

## “*Tat Tvam Asi*” in Context

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Among other things, familiarity breeds acceptance. The traditional translations of the famous *tat tvam asi* refrain of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.8–16 are so familiar that it is easy not to notice that they obscure the syntactic peculiarity of the passage. The refrain runs *sa ya eṣo ’ṇimaitadātmyam idaṃ sarvaṃ tat satyaṃ sa ātmā tat tvam asi śvetaketu iti*. HUME’s translation<sup>1</sup> is typical: “That which is the finest essence — this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality (*satya*). That is Ātman (Soul). That art thou, Śvetaketu.” This translation suggests that the *eta-* and *ta-* pronouns all have the same antecedent, namely, the “finest essence” (*aṇiman-*). In the final phrase, however, *tad* is neuter; while both *aṇiman-* and *tvam* are not. If the meaning were “you are that (finest essence),” then we would expect not *tat tvam asi* but *sa tvam asi*. The *ta-* pronoun ought to be masculine, not neuter. The problem, then, is to explain this *tad* and with it the meaning of the refrain.

Before coming to that final *tat tvam asi*, let me begin by commenting on the other parts of the refrain. The second phrase should be read *etadātmyam*<sup>2</sup> *idaṃ sarvaṃ*, not *aitadātmyam* with the commentaries<sup>3</sup> nor *etadātmakam* as BÖHTLINGK<sup>4</sup> emends. The hypothetical *aitadātmyam* is stylistically appropriate to the commentators’ language, which regularly employs such nominal abstraction. It does not fit the style of the early

<sup>1</sup> R. E. HUME: *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. 2nd ed. Oxford 1931; rpt. Madras 1949, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Correctly, J. S. SPEIJER: *Sanskrit Syntax*. [SS]. Leiden 1886; rpt. Delhi 1973, p. 18 n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the commentary ascribed to Śaṅkara (hereafter ChUBh), the *Mitākṣarāvvykhyā* of Nityānanda, who follows the *Śaṅkara-Bhāṣya*, and the *Ānandatīrtha* of Madhva, all on ChU 6.8.7.

<sup>4</sup> OTTO BÖHTLINGK [ed. and trans.]: *Khāndogyopanishad*. St. Petersburg 1889. The emendation was accepted by ÉMILE SENART [ed. and trans.]: *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*. Paris 1930.

*Upaniṣads* and makes both the interpretation and translation difficult.<sup>5</sup> The reading *etadātmyam* follows the type of *etaddevatyā-*: cf. MS. 1.4.6 (54: 4-5) *eté vái devā áhutādo yád brāhmaṇā etaddevatyā eṣá yáḥ purān-ijānaḥ* "These are the gods who do not eat the oblations: the brahmins. He has these as his divinity (*etaddevatyāḥ*) who has never sacrificed previously," and TB 3.9.17.3 *raudrāṃ carūṃ nīrvapet, yádi mahatī devātā-bhimānyeta. etaddevatyò vā ásvaḥ, sváyaiváinaṃ devátayā bhiṣajyati. agadó haivá bhavati* "He should offer a *caru* to Rudra, if the great divinity should threaten (his cattle). The horse has this (god) (*etaddevatyāḥ*) as its divinity; (therefore) it is by his very own divinity that he heals him. He becomes free of disease." In the ChU, *etad-* refers unproblematically to the preceding *aṇiman-*, in the same way that it refers to the *brāhmaṇāḥ* in the MS and to Rudra in the TB.

The next two phrases present no real difficulty either. In *sa ātmā*, the pronoun most naturally refers to *aṇiman-* again. There is, in fact, nothing else in the passage itself for it to refer to and no reason for it to refer to anything outside. Likewise in *tat satyam*, again the antecedent of *tad* is *aṇiman-*. The pronoun is neuter according to the rule in Vedic prose that a demonstrative agrees in number and gender with a predicate nominative, subject nominative, or appositive.<sup>6</sup>

Because this rule of agreement is essential to the correct interpretation of the *tat tvam asi* phrase and because translators do not always pay sufficient attention to it, let us examine some examples of its operation. A good illustration of the rule and the necessity of observing it is JB 3.326 *tasyai . . . akṣare upodasarpatām saivaiṣānuṣṭub abhavat* "From her [*Vāc*] there developed two syllables; they became this Anuṣṭubh." Here *sā* refers to *akṣare* (neuter dual), but agrees with *anuṣṭubh-* (feminine singular). *Sā . . . anuṣṭub abhavat* does not mean "that Anuṣṭubh came to be," but rather that those two syllables, which came from Speech, these became the Anuṣṭubh.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> A case in point is FRANKLIN EDGERTON's translation in his *The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy*. Cambridge, MA 1965, pp. 175 et passim. He loyally follows this reading: "A state-of-having-that-as-its-nature is this universe . . ." That is, in fact, just what the ChUBh says *aitadātmyam idaṃ sarvam* means (see below), and this translation shows that this reading does not yield particularly good sense.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. LOUIS RENO: *Grammaire sanscrite*. Paris 1961, 369, p. 500; B. DELBRÜCK: *Altindische Syntax [AS]*. Halle a.d.S. 1881; rpt. Darmstadt 1968, § 279, p. 565; SPEIJER: *SS* § 27.1, p. 18; J. S. SPEIJER: *Vedische und Sanskrit-Syntax*. Strassburg 1896, § 95b, p. 30; INGBORG ICKLER: *Untersuchungen zur Wortstellung und Syntax der Chāndoggyopaniṣad*. Göttingen 1973, pp. 4ff.

<sup>7</sup> Note also that *ta-* is not normally adjectival, in contrast to *eta-*, which normally is. Cf. ICKLER, pp. 10f.

The rule applies commonly when a relative clause marks the subject of an identification. That subject is then resumed by the *ta-* pronoun, which agrees with the predicate nominative. Cf. AiB 3.34.2 *yāni pari-kṣānāny āsaṃs te kṛṣṇāḥ paśavo 'bhavan* "What were the cinders, they became the black animals." The construction is similar in JB 3.126 *tad yat tad yajñasya śiro 'chidyateti so 'sāv ādityaḥ* "Now regarding which it is said that this head of the sacrifice was cut off, this was yonder sun." Or again, *ta-* may refer to a proleptic phrase, as in AiB 4.17.6 *prāyavīyo 'tirātraś caturviṃśa ukthyaḥ sarve 'bhīplavāḥ ṣaḍahā ākṣyantya anyāny ahāni tad ādityānām ayanam* "The introductory Atirātra, the Caturviṃśa Ukthya, all the Abhiplava Ṣaḍahas, and the other Ākṣyant days — such is the way of the Ādityas." Here *tad* refers to the various rites which constitute the way of the Ādityas. Finally, the same agreement occurs when *ta-* is in apposition. Consider ŚB 2.5.1.18 *pravā upasāṃnaddhā bhavanti tāṃ prastarāṃ gṛhṇāti prajānanam u hīdāṃ prajānanam u hī pravās tāsmāt prasūḥ prastarāṃ gṛhṇāti* "Shoots are tied (to the bunches of *barhis*). These he takes as the *prastara*, for this is productive and the shoots are productive. Therefore he takes flowering shoots as the *prastara*." The final phrase makes clear that *tam* refers to the shoots. It is not a deictic pronominal adjective modifying *prastara*.<sup>8</sup>

This rule of Vedic prose is amply illustrated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* itself. An excellent example is ChU 6.10.1 *tāḥ [nadyaḥ] samudrāt samudram evāpiyanti. sa samudra eva bhavati. tā yathā tatra na vidur* "These rivers flow from the sea and into the sea. They become just the sea. Just as these do not there know . . ." As ICKLER (p. 4) correctly argues, the *ta-* pronouns all refer to the rivers. In the second phrase, *sa* is masculine in agreement with *samudra-*, not feminine plural in agreement with the rivers, but it does refer to the rivers and must be translated as such.<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere, the *ta-* pronoun resumes a proleptic phrase, as in ChU 4.3.8 *te vā ete pañcānye pañcānye daśa santas tat kṛtam* "These — these five ones and five other ones, making ten — they are the *kṛta*" and in ChU 2.21.1 *traya ime lokāḥ sa prastāvāḥ. agnir vāyur ādityaḥ sa udgīthaḥ nakṣatrāṇi vayāṃsi marīcayāḥ sa pratihārah. sarpā gandharvāḥ pitaras tan nidhanam* "The three worlds here, these are the Prastāva; Agni, Vāyu, and the Sun, these are the Udgītha; the lunar mansions,

<sup>8</sup> Correctly interpreted in J. EGGELING [trans.]: *The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. Vol. 1. Oxford 1881, p. 389.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. also ChU 3.19.1, cited and explained by ICKLER, p. 5, *tad āṇḍam niravarata . . . tan nirabhidyata. te āṇḍakapāle rajataṃ ca suvarṇam cābhavatām* "It [= this world] evolved into an egg. It split apart. From it came two egg shell (halves), one silver, one gold." Similar too is ChU 3.5.4.

birds, and light rays, these are the Pratihāra; serpents, Gandharvas, and the Fathers, these are the Nidhana.”<sup>10</sup> In a similar construction, the *ta*-pronoun resumes not a proleptic phrase or series but a whole discussion. ChU 7.4, for example, explains the nature of “intention” (*saṃkalpa-*). The teacher first shows that ritual (*karman-*), *mantra*, name, speech, and mind (*manas-*) all have their basis in intention. So also, heaven and earth, wind and space, water and heat are all “formed” (*saṃkḷp*), and from them arise, rain, food, the vital breaths (*prāṇa-*), *mantras*, rites, the world, everything. The passage then concludes: *sa eṣa saṃkalpaḥ* “such is intention.” Here *sa* refers to the entire description of *saṃkalpa-* and *saṃkḷp*.<sup>11</sup> Were it not in such an identification, the *ta*-pronoun would be neuter. Here, however, the rule of agreement again dictates its gender.

The type of identification mentioned above in which the subject expressed in a relative clause is resumed by a *ta*-pronoun is also frequent in the ChU. Cf. ChU 7.23.1 *yo vai bhūmā tat sukham* “What is fullness, that is happiness;” ChU 1.3.3 *yo vyānaḥ sā vāk* “What is the diffuse breath, that is speech” (so also 1.3.4); and ChU 3.19.2 *tad yad rajataṃ seyaṃ pṛthivī* “That which was the silver (half), that was the earth.”<sup>12</sup> This rule likewise holds true when the *ta*-pronoun refers not to a specific item but to the content of a subordinate clause, as in ChU 7.24.1 *yatra nānyat paśyati nānyac chr̥ṇoti nānyad vijānāti sa bhūmā*

<sup>10</sup> Cf. also ChU 2.3 and 2.4.

<sup>11</sup> It is characteristic of *ta-*, for it is an anaphoric pronoun, to resume something stated previously. It does not anticipate or signify a wholly new item. Cf. especially DELBRÜCK: *AS* § 139, p. 214. Bearing this in mind, we can clarify another passage which illustrates the rule of agreement. This passage is ChU 3.1.1, 2 *asau vā ādityo devamadhu . . . tasya ye prāñco raśmayas tā evāsya prācyo madhunādyah. ṛca eva madhukṛtaḥ. ṛveda eva puṣpam. tā amṛtā āpaḥ* (cf. 3.2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1). The first part translates without difficulty: “The honey of the gods is yonder sun. What are the eastern rays of this (sun), these are the eastern honey cells of this (honey). The *ṛks* are the bees. The *Rgveda* is the blossom.” HUME (p. 203) understands the last phrase as anticipatory: “The drops of the nectar fluid [arose as follows],” but the *ta*-pronoun should refer to something preceding, not following. The *amṛtā āpaḥ* are liquids in several different categories corresponding to the different levels of metaphor in the passage. They are the liquid offerings at the sacrifice, e.g., *soma*, melted butter, milk, etc. (cf. ChUBh ad loc.), the essence (*rasa-*) created by the bees (3.1.3), which flows to the sun (3.1.4), and the nectar on which the gods live (3.6.1). They are, in fact, the honey of the gods, and it is to this honey that the *ta*-pronoun most naturally refers: “The immortal liquids are that (honey).” The passage then continues by describing how these liquids are produced and why they are that honey.

<sup>12</sup> So also in ChU 2.7.2 and 3.16.1.

"Where one does not see another thing, hear another thing, discern another thing — that is fullness" and ChU 3. 17. 1 *sa yad asīśīṣati yat pipāsati yan na ramate tā asya dikṣāḥ* "when he hungers, when he goes thirsty, when he does not satisfy himself — these are his rites of consecration." In fact, so far as I can see, the rule is followed in this *Upaniṣad* without exception.<sup>13</sup>

It is because of this rule that the neuter *tad* in *tat tvam asi* poses such a problem. If HUME is correct, *tad* is a predicate nominative with *tvam*. Why then is it neuter?<sup>14</sup>

One possible reason this peculiarity has not received much attention is that the commentarial tradition does not perceive a problem. According to Śaṅkara's comments in the *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*, the pronouns refer to a single reality which is called Being (*sat*).<sup>15</sup> This view is explicit in the ChU commentary attributed to him<sup>16</sup>:

*sa yaḥ sadākhyā eṣa ukto 'nimāṇubhāvo jagato mūlam. aitadātmyam etat sad ātmā yasya sarvasya tad etadātma tasya bhāva aitadātmyam. etena sadākhyenātmanātmavat sarvam idaṃ jagat . . . yena cātmanātmavat sarvam idaṃ jagat tad eva sadākhyam kāraṇam satyam paramārthasat. ataḥ sa evātmā jagataḥ pratyaksvarūpaṃ satattvam yathātmyam.*

<sup>13</sup> An apparent exception is ChU 7.25.1 *sa [bhūmā] evādhastāt sa upariṣṭāt sa paścāt sa purastāt sa dakṣiṇataḥ sa uttaraḥ sa evedaṃ sarvam iti*. HUME (p. 261) translates the last line: "It [fullness], indeed, is this whole world." If he were correct, then the final *sa* would agree with its antecedent (*bhūmā*), not its predicate nominative (*idaṃ sarvam*). The adverbial expressions *adhastāt*, etc., however, suggest that there is here an ellipsis of a verb of motion: "It (extends) downward, upward, to the west, east, south, and north. It is that which (extends) to this whole world." Cf. MuU 2.2.12 *brahmaivedam amṛtam purastād brahma, paścād brahma dakṣiṇataś cottareṇa, adhaś cordhvaṃ ca prasṛtam, brahmaivedam viśvam idaṃ variṣṭham* "The *brahman* alone is this immortal one. To the east, to the west, to the south and north, below and above, the *brahman* (is) extended (*prasṛtam*). It is the *brahman* which (extends) to everything here, to its widest extent."

<sup>14</sup> SPEIJER: *SS*, p. 18 n. 1, noticed that *tat tvam asi* apparently breaks the rule, and he is clearly troubled by that. In accounting for it, he attempts a philosophic explanation: "the neuter has been preferred, because of *tad* and *tvam* there is not affirmed a full identity . . ., but it is only said, *tvam* is a phenomenal manifestation of *tad*: '*tad* (sc. *ātmā*) is also in you.'" It is difficult to see the justification for this interpretation. At least for the Vedic period, it is never wise to use philosophy to explain syntax. Rather, the philosophic interpretation must be held accountable to the normal rules of grammar, syntax, and word order. SPEIJER himself eventually abandoned this explanation in *VSS* § 95 b, p. 30, in which he says only that the text has *tad* instead of *sa* so that the thought will not be obscured.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. BSBh on 1.1.6.

<sup>16</sup> ChUBh on 6.8.7.

*ātmaśabdasya nirupapadasya pratyagātmani gavādīśabdavan nirūdhāt-  
tvād atas tat sat tvam asi iti . . . .*

“That which” — that called Being — is ‘this’ — previously discussed — ‘finest essence,’ the subtle essence and the root of the phenomenal world. ‘The state of having this as its self’: the whole, which has this, Being, as its self, that is *etadātma* ‘possessing this as its self’ and the state of possessing this as its self is *aitadātmyam*. Through this — called Being — as its self, ‘this whole’ world is possessed of a self. And by which self this whole world is possessed of a self, just ‘that,’ called Being, which is the primal cause, is ‘truth,’ Being in the absolute sense. Further, just ‘that’ is the ‘self,’ the world’s own inner condition, its real nature with regard to its self. Because the word *ātman-*, without modification, has a conventional meaning, like the word ‘cow,’ etc., in the sense of the individual self, therefore (the text) says ‘that,’ i. e., Being, ‘are you.’”

Notice that the commentator interprets the *ta-* and *eta-* pronouns as referring to “Being” (*sat*) in one way or another. Thus, he says, *sa yaḥ sadākhya* “‘that which’ — called Being . . . .”. He takes *etad* in the supposed *aitadātmyam* as *sat*. He has *etena sadākhyena ātmanā* and so on until he finally says, “‘*tad*’, i. e., Being, ‘are you.’”

Now, philosophically he may be completely justified. Philosophically, *sat* and *añiman-* may be identical. But syntactically they are two different items, and syntactically, all the demonstrative pronouns, except for the last, refer not to *sat*, but to *añiman-*. That last pronoun cannot. The effect of the commentator’s strategy is to gloss over this change.

Nonetheless, his comments may suggest a way of explaining the final *tad*. Even if the other pronouns refer to *añiman-*, perhaps this last one does refer to *sat*. In that case, *tad* would at least have a neuter antecedent. Moreover, the context of the refrain initially appears to support such a reference to *sat*. The refrain first occurs in ChU 6.8–10, which discusses the retreat of the various faculties of a person into Being and the loss of individuality within Being. And further, within these *khaṇḍas*, in 6.9.3 and 10.2, *tad*, standing alone and just before the refrain, probably does refer to *sat*. The text in these two passages reads: *ta iha vyāghro vā śiṃho vā vṛko vā varāho vā kiṭo vā pataṅgo vā daṃśo vā maśako vā yad yad bhavanti tad ābhavanti* “These [creatures] are here a tiger or lion or wolf or boar, a worm or moth or gnat or mosquito, whatsoever they become. They merge into that [i. e., Being].”<sup>17</sup> The refrain follows

<sup>17</sup> For the construction of this passage, see ICKLER, pp. 17 ff. It is also possible to read *sat* instead of *tad*. Cf. A. HILLEBRANDT: *Aus Brahmanas und Upani-  
shaden*. Jena 1921, p. 173 n. 93.

directly after this statement. In such a context, a concluding reference to *sat* paralleling *tad ābhavanti* would be reasonable.

But the difficulties in this solution weigh heavily against it. First, that *tad* would have a neuter antecedent should not make a difference. According to the rule of agreement, even if the antecedent of the *ta*-pronoun were neuter, we would still expect *sa tvam asi*, not *tat tvam asi*.<sup>18</sup> Second, 6.8–10 is not the context within which to interpret the refrain. In his analysis of ChU 6, HANEFELD<sup>19</sup> contends that the chapter consists of a number of independent sections, which were united by one or more redactors. The latter half of the chapter, which is formally separated from the rest by the occurrence of the *tat tvam asi* refrain, consists of five separate sections. Following HILLEBRANDT, he argues further that the refrain belongs unequivocally only to the section he calls the „Lebenskraft-(*Jīvan*-)Theorie,“ *khaṇḍas* 11–13.<sup>20</sup> HANEFELD's analysis underestimates the thematic unity in this chapter, but I do agree that the refrain is most closely connected with the content of *khaṇḍas* 11–13. In fact, it is 6.12 which is the one passage in which the refrain is not simply a tag, but an essential part of the whole *khaṇḍa*.<sup>21</sup> It is here I would place its original locus.

In 6.12, Uddālaka teaches his son Śvetaketu through the example of a fruit from a *nyagrodha* tree. At his father's direction, he brings a fruit

<sup>18</sup> One further example of the rule agreement shows precisely the construction and expression we expect. This is ŚB 14.2.1.8 *tām āgatām abhūdadhātī / ādītyai rāsnāsīndrānyā uṣṇīṣa itindrāṇī ha vā indrasya priyā pātnī tāsya uṣṇīṣo visvārūpatamaḥ so 'sīti tād āha tām evānam etāt karoti* "When that [cow] has come, he lays [a rope] around [her horns], saying, 'You are the girdle of Aditi, the head-band of Indrāṇī' — Indrāṇī is Indra's own dear wife and her head-band, above all, has every color [and form]. 'You are these,' he thereby says, and thus just these he thereby makes it to be." I realize this example is not incontrovertible. EGGELING (*ŚB*. Vol. 5. Oxford 1900, p. 474) translates the concluding *sa* and *tam* as singulars referring to the head-band alone. But this sentence forms the final interpretation of the whole *mantra*, and thus logically the concluding *sa* and *tam* refer to both Aditi's girdle as well as Indrāṇī's head-band. *Sa* is singular in agreement with the second person singular subject; *tam* in agreement with *enam*, which refers to the rope. If we have *so 'si* here in the ŚB, where *sa* refers to two objects, we should have *sa tvam asi*, even if the *ta*-pronoun refers to neuter *sat*.

<sup>19</sup> E. HANEFELD: *Philosophische Haupttexte der Älteren Upaniṣaden*. Wiesbaden 1976, pp. 116 ff.

<sup>20</sup> HANEFELD, p. 163.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. HANEFELD, p. 162 on 6.12: „Hier nun ist die entscheidende Stelle, von der aus diese Aussage verständlich wird; es ist nämlich die einzige Stelle, in der im vorangegangenen Text deutlich . . . auf die Aussage dieser Passage Bezug genommen wird.“

and looks inside. There he finds seeds. He then looks inside the seeds and sees nothing. His father then says to him: 6.12.2 *yaṃ vai somyaitam aṇimānaṃ na nibhālayasa etasya vai somyaiṣo ’ṇimna evaṃmahān*<sup>22</sup> *nyagrodhas tiṣṭhati. śraddhatsva somyeti* “This finest essence which you do not see, my dear, from this finest essence stands this so great *nyagrodha* tree. Trust this, my dear.” The refrain, which immediately follows, continues the discussion of this “finest essence” and then points up the significance of what Śvetaketu has been shown. As the *nyagrodha* tree exists because of an invisible essence, so also both the world and Śvetaketu himself have such an essence as their true nature and true self.

From this passage, the refrain became a refrain through its addition to the other *khaṇḍas*: probably first to 6.11 and 13 and then to the others in the second half of the chapter. Only in the very last *khaṇḍa*, 6.16, is the refrain an essential part of the text. Unlike 6.12, however, that *khaṇḍa* was composed after the refrain was established elsewhere. It serves, in fact, as an elucidation and justification of the refrain.<sup>23</sup>

The refrain spread within the chapter for several reasons. First, it is an impressive formulation and one which expresses a basic theme of the whole chapter. Time and again, Uddālaka emphasizes that there is an invisible essence from which all things evolve, to which all things devolve, and which is thus the inner reality of all things – and this is

<sup>22</sup> For the reading *evaṃmahān*, cf. ICKLER, p. 73. For other possibilities, see F.-R. HAMM: *Chāndogyaopaniṣad VI. Ein Erneuter Versuch*. In: WZKSO 12/13 (1968/69), p. 157 n. 65, 66.

<sup>23</sup> In this *khaṇḍa*, the ordeal by a heated axe illustrates the relation of truth and the self, described in the refrain. According to this passage, if a thief denies his guilt, a heated axe will burn him. If he is innocent, however, the truth surrounds him and so protects him: 6.16.2 *atha yadi tasyākartā bhavati tata eva satyam ātmānam kurute. sa satyābhīsandhaḥ satyenātmānam antardhāya paraśuṃ taptam pratigrhṇāti. sa na dahyate* “But if he turns out not to be the doer of that (theft), on account of that, he takes the truth to himself. And he, whose intention is the truth, after covering himself by the truth, takes hold of the heated axe. But he is not burned.” The example of the ordeal is a practical demonstration, of a type frequent in this section of the *Upaniṣad*, that the truth can enclose the self. Its purpose is to substantiate the claim of the refrain that the truth and the self can be one. The *Upaniṣatkāra* makes clear that the example of the ordeal illustrates this theme by adapting the refrain slightly: 6.16.3 *sa yathā tatra nādāhye-taitadātmīyam idaṃ sarvaṃ tat satyaṃ sa ātmā* “As in that (case) he would offer no place to be burnt, (so) this whole world is of such a nature. That is the truth. That is the self.” *Etad-* now refers to the situation described in the illustration: the condition in which the self is pervaded by the truth. The stem *ā-dāhaya-* is not otherwise attested. I take it as a quasi-denominative to *ādāhana-* AV “place for burning.” Cf. S. W. JAMISON: *Function and Form in the -āya- Formations of the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda*. Göttingen 1983, pp. 89f.

precisely the concept stressed in the refrain. The constant repetition of the refrain would establish that theme in the minds of those hearing the text. Such repetition is not a stylistic feature of this Upaniṣad alone, by any means. In a similar way, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* repeats the *neti neti* passage four times (in 3.9.26, 4.2.4, 4.4.22 and 4.5.15) and mentions it again in 2.3.6. That this *neti neti* also spread within the text after the composition of its major sections is easily established. It occurs in BU(K) 4.5.15, but not in the parallel passage in the Mādhyamīna recension of the text nor in BU 2.4, which is a doublet of 4.5 in both recensions. Thus, there are four versions of the same text, in only one of which *neti neti* occurs. This circumstance alone would be sufficient to suspect its insertion, and that conclusion becomes inescapable when one examines the passage itself. BU(K) 4.5.15 explains that the self is unknowable because it is the source of all knowing. An editor has inserted the *neti neti* formulation because it likewise emphasizes the impossibility of describing the self. But that insertion actually breaks the continuity of the passage. Before it, Yājñavalkya asks how, when everything has become the self, a person could possibly perceive any other thing. His series of questions ends with: *yenedaṃ sarvaṃ vijānāti taṃ kena vijānīyāt* "By what would one understand that by which one understands this whole world?" Then, in the Kāṇva recension, comes the *neti neti* saying: *sa eṣa neti nety ātmā. agrhyo na hi grhyate. aśīryo na hi śīryate. asaṅgo na hi sajjyate. asito na vyathate na riṣyate* "That self is this 'not this, not that.' It is ungraspable, for it is not grasped; indestructible, for it is not destroyed; unattached, for it is not attached. Unbound, it trembles not nor is injured." Finally, the passage ends: *vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt* "Look now! By what would one understand the understander?" This last question belongs immediately after the preceding one, for it develops from that question and climaxes the series. The *neti neti* saying interrupts the natural conclusion of the passage, even though it is thematically relevant. Here then, we have a clear instance of the generalization of a stereotyped formulation because it encapsulates a central theme of the text. It is this same kind of generalization which took place in ChU 6, although there, it took place in a far more systematic fashion than in the BU.

A second reason for the addition of the refrain was to mark the end of the *khaṇḍas*. Formally, it has a similar function to the repetition of the last few words of a section, a technique for marking the end of a logical unit which is found elsewhere in the older *Upaniṣads*.<sup>24</sup> It alerts the

<sup>24</sup> Cf. L. REYOU: *Études védiques et pāṇinées*. I. Paris 1955, pp. 91 ff.

hearer to the movement from one topic to the next. In one instance, however, its insertion breaks the proper continuity between two *khanḍas*, somewhat as the *neti neti* saying breaks the continuity of BU 4.5.15. These passages are ChU 6.14 and 15, in which are the allegory of the blindfolded man who is led away from home but who gradually makes his way back home, and the example of the dying man, whose mental faculties function so long as they do not retreat into their source. Both not only express the same themes — movement toward one’s source and merging with that source — but even use the same terminology. Thus, in 14.2, the wanderer thinks: *tasya tāvad eva ciraṃ yāvan na vimokṣye ’tha sampatsya iti* “For me there is just so long a time before I shall be free. And then I shall unite with [my people].” And in 15.1, after describing the dying man, the text says: *tasya yāvan na vāñ manasi sampadyate manaḥ prāṇe prāṇas tejasi tejaḥ parasyāṃ devatāyāṃ tāvaj jānāti* “Before his voice unites with his mind, his mind with breath, his breath with heat, heat with the highest divine power, so long does he know [his relations].” The two lines have the same vocabulary — each uses the *yāvan na . . . tāvat* construction and the verb *sam-pad* — and express the same ideas. The example in 15 explains the allegory in 14 and reinforces its point. The intervening *tat tvam asi* refrain, on the other hand, uses quite different terminology and is concerned with the pervasiveness of the finest essence, not the retreat of the faculties into the self.

To return then to the *tat tvam asi* refrain itself: if the refrain spread within the text and if it was generalized from 6.12, then an interpretation of it must account for it in that passage above all. As we noted above, this section discusses the *anīman-*: it does not discuss *sat*. A reference to Being might not be out of place, but there is nothing in the passage itself which warrants its sudden introduction at the close. Contextually, as well as syntactically, the explanation of *tad* as *sat* is unconvincing.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Another possibility is that *tad* in *tat tvam asi* represents a secret name of the *brahman*; cf. A. MINARD: *Trois Énigmes sur le Cent Chemins*. II. Paris 1956, § 453 a, p. 182. According to him, *tad* designates the *brahman* without giving it a real name, for the *brahman* is nameless. Nothing in the context of the refrain supports this interpretation, however. First, nowhere else in the Vedic literature is there a clear instance of the *ta-* pronoun in this usage. Nor would we expect there to be, for *ta-* is an anaphoric pronoun. The closest parallel cited by MINARD is BU 3.9.9, but here the pronoun is *tya-* and agrees with its nominative *brahma* in number and gender. Second, this section of the ChU does not discuss *brahman*. The principal concern of this chapter is Being, which is named and described as far as possible. In fact, one of the principles of Uddālaka’s exposition is to show that the whole process of evolution from and devolution into Being can be

If, then, *tad* does not refer either to *añiman-* or to *sat*, how can we account for it? The only way remaining is to look to the special functions of neuter demonstrative pronouns. Very commonly in Vedic prose, *tad*, like the other neuter demonstratives *etad*, *adaḥ*, and *idam*, is used adverbially in a variety of senses.<sup>26</sup> For example, it can express logical consequence: "therefore," "consequently," or "thereby."<sup>27</sup> It can mean "then," both in the sense of "after this" as well as "on account of this."<sup>28</sup> It may signify place, "there,"<sup>29</sup> or occasion, as in ŚB 2.5.2.5 *tād vai dvé védī dvāv agnī bhavataḥ* "In this (sacrifice) there are two Vedīs and two fires." Or it can express circumstance in the sense of "in that case"<sup>30</sup> or "in any case." Cf. ŚB(K) 2.2.1.16 *sá yátra viśvárūpaṃ tvāṣṭrám índro jaghāna tásya ha vádhyasya vidāṃ cakruḥ śásvad dhainam tritá evá jaghāna tād áty áha tād índró 'mucyata devó hí sáh* "When Indra slew Viśvarūpa, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ, they [Ekata, Dvita, and Trita] knew that he was to be killed. Probably, it was Trita, who slew him. In any case, Indra escaped that (crime) completely, for he is a god."<sup>31</sup> In the often-recurring phrase *tad eṣa śloko bhavati* and its variants,<sup>32</sup> *tad* means "with regard to this." In all these examples, *tad* refers to some preceding object or circumstance and signals a relation between it and the statement which follows. As these examples also show, the relations it may express are various.

I suggest that in *tat tvam asi*, *tad* has such an adverbial function. There is a parallel instance with two other demonstratives, which establishes

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understood through concrete and common events, such as hunger, thirst, sleep, death, the merging of rivers into the ocean or the blending of pollen in bees' honey. Being is unseen, but it can be understood. To give it a mysterious name does not accord with the whole tenor of the preceding sections.

<sup>26</sup> In general, cf. SPELJER: *VSS* § 147, p. 43; *SS* § 279.4, p. 209; RENOUE, *GrS* § 119c, p. 156.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. SPELJER: *SS* § 444, p. 344; DELBRÜCK: *AS* § 141, pp. 216ff.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. J.-M. VERPOORTEN: *L'Ordre des Mots dans l'Aitareya-Brahmaṇa*. Paris 1977, p. 297.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. H. W. BODEWITZ: *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I, 1-65*. Leiden 1973, p. 159; RENOUE: *GrS* § 119c, p. 156.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. A. MINARD: *La Subordination dans la Prose védique*. Paris 1936, § 294, p. 93; RENOUE: *GrS* § 119c, p. 156.

<sup>31</sup> According to MINARD: *Trois Énigmes sur le Cent Chemins. I*. Paris 1949, § 589c, p. 202, one *tad*, probably the second, is governed by the verb, and the other is adverbial.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. ŚB 10.5.2.4, 18; 10.5.4.16; BU 2.2.3; 4.4.6, etc., cf. ŚB 11.5.5.12; 12.3.2.7, 8; BU 4.3.11; 4.4.8. *tad eṣa ślokaḥ* in ChU 2.21.3; 3.11.1; 5.2.9; 5.10.9; 5.24.5; 7.26.2; 8.6.6.

the sense of *tad* here and supports this interpretation of it. This passage is TS 1.5.7.6 *sám tvám agne sūryasya várcasāgathā ity āhaitát tvám asī-dám ahám bhūyāsam iti vāvaitád āha. tvám agne sūryavarca asīty āhāśī-ṣam evaitám āśāste* "You, Agni, have come with the radiance of the sun," he says; 'in that way are you (*etát tvám asi*), in this way may I come to be (*idám ahám bhūyāsam*),' he thus says in effect. 'You, Agni, are one who possesses the radiance of the sun,' he says; it is this blessing which he asks." Here the demonstratives *etad* and *idam* refer to the condition which the fire has attained, namely, that it brings with it the radiance of the sun. In the same manner, *tad* in *tat tvam asi* refers to the condition which was previously described, the condition of the *nyagrodha* tree and of the whole world. As these two are pervaded by the finest essence, as that finest essence is the truth and the self for them, so also is Śvetaketu in that same condition. Therefore, I translate the whole refrain as: "That which is this finest essence, that the whole world has as its self. That is the truth. That is the self. In that way are you, Śvetaketu."

Such is really the logical ending of 6.12, in which the refrain has its most natural place, and its appropriate climax. First, the passage establishes that the tree grows and lives because of an invisible essence. Then, in the refrain, it says that everything, the whole world, exists by means of such an essence. This essence is the truth, for it is lasting and real. It is the self, for everything exists by reference to it. Then and finally, Uddālaka personalizes the teaching. Śvetaketu should look upon himself in the same way. He, like the tree and the whole world, is pervaded by this essence, which is his final reality and his true self.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> There is no need here to examine the discussion among Vedanta schools on whether *tat tvam asi* implies an identity of the self and the *brahman* or not. Even Vedantins who reject the non-dualist position do not argue that *tad* does not refer to *brahman*, as I have done. Rather, they argue that the refrain expresses a different relation between the *tad* and *tvam* other than absolute identity. One section of Viṣṇudāsācārya's *Vādaratnāvalī*, a Madhvite text, for example, offers twenty explanations of *tat tvam asi* which do not imply identity. Using Pāṇini as his authority, Viṣṇudāsācārya says that it could just as well mean "you are like that" (§ 3), "you are (attached) to that" like a bird tied to its perch (§ 4), "you are dependent on that" (§ 9), "you are of the nature of that" (§ 10), and so forth. His last idea, which also occurs in Madhva's commentary on 6.8.7, has an appealing improbability. He suggests reading the final clauses as *sa ātmā atat tvam asi*. My thanks to Dr. EDWIN GEROW for referring me to this text.

## Bücherbesprechungen

HANS HÜLS und HANS HOPPE: *Engelbert Kaempfer zum 330. Geburtstag. Gesammelte Beiträge zur Engelbert-Kaempfer-Forschung und zur Frühzeit der Asienforschung in Europa*. Lemgo: Wagener 1982. 268 S., 79 Abb. Geb.

Leben und Werk ENGELBERT KAEMPFRERS, der als Arzt und Naturforscher von 1683 bis 1693 Rußland, Persien und „Ostindien“ (in der damals üblichen, umfassenden Bedeutung des Wortes) bereiste, wird nun, 300 Jahre nach seiner „curiosen“ Fahrt, durch dieses Werk gewürdigt. Es enthält insbesondere KAEMPFRERS wissenschaftsgeschichtlich äußerst wichtige Dissertation *Decas observationum exoticarum* (Leiden 1694) in vollständiger deutscher Übersetzung und ausführlicher Kommentierung (S. 31–61) und eine von dem Geographen HANS HÜLS (1935–80) zusammengestellte *Internationale Kaempfer-Bibliographie* (S. 209–58). Im folgenden soll nur auf die letztere eingegangen werden.

KAEMPFRERS Biographie (Punkt 1–5) umfaßt, obwohl sein Leben abschnittsweise noch immer völlig im Dunkeln liegt, nahezu ein Drittel der 672 Titel. Sie entstammen jedoch überwiegend der Welt des Feuilletons und sind wissenschaftlich belanglos.

Sehr erfreulich ist dagegen die gründliche Erfassung von Kaempfers schriftstellerischem Werk (Nr. 225–292). Obwohl es in der Hauptsache nur aus den *Amoenitates exoticae* (Lemgo 1712) und der posthum veröffentlichten *History of Japan* (London 1727) besteht, hat es durch eine Vielzahl von – teils auszugsweisen – Nachdrucken, Übersetzungen, gekürzten Ausgaben usw. während des 18. Jh.s eine große Wirkung, insbesondere auf das europäische Japanbild ausgeübt. Nachzutragen wäre noch der *Extrait de l'Histoire du Japon par le Docteur Kaempfer*. In: *Lettres sérieuses et badines 2* (La Haye 1729), 345–78 und der Abschnitt „Besondere Bäume und Pflanzen in Japan“ in: *Allgemeine Historie der Reisen*. Bd. XII. Leipzig 1754, 708–40.

Einen zweiten großen bibliographischen Komplex stellt KAEMPFRERS Reise-  
weg dar (Punkt 9). Von den 129 Literaturangaben beziehen sich 83 auf Japan, welche wiederum zum großen Teil Japanisch geschrieben sind, denn die Japaner haben seit langem KAEMPFRERS Werk für sich „entdeckt“. Beiträge in anderen asiatischen Sprachen fehlen dagegen völlig, teilweise jedoch zu Unrecht: So erschien 1972 in Teheran eine persische Übersetzung des 1. Teils der *Amoenitates exoticae*, der Beschreibung des persischen Hofes. Die durch die japanischen Titel angesprochenen Japaner und Japanologen vermissen Hinweise auf japanische Bibliographien, z. B. diejenige in der „Gedenkschrift“ für KAEMPFER und SIEBOLD, in der sich die Hälfte des japanischen Schrifttums wiederfinden läßt, in: *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens*, Suppl.-Bd. 28, Tokyo 1966, 271–75.

Unter den „von Kaempfer besonders gepflegte(n) Wissenschaften“ (Punkt 10, Nr. 463–623) nimmt die Botanik unter Einschluß der angewandten Drogenkunden den ersten Platz ein. Das zusammengetragene Material ist beachtlich, wenn