

IS "ISHVARA / ISHVARAPRANIDHANA"INDISPENSABLE IN PATANJALA YOGA SADHANA? – A REVISIT

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I. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Patanjala Yoga Sutra (P.Y.S.), a well known Sutra treatise (about 200 BC) in ancient Indian history, deals with deeper understanding of life phenomenon in tune with the essence of yoga and thus it has come to be accepted as parental stalk of yogic wisdom of Ancient Indian Tradition.

We find a popular notion amongst the scholars - both Eastern and Western - that the concept of *Ishvara/Ishvarapranidhana*" has no special importance in P.Y.S. particularly from theoretical point of view mainly because it is supposed to be based on Samkhya and hence accepts the samkhyian theory of evolution wherein no role of Ishvara has been seen. According to these scholars Patanjali has incorporated this concept merely to help those Sadhakas, who are unable to follow of *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* . He has suggested this alternative mean for them to achieve the highest goal of Yoga i.e. "*Svarupavastha*" . They have tried to hold on to their contention, by quoting the SutraI/23 that Patanjali uses the term 'VA' to mean 'OR' and therefore, *Ishvarapranidhana* stands merely as an alternative or a substitute method to *abhyasa* and *vairagya*.

Supporters of this opinion, which includes J.W. Hauer and other modern commentators, have gone to the extent of saying that the Sutras related to *Ishvara* can form an independent section as the contents of these Sutras run contrary to the yoga explained in the other parts of P.Y.S.. They seem to opine that even the removal of these Sutras from this treatise is not going to affect Patanjali's Yoga in any way. Substantiating a similar conclusion, Gasper M. et. al. say "We could very well cut out the Sutras relating to the Lord, without in any way impairing the systematic coherence of the Patanjala Yoga, without even leaving a trace of the excision".

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The author of this paper, as for an impartial inquiry, submits that as Patanjali Yoga Sutra is a single treatise consisting of four chapters authored by Patanjali , how can we overlook the Sutras relating to *Ishvarapranidhana* in the Sadhanapada which, Patanjali indicates, is an indispensable mean for attaining "*Samadhibhavana*" (i.e. to develop an inner ambience of Samadhi) as a part of *Kriyayoga* and for the "*Samadhisiddhi*:" (i.e. perfection in Samadhi) as a part of *Ashtangayoga* .

Moreover, according to Patanjali , the attainment of Samadhi is indispensable for the attainment of *SVARUPAVASTHA* i.e. Kaivalya , the ultimate goal of Yogasadhana and this Samadhi is obtainable through *Ishvarapranidhana* . Thus, *Ishvarapranidhana* seems to be indispensable for Yogasadhana even according to Patanjali.

Now the question arises, if the term "VA" in Sutra1/23 is interpreted to indicate "or" / alternative method of yogasadhana, as has commonly been done so far, why at all Patanjali has included *Ishvarapranidhana* as an essentially integral component of both *kriyayoga* and *Ashtangayoga* sadhanas. Perhaps, there could be a mistake either on the part of Patanjali or on the part of these interpretations.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to show the 'indispensability' of *Ishvara* or *Ishvarapranidhana* so that due justice can be made to *sadhana* aspect of Patanjali .

I. A. MATERIAL :

- (a). The Sutras related to *Ishvara /Ishvarapranidhana* and other relevant Sutras in P.Y.S.(App.1)
- (b). Sanskrit and Modern commentaries on Sutras (I A. (a)) and other relevant work on P.Y.S. (App. II & III)

I. B. METHOD :

A. TWO FOLD ANALYTICAL APPROACH.

- (a). Metaphysical reflections as found in Sutraas stated in I (a) & (b)
- (b). Linguistic usage of the term "VA" in Sanskrit Literature.

II. DISCUSSION ON I. B. (a) (METAPHYSICAL REFLECTIONS) :

As for Metaphysical reflections in P.Y.S. - let us first understand the nature and status of *Ishvara* in P.Y.S. Patanjali defines *Ishvara* as '*Klesha-karma-*

vipakasayairaparamrstah Purusavisesaa Ishvarah (I/24) i.e. *Ishvara* is a "**Special Purusa**" who is untouched by the *Klesha* (afflictions)' *karma* (action), *vipaka* (i.e. the result of karma) and *asaya* (i.e. impressions produced by these karmas). Here a question arises, as basically according to this Philosophy Purusas remain free from all the above mentioned attributes then how does Patanjali differentiates *Ishvara* from other Purusas? By way of answer we may say that though these attributes (*Kleshas karma* etc.) exist in citta they are attributed to Purusa and thereby Purusa is said to be the seer or experiencer of all activities of citta, just as a victory or defeat though depends upon the fighter (soldiers) but, in a way, attributed to the king only. The *Ishvara* however remains untouched by the said experience and therefore said to be the "**Special Purusa**". Patanjali has made this point very clear by defining the nature of *drasta* (Purusa) in second chapter wherein he says "*drasta drsimatrah suddho' pi pratyayanupasyaj'* (II/20) i.e. the seer is merely a power of consciousness alone, though pure, he witnesses the modifications of *citta* and therefore, does not remain bound by the limitations of *citta*. This is the basic idea underlying in the philosophy of Yoga with regard to the bondage of Purusa and if we do not accept it there will be no room for the credibility of the concepts of **bondage** as well as the **liberation**.

Again, a question may arise as to if there are many liberated *Purusas*, who have attained liberation - remain unaffected by these attributes - what is then the difference between *Ishvara* and liberated *Purusas* ? To answer, we may say that liberated *Purusas*, before attaining the final liberation, were under the grip of these attributes whereas *Ishvara* at all time liberated and was never in the grip of these attributes and therefore, said to be the "**Special Purusa**". Furthermore, Patanjali gives the other characteristics of *Ishvara* as "**Special Purusa**" by the Sutra- "*tatra niratisayam sarvijnabijam*" (I/25) i.e. in Him there is unexcelled seed of omniscience - its the highest stage reached in Him which cannot be surpassed by any other entity conceptual or existential. Patanjali seems to give another Sutra to prove his contention "*Purvesamapiguruh kalenanavacchedat* " (I/26) i.e. *Ishvara* remains unconditioned by time and due to the seed of omniscience said to be the teacher of all ancient teachers. Thus, he is the "**Special Purusa**" Who is the source of All Knowledge. In subsequent Sutrahe clearly mentions - "*tasya vacakah pranavah*" (I/27) i.e. His designation is OM. Here in this Sutra Patanjali uses the term 'tasya' in singular form which shows the

intention of Patanjali that he wants to establish the *Ishvara* as one single Purusa who cannot be compared with other Purusas, whether bounded or liberated.

On the basis of the above discussion on Sutras depicting *Ishvara* it becomes clear that Patanjali accepts *Ishvara* as a beginningless (Primordial) element entirely different from that of other two elements "*drasta* and *drusya*" and hence does not seem to follow, in toto, the Samkhyan metaphysics which has accepted only two fundamental elements. *Purusa* and *Prakriti*. We may say that Patanjali has followed dualistic view of Samkhya by accepting **Conscious** and **Inert** principles yet by accepting the concept of *Ishvara* he seems to support the theory of Three Primordial Principles. The very acceptance of *Ishvara* as the primordial element by Patanjali is an indication of its paramount importance in P.Y.S..

Now let us ponder over the point - if Patanjali propounded the view that *Ishvarapranidhana* is merely an alternative method of practice for the accomplishment of the Yogic goal, then what could be the propriety of *Ishvara* being mentioned as an independent and third element? Yoga Sutra discusses variety of means / yogic practices but none of them have been accepted as independent reality and therefore, accepting *Ishvara* as a separate and primordial element leads one to think that Patanjali seems to accept, in some way or other, the role of *Ishvara* in the evolutionary process just as the role of other two elements is seen in the creation.

Another argument to strengthen the role of *Ishvara* in the evolution process is as follows -

Patanjali uses the terms seer and seen (*drasta and drusya*) in place of *Prakriti* and *Purusa* (*drasta drusya samyoga* II/17). *drasta* has already been explained and *drusya* stands for manifested objects of the world (II/18). It seems that here Patanjali wants to make it clear that manifested world is the functional place of *drasta* (Purusa). It has nothing to do with the equilibrium state of Alinga i.e. Prakriti. In such case, how can *drasta* (Purusa) be the cause of disturbance in the equilibrium of Alinga? If we accept this *drasta* (Purusa) to be the cause of disturbance then the concepts like pleasure and pain or bondage - liberation cannot be explained. Therefore, logically it seems to be acceptable that the root cause of disturbance in *Alinga* should be "*Purusavisesa*" i.e. *Ishvara* .

This view can be substantiated with the help of the definition of *Ishvara* given by Patanjali. If Patanjali would not have intended to accept the role of *Ishvara* in evolution, *Ishvara* would not have been defined as ever untouched by *Klesa* etc. because that who is ever liberated for such element statement like "ever free from *Klesa*" etc. seems no relevance. Therefore, it seems that *Ishvara* though disturbs the equilibrium of *Alinga*, yet Himself remains untouched by the attributes of *Prakriti* because of His unsurpassed knowledge. Thus Patanjali seems to accept the role of *Ishvara* in the process of evolution.

Here the commentators, who reject the role of *Ishvara* in evolution, can raise a question that if we accept *Ishvara* as a creator, then there will be a problem in accepting *Ishvara* as "perfect-being" if at all He has desire to create. Because desire means imperfection and *Ishvara* will be a slave of His desire and therefore, *Ishvara* will not be accepted as is described by Patanjali. To avoid this discrepancy, we can take the help of various Sanskrit commentators e.g. **Vyasa**, the first commentator of Patanjali, says "though there is an absence of self gratification in Him, and therefore, "kindness towards other being" is the purpose (of creation)" (Vyasa Bhasya on 1/25).

Vacaspati Misra supports this view of **Vyasa** and accepts the role of *Ishvara* in creation as an impelling cause (**Prayojaka**). He says that "Transformation from one body to another is due to *prakrityapura* i.e. by the "filling in process" in which merits (and demerits) are the causes. But they are not impelling causes. For surely when the potter is not there, the jar cannot impel itself the clay, wheel, water and so on for its own production. But they are impelled by a potter who is independent of them. In the creation that independent could be *Ishvara* who sets all in motion" (T.V. on Sutras 1/25 & IV/3).

Vijnanabhikshu accepts that "The disturbance which causes dissimilarity in *prakṛti* is due only to the desire of *Ishvara* and because of creating disturbance in the equilibrium of Prakriti *Ishvara* should be accepted as "UDBODHAKA" i.e. Awakener) or Stimulator (Y.V. on 1/24 & IV/3).

Bhoja clearly says that *Ishvara* is the cause of creation and dissolution which according to him should not be doubted because there is no selfish motive in *Ishvara*. Whose motive lies in compassion for other Purusas" (Bhoja Vrtti on 1/15).

Here, we have seen that in order to solve the problem of First Push or disturbance in Prakriti these commentators have accepted *Ishvara* as an impeller (**Prayojaka**) of *Prakriti*. Das Gupta also raises many questions on this evolution theory and says "how the blind tendency of the non-intelligent Prakriti can bring forth the order and harmony of the universe?..... there must be some intelligent Being who should help in course of evolution in such a way that this system of order and harmony be attained. **"This Being is Ishvara"** (His of Indian Philosophy Vol. 11, pp258-259).

Perhaps due to these reasons, Patanjali might have accepted *Ishvara* as an omniscient, omnipresent and as an entirely different element which can be accepted as an impeller of prakriti and thereby the contention of those commentators, who have not given any importance to Ishvara and have not accepted any role of Ishvara in the process of evolution stands refuted.

III. Discussion on I. B. (b). (Linguistic usage of the term "VA" in Sanskrit).

Now if *Ishvara* is so important in P.Y.S. then how His *Pranidhana* be an alternative or an optional method to Patanjala Yogasadhana ? as is understood so far by the commentators. If we accept the view of those commentators then the status given to *Ishvara* by Patanjali himself as the primordial element will become redundant. More than that Patanjali has accepted *Ishvarapranidhana* as an essential, integral component in the group of other Yogic practices, if the interpretations of the commentators are accepted then *Ishvarapranidhana* in those places will also be reduced to "uselessness". Therefore, it seems that the term "VA" used in I/23 should not denote only "OR" / ALTERNATIVE but must have some different import. Thus there is need to go through the Sanskrit Literature to find out the different meaning of the term "VA".

In Sanskrit the term "VĒ" is an *avyaya* which is used for different meanings such as - alternative (*vikalpa*), likeness (*sadrisya*), filling the gap of the meter of the poem (*padapurana*) and conjunctive (*samuccaya* i.e. when used in group). These meanings are decided according to the context.

Now let us give a thought to the context of Patanjali, we find that in P.Y.S. Patanjali uses the term "VĒ" in I/23 and includes this practice in *Kriyayoga* as well as in *Ashtangayoga* (under *Niyamas*) as an integral part of other components. Thus, it

seems to stand for "*Samuccaya*" and should not be taken in the sense of *vikalpa*. Another point to support this view is that the term "VĒ" in the sense of *samuccaya* (conjunctive) is used when writer wants to give emphasis to his statement or when he wants to prove the indispensability of his statement e.g. in "*kiratarjuniam*" - *suta na yuyam kimu tasya rajnah suyodhanan va gunairatitah*" (III/13).

In this statement author has emphasized that "You are the sons of that king and (VA i.e. also)

extraordinary than that of suyodhana", Here the term "VA" came to be accepted in the sense of "*samucaya*" i.e. CONJUNCTIVE, Similarly, Patanjali has emphasized by adding the term "VA" in the sense of "*samuccaya*" that if this practice is not taken to be an essential part of other practices described in P.Y.S. then the final goal set forth by Patanjali , will become unattainable. Probably, this could be the idea which has motivated Patanjali to frame the Sutra "*samadhi siddhisavarapranidhanat*" (11/45) i.e. as a result of devotion to *Ishvara* there is a perfection in Samadhi . Otherwise Patanjali might have used the term "VA" herein also to make *Ishvara pranidhana* , an alternative method. Therefore, it can be said that the term "VĒ" used in I/23 gives the sense of *samuccaya* and not of *vikalpa*.

Now let us examine the view points of the commentators who have interpreted the term "VĒ" as alternative and considered *Ishvarapranidhana* as an easy optional method in comparison to *Abhyasa* and *vairagya*. However, while commenting on Sutras (I/12 and 14) where Patanjali does not indicate any particular method for *Abhyasa* , all have accepted only those practices for Abhyasa where *Ishvarapranidhana* is one of the integral parts e.g. *Vyasa*, while commenting on Sutra(I/14), has accepted *tapas*, *brahmacharya* and *shraddha* etc. for Abhyasa which are integral parts of *Kriyayoga* and *Ashtangayoga* in which *Ishvarapranidhana* is an essential component.

Vacaspati and other modern commentators consider Ashtangayoga as the best practice for Abhyasa. (Com. on P.Y.S. I/12, 14).

Vijnanabhikshu and his followers accept *shraddhavirya* etc. under SutraI/20 for Abhyasa Furthermore he himself comments on the Sutras (I/20 and II/29) that *shraddhavirya* etc. are well integrated under *Ashtangayoga* in which *Ishvarapranidhana* is an integral part.

On the basis of the statements mentioned above we can say that though these commentators have chosen to interpret the term "VA" as *vikalpa* and thereby they have stated *Ishvarapranidhana* as an optional method of *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* but indirectly contradicting their own views have accepted *Ishvarapranidhana* as an essential and integral part of Sadhana.

Georg Feuerstein is the only modern commentator who does not accept *Ishvarapranidhana* as an optional method to *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* and clearly mentions that "J.W. Hauer has mistaken in taking the practice of devotion to the Lord as an alternative discipline to *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* (see I/12). It is at best an alternative to five factors mentioned in SutraI/20. Probably, however, the word "VA" has to be understood in the sense of "**or more specifically**" which makes *Ishvarapranidhana* a particular instance of the category of Abhyasa" (P-42). Here, Feuerstein wants to make a point that a group of practices mentioned in Sutra "*shraddhaviryasmriti*" etc. can be understood **more specifically as *Ishvarapranidhana*** thereby he has tried to understand the contention of Patanjali on this point and has *Ishvarapranidhana* accepted the importance of *Ishvarapranidhana* in this treatise.

Further Feuerstein has advocated *Ishvara* as an "**archetypal model**" and thereby has made an appreciable effort towards understanding the import of Patanjali's Sutras. But by leaving the selection on the choice of an individual Sadhaka he has made his argument a little weak. Because the goal of Yoga is to attain "*svavarupavastha*" and an ideal should be such which is ever free and always remain in its own form and such an ideal can never be other than *Ishvara* in P.Y.S. The selection of an ideal may depend on the choice of Sadhaka for the sake of worldly gains. But the goal set forth by Patanjali - "*svanupavastha*" cannot be attained if *Ishvara* is not accepted as an "IDEAL". Perhaps, this could be the reason Patanjali has brought in the concept of "*prakritilina*" yogis in P.Y.S. in order to caution the Sadhakas. (1/19)

Sadhakas have also been reminded of **vibhutis** being obstacles in the path of Samadhi (111/37) and therefore, it can be deducted that Patanjali wanted to caution the Sadhakas in accepting such yogis as an ideal who have attained vibhutis. Sadhaka may take the help of such yogis for the sake of concentration during the disturbed state of mind for which Patanjali himself suggests various alternative means in the context of

cittaprasadana. (1/33-39) If the goal is not clear there is a fear of getting distracted from the right path.

Considering all these points in mind it seems that Patanjali might have brought in the concept of *Ishvarapranidhana* in Kriyayoga as the very first Sutra of his Sadhanapada. Here, Patanjali uses the term *Kriyayoga* in singular form just to emphasize that these three (*tapas-svadyaya* and *Ishvara pranidhana*) components of Kriyayoga have got equal importance and have to be mutually supportive to get the desired end. Therefore, it can be said that the practice of *tapas* in the form of Pranayama alongwith the *svadyaya* of holy *mantras* leads one to develop the surrendering attitude towards the ideal Purusa i.e. *Ishvarapranidhana*. Once this attitude is built within oneself then Sadhaka becomes capable of understanding the hidden meaning of *Japa* i.e. the recitation of mantra and contemplation on its meaning which has been made clear by Patanjali in the Sutra "*tajjapastadarthabhavanam*" (I/28). By getting mastery over its application Sadhaka gets the direct perception of his Innerself i.e. "*tatah pratyakcetanadhigamo..*" (I/29) and therefore, *Ishvara* stands appropriate **IDEAL** for Patanjala Yoga Sadhana.

Furthermore, in Ashtangayoga *Ishvarapranidhana* is mentioned as one of the five *niyamas* which are the binding rules and are to be followed regularly without any exception whatever the situation may be. This shows the intention of Patanjali that alongwith other practices *Ishvarapranidhana* has to be followed without which Patanjali's Sadhana could not be thought of.

On the basis of the above discussion author of this paper wants to make a point that *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* are in built in *Ishvarapranidhana* because the term *Pranidhana* itself stands for "**great effort**" i.e. *Abhyasa* and the nature of *Ishvara* as described by Patanjali is the best example of "**highest vairagya**" and therefore , *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* cannot be the alternative to *Ishvarapranidhana* and the term "**VA**" used in Sutra I/23 should be understood in the sense of "*samuccaya*" and not for *vikalpa*.

Thus, the opinions of those commentators of P.Y.S. are completely refuted who have suggested to cut out the Sutras related to *Ishvara* or *Ishvarapranidhana* considering them as irrelevant.

Regarding those commentators and scholars, who have propounded *Ishvarapranidhana* as an alternative method of Yogasadhana of Patanjali it can be said that they might have been influenced by atheist Samkhya n thought.

Moreover, the concept of *Ishvara* as discussed in Yoga Sutra is no less an important concept from theoretical point of view since Ishvara has been defined as **omniscient, omnipresent** and **impeller** of creation. It is popularly said that Patanjali's yoga is a dualistic philosophy which accepts "INERT" and "CONSCIOUS" principles but by accepting the concept of *Ishvara* , under the conscious principle, entirely different than that of other Purusas, it can be said that Patanjali seems to be the supporter of Vedic Tradition of Trinity.

IV. CONCLUSION :

On the basis of both the parameters, discussed above, it can be concluded that *Ishvarapranidhana* in P.Y.S. is not only essential but remains an integral part of Patanjala Yoga Sadhana. There is no discrepancy in the Sutras of Patanjali whatsoever it seems that the commentators have misunderstood, in their interpretations, the term "VA". This verily can be the root cause of all misunderstandings about the Sutras related to *Ishvara*, as the goal that has been set forth by Patanjali does not seem to be possible without an ideal i.e. *Ishvara* and without His *Pranidhana* i.e. *Ishvarapranidhana*. In order to justify Patanjali's SutraI/23, the term "VA" should be interpreted as **conjunctive** alongwith and not as an **alternative**. Only then the essence of Yoga Sutra with respect to *Ishvara* or *Ishvarapranidhana* can be best understood in right perspectives. In short, *Ishvara* or *Ishvarapranidhana* stands **indispensable** in Patanjala Yoga Sutra .

APPENDIX - I

SUTRAS related to "ISHVARA OR ISHVARAPRANIDHANA" in P.Y.S

Ishvara pranidhana dva (1/23)

i.e. or (?) from devotion to the supreme lord.

Klesa karma vipakashayairaparamristah Purusavishesa Ishvarah (1/24)

i.e. Ishvara is a "Special Purusa" who is untouched by the afflictions (Klesha), action (karma), the result of action (vipaka) and the impressions produced by these karma (ashaya).

Tatra niratishayam sarvajnabijam (1/25)

i.e. In him there is unexcelled seed of Omniscience.

Purveshamapi guruh kalenanavacchedat (1/26)

i.e. (Ishvara) is the greatest (teacher) of even the earliest great ones, because unconditioned by time.

taysa vacakahpranavah (1/27)

i.e. The syllable Om is His indicator.

Tajjapastadartha bhavanam (1/28)

i.e. (there should *be*) repetition of that (Name) and reflection on what is signified by it.

tapah svadhyayeshvarapranidhanani Kriyayogah (II/1)

i.e. austerities, self study (or study of holy scriptures) and devotion to Ishvara (comprise) Kriyayoga (in the form of action).

Samadhibhavanarthah (II/2)

i.e. to develop an inner ambiance of Samadhi .

Shaucasantosa tapah svadhyayeshvarapranidhana ni niyamah.(II/32)

i.e. Cleanliness, Contentment, Austerity, Study and Devotion to Ishvara - are the observances.

SamadhisiddhirIshvara pranidhanat (II/45)

i.e. As a result of devotion to Ishvara (there is a) perfection in Samadhi .

Appendix -II

"tasyatmanugrahabhavepi bhutanugraha prajoyanam," (Vyasa . Bhasya 1/25)

*"nityatriptasya bhagavato vairagyatishayasampannasya svarthe trishnasambhavat
praninamanugraha prajoyanam. (Tattva. Vaisaradi 1/25)*

*"..... dharmadayo nimittam na tu prajoyakah tesamapi prakritikaryatvat
na ca karyam karanam prajoyayati svatantryasya ca prajoyakatvat na ca*

Purusarthopi pravartakah kintu taduddesheneshvarah (Tattva. Vaisaradi. 1V/3)

"prakritervaisamyahetuh ksobhopishvarecchat eva." (Yoga Varttika 1/24)

*"Ishvarastu samyaparinamadirupakhilakaranabhangenodbodhakah" (Yoga Varttika
1V/3)*

tasya svaprajoyanabhava katham prakriti Purusayoh

samyogaviyogavapadayatiti na sa kaniyam,

tasya karinikatvad bhutanugraha eva prajoyanam " (Bhoja Vrtti 1/25)

Das Gupta says -

"How the blind tendency of this non-intelligent prakriti can bring forth the order and harmony of the universe ? How can it determine what course of evolution will be of the best service to Purusa? How can it remove its own barriers and lend itself to the evolutionary process from the state of prakriti equilibrium? How too can this blind tendency so regulate in evolutionary order that all men must suffer pains according to their bad karmas and happiness according to their good ones. There must be some intelligent being who should help the course of evolution in such a way that this system of order and harmony be attained. This Being is Ishvara ."

(**History of Indian Philosophy Vol.II ; pp 258-9**)

Appendix-III.

Vyasa:

Satkarasevito.....

tapasa Brahmacharyena Vidyaya shraddhaya ca sampadita (Vyasa bh 1/14)

Vacaspati :

Abhyasa Vairagya shraddhavirya dayopi yatha yogametesveva svarupato

antarbhavayitavyah (Tattva Vaisaradi (T.V.)(II/29)

"....sthiti sadhananyantaranga bahirangani yamaniyamadini (T .V. 1/12)

Vijuanabhiksu:

*"shraddhavirya smriti samadhi prajadinam vaksyamanani
sadhanana manusthanamabhyasah"* (Yoga Varttika 1/12)

Tatra vairagyasya santose pravesah,

shraddhadinam ca tapa adisu

parikarmanam ca dharanadi trik iti (Yoga Varttika II/29)

Modern Commentators:

Almost all the modern commentators accept Ashtangayoga for Abhyasa .
(comm. on I / 12 ,14)