoga and Asāṅga 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 Śaṅkara’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” (nātā ca bahu tve sati na śākyā nirodhātmyaś taḥ - pāñcatāyya iti, yadāpi kliṣṭākliṣṭa vṛttāyā vīrtta-yonāntāh tathāpi pāñcatāyāh bhāyaś ca pāñcpaścāyārakaro-vyāpārya-vaivṛttaprayaṇo-devaśāyāt), (pratyaśayaṇa-pāñcāḥdhanāprayaṇa-vaivṛttaprayaṇo-devaśāyanam) (Śaṣṭri & 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 VRITTIS

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-viśeṣa) (Śaṭṭhī, 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 paṇcaddhā vṛttayah) (Śaṭṭhī, 2007, p. 26). Viśṇunābhaḥkiṣu also seems to toe the line of Vyāsa when he says, “be it Kliṣṭa or Akliṣṭa, Vṛttis are of five types” (kliṣṭākliṣṭāḥ vyābhantu, vṛttayaḥ paṇcataayah...eva) (Śaṭṭhī, 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 Klesas or otherwise and hence that is the fundamental characteristic of Vṛttis according to yoga.

DEFINITIONS OF KLIṢṬA AND AKLIṢṬA VRITTIS

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-vṛttī-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 – “kleṣahetukāḥ karmāṣayapracya-keśtriḥbhiḥāḥ” (Śaṭṭhī, 2007, p. 25). The general meaning of this reads as follows “Kliṣṭa Vṛttis as those that are caused by afflictions (Klesas) 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).

Vācaspati Miśra provides two interpretations (Śaṭṭhī, 2007, p. 25) to the term kleṣahetuka (appearing in Vyāsa’s commentary):

a. Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are those that are caused (hetu) by Kleśas such as avidyā and asmitā (kleśāḥ asmitādāyayah, hetavah pravṛttikāraṇam yāsāṃ vṛttinaṃ tāstathihoctāḥ).

b. “Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are the Rājasika and Tāmāsika Vṛttis, of a person who desires to attain (material?) goals of the Purusa (soul), that cause (hetu) Kleśas (yad u paṇurāṭhpadhānasya rajastamomajñānā hi vṛttinām kleshārāte vṛttayaḥ klesāyaiva pravṛttṛḥ)” (Śaṭṭhī, 2007, p. 25). 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 (karmāṣayapracya-keśtriḥbhiḥāḥ) 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 (Pūraṇa) and demerit (Pāpa)” (pramāṇādīna khalvayam pratipatā arhamavāsāya tatra saktaḥ dvīṣṭāḥ v karmāṣayamāniḥ, bhavanti dharmādharma-prasababhumāyaḥ vṛttayaḥ kliṣṭāḥ iti) (Śaṭṭhī, 2007, p. 25).

ii. Viśṇunābhaḥkiṣu presents a contrasting interpretation to Vyāsa’s commentary. Regarding the first term (Klesahetukā), 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 dukkha (pain or misery) thus kleṣahetukā would (simply) mean those (Vṛttis) which take on the form of objects (of sense pleasure) and result in pain.” (trigunaṃkataḥ śravāśāmeva vṛttinaṃ klesavarttave kliṣṭākliṣṭābhāgo napapadyate… klesācātāra mukhya eva grāhyo dukkhaḥkhyāḥ… klesahetukā dukkhahalikā visyākāravṛttayaḥ) (Śaṭṭhī, 2007, p. 25). Viśṇunābhaḥkiṣu’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 “Klesahetuka.” 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” (kleṣahetukāḥ - avidyādīpānaklesapravṛttāt hi cittam vṛttibhiḥ ātmānam punaḥ punaḥ āvedayati) (Saṭṭṭhī & Saṭṭṭhī, 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 Vyāsaḥ śāntyā that is published with Śāṅkara’s subcommentary, the term is split into two as karmāṣayapracya keśtriḥbhiḥ (Saṭṭṭhī & Saṭṭṭhī,
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1952, p. 17). It is explained by Śaṅkara 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” (…karmāyatpyapoca(ye nimitte, avidyādikṣetribhātāḥ kliṣṭāryāḥ ityarthabhāḥ satīsu hi tāsu karmāṣayo vipākāhimbhīkhitvāt) (Sastri & Sastri, 1952, p. 17).

Śaṅkara’s interpretation brings out the twin role of Kleśas in the dual role of Kleśas in the role of Vṛttis and the Guṇas. The association of Guṇas and Kleśa/Akliṣṭa Vṛttis (avidyā, asmitā etc.) or inducers of Kleśas (avidyā, asmitā etc.) by Bhaja and Sadasiva (Śaṅkara, 2007, p. 8, 9) advocate the former idea where most others like Nāgojībhūta and Rāmānanda (Śaṅkara, 2007, p. 8) and Nārāyanatirtha 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 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 (Sattvikas) mind (vidhūtarajastamasah…) (Śaṅkara, 2007, p. 25).

ii. Vijñānabhikṣu presents a different viewpoint. He states that Kliṣṭa Vṛttis are Tāmasika. Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are Sattvikas in nature. In his view, Rājasika Vṛttis are a mixture of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa (tāmasinām sātvikān ca deviāhānāmeva vṛttinām nirodhaḥvyatvamuktaṁ… rājasinām kliṣṭākliṣṭamisārvāvṛttinām) (Śaṅkara, 2007, p. 25).

iii. Bhāvagāneśa mentions a slightly different view from that of Vijñānabhikṣu. He states that Kliṣṭa vṛttis are Tāmasika in nature. Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are both Sattvikas and Rājasikas in nature (kliṣṭāh tāmasyah akliṣṭāh sātvikyo rājasyaśca) (Śaṅkara, 2009, p. 8) (it is to be noted that Bhāvagāneśa is a disciple of Vijñānabhikṣu. Vijñānabhikṣu considers Rājasika Vṛttis as a mix of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis. Taking recourse to this, probably Bhāvagāneśa might have considered a portion of Rājasika Vṛtti to be Akliṣṭa).

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 Sadasiva (Śaṅkara, 2009, p. 8, 9) advocate the former idea where most others like Nāgojībhūta and Rāmānanda (Śaṅkara, 2009, p. 8) and Nārāyanatirtha 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].

It can be observed that all commentators accept Kliṣṭa Vṛttis as Tāmasika and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis as Sattvikas. 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 Śūtra 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 nirodhhavyāḥ) tatastā api pareṇa vairāgyeṇa iti “sattvaṇāyate hanyatā sattvaṇa caiva hi iti smaranāt) (Śaṅkara, 2007, p. 25). This would then clearly amount to equating/associating Sattva to Akliṣṭa and Rājas and Tāmas 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 Tāmasic Vṛttis as Kliṣṭa and Sattvika as Akliṣṭa seems more tenable [Figure 2].
Aklīṣṭa Vṛttis

Aklīṣṭa Vṛttis too are defined by Vyāsa with two compound terms, namely “khyāti-visayāḥ guṇādhikāra-virodhi-hyāḥ” (Śaṭṭī, 2007, p. 25). The general sense of these two would be: Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are those that have khyāti (knowledge of the difference between Puruṣa and Prakṛti) as their content and they oppose the way of the Guṇas.

Vācaspati Miśra 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 Prakṛti 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 Guṇa 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 Akliṣṭa Vṛttis” (vidhātāra-jastamsas buddhisattvasya prāsāntāvāhyāḥ prajñāprāśādaḥ khyātiḥ, taṣā khyātāṇāṃ tattvasāvaya cakramala-kṣaṇaḥ, tetaś cakramala-kṣaṇaḥ atata eva guṇādhikāra-virodhi-hyāḥ, karyārambhānāṃ hi guṇānāmadhi-kāraḥ… guṇānāmadhi-kāraṇa nirūndhantiti atī tāḥ aklīṣṭāḥ) (Śaṭṭī, 2007, p. 25).

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

Relationship between Kliṣṭa and Aklīṣṭa Vṛttis

So far, the purpose and definitions of Kliṣṭa and Aklīṣṭa 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 “Akliṣṭa Vṛttis… occur in the stream of Kliṣṭa Vṛttis. Even in the midst of Kliṣṭa Vṛttis, Akliṣṭa Vṛttis exist. Similarly in the midst of Akliṣṭa Vṛttis, Kliṣṭa Vṛttis exist” (Kliṣṭapraṇavāhirātī aśyakliṣṭāḥ, Kliṣṭačḍihārya-ayukliṣṭā bhavanti, Aklīṣṭačḍihārya kliṣṭā iti) (Śaṭṭī, 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 Kliṣṭa and Aklīṣṭa Vṛttis.

i. Vācaspati Miśra 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 Kliṣṭa Vṛttis will be operative. Further, in the stream of Kliṣṭa Vṛttis, Aklīṣṭa Vṛttis cannot exist. Even if they are present, they will not be able to result in any (Aklīṣṭa) action… and hence it would be wishful thinking, to overcome Kliṣṭa Vṛttis with Aklīṣṭa and further overcome the Aklīṣṭa Vṛtti with higher state of discrimination. To (dispel) this (doubt), Vyāsa has made the (above) statement” (vītārāgajāmnādār-śanāt kṣaṭvārtha eva savya prābhītāḥ, na hi Kliṣṭa-vṛttraprācīhe bhavitumahāvyāktiṣṭārthaḥ, na ca amīṣām bhūcā’pi kāryakāriṣṭaḥ tasmāt kliṣṭānāmakliṣṭābhīḥ nirodhaḥ, tāsām ca vaivāyogeṇa paścāta manorathamātratamitya āha) (Śaṭṭī, 2007, p. 25).

Thus, in essence, Vācaspati Miśra seems to interpret the statement of Vyāsa to mean that Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis will retain their respective identity in each other’s stream. This he, probably, does to establish, the method proposed by him to overcome Kliṣṭa by Akliṣṭa and overcome Akliṣṭa by higher discrimination, in a firm footing. He makes this very explicit when he states that “the dentity (chidā) in the stream of Kliṣṭa 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 Akliṣṭa Vṛttis (retaining their identity) following the process of fruition of the impressions (samskāras) created by them progressively overcome the Kliṣṭa Vṛttis.” (āgaṃānāmnācaryārodayasaparīśāhālābhāyam anī abhyāsasavairāyage Kliṣṭačḍihāram-kliṣṭāntarārtyatitā ca kliṣṭābhirahanabhiḥbhātvā kliṣṭāḥ sva-samskāraparipākākaṃkṣena kliṣṭā eva tāvadabhih-hāvānti) (Śaṭṭī, 2007, p. 26).

ii. Viśiṣṭānabhiṣkṛśu 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 Sattvikā 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 Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are to be subsumed (or should have taken to be mentioned) under those (Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa) that have already been mentioned” (nanci Sūtrakāreṇa tāmasinām Sattvikānām ca devāvidhāhuṇe vṛttinām nirodhaḥcaturvāyataṃkāma na tu rājasinām kliṣṭāKliṣṭaparipāmsarūrtyāntāḥ, nyānatetāsayāntā āha) (Śaṭṭī, 2007, p. 25).

When Vyāsa says that Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis exist in the stream of Vṛttis of opposing nature (without losing their nature), Viśiṣṭānabhiṣkṛśu takes it as a description of Rājasika Vṛttis which is a mixture of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis. To the question regarding the nonmention of Rājasika Vṛttī, Viśiṣṭānabhiṣkṛśu reasons out that the Rājasika Vṛtti (Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa) should have to be taken as included (by the very statement by that mentions “Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis are to be overcome”), as they are a mixture of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis (rājaśāyā māśānyāty amsābhāvyām amsānyāty praveśa iti…) (Śaṭṭī, 2007, p. 26).

iii. Śaṅkara, in his subcommentary, presents yet another insight regarding the relation between Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis stated by Vyāsa. He foresees a violation of the well-established ideas regarding the link between Vṛttis, Samskāra, memory, and activity. It is well known that Vṛttis cause Samskāras. Samskāras at a later point of time give rise to memory, and based on the memory, one acts. Śaṅkara states that “if an Aklīṣṭa Vṛtti which is in a stream...”
of Kliṣṭa Vṛttis becomes Kliṣṭa, (there would be difficulty in) memory (smṛti) confirming to the subliminal impressions of the Vṛttis and activity to that (memory) will not happen, when there is change in one’s nature” (yadi Kliṣṭapraṇāhapatī akliṣṭāḥ kliṣṭāḥ syuh, tadā Vṛttisamskārānyavidhāyini smṛtiḥ, tadanurūpa eva vyavahārak! sa cāpi na siddhyati, svārūpyapañhcāre). Hence, he concludes that Vyāsa had to state that Kliṣṭa or Akliṣṭa Vṛttis, wherever they may be, will not transform into one another (tasmadāha-Kliṣṭa chṛidreṣvāyakliṣṭāḥ akliṣṭa eva bhavanti, Akliṣṭa chṛidreṣvāpi kliṣṭāḥ kliṣṭa eva bhavantि) (Sastri & Sastri, 1952, p. 18).

Vācaspati Miśra’s interpretation of this postulate of Vyāsa seems to be consistent with his initial statement regarding the very purpose of classification of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa 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 Akliṣṭa Vṛttis holding on to their identity even amidst a stream of Kliṣṭa Vṛttis, he seems to reassure the practitioner regarding the firmness of the Akliṣṭa Vṛttis that were cultivated by him by weakening (Kliṣṭa chidra) the Kliṣṭa 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 Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa, 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 Śūtra 2.15) (Śāstri, 2007, p. 182, 183). Going by his own definition of Kleśa (suffering/pain), Rājasika Vṛttis should have been the Kliṣṭa Vṛttis and not a combination of Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa, Rajas being described as the chief cause of suffering/pain and not Tamas.

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

**SUMMARY**

In the introduction, four questions regarding Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis were raised. As evident from the above discussion, the commentaries to the Yoga Śūtras have addressed all the questions and discuss many more aspects which include the nature of the association of Guṇas with the Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis, relationship between the 5-fold classification and the 2-fold classification of Vṛttis, and the relationship between the Kliṣṭa division of the Vṛttis with that of the Akliṣṭa Vṛttis. Attempt has been made in this article to collect and arrange all the views available in the commentaries regarding the Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa 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 Kliṣṭa-Akliṣṭa classification of the Vṛttis to achieve the goals of yoga. This establishes the centrality of Kliṣṭa-Akliṣṭa classification toward Ātma-vṛtti-nirodha. On close scrutiny, it will become evident that all the techniques of Patañjali in the Yoga Śūtras, be it Abhyāsa-vairāgya, Aśā Yoga, or Aṣṭāṅga Yoga, operate on the principles discussed under the Śūtra on Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa 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 Akliṣṭa Vṛttis. Moreover, to subdue even these Akliṣṭa Vṛttis, as has been suggested by Vācaspati Miśra, 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 Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis (in the Ātma)” 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 Kliṣṭa and Akliṣṭa Vṛttis of the Ātma 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.

**Acknowledgment**

The author wishes to acknowledge Sri S. Sridharan and Dr. Latha Satish, Trustees of Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, for encouraging and suggesting valuable inputs in the process of writing and refining this article.

**Financial support and sponsorship**

Nil.
Conflicts of interest
There are no conflicts of interest.

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