

The first Sūtra also acts as a key for the memory to link all the Yoga...

अथ

अथ योगानुशासनम् ॥१॥

atha yoga-anu-śāsanam

"Now follow the teachings of Yoga."

"Atha – Now in the sense of nowness.

By convention let there be something auspicious.

The Sūtra are different in the sense of not having a prayer dedication in the first Sūtra.

Thus Atha fills this role.

Particularly the letter 'A' which is a dedication.

"Of sounds I am the first letter A."

Bhagavad Gītā Chapter Ten verse 33

Now I am going to tell you something about Yoga.

A serious discussion as you, the students, are ready.

This also refers to the student's previous attempts at learning, which will now be clarified.

A student might have tried to study problems of the mind
to try to bring an understanding of equilibrium.

The teacher says 'now I will teach you'.

The first Sūtra also acts as a key for the memory to link all the Yoga Sūtra.

So no confusion with the Brahma Sūtra, etc.

Anu-Śāsanam – Śāsanam text of authority.

Thus it was in the past and is continuous and will be there in the future.

It is not new and will always be valid.

No reference is made to it being an inquiry into Yoga.

On the contrary it is given as an absolute teaching.

Emphasis is given to the use and choice of words.

They are placed and given in context very carefully.

Thus the meaning is very clear.

However the Sūtra require a great teacher to explain and give comments.

This presumes a great knowledge of Saṃskṛta as well.

The beauty of the Sūtra is that they are only related to the mind.

Thus they stand above various religions

and can be studied and related to by all types of persons from all types of religions."

– TKV Desikachar commentary on Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 1