Introduction

The ‘akhandārtha’ or the advaitic import of oneness between the tat-padārtha-iśvara and tvam-padārtha-jīva is comprehended through three sequential knowledge-steps — (a) sāmānādhikaraṇya-sambandha-jñānām, (b) viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānām and (c) lakṣya-lakṣaṇaṭa-sambandha-jñānām. While analysing the first knowledge-step, we saw that since the tat-pada and tvam-pada are in samānā-vibhakti (grammatical coordination or apposition) they enjoy sāmānādhikaraṇya-sambandha. This sāmānādhikaraṇya-sambandha-jñānām enables us to infer and posit a single and same adhikaraṇa (locus or substratum) for tat-pada and tvam-pada. Its function of sāmānādhikaraṇya-sambandha-jñānām ends there. The function of the next knowledge-step viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānām is to help us track this adhikaraṇa indicated by the sāmānādhikaraṇya-sambandha.

The Term Viśeṣaṇa-Viśeṣyatā-Sambandha-Jñānām

Before we proceed further, it is imperative that the term viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānām is understood. The word ‘viśeṣaṇa’ means ‘qualification’. That which is qualified by a

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Before going through this essay it is strongly recommended that the readers give at least a cursory glance at ‘Tat Tvam Asi – Part II’ and ‘Tat Tvam Asi – Part III’ which appeared in the September and October 2004 issues of Tapovan Prasad. You will find that the words pada, padārtha, vākyā, vākyārtha, akhandārtha, samāna-vibhakti, bhinnavibhakti, sansarga, bheda-rūpa-sansarga, abheda-rūpa-sansarga, sāmānādhikaraṇya etc. and the illustrations of ‘Nilam utpalam asti’ and ‘Dandena gam ānaya’ which figure in this essay are elaborately discussed therein.
"višeṣaṇa" is called "višeṣya". In the sentence 'He is a tall man', the višeṣaṇa is 'tall' and the višeṣya is 'man'. When the syllable 'tā' is suffixed to 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣya', the term becomes 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā'. The syllables 'tā' or 'tava' when added as suffix give the meaning of bhāva — the 'condition' or 'state of being'. While 'nila' is blue, 'nilatā' or 'nilatava' is 'blueness' i.e., 'the state (bhāva) of being blue'. Thus, the term 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā' or 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatava' or 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-bhāva' means 'the state of being the qualification and qualified'.

The word 'sambandha' means 'relationship'. This state of two or more padārthas (word-sense) being related as the 'višeṣaṇa' (qualification) and 'višeṣya' (qualified) is itself the relation. Thus 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā' is itself the sambandha. Now the term 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha' means 'the relationship of being the qualification and the qualified'. The jñānam (knowledge) of this sambandha is called 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam'. Thus the whole term 'višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam' means 'the knowledge of the relationship of being the qualification and the qualified'. The tabular column below will give a cumulative picture of the methodology of constructing and construing this term:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Višeṣaṇa</td>
<td>Qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Višeṣaṇa-višeṣya</td>
<td>Qualification and the qualified</td>
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<tr>
<td>Višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā</td>
<td>The state of being the qualification and the qualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha</td>
<td>The relationship of being the qualification and the qualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam</td>
<td>The knowledge of the relationship of being the qualification and the qualified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam is also called višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatava-sambandha-jñānam or višeṣaṇa-višeṣya-bhāva-

2 Višeṣya and višeṣaṇa are termed as 'noun' and 'adjective' respectively in English grammar.
sambandha-jñānam. A mention of all these three terms is made because we find different texts employing these interchangeable terms to describe this relationship.

**Viśeṣāna is Vyavacchedaka**

When we say that viśeṣāna 'qualifies' and viśeṣya is 'qualified', what is exactly meant by 'being a qualifier' and 'being qualified'? Sri Ramatirtha, while commenting on Sri Swami Sadananda's *Vedānta Sāra* clarifies:

Viṣevaqa jhīu acchedaka

**Vyavacchedakāṁ viśeṣāṇāṁ vyavacchedāyaṁ viśeṣyaṁ**

That which delimits is called viśeṣāna and that which is delimited is called viśeṣya.

This simple, yet very profound grammatical concept can be explained with the example — *nīlam utpalam asti* — 'The blue (nīlam) lotus (utpalam) is (asti)'. The padārtha (word-sense) of utpala is utpalatva (lotusness), a dravya (substance) with the characteristics of the lotus. It could be either a red lotus, a white lotus or a blue lotus. That does not become clear by the mere mention of the word utpalam (lotus).

The padārtha (word-sense) of nīla is the guṇa (quality), nīlatva (blueness), the colour blue. When we say that the padārtha of utpala is qualified by padārtha of nīlā what is meant is that the utpalatva is restricted or delimited by nīlatva. The utpalatva (lotusness) is no more general – it is not red or white or blue. With nīlatva (blueness) qualifying utpalatva (lotusness), the utpalatva is now particularised or delimited as 'blue' alone. This particularisation or delimiting of utpalatva is its restriction. Thus nīlatva becomes the višeṣāna because of its function of delimiting (vyavacchedaka) utpalatva. And utpalatva because of being delimited (vyavaccheda) is termed višeṣya.

It is important to note that the višeṣāna-višeṣyatā-sambandha is always between the padārthas (word-senses). While sāmānādhikaranya-sambandha is between padas (words), višeṣāna-višeṣyatā-sambandha is between the padārthas (word-senses). It
has to be naturally so because only a padartha has the capacity to qualify another padartha. Only nilatva can qualify utpalatva and not the mere word nila (nila-pada).

**Anyonya-Višeṣaṇa-Višeṣyatā-Sambandha**

Through sāmānādhikaranya-sambandha-jñāna though we infer the presence of a common locus for both the nila-pada and utpalapa, the second knowledge step of višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam is required to discover the object – nilam utpalam (blue lotus). Both the nilatva padartha and utpalatva padartha by mutually delimiting each other discover the object. This mutual delimiting of the padārthas is called anyonya-višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha. This idea of mutual delimiting can be clearly grasped with the following illustration.

Let us consider a room in which many types of lotuses are placed — red lotus, white lotus, and blue lotus. In the same room there are also many types of blue objects — a blue cloth, blue paint, blue chalk-piece etc. When a person is directed—'nilam utpalam ānaya'—'Bring the blue lotus' what are the thought processes involved in the identification of the nilam utpalam (the blue lotus)?

The preceding fundamental thought process is the sāmānādhikaranya-sambandha-jñānam. Since I see that the words nilam and utpalam are in the same case, it is possible to ascertain that the meaning of the sentence is a request to bring the object which has the characteristics of both lotusness (utpalatva) and blueness (nilatva). Once the need of one object (and not many) is seen, the next sequential thought process of anyonya-višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam starts for the determination of that single unitary object. Anyonya-višeṣaṇa-višeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam embraces within itself a two-fold thought process:

**Thought Process I:** The person delimits the lotusness (utpalatva) with blueness (nilatva) in an effort to find the right lotus. Nilatva acts as the vyavacchedaka and utpalatva becomes the vyavacchedya or that which is delimited. When nilatva de-
limits utpalatva (nīlatavasiṣṭa-utpala), the other lotusness — white-lotusness and red-lotusness (i.e., utpalasya anīlāvatam) — is excluded. Thus in the first thought process nīlatava is the viṣeṣaṇa and utpalatva is the viṣeṣya.

**Thought Process II:** This is just the opposite of the first process. The person now delimits the blueness (nīlatava) with the lotusness (utpalatva) in an effort to find the right blueness. Herein the utpalatva behaves as the delimiter of nīlatava i.e., utpalatva becomes the vyavacchedaka and nīlatava is the vyavacchedya. When utpalatva delimits nīlata va (utpalatva-siṣṭa-nīlam) the other blueness — paint-blueness, cloth-blueness, chalk-blueness (i.e., nilasya anutpalatvam) — is all excluded. Thus in the second thought process utpalatva takes the position of the viṣeṣaṇa and nīlatava becomes the viṣeṣya.

It is only when the dual mutual delimiting processes happen in the mind that one is able to find the right object — ‘an object which has lotusness characterised by blueness and blueness characterised by lotusness’ or to put it simply ‘a certain thing which has the properties of both lotusness and blueness’ — the nīla-abhinna-utpalam. Since both nīlatava and utpalatva mutually qualify each other, the relationship is not merely ‘one-sided’ but ‘both-sided’. This ‘both-sided’ or ‘two-sided’ relationship between the padārthas mutually qualifying each other is called anyonya-viṣeṣaṇa-viṣeṣyatā-sambandha or ‘the relation of mutually being the qualification and the qualified’.

An important point to be noted herein is that there is no hard and fast rule that these two-fold processes of anyonya-viṣeṣaṇa-viṣeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam should happen in the same precise order mentioned above. Once sāmanādhikaranya-sambandha-jñānam is complete, the dual thought processes of anyonya-viṣeṣaṇa-viṣeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam can very well be interchanged without any harm to the final result of finding the nilam utpalam (blue lotus). But what cannot be avoided is

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3 Viṣeṣāṇas are known to have three functions — vyavacchedaka, vidheya and hetugarbha. No effort is made to explain all these varied concepts for fear of exceeding the scope of these essays.
the dual aspect of the thought process. Even though these two thought processes happen serially, the thought-processess being rapid in nature, one feels that they happen simultaneously. Also in this rapidity, the fundamental nature of the primary sāmānādhi karanya-sambandha-jñānam as the very basis of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam is often not noticed.

Anyonya-Viśeṣaṇa-Viśeṣyatā-Sambandha in Tat Tvam Asi

The example which was used to illustrate the concept of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha was 'Nīlam utpalam asti'. We see in this sentence that nīlapada and utpalapada are in samāna-vibhakti and that they enjoy sāmānādhi karanya-sambandha. Since the nīlapada and utpalapada are in samāna-vibhakti, their padārthas, nīlatva and utpalatva, come to have viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha between them. With the application of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha we discovered the object — nīlam utpalam. Based on the analysis of this particular example, three general principles of sentence interpretation can be drawn:

**Principle I:** Padas which are in samāna-vibhakti enjoy sāmānādhi karanya-sambandha i.e., the relation of the padas denoting a common locus.

**Principle II:** Padas which are in samāna-vibhakti will cause their padārthas to have viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha between them.

**Principle III:** By the application of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha between the padārthas, we can determine the common adhikaraṇa denoted by the padas.

It all starts with two words in samāna-vibhakti (grammatical co-ordination or apposition). If that happens we have to accept the presence of both sāmānādhi karanya-sambandha between the padas and to discover their common adhikaraṇa we take recourse to anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha between their respective padārthas. Since both the tat-pada and tvam-pada are in samāna-vibhakti, with the help of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha between the tvam-padārtha-jīva and the tat-padārtha-līśvara we
should be able to find their common adhikarana. But are we able to do so? This is the vital question of crucial practical importance!

**Dismissal of Tat Tvam Asi?!**

When we try to employ this anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha, as envisaged by Principle III, to find out the common locus of both tat-padārtha-Īśvara and tvam-padārtha-jīva, we land into grave trouble. This becomes evident as we even try to ‘trial run’ the dual thought processes of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha:

**Thought Process I:** When we delimit tatpadārtha-Īśvara with tvampadārtha-jīva what we are actually trying to do is to find out an Īśvara with the properties of jīva. There is zero result.

**Thought Process II:** When we try to delimit tvampadārtha-jīva with tatpadārtha-Īśvara we are trying to find out a jīva with the characteristics of Īśvara. Here too the result is nil.

The failure of both these thought processes is not at all surprising, for both these are truly impossible tasks.

It is possible to delimit lotusness with blueness and blueness with lotusness, since there is no contradiction in their essential nature. And since there is no contradiction between their padārthas, a vastu (thing) with properties of both the lotusness and blueness is easily determined. There is nothing impossible or illogical about it. But it will be preposterous to delimit Īśvara with jīva and try to expand jīva with Īśvara. This is utterly illogical and absolutely impossible since the characteristics of Īśvara and jīva are contradictory and mutually exclusive. Both cannot have a single adhikarana (locus)⁴. Unlike the case of ‘nilam utpalam’ where the application of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha led to the discovery of the common lōcus of nilatva-padārtha and utpalatva-padārtha, in ‘Tat tvam asi’ the application of anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha does not lead to a com-

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⁴ Can there be a single common locus for both sarvaññatva (infinite Knowledge) and kīcchijñatva (incomplete knowledge)? If a vastu possesses complete Knowledge it cannot be said to be having incomplete knowledge! That which has sorrow cannot be said to be experiencing infinite Bliss also at the same time!
mon adhikarana for tatpadartha-Iśvara and tvampadartha-jīva. In fact, even the idea of applying anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha for tatpadartha-Iśvara with tvampadartha-jīva is ludicrous!

An object cannot be ‘hot and cold’ at the same time. Let us take a sentence ‘Bring that hot cold’. We see that the words hot and cold are in sāmāṇādhikaranyā. Hence their padarthas, hot-ness and cold-ness will have anyonya- viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha. Even after we apply the rules of grammar — sāmāṇādhikaranyā and anyonya-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha, the vastu (object) is not discovered and therefore the sentence is rightly discarded as alīka or nonsensical. Is ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ such an alīka-vākyā (nonsensical sentence)? Nay, not at all. It is a Veda-vākyā, a Mahā-vākyā and has to be arthāat (having a definite meaning).

Conclusion

When with the mere application of sāmāṇādhikaranyā-sambandha-jñānam and viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha-jñānam we are not successful in determining the vākyārtha of a sentence, we are advised to adopt the lakṣaṇa-vṛtti or the implied connotation to derive the meanings of the words. When that is done, the whole picture suddenly changes; all difficulties disappear and a cogent meaning, the vākyārtha of ‘Tat tvam asi’ emerges.

At this critical juncture a student may raise some crucial questions. If sāmāṇādhikaranyā-sambandha and viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatā-sambandha fail in giving a cogent vākyārtha (sentence sense) of ‘Tat tvam asi,’ and only the application of lakṣya-lakṣaṇatā-sambandha helps us to find the vākyārtha (sentence sense) of ‘Tat tvam asi’ why not dismiss the first two steps? Why at all say that ‘Tat tvam asi’ is comprehended by three knowledge-steps? Why not just say that the sentence ‘Tat tvam asi’ is understood by only one knowledge-step, the lakṣya-lakṣaṇatā-sambandha? These questions will be answered as we study methodically the next knowledge-step — the lakṣya-lakṣaṇatā-sambandha-jñānam. The Mahā-vākyā ‘Tat tvam asi’ is definitely a challenging topic.

November 2004